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Neuadd y Sir
Y Rhadyr
Brynbuga
NP15 1GA

Dydd Mercher, 7 Gorffennaf 2021

Hysbysiad o gyfarfod

Pwyllgor Dethol Economi a Datblygu

Dydd Iau, 15fed Gorffennaf, 2021 at 10.00 am
County Hall, Usk with Remote Attendance

AGENDA

BYDD CYFARFOD CYN I AELODAU'R PWYLLGOR 30 COFNODION CYN I'R CYCHWYN Y CYFARFOD

Rhif Eitem	Eitem	Tudalennau
1.	Ymddiheuriadau am Absenoldeb.	
2.	Datganiadau o Fuddiant	
3.	Fforwm Agored i'r Cyhoedd. Canllawiau ~ Fforwm Agored Cyhoeddus y Pwyllgor Dethol Mae ein cyfarfodydd Pwyllgor Dethol yn cael eu ffrydio'n fyw a bydd dolen i'r ffrwd fyw ar gael ar dudalen gyfarfod gwefan Cyngor Sir Fynwy Os hoffech i rannu eich barn ar unrhyw gynigion sy'n cael eu trafod gan Bwyllgorau Dethol, gallwch gyflwyno eich sylwadau drwy ddefnyddio'r ffurflen hon <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rhannwch eich barn drwy lanlwytho ffeil fideo neu sain (uchafswm o 4 munud) neu os yn well gennych;• Cyflwynwch gynrychiolaeth ysgrifenedig (drwy Microsoft Word, uchafswm o 500 gair) Bydd angen i chi gofrestru ar gyfer cyfrif Fy Sir Fynwy er mwyn cyflwyno'r ymateb neu ddefnyddio eich manylion mewngofnodi os ydych wedi cofrestru o'r blaen. Y dyddiad cau ar gyfer cyflwyno sylwadau i'r Cyngor yw 5pm dri	

diwrnod gwaith clir cyn y cyfarfod.

Os bydd y sylwadau a dderbynnir yn fwy na 30 munud, bydd detholiad o'r rhain, yn seiliedig ar thema, yn cael eu rhannu yng nghyfarfod y Pwyllgor Dethol. Bydd yr holl sylwadau a dderbynnir ar gael i gynghorwyr cyn y cyfarfod.

Os hoffech awgrymu pynciau i un o'n Pwyllgorau Dethol graffu arnynt yn y dyfodol, gwnewch hynny drwy e-bostio Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk

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Paul Matthews

Prif Weithredwr

CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

MAE CYFANSODDIAD Y PWYLLGOR FEL SY'N DILYN:

Cynghorwyr Sir:

D. Blakebrough
J.Becker
A.Davies
D. Evans
M.Feakins
G. Howard
P. Jordan
R.Roden
B. Strong

Gwybodaeth Gyhoeddus

Mynediad i gopiâu papur o agendâu ac adroddiadau

Gellir darparu copi o'r agenda hwn ac adroddiadau perthnasol i aelodau'r cyhoedd sy'n mynychu cyfarfod drwy ofyn am gopi gan Gwasanaethau Democrataidd ar 01633 644219. Dylid nodi fod yn rhaid i ni dderbyn 24 awr o hysbysiad cyn y cyfarfod er mwyn darparu copi caled o'r agenda hwn i chi.

Edrych ar y cyfarfod ar-lein

Gellir gweld y cyfarfod ar-lein yn fyw neu'n dilyn y cyfarfod drwy fynd i www.monmouthshire.gov.uk neu drwy ymweld â'n tudalen Youtube drwy chwilio am MonmouthshireCC. Drwy fynd i mewn i'r ystafell gyfarfod, fel aelod o'r cyhoedd neu i gymryd rhan yn y cyfarfod, rydych yn caniatáu i gael eich ffilmio ac i ddefnydd posibl y delweddau a'r recordiadau sain hynny gan y Cyngor.

Y Gymraeg

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu cyfraniadau gan aelodau'r cyhoedd drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg. Gofynnwn gyda dyledus barch i chi roi 5 diwrnod o hysbysiad cyn y cyfarfod os dymunwch siarad yn Gymraeg fel y gallwn ddarparu ar gyfer eich anghenion.

Nodau a Gwerthoedd Cyngor Sir Fynwy

Cymunedau Cynaliadwy a Chryf

Canlyniadau y gweithiwn i'w cyflawni

Neb yn cael ei adael ar ôl

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

Pobl yn hyderus, galluog ac yn cymryd rhan

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

Ein sir yn ffynnu

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

Ein blaenoriaethau

- Ysgolion
- Diogelu pobl agored i niwed
- Cefnogi busnes a chreu swyddi
- Cynnal gwasanaethau sy'n hygyrch yn lleol

Ein gwerthoedd

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

SUBJECT: MONMOUTHSHIRE REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN PREFERRED STRATEGY
MEETING: ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE
DATE: 15 JULY 2021
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Economy and Development Select Committee of the statutory consultation on the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) Preferred Strategy, and to seek Committee's feedback/comments on the document.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To feedback/comment on the RLDP Preferred Strategy as appropriate.

3. KEY ISSUES:

Background

- 3.1 The Council is preparing a RLDP for the County (excluding the area within the Brecon Beacons National Park) to cover the period 2018-2033. The RLDP will set out land use development proposals for the County and will identify where and how much new, sustainable development will take place over the Replacement Plan period. It will also identify areas to be protected from development and contain policies against which future planning applications will be assessed. The RLDP will be adopted in Autumn 2023.
- 3.2 Members will be aware that the Plan had commenced consultation on the Preferred Strategy stage in March 2020 alongside the second Call for Candidate Sites, with non-statutory consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options having taken place between July and August 2019.
- 3.3 Progress on the RLDP was subsequently paused in March 2020 because the Covid-19 pandemic meant we could not continue with the Preferred Strategy public engagement events in the format prescribed in the Delivery Agreement. Following advice from the Minister for Housing and Local Government¹, the decision was made to cease the Preferred Strategy consultation and second Call for Candidate Sites on 20th July 2020. This enabled the Council to undertake a review of the RLDP issues, vision, objectives and evidence base² in terms of sensitivity to the consequences the Coronavirus pandemic before progressing with Plan preparation. This concluded that the Plan's Issues, Vision and Objectives and evidence base remain relevant to Monmouthshire, with a number of issues and objectives considered to have increased emphasis and importance consistent with the priorities identified in the Welsh

¹ Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid-19, 7th July 2020

² Monmouthshire RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in Light of Covid-19 (September 2020)

Government *Building Better Places* Covid-19 recovery document published in July 2020.

- 3.4 In August 2020 the Welsh Government published a correction to the 2018-based population and household projections. These projections form the starting point for the Plan's evidence base on growth levels. In order to ensure that the evidence base for the RLDP is robust and based on the most up to date information, the decision was made to revisit both the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the RLDP process.
- 3.5 These unavoidable delays necessitated a further revision to the RLDP Delivery Agreement timetable and community involvement scheme. The Revised Delivery Agreement, together with the RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives and evidence base were reported to, and endorsed by, Council on 22nd October 2020. The Welsh Government approved the Delivery Agreement on 30th October 2020. The revised Growth and Spatial Options Paper was endorsed by Council in December 2020 for non-statutory consultation for a four-week period in January-February 2021. Work on the RLDP is progressing in accordance with the revised timetable, the next key stage being the Preferred Strategy.

Pre-Deposit Plan Preparation

- 3.6 The Preferred Strategy represents the culmination of a period of pre-Deposit Plan preparation which has involved engagement and consultation from the outset in order to gather opinions and build consensus. Key previous stages are summarised in the footnote below³. Engagement and consultation at this early stage of the process will also ensure that the Council accords with the five ways of working as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act (in particular involvement and collaboration).
- 3.7 A revised Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020) was prepared and endorsed by Cabinet (16th December 2020) to be issued for non-statutory consultation for a four-week period in January and February 2021. This Paper set out a number of alternative options for how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and broadly where this growth should take place, together with the implications of each option and the extent to which they will achieve the RLDP objectives. It also identified the Council's preferred growth and spatial options that are considered to best address the County's key issues/challenges and meet the RLDP objectives.
- 3.8 Notification of the consultation, inviting comments, was sent to statutory and other consultees, agents and individuals on the RLDP consultation database (793 notifications were sent). Given the Covid-19 restrictions in place at the time, a range of virtual consultation and engagement took place including a Joint Area Cluster meeting (21st January 2021), a Members' Workshop (8th December 2020), scrutiny by Economy & Development and Adult Select Joint Committee (10th December 2020) and internal discussions within the Council through DMT/SLT, as well as virtual

³ Pre-deposit plan preparation stages:

- Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper was subject to non-statutory consultation in January-February 2019. This Paper has since been updated to reflect the Council's declaration of a climate emergency (this was agreed by Cabinet in July 2019) and the continued development of the RLDP evidence base and the spatial element of the Vision. The Issues, Vision and Objectives have also recently been reviewed in light of the Covid-19 pandemic which was endorsed by Council in October 2020, as noted above.
- Growth and Spatial Options Paper was subject to non-statutory consultation/engagement for a six-week period in July and August 2019. However, given the delays incurred to the Plan preparation process as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the publication of the Welsh Government 2018-based population and household projections, the Growth and Spatial Options stage has been revisited. As noted above, the revised Growth and Spatial Options Paper was subject to non-statutory consultation for a four-week period in January-February 2021.

engagement events which were open for all to attend (14th and 20th January 2021). The consultation responses received to this Paper have been considered and reported in the Growth and Spatial Options Report of Consultation and helped to inform the preparation of the Preferred Strategy. The Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021) complements the Report of Consultation and adds further analysis of the options considered.

RLDP Preferred Strategy

- 3.9 The Preferred Strategy is the first formal publication and statutory consultation stage in the RLDP preparation process. It provides the strategic direction for the development and use of land in Monmouthshire (excluding the area within the Brecon Beacons National Park) over the Plan period 2018 to 2033 and identifies how much sustainable growth is needed and where this growth will broadly be located. Its preparation has been guided by a framework of key inputs that includes national legislation/policy, local and regional policies/strategies and an evidence base relating to key issues for the Plan to address.
- 3.10 The overall purpose of the Preferred Strategy is to:
- Identify key issues, challenges and opportunities for the County.
 - Develop a vision and set of objectives for the RLDP that respond to the key issues, challenges and opportunities.
 - Set out the Preferred Strategy including the scale of future population, housing and employment growth and establish the broad spatial distribution of growth.
 - Set out strategic policies that will deliver/implement the strategy.
- 3.11 The Preferred Strategy provides the strategic context for the preparation of more detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations which will be included in the Deposit RLDP. The Preferred Strategy does not identify any site-specific allocations nor does it identify designations for protecting areas from new development. Allocations and designations will be a key part of the Deposit Plan preparation process once the Preferred Strategy has been agreed. Only those candidate sites that accord with the Preferred Strategy will be considered for inclusion in the Deposit Plan.
- 3.12 The Preferred Strategy is attached at **Appendix 1**. An Executive Summary and Easy Read Summary version of the Preferred Strategy have also been prepared (attached at **Appendix 2 and Appendix 3** respectively).
- 3.13 The Preferred Strategy is structured as follows:

Executive Summary

Section 1: Introduction – Provides a summary of the RLDP process and progress to date, outlines what the Preferred Strategy is/how this is prepared as well as a list of supporting documents. It also sets out the consultation arrangements in relation to the Preferred Strategy and the next key steps in the RLDP process.

Section 2: Context – Presents an overview/profile of the County outlining the key economic, social, environmental and cultural characteristics of Monmouthshire. It also sets out the legislative and policy context and key influences on the Plan.

Section 3: Key Issues, Challenges and Opportunities – Provides a summary of the key issues, challenges and opportunities within Monmouthshire.

Section 4: Replacement LDP Strategic Framework – Outlines the RLDP Vision, Objectives, sets out the Preferred Growth and Spatial Option (i.e. the Preferred Strategy) and a key diagram.

Section 5: Implementation and Delivery – Sets out the Strategic Policies including Strategic Growth Options.

Appendices – provide further detail in relation to supporting evidence to the Preferred Strategy, the RLDP Issues, Strategic Growth Options and Development Management Policies.

Preferred Strategy – the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy

- 3.14 The identification of the Preferred Strategy has been informed by a range of considerations, including the assessment and consideration of the growth and spatial options, responses from the consultation process, the findings of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal, the newly published Future Wales 2040 (which is a statutory development plan), the LDP tests of soundness, Welsh Government's *Building Better Places*, and the pressing need to address the key challenges relating to the County's demography, affordability and the climate emergency to achieve a sustainable balanced deliverable outcome.
- 3.15 The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy promotes and supports a level of housing and employment growth that will be distributed proportionately⁴ across Monmouthshire up to 2033. The Strategy assists in addressing the demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and ultimately seeks to deliver the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Strategy conforms with Policy 1 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (hereafter referred to as Future Wales 2040) which is the highest tier statutory development plan and supports sustainable growth in *all* parts of Wales that seeks to address local aspirations and need. The Strategy also meets a key 'Test of Soundness' of ensuring that the Plan's vision and strategy are positive and sufficiently aspirational⁵. A Self-Assessment of the Preferred Strategy against the Tests of Soundness is attached at **Appendix 4**, which includes an assessment of the Strategy's general conformity with Future Wales 2040. This demonstrates that the Preferred Strategy and the stages undertaken and processes followed to reach this stage are 'sound' and that the Strategy assists in the delivery of the Future Wales policies and is in general conformity with its overarching strategy. Further detail of the Strategy is set out in Section 4 of the Preferred Strategy (Appendix 1 refers) and is summarised below.
- 3.16 In order to deliver the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy the RLDP will:
- Make provision for a total of **8,366 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,605 homes** (this provision is based indicatively on a 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This level of housing growth will enable the provision of market and affordable housing in both urban and rural areas and, importantly, provides the opportunity to address the unbalanced demography, improve labour force retention by retaining/attracting younger adult population age groups and assists in addressing the County's housing affordability challenge. Taking account of the existing housing land supply and projected windfall delivery, the RLDP will need to allocate sufficient land to accommodate **3,658 homes**. The various components of housing supply are set out in Table 1 below.

⁴ 'Proportionately' is deemed to mean that the level of growth directed toward a settlement will be proportionate to its population size. To calculate the proportion of development to be directed toward a settlement only the population of those settlements included in the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal has been used to contribute to the total population figure for the County. This takes into account the large areas of Monmouthshire which are rural and as such these areas would not be expected to have any significant development.

⁵ Development Plans Manual, Edition 3, WG March 2020

- Provide the **planning policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 additional jobs**. This level of job growth aligns with the projected population and housing growth and takes account of adjustments to household membership rates for key younger age groups and a reduced level of commuting by retaining more of the resident workforce and growing our working age demographic. There has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer term and in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home is something that we wish to encourage and enable. This provides residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving this level of job growth, whilst also achieving the Welsh Government and Council's aim of reducing the need for commuting. This approach will help to reduce congestion, emissions and pollution, improve the work-life balance for employees and employers, support local businesses/services and enable the creation of sustainable vibrant communities and '20 minute neighbourhoods'⁶.
- Address economic growth and resilience within the County through the **provision of a sufficient range and choice of employment land**. To enable this a minimum of 43ha of employment land will be allocated to support the provision of industrial and business development (classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987), the location of which will be determined in the Deposit Plan. Other key employment sectors including retail, tourism and agriculture will also be an integral part of the County's economy and supported through the policy framework in the Deposit Plan. This approach reflects the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Ambition Statement and Investment Prospectus.
- Distribute growth proportionately across the County's most sustainable settlements. Whilst housing and employment growth will be focused on the higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy, appropriate growth will also be channelled to the County's most sustainable rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and resilient communities throughout Monmouthshire.
- Collectively these measures will help us to fulfil our core objectives and create sustainable and resilient communities where an enhanced economically active aged population can both live and work in the County through supporting/enabling remote and home working and local jobs in a range of sectors. Fundamentally, the Strategy will address the Council's key climate change objectives and reflect national planning policy placemaking principles whereby commuting/the need to travel is reduced and residents can access and support services/businesses locally, thereby enabling sustainable and vibrant communities.

3.17 The Preferred Growth Strategy is based on a population-led scenario with added policy assumptions to address the County's key demographic and affordability issues. The policy assumptions adjust in-migration rates to reflect local trends over a five year period (2015-2020) to take account the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls, increase the household formation rates for three key younger age groups and reduce commuting ratio assumptions to reflect the Council's aim of addressing the unbalanced demographic in the County by retaining younger age groups and reducing out-commuting. This aligns with the Welsh Government ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from home or near home, and the Welsh Government's transport

⁶ 20 Minute Neighbourhoods are strong, well connected neighbourhoods where people live within a 20 minute walking distance of key everyday services. The RLDP supports a placemaking approach to future development and the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods.

policy hierarchy which seeks to reduce the need to travel in the first instance, followed by active travel, then public transport, then the private car.

- 3.18 The Strategy also incorporates an affordable housing policy-led element which aims to meet 10% of the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) need arising from this growth strategy on housing sites which deliver 50% affordable housing. This is considered to represent an appropriate starting point as it is widely accepted that the affordable housing need identified in the LHMA is beyond the scope of the development plan process to deliver in isolation. The resultant housing requirement addresses the RLDP issues/objectives while also performing well against the ISA themes: a larger addition would result in an environmentally unsustainable level of growth. This element of the Strategy will deliver approximately 1,551 homes over the Plan period (divided equally between affordable and market homes, including 10% flexibility allowance). This approach will help to explicitly address the key housing affordability issue in the County (RLDP Objectives 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13) and is consistent with Policy 7 of Future Wales 2040 (Welsh Government, February 2021) which requires local planning authorities to identify sites for affordable housing-led developments in response to local needs. Further detail on this scenario is set out in the Edge Analytics Report - Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence Report (November 2020) and the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021).
- 3.19 The Preferred Strategy promotes sustainable economic growth that will help reduce levels of commuting and promote self-contained communities, ensuring the environmental and economic sustainability of our communities. This will be achieved by providing policy support to enable and facilitate the increased propensity for home/remote working, enabling economic growth through supporting the delivery of the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Growth and Ambition Statement and Investment Prospectus, maximising opportunities from the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, targeting growth in key economic sectors and providing appropriate employment land in the right locations. Further information on employment land provision is set out in Strategic Policy S13 of the Preferred Strategy.
- 3.20 Housing and employment growth will be focused on the higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy⁷. This approach reflects the overarching principles of Future Wales 2040 by guiding growth towards building sustainable places that support placemaking principles but applied within a Monmouthshire setting to reflect the predominantly rural context. In this respect, the dominant role of the County towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow, Monmouth and Severnside Area focused around the town of Caldicot, provide the focus of urban growth within a Monmouthshire context. This will be supported by an appropriate level of growth in the smaller settlements and a number of rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and vibrant rural communities consistent with the aims of Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities of Future Wales 2040. Policy S2 of the Preferred Strategy sets out an indicative spatial distribution of housing growth:
- Primary Settlements (Abergavenny, including Llanfoist; Chepstow; and Monmouth, including Wyesham) will account for approximately 58% of total housing growth.
 - Severnside Settlements (Caldicot, Caerwent, Crick, Magor/Undy, Portskewett, Rogiet and Sudbrook) will account for approximately 28% of total housing growth.
 - Secondary Settlements (Penperlleni, Raglan and Usk) will account for approximately 5% of total housing growth.

⁷ Sustainable Settlement Appraisal, June 2021

- Appropriate growth will also be channelled to the County's most sustainable rural settlements (9%) to facilitate the creation of sustainable and resilient communities throughout Monmouthshire. Further refinement of the Main Rural and Minor Rural Settlements will take place for the Deposit Plan to establish which of these settlements are appropriate to accommodate a proportionate amount of growth to meet local needs and support sustainable rural communities.

3.21 Table 1 summarises the indicative spatial distribution of housing provision over the Plan period by the various components of housing supply.

Table 1: Summary of Indicative Spatial Distribution of Housing Provision*

Settlement	Total Commitments		Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy		Total Housing Provision 2018-2033*
	Completions 2018-2021	Existing Commitments; LDP Rollover Allocations	Total Allowances (Small Sites; Windfalls)	RLDP New Housing Allocations (Dwellings)	
Abergavenny (incl. Llanfoist)	362	207	437	887	1,893
Chepstow	96	484	212	729	1,521
Monmouth (incl. Wyesham)	261	226	182	749	1,418
Severnside	300	886	283	854	2,323
Secondary Settlements	87	45	68	249	449
Rural Settlements	112	94	366	190	762
Total	1218	1942	1,548	3,658	8,366

*Figures include an indicative 10% flexibility allowance which will be subject to further consideration and refinement at Deposit Plan stage. The spatial distribution figures should be treated as indicative as they may alter following the consideration of sites submitted as part of the second Call for Candidate Sites and detailed site assessment work.

3.22 To encourage the promotion of sustainable communities where residents can live and work in the same area, housing growth will be accompanied by a commensurate amount of employment land. The proportion of employment growth to be accommodated in the settlement tiers will be set out in the Deposit RLDP. The submission of additional candidate sites for employment uses, aligned with our Growth and Ambition Strategy and Investment Prospectus, is sought during the second Call for Candidate Sites. It is, however, recognised that there has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer term in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home. This provides residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving the level of job growth, whilst also achieving a key RLDP objective of reducing the need to commute and thereby supporting our climate change objectives.

3.23 The exact distribution of growth will be determined following the second Call for Candidate Sites and subsequent site assessments which will inform the Deposit RLDP. Any decisions on whether or not to allocate particular sites for development in the settlements will also depend on such issues as their impact on the physical form of the settlement, placemaking, carbon footprint, landscape setting, environmental constraints and infrastructure capacity.

3.24 Detailed site allocations will be set out in the Deposit RLDP. However, the Preferred Strategy identifies potential strategic growth areas for each of the Primary Settlements

and the Severnside area. The identified site options (Strategic Policy S8 refers) are considered to have the potential to underpin the Spatial Strategy by accommodating growth and focusing development within those settlements and areas which are identified as the most sustainable locations. Not all sites submitted within each settlement will be selected for inclusion in the Deposit Plan, as the combined capacity of those submitted during the first call for sites far exceeds the number of dwellings needed to meet the residual housing provision. The final selection of sites for the Deposit Plan will be dependent on further detailed assessment work.

- 3.25 The Preferred Strategy also contains a number of Strategic Policies which form the framework for implementing and delivering the Strategy. These are summarised below and detailed in Sections 4 and 5 of the Preferred Strategy.

Preferred Strategy - Strategic Policies:

- S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth
- S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy
- S3 – Sustainable Placemaking & High Quality Design
- S4 – Climate Change
- S5 – Infrastructure Provision
- S6 – Delivery of Homes
- S7 – Affordable Homes
- S8 – Strategic Development Sites
- S9 – Gypsy and Travellers
- S10 – Sustainable Transport
- S11 – Retail & Commercial Centres Hierarchy
- S12 – Community and Recreation Facilities
- S13 – Employment Sites Provision
- S14 – Rural Enterprise
- S15 – Visitor Economy
- S16 – Sustainable Waste Management
- S17 – Minerals
- S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation

Supporting Documents

- 3.26 The Preferred Strategy has been subject to an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Well-being of Future Generations Assessment (WBFGA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) to assess the extent to which the emerging proposals and policies will help to achieve the wider environmental, economic, social and cultural objectives of the RLDP. The Initial ISA of the Preferred Strategy is published alongside the Preferred Strategy. The Strategy has also been screened under the Habitats Regulations Assessment; the HRA Report is also published alongside the Preferred Strategy. The Integrated Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment are iterative processes and will be updated as the RLDP preparation progresses.
- 3.27 The RLDP will be accompanied by an Infrastructure Plan, setting out what is needed to support the development of the allocated sites, and will sit alongside an updated Local Transport Plan and an Economic Ambition Strategy. Together, these Plans will seek to deliver on the Council's economic ambition and its core purpose to help build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Deposit Plan will also designate land for protection and identify

search areas for renewable energy and will be accompanied by a Green Wedge Review and Renewable Energy Assessment.

- 3.28 A number of additional supporting background documents have been prepared to inform the Preferred Strategy; these are listed in Appendix 1 of the Preferred Strategy and are available to view on the Planning Policy pages of the Council's website. These documents contain a significant amount of robust data/information and should be read alongside the Preferred Strategy.

Consultation, Engagement and Stakeholder Involvement

- 3.29 Regulation 15 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended 2015)) requires the Council to publish its pre-Deposit Plan proposals (Preferred Strategy) for public consultation prior to determining the content of its Deposit Plan. The Preferred Strategy was endorsed by Council on 24th June 2021 for statutory engagement and consultation for an eight-week period between Monday 5th July and Tuesday 31st August 2021, whereby comments are invited on the consultation questions set out in the Preferred Strategy. Where possible, the consultation will be carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in the Delivery Agreement's Community Involvement Scheme (Second Revision, October 2020). However, regard will be given to any Covid-19 restrictions in place, meaning that procedures may be subject to change. Engagement/consultation will take place via:

- Notifying all parties on the RLDP database of the consultation;
- Planning Policy Officer attendance at Area Cluster meetings (if held) during July-August 2021;
- Members' Workshop 22nd June 2021 (hosted by the Economy & Development Select Committee);
- Scrutiny by Economy & Development Select Committee 15th July 2021;
- Internal discussions within the Council through an officer workshop, Department Management Team and Senior Leadership Team;
- Several RLDP Preferred Strategy Drop-in Sessions during July-August 2021. Full details of venues and dates will be available on the Council's Current Consultations page of the website. Should there be a further lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these drop-in sessions will be replaced by additional virtual events;
- Two Webinar Sessions during July 2021;
- We will seek to engage with seldom heard groups in particular young people, via the Youth Council and going into secondary schools, and Gypsy and Travellers via the GTAA work and reiterating the opportunity to promote sites during the Second Call for Candidate Sites.

- 3.30 A **Second Call for Candidate sites**, seeking the submission of new sites that accord with the Preferred Strategy and supporting information (viability and deliverability) for existing (previously submitted) Candidate Sites that accord with the Preferred Strategy, commenced alongside the consultation on the Preferred Strategy. This Second Call for Candidate Sites will run for eight weeks from Monday 5th July – Tuesday 31st August 2021.

Next Steps

- 3.31 Following the stakeholder involvement, engagement and consultation on the Preferred Strategy, responses will be collated and carefully considered. A consultation report will be prepared and published containing details of the representations and the Council's response to them. This consultation report and the Preferred Strategy with any necessary amendments will be reported to Council in approximately November

2021 to seek approval of the Preferred Strategy. The Deposit Plan will then be prepared and considered by Council prior to a statutory six-week consultation and engagement period in Summer 2022.

RLDP and Phosphates

- 3.32 As a result of recent evidence regarding the environmental impacts of phosphate in watercourses, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) have adopted tighter targets for the water quality of watercourses and have conducted an assessment of the 9 riverine Special Areas of Conservation in Wales. This assessment has established that phosphorus breaches are widespread within Welsh SAC rivers with over 60% of waterbodies failing against the challenging targets set.
- 3.33 Within Monmouthshire it was identified that within the River Usk, 88% of the river's water bodies failed to meet the required target and within the River Wye, 67% failed to meet the required target. As a result of this failure, NRW has issued detailed planning guidance to ensure that the environmental capacity of the rivers does not deteriorate any further. Any proposed development within the catchment areas of the rivers that might increase phosphate levels need to clearly evidence that the development can demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body. In most cases there will be limited capacity to connect to the public sewerage system and an alternative solution will have to be found. This requirement on drainage considerations will impact on all development that increases the volume or concentration of wastewater.
- 3.34 This recent announcement of phosphate water quality issues in the Usk and Wye Riverine SACs, has implications for the progression of the RLDP as our Preferred Strategy directs future growth to a number of key sustainable settlements within these affected catchment areas over the Plan period (2018-2033). Consideration has, therefore, been given as to how we progress with the preparation of the RLDP in light of this issue. The following three realistic options have been assessed:
1. Progress preparation of the RLDP with the Preferred Strategy with proportionate distribution of growth across the County's most sustainable settlements, in the anticipation that solutions to the phosphate issue can be identified and agreed by Deposit Plan stage.
 2. Halt/pause RLDP preparation until there is certainty that the phosphate issue can be resolved i.e. solutions determined/agreed with NRW and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW).
 3. Withdraw the RLDP and commence a new RLDP with a revised Plan period on the basis that this would provide a longer Plan period giving us more time to address the phosphate issue.
- 3.35 A Risk Assessment and Options Appraisal of the three options considered (attached at **Appendix 5**) has been undertaken which considers the impact of each option on:
- Plan preparation - resources, work programme, expenditure
 - Addressing the RLDP Issues/Challenges/Objectives
 - Deliverability of the RLDP (including growth levels, market and affordable housing delivery, economic prosperity/recovery).
- 3.36 An option appraisal concludes that Option 1, to progress the preparation of the RLDP with Preferred Strategy which proposes proportionate growth across the County's most sustainable settlements including a number of settlements in the affected Wye and Usk catchment areas, is considered to be the most appropriate option. Good progress is being made, and it is anticipated that solutions to the phosphate issue can be determined and agreed by the Deposit Plan stage meaning that the Plan can be progressed and delivered in accordance with the Delivery Agreement (Second Revision, October 2020). Progressing the RLDP would reduce the risks associated

with a policy gap and ensure the key demographic and affordability challenges facing the County, which have been exacerbated in light of the current pandemic, are addressed in a timely manner. Whilst all three options carry risks, the risks associated with Option 1 are considered to have less of an impact than Options 2 and 3, particularly in terms of addressing the RLDP issues, challenges and objectives and deliverability of the Plan. The Council is committed to seeking solutions to the phosphate issue by Deposit Plan stage and is in proactive discussions with key organisations, including NRW, WG, DCWW and the development industry, to seek viable and timely solutions in the affected settlements. Progress to date suggests that effective solutions, which are likely to involve both nature-based solutions and infrastructure upgrades to key treatment works, will be identified/secured by the time we reach Deposit stage. This situation will be kept under constant review as we progress with Plan preparation.

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

- 4.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) sets out the requirement for all LDPs to be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). All stages of the RLDP will be subject to an Integrated Sustainability Assessment (ISA) (including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Well-being of Future Generations (WBFG), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), and Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA)). The ISA findings have informed the development of the RLDP strategy and strategic policies, and will be used to inform detailed policies and site allocations in the Deposit Plan, in order to ensure that the Plan will promote sustainable development. The Initial ISAR is published alongside the Preferred Strategy.
- 4.2 An Equality and Future Generations Evaluation (including equalities and sustainability impact assessment) is attached to this report at **Appendix 6**.

Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting

- 4.3 There are no safeguarding or corporate parenting implications arising directly from this report. The RLDP has the potential to provide affordable housing, delivery and allocation of which should be cognisant of the needs of children leaving care.

Socio-economic Duty

- 4.4 The RLDP seeks to tackle house price unaffordability, which currently prevents some of our communities accessing suitable housing within the County. This is likely to benefit younger people in particular, which in turn will make our ageing communities more socially sustainable. Good quality and affordable housing is important in achieving poverty reduction and equitable prosperity, and supporting the best start in life. Good spatial planning helps to build cohesive communities. The provision of affordable housing combined with policy interventions in relation to the requirement of a mix of market housing will increase opportunities for those in poverty to access safe, secure and suitable housing. In accordance with the WBFGA, the RLDP also seeks to prevent future problems and will therefore continue to avoid new development in flood risk areas and will seek low/zero carbon development to help address the climate emergency and also tackle issues such as fuel poverty.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Preferred Strategy

Option	Benefit	Risk	Comment
Economy and Development Select Committee consider and comment, as appropriate, on the RLDP Preferred Strategy.	This provides the Economy and Development Select Committee with the opportunity to scrutinise the Preferred Strategy and comment accordingly. Any feedback received will be noted and carefully considered as part of the Preferred Strategy consultation process.		This is the preferred option. The Preferred Strategy, as drafted, is considered to promote an appropriate level and spatial distribution of housing and employment growth for the County to 2033, which assists in addressing the demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and seeks to deliver the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations.
Economy and Development Select Committee do not comment on the RLDP Preferred Strategy.		The option of not commenting on the Preferred Strategy would result in the Economy and Development Select Committee missing a key opportunity to shape the RLDP.	The option of not commenting on the Preferred Strategy would result in the Economy and Development Select Committee missing a key opportunity to help shape the RLDP and should, therefore, be discounted.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Officer and consultant time and costs associated with the preparation of the Preferred Strategy and carrying out the required consultation exercises. Any costs will be met from the Planning Policy budget.
- 6.2 Delivery of the RLDP, once adopted, will need to be accompanied by a range of infrastructure provision including transport, education, health care, leisure and affordable housing. The infrastructure requirements will be identified in the Infrastructure Plan and Local Transport Plan accompanying the RLDP. Although it is expected that most of this infrastructure would be funded via S106 planning contributions (or possibly a Community Infrastructure Levy), there may be a requirement for Council expenditure to assist in providing some infrastructure or in bringing some sites forwards. This might include the use of Compulsory Purchase

Orders and/or potential commercial investment to provide 'shovel ready' sites or business premises. There may also be grant funding available.

- 6.3 The Preferred Strategy includes the allocation of land for approximately 1,551 homes (including 10% flexibility) on affordable housing-led sites with 50% affordable housing and 50% market housing. The Minister's letter of July 2019 (**Appendix 7**) invites the inclusion of affordable housing-led sites in LDPs, with at least 50% affordable housing and, in the first instance, making use of public land. This approach is consistent with Policy 7 of Future Wales 2040 (Welsh Government, February 2021) which requires local planning authorities to identify sites for affordable housing-led developments in response to local needs. This approach complies with Policy 7 of Future Wales 2040. Although sites have not yet been allocated at this Preferred Strategy stage, land within Strategic Growth Option zone J to the north-east of Caldicot includes Council-owned land and could form such a site. Allocation of land as a 50% affordable housing site will impact on land values, and if such a site were allocated on Council land, there would likely be an impact on capital receipt or commercial return.

7. **CONSULTEES**

- Enterprise DMT
- SLT
- Member workshop 22 June 2021
- Council 24 June 2021

8. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- RLDP Preferred Strategy (June 2021)
- Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Report (AECOM, June 2021)
- HRA of the Monmouthshire RLDP Preferred Strategy (AECOM, June 2021)
- RLDP Delivery Agreement (Second Revision, October 2021)
- Sustainable Settlements Appraisal (June 2021)
- Growth and Spatial Options Report of Consultation (June 2021)
- Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021)
- Housing Background Paper (June 2021)
- Review of Candidate Sites against the Preferred Strategy (June 2021)
- Monmouthshire Employment Land Review (BE Group, June 2021)
- Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021)
- Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020)
- Monmouthshire RLDP Updated Demographic Evidence Report (Edge Analytics, November 2020)
- Monmouthshire Affordable Housing Report (Edge Analytics, November 2020)
- Review of RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in Light of Covid-19 (September 2020)
- Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement (November 2019) and supporting MCC Economies of the Future Reports (2018)
- Candidate Sites Register (February 2019)
- Local Housing Market Assessment (September 2018)
- LDP Annual Monitoring Reports (2014-2020)

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APPENDICES:

APPENDIX 1: Preferred Strategy

APPENDIX 2: Preferred Strategy Executive Summary

APPENDIX 3: Preferred Strategy Easy Read Summary

APPENDIX 4: Self-Assessment of the Preferred Strategy against the Tests of Soundness

APPENDIX 5: Risk Analysis and Options Appraisal of the Implications of Phosphates on the RLDP

APPENDIX 6: Future Generations Evaluation

APPENDIX 7: Letter from Minister for Housing and Local Government 8th July 2019

APPENDIX 1

**Monmouthshire
Replacement Local Development
Plan**

PREFERRED STRATEGY

June 2021



monmouthshire
sir fynwy



Monmouthshire County Council
Replacement Local Development Plan

Preferred Strategy

June 2021

Planning Policy Service

Monmouthshire County Council

County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk, Monmouthshire NP15 1GA

Tel: 01633 644429

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Executive Summary

Replacement Local Development Plan

- i. The Council is preparing a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) for Monmouthshire (excluding the part of the County that is within the Brecon Beacons National Park). The RLDP will identify where and how much new development will take place during the 'Plan period' (2018-2033). It will allocate land for development, identify areas to be protected, and contain policies to guide decisions on applications for planning permission. We aim to adopt the RLDP in autumn/winter 2023.
- ii. The Council has now reached the Preferred Strategy stage of the development plan process. This is the first of the statutory consultation stages in the RLDP process. However, a number of earlier pre-deposit plan preparation stages have been undertaken which have informed the Preferred Strategy. The first stage involved the preparation of an Issues, Vision & Objectives Paper. This was first published in January 2019 and amended in June 2019 to reflect the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in May 2019. A review of the Issues, Vision and Objectives was also undertaken in June 2020 in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and incorporated into the Review of RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in light of Covid-19 during September 2020. This concluded that the Plan's Issues, Vision and Objectives remain relevant to Monmouthshire with a number of issues and objectives now considered to have increased emphasis and importance consistent with the priorities identified in the Welsh Government Building Better Places Covid-19 recovery document published in July 2020. The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper has been updated to reflect the vision for the Preferred Strategy and issues that have emerged since the original version.
- iii. The Plan had progressed to the Preferred Strategy stage of the RLDP process in March 2020. Non-statutory consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options took place between July and August 2019 and statutory consultation on the RLDP Preferred Strategy and the Second Call for Candidate Sites commenced during March 2020. Progress on the RLDP was subsequently paused in March 2020 because the Covid-19 pandemic meant the Preferred Strategy public engagement events could not continue in the format prescribed in the Delivery Agreement. Following advice from the Minister for Housing and Local Government¹, the decision was subsequently made to cease the Preferred Strategy consultation and second call for candidate sites on 20th July 2020. This enabled the Council to undertake a review of the RLDP issues, vision, objectives and evidence base² in terms of sensitivity to the consequences the Coronavirus pandemic before progressing with Plan preparation. This review was agreed by Council in October 2020.
- iv. In August 2020 the Welsh Government published a correction to the 2018-based population and household projections, which comprise important new evidence that require consideration and form the starting point of the Plan's evidence base. This

¹ Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid19, 7th July 2020

² Monmouthshire RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in Light of Covid-19 (September 2020)

resulted in the need to revisit the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the RLDP process. The Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020) was prepared and subject to non-statutory consultation for a 4-week period in January and February 2021. The outcome of which has informed and helped shape the Preferred Strategy (June 2021).

What is the Preferred Strategy?

- v. The Preferred Strategy is the first statutory stage in the RLDP preparation process. It provides the strategic direction for the development and use of land over the period 2018-2033. The overall purpose of the Preferred Strategy is to:
- Identify key issues, challenges and opportunities for the County.
 - Develop a vision and set of objectives for the RLDP that respond to the key issues, challenges and opportunities.
 - Set out the Preferred Strategy including the scale of future growth in population, housing and jobs and establish the spatial distribution of growth.
 - Set out strategic policies that will deliver/implement the strategy.

Preferred Strategy – Sustainable & Resilient Communities Strategy

- vi. The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy promotes and supports a level of housing and employment growth that will be distributed proportionately³ across Monmouthshire up to 2033. The Strategy assists in addressing the demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and ultimately seeks to deliver the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Strategy conforms with Policy 1 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (hereafter referred to as Future Wales 2040) which is the highest tier statutory development plan (Welsh Government, February 2021) and supports sustainable growth in all parts of Wales that seeks to address local aspirations and need. The Strategy also meets a key 'Test of Soundness' of ensuring that the Plan's vision and strategy are positive and sufficiently aspirational. A Self-Assessment of the Preferred Strategy against the Tests of Soundness is published alongside this document, which includes an assessment of the Strategy's general conformity with Future Wales 2040. This demonstrates that the Preferred Strategy and the stages undertaken and processes followed to reach this stage are 'sound' and that the Strategy assists in the delivery of the Future Wales policies and is in general conformity with its overarching strategy.

³ Proportionately' is deemed to mean that the level of growth directed toward a settlement will be proportionate to its population size. To calculate the proportion of development to be directed toward a settlement only the population of those settlements included in the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal has been used to contribute to the total population figure for the County. This takes into account the large areas of Monmouthshire which are rural and as such these areas would not be expected to have any significant development

vii. A summary of the key points of the Strategy is set out in Box 1.

Box 1: Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy

In order to deliver the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy the RLDP will:

- Make provision for a total of **8,366 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,605 homes** (this provision is based indicatively on a 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This level of housing growth will enable the provision of market and affordable housing in both urban and rural areas and, importantly, provides the opportunity to address the unbalanced demography, improve labour force retention by retaining/attracting younger adult population age groups and assists in addressing the County's housing affordability challenge. Taking account of the existing housing land supply and projected windfall delivery, the RLDP will need to **allocate sufficient land to accommodate 3,658 homes**.
- Provide the **planning policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 additional jobs**. This level of job growth aligns with the projected population and housing growth and takes account of adjustments to household membership rates for key younger age groups and a reduced level of commuting by retaining more of the resident workforce and growing our working age demographic. There has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer term and in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home is something that we wish to encourage and enable. This provides residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving this level of job growth, whilst also achieving the Welsh Government and Council's aim of reducing the need for commuting. This approach will help to reduce congestion, emissions and pollution, improve the work-life balance for employees and employers, support local businesses/services and enable the creation of sustainable vibrant communities and '20 minute neighbourhoods'⁴.
- Address economic growth and resilience within the County through the **provision of a sufficient range and choice of employment land**. To enable this a minimum of 43ha of employment land will be allocated to support the provision of industrial and business development (classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987), the location of which will be determined in the Deposit Plan. Other key employment sectors including retail, tourism and agriculture will also be an integral part of the County's economy and supported through the policy framework in

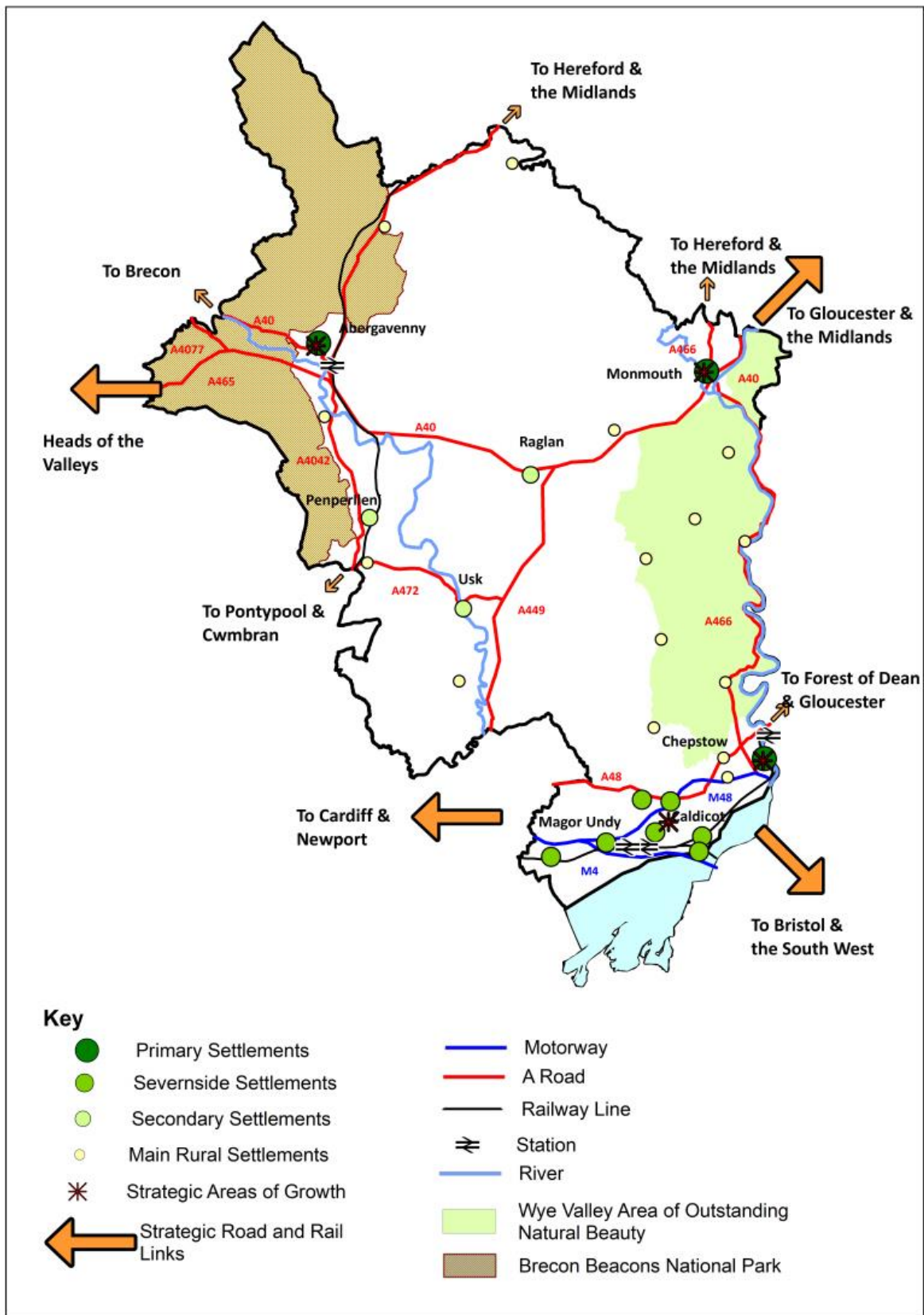
⁴ 20 Minute Neighbourhoods are strong, well connected neighbourhoods where people live within a 20 minute walking distance of key everyday services. The RLDP supports a placemaking approach to future development and the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods.

the Deposit Plan. This approach reflects the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Ambition Statement and Investment Prospectus.

- Distribute growth proportionately across the County's most sustainable settlements. Whilst housing and employment growth will be focused on the higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy, appropriate growth will also be channelled to the County's most sustainable rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and resilient communities throughout Monmouthshire.

Collectively these measures will help us to fulfil our core objectives and create sustainable and resilient communities where an enhanced economically active aged population can both live and work in the County through supporting/enabling remote and home working and local jobs in a range of sectors. Fundamentally, the Strategy will address the Council's key climate change objectives and reflect national planning policy placemaking principles whereby commuting/the need to travel is reduced and residents can access and support services/businesses locally, thereby enabling sustainable and vibrant communities.

Preferred Strategy Key Diagram



Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy

- viii. The Preferred Growth Strategy makes provision for a total of 8,366 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,605 homes over the Plan period 2018-2033 (this provision is based indicatively on a 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This results in a growth of the County's population of 12,443 (13.2%) and households of 7,255 (18.1%) over the Plan period.
- ix. The Growth Strategy is based on a population-led scenario with added policy assumptions to address the County's key demographic and affordability issues. The policy assumptions adjust in-migration rates to reflect local trends over a five-year period (2015-2020) to take account the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls, increase the household formation rates for three key younger age groups and reduce commuting ratio assumptions to reflect the Council's aim of addressing the unbalanced demographic in the County by retaining younger age groups and reducing out-commuting. The latter aligns with Welsh Government's long-term ambition of 30% of Welsh workers working from home or near home and the Welsh Government's transport policy hierarchy which seeks to reduce the need to travel in the first instance, followed by active travel, then public transport, then the private car. The strategy also incorporates an affordable housing policy-led element which aims to meet 10% of the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) need arising from this option on housing sites which deliver 50% affordable housing. Further detail on this scenario is set out in the Edge Analytics Report - Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence Report, November 2020 - and the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021).

Delivering the Residential Growth

- x. The overall housing provision figure of 8,366 homes (including an indicative 10% flexibility allowance) will be delivered through a number of housing supply streams. These include existing commitments that have planning permission, Adopted LDP Rollover sites, and an allowance for windfall and infill sites such as barn conversions and development sites that emerge throughout the life of the Plan. Combined these account for 4,708 homes. The remaining 3,658 homes will be delivered on new allocations to be identified in the Deposit RLDP.

Economic Growth

- xi. The RLDP is underpinned by a level of growth that seeks to address the issues currently impacting on economic growth such as a shrinking working age population and high levels of out-commuting. The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy provides the policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 additional jobs over the Plan period (481 jobs per annum). It should be noted that not all of these jobs will be in planning B-class uses⁵ and will be delivered through a range of sectors such as tourism, leisure and retail. This will be achieved by enabling economic growth through supporting the delivery of the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic

⁵ B-class uses refer to industries such as manufacturing, offices and warehousing.

Growth and Ambition Statement, maximising opportunities from CCR City Deal, targeting growth in key economic sectors and providing appropriate employment land in the right locations.

- xii. Whilst the Strategy projects a significant growth in jobs over the Plan period, it is becoming widely accepted that the fundamental shift in working practices experienced as a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic, with a significant increase in people working from home/remotely, has made it less important where some jobs are located as employees no longer need to commute for work in many cases. This has provided the opportunity for many people to live and work in the same location via a new remote working approach.
- xiii. The Preferred Strategy aims to build on this shift and the benefits that have occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic, as recognised in Welsh Government’s Building Better Places response to Covid-19. This acknowledges that even when all restrictions are lifted, the impacts on people working from home are likely to have longer term impacts on where and how we work. In this respect, these changes have opened up new opportunities for jobs to be secured through the increased propensity to work from home/remotely, including via community-based remote working hubs. It is expected that the trend for increased home and remote working will continue over the longer term in accordance with Welsh Government’s ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home. While it will not be possible for all employment sectors to work from home/work remotely, policy support requiring broadband connectivity and supporting the provision of local remote/agile community-based working hubs will enable those who can and choose to do so.

Sustainable and Resilient Communities Spatial Strategy

- xiv. The Preferred Spatial Strategy seeks to distribute development across the County in a proportionate manner that reflects and address the aims of the overarching Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy. The level of residential growth will be proportionate to a settlement’s size and amenities and will reflect affordable housing need as identified in the LHMA in both urban and rural areas. The Spatial Strategy seeks to focus new development on the primary settlements of Abergavenny (including Llanfoist), Monmouth (including Wyesham) and Chepstow and the Severnside area, together with a proportionate amount of growth to the lower tier settlements to support sustainable rural communities. The exact distribution of development will follow in the Deposit RLDP following the second call for candidate sites and subsequent site assessments.
- xv. The spatial framework for distributing growth in the County has regard to the overarching principles of Future Wales 2040 by guiding growth towards building sustainable places that support placemaking principles but applied within a Monmouthshire setting to reflect the predominantly rural context. In this respect, the

dominant role of the County towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth and the Severnside Area focused on the town of Caldicot, provide the focus of urban growth within a Monmouthshire context. This will be supported by an appropriate level of growth in the smaller settlements and a number of rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and vibrant rural communities consistent with the aims of Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities of Future Wales 2040 (February 2021).

- xvi. The Strategy also has regard to Policy 34 of Future Wales 2040 which requires the South East Wales Strategic Development Plan to identify a Green Belt to the north of Cardiff, Newport and the eastern part of the region to manage urban form and growth.

Economic Growth – Land Requirement & Spatial Distribution

- xvii. The Council has commissioned the preparation of an Employment Land Review (ELR). This involves undertaking a review of employment forecasts and land requirements for the Plan period 2018 – 2033. The study recommends that a forecast scenario based on past employment land take-up rates is adopted for the RLDP. This provides a minimum requirement of 43ha of land for traditional B use class industries such as manufacturing and warehousing, including a five-year buffer to allow for choice and uncertainty in forecasting.
- xviii. Employment growth will be directed to sustainable locations across the County, which will assist in reducing the need to travel and levels of out-commuting and promoting self-contained communities which are also key objectives of the RLDP. As above, it is, however, recognised that in light of Covid-19 there has been a fundamental shift in working patterns with an increase in home and remote working, which is likely to continue over the longer term and further reduce commuting levels over the Plan period. The spatial distribution of employment allocations will be set out in the Deposit RLDP and will be consistent with the spatial strategy and commensurate to the level of housing growth proposed for an area.
- xix. Details of employment land allocations and existing protected sites will be provided in the Deposit RLDP, along with criteria setting out the exceptional circumstances in which the loss of existing industrial and business sites or premises will be considered acceptable. The Plan will also include policies that allow for the assessment of non-B use class industries such as leisure, retail and tourism to facilitate job growth in these key economic sectors.

Strategic Policies

- xx. The main document also contains several Strategic Policies which form the framework for implementing and delivering the Preferred Strategy of the RLDP. A list of policies contained within the Preferred Strategy is set out below:

Preferred Strategy - Strategic Policies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth ▪ S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy ▪ S3 – Sustainable Placemaking & High Quality Design ▪ S4 – Climate Change ▪ S5 – Infrastructure Provision ▪ S6 – Delivery of Homes ▪ S7 – Affordable Homes ▪ S8 – Strategic Development Sites ▪ S9 – Gypsy and Travellers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ S10 – Sustainable Transport ▪ S11 – Retail & Commercial Centres Hierarchy ▪ S12 – Community and Recreation Facilities ▪ S13 – Employment Sites Provision ▪ S14 – Rural Enterprise ▪ S15 – Visitor Economy ▪ S16 – Sustainable Waste Management ▪ S17 – Minerals ▪ S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation

Supporting Documents

- xxi. The RLDP is accompanied by an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), which considers the environmental, equalities, health and well-being impacts of the Plan, and a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The ISA and HRA are working documents, updated as the RLDP progresses. The RLDP will also be accompanied by an Infrastructure Plan, setting out what infrastructure is needed to support the development of the allocated sites, and an updated Local Transport Plan and Economic Strategy. Together, these Plans will seek to deliver on the Council's economic ambition and its core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Deposit Plan will also designate land for protection and identify search areas for renewable energy and will be accompanied by a Green Wedge Review and Renewable Energy Assessment. There are also a range of technical Background Papers to provide additional detail on the evidence and methodologies used in developing the Preferred Strategy.

Consultation Arrangements

- xxii. Community and stakeholder involvement is invited during the six-week statutory engagement and consultation on the Preferred Strategy between **Monday 5th July and Tuesday 31st August 2021**, whereby comments will be invited on the consultation questions set out in the Preferred Strategy. Our consultation and engagement arrangements have been revised in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and reflect the Coronavirus Regulations (2020) and recent Ministerial advice⁶. We have reviewed the use of digital involvement options to provide communities with information and the

⁶ Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid19, 7th July 2020

ability to engage with the RLDP in a virtual manner. Further details are provided in the Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020). Engagement/consultation will take place via:

- Notifying all parties on the RLDP database of the consultation;
- Planning Policy Officer attendance at Area Cluster meetings during July and August 2021;
- A Members' Workshop in June 2021 (hosted by the Economy & Development Select Committee);
- Scrutiny by Economy & Development Select Committee in July 2021;
- Internal discussions within the Council through an officer workshop, Department Management Team and Senior Leadership Team;
- Two Virtual Engagement Events during July 2021
- Several RLDP Preferred Strategy Drop-in Sessions during July-August 2021. Should there be a further lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these drop-in sessions will be replaced by additional virtual events. Full details of venues and dates are available on the Council's Current Consultations page of the website.
- We will seek to engage with seldom heard groups in particular young people, via the Youth Council and going into secondary schools, and Gypsy and Travellers via the GTAA work and reiterating the opportunity to promote sites during the Second Call for Candidate Sites.

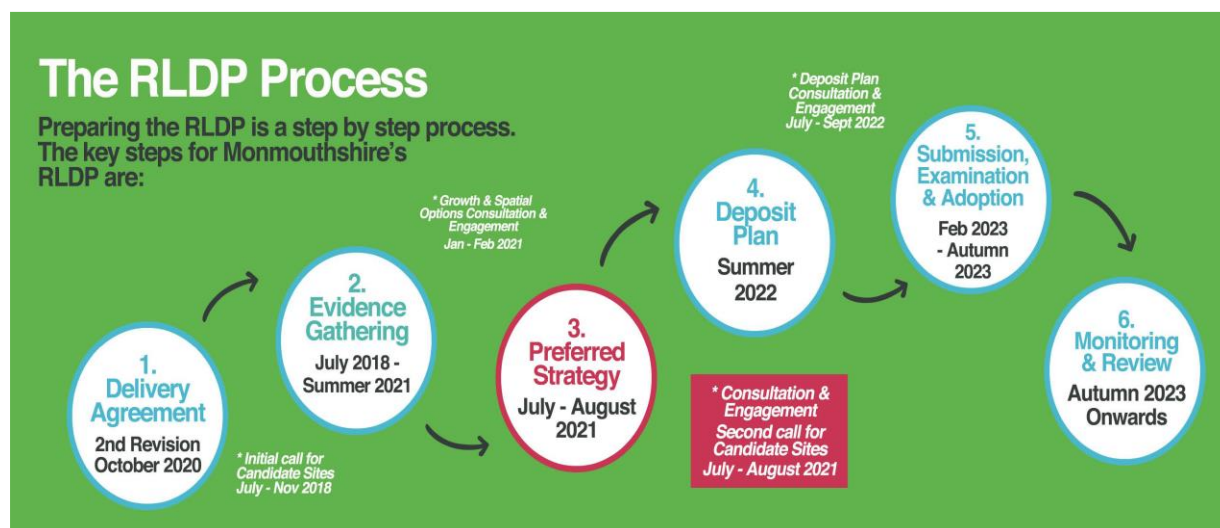
xxiii. The closing date for the submission of comments is midnight on **Tuesday 31st August 2021**. For details of how to respond to this consultation please see the Planning Policy Current Consultations page on the Council's website. Feedback from the consultation/engagement on the Preferred Strategy will be considered and set out in the Consultation Report on the Preferred Strategy. This consultation report and the Preferred Strategy with any necessary amendments will be reported to Council in approximately November 2021 to seek approval of the Preferred Strategy. The Deposit Plan will then be prepared and considered by Council prior to a statutory six-week consultation and engagement period in Summer 2022.

1 Introduction

Replacement Local Development Plan

- 1.1 Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) is in the process of preparing a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) for the County (excluding the area within the Brecon Beacons National Park). The RLDP will cover the period 2018-2033 and will be the statutory land use plan to support delivery of the Council's core purpose of helping to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The RLDP will set out land use development proposals for the County and will identify how much new development will take place and where this will go over the Replacement Plan period. It will also identify areas to be protected from development and provide policies against which future planning applications will be assessed. The RLDP will build upon the current Adopted LDP which covers the period 2011-2021⁷.
- 1.2 The RLDP is being prepared in accordance with the Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020) which sets out the timetable for plan preparation and the approach to community consultation and engagement. The Preferred Strategy is the first of the statutory consultation stages in the RLDP process. Figure 1 below provides a broad overview of the RLDP process.

Figure 1: Replacement Local Development Plan Process



⁷ Ministerial Letter (September 2020) clarified that the provisions in the Planning (Wales) Act 2014 relating to LDP expiry dates do not apply to LDPs adopted prior to that Act coming into force. This means that the Adopted LDP (February 2014) remains an extant development plan for decision-making purposes until the RLDP is adopted.

Structure of the Preferred Strategy

- 1.3 This Document is structured as follows:

Executive Summary

Section 1: Introduction – Provides a summary of the RLDP process and progress to date, outlines what the Preferred Strategy is/how this is prepared. It also sets out the consultation arrangements in relation to the Preferred Strategy and the next key steps in the RLDP process.

Section 2: Context – Presents an overview/profile of the County outlining the key economic, social, environmental and cultural characteristics of Monmouthshire. It also sets out the legislative and policy context and key influences on the Plan.

Section 3: Key Issues, Challenges and Opportunities – Provides a summary of the key issues, challenges and opportunities within Monmouthshire.

Section 4: RLDP Strategic Framework – Outlines the RLDP Vision, Objectives, sets out the Preferred Growth and Spatial Option (i.e. the Preferred Strategy) and a key diagram.

Section 5: Implementation and Delivery – Sets out the Strategic Policies including Potential Strategic Growth Options.

Appendices – provide further detail in relation to supporting evidence to the Preferred Strategy, the RLDP Issues, Potential Strategic Growth Options and Development Management Policies.

Preferred Strategy Background

- 1.4 The RLDP is being prepared in accordance with the Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020). One of the first key stages of the RLDP process involved the preparation of the Issues, Vision and Objectives. The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper identifies the key issues, challenges and drivers facing the County and sets out the vision and objectives for the RLDP. This paper was subject to targeted engagement in January-February 2019. The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper was subsequently reviewed and amended in June 2019 to reflect relevant feedback from the targeted engagement process and the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in May 2019 and as part of the continued development of the RLDP evidence base.
- 1.5 Subsequent to the preparation of the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper we progressed with the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the RLDP process. A non-statutory consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options (June 2019) was undertaken for a four-week period between 8th July and 5th August 2019 and a statutory consultation on the RLDP Preferred Strategy (March 2020), together with the second call for candidate sites, commenced on the 9th of March 2020.

- 1.6 Progress on the RLDP was paused in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic which meant we could not continue with the public engagement events in the format prescribed in the Delivery Agreement. Following advice issued in a letter from the Minister for Housing and Local Government (7th July 2020), the decision was made to cease the RLDP Preferred Strategy consultation and second call for candidate sites on 20th July 2020. The letter requires Local Planning Authorities to undertake an assessment of the RLDP evidence base, strategy and policies in terms of sensitivity to the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic before progressing with Plan preparation.
- 1.7 A review of the RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives was undertaken in June 2020 and incorporated into the RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives (IVO) and Evidence Base (September 2020). This review demonstrated that the Plan's Issues, Vision and Objectives remain relevant to Monmouthshire. The review concluded that in light of Covid-19 a number of issues and objectives are now considered to have increased emphasis and importance, consistent with the priorities identified in the Welsh Government Building Better Places document published in July 2020.
- 1.8 At the time of the consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options in July/August 2019 the latest available projections were the WG 2014-based population and household projections. In August 2020, Welsh Government (WG) published corrected 2018-based population and household projections. These constitute a first update since the 2014-based population and household projections. National policy requires that updates to nationally published data, such as household and population projections should be taken into account in the plan preparation process (Development Plans Manual, March 2020, Para. 3.83). The latest WG population and household projections form the starting point for the Plan's evidence base on growth levels, onto which policy choices can be added to ensure that the issues are addressed, objectives met and vision achieved. The updated projections comprise important new evidence that requires consideration.
- 1.9 As a result of the unavoidable delays detailed above with regard to the Covid-19 pandemic, the review of the Issues, Vision, Objectives and Evidence Base, and the publication of updated key evidence the decision was made to revisit the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the RLDP. This has necessitated a further revision to the RLDP Delivery Agreement which was agreed by Welsh Government in October 2020.
- 1.10 To take account of the 2018-based population and household projections, a revised Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020) was prepared and subject to non-statutory consultation for a 4-week period in January and February 2021. This Paper sets out a number of alternative options for how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and broadly where this growth should take place, together with the

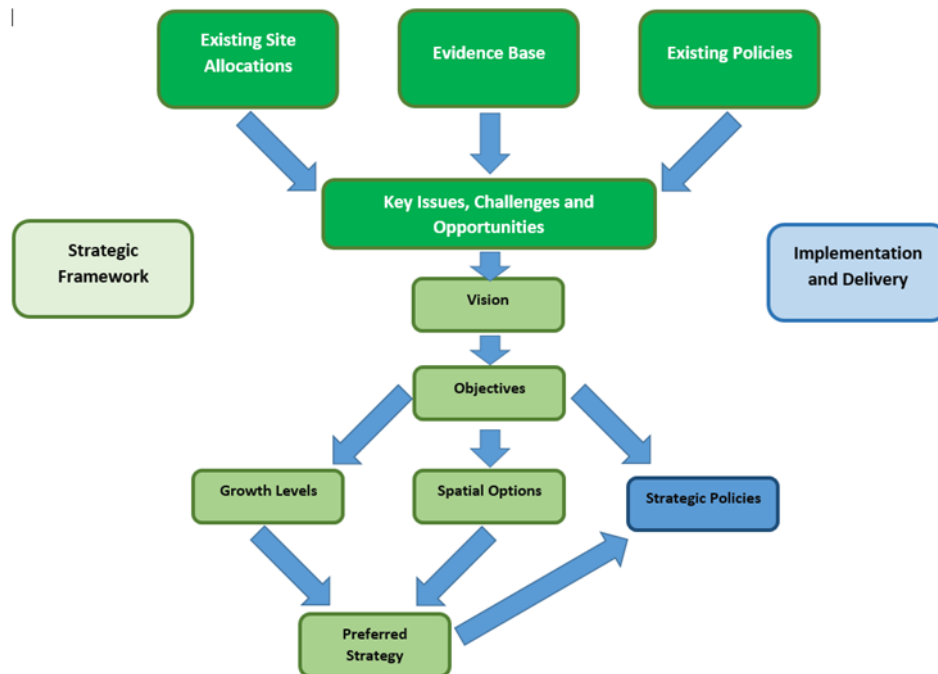
implications of each option and the extent to which they will achieve the RLDP objectives. The consultation responses to this Paper have been considered/reported in the Growth and Spatial Options Report of Consultation and helped to inform the Preferred Strategy. The Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper complements the Report of Consultation and adds further analysis of the options considered.

What is the Preferred Strategy?

- 1.11 Regulation 15 of the Local Development Plan Regulations⁸ requires the Council to publish its pre-Deposit Plan proposals (Preferred Strategy) for public consultation prior to determining the content of its Deposit Plan. The Preferred Strategy is the first statutory consultation stage in the RLDP preparation process. It provides the strategic direction for the development and use of land in Monmouthshire (excluding the area within the Brecon Beacons National Park) over the Plan period 2018 to 2033. It also identifies how much growth is needed and the broad locations of where this growth is likely to be. It represents the completion of a period of pre-Deposit Plan preparation and engagement (as referred to above), the outcome of which has had a clear influence over the selection of the Preferred Strategy.
- 1.12 The overall purpose of the Preferred Strategy is to:
- Identify key issues, challenges and opportunities for the County.
 - Develop a vision and set of objectives for the RLDP that respond to the key issues, challenges and opportunities.
 - Set out the Preferred Strategy including the scale of future growth in population, housing and jobs and establish the spatial distribution of growth.
 - Set out strategic policies that will deliver/implement the strategy.
- 1.13 Figure 2 overleaf provides a summary of the Preferred Strategy preparation process.

⁸ The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended 2015)

Figure 2: Preferred Strategy Preparation Process



1.14 The Preferred Strategy provides the strategic context for the preparation of more detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations that will seek to deliver on the Council’s vision of creating sustainable and resilient communities, which will be included in the Deposit RLDP. As evidenced in the Annual Monitoring Reports for the Adopted LDP, it is recognised that many of the Adopted LDP’s policies are functioning effectively and will require only minor changes to reflect contextual changes and updates to national policy.

1.15 The Preferred Strategy identifies the strategic growth level and broad spatial distribution of growth but does not identify any site-specific allocations /designations at this stage. This will be undertaken as part of the Deposit Plan preparation process once the Preferred Strategy has been agreed. Only those candidate sites that accord with the Preferred Strategy will be considered for inclusion in the Deposit Plan.

1.16 What is NOT included in the Preferred Strategy?

- Site allocation, designations and defined settlement boundaries – these will be identified in the Deposit Plan.
- Detailed Development Management policies – these will be included in the Deposit Plan.

- A detailed evaluation of candidate sites. The Preferred Strategy is accompanied by a background paper that identifies those candidate sites that broadly accord with the Strategy. In accordance with our Delivery Agreement, a second call for candidate sites will take place alongside consultation on the Preferred Strategy. A detailed assessment of all candidate sites will be published alongside the Deposit RLDP.

Supporting Documents

- 1.17 The Preferred Strategy has been subject to an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Well-being of Future Generations Assessment (WBFGA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) to assess the extent to which the emerging proposals and policies will help to achieve the wider environmental, economic, social and cultural objectives of the RLDP. The Preferred Strategy has also been subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment. The Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Report⁹ and Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Preferred Strategy¹⁰ are published alongside the Preferred Strategy. The Integrated Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment are iterative processes and will be updated as the RLDP preparation progresses.
- 1.18 The RLDP will also be accompanied by an Infrastructure Plan, setting out what is needed to support the development of the allocated sites, and will sit alongside an updated Local Transport Plan and an Economic Strategy. Together, these Plans will seek to deliver on the Council's economic ambition and its core purpose to help build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Deposit Plan will also designate land for protection and identify search areas for renewable energy and will be accompanied by a Green Wedge Review and Renewable Energy Assessment.
- 1.19 A number of additional supporting background documents have been prepared to inform the Preferred Strategy. These are listed in Appendix 1 and should be read alongside the Preferred Strategy as only their main findings are highlighted in this document given the significant amount of data/information they contain. The documents are available on the Planning Policy page of the Council's website¹¹.

⁹The Integrated Sustainability Appraisal of the Preferred Strategy can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/sa-sea-hra/>

¹⁰ The Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Preferred Strategy can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/sa-sea-hra/>

¹¹ Supporting Background Papers can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

How to Make Comments on the Preferred Strategy

- 1.20 Community and stakeholder involvement is invited during the six-week statutory engagement and consultation on the Preferred Strategy between **5th July and 31st August 2021**, whereby comments will be invited on the consultation questions set out in the Preferred Strategy. Our consultation and engagement arrangements have been revised in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and reflect the Coronavirus Regulations (2020) and recent Ministerial advice¹². We have reviewed the use of digital involvement options to provide communities with information and the ability to engage with the RLDP in a virtual manner. Further details are provided in the Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020). Engagement/consultation will take place via:
- Notifying all parties on the RLDP database of the consultation;
 - Planning Policy Officer attendance at Area Cluster meetings during July-August 2021;
 - A Members' Workshop in June 2021 (hosted by the Economy & Development Select Committee);
 - Scrutiny by Economy & Development Select Committee in July 2021;
 - Internal discussions within the Council through an officer workshop, Department Management Team and Senior Leadership Team;
 - Two Virtual Engagement Events during July 2021;
 - Several RLDP Preferred Strategy Drop-in Sessions during July-August 2021. Should there be a further lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these drop-in sessions will be replaced by additional virtual events. Full details of venues and dates are available on the Council's Current Consultations page of the website;
 - We will seek to engage with seldom heard groups in particular young people, via the Youth Council and going into secondary schools, and Gypsy and Travellers via the GTAA work and reiterating the opportunity to promote sites during the Second Call for Candidate Sites.
- 1.21 The Preferred Strategy is available to view on the Council's website and at other locations within the County including County Hall, Usk and the Council's Community HUBs via advanced appointment. Please refer to the Planning Policy Current Consultations page on the Council's website¹³ for further details of any restrictions and arrangements that are in place. An Executive Summary and an Easy Read Summary version of this document have been prepared which can also be viewed at the above locations.

¹² Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid19, 7th July 2020

¹³ The Planning Policy Current Consultations Page can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policy-current-consultations/>

- 1.22 The closing date for the submission of comments is midnight on Tuesday 31st August 2021. For details of how to respond to this consultation please see the Planning Policy Current Consultations page on the Council’s website.
- 1.23 Feedback from the consultation/engagement on the Preferred Strategy will be considered and set out in the Consultation Report on the Preferred Strategy. The feedback received will help to inform the Deposit Plan.
- 1.24 It should be noted that this consultation relates to the matters set out in the Preferred Strategy; it is not an opportunity to make detailed comments on individual candidate sites. All comments should relate to the questions included in the Preferred Strategy which are designed to assist with your representation.

Next Steps

- 1.25 Following the consultation and stakeholder involvement on the Preferred Strategy, the Council will finalise the RLDP and place it on Deposit. Feedback from the Preferred Strategy consultation will be detailed in the Consultation Report on the Strategy. This report must accompany the RLDP ISA Report and the other supporting documents on Deposit, in accordance with Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended 2015). This Consultation Report and the Preferred Strategy with any necessary amendments will be reported to Council in approximately November 2021 to seek approval of the Preferred Strategy. The Deposit Plan will then be prepared and considered by Council prior to a statutory six-week consultation and engagement period in Summer 2022.
- 1.26 Pursuant to Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (LDP) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended 2015), the Deposit Plan will then be submitted to the Welsh Government who will appoint an independent Inspector to examine the RLDP. Having regard to the evidence and representations received during the Deposit consultation, the Inspector must determine whether the RLDP accords with the ‘tests of soundness’ set out in the Development Plans Manual.
- 1.27 Following the Examination, the Inspector will issue a report recommending any necessary changes to the RLDP. The Inspector’s report will be binding and the Council must accept the changes and adopt the RLDP as amended. Once adopted, the RLDP will replace the existing Adopted LDP.

2 Context

Monmouthshire Profile and Overview

- 2.1 This section provides a broad introduction to the Plan area, outlining the key economic, social, environmental and cultural characteristics of Monmouthshire. It also identifies the policy context and other influences on the Plan due to the requirement to have regard to a range of plans, policies and programmes at the national, regional and local level. Of note, the Initial Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report also sets out a full list of policies, plans, programmes and strategies relevant to the RLDP.

Geographical Context

- 2.2 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. Monmouthshire covers an area of approximately 88,000 hectares (880 square kilometres), of which 3% is defined as 'built on'¹⁴. Monmouthshire has an estimated population of 94,590¹⁵, of which around 8% reside within the Brecon Beacons National Park area of the County. The County is bordered by a number of Welsh Local Authorities; Newport City Council to the south-west, Torfaen County Borough Council to the west and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority to the north-west. It is also bordered by a number of English Local Authorities; Herefordshire Council to the north-east, South Gloucestershire Council and the Forest of Dean District Council to the east (on the other side of the River Wye), with links to South Gloucestershire via the Severn Bridge.
- 2.3 The County has a distinctive identity arising from its location in the borderlands between England and the industrial heartland of South Wales. An integral element of Monmouthshire's distinctive settlement pattern arises from its historic market towns and villages and their relationship with the surrounding rural areas. The County 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 to the north-west and the river corridor of the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the east.
- 2.4 Located at the gateway to Wales and the Cardiff Capital Region, the County is easily accessible from the rest of Wales and England using a number of strategic routes including the M4 and M48 motorways, the Heads of the Valleys road (A465), the A449, A40 and A4042. Monmouthshire also has four railway stations at Caldicot, Chepstow and Severn Tunnel Junction in the south of the County, and, Abergavenny in the north.

¹⁴ Corine Landcover Inventory

¹⁵ Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2019 Mid-Year Population Estimate

These provide rail links to the key settlements of Newport, Cardiff and to west Wales, as well as to Bristol, London, Gloucester, Cheltenham, the Midlands and Manchester. A walkway rail station is also proposed at Magor.

Settlement Pattern

- 2.5 The main county towns of Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Monmouth, offer a wide range of opportunities for employment, shopping, community facilities and sustainable and active travel. Outside of these areas, additional opportunities are found at the wider Severnside area and in the smaller settlements of Usk, Raglan, Penperlleni, and a number of smaller rural settlements. Further details on individual settlements and the settlement hierarchy is provided in the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal¹⁶ which has been developed to identify those settlements which are best suited to accommodate future growth in terms of their location, role and function. This has involved an assessment of the current role and function of settlements, as well as an understanding of the relationships between settlements and their potential future roles.

Natural and Built Environment

- 2.6 Monmouthshire is renowned for its beautiful landscapes and biodiversity resource. As a largely rural County, Monmouthshire has significant landscape resources and is home to internationally and nationally designated landscapes ranging from the Wye Valley AONB to the east and the Brecon Beacons National Park and the Blaenavon Industrial World Heritage Site to the north west. It has substantial biodiversity and nature conservation resources, a number of which are internationally or nationally recognised, including the Severn Estuary which is designated as a Special Area for Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Ramsar Site. The County is also home to four other SACs, namely the River Wye, the River Usk, the Wye Valley Woodlands and the Wye Valley Bat Sites. These are supplemented by a rich resource of nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and non-statutory locally identified Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).
- 2.7 The Monmouthshire RLDP area also has a rich built heritage and historic environment which includes, 31 Conservation Areas, 44 Historic Parks and Gardens, 3 Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest, approximately 169 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and 2,146 Listed Buildings. There is a need to protect, promote and enhance the best of our landscape and heritage which are an important part of Monmouthshire's culture and play a key role in tourism and economic growth.

¹⁶ Sustainable Settlement Appraisal can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

Population

- 2.8 Monmouthshire is a predominantly rural County with almost half (49%) of the total population living in wards defined as being in rural areas (i.e. with a population of less than 10,000). The County has a population of 94,590 based on the 2019 Office of National Statistics (ONS) mid-year estimate, with the three primary settlements of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth accounting for over a third of the population between them at 39%. Caldicot, the main centre in the Severnside area, accounts for a further 11%, with the settlement of Magor/Undy following with 6.4% and Usk accounting for 3% of the population.
- 2.9 In terms of population make-up, Monmouthshire has a median age of 49 years compared to 34 years in Cardiff, and has a significantly higher proportion of older age groups (65+) and a lower proportion of young adults (16-44) compared to the Welsh average. The proportion of our population aged 65+ and 85+ is increasing well in excess of the Welsh average. For the County as a whole, the 2019 ONS mid-year population estimates identify that over 25% of the population is over 65 (compared to 21% in Wales), with 16% under 16 (18% in Wales) and nearly 59% in the working age population group (16-64) (61% in Wales). However, this differs by settlement across the County. The continuing trend for an ageing demographic is one of the key issues that Monmouthshire is facing. Abergavenny, Monmouth, Usk, Penperlleni and Raglan (as well the majority of villages) all have a higher than average proportion of their population in the over 65 age groups. However, a number of settlements also have a higher than average proportion of their population in both the working age and younger age groups including Chepstow, Magor/Undy, Little Mill, Rogiet, Caerwent/Crick, Portskewett and Llanishen. Table 16 in the Sustainable Settlements Appraisal provides more detailed information on this matter.
- 2.10 The relative absence of young adults is often linked to the affordability of housing across the County. Average house prices in the County are high at £297,628 when compared to the Welsh average of £187,477 (Hometrack, March 2020). House prices are also high in relation to earnings and there is a pressing need for additional affordable housing in the County in both urban and rural areas to assist in ensuring a more balanced population. This issue has been heightened by the current pandemic which has demonstrated the importance of ensuring our communities are balanced and socially sustainable, particularly in terms of demography.

Economy

- 2.11 As the gateway to Wales, Monmouthshire is geographically well connected in a key strategic location with good transport infrastructure linking to the wider region. The County enjoys close proximity to the key growth areas of Cardiff, Bristol, Newport and the Midlands and is only a 45 minute drive to Cardiff and Bristol airports. It is the most competitive economy in Wales after Cardiff and is best placed for growth per capita

(UK Competitiveness Index 2019). Our residents are among the best qualified in Wales.

- 2.12 Monmouthshire is a key partner in the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal. The Council has had notable involvement in the delivery of its first initiative - the establishment of an Advanced Compound Semi-Conductor Cluster. With the recent abolition of the Severn Bridge Tolls, Monmouthshire's relationship with the Bristol City Region is also strengthening.
- 2.13 The January 2020 – December 2020 ONS Annual Population Survey indicated that over 83% (83.4%) of Monmouthshire's population were economically active, 80% of whom were in employment. Both these figures were higher than those for Wales, at 75.7% and 72.8% respectively, whilst the proportion of those unemployed in Monmouthshire was 2.6% compared to 3.7% in Wales.
- 2.14 Monmouthshire has a strong core of agri-food, tourism, manufacturing, digital and tech businesses. The Council's Economic Growth and Ambition Statement¹⁷ recognises the importance of building on this success to generate growth in a spectacular setting. Maintaining the attractiveness of Monmouthshire to its current and future residents and visitors through sustainable growth is a key aim of the RLDP.
- 2.15 The 2011 Census travel to work data reveals that 8.7% of those commuting into Monmouthshire were from Torfaen, with 8.1% from Blaenau Gwent, 6.4% from Newport and 5.9% from the Forest of Dean. The main destination for those commuting out of the County for work was Newport which accounted for 12.1% of all those commuting out for work, whilst 7% commuted to Torfaen and 5.3% to Cardiff. At the same time, 4.5% commuted to South Gloucestershire, 4% to Bristol and 3.3% to the Forest of Dean, emphasising the County's connections with the South West of England. The 2011 Census also revealed that 36.7% of Monmouthshire residents live and work in the County. The removal of the Severn Bridge tolls is likely to have altered these figures. The most recent figures from the ONS 2020 Annual Population Survey reveal that 16.7% of Monmouthshire's working population currently commute to the SW of England for work. Welsh Government's Building Better Places response to Covid-19 acknowledges that even when all restrictions are lifted, the tendency for people to work from home is likely to have longer term impacts on commuting patterns. It is expected that the trend for increased home and remote working will continue over the longer term in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of people working from or near home.¹⁸

¹⁷ The Economic Growth and Ambition Statement can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

¹⁸ <https://gov.wales/aim-30-welsh-workforce-work-remotely>

- 2.16 An Employment Background Paper¹⁹ is prepared annually which assesses employment land take-up in the County's Identified Industrial and Business Sites (SAE1) and Protected Employment Sites (SAE2) as identified in the Adopted LDP. As of April 2021, of the 50.12ha allocated across SAE1 sites in the Adopted LDP, just over 33 hectares of land was available for B1, B2 and B8 uses. The employment land take-up rate has averaged 2.1 hectares per annum since the adoption of the LDP in 2014. The results from this annual survey will help to inform future employment land requirements.
- 2.17 In spatial terms, the larger of the employment sites referenced above are located in the South of the County and make use of the M4 and M48 strategic transport routes, with links to South Wales and the South West of England. Such sites include Newhouse Farm to the South of Chepstow and Severnbridge Industrial Estate to the east of Caldicot, the latter accounting for approximately 20% of all Protected Employment Sites in Monmouthshire. In the North of the County, both Abergavenny and Monmouth have employment land allocations which are largely built out. Similarly, the Secondary Settlements of Usk and Raglan have employment land allocations which are predominantly built out. Whilst there is provision in the North, the majority of employment sites are located in the Southern half of the County and more specifically around the M4 corridor and within the Severnside area. Given the increased propensity in agile and home working during the Covid-19 pandemic which is expected to continue over the longer term, employment land demand/requirements may change. However, the RLDP will continue to need to provide a range of sites to meet employment needs to 2033 to support the Council's ambitions and to support the local economy. The spatial provision of employment land will be given further consideration in the Deposit RLDP which will include the identification of suitable employment sites and premises to enable existing businesses to grow and to attract new businesses in key growth sectors.

Climate Emergency

- 2.18 Tackling climate change is one of the biggest challenges facing our planet at a world wide scale down to the local level. In May 2019, Monmouthshire County Council unanimously passed a motion declaring a climate emergency and in doing so set an aim that by 2030 the Council will reduce its net carbon emissions to zero. This policy commitment strives to encourage and support residents and businesses to take their own actions to reduce their carbon emissions and work with partners to help develop and implement best practice methods in limiting global warming to less than 1.5 °C. The RLDP will play an important role in achieving a reduction in carbon emissions within the County through the allocation of appropriate patterns of development and a policy framework that supports sustainable development principles. The reliance on the private motor car and patterns of long travel to work distances are key considerations in efforts to reducing carbon emissions within a Monmouthshire

¹⁹ The Employment Land Background Paper – September 2020 can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/annual-monitoring/employment/>

context. However, efforts to tackle climate change are wide-ranging and will require a co-ordinated approach to development including aspects such as active travel, green infrastructure, effective use of land and resources and flood resilience.

Influences on the Replacement Local Development Plan

Legislative Context

- 2.19 The Preferred Strategy has been prepared in the context of several key pieces of legislation which set out the requirements for the emerging RLDP. A summary of this legislation is set out below.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015

- 2.20 The Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (WBFGA) sets the framework for improving the well-being of Wales by ensuring that sustainable development is at the heart of government and public bodies. It aims to make a difference to the lives of people in Wales in relation to a number of well-being goals including improving health, culture, heritage and sustainable resource use. The Act puts in place a ‘sustainable development principle’ and places a well-being duty on public bodies, including local authorities, to ‘act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’. Given that sustainable development is the core underlying principle of the RLDP (and SEA), the Act has a major influence on all aspects of the RLDP. Sustainable development must be carried out to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of the area by contributing to the achievement of the seven well-being goals as set out in Figure 3. The Act also sets out five ways of working needed for public bodies to achieve the seven well-being goals: (1) Long-term; (2) Integration; (3) Involvement; (4) Collaboration; and (5) Prevention. The five ways of working, have formed and will continue to form an intrinsic part of the RLDP’s development.

Figure 3: Seven well-being goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015



2.21 Explanation of how the wellbeing goals, five ways of working and broader sustainable development principles have been incorporated into the RLDP will be provided at each key stage. The broader sustainable development principles will be demonstrated at each stage of Plan preparation through the five ways of working contained in the Act. The links between the RLDP objectives and Well-being Goals (and Local Well-being Goals) is clearly set out in the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper²⁰. Each Strategic Policy will closely link with and reference the relevant well-being goals which most relate to its purpose and implementation, with an emphasis on maximising social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits to ensure that the Council has fully met its sustainable development duty.

Planning (Wales) Act 2015

2.22 The Planning (Wales) Act came into force in July 2015. It sets out a series of legislative changes to deliver reform of the planning system in Wales, to ensure that it is fair, resilient and enables development. The Act addresses 5 key objectives which includes strengthening the Plan-led approach to planning. The Act also introduces a legal basis

²⁰ The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper – (Updated June 2021) can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

for the preparation of a National Development Framework (NDF) and Strategic Development Plans (SDP), which are discussed in further detail below.

- 2.23 The Welsh Government have recently published Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 (hereafter referred to as Future Wales 2040) which has replaced the Wales Spatial Plan. This is considered further in paragraphs 2.33 to 2.39. Future Wales 2040 sets out the 20 year spatial framework for land use in Wales, providing a context for the provision of new infrastructure/growth. Future Wales 2040:
- sets out where nationally important growth and infrastructure is needed and how the planning system at a national, regional and local level can deliver it;
 - provides direction for SDPs and LDPs and supports the determination of Developments of National Significance;
 - sits alongside Planning Policy Wales, which sets out the Welsh Government’s planning policies and will continue to provide the context for land use planning;
 - supports national economic, transport, environmental, housing, energy and cultural strategies and ensures they can be delivered through the planning system; and
 - will be reviewed every 5 years.
- 2.24 The Planning (Wales) Act also provides the legal framework for the preparation of Strategic Development Plans (SDP) which are intended to provide a regional spatial framework for the future development and use of land within a defined region. In this case, Monmouthshire forms part of the Cardiff Capital Region and there is broad agreement that this will be taken forward as the basis for the footprint of a South East Wales SDP. 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 and comprehensive way. Whilst the Council is proceeding with a RLDP, simultaneous collaborative working is ongoing with neighbouring authorities and the broader region to prepare the SDP.

Environment (Wales) Act 2016

- 2.25 The Environment (Wales) Act provides legislation for the environment to plan and manage Wales’ natural resources in a more proactive, sustainable and joined up way, providing an iterative framework which ensures that managing Wales’ natural resources sustainably will be a core consideration in decision-making. It includes an enhanced biodiversity duty which requires public authorities to maintain and enhance biodiversity and to promote the resilience of ecosystems.
- 2.26 The Act also introduced a requirement for Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to produce Area Statements. Monmouthshire is included in the Area Statement for South East

Wales. The overarching focus of the Area Statements is to review the way in which natural resources are managed and used, support ecosystem services and build resilience. The RLDP will have regard to the Area Statement for South East Wales.

Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013

- 2.27 The Active Travel (Wales) Act aims to promote walking and cycling as an attractive mode of transport for purposeful journeys (i.e. to access work, school or shops and services). It seeks to instil a lasting transformation of how developments are planned to incorporate walking and cycling infrastructure from the outset as well as encouraging long term behavioural change.
- 2.28 The Act makes provision for the mapping of active travel routes and related facilities in connection with Active Travel Network Maps. It also requires local authorities in Wales to deliver year on year improvements in active travel routes and facilities to enhance opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists to make meaningful journeys without relying on the car. The principles of active travel are found throughout Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (2021), which stresses the need for the planning system to create an environment and infrastructure for people to walk and cycle.

A More Equal Wales - The Socio-economic Duty Equality Act 2010 (2021)

- 2.29 The Socio-economic Duty came into force in Wales on the 31 March 2021. The Socio-economic Duty further supports the common purpose and ways of working put in place through the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. The Socio-economic Duty Equality Act compliments the Equalities Act by further contributing towards Wales' long term well-being goals, in particular "A more equal Wales" and "A Wales of cohesive communities". Further strengthening social partnership arrangements and advancing fair work ambitions. The Duty requires specified public bodies, when making strategic decisions such as 'deciding priorities and setting objectives', to consider how their decisions might help to reduce the inequalities associated with socio-economic disadvantage. The Duty requires that 'Due Regard' has been given to the need to reduce the inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage. The Duty applies to strategic policy development and as such applies to the RLDP. To meet the statutory requirements under the duty the RLDP will be supported by an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), the duty will fall under and compliment the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) as part of the ISA.

Policy Context

Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (2021)

- 2.30 Edition 11 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW 11) sets out the land use planning policies and overarching sustainable development goals for Wales, revised to contribute towards the statutory well-being goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. PPW11 secures a presumption in favour of sustainable development and considers a Plan-led approach to be the most effective means of securing sustainable development through the planning system. PPW11 has a strong focus on promoting placemaking, which is considered instrumental to achieving sustainable places, delivering socially inclusive development and promoting more cohesive communities. Placemaking is deemed to be a holistic approach that ‘considers the context, function and relationships between a development site and its wider surroundings’ (PPW 11, 2021, p. 14). PPW11 sets out five National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes (Figure 4, p20) and four Themes which collectively contribute to placemaking (Figure 5, p21). At a strategic level planning policy topics can be clustered around these four themes which contribute individually to placemaking:
- Strategic & Spatial Choices
 - Active & Social Places
 - Productive & Enterprising Places
 - Distinctive & Natural Places
- 2.31 In order to inform the spatial strategy, PPW11 requires development plans to ‘include a spatial strategy covering the lifetime of the plan which establishes a pattern of development improving social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being’ (PPW 11, 2021, para 3.42). The link between the number of homes due to be provided and the expected job opportunities is clearly emphasised, as is the location of any new development in relation to existing or planned infrastructure. This is important to minimise the need to travel, reduce private car reliance and increase opportunities for cycling, walking and the use of public transport. Development Plans are deemed to ‘provide the main means for achieving integration between land use and transport planning’ (PPW11, 2021, para 4.1.5).
- 2.32 PPW11 specifies a well-defined search process to identify development land. Sustainable previously developed land and/or underutilised sites within existing settlements should be reviewed first before suitable, sustainable greenfield sites within or on the edge of settlements are considered. In either case, ‘a broad balance between housing, community facilities, services and employment opportunities in both urban and rural areas should be promoted to minimise the need for long distance commuting’ (PPW 11, 2021, para. 3.50). Significant weight is attached to developing active and social places in the form of well-connected cohesive communities. The Council is committed to a placemaking approach to future development and the

concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods.²¹ These are strong, well connected neighbourhoods where people live within a 20 minute walking distance of key everyday services, prioritising mix-type development which combines housing, transport links, public services, workplaces and recreational facilities. The Council intend to sign up to the Placemaking Charter²² which has been developed by Welsh Government and the Design Commission for Wales in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership.

Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 (Welsh Government, February 2021)

2.33 Future Wales 2040 sets out 11 outcomes which collectively are a statement of where the Welsh Government want Wales to be in 20 years' time (Future Wales, 2021, page 52). Future Wales aims to develop:

A Wales where people live....

1. and work in connected, inclusive and healthy places
2. in vibrant rural places with access to homes, jobs and services
3. in distinctive regions that tackle health and socio-economic inequality through sustainable growth
4. in places with a thriving Welsh Language
5. and work in towns and cities which are a focus and springboard for sustainable growth
6. in places where prosperity, innovation and culture are promoted
7. in places where travel is sustainable
8. in places with world-class digital infrastructure
9. in places that sustainably manage their natural resources and reduce pollution
10. in places with biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems
11. in places which are decarbonised and climate resilient.

2.34 Future Wales notes these outcomes can be achieved through Future Wales and other Development Plans focussed on the long-term providing quality development in the right places for the right reasons (Future Wales, 2021, page 52). The outcomes are intended to be inter-related and inter-dependent, and are proposed to improve places and well-being across Wales. It notes growth and new development must be in the right place, undertaken in the right way and make efficient use of resources to achieve the Future Wales outcomes.

²¹ <https://www.futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/FGC-Report-English.pdf>

²² <http://dcfw.org/placemaking/placemaking-charter/>

2.35 A number of policies are set out in the ‘Strategic and Spatial Choices: Future Wales’ spatial strategy section and include:

- Policy 1 - Where Wales will Grow,
- Policy 2 - Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking,
- Policy 3 - Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership,
- Policy 4 - Supporting Rural Communities; and
- Policy 5 - Supporting the rural economy.

Policies 4 and 5 specifically note that the Welsh Government supports sustainable and vibrant rural communities and appropriate proportionate growth in rural towns and villages, adding Strategic and Local Development Plans must develop policies that support rural areas. Where these plans identify growth in rural areas, it must be appropriate and proportionate to the needs of the settlement and the wider rural area they serve, adding that Strategic and Local Development Plans should plan positively to meet the needs of rural communities with regard to housing, transport, businesses, services, digital communications and diversification in the agricultural sector. As a rural authority Monmouthshire recognises the challenges facing our communities and will set out policies to help address them, considering the role that age appropriate housing, employment and home-working, health and social services, places of education, emergency services, shops and infrastructure can play in tackling these challenges and in helping create more sustainable places.

2.36 Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership and Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes, provide guidance on the Welsh Government’s commitment to increasing affordable housing provision in Wales. Both policies provide a framework for reviewing publically owned land to help support the provision of affordable housing-led developments and explore all opportunities to increase the supply of affordable housing. It specifically notes that the reuse of publicly owned land will be important to the delivery of these homes.

2.37 In Section 5 ‘The Regions’ Monmouthshire is included in the South East Wales region, although the indicative national growth area does not appear to extend into the County. The focus of growth is in Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys (Policy 33). It notes that Cardiff is to retain and extend its role as the primary national centre for culture, sport, leisure, media, the night time economy and finance and that Newport is a focus for sustainable long-term growth and investment. Future Wales aspires to promote Newport’s strategic role in the region. The Welsh Government also supports co-ordinated regeneration and investment in the Heads of the Valleys to improve well-being, increase prosperity and address social inequalities.

- 2.38 While Monmouthshire does not appear to be included in the South East Wales growth area, Outcomes 2 and 6 support sustainable growth in rural areas and are therefore of particular relevance to the County. The supporting text to Outcomes 2 and 6 state that: *“In rural areas, job opportunities and community services will be supported to help attract and retain people. A balance will be found between development and preserving the character of rural Wales, ensuring our small towns and villages have bright futures as attractive places to live and work. The rural economy will be thriving and communities will be well connected digitally and physically. There will be support for the agricultural sector and its supply chains to boost resilience through diversification.”* And *“Development Plans will have a forward thinking, positive attitude towards enabling economic development, investment and innovation. Increased prosperity and productivity will be pursued across all parts of Wales, building on current activity and promoting a culture of innovation, social partnership, entrepreneurialism and skills-development in sustainable industries and sectors. The culture, heritage and environment of Wales will play a positive, modern role in the economy by attracting the interest and expenditure of tourists and providing a distinctive and trusted brand for Welsh businesses”*. However, it must be recognised that providing job opportunities and sustaining community services will require demographically mixed and resilient communities. Employers will be attracted by a workforce, which in turn requires housing and affordable housing that retains younger people and families. Providing a sufficient range of employment opportunities will also help reduce out commuting from the County and contribute to placemaking. These are key objectives of the RLDP.
- 2.39 An indicative green belt is identified across the south of the County in Policy 34 (Green Belts in the South East). Future Wales requires the identification of a green belt through a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) to the north of Cardiff, Newport and the eastern part of the region to manage urban form and growth. It states that regional plans should consider the relationship of the green belt with the green belt in the West of England. Future Wales states that Local Development Plans and development management decisions should not permit major development in the areas shown for consideration for green belts, except in very exceptional circumstances, until the need for green belts and their boundaries have been established by an adopted SDP. In advance of an SDP, the areas shown for consideration for green belts should be treated as if they have been designated as green belts by an SDP with PPW 11 setting out the circumstances and limited forms of development that may be appropriate in green belts.

Building Better Places - The Planning System Delivering Resilient and Brighter Futures: Placemaking and the Covid-19 recovery (WG, July 2020)

- 2.40 This document sets out the Welsh Government’s planning policy priorities to assist in taking action in the recovery period after the Covid-19 pandemic crisis. It states that the planning system should be centre stage in the consideration of built and natural

environment issues that have arisen from the pandemic. The document highlights the key existing planning policies and tools which should be used by all sectors in the environmental, social, cultural and economic recovery of Wales, recognising the continuing need for Planners to operate within a wider context of priorities and action at all scales. Local Development Plans should actively embrace the placemaking agenda set out in PPW, with each plan unique to an area, identifying its character, strengths and areas which need improving and set out policies on how these areas will be improved.

2.41 The document reinforces Welsh Government's commitment to better places, placemaking, quality outcomes and good design and identifies policy areas that should be the focus of consideration and action, in order to act as a catalyst for a recovery. It identifies key issues which bring individual policy areas together to ensure that action is the most effective. The RLDP as a key tool for addressing these issues will play an important role in supporting the post-covid recovery of the County. The 8 issues are:

- Staying local: creating neighbourhoods
- Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods
- Revitalising our town centres
- Digital places – the lockdown lifeline
- Changing working practices: our future need for employment land
- Reawakening Wales' tourism and cultural sectors
- Green infrastructure, health and well-being and ecological resilience
- Improving air quality and soundscapes for better health and well-being

Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales (2019)

2.42 This Plan sets the foundations for Wales to transition to a low carbon nation; setting out the Welsh Government's approach to increasing efficiency and cutting emissions of greenhouse gasses by at least 80% by 2050. This is vital to meeting the requirements of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, thereby contributing to a fairer and healthier society. The five ways of working of the WBFGA guide Wales's decarbonisation action, ensuring effective collaboration and involvement with stakeholders to integrate decarbonisation, limit further effects of climate change and maximise all seven national well-being goals.

2.43 The planning system has an important role in facilitating decarbonisation. Planning Policy Wales' focus on placemaking encourages well-designed development that ensures communities have all the services they need within easy reach. A plethora of other planning related priorities also encourage lower carbon emissions whilst simultaneously creating places where people can live well. These include promoting

renewable energy developments, restricting the use of fossil fuels and incorporating active travel principles (walking and cycling) into new developments. Low carbon infrastructure can ultimately help increase efficiency through the way energy is produced and transmitted, the design and construction of buildings and the transportation of people and goods. All Development Plans must ultimately support these strategic decarbonisation goals to facilitate clean energy and build resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Welsh National Marine Plan (2019)

- 2.44 It is a requirement under the Marine and Coastal Access Act (MCAA) to produce a Marine Plan, the Welsh National Marine Plan (WNMP) is the first marine plan for Wales and sits alongside Future Wales in identifying opportunities and guiding development both inshore and offshore, supporting integrated decision making and collaboration across marine and terrestrial interfaces and boundaries. The WNMP and Future Wales work together to provide a framework for the management of change around the coast. The WNMP contains plans and policies which will support the Welsh Government vision for clean, healthy, safe and diverse seas, guide future sustainable development and support the growth of marine space and natural resources ('blue growth'). The WNMP has informed the preparation of Future Wales and, where relevant, it should inform Strategic and Local Development Plans and planning decisions. This ensures that marine and terrestrial planning work together.
- 2.45 The joined up planning and management of the coastal zone will enable development to understand and be responsive to the challenges that result from the interaction of natural and development pressures in coastal areas. This will help ensure that coastal areas are planned in a socially, environmentally, culturally and economically sustainable way. As an authority which borders the Severn Estuary the Monmouthshire RLDP will need to consider these overlapping pressures to ensure impacts are avoided and opportunities are maximised. This will include impacts on water resources, heritage, landscape and seascapes and from pollution (water, noise, air, litter). There is a need to take into account the cumulative effects of all uses on the coastal environment, promoting the co-existence of compatible activities and supporting the avoidance or mitigation of conflicts between users wherever possible.

Regional Context

Cardiff Capital Region City Deal

- 2.46 The Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) comprises ten local authorities across the South East Wales region, including Monmouthshire. These local authorities are working collaboratively on projects and plans for the area to seek to tackle issues that affect the whole of the region, such as worklessness and poor transportation links. The authorities forming the Cardiff Capital Region have entered into a 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. Strong governance has been established across the region through the Cardiff Capital Region Joint Cabinet. A five year Strategic Business Plan to leverage maximum economic and social benefits was agreed in May 2018 by all 10 local authority partners. The plan specifies the regional strategic objectives of the CCR which are:

- Prosperity and Opportunity – building the capacity of individuals, households, public sector and businesses to meet challenges and grasp opportunity, creating a more productive economy;
- Inclusion and Equality – a vibrant and sustainable economy which contributes to the well-being and quality of life of the people and communities in the region now and in the future; and
- Identity, Culture, Community and Sustainability – forging a clear identity and strong reputation as a City Region for trade, innovation and quality of life.

South East Wales Metro

- 2.47 To grow its economy, there is widespread recognition that the Cardiff Capital Region needs major investment in its infrastructure to help it play a bigger role in the UK economy. A regional approach, underpinned by a transformation in public transport, will help to fulfil this ambition, enabling the Cardiff Capital Region to raise its international profile and compete more effectively on the world stage. Monmouthshire, with its existing mainline stations which link to the wider South Wales rail network, will benefit from the Metro project.

Removal of Severn Bridge Tolls

- 2.48 The removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls in December 2018, combined with the wider opportunities associated with the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal agenda, South East Wales Metro and the County's strategic location between the Great Western Cities of Cardiff, Newport and Bristol, offer significant economic and social opportunities for Monmouthshire by removing a perceived economic barrier to businesses entering Wales. However data shows that, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, car use increased markedly following toll removal.

Neighbouring Local Planning Authorities: Joint Working and Collaboration

- 2.49 Monmouthshire as a border County adjoins both Welsh and English Local Authorities. Monmouthshire's neighbouring Welsh authorities of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (BGCBC), Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC) and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA) are all currently in the process of revising their Local Development Plans. The current Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on the timetables

for all of the authorities. The BBNPA were further ahead in the process having consulted on its Preferred Strategy in July – August 2019. However, following a review of their LDP evidence base in light of the July 2020 Welsh Government guidance the Authority determined that they needed to revisit their Strategic Position. They have recently undertake a consultation on a Revised Delivery Agreement and Towards a Preferred Strategy document which sets out their rationale for revisiting the Preferred Strategy and a shift in their policy focus; the consultation closed on 21st May 2021.

- 2.50 The timetables of BGCBC and TCBC were closely aligned with Monmouthshire with all expecting to publish their Preferred Strategies in early 2020. However, Plan progress has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, with each authority having published Revised Delivery Agreements. Blaenau Gwent CBC consulted on the Preferred Strategy in early 2020, prior to the Covid-19 lockdown, however, their Second Call for Candidate Sites was subsequently delayed. It is anticipated that Blaenau Gwent CBC will consult on the Deposit Plan in the Summer of 2021. Torfaen CBC also experienced a delay to the Preferred Strategy consultation, with the consultation period extended to allow for Covid-19 restrictions. It is anticipated that Torfaen CBC will consult on the Deposit Plan in Summer/Autumn 2021. Newport City Council began the formal review process of their LDP in October 2020 with consultation on the Review Report and Delivery Agreement in early 2021.
- 2.51 The Forest of Dean District Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan for the period 2021-2041 with consultation on the Preferred Option having closed in January 2021. South Gloucestershire Council has also commenced work on a new Local Plan with consultation on Phase 1 – Issues and Approaches, completed in March 2021. Phase 2 on potential options for growth, protection, site proposals and place discussions is proposed for late 2021. In November 2020 Herefordshire Council took the decision to update the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy.
- 2.52 Monmouthshire is committed to working collaboratively with its neighbouring authorities and a number of joint evidence base studies have been produced to date, with further joint research and evidence due to be commissioned to inform the Deposit Plans. Regular LDP progress meetings are held with these neighbouring Welsh authorities and adjacent English authorities on the emerging development plans.
- 2.53 As part of collaboration with neighbouring authorities, regard has been given to national guidance which requires consideration of a collaborative approach to the site selection process to promote the development of previously developed land. PPW11 states that where a need for new residential allocations is identified, first preference should be given to previously developed land within the authority or neighbouring authorities before consideration is given to greenfield development (para 3.44). As Monmouthshire has few previously developed sites to accommodate future growth, discussions have been held with neighbouring authorities in this regard (including Newport CC, Torfaen CBC, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and Forest of Dean

DC). These discussions have confirmed that there is no scope to accommodate any of Monmouthshire's growth on previously developed sites within these adjoining local authority areas; rather it has been confirmed that any such brownfield sites are needed for each authority's own growth requirements. Notwithstanding this, accommodating Monmouthshire's growth requirements in an adjoining authority area would not address the key demographic, affordability and economic issues/challenges facing the County and, therefore, would not assist in meeting the RLDP's key aim of delivering sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. In view of this, the homes and jobs required to deliver the RLDP Preferred Strategy will be provided within Monmouthshire.

- 2.54 The Brecon Beacons National Park is situated to the north and northwest of Monmouthshire. Consideration therefore will need to be given to the proposed delivery of housing in that part of the County which is covered by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA). Whilst the BBNPA consulted on its RLDP Preferred Strategy in July-August 2019 they have now gone back a stage and have recently completed consultation on a Revised Delivery Agreement and Towards a Preferred Strategy document. Monmouthshire will need to consider the impact of any proposed development within its administrative boundary. Monmouthshire's Preferred Growth Option includes an allowance for the BBNPA which equates to 33 dwellings per annum within the National Park area. At this stage it is proposed that the allowance of 33 dwellings will be met within the Monmouthshire planning area. This position will be further considered with the BBNPA as their RLDP progresses.

Local Context

The Monmouthshire Well-being Plan (Public Service Board) February 2018

- 2.55 The Monmouthshire Well-being Plan was prepared by the Public Service Board (PSB) which is made up of four statutory members namely; Monmouthshire County Council, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service and Natural Resources Wales. Other organisations are also invited, in Monmouthshire this includes; Public Health Wales, Gwent Police, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent, Monmouthshire Housing Association, Melin Homes and voluntary organisations represented through the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations. While this work has been carried out on behalf of the Public Service Board rather than Monmouthshire County Council specifically, it identifies important issues for the County as a whole that must be considered.
- 2.56 The Well-being Plan identifies four objectives:
- Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.
 - Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.

- Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.
 - Develop opportunities for communities and business to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected County.
- 2.57 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 2019-20 are set out in the 2020 Annual Report, which provides details of the progress made with each of these steps.

The Monmouthshire Corporate Business Plan 2017-2022 (Incorporating Well-being Objectives) February 2018

- 2.58 The Corporate Business Plan is produced by Monmouthshire County Council: our core purpose is to help build sustainable and resilient communities for current and future generations. The Corporate Plan utilises the contributions made to the Well-being Plan along with issues raised most frequently to County Councillors and issues reported to Community Hubs, the contact centre and on the My Monmouthshire App. The Corporate Business plan 2017-2022 sets out the Council’s four Well-being Objectives:
- Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.
 - Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of a thriving and well-connected County.
 - Maximise the potential of the natural and built environment for the well-being of current and future generations.
 - Maximise the potential in our communities to develop the well-being of people throughout their lives.
- 2.59 A well-functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places. The RLDP will be an integral means of enabling the well-being of Monmouthshire’s communities and achieving these objectives. The links between the RLDP objectives and the Local Well-being objectives is set out in the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper.

Monmouthshire Climate Emergency Declaration (May 2019)

- 2.60 The Council declared a climate emergency on 16th May 2019 and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C. The declaration agreed is that this Council will:
- Strive to reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero in line with the Welsh Government target of 2030.
 - Develop a strategy and associated action plans to aim to deliver these targets as soon as practicable.

- Continue to review the Corporate Plan, Public Service Board Local Well-being plan, Local Development Plan and other relevant plans and policies to support the above.
- Publicise this declaration of a climate emergency to residents and businesses in the County and encourage and support them to take their own actions to reduce their carbon emissions in line with a 2030 target.
- 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.

2.61 The RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper was revised in July 2019 to reflect the climate emergency declaration. A report on the climate emergency setting out the emerging actions to address/respond to the climate emergency was subject to political reporting in autumn 2019. Relevant actions will be reflected in the RLDP, recognising that the RLDP will have a key role in implementing a number of the identified climate emergency actions. The RLDP will set out a policy framework which assists in tackling the causes and effects of climate change within our communities through the adoption of sustainable development principles. Efforts to tackle climate change are wide-ranging and will require a co-ordinated approach to development including aspects such as active travel, green infrastructure, effective use of land and resources and flood resilience.

Vision Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement (November 2019)

2.62 Monmouthshire has produced a statement to consider the kind of future the Council wishes to create, including consideration of the demographic changes, infrastructure and skills needed to support this while at the same time ensuring environmental impact is limited. The statement reflects national and regional policies including the ambitions for the Cardiff Capital Region, the Council's Corporate Plan and the RLDP. It focuses on building the County's economic resilience to ensure the future generations of Monmouthshire have the best chance in life whilst respecting the incredible landscape that makes the County so special. As a consequence the vision of the Economic Growth and Ambition Statement is 'helping to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations'. It sets out the Council's aspirations to raise the profile of Monmouthshire as:

- A dynamic place to do business
- A credible place to invest
- An incredible place to live, visit and stay.

2.63 The Statement seeks to lay the ground rules for an economic environment that enables business to land and expand, providing sustainable employment opportunities for local people. A key aim is to attract investment and funding which

will generate the right conditions for an ‘inclusive economy’ - one that is equitable, sustainable, stable, participatory and growing - ensuring that our economy flourishes in a way that is sensitive to the landscape, to ensure that Monmouthshire remains an incredible place to live, visit, stay and invest. The Statement also sets out the implications for our population, young people, economy, environment and housing stock if we do not take action to address the issues and challenges facing the County’s communities. To support this aim the Council published an Inward Investment Prospectus 2020, which highlights what the County has to offer to businesses and employers. The Council is keen to work pro-actively with the private sector and engage with the local market to develop a balanced portfolio of employment sites.

- 2.64 The vision will be delivered through the implementation of four Aims
- Aim 1: A Productive Monmouthshire - A dynamic place for businesses to grow and invest
 - Aim 2: A Healthy and Happy Monmouthshire – An incredible place to live
 - Aim 3: A Prosperous Monmouthshire – A great place to thrive
 - Aim 4: A Welcoming Monmouthshire – An amazing place to visit and stay
- 2.65 The RLDP will have a key role in enabling the delivery of these aims, which will be reflected in the Plan’s policy framework.

Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan (May, 2015)

- 2.66 The Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) identifies the key transport issues relevant to the County, the high level interventions needed to address these and the specific priorities for the local authority. The LTP includes a prioritised five-year programme of projects the Council wishes to see delivered between 2015 and 2020 as well as medium and longer term aspirations up to 2030.
- 2.67 The aim of the Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan is to facilitate and support the development of a modern, accessible, integrated and sustainable transport system, which increases opportunity, promotes prosperity for all and protects the environment; where walking, cycling, public transport and sustainable freight provide real travel alternatives.
- 2.68 The programme outlined in the LTP includes walking and cycling infrastructure, bus network, station and highway improvements, Cardiff Capital Region Metro schemes, 20mph limits and road safety schemes. In accordance with Welsh Government guidance it does not contain specific rail service and trunk road proposals. The LTP will be updated to inform the Deposit RLDP.

3 Key Issues, Challenges and Opportunities

Key Issues and Challenges

- 3.1 The key issues, challenges and opportunities/drivers facing the County (economic, environmental, social and cultural) are set out in the RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper²³ (Updated June 2021). As part of this process the existing Adopted LDP issues have been reviewed to determine whether they remain relevant for the RLDP. New issues, challenges and opportunities that have arisen since the adoption of the LDP have also been identified, informed by a wide range of evidence including the Monmouthshire Public Service Board Well-being Plan, Corporate Business Plan 2017-2022, LDP Annual Monitoring Reports (2015 – 2020) and LDP Review Report, along with wider contextual factors such as national guidance/legislation and the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal. They are also informed by key sustainability matters which must be developed as part of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (ISA/SEA) of the RLDP.
- 3.2 A review of the RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives in light of Covid-19 was undertaken and endorsed by Cabinet on 17th June 2020 and was incorporated into the Review of Evidence Base in light of Covid-19 (September 2020)²⁴. This review demonstrated that the Plan's Issues, Vision and Objectives remain relevant to Monmouthshire. The review concluded that a number of issues and objectives are now considered to have increased emphasis and importance as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, consistent with the priorities identified in the Welsh Government Building Better Places²⁵ document published in July 2020. For example, the review recognises that lockdown has emphasised the value and importance of place-making and of the provision of locally accessible open/green spaces for health and well-being and recreation. Similarly, the role and function of the high street in the local community has been highlighted as well as ensuring a sufficient supply of affordable housing given the importance of ensuring our communities are balanced and socially sustainable, particularly in terms of demography.
- 3.3 The issues, challenges and opportunities have directly informed the development of the RLDP Vision, Objectives and Preferred Strategy. The issues, challenges and opportunities facing Monmouthshire have been identified and are listed in full in the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021) and set out in Appendix 2. The Issues have been grouped to align with the Seven Well-being Goals as set out in

²³ The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021) can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

²⁴ <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/11/Monmouthshire-RLDP-Review-of-Issues-Vision-Objectives-and-Evidence-Base-in-Light-of-Covid.pdf>

²⁵ Welsh Government - Building Better Places: Placemaking and the Covid-19 Recovery can be via: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-07/building-better-places-the-planning-system-delivering-resilient-and-brighter-futures.pdf>

the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to ensure that they are framed within this context. A summary of the key issues, challenges and opportunities is provided below:

- There is a need to tackle climate change and carbon reduction. The Council recognises that we are in a climate emergency and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5 °C. The RDLP will provide the policy framework to support and enable renewable energy generation and establish requirements for low carbon developments and other sustainable development principles such as active travel and green infrastructure.
- Our population is getting older. By 2033 we will have more old people living in the County but fewer young people. The importance of addressing this issue has increased during the pandemic with renewed emphasis on ensuring communities are balanced, particularly in terms of demography.
- An older population changes the kind of services our communities will need, but also reduces the number of people using and financially supporting businesses and services. We will have a smaller economically active population making Monmouthshire a less attractive place for businesses to locate. This impacts on our future economic prospects.
- We have the highest average house prices in Wales. This means a large proportion of people cannot afford to buy a home so either leave the County, or, have to live with their parents or in shared housing for longer. High houses prices and associated affordability could be exacerbated by the impacts of Covid-19, potentially as a result of increased unemployment but also due to the continuation of home/agile working and increased importance on quality of life/environment. This could influence decisions on where to live making Monmouthshire an even more attractive proposition increasing house prices further.
- We have over 2,000 households identified as being in need of affordable housing. The RLDP will explore opportunities to ensure a range and choice of homes are incorporated within new developments and identify affordable housing-led sites.
- There is a need to consider whether existing employment land is suitably located and fit for purpose for appropriate growth sectors, along with the potential increase in agile and home working and the impact this may have on employment land demand/requirements. We also need to consider future demand in line with Council aspirations and the opportunities that a shift in working behaviour could create with businesses given greater flexibility over where to locate.
- There are opportunities associated with the removal of the Severn Bridge tolls and growth from both the Cardiff Capital region and Bristol region.

- Unemployment levels are low; however, these have increased during Covid-19 consistent with the national picture. Monmouthshire also has a net-outflow of commuters. To address these issues there is a need to provide support for inward investment and local employment growth/opportunities.
- Monmouthshire has a dual economy. The qualifications, skills and earnings of the residents are above the regional and national average, however, for those working in the area earnings are lower and employment is relatively less skilled.
- Vacancy rates in some of the County's retail centres have increased which is likely due to the changing role of high streets, in addition to Business Rates and further influenced by Covid-19 restrictions and the increase in online shopping.
- There are challenges of rural isolation and sustaining rural communities, including regenerating the rural economy. Lockdown has emphasised the value and importance of having locally accessible services and facilities.
- We want to protect the landscapes and heritage that make Monmouthshire a unique and attractive place to live. This key aim has been reinforced during Covid-19 with lockdowns emphasising the value and importance of placemaking and the provision of locally accessible open/spaces for health and well-being and recreation.
- Tourism plays a significant part in the Monmouthshire economy particularly in assisting in the diversification of the rural economy and in sustaining the County's historic town centres. This importance be may enhanced further by the increased demand for 'staycations', with particular emphasis on self-catering accommodation in the short-term.

Development Constraints

- 3.4 The RLDP response to these issues must be considered and delivered with regard to development constraints that need to be avoided, mitigated and balanced to achieve sustainable development. Specific examples are discussed throughout the policy framework contained in the Preferred Strategy, but examples include the challenge of protecting the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land given the high proportion of BMV land in the County and limited opportunities for brownfield development. Similarly, areas of flood risk will be avoided for inappropriate development, whilst also being mindful of potential policy changes that are anticipated through the revision of TAN15: Flood Risk (2004) currently underway by Welsh Government. Also of note is the requirement to demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment for developments within the River Usk SAC and River Wye

SAC catchment areas, following recent guidance from Natural Resources Wales. These challenges are discussed in more detail in relation to Policy S8 – Strategic Development Sites.

- 3.5 More generally, the appropriate policy response to the issues discussed above will also have to address overarching sustainable development principles such as placemaking, active travel and environmental considerations including high quality landscape across the County, biodiversity designations and green infrastructure. Collectively these constraints and policy requirements will need to be balanced and will influence the location and scale of development appropriate to different parts of the County.

Key Opportunities

- 3.6 Having identified the key issues and challenges facing the County that the RLDP needs to address, the following sets out some of the key opportunities to realising some of the issues and challenges.

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (February 2021)

- 3.7 As discussed in Section 2, Welsh Government published Future Wales 2040 in February 2021. While this sets out the national development framework and direction for development in Wales to 2040, it contains a number of policies that are considered to be of particular relevance to Monmouthshire providing the national policy context to address key issues facing Monmouthshire. Of note Policies 4 – Supporting Rural Communities and Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy, provide the policy framework to consider how age balanced communities can be achieved, where depopulation should be reversed and allowing for sustainable, appropriate and proportionate economic growth. Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes, also addresses the key issue of affordable housing prices in the County and provides the framework to address this through affordable housing led developments. These policies are considered to provide significant opportunities to address a number of the key issues facing the County.

Building Better Places: The Planning System Delivering Resilient and Brighter Futures. Placemaking and the Covid-19 recovery (July 2020)

- 3.8 The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in many challenges, but it has also resulted in some significant changes in how we operate our daily lives and use the neighbourhood spaces around us. Welsh Government's Building Better Places Covid-19²⁶ recovery policy document recognises this, and the opportunity it has created to continue with some of the shifts in behaviour and the increased importance on placemaking that

²⁶ Building Better Places – Placemaking and the Covid-19 recover – July 2020 can be viewed via: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-07/building-better-places-the-planning-system-delivering-resilient-and-brighter-futures.pdf>

have been highlighted as a result of Covid-19. In this respect, the RLDP is recognised as a key mechanism in delivering the planning policy priorities identified in the Building Better Places document to assist in the Covid-19 recovery and maintaining and enabling the sustainable improvements that have arisen from the situation. Examples include greater emphasis on creating neighbourhoods that enable residents to stay and move locally to access most services and amenities through revitalised town centres and the provision of locally accessible green spaces. Similarly, the importance of digital connectivity and necessity to incorporate sufficient infrastructure in developments from the outset has been highlighted, particularly in rural areas.

Climate Emergency Declaration

- 3.9 In May 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and published a Climate and Decarbonisation Strategy in October 2019. This sets out key actions the Council will take to reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero in line with Welsh Government's target of 2030, but also make a commitment to work with partners and organisations to develop and implement best practice in limiting global warming to less than 1.5°C. As recognised by PPW11 and Building Better Places, the RLDP and its policy framework and allocations provide a significant opportunity to address the causes and effects of climate change. It is recognised that efforts to tackle climate change are wide-ranging and will require a co-ordinated approach to development including aspects such as active travel, green infrastructure, effective use of land and resources and flood resilience.

Cardiff Capital Region City Deal

- 3.10 As set out in Section 2, the overarching economic objectives of the City Deal are to create 25,000 new jobs and leverage £4 billion in private sector investment across the region. Key themes have been identified to focus the approach: Connecting the Region; Regeneration and Infrastructure; Skills and Employment. These strategic themes have implications for the RLDP including:

- Connecting the Region – Digital Strategy: this aims to create a smart region, driving innovation and solutions to attract private sector partnership and investment, including Welsh and regional connectivity, mobile 5G access and maximising open data.
- Metro – the South East Wales Metro Project provides much needed opportunities to increase train service frequency, improve inter-modal connectivity and coordination, streamline ticketing and improve bus services.
- Regeneration and Infrastructure – the Housing and Investment Fund has been proposed to support the need for more homes to be built across the region. This will include assistance in stimulating the SME sector across the region by providing loan development finance and launching a Customer Build Scheme releasing smaller plots of public sector land with a full package of support for SMEs to deliver new homes.

- Skills and Employment – the Skills for the Future Project provides region-wide school engagement with pupils and parents to offer careers advice and guidance, support for businesses to address barriers of participation, including a skills investment fund and a commitment to support delivery of over 10,000 additional apprenticeships, graduate internships and upskilled employees in the private sector.

Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement and Inward Investment Prospectus 2020: Growing your Business in Monmouthshire

- 3.11 As set out in Section 2 (paragraphs 2.62-2.65), the Council’s Economic Growth and Ambition Statement and Prospectus set out the aspirations to raise the profile of Monmouthshire as a dynamic place to do business, a credible place to invest and an incredible place to live, visit and stay. It recognises that Monmouthshire’s economy needs to grow to help build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations and sets out the priorities and aims to achieve this vision.
- 3.12 The Economic Growth and Ambition Statement and accompanying Prospectus will work alongside the RLDP and will assist in:
- Raising the profile of Monmouthshire as a key investment opportunity for the private sector.
 - Attract funding and investment to Monmouthshire to attract and facilitate economic growth to the County.
 - Increasing the take up of apprenticeships and reducing the number of residents who are not in education, employment or training.
 - Increasing next generation access broadband and mobile phone coverage across the County.

4 RLDP Strategic Framework

RLDP Vision (2018-2033)

- 4.1 The Vision clarifies the core purpose of the RLDP and provides a framework for developing the Preferred Strategy and future detailed policies. The Vision set out in the adopted LDP 2011-2021 has been reviewed and updated to take account of the issues, challenges and opportunities facing the County and reflects key elements of the PSB Well-being Plan and Corporate Business Plan. The Vision has been reviewed in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and is considered to remain relevant and appropriate.

By 2033 Monmouthshire will be a place where:

- (1) People are living in sustainable, resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations and are more inclusive, cohesive, prosperous, vibrant and balanced demographically. Both urban and rural communities are well-connected with better access to local services and facilities, open space and employment opportunities.**
- (2) Communities and businesses are part of an economically thriving and well-connected County.**
- (3) The best of the County's built heritage, countryside, landscape and environmental assets have been protected and enhanced to retain its distinctive character.**
- (4) People enjoy healthier, more sustainable lifestyles with improved access to public transport and active travel opportunities and have a minimised impact on the global environment.**

The spatial implications of achieving this Vision will be that by 2033:

Monmouthshire will have grown sustainably, with a proportionate distribution of new homes and jobs across the most sustainable settlements, which are supported by amenities and infrastructure with the delivery of affordable housing to meet local needs.

Development will have contributed to facilitating sustainable lifestyles by delivering high quality places that promote low carbon developments with an appropriate mix of uses and that are well-connected both digitally and physically to the wider area in terms of character, environment and movement by public transport, walking and cycling.

RLDP Objectives (2018-2033): Delivering the Vision

- 4.2 In order to address the key issues and challenges and deliver the Vision, 17 Objectives have been developed for the RLDP which build upon the Adopted LDP objectives and the well-being objectives set out in the Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan. The objectives were subsequently reviewed and revised following the climate emergency declaration. They were also reviewed in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and endorsed by Cabinet (June 2020) and by Council (October 2020) as remaining relevant. Accordingly, a number of the Objectives were found to have increased emphasis and importance in light of Covid-19, these are indicated in Table 2 below using an asterisk against the headline.
- 4.3 The Objectives are considered to be sufficiently aspirational yet also achievable within a spatial planning context. As with the RLDP issues, the objectives have been grouped in alignment with the seven well-being goals as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and are aligned with the RLDP issues, the main policy themes identified in Planning Policy Wales (PPW11) and the Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objectives, as set out in Table 2.

Table 2 – Replacement LDP Objectives

RLDP Objective Number	Headline	RLDP Objective	RLDP Issues addressed	Main PPW11 theme	Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objective
A Prosperous Wales (Well-being Goal 1)					
Objective 1	Economic Growth/ Employment*	To support a thriving, well-connected, diverse economy, which provides a range of good quality employment opportunities to enable and encourage indigenous business growth and attract inward investment and competitive innovative businesses in appropriate growth sectors, including through the provision of start-ups and grow on spaces.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 24	Productive and enterprising places	Develop opportunities for communities and business to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.
Objective 2	Retail centres*	To sustain and enhance the County towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow, Monmouth, Caldicot and Usk as vibrant and attractive retail centres serving their own populations and those of their surrounding hinterlands, along with increasing the potential customer base through future growth whilst recognising that the role of these centres is evolving.	8	Active and social places	Develop opportunities for communities and business to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.
A Resilient Wales (Well-being Goal 2)					
Objective 3	Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape*	To protect, enhance and manage Monmouthshire’s natural environment and ecosystems. This includes, the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the County’s other high quality	11, 12, 35	Distinctive and natural places	Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and

RLDP Objective Number	Headline	RLDP Objective	RLDP Issues addressed	Main PPW11 theme	Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objective
		and distinctive landscapes, protected sites, protected species and other biodiversity interests, along with the connectivity between them by creating new linkages for them to adapt while at the same time maximising benefits for the economy, tourism, health and well-being.			adapting to the impact of climate change.
Objective 4	Flood risk	To ensure that new development takes account of the risk of flooding, both existing and in the future, including the need to avoid inappropriate development in areas that are at risk from flooding or that may increase the risk of flooding elsewhere and the need to design development to appropriately manage surface water run-off.	12, 13	Distinctive and natural places	Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.
Objective 5	Minerals and Waste	To meet the County's regional and local obligations to manage and dispose of its waste and to safeguard and exploit its mineral resource in a sustainable fashion.	14, 15	Productive and enterprising places	Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.
Objective 6	Land	To promote the efficient use of land, including the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> maximise opportunities for development on previously developed land, whilst recognising that 	16, 17	Strategic and spatial choices	Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and

RLDP Objective Number	Headline	RLDP Objective	RLDP Issues addressed	Main PPW11 theme	Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objective
		<p>brownfield opportunities are limited in Monmouthshire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> protect the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land whilst at the same time recognising that this will not always be possible given high proportion of BMV land in the County and the limited opportunities for brownfield development. 			adapting to the impact of climate change.
Objective 7	Natural resources	To promote the efficient use of natural resources including providing increased opportunities for water efficiency, energy efficiency, renewable energy, recycling and waste reduction.	14, 15, 31, 37	Productive and enterprising places	Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.
A Healthier Wales (Well-being Goal 3)					
Objective 8	Health and Well-being*	To improve access for all to recreation, sport, leisure activities, open space and the countryside and to enable healthier lifestyles.	18, 20, 21, 33, 35	Active and social places	Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.
A More Equal Wales (Well-being Goal 4)					
Objective 9	Demography*	To increase opportunities for the younger population to both live and work within Monmouthshire to assist in ensuring a balanced demography.	2, 3, 4, 5, 24	Active and social places	Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.

RLDP Objective Number	Headline	RLDP Objective	RLDP Issues addressed	Main PPW11 theme	Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objective
A Wales of Cohesive Communities (Well-being Goal 5)					
Objective 10	Housing*	To provide a level of housing that is sufficient to provide a wide ranging choice of homes both for existing and future residents, while ensuring that local needs for appropriate, affordable and accessible housing are met as far as possible, particularly in towns but also in rural areas, so long as such housing can assist in building sustainable balanced communities.	23, 25, 26, 27, 28	Active and social places	Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.
Objective 11	Placemaking	To promote good quality sustainable places through design, layout and mix of uses that enhance the character and identity of Monmouthshire's settlements and countryside; create attractive, safe and accessible places to live, work and visit; and promote people's prosperity, health, happiness and well-being.	1, 11, 12, 18, 20, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35	Strategic and spatial choices	Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.
Objective 12	Communities	To build sustainable resilient communities where people have good access to employment, shops, housing, public transport, active travel, healthcare, community and cultural facilities.	1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 18, 20, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 35	Strategic and spatial choices	Develop opportunities for communities and business to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.

RLDP Objective Number	Headline	RLDP Objective	RLDP Issues addressed	Main PPW11 theme	Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objective
Objective 13	Rural Communities	To sustain existing rural communities as far as possible by providing development opportunities of an appropriate scale and location in rural areas in order to assist in building sustainable rural communities and strengthening the rural economy.	6, 7, 20, 22, 26, 29, 30, 34	Productive and enterprising places	Develop opportunities for communities and business to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.
Objective 14	Infrastructure*	To ensure that appropriate physical and digital infrastructure (including community and recreational facilities, sewerage, water, transport, schools, health care and broadband etc.) is in place or can be provided to accommodate new development.	12, 19, 20, 31	Productive and enterprising places	Develop opportunities for communities and business to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.
Objective 15	Accessibility	To seek to reduce the need to travel by promoting a mix of land use allocations and improved internet connectivity, and where travel is required, to provide opportunities for active travel and integrated sustainable transport.	10, 30, 36	Active and social places	Develop opportunities for communities and business to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.
A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language (Well-being Goal 6)					
Objective 16	Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language	To protect and enhance the built environment, culture and heritage of Monmouthshire for the future while maximising benefits for the economy, tourism and social well-being, including supporting and safeguarding the Welsh Language.	9, 32, 33, 34, 35	Distinctive and natural places	Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.

RLDP Objective Number	Headline	RLDP Objective	RLDP Issues addressed	Main PPW11 theme	Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objective
A Globally Responsible Wales (Well-being Goal 7)					
Objective 17	Climate Change*	To strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C, supporting carbon reduction through a variety of measures including the use of renewable energy, the design and location of new development, encouraging balanced job and population growth to reduce out-commuting, the provision of broadband connectivity to reduce the need to travel, the provision of ultra-low emission vehicle charging infrastructure to reduce emissions and improve air quality, and the provision of quality Green Infrastructure.	10, 12, 36, 37, 38	Distinctive and natural places	Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.

** indicates the Objective has increased emphasis and importance in light of Covid-19*

Replacement LDP Preferred Strategy: Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy

- 4.4 The identification of the Preferred Strategy has been informed by a range of considerations, including the assessment and consideration of the growth and spatial options, responses from the consultation process, the findings of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal, the newly published Future Wales 2040 (which is a statutory development plan), the LDP tests of soundness, Welsh Government's Building Better Places, and the pressing need to address the key challenges relating to the County's demography, affordability and the climate emergency to achieve a sustainable balanced deliverable outcome.
- 4.5 The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy promotes and supports a level of housing and employment growth that will be distributed proportionately²⁷ across Monmouthshire up to 2033. The Strategy assists in addressing the demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and ultimately seeks to deliver the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Strategy conforms with Policy 1 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (hereafter referred to as Future Wales 2040) which is the highest tier statutory development plan and supports sustainable growth in all parts of Wales that seeks to address local aspirations and need. The Strategy also meets a key 'Test of Soundness' of ensuring that the Plan's vision and strategy are positive and sufficiently aspirational. A Self-Assessment of the Preferred Strategy against the Tests of Soundness is published alongside this document, which includes an assessment of the Strategy's general conformity with Future Wales 2040. This demonstrates that the Preferred Strategy and the stages undertaken and processes followed to reach this stage are 'sound' and that the Strategy assists in the delivery of the Future Wales policies and is in general conformity with its overarching strategy.
- 4.6 Box 1 below provides a summary of the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy.

²⁷ Proportionately' means that the level of growth directed toward a settlement will be proportionate to its population size. To calculate the proportion of development to be directed toward a settlement only the population of those settlements included in the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal has been used to contribute to the total population figure for the County. This takes into account the large areas of Monmouthshire which are rural and as such these areas would not be expected to have any significant development

Box 1: Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy

In order to deliver the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy the RLDP will:

- Make provision for a total of **8,366 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,605 homes** (this provision is based indicatively on a 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This level of housing growth will enable the provision of market and affordable housing in both urban and rural areas and, importantly, provides the opportunity to address the unbalanced demography, improve labour force retention by retaining/attracting younger adult population age groups and assists in addressing the County's housing affordability challenge. Taking account of the existing housing land supply and projected windfall delivery, the RLDP will need to **allocate sufficient land to accommodate 3,658 homes**.
- Provide the **planning policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 additional jobs**. This level of job growth aligns with the projected population and housing growth and takes account of adjustments to household membership rates for key younger age groups and a reduced level of commuting by retaining more of the resident workforce and growing our working age demographic. There has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer term and in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home is something that we wish to encourage and enable. This provides residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving this level of job growth, whilst also achieving the Welsh Government and Council's aim of reducing the need for commuting. This approach will help to reduce congestion, emissions and pollution, improve the work-life balance for employees and employers, support local businesses/services and enable the creation of sustainable vibrant communities and '20 minute neighbourhoods'²⁸.
- Address economic growth and resilience within the County through the **provision of a sufficient range and choice of employment land**. To enable this a minimum of 43ha of employment land will be allocated to support the provision of industrial and business development (classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987), the location of which will be determined in the Deposit Plan. Other key employment sectors including retail, tourism and agriculture will also be an integral part of the County's economy and supported through the policy framework in

²⁸ 20 Minute Neighbourhoods are strong, well connected neighbourhoods where people live within a 20 minute walking distance of key everyday services. The RLDP supports a placemaking approach to future development and the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods.

the Deposit Plan. This approach reflects the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Ambition Statement and Investment Prospectus.

- Distribute growth proportionately across the County's most sustainable settlements. Whilst housing and employment growth will be focused on the higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy, appropriate growth will also be channelled to the County's most sustainable rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and resilient communities throughout Monmouthshire.

Collectively these measures will help us to fulfil our core objectives and create sustainable and resilient communities where an enhanced economically active aged population can both live and work in the County through supporting/enabling remote and home working and local jobs in a range of sectors. Fundamentally, the Strategy will address the Council's key climate change objectives and reflect national planning policy placemaking principles whereby commuting/the need to travel is reduced and residents can access and support services/businesses locally, thereby enabling sustainable and vibrant communities.

RLDP Growth and Spatial Strategy Options

- 4.7 The Sustainable and Resilient Communities strategy was arrived at following careful consideration of how much growth (housing and employment) is required over the Plan period (2018-2033) and where in the County this growth should be located, in order to deliver the RLDP vision and objectives identified above. This aligns with Policy 1 of Future Wales 2040 which supports sustainable growth in all parts of Wales that seeks to address local aspirations and need. A number of alternative demographic, dwelling and employment-led growth options and spatial options for the RLDP have been considered and assessed, the details of which are set out in the Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020). This Paper provides a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each option and considers the extent to which they will achieve the RLDP's objectives. The options have also been assessed under the ISA process as set out in the Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Report²⁹. This forms an important element in the process of selecting the most suitable growth and spatial options for Monmouthshire.
- 4.8 In order to engage with consultees and stakeholders at this early stage and to help build consensus, the Growth and Spatial Options Paper was subject to a four week non-statutory consultation during January/February 2021. The Paper included six growth options and four spatial options for consideration, and identified the Council's

²⁹ <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/sa-sea-hra/>

Preferred Growth and Spatial Options that are considered to best address the County's key issues and challenges and meet the RLDP objectives.

- 4.9 The feedback from this consultation has been considered and is summarised in the Growth and Spatial Options Report of Consultation (June 2021), together with the Council's response to the comments made. Further detail on the growth options, including an explanation of why specific options would/would not meet the Council's ambitions and RLDP objectives, is provided in the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021). This should be read alongside the Preferred Strategy.

RLDP Preferred Growth Strategy - Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy

- 4.10 The Council's Preferred Growth Option has been reviewed in light of consultation responses received to the Growth and Spatial Options Paper. Based on this detailed assessment, the ISA findings, the pressing need to address the key issues and challenges and the need to achieve a sustainable balanced deliverable outcome that has a meaningful impact on the objectives in order to deliver the vision, Growth Option 5 - Population-led projection (with added policy assumptions) – remains the Council's preferred Growth Option. This option best meets the RLDP objectives and is considered to be the most conducive to achieving the RLDP vision and the Council's core purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities across Monmouthshire without adversely impacting on the Council's climate emergency objective, and balancing the impact of development with the County's distinct natural environment. It is also in general conformity with Future Wales' overarching strategy and aligns with a key test of soundness³⁰ of ensuring that the Plan's Vision and Strategy are positive and sufficiently aspirational (as detailed above).

Strategic Policy S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth

In order to meet Monmouthshire's core purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities, between 2018 and 2033 the Plan will make provision for:

- **7,215 new jobs; and**
- **8,366* homes to meet a housing requirement of 7,605 homes.**

The focus of this development will be in accordance with the spatial strategy to distribute growth proportionately across the County's most sustainable settlements, as outlined in the sustainable settlement hierarchy set out in Policy S2.

*This figure includes an indicative 10% flexibility allowance, which will be subject to further consideration and refinement at Deposit Plan stage

³⁰ Development Plans Manual, Edition 3, WG March 2020

- 4.11 The Preferred Growth Strategy makes provision for a total of 8,366 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,605 homes over the Plan period 2018-2033 (this provision is based indicatively on a 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This results in a growth of the County's population of 12,443 (13.2%) and households of 7,255 (18.1%) over the Plan period.
- 4.12 The Strategy is based on a population-led scenario with added policy assumptions to address the County's key demographic and affordability issues. The policy assumptions adjust in-migration rates to reflect local trends over a five year period (2015-2020) to take into account the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls, increase the household formation rates for three key younger age groups and reduce the commuting ratio to reflect the Council's aim of addressing the unbalanced demographic in the County by retaining younger age groups and reducing out-commuting. The reduction in commuting also aligns with Welsh Government's long-term ambition of 30% of Welsh workers working from or near home,³¹ and the Welsh Government's transport policy hierarchy which seeks to reduce the need to travel in the first instance, followed by active travel, then public transport, then the private car.
- 4.13 The Strategy also incorporates an affordable housing policy-led element, which aims to meet 10% of the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) need on housing sites which deliver 50% affordable housing. This is considered to represent an appropriate starting point for the affordable housing policy-led element as it is widely accepted that the affordable housing need identified in the LHMA is beyond the scope of the development plan process to deliver in isolation and the resultant housing requirement addresses the RLDP issues/objectives and performs well against the ISA themes. Further detail on this scenario is set out in the Edge Analytics Report - Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence, November 2020, the Edge Analytics Report - The Affordable Housing Evidence, November 2020 and the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper, June 2021.
- 4.14 It is recognised that in order to create sustainable and resilient communities we must seek to achieve a more balanced age structure and enable those people who are currently unable to afford to buy or rent a home to remain in the County. The Preferred Growth Strategy assists in addressing these key demographic and affordability challenges.
- 4.15 Given the RLDP's key role in strengthening the local economy and ensuring an appropriate economic base for people to live and work in the County, the Preferred Growth Strategy seeks to address the unbalanced demographic in the County by retaining the younger age groups and reducing out-commuting. It aims to create a more balanced population structure to ensure that the County has a sufficient population base of working aged people to support the economy and to ensure our

³¹ <https://gov.wales/aim-30-welsh-workforce-work-remotely>

communities are sustainable and resilient, and to provide a level of growth that can provide opportunities for younger people to both stay in and move to the area. Addressing these key issues is directly relevant to achieving Policy 4 of Future Wales 2040 which states that policies should consider how age balanced communities can be achieved, where depopulation should be reversed and consider the role of new affordable and market housing, employment opportunities, local services and greater mobility in tackling these challenges. Similarly, Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy – seeks to support sustainable, appropriate and proportionate growth in a range of sectors including the foundational sector and emerging technology businesses to help rural areas unlock their potential and provide an economic base to retain a more balanced population.

- 4.16 The Strategy begins to address the unbalanced and ageing demographic in the County with an uplift in the 0-19 and 30-49 age groups. The retention and provision of more established households in the 30-49 age groups will assist in achieving a younger, economically active population and in counter-balancing the ageing population, ensuring the social, cultural and economic sustainability of our communities. The projected increase in one and two-person (no children) households in the most absolute terms over the Plan period (25.5% and 16.1% respectively) will also assist in addressing the issues/challenges around demography. The Strategy will consequently assist in ensuring our communities are balanced and socially sustainable, particularly in terms of demography, which is a key RLDP objective and the importance of which has been clearly demonstrated during the current pandemic.
- 4.17 The Preferred Growth Strategy also seeks to address housing affordability which is one of the most fundamental challenges facing Monmouthshire’s communities. High average house prices³² and high house prices in relation to earnings in the County has resulted in a pressing need for affordable housing. Consequently, a significant proportion of people cannot afford to buy or rent a home so either leave the County, or have to live with their parents or in shared housing for longer. The current pandemic has further increased the need for affordable homes and revealed the extent of hidden homelessness in the County. The Minister for Housing and Local Government has announced that post-Covid-19, no-one should return to the streets and Welsh Government’s Building Better Places response to Covid-19 also highlights how the delivery of new social and market housing can make a significant contribution to economic recovery and social cohesion.
- 4.18 In order to address this issue, the Preferred Growth Strategy incorporates an affordable housing policy-led element. This will assist in addressing this fundamental challenge by providing opportunities to retain/house those in need of affordable homes³³. Sensitivity testing was undertaken as part of the Growth and Spatial Options

³² £297,628 March 2020, Hometrack

³³ Affordable housing as defined in Technical Advice Note 2 Planning and Affordable Housing (WG, 2006)

work in relation to affordable housing, the aim of which was to address the key issues associated with housing affordability in the County. These dwellings will be delivered on sites comprising at least 50% affordable housing and will meet 10% of the total affordable housing need within the County identified by Monmouthshire's Local Housing Market Assessment 2020³⁴. This element of the Strategy will deliver approximately 1,551 homes over the Plan period (divided equally between affordable and market homes, including 10% flexibility allowance). This approach will help to explicitly address the key housing affordability issue in the County (RLDP Objectives 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13) and is consistent with Policy 7 of Future Wales 2040 (Welsh Government, February 2021) which requires local planning authorities to identify sites for affordable housing-led developments in response to local needs.

- 4.19 All opportunities to increase the supply of affordable housing will be explored and in considering site allocations, site promoters will be required to demonstrate that sites assist in meeting the Plan's objectives in addition to being viable and deliverable. Sites associated with the affordable housing policy-element growth will need to demonstrate that they are viable and deliverable with the provision of 50% affordable housing on site. These sites will be specifically included within the Strategy to provide a higher proportion of affordable housing to address the key issue of affordability in line with the requirements outlined within Future Wales 2040. All other sites will need to demonstrate that they are viable and deliverable based on the affordable housing thresholds that will emerge as part of the high-level viability appraisal being undertaken to establish the appropriate affordable housing thresholds. This will be a key consideration in the Plan preparation process.
- 4.20 In terms of economic growth, the RLDP is underpinned by a level of growth that seeks to address the issues currently impacting on economic growth such as a shrinking working age population and high levels of out commuting. The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy provides the planning policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 additional jobs over the Plan period (481 jobs per annum). It should be noted that not all of these jobs will be in planning B-class uses: jobs will be delivered through a range of sectors such as tourism, leisure and retail. Supporting job growth in the County will also reduce the need to travel and travel to work distances, which will assist in addressing our challenges in relation to climate change.
- 4.21 Whilst the Strategy projects a significant growth in jobs over the Plan period, it is becoming widely accepted that the fundamental shift in working practices experienced as a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic, with a significant increase in people working from home/remotely, has made it less important where some jobs are located as employees no longer need to commute for work in many cases. This has

³⁴ Meeting 10% of the need identified in the LHMA on sites where at least 50% of the homes are affordable forms a starting point, the 10% target may be refined in light of the evidence as we progress through the Plan process.

provided the opportunity for many people to live and work in the same location via a new remote working approach.

- 4.22 The Preferred Strategy therefore aims to build on this shift and the benefits that have occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic, as recognised in Welsh Government's Building Better Places response to Covid-19. This acknowledges that even when all restrictions are lifted, the impacts on people working from home are likely to have longer term impacts on where and how we work. In this respect, these changes have opened up new opportunities for jobs to be secured through the increased propensity to work from home/remotely, including via community-based remote working hubs. It is expected that the trend for increased home and remote working will continue over the longer term in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home, making it less important where the jobs are located as commuting is reduced as a result of changing working habits.
- 4.23 Increased remote/home working will mean both employers and employees will have greater flexibility over where to locate with quality of life and environment potentially becoming increasingly important to Monmouthshire's benefit. Monmouthshire is a very attractive proposition and stands to gain from an increased economically active population without the associated problems of increased commuting, and local businesses and services would benefit from increased custom and footfall with workers spending their wages in local businesses and supporting local services helping to create vibrant neighbourhoods and sense of place.
- 4.24 The Covid-19 pandemic has also affected home-buying trends with an emphasis on quality of life, house size and access to outdoor green space rather than a focus on commuting times. Monmouthshire is a very attractive proposition and stands to gain from an increased economically active population without the associated problems of increased commuting. Local businesses and services would benefit from increased custom and footfall with workers spending their wages in local businesses rather than in the town/city in which they previously worked, helping to create vibrant neighbourhoods and sense of place. Appropriately located growth will increase the customer base and workforce supporting local facilities, businesses and services. Notwithstanding this, there remains a need to provide a sufficient range and choice of employment land in the County as not all businesses are able to operate remotely. To enable this the RLDP will allocate a minimum of 43ha of employment land, the location of which will be determined in the Deposit Plan.
- 4.25 The Preferred Growth Strategy promotes sustainable economic growth that will help reduce levels of commuting and promote self-contained communities, ensuring the environmental and economic sustainability of our communities. This will be achieved by providing policy support to enable and facilitate home/remote working, enabling economic growth through supporting the delivery of the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Growth and Ambition Statement, Investment Prospectus

and climate emergency declaration, maximising opportunities from Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, targeting growth in key economic sectors and providing appropriate employment land in the right locations. Further information on employment land provision is set out in Strategic Policy S13.

- 4.26 Overall, the Preferred Growth Strategy will support the growth of sustainable and resilient communities in the County up to 2033, will assist in meeting the Council's ambitions and aspirations and align with proposed key elements of the RLDP objectives (as detailed in the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper). It will enable the provision of a sufficient range and choice of homes, both market and affordable, the need for which has been heightened by the current pandemic. The level of growth will also help support the rural economy and assist in addressing rural isolation. The increased reliance on access to local facilities and services during the current pandemic, has highlighted their importance to our communities. Policy interventions are likely to be required to ensure the housing mix achieves the objective of demographic balance and that carbon emissions are minimised. The Preferred Growth Strategy performs positively against the ISA themes relating to population and communities, health and well-being, economy/employment, transport and equalities. The Strategy also conforms with Policy 1 of Future Wales 2040 and meets a key 'Test of Soundness' of ensuring that the Plan's vision and strategy are positive and sufficiently aspirational (as detailed above).
- 4.27 A summary of the implications of the preferred growth strategy on population, households, dwellings and employment levels over the Plan period is set out in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy – Summary of the Implications for Population, Households, Dwellings and Employment

Preferred Growth Strategy	Change 2018 – 2033				Average per year			Total 2018-2033	
	Increase in Population	% Increase in Population	Increase in Households	% Increase in Households	Net Migration*	Number of Dwellings**	Number of Jobs	Number of Dwellings**	Number of Jobs
	12,443***	13.2%***	7,255	18.1%	1,223***	507	481***	7,605	7,215***

* The net migration rate is the difference between the number of people moving into the County and the number of people leaving the County. When the number of people coming in is larger than the number of people leaving a positive net migration rate occurs.

**Excluding 10% flexibility allowance

***These figures only include the market element of the Affordable Housing Policy-led growth as the affordable housing need figure is derived from the LHMA and represents people already living and working in the County. As such, these people are already factored into the residential population and would not impact on population or job numbers.

Source: Monmouthshire Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence, Edge Analytics November 2020

S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth - Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 1 – Economic Growth/Employment Objective 9 – Demography Objective 10 – Housing Objective 11 – Placemaking Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities Objective 15 – Accessibility
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 1 – Where Wales will Grow Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes Policy 34 - Green Belts in the South East
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Strategic and Spatial Choices Theme (Chapter 3)
Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (Page 14) Changing working practices: our future need for employment land (Page 20)
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	A prosperous Wales A resilient Wales A more equal Wales A Wales of cohesive communities
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change. • Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.
Key Evidence	Growth and Spatial Options Paper – December 2020 Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper – June 2021 Growth and Spatial Options Report of Consultation – June 2021 Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence Report, Edge Analytics November 2020 Housing Background Paper – June 2021
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

Replacement LDP Spatial Options

- 4.28 As well as setting out the preferred level of growth required over the Plan period, the RLDP must also put forward a clear spatial strategy for where this growth should be located in the County. Growth should be directed towards the County's most sustainable settlements to enable sustainable placemaking and to deliver the Council's core purpose of helping to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations.
- 4.29 Given the predominantly rural character of Monmouthshire, it is clear that some settlements have more potential to facilitate sustainable placemaking and to accommodate growth than others. The ability of settlements to accommodate growth is also dependent on their role, function, infrastructure, connectivity and capacity. Reflecting PPW11 and the Plan's aim of creating sustainable and resilient communities, a Sustainable Settlement Appraisal³⁵ has been prepared to identify those settlements which are best suited to accommodate future growth in terms of their location, role and function. This has involved an assessment of the current role and function of settlements, as well as an understanding of the relationships between settlements and their potential future roles. This appraisal should be read alongside the Preferred Strategy.
- 4.30 The methodology used for the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal is based on the approach set out in the draft South East Wales Strategic Planning Group (SEWSPG) Pathfinder Group Sustainable Settlement Appraisal Paper (SSAP), with some localised refinements to reflect Monmouthshire's rural character. Regard has also been had to relevant guidance set out in the Development Plans Manual (WG, March 2020). A total of 55 settlements have been assessed as part of the appraisal, which considers a range of factors to help establish a sustainable settlement hierarchy that can identify the most appropriate locations to accommodate future growth. To this end, the assessment is based on three guiding principles and further refined to take account of population and settlement size:
- Principle 1 – The level of sustainable transport and accessibility in and around settlements.
 - Principle 2 – The availability of local facilities and services in and around settlements.
 - Principle 3 – The level of employment opportunities in and around settlements.
- 4.31 This appraisal has enabled settlements to be grouped into different tiers based upon their role and function and has helped to inform the Plan's settlement hierarchy which is set out in Policy S2. However, it should be noted that the results of this assessment

³⁵The Sustainable Settlement Appraisal can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

will form part of a larger evidence base and whilst it will give some indication of the relative sustainability of the settlements, there are other criteria that will also need to be taken into consideration. For instance, any decisions on whether or not to allocate particular sites for development in the settlements will also depend on such issues as their impact on the physical form of the settlement, landscape setting, environmental constraints, infrastructure capacity and placemaking.

- 4.32 As part of the RLDP process, settlement boundaries (where relevant) will be reviewed in accordance with the settlement hierarchy, having regard to growth requirements and the Preferred Strategy. Development proposals will be directed to the most appropriate settlements at a scale commensurate with their role/function, environmental sensitivities and community needs, including affordable housing need. The boundary review will demarcate the extent of the built settlements from the countryside and provide certainty as to where appropriate development will be permitted. Where possible, the RLDP will prioritise the re-use/redevelopment of brownfield land, although it is recognised that such opportunities are limited in Monmouthshire.
- 4.33 Housing and employment opportunities need to be well-connected to ensure that the Council's placemaking aspirations are met and to reduce the need to travel. The Strategy assumes that housing development without employment opportunities in the same broad locations (and vice versa) is less sustainable and should be avoided. However, given the predominantly rural nature of the County this will not always be achievable. The fundamental shift in working patterns experienced as a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic has also made it less important where some jobs are located as employees no longer need to commute for work. This shift has/will continue to open up new opportunities for jobs to be secured through the increased propensity to work from home/remotely, including via community-based remote working hubs. Infrastructure improvements must be aligned with new developments, including improvements to transport networks, green infrastructure, utilities, health, education and social facilities. Therefore, the terms 'growth and development' refer to the balance of housing, employment opportunities and accompanying infrastructure.
- 4.34 Within the framework of the settlement hierarchy, four spatial options have been considered and assessed as a means of accommodating future growth (housing and employment) in the County, as detailed in the Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020)³⁶. The Paper identified the Preferred Spatial Option that is considered to best address the County's key issues and challenges and meet the RLDP objectives. The Paper provides a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each spatial option, along with a map to portray a spatial illustration, and considers

³⁶ The Growth and Spatial Options Paper can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/plan-preparation/growth-and-spatial-options/>

the extent to which each option will achieve the RLDP's objectives. The options have also been assessed under the ISA process as set out in the Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Report³⁷. This forms an important element in the process of selecting the most suitable spatial option for Monmouthshire. As noted above, the Growth and Spatial Options Paper was subject to non-statutory consultation and engagement for a four week period between January and February 2021.

- 4.35 Further detail on the spatial options, including an explanation of why specific options would/would not meet the Council's ambitions and RLDP objectives, is provided in the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021)³⁸. This should be read alongside the Preferred Strategy.

Replacement LDP Preferred Spatial Strategy

The Preferred Spatial Option has been reviewed in light of consultation responses received as part of the stakeholder engagement. Based on this detailed assessment, the ISA findings, the pressing need to address the key challenges and the need to achieve a sustainable balanced deliverable outcome that has a meaningful impact on the objectives in order to deliver the vision, Spatial Option 2 - Distribute Growth Proportionately across the County's most Sustainable Settlements – remains the Council's preferred Spatial Option.

- 4.36 The Preferred Spatial Strategy seeks to distribute development across the County in a proportionate manner that reflects and addresses the aims of the overarching Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy. It will distribute growth across Primary Settlements, Secondary Settlements, Severnside and those Rural Settlements identified as having capacity for growth and/or in need of development to sustain them, including a small amount of development in the most sustainable Rural Settlements to bring forward affordable housing. The level of growth will be proportionate to a settlement's size and amenities, and will reflect affordable housing need as identified in the LHMA in both urban and rural areas – further details on this are provided in the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal³⁹ and Housing Background Paper⁴⁰. This Spatial Strategy provides a land use framework that will help to deliver the Council's core purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities for current and future generations.

³⁷ The Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report can be viewed <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/sa-sea-hra/>

³⁸ The Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

³⁹ The Sustainable Settlement Appraisal can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

⁴⁰ The Housing Background Paper can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

- 4.37 As such, the focus of growth will be channelled towards the most sustainable settlements that benefit from significant services, facilities, employment opportunities and active travel networks. The increased reliance on access to local facilities and services during the current pandemic has highlighted the importance of these to our communities. Importantly, the Preferred Spatial Strategy also allows some growth in the County's most sustainable rural settlements to support/enhance such areas, to bring forward affordable housing and address rural isolation. This is imperative given the predominantly rural nature of the County.
- 4.38 The Preferred Spatial Strategy provides the opportunity for a sufficient range and choice of homes, both market and affordable, and jobs to be provided throughout the County. Housing growth will be distributed proportionately and reflect affordable housing need in both urban and rural areas. This will assist in ensuring our communities are balanced and socially sustainable, particularly in terms of demography, which is a key RLDP objective and the importance of which has been clearly demonstrated during the current pandemic. Likewise, employment growth will be directed to sustainable locations across the County, which will assist in reducing the need to travel and levels of out-commuting, and promoting self-contained communities which are also key objectives of the RLDP. It is, however, recognised that in light of the Covid-19 pandemic there has been an increase in home and remote working which is likely to continue over the longer term⁴¹ and further reduce commuting levels over the Plan period (as detailed above). The Plan will seek to create a planning policy framework that will facilitate/enable remote working opportunities and emerging ideas such as local working hubs.
- 4.39 The spatial framework for distributing growth in the County has regard to the overarching principles of Future Wales 2040 by guiding growth towards building sustainable places that support placemaking principles but applied within a Monmouthshire setting to reflect the predominantly rural context. In this respect, the dominant role of the County towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow, Monmouth and Severnside Area focused around the town of Caldicot, provide the focus of urban growth within a Monmouthshire context. This will be supported by an appropriate level of growth in the smaller settlements and a number of rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and vibrant rural communities consistent with the aims of Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities of Future Wales 2040 (February 2021).

⁴¹ Welsh Government announced in September 2020 that they have a long-term ambition for around 30% of the Welsh workforce to work remotely either from home or near to home using community-based remote working hubs <https://gov.wales/aim-30-welsh-workforce-work-remotely>

Sustainable and Resilient Communities Spatial Strategy

Strategic Policy S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy			
<p>In order to deliver sustainable and resilient communities, the main focus for new development will be distributed based on the following settlement hierarchy:</p>			
		Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy	
		Indicative Distribution of Residential Growth*	Distribution of Employment Growth
Settlement Hierarchy		Indicative % of distribution	Indicative No. of homes
Tier 1	Primary Settlements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abergavenny (inc. Llanfoist) • Chepstow • Monmouth (inc. Wyesham) 	23% 18% 17%	1,893 1,521 1,418
Tier 2	Severnside Area comprising of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caldicot • Caerwent • Crick • Magor Undy • Portskewett • Rogiet • Sudbrook 	28% across Severnside Area	2,323 across Severnside Area
Tier 3	Secondary Settlements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penperlleni • Raglan • Usk 	5% across Secondary Settlements	449 across Secondary Settlements
Tier 4	Main Rural Settlements: Devauden Dingestow Little Mill Llandogo Llanellen Llangybi Llanishen Llanover Llanvair Discoed Llanvapley Mathern Penallt Pwllmeyric	9% across Main Rural and Minor Rural Settlements	762 across Main Rural and Minor Rural Settlements
<p>This will be set out in the Deposit RLDP and will be consistent with the spatial strategy and commensurate to the level of housing growth.</p>			

	Shirenewton/ Mynyddbach St Arvans The Narth Tintern Trellech Werngifford/Pandy			
Tier 5	Minor Rural Settlements: Bettws Newydd Broadstone /Catbrook Brynygwenin Coed y Paen Cross Ash Cuckoo's Row Great Oak Grosmont Gwehelog Llanarth Llanddewi Rhydderch Llandegveth Llandenny Llangwm Llansoy Llantilio Crossenny Llantrisant Llanvair Kilgeddin Mitchel Troy Penpergwm The Bryn Tredunnock			
Tier 6	Open Countryside			

Development boundaries will be defined for Settlement Tiers 1 – 4, within which the principle of development is considered to be acceptable, subject to the detailed policy considerations to be set out in the RLDP.

Within Tier 5 – Minor Rural Settlements, minor infilling between existing buildings will be considered acceptable, subject to the detailed policy requirements to be set out in the RLDP.

Outside of Tiers 1 – 5, open countryside policies will apply where planning permission will only be allowed for the following types of development, subject to satisfying detailed planning criteria:

- Acceptable conversions of rural buildings
- Sub-divisions of existing dwellings
- Rural Enterprise Dwellings
- One Planet Development

- **Rural diversification and rural enterprise uses**
- **Affordable housing exception sites adjoining settlement boundaries to meet local needs**

*Figures include an indicative 10% flexibility allowance which will be subject to further consideration and refinement at Deposit Plan stage. The spatial distribution figures should be treated as indicative as they may alter following the consideration of sites submitted as part of the second Call for Candidate Sites and detailed site assessment work.

4.40 Policy S2 seeks to focus new development associated with the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy on the primary settlements of Abergavenny (including Llanfoist), Monmouth (including Wyesham), Chepstow and the Severnside area, together with a proportionate amount of growth to the lower tier settlements. It sets out the indicative proportion of residential growth to be accommodated by each of the settlement tiers (a full breakdown can be found in the Housing Background Paper). The exact distribution of development will follow in the Deposit RLDP following the second call for candidate sites and subsequent site assessments. Any decisions on whether or not to allocate particular sites for development in the settlements will also depend on such issues as their impact on the physical form of the settlement, placemaking, carbon footprint, landscape setting, environmental constraints and infrastructure capacity. Where growth cannot be met in an individual settlement, development will be directed toward a same tier or higher tier settlement within the same Housing Market Area. A map of the Housing Market Areas is provided in the Housing Background Paper. Further refinement of the Main Rural and Minor Rural Settlements will take place for the Deposit Plan to establish which of these settlements are appropriate to accommodate a proportionate amount of growth to meet local needs and support sustainable rural communities.

4.41 To encourage the promotion of sustainable communities where residents can live and work in the same area, housing growth will be accompanied by a commensurate amount of employment land. The proportion of employment growth to be accommodated in the settlement tiers will be set out in the Deposit RLDP. The submission of additional candidate sites for employment uses, aligned with our Growth and Ambition Strategy and Investment Prospectus, is sought during the second Call for Candidate Sites. It is, however, recognised that there has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer term in accordance with Welsh Government’s ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home. This provides residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving the level of job growth, whilst also achieving a key RLDP objective of reducing the need to commute and thereby supporting our climate change objectives.

- 4.42 The Preferred Spatial Strategy aligns with key elements of the RLDP objectives (as detailed in the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper) and performs positively against ISA themes relating to population and communities, health and wellbeing, economy and employment and equalities/social inclusion. The ISA recognises that the Strategy will likely positively address existing demographic issues, encouraging younger people to reside and work in the County, and performs positively in terms of providing housing to meet the identified needs of the County. It will provide affordable housing throughout the settlement hierarchy, ensuring a range and choice of homes is delivered, to assist in enabling a more balanced population and sustainable communities.
- 4.43 While growth will be focused in the most sustainable settlements, it must be recognised that landscape quality and agricultural land quality are high throughout the County, and as such these challenges cannot be avoided via a different spatial option. For example, all of our settlements are surrounded by agricultural land with a high level classification as best and most versatile land. Rather, the RLDP will seek to allocate those sites that are the best connected, most sustainable, best deliver placemaking and are least harmful, which will require balanced consideration and trade-offs at Deposit Plan stage. This is likely to mean allocating some sites for development that were rejected in the Adopted LDP.
- 4.44 Future Wales 2040 (Policy 34) requires the South East Wales Strategic Development Plan to identify a Green Belt to the north of Cardiff, Newport and the eastern part of the region to manage urban form and growth. The South East Wales Regional Strategic Diagram set out in Future Wales indicates the indicative extent of the Green Belt in the region which includes part of rural Monmouthshire. The Spatial Strategy has regard to Policy 34 and the indicative Green Belt boundary. Monmouthshire's five towns fall outside of the indicative Green Belt boundary and national planning policy⁴² allows for extensions to existing settlements within and adjoining the Green Belt of an appropriate scale having regard to the identified and longer term need for development land, the effects of development pressures in areas beyond the Green Belt, the need to minimise demand for travel, and the purpose of the overall greenbelt designation. PPW11 states that this may require land to be safeguarded and boundaries of proposed Green Belts must be carefully defined to achieve this.
- 4.45 Table 5 sets out a summary of the overarching indicative spatial distribution of housing provision for the RLDP. A full breakdown of each component is set out in Table 10 of the Housing Background Paper.

⁴² PPW11, paragraph 3.72

Table 5: Summary of Indicative Spatial Distribution of Housing Provision*

Settlement	Total Commitments		Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy		Total Housing Provision 2018-2033*
	Completions 2018-2021	Existing Commitments; LDP Rollover Allocations	Total Allowances (Small Sites; Windfalls)	RLDP New Housing Allocations (Dwellings)	
Abergavenny (incl. Llanfoist)	362	207	437	887	1,893
Chepstow	96	484	212	729	1,521
Monmouth (incl. Wyesham)	261	226	182	749	1,418
Severnside	300	886	283	854	2,323
Secondary Settlements	87	45	68	249	449
Rural Settlements	112	94	366	190	762
Total	1218	1942	1,548	3,658	8,366

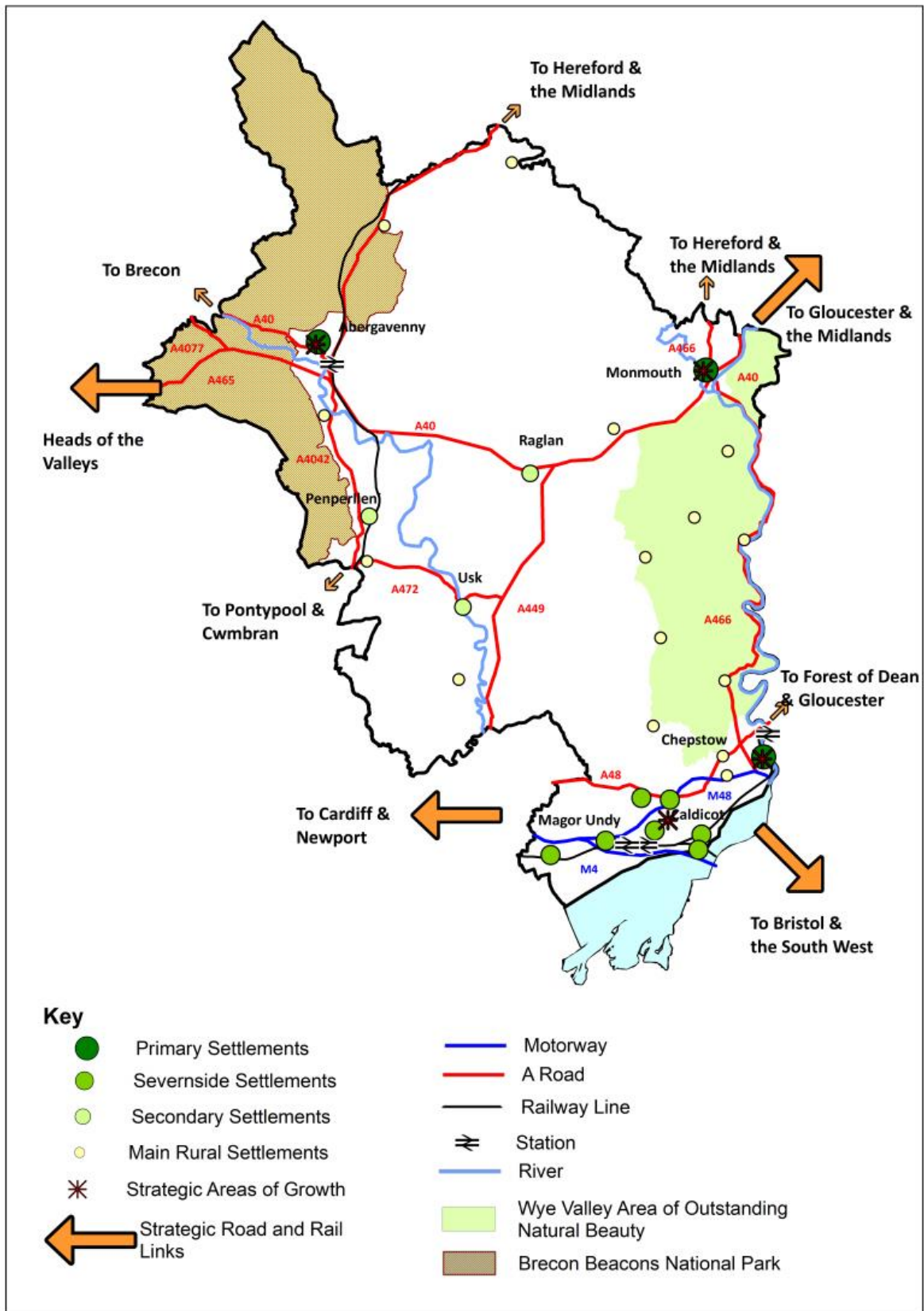
*Figures include an indicative 10% flexibility allowance which will be subject to further consideration and refinement at Deposit Plan stage. The spatial distribution figures should be treated as indicative as they may alter following the consideration of sites submitted as part of the second Call for Candidate Sites and detailed site assessment work.

S2 – Spatial Distribution & Settlement Hierarchy - Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 1 – Economic Growth/Employment Objective 9 – Demography Objective 10 – Housing Objective 11 – Place-making Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities Objective 15 – Accessibility
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 1 – Where will Wales Grow Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes Policy 34 – Green Belts in the South East
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Strategic and Spatial Choices Theme (Chapter 3)
Building Better Places (W G, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Staying local: creating neighbourhoods Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods Changing working practices: our future need for employment land

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (W G, 2015)	A prosperous Wales A resilient Wales A more equal Wales A Wales of cohesive communities
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change. • Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.
Key Evidence	Sustainable Settlement Appraisal – June 2021 Candidate Site Register First Call – February 2019 Review of Candidate Sites against the Preferred Strategy – June 2021 Growth and Spatial Options Paper – December 2020 Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper – June 2021 Housing Background Paper – June 2021
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

4.46 The Preferred Strategy is illustrated in the Key Diagram below.

Figure 5: Preferred Strategy Key Diagram



5 IMPLEMENTATION & DELIVERY - STRATEGIC POLICIES

Introduction

- 5.1 This section sets out the Strategic Policies which form the framework for implementing and delivering the Preferred Strategy of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) as set out in Strategic Policies S1 and S2. The format and structure reflect PPW11’s placemaking themes and the overarching aim of delivering sustainable development. The Strategic Policies are therefore grouped by the planning policy topics clustered around the four placemaking themes in PPW11⁴³:

PPW11 Placemaking Themes	Planning Policy Topics Set Out in PPW11
Strategic & Spatial Choices	Good Design / Promoting Healthier Places / The Welsh Language / Sustainable Management of Natural Resources / Strategic Planning / Placemaking in Rural Areas / Managing Settlement Form
Active & Social Places	Transport / Housing / Retail & Commercial Centres / Community Facilities / Recreational Spaces
Productive & Enterprising Places	Economic Development / Tourism / The Rural Economy / Transportation Infrastructure / Telecommunications / Energy / Minerals / Waste
Distinctive & Natural Places	Landscape / Coastal Areas / Historic Environment / Green Infrastructure / Biodiversity / Water, Air, Soundscape & Light / Flooding / De-risking

- 5.2 It should be noted that not all of the PPW11 planning policy topics listed above are covered by the RLDP Strategic Policies. Some of those topics are best considered as underpinning matters of detail via other policies that will be included within the Deposit RLDP. Others are adequately covered by national planning policy which need not be duplicated via the RLDP.
- 5.3 It is recognised that there will be some overlap between the respective themes and the policies and as such they should be read in conjunction with one another. Each section highlights the relevant strategic policy, the reasoned justification for the policy and the summary table following each of the strategic policies provides a link back to the relevant RLDP objectives, Future Wales 2040 policies, PPW11 themes, Building Better Places priorities, Monmouthshire PSB Well-Being Plan (MWBEP) and the Well-being of Future Generations (WBFGE) Goals. An outline of how the Deposit Plan will respond with further criteria or topic based policies, where relevant, is also included. The ‘delivery and monitoring section’ at the end of each policy will be developed as part of the Deposit Plan. A review of the existing Local Development Plan (LDP) detailed Development Management policies is set out in Appendix 3. This identifies

⁴³ Figure 6 PPW11 – Page 20

policies which are functioning effectively, those where changes are likely to be required and highlights ones which may no longer be appropriate for inclusion in the RLDP.

STRATEGIC & SPATIAL CHOICES

- 5.4 Within the context of PPW11's Strategic and Spatial Choices theme, the policies within this section focus on setting out how Monmouthshire's preferred level and spatial distribution of growth as set out in policies S1 and S2, will contribute to supporting sustainable and resilient communities. Where development does take place it is important that it contributes to the creation of sustainable places that focus on delivering placemaking and ensuring that Monmouthshire's communities are sustainable in the long-term and are attractive places to live, work and visit.

Sustainable Placemaking & High Quality Design

Strategic Policy S3 – Sustainable Placemaking & High Quality Design

Development shall contribute to creating high quality, attractive and sustainable places that support the well-being of the community. In order to achieve this, all development should:

- i) Include and promote high quality, sustainable, safe and inclusive design that offers ease of access for all and provides connectivity between uses;**
- ii) Promote the co-location of uses to minimise the need to travel and to maximise opportunities for active travel and public transport use;**
- iii) Promote a Green Infrastructure-led approach that respects local distinctiveness and the character of the site and its surroundings; and**
- iv) Protect and enhance the natural, historic and built environments and show an understanding of how these function together to contribute towards the quality of places.**

- 5.5 Monmouthshire is renowned for its distinctive identity and the high quality of its natural, historic and built environments. It is intended to protect and enhance the quality of the County's settlements by ensuring that new development is designed to a high standard that creates buildings and places that are sustainable, well-integrated with their context and contribute to the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of strong, vibrant and healthy communities. The Plan will seek to achieve this by ensuring new development incorporates the principles of sustainable placemaking and good design.
- 5.6 PPW11 places the delivery of sustainable places which are attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcoming, healthy and friendly at the heart of the Plan and notes it as the optimal outcome of development plans. This is reflected in the Welsh

Government Building Better Places (July 2020) document where placemaking is considered to be a core value in the Covid-19 recovery in Wales. In order to achieve this, development plans must take forward the five national sustainable placemaking outcomes including creating and sustaining communities and facilitating accessible and healthy environments, supported by the five objectives of good design including access, character, community safety and movement, to develop an overarching set of outcomes for the RLDP.

- 5.7 The RLDP strategy and policies will seek high quality sustainable design and green infrastructure and will place people, natural resources and the natural environment at the heart of the design process. It should embrace a green infrastructure-led approach that is capable of delivering a wide range of social, economic, environmental, and health and well-being benefits for local communities and the County as a whole. This will enhance the character and identity of Monmouthshire’s settlements and countryside, encourage sustainable lifestyles and create attractive, safe and accessible places. The achievement of this will depend largely upon identifying and understanding the local characteristics which are distinctive to an area: a green infrastructure approach to design will be essential to delivering placemaking. A Placemaking Wales Charter has been developed by Welsh Government and the Design Commission for Wales in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership, the Council will consider signing up to these principles through the political process.

Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 3 – Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape. Objective 8 – Health and Well-being Objective 11 – Place-making Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities Objective 15 – Accessibility Objective 16 – Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language Objective 17 – Climate Change
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	People and Places: Achieving Well-being Through Placemaking (Chapter 2) Strategic and Spatial Choices Theme (Chapter 3)- Placemaking In Action: Good Design Making Better Places
Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places – post Covid-19 considerations: Considering Health and Well-being throughout the Planning Process (page 12) Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (Page 14)

	<p>Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods (Page 16)</p> <p>Revitalising our town centres (Page 18)</p> <p>Changing working practices – our future need for employment land (Page 20)</p> <p>Reawakening Wales’ tourism and cultural sectors (Page 21)</p> <p>Green Infrastructure, health and well-being and ecological resilience (Page 22)</p> <p>Improving air quality and soundscapes for better health and well-being (Page 23)</p>
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	<p>A Resilient Wales</p> <p>A Healthier Wales</p> <p>A Wales of Cohesive Communities</p> <p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language</p>
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life. • Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change. • 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.
Key Evidence	TAN 12 Design
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

Climate Change

Strategic Policy S4 – Climate Change
<p>All development proposals will be required to make a positive contribution towards addressing the causes of, and adapting to the impacts of, climate change. Means of achieving this will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Having low/zero carbon energy requirements by reducing energy demand and promoting energy efficiency; ii) Supporting the development of renewable and low/zero carbon energy generation and a presumption against energy generation utilising fossil fuels, fracking and methods that are not low/zero carbon; iii) Utilising sustainable construction techniques and local supplies through the adoption of the circular economy principles; iv) Incorporating water efficiency measures and minimising adverse impacts on water resources and quality;

- v) Promoting the efficient use of land and co-location of uses to minimise the overall need to travel and maximise opportunities for active travel and public transport use;**
- vi) Promoting the provision of ultra-low emission vehicle charging infrastructure to reduce emissions and improve air quality;**
- vii) Support resilience of development through Green Infrastructure solutions including: opportunities for biodiversity and resilient ecosystems, greenspace provision and connectivity, sustainable energy use, local food production and flood attenuation and water resource management; and**
- viii) Avoid locating development in areas at risk of flooding, or where appropriate, minimise the risk of flooding including the incorporation of measures such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and flood resilient design.**

5.8 The need to tackle climate change represents a fundamental challenge if sustainable development and the obligations under the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 are to be delivered. One of the themes embodied in the Well-being of Future Generations Act is the need for ‘a resilient Wales’ whereby there is capacity to adapt to change such as climate change. A key principle of sustainable development, as recognised in PPW11, is tackling climate change by reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change and ensuring that places are resilient to the consequences of climate change. National guidance continues to outline how the planning system can play an important part in improving the sustainability of new developments whilst also tackling climate change. Welsh Government’s Building Better Places document recognises a plan-led approach is the most effective way for the planning system to combat climate change and encourage key steps in achieving the switch to a decarbonised and resilient society. Furthermore, Future Wales has an important role in driving sustainable growth and combating climate change and along with PPW11 stresses the importance of the focus on delivering a decarbonised and resilient Wales through ‘the places we create, the energy we generate, the natural resources and materials we use, and, how we live and travel’ (Page 46). Future Wales contains a number of policies to support their climate change and decarbonisation aspirations. This includes specific policies relating to Heat Networks (Policy 16), Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and Associated Infrastructure (Policy 17) and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments of National Significance (Policy 18). The RLDP will provide a positive planning policy framework to support and enable this approach to support climate change and decarbonisation.

5.9 In May 2019 Monmouthshire County Council passed a motion declaring a climate emergency and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures

to 1.5°C. The Strategy and draft Action Plan⁴⁴ accompanying the declaration were approved by the Council in October 2019, setting out the broad objectives and actions that the Council implement to deliver a net reduction in its own carbon emissions to net zero by 2030. Policy S4 builds on a number of these actions and draws together specific sustainability issues in relation to energy use and generation, efficient resource use and flood risk and provides a framework for sustainable growth which seeks to enable development that both mitigates the causes of climate change and is able to adapt to its likely effects. Such an approach is essential in ensuring that Monmouthshire meets its commitments contained within the Monmouthshire declaration on Climate Emergency (May 2019) and the economic, environmental and social objectives of the RLDP. The Council's Climate Emergency agenda will continue to be monitored and given further consideration in the Deposit RLDP.

- 5.10 The RLDP recognises, however, that the sustainability issues covered by Policy S4 are only part of the solution to addressing climate change, and while the planning system has an important role to play in this agenda, actions by individuals, communities and other organisations outside of the planning system are vital. The principles of sustainable development are wide-ranging and include such aspects as transport, green infrastructure, and the natural environment. These principles are dealt with in the Plan's other Strategic Policies, including S3 – Sustainable Placemaking & High Quality Design, S10 – Sustainable Transport and S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation and are therefore not repeated in this policy. These policies should be considered as a whole.
- 5.11 The RLDP needs to ensure that new development has regard to broader principles of sustainable design in order to significantly reduce energy usage and carbon emissions, such as making the best use of orientation and shading. The Plan will also support, where appropriate, renewable and low/zero carbon energy generation technology, subject to a range of material planning considerations. An assessment of the potential for renewable energy generation, using the Welsh Government Toolkit, will inform the Deposit Plan in terms of specific areas of search or the potential for particular types of renewable and low/zero carbon energy. We will also consider the inclusion of a Policy within the Deposit RLDP to require all new developments to be Zero Carbon Ready in advance of the proposed changes to Building Regulations being implemented in 2025, the details and date of which will be determined in the Deposit RLDP.
- 5.12 PPW11 promotes the principles of a circular economy whereby the use of material resources in the building industry is influenced by making the most appropriate and sustainable use of finite resources. Such an approach sources materials as locally as possible, makes best use of the resources available through design and construction techniques, and minimises waste by re-using materials on site wherever possible.

⁴⁴ The Climate Emergency Strategy and draft Action Plan can be viewed via:
https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2019/11/Climate-and-Decarbonisation_Strategy_v1.0.pdf

- 5.13 The sustainable provision and use of water resources is also an important consideration in terms of building climate change resilience. Developers will be required to use design approaches and techniques that improve water efficiency and minimise adverse impacts on water resources.
- 5.14 Development proposals will be expected to make full and appropriate use of land, with preference given to the development of previously development land, although it is recognised that there are limited opportunities for further significant brownfield development in Monmouthshire. The potential impacts of climate change should be central to the design process, including the contribution that location, density, layout, built form and mix of uses can make towards climate responsive developments. The RLDP categorises settlements into a hierarchy which reflects their relative sustainability and will be a guiding policy in terms of a site's ability to accommodate development. The Plan's aspirations of minimising the need to travel, particularly by the private motor car, and to realise opportunities to incorporate active travel modes and routes, seek to direct development to appropriate settlements which serve to achieve this. Furthermore, there has been an increase in home and remote working as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, which is likely to continue over the longer term, this combined with enhanced sustainable transport opportunities such as active travel networks, improved public transport and electric vehicle charging point infrastructure will help to reduce the impact of transport-based emissions and improvements in air quality. This approach is supported by Policy 12 of Future Wales relating to Regional Connectivity.
- 5.15 A key effect of climate change is the risk of flooding, both in terms of the likelihood of flooding as well as the intensity of flooding. The Development Advice Maps accompanying Technical Advice Note (TAN) 15: Flood Risk (2004) identify the flood risk zones as set out in the TAN. A revised version of this document and associated maps has been subject to consultation, the outcome of which will be taken into consideration as the Plan progresses. The information set out in TAN 15 will have an important influence on where development allocations will be located, along with the type of development, and will also inform appropriate local policies on flood risk whereby subsequent development proposals, in the form of planning applications can be assessed. The approach of the Plan will be to locate highly vulnerable development away from flood risk areas, to assess the implications of development in areas at risk of flooding and to ensure that development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. The use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) must be considered as an integral part of a development to reduce the potential impact of new development with respect to surface water drainage discharges. A separate regulatory framework, namely the Sustainable Drainage Approving Body (SAB) is now in place to ensure this happens. The effective management of surface water drainage can mitigate the impact of development in terms of flooding, water efficiency and water quality.

Links to Wider Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 4 – Flood risk Objective 6 – Land Objective 7 – Natural resources Objective 15 – Accessibility Objective 17 – Climate change
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 8 – Flooding Policy 12 – Regional Connectivity Policy 16 – Heat Networks Policy 17 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and Associated Infrastructure Policy 18 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments of National Significance
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Productive and Enterprising Places Theme (Chapter 5) Distinctive and Natural Places Theme (Chapter 6)
Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places – post Covid-19 considerations: Climate Change and Decarbonisation (Page 11) Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (Page 14) Green Infrastructure, health and well-being and ecological resilience (Page 22) Improving air quality and soundscapes for better health and well-being (Page 23)
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	A resilient Wales A healthier Wales A globally responsible Wales
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life. • Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change. • 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.
Key Evidence	TAN 8: Planning for Renewable Energy (2005) TAN 12: Design TAN 15: Development and Flood Risk (2004) Development Advice Maps (TAN 15) Practice Guidance – Planning for Sustainable Buildings (WG, 2014). To follow in the Deposit: Renewable Energy Assessment (using the Welsh Government Toolkit. Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Supplementary Planning Guidance - March 2016)

	Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment will be prepared to inform the Deposit Plan
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

Infrastructure Provision

Strategic Policy S5 – Infrastructure Provision

Where existing infrastructure is inadequate to serve the development, new or improved infrastructure and facilities to remedy deficiencies must be provided in phase with proposed development. Where provision on-site is not appropriate, off-site provision, or a financial contribution towards it, will be sought.

Financial contributions will also be required towards the future management and maintenance of facilities provided, either in the form of initial support or in perpetuity.

Planning Obligations may be sought to secure improvements in infrastructure, facilities, services and related works, where they are necessary to make development acceptable. In identifying appropriate contributions due regard will be paid to the overall development viability, including the cost of measures that are necessary to physically deliver a development and ensure that it is acceptable in planning terms. Such obligations may include:

1. Affordable Housing Provision
2. Education Facilities
3. Broadband Infrastructure
4. Active Travel
5. Sustainable Transport Measures
6. Transport Infrastructure
7. Recreation and Leisure Facilities including formal and informal open space
8. Green Infrastructure
9. Community and Cultural Facilities
10. Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement
11. Strategic utilities
12. Renewable / Low Carbon Energy Infrastructure
13. Local Climate Change Mitigation and Adaption Measures
14. Flood Risk Management Measures
15. Waste management facilities
16. Commuted payments for the management and maintenance of facilities provided
17. Other facilities and services considered necessary.

In the event that viability considerations indicate that not all the identified contributions can be reasonably required, priority contributions will be determined on the basis of the individual circumstances of each case. In the case of housing developments, priority will be given to the affordable housing required by Policy S7 unless there is an overwhelming need for the available contribution, in whole or in part, to be allocated for some other necessary purpose/s.

Proposals for utility services to improve infrastructure provision will be permitted, subject to detailed planning considerations.

- 5.16 The RLDP recognises the need to ensure that appropriate infrastructure is already in place or can be provided to accommodate the level of growth identified and is reflected in the spatial strategy. The increased reliance on access to local facilities and services has been heightened by the Covid-19 pandemic and has highlighted their importance to communities. The provision of a range of services and facilities is essential to delivering sustainable development and to meeting diverse community needs, and the provision of appropriate infrastructure will be supported by the Plan.
- 5.17 Infrastructure covers a range of services and facilities provided by public and private bodies and includes:
- Physical infrastructure such as transport facilities and related infrastructure (such as footpaths, cycleways), water provision and treatment, sewerage, flood prevention and drainage, waste disposal, power generation and supply, including renewables, digital infrastructure and telecommunications.
 - Community infrastructure such as schools, healthcare, transport services (including public transport), community buildings, community recycling facilities, sport and recreation facilities, open space, etc.
 - Green Infrastructure (as detailed in Strategic Policy S18)
- 5.18 Without appropriate investment to enable the provision of improved or new infrastructure, the proposed level of growth will be neither sustainable nor acceptable. New development will therefore be required to provide or contribute towards the provision of necessary infrastructure to enable it to be provided in a timely manner and to support sustainable development in Monmouthshire. Development will only be permitted when agreement has been reached between the relevant parties on the funding and programmed implementation of required provision in line with Policy S5. Financial contributions may be sought for the management and maintenance of the facilities provided.
- 5.19 Developers should consult and work with statutory undertakers and service providers to ensure that adequate provision is made for such infrastructure – this includes highways, utility services, and, surface water drainage and sewage disposal. Given

Monmouthshire’s rural character, the provision of adequate digital infrastructure is key to enhancing the County’s economic and community connectivity and communication needs and reducing the need to travel. Developers should liaise with broadband infrastructure providers to ensure future digital infrastructure requirements are addressed in developments. The reliance on staying digitally connected has become of particular importance throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and is essential to enable remote/home working in the long term. Welsh Government’s Building Better Places (July 2020) document recognises that having reliable and good quality communication systems in place is essential in helping the economic and social recovery, as a result of Covid-19.

- 5.20 This policy will be delivered through the development management process. Planning contributions can be secured via agreements entered into under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, or via a Community Infrastructure Levy. A decision on which tool best delivers the required infrastructure will be made as the RLDP progresses and the infrastructure needs are fully known. Planning obligations are a means of seeking contributions from developers to enhance the quality of a development, provide community benefits and infrastructure, and mitigate any negative impacts that may arise as a consequence of the development. In line with Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended), the Council will negotiate obligations where these are necessary, relevant to planning, directly related to the proposed development and reasonable in all other respects. Further guidance on the use of planning obligations is provided in PPW11 and Welsh Office Circular 13/97 Planning Obligations. Supplementary Planning Guidance will be prepared to provide further detail on the Council’s Planning Obligations policy.
- 5.21 Planning obligations will be sought, where relevant, in relation to the key infrastructure necessary to support the delivery of the strategy. An Infrastructure Plan will be prepared to accompany the Deposit RLDP, which will identify the key infrastructure needed, anticipated timescales of delivery and potential funding streams to support the delivery of allocated sites.
- 5.22 Where a viability assessment is deemed necessary, the Council will require applicants to provide detailed information and supporting evidence. The Council’s policy requirements should be the starting point for viability appraisals with an expectation that land values will reflect these. Where it is considered necessary to independently assess viability assessments, the costs will be borne by the developer.

Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment Objective 3 – Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape Objective 4 – Flood risk Objective 8 – Health and Well-being

	Objective 10 – Housing Objective 11 – Place-making Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities Objective 14 – Infrastructure Objective 17 – Climate Change
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 13 – Supporting Digital Communications Policy 14 – Planning in Mobile Action Zones
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Strategic and Spatial Choices Theme (Chapter 3) – Supporting Infrastructure
Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places – post Covid-19 considerations: Climate Change and Decarbonisation (page 11) Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (page 14) Active travel- exercise and rediscovered transport methods (page 16) Digital places – the lockdown lifeline (pages 19-20) Green infrastructure, health and well-being and ecological resilience (page 22)
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	A prosperous Wales A resilient Wales A more equal Wales A Wales of cohesive communities A globally responsible Wales
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life. • Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change. • 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.
Key Evidence	Infrastructure Plan to follow alongside Deposit RLDP Viability Assessments for Allocations to follow with the Deposit RLDP
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

ACTIVE & SOCIAL PLACES

- 5.23 The Active & Social Places theme aims to create well-connected and cohesive communities. The Strategic Policies contained within this section seek to deliver well connected, active and healthy communities that have access to good quality homes, services and community facilities.

Delivery of Homes

Strategic Policy S6 – Delivery of Homes

In order to meet the housing requirement of 7,605 new dwellings provision will be made for the development of up to 8,366 new dwellings during the Plan period to enable a 10% flexibility allowance (to be given further consideration through the Deposit Plan preparation process).

- 5.24 A key function of the Plan is to provide an appropriate and deliverable supply of housing land. The Preferred Strategy provides the framework for the provision of 8,366 homes to meet the requirement of 7,605 dwellings over the Plan period (providing a 10% flexibility allowance). In accordance with the Development Plans Manual⁴⁵ (WG, March 2020) an allowance is provisionally made for a 10% flexibility allowance to factor in sites that may not come forward, unforeseen issues or to meet higher aspirations for the County to enable the provision/delivery of additional sites if all sites are delivered. The flexibility allowance will be given further consideration as Plan preparation progresses and may therefore be subject to change based on local evidence.
- 5.25 The provision of 8,366 new homes will be delivered through a number of different housing land supply components. A detailed description of each component is set out in the Housing Background Paper⁴⁶, with a brief summary set out below.

Existing Commitments

- 5.26 Existing commitments comprise of completions made in the first three years of the Plan period (2018 – 2021), existing land supply commitments including sites under construction or sites with planning permission as of 1st April 2021 and LDP ‘Rollover Allocations’, where the site does not benefit from planning permission, but progress can be evidenced (these sites will be kept under review as the Plan progresses).
- 5.27 As noted in the supporting evidence to Policies S1 and S2, the starting point for the overall dwelling requirement is a population-led projection (with added policy assumptions) that aims to address the demographic challenges, out-commuting and

⁴⁵ The Development Plans Manual (March 2020) states that a flexibility allowance must be embedded into the plan and that the Plan will need to evidence there is sufficient flexibility above the requirement to account for non-delivery and unforeseen issues.

⁴⁶ The Housing Background Paper can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

household formation on a County-wide basis whilst adjusting in-migration rates to reflect local trends from a 5 year period (2015-2020) to take into account the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls. The methodology and assumptions behind this are set out in supporting evidence prepared by Edge Analytics⁴⁷. This element of the Strategy establishes a housing requirement of 6,195 (6,815 including 10% flexibility) new homes. This will in part be met by trend based small site and windfall site completions expected over the Plan period. Details of where these windfall sites could potentially come from will be set out in a Housing Potential Study (HPS). Potential sources include possible regeneration schemes within settlements and empty homes and upper floors within town centres.

- 5.28 A residual requirement of 2,107 homes remains once the existing commitments and windfall and site allowances are accounted for. Sites will be allocated to deliver this residual requirement with growth distributed proportionately across urban and rural areas in accordance with the sustainable settlement hierarchy set out in Policy S2.

New allocations Provision – Sustainable & Resilient Communities Growth Strategy

- 5.29 Once all of the existing land supply commitments and allowances for windfall/infill sites and ‘Rollover’ sites have been taken into account, the RLDP will need to make provision for new site allocations to deliver 3,658⁴⁸ homes over and above the existing commitments. Of these 2,107 homes are linked to the population-led element of the Strategy and will be delivered on sites where the appropriate mix of affordable and private market homes will be determined by viability work that is being progressed to inform the Deposit RLDP. The remaining 1,551 homes are derived from the policy-led affordable housing element of the Strategy and will be delivered on sites identified to specifically deliver 50% affordable housing and 50% private market housing. An indicative housing balance table is set out below and shows how the Plan’s housing provision figure is to be met through a mix of commitments, completions to date, allowances for small sites and windfalls, LDP ‘rollover allocations’ and new allocations. This is indicative at present and will be refined as the Plan progresses.

⁴⁷ Updating Demographic Evidence Report (Edge Analytics, November 2020) can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

⁴⁸ The new site allocations figure takes account of completions and windfall and small sites allowances as of 01/04/2021 and the application of the 10% flexibility allowance. Further information with regards to this can be found in the Housing Background Paper which can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

Table 6: Breakdown of Housing Supply

Element	Number of Homes	Notes
Demographic-led Strategy		
Housing Provision	6,815	Housing requirement under the population-led element of the Strategy for 2018-2033 = 6,195 + 10% flexibility allowance, to be considered further in the Deposit Plan
Less Commitments:		
2018-21 Completions	1,218	Comprises 949 homes on large sites and 269 homes on small sites
Existing Land Supply Commitments	1,642	Sites have only been included if construction is already underway or they have planning permission or have planning permission subject to the signing of a S106 agreement as at 01/04/21, and they are expected to come forward over the Plan period.
Less Allocations:		
LDP 'Rollover Allocations'	300	This is based on adopted LDP Strategic Site allocations which do not currently benefit from a planning permission but where progress can be evidenced.
Revised Provision	3,655	
Less Allowances:		
Windfall Allowance (>10 homes)	553 (79 dwellings per annum)	The windfall allowance is calculated on the basis of the last 7 years of the Plan period (2026-2033) ⁴⁹ . An allowance of 79 homes per annum is included. This is a future extrapolation rate which is based on an average of windfall completions over the past 10 years (2011-2021).
Small Site Allowance (<10 homes)	995	If the small sites allowance is calculated on the basis of the remaining 12 years of the Plan period (2021-2033) ⁵⁰ , an allowance of 86 homes per annum would need to be included. This is based on an average of small site completions over the past 10 years (2011-2021), a small site

⁴⁹ To avoid double counting five years of the remaining 12 years of the Plan period have been discounted as large windfall sites with extant permission are included within the existing land supply commitments

⁵⁰ The contribution from small sites for the first three years of the 15-year Plan period are included within the completions

Element	Number of Homes	Notes
Demographic-led Strategy		
		allowance of 1,032 homes. However, following an appraisal of small site opportunities, the allowance for sites of less than 5 homes in rural areas has been discounted by 10%. ^{*51}
Remaining New Allocations Provision	2,107	
Plus Policy-led Affordable Housing Provision:		
	1,551	Housing requirement under the policy-led Affordable Housing element of the strategy for 2018-2033 = 1,410 + 10% flexibility allowance, to be considered further in the Deposit Plan
Total New Allocations Provision	3,658	

*Further information with regards to this can be found in the Housing Background Paper (June 2021)

5.30 The housing requirement of 7,605 homes equates to 507 dwellings per annum up to 2033. This figure is higher than the annual requirement of the Adopted LDP of 450 homes per annum, and is also higher than the completion rate achieved since the start of the Adopted Plan period (average of 300 completions per annum over the last 10 years). This slower than anticipated delivery rate is largely due to the speed at which the Adopted LDP Strategic Housing Sites have come forward. Significant progress is now being made with the delivery of these sites with six of the seven strategic sites now with planning permission⁵². The Council also sought to address the shortfall in housing completions and housing land supply through agreeing an approach to be taken in relation to unallocated housing sites⁵³. One housing site has received planning permission for 130 dwellings under the unallocated sites policy.

5.31 Completions recorded for the 2018 - 2021 period are substantially higher than the average annual completion rates noted above, at 406 homes. The proposed annual build rate of 507 dwellings per annum is considered to represent a balance between

⁵¹ There is limited scope for small site development within our existing rural settlements with many of the development opportunities already taken, to ensure that the small site allowance is achievable the estimated number of completions based on sites of less than 5 that have come forward in our rural settlements over the past 10 years has been discounted by 10%.

⁵² The Adopted LDP Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) October, 2020 can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/annual-monitoring/ldp-annual-monitoring-report/>

⁵³ The Unallocated Housing Sites Council Report 21st Feb 2019 can be viewed via <https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/documents/s19399/1.%20Addressing%20our%20lack%20of%20a%20five%20year%20housing%20land%20supply%20-%20reviewing%20our%20approach%20to%20unallocated%20ho.pdf>

setting a deliverable completions rate when compared against longer term past delivery rates and a rate that addresses the aims of the Plan’s Strategy of providing for sufficient growth to address the demographic, out-commuting and affordability challenges the County is facing, and to enable sustainable and resilient communities, as evidenced in the Edge Analytics Reports (November 2020)⁵⁴. The Preferred Strategy will support the growth of sustainable and resilient communities in the County up to 2033 and will assist in meeting the Council’s ambitions and aspirations.

- 5.32 The Deposit RLDP will set out a housing trajectory to demonstrate the proposed delivery rates of the housing supply components are achievable for the Plan period. Viability appraisals to evidence that key sites are viable and deliverable will also be undertaken to inform the Deposit RLDP.

Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 9 – Demography Objective 10 – Housing Objective 11 – Place-making Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 1 – Where Wales will Grow Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes Policy 34 – Green Belt in SE Wales
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Active and Social Places Theme (Chapter 4)
Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (page 14). Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods (page 16).
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	A resilient Wales A more Equal Wales A Wales of cohesive communities A globally responsible Wales
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.

⁵⁴ Updating Demographic Evidence Report (Edge Analytics, November 2020) can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change. • 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.
Key Evidence	Updating Demographic Evidence Report (Edge Analytics, November 2020) Affordable Housing Evidence Report (Edge Analytics, November 2020) Housing Background Paper – June 2021 Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper – June 2021 Sustainable Settlement Appraisal – June 2021
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

Affordable Homes

Strategic Policy S7 – Affordable Homes

The affordable housing target* for the Plan period of 2018 – 2033 is set at 2,450 homes.

Further detail relating to affordable housing percentage thresholds will be included in the Deposit RLDP to reflect the outcomes of the emerging viability work.

**This target is likely to change and will be finalised in the Deposit RLDP once detailed viability work has been undertaken.*

5.33 Affordable housing represents a key issue to be considered in the preparation of the RLDP particularly in addressing some of the County's key issues relating to demography and affordability, and contributing to the development of sustainable, resilient and balanced communities. The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021) identified a number of issues that the RLDP will seek to address through its affordable housing target:

- Average house prices in the County are high at £297,628 when compared to the Welsh average of £187,477 (Hometrack, March 2020), with the most significant increases experienced in recent years.
- House prices are high in relation to earnings and there is a pressing need for additional affordable housing in the County in both urban and rural areas to assist in ensuring a balanced population.

- A range and choice of housing is needed to both meet the needs of an ageing population and to attract and retain the younger age groups.
- The potential impact on house prices arising from the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls, the ambitions and opportunities associated with the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, together with the opportunities for Monmouthshire as a border county are also factors that need to be taken into account when considering affordability issues.

5.34 The current pandemic has increased the need for affordable homes and revealed the extent of hidden homelessness in the County. The Minister for Housing and Local Government has announced that post-Covid-19, no-one should return to the streets and Welsh Government’s Building Better Places response to Covid-19 also highlights how the delivery of new social and market housing can make a significant contribution to economic recovery and social cohesion. The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the need to ensure the provision of a range and choice of homes in new housing sites to address the County’s affordability issues and build sustainable and resilient communities throughout Monmouthshire.

Affordable Housing Target

5.35 The delivery of affordable housing across the County that seeks to address these issues is a key aim of the overarching Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy, and an integral part of the general provision of housing in the RLDP which incorporates an affordable housing policy-led element. Economically viable and deliverable allocations will facilitate this aim and ensure communities have access to sufficient, good quality, affordable housing to meet a range of needs. The affordable housing policy-led element aims to meet 10% of the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) need on housing sites which deliver at least 50% affordable housing.

5.36 The latest Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) (December 2020) identifies an annual shortfall of 467.81 dwellings for the 5 year period 2020-2025 for the affordable housing tenures of low cost home ownership, intermediate rent and social rent. This would represent an affordable housing requirement of 7,017 if extrapolated over the Plan period. This is not a realistic affordable housing target for the Plan and it is not expected to be as it is only one of a variety of means of achieving a supply of affordable housing. However, as set out in Section 4 and Policy S1, affordable housing provision is a key issue for the County and forms an integral part of the overarching Strategy with provision being sought on all sites, subject to viability, and more specifically on sites identified to deliver 50% affordable housing.

5.37 The affordable housing target is set at 2,450 affordable homes over the Plan period. Table 7 summaries the components of the target, with a brief description on each set out below.

Table 7 – Summary of Affordable Housing Target

Source of Affordable Housing	No. of affordable dwellings
Housing Delivery Commitments Affordable Housing secured on a tenure neutral basis either already completed, agreed on existing commitments or via an allowance for existing LDP ‘Rollover’ Allocations based on existing adopted LDP affordable housing percentage thresholds.	731
Housing Allowances Affordable Homes to be sought on a tenure neutral ⁵⁵ basis related to windfall and small sites allowances. The percentage of affordable housing is based on the existing adopted LDP affordable housing percentage thresholds, which will be updated to reflect the outcomes of the emerging viability work.	230
Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy Affordable Homes to be sought on a tenure neutral basis on new housing allocations required to meet the housing requirement figure. The spatial distribution of housing is set out in Strategic Policy S2 and the Housing Background Paper (June 2021). The percentage of affordable housing is based on the existing adopted LDP affordable housing percentage thresholds, which will be updated to reflect the outcomes of the emerging viability work.	1489
Overall Target	2,450

Existing Commitments and Completions

- 5.38 A total of 284 affordable homes have been completed over the 2018 – 2021 period, and a further 357 homes are either under construction, benefit from planning permission or are agreed subject to the signing of a S106 agreement. A further stream of affordable housing factored in to the figures is from the LDP ‘Rollover Allocations’ equating to 90 homes, although it is recognised that this stream of housing land supply may change as the Plan progress. Combined these contribute 731 affordable (tenure neutral) homes to the affordable housing target.

⁵⁵ Neutral Tenure homes relate to where the tenure of housing is not predetermined but can vary according to needs, means and preferences of households to whom it is offered. This includes both Social Rented Housing which is led by Registered Social Landlords (RSL) and Intermediate Housing which are provided at a cost above social rent but below market levels, these can include shared equity and intermediate rent and are also provided through a RSL.

Affordable Housing Sources linked to Housing Allowances

- 5.39 Windfall and small site allowances are estimated to contribute 230 homes to the affordable housing target. This estimation is based on current policy thresholds and requirements may therefore be subject to change as the Plan progresses. It is anticipated that sites of 4 or fewer homes will be required to pay a commuted sum towards off-site affordable housing provision, however, this will be considered further as part of the emerging viability work.

Affordable Housing element of the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy

- 5.40 New housing allocations will be identified in the Deposit RLDP to address the residual dwelling requirement identified in relation to the Strategy once the above commitments and allowances have been accounted for. At present this is estimated to contribute 1,489 affordable homes to the target. This estimation may be subject to change as the Plan progresses and additional viability evidence is prepared. The RLDP will contain detailed policies setting out thresholds at which development will be required to provide affordable housing and the associated percentages of affordable housing provision that will be applied across different housing market areas, having regard to viability considerations. An Affordable Housing Viability Study will be undertaken to inform the appropriate thresholds and percentages set out in the Deposit RLDP. All relevant figures will be updated to reflect the outcome of this work.

Affordable Housing Sources linked to the Affordable Housing Policy-led Strategy

- 5.41 As discussed in Section 4, the provision of affordable housing is a key issue to be addressed by the overarching Preferred Strategy. The Affordable Housing Policy-led Strategy accounts for 1551 homes (including a 10% flexibility allowance) of the overall housing requirement figure of 7,605 homes. In order to meet the affordable housing figure, the RLDP will seek to allocate sites in housing market areas where there is an identified need for Social Housing, Low Cost Home Ownership and/or intermediate rental as evidenced by the Local Housing Market Assessment. These sites are proposed to be delivered on a 50/50 split of affordable homes and private market homes.
- 5.42 The rationale behind the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy and housing requirement is set out in the Section 4 and discussed in more detail in the Housing Background Paper (June, 2021). However, in allocating suitable sites to deliver this element of the overall housing requirement figure, consideration has been given to the Minister for Housing and Local Government's letter of July 2019 which states that in the first instance affordable housing-led housing sites should make use of public land and, where this is not available, then privately owned land may be

identified. This approach is reflected in Policy 7 of Future Wales 2040 - Delivering Affordable Homes – which encourages local authorities, registered social landlords, small and medium sized construction and building companies to build more homes and to facilitate the reuse of publicly owned land to help support the provision of affordable housing-led developments.

5.43 The Council is undertaking initial appraisals, weighing up the merits of establishing its own Development Company to undertake residential and commercial developments, the residential arm of which would focus on the private and intermediate markets. The role of Registered Social Landlords in delivering affordable housing led sites will also be explored in the preparation of the Deposit Plan.

5.44 The Council will identify appropriate sites through the Candidate Site process.

Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 9 – Demography Objective 10 – Housing Objective 11 – Placemaking Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes Policy 33 – National Growth Area – Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Active & Social Places Theme (Chapter 4)
Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (Page 14)
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	A More Equal Wales A Resilient Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life. • Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.
Key Evidence	Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence Report, Edge Analytics November 2020 Housing Background Paper – June 2021 Monmouthshire Local Housing Market Assessment – December 2020 Affordable Housing Viability Assessment – to be undertaken for the Deposit RLDP.
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

Strategic Development Sites

Strategic Policy S8 – Strategic Development Sites

Strategic Development Sites will be allocated to contribute to the delivery of the housing and job growth rates set out in Policy S1.

- **To be specified in the Deposit RLDP following consideration of the responses to the Preferred Strategy, the Second Call for Candidate Sites and detailed site assessments.**

Strategic Growth Areas

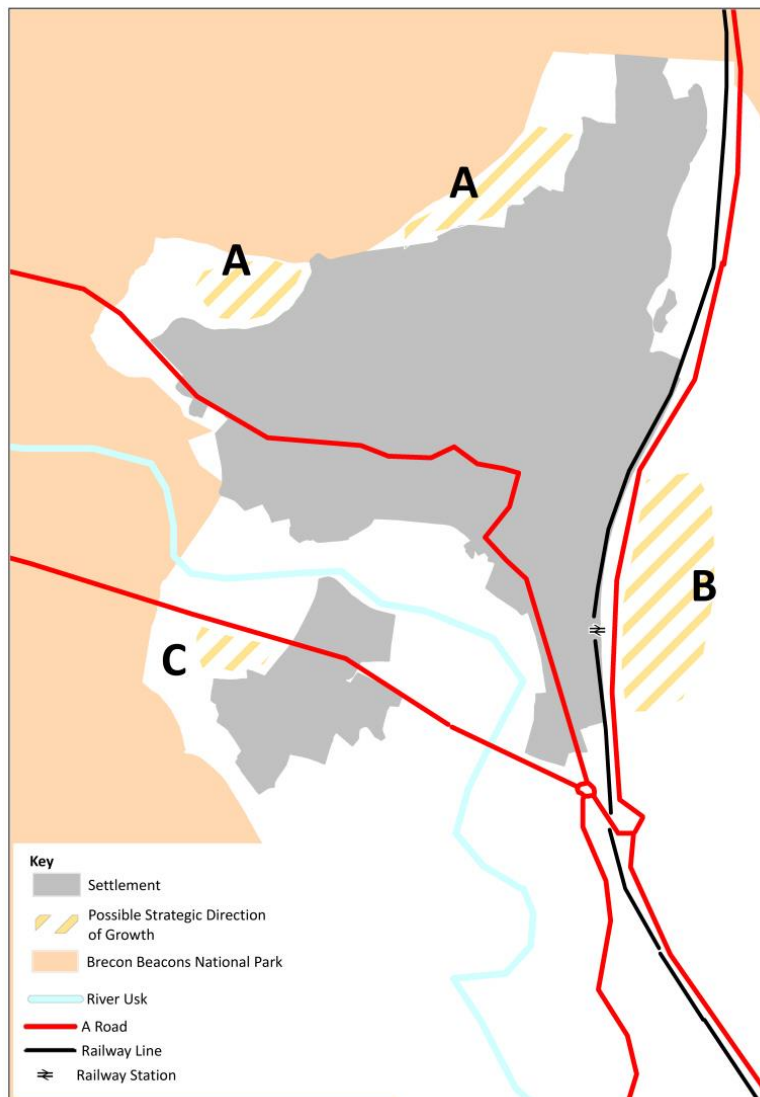
- 5.45 In order to implement the RLDP’s Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy, possible strategic growth areas have been identified for each of the Primary Settlements and Severnside. To inform these possible strategic growth areas, a high-level assessment of sites submitted during the Initial Call for Candidate Sites has been undertaken to identify those sites which could potentially contribute to delivering the level of growth (housing and jobs) required to deliver the Preferred Strategy. At the present time only strategic sites and sustainable urban extensions of around 8ha in size and above have been considered. At this stage, identified site options (refer to Appendix 4 for further details) are considered in theory to have the potential to underpin the Strategy by accommodating growth and focusing development within those settlements and areas which are identified as the most sustainable locations (refer to Strategic Policy S2 Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy). It is important to note that not all sites will be selected for inclusion in the Deposit Plan, as their combined capacity exceeds the number of dwellings needed to meet the residual housing provision. The final selection of sites for the Deposit Plan will be dependent on the second call for candidate sites and further detailed assessment work.

5.46 The indicative maps below set out the options for the future strategic growth of the Primary Settlements and Severnside. Please refer to Appendix 4 for further details on the potential strategic growth options.

Abergavenny

- A Land north of Abergavenny
- B Land to the east of the A465
- C Land between the B4246

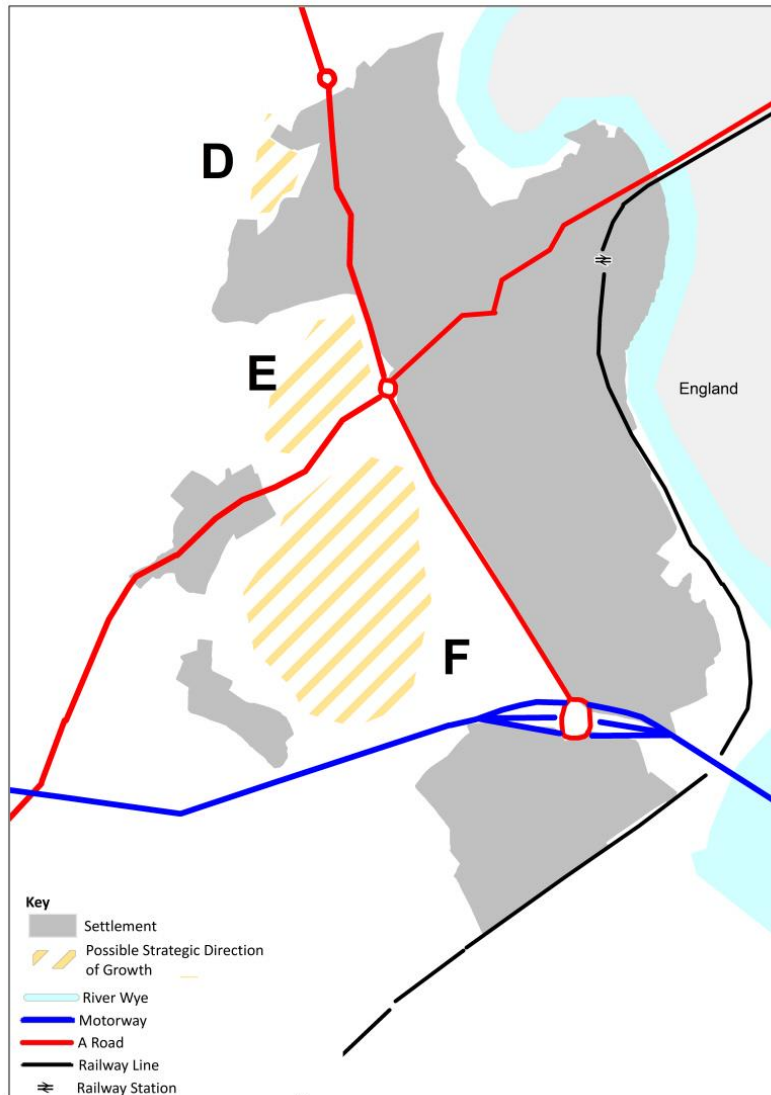
Figure 5: Abergavenny Strategic Growth Options



Chepstow

- D Land north of the Bayfield Estate
- E Land between the Bayfield Estate and A48
- F Land between the A48 and M48

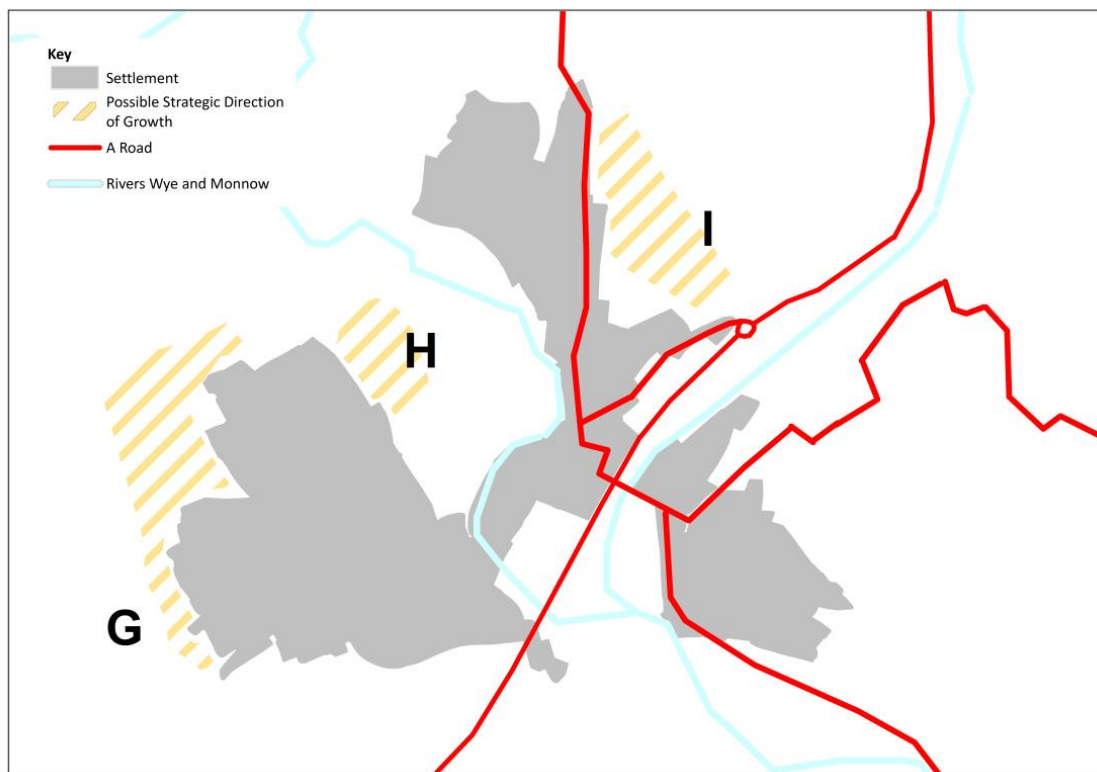
Figure 6: Chepstow Strategic Growth Options



Monmouth

- G Land west of Monmouth
- H Land central Monmouth
- I Land north east of Monmouth

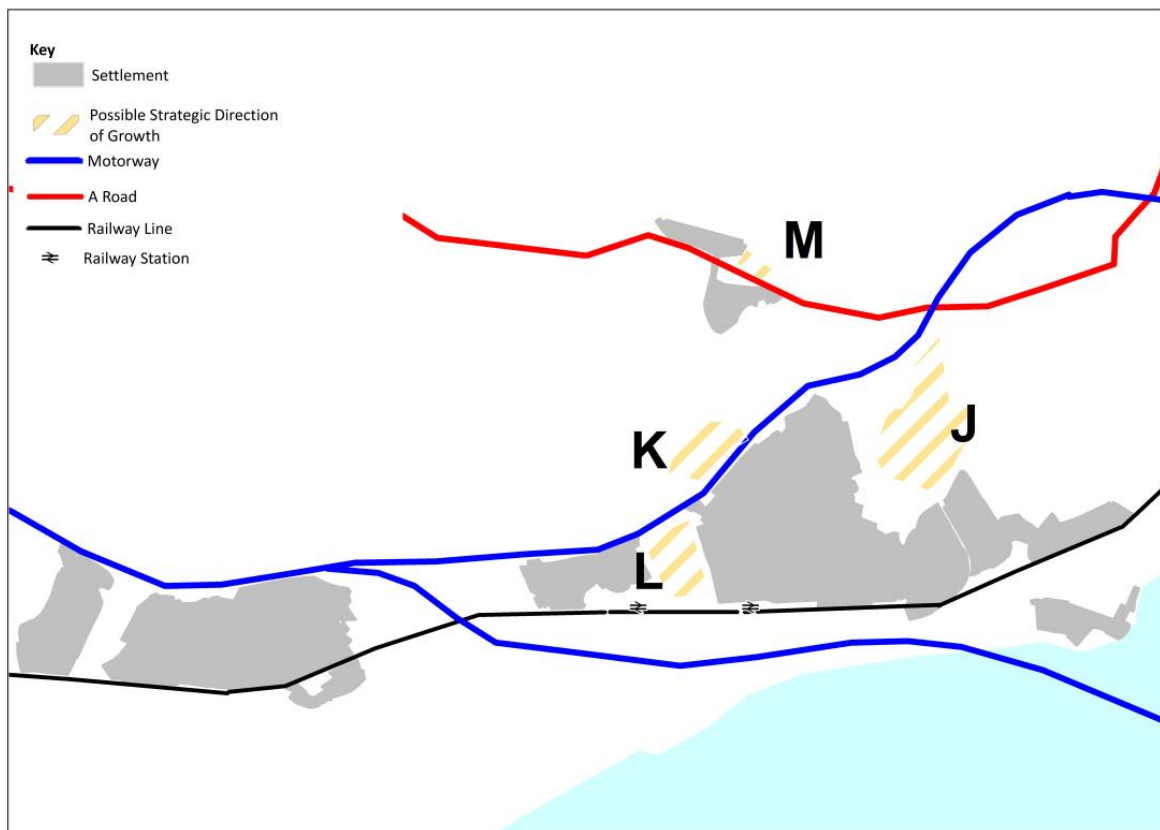
Figure 7: Monmouth Strategic Growth Options



Sevenside

- J Land north east of Caldicot
- K Land north west of Caldicot
- L Land west of Caldicot / east of Rogiet
- M Land east of Caerwent

Figure 8: Sevenside Strategic Growth Options



5.47 Following the consultation on the Preferred Strategy and a second call for candidate sites, the Council will undertake a detailed assessment of potential sites available to deliver the Plan's Strategy which will include consideration of:

- The ability to deliver the level of supporting infrastructure required;
- A masterplanning process to ensure they create sustainable, cohesive, well-designed places delivered through a strong placemaking approach; and
- A financial viability assessment to ensure sites are deliverable within the Plan period.

Site Sequence and Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

- 5.48 The approach to site selection will follow the Site Sequence outlined in PPW11, which prioritises the use of suitable and sustainable previously developed land before considering greenfield sites. This process will, however, also acknowledge the limited brownfield resource available in Monmouthshire and the environmental, social and economic considerations that need to be balanced in a Monmouthshire context.
- 5.49 A key consideration in assessing the Candidate Sites will be the high percentage of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land within Monmouthshire. An Agricultural Land Classification Background Paper will be produced at the Deposit RLD stage setting out the Council's approach to protecting BMV land and minimising its loss through its growth strategy. The widespread distribution of BMV agricultural land throughout Monmouthshire means that it does not affect the spatial strategy: were only some of the County's sustainable settlements surrounded by BMV agricultural land, consideration could be given to a strategy that minimises development around those settlements. However, all our main settlements are surrounded by BMV agricultural land.
- 5.50 A sequential approach to assessing the loss of BMV agricultural land, as set out by PPW11, will be undertaken in the assessment of all candidate sites. However, as above, it is anticipated that due to the high percentage of BMV agricultural land distributed extensively throughout Monmouthshire it will be difficult to apply this sequential test. The aim at the outset, nevertheless, will be to protect the higher grades of BMV land; and to avoid/or minimise the loss of BMV land. Appendix 3 sets out the Council's anticipated approach to assessing the potential loss of BMV agricultural land.

Future Wales 2040 – Green Belt

- 5.51 Policy 34 of Future Wales requires the South East Wales Strategic Development Plan (SDP) to identify a green belt to the north of Cardiff, Newport and the eastern part of the region to manage urban form and growth. The South East Wales Regional Strategic Diagram (page 163 of Future Wales) provides an indicative plan of the area for consideration with the detailed boundary to be defined through the preparation of the SDP. In advance of an SDP, the indicative area shown for consideration in Future Wales should be treated as a designated Green Belt.
- 5.52 While the County's main towns are situated outside of Future Wales' indicative green belt, in assessing candidate sites and their relationship to Policy 34 of Future Wales consideration will be given to paragraph 3.72 of PPW11 which states that when considering a Green Belt designation, a sufficient range of development land which is suitably located in relation to the existing urban edge should be made available, having regard to the longer term need for development land, the effects of development pressures in areas beyond the Green Belt and the need to minimise

demand for travel. This may require land to be safeguarded, and boundaries of proposed Green Belts must be carefully defined to achieve this.

Phosphates – Water Quality in Riverine Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

- 5.53 Following new evidence about the environmental impacts of phosphate in watercourses, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has adopted tighter targets for the water quality of watercourses and have assessed the nine riverine Special Areas of Conservation in Wales. Within Monmouthshire it was identified that within the River Usk 88% of the river’s water bodies failed to meet the required target and within the River Wye 67% failed to meet the required target. As a result of this failure NRW has issued detailed planning guidance to ensure that the environmental capacity of the rivers does not deteriorate any further. Any candidate sites within the catchment areas of the rivers affected need to evidence as part of their candidate site submissions that the development can demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body. A plan of the catchment area of the rivers can be found on the Council’s website via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning/water-quality>. Strategic Growth Areas identified within Abergavenny fall within the River Usk SAC catchment area, and Monmouth within the River Wye SAC catchment area. However, all candidate site submissions are advised to refer to the catchment plans to determine if the issue of phosphate neutrality or betterment is a consideration.
- 5.54 NRW has provided interim planning guidance for developers which outlines what type of development is unlikely to have an impact on phosphate levels in the watercourses. This guidance can be found on the Council’s website via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2021/02/Interim-Planning-Advice-V2.0-FINAL.pdf>
- 5.55 This new guidance does have significant implications on development proposals within the river catchment areas and we are working with NRW, Dwyr Cymru Welsh Water, Welsh Government, the development industry and our biodiversity officers to find solutions and enable the progression of appropriate candidate sites through the RLDP process in a manner that does not harm the environmental capacity of our watercourses.

Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment Objective 6 – Land Objective 9 – Demography Objective 10 – Housing Objective 11 – Placemaking Objective 12 – Communities Objective 14 – Infrastructure Objective 15 - Accessibility

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy Policy 34 – Green Belts in the South East
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Strategic and Spatial Choices Theme (Chapter 3) - Spatial Strategy and Site Search Sequence
Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (page 14) Active Travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods (page 16) Changing working practices: our future need for employment land (page 20)
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	A prosperous Wales A resilient Wales A more equal Wales A Wales of cohesive communities
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life. • Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change. • 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.
Key Evidence	Sustainable Settlement Appraisal – June 2021 Review of Candidate Sites Against the Preferred Strategy – June 2021 Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper – June 2021 Growth and Spatial Options Consultation Report – June 2021 Housing Background Paper – June 2021
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

Gypsy and Travellers

Strategic Policy S9 – Gypsy and Travellers

Land will be made available to accommodate future unmet gypsy and traveller accommodation needs if a need is identified in the updated Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment.

- 5.56 The Approved Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment was agreed in May 2016 and covers the 5-year period 2016 – 2021⁵⁶. This concluded that Monmouthshire has an estimated unmet need for eight permanent residential pitches to 2021. The assessment did not identify a need for a transit site. An updated Gypsy & Travellers Needs Assessment for the Plan period 2018 – 2033 has been prepared and submitted to Welsh Government for approval. This identified a need for nine residential pitches between the period 2020 – 2025 and a further four pitches for the remaining Plan period of 2026 – 2033, giving a total need of 13 pitches for the Plan period. The update did not identify a need for a transit pitch. Land will be identified to accommodate unmet gypsy and traveller accommodation need in the Deposit Plan.
- 5.57 In terms of transit sites, it is considered that these would be best considered on a regional basis, requiring collaboration with neighbouring local authorities through the SDP process. Work on this has commenced through a SEWSPG sub-group.
- 5.58 Specific criteria-based policies to assess proposals for gypsy and traveller accommodation that come forward during the Plan period will be considered within the Deposit RLDP.

Links to Wider Policy Framework

RLDP Objectives	Objective 9 – Demography Objective 10 – Housing Objective 11 – Placemaking Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Active and Social Places Theme (Chapter 4) - Gypsies and Travellers
Building Better Places (WG (July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (page 14)

⁵⁶ The Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment – May 2016 can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	A more equal Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life. • Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.
Key Evidence	<p>Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment – May 2016 Draft Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment – 2020 – 2025 (January 2021) – submitted to Welsh Government for approval.</p> <p>Housing (Wales) Act 2014 Welsh Government Circular 005/2018: Planning for Gypsy, Traveller and Showpeople Sites TAN 6: Planning Sustainable Rural Communities (2010)</p>
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

Sustainable Transport

Strategic Policy S10 – Sustainable Transport

Development proposals should promote sustainable, safe forms of transport which reduce the need to travel, increase provision for walking and cycling and improve public transport provision. This will be facilitated by:

- Favouring development that accords with the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy of reducing the need to travel, especially by car, and promoting walking, cycling and public transport.
- Promoting and enabling use of ultra low emission vehicles by providing charging infrastructure;
- Promoting active travel through safeguarding, enhancing and expanding on the Active Travel Network identified in the Integrated Network Maps;
- Favouring development close to public transport facilities and designing developments to facilitate and incorporate public transport infrastructure and connections;
- Improving road safety;
- Minimising the adverse effects of parking;
- Improving public transport links between the County's main towns and other key settlements in the region; and

- **Developing the role of the key settlements of Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Monmouth, around which high-capacity sustainable transport links can be developed.**

The Deposit Plan will safeguard sites necessary to deliver the key transport measures and schemes identified in the Updated Local Transport Plan.

- 5.59 The RLDP encourages development towards an integrated, sustainable and safe transport system, where possible reducing the need to travel, and enhancing the opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport as alternative modes to car travel. This is considered important to assist in reducing the impact of travel on the environment and climate change, encouraging more sustainable and healthy lifestyles and also encouraging more sustainable commuting patterns.
- 5.60 The spatial strategy of the RLDP is to focus development in those locations that provide the best opportunities for achieving sustainable development, which offer a choice of transport modes and contribute towards the development of a sustainable transport network. The Plan also proposes an appropriate amount of development in the County's rural areas, with a focus on those rural towns and villages that have the best access to public transport and services. However, it is recognised that many people are likely to continue to use their cars, particularly in rural areas where there is often no realistic alternative to car travel. The RLDP does, however, establish the foundations to encourage longer term changes to the historic high levels of car usage in Monmouthshire. This will include ensuring that development proposals make the best possible provision for alternative means of travel.
- 5.61 Emphasis will therefore be placed on improving the opportunities for sustainable travel in the County, particularly walking, cycling and public transport in accordance with PPW11's Sustainable Transport Hierarchy. Where cars are to be used there needs to be a move away from petrol and diesel vehicles to Ultra-Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEVs). It is important that new developments provide the charging infrastructure required to support a move to ultra-low emissions vehicles, particularly given Monmouthshire's dispersed geographical structure.
- 5.62 The Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 makes walking and cycling the preferred option for shorter journeys, particularly everyday journeys, such as to and from a workplace or colleges and schools. In line with the Active Travel Act, the Council has produced Active Travel Network Maps⁵⁷, identifying the walking and cycling routes required to create fully integrated networks for walking and cycling. The Council is also in the process of an active travel consultation throughout 2021 (which began in August 2020) to identify new and improve existing active travel routes throughout the

⁵⁷ Monmouthshire's Active Travel Network Maps can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/monmouthshire-active-travel>

County⁵⁸. The Deposit RLDP will identify and safeguard active travel routes and seek to integrate new development with the network, and where possible, expand and improve the network.

- 5.63 The RLDP will be accompanied by a Local Transport Plan (LTP). The Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan⁵⁹ includes a prioritised five-year programme of projects the Council wishes to see delivered between 2015 and 2020 as well as medium and longer term aspirations up to 2030. The programmes outlined in the LTP includes walking and cycling infrastructure, bus network, station and highways improvements, Cardiff Capital Region Metro schemes, 20mph limits and road safety schemes. The LTP will be updated to inform the Deposit Plan.
- 5.64 The updated Monmouthshire LTP will be informed by the South East Wales Transport Commission Final Recommendations Plan: November 2020⁶⁰. This seeks to address the acute congestion problem on the M4 by proposing a ‘Network of Alternatives’ which includes rail/bus public transport infrastructure improvements and an emphasis on active travel/cycle corridors. Within Monmouthshire the report specifically recommends enhancement of Severn Tunnel Junction rail station and its access arrangements. The report also highlights the need for a behavioural shift to change people’s commuting patterns, such as promotion of ‘flexible office hubs’ and facilitating ‘working from home’. The RLDP policy framework will support provision of such facilities. It is expected that the trend for home working/working remotely (as a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic) will continue in the long-term.
- 5.65 Welsh Government’s Building Better Places document further acknowledges the behavioural shift of increased cycling and walking activity and working from home patterns, which has been brought about by the unprecedented impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Building Better Places’ sets out that planning policy framework needs to maximise opportunities and further secure in the long -term this positive transport modal shift, kickstarted by the Covid-19 pandemic, from the car to active travel car-free journeys. In addition to this commitment of promotion of walking/cycling as the dominant transport mode the concept of the ‘20 minute neighbourhood’ whereby all people live within a 20 minute walking distance of key everyday services is a recent key Recommendation to Welsh Government Policy set out in the Future Generations Report Recommendations⁶¹.

⁵⁸ Monmouthshire’s Active Travel consultation can be viewed via

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/active-travel-consultation/>

⁵⁹ Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan – May 2015 can be viewed via

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/local-transport-plan/>

⁶⁰ South East Wales Transport Commission Final Recommendations

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-11/south-east-wales-transport-commission-final-recommendations.pdf>

⁶¹ Future Generations Report: Welsh Government Policy Recommendations

<https://www.futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Welsh-Government-Recommendations.pdf>

- 5.66 Future Wales 2040 will also inform the updated Monmouthshire LTP. Policies 11 and 12 of the Plan set out that the Welsh Government will support and invest in improving the national and regional connectivity of Wales. Future Wales also includes a specific Policy 36 ‘South East Metro’, which Monmouthshire is a part of, to promote the investment and development of a “a major strategic opportunity to improve rail, bus, cycling and walking infrastructure across the region”⁶². The policy sets out that the local planning policy frameworks must ensure that long term strategic decisions maximise opportunities in areas that will benefit from the Metro.
- 5.67 An update of the Monmouthshire LTP taking into account recent key evidence and National Policy updates, will be undertaken alongside the preparation of the Deposit RLDP. The RLDP will support the transport schemes identified within the Monmouthshire updated LTP and, where appropriate, safeguard land for key transport proposals.

Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 1 – Economic Growth/Employment Objective 8 – Health and Well-being Objective 9 – Demography Objective 11 – Place-making Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities Objective 14 – Infrastructure Objective 15 – Accessibility Objective 17 – Climate Change
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (W G, February 2021)	Policy 11 – National Connectivity Policy 12 – Regional Connectivity Policy 36 – South East Metro
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Active and Social Places Theme (Chapter 4) - Moving within and between places
Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (page 14) Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods (page 16)

⁶² Policy 36 Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG 2015)	A prosperous Wales A resilient Wales A more equal Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life. • Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change. • 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.
Key Evidence	Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan and updated LTP to be prepared alongside the Deposit Plan. Integrated Network Maps for Monmouthshire South East Wales Transport Commission: Final Recommendations: November 2020
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

Retail & Commercial Centres

Strategic Policy S11 – Retail & Commercial Centres Hierarchy

To sustain and enhance a network of town centres, a retail hierarchy is defined below. All new or enhanced retail and commercial developments should be consistent in scale and nature with the size and character of the centre and its role in the retail hierarchy. Proposals which would undermine the retail hierarchy will not be permitted.

County Towns	Abergavenny Caldicot Chepstow Monmouth
Local Centres	Magor Raglan Usk
Neighbourhood Centres/Shops (These will be reviewed as	Abergavenny <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hillcrest Road • Rother Avenue • The Mardy

part of the Caldicot
Deposit RLDP)

- West End

Chepstow

- Bulwark
- Thornwell

Monmouth

- Overmonnow
- Wyesham
- The Albion

- 5.68 PPW11 requires local planning authorities to identify a hierarchy of centres which distinguishes between higher order centres which have a wider range of uses and larger catchment areas, and lower order centres which are important to communities for day-to-day needs. Policy S11 sets out the retail hierarchy for Monmouthshire, although this will be given further consideration as part of the Retail Study which will inform the Deposit Plan.
- 5.69 The main County towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth are akin to market towns, providing a broad range of facilities and services, of which retailing is a key component, for residents and visitors. The centres attract significant numbers of shoppers from their respective town and rural hinterlands. The towns are also main visitor destinations in the County, providing a range of leisure, tourism and cultural facilities. Caldicot town centre has a more limited retail offer than the other main towns, although it remains an important centre serving the area with a range of facilities. Monmouthshire County Council, with the support of key stakeholders such as Caldicot Town Council, Cardiff Capital Region and Welsh Government, is implementing an ambitious town centre regeneration project in Caldicot. While the area is not a major tourist destination, Caldicot is an important local attraction and the Council is promoting nearby tourist attractions such as Caldicot Castle and Country Park, Black Rock and the Gwent Levels.
- 5.70 The County's local centres – Magor, Raglan and Usk – also provide an important role in the retail hierarchy serving a more local function for residents, with a prominent focus on convenience (food) shopping and an element of comparison (non-food) shopping together with some local service provision. Neighbourhood centres and shops similarly provide an important local day-to-day function for their local communities. Monmouthshire County Council and Usk Town Council are jointly working on a regeneration masterplan for Usk.

- 5.71 The Monmouthshire Retail Expenditure Forecasts Update (2016)⁶³ notes that Monmouthshire's centres are performing relatively well as destinations for convenience trading, but less well as destinations for comparison shopping. Further information on the health and function of the town and local centres can also be found in the latest Retail Background Paper March 2021⁶⁴. The decline in the role of town centres as destinations for comparison goods shopping highlights the importance of attracting a diverse range of uses to commercial centres such as leisure and community uses. Given the changing role of commercial centres, the current Central Shopping Area and Primary Shopping Frontage boundaries will be reviewed in the Deposit RLDP and amended, if necessary, in recognition of the need for a degree of flexibility in maintaining occupancy, footfall and vibrant centres. An update of Monmouthshire's Retail Expenditure Forecasts (2016) will also be undertaken to take account of the population growth levels established in the Preferred Strategy. If appropriate, land will be identified in the Deposit Plan for future retailing needs.
- 5.72 Given the essential role and function of commercial centres, it is important that a centre's position in the hierarchy is maintained and, where possible, enhanced. A key objective of the RLDP is to sustain and enhance the County's main towns as vibrant and attractive centres and to maintain the essential local shopping function of local centres, by focusing new and enhanced retail and commercial developments of an appropriate scale and nature, in designated centres. This is vital in ensuring that the centres remain attractive places to live and visit and provide a valuable role in meeting the needs of local communities and visitors.
- 5.73 Welsh Government's Building Better Places (July 2020) document recognises the economic consequences to town centres as a result of Covid-19. It tasks the planning system with responding to this by ensuring that retail and commercial centres can operate as flexibly as possible. Whilst recognising the important role our town centres play, high streets will continue to change especially in the short-term due to the increase in online shopping associated with Covid-19, and there is a clear need for flexible planning policies in our central shopping areas to enable a 're-imagining' of our high streets across the County. Increased agile/home working might also result in increased expenditure within our towns, with the community good-will encapsulated by the Covid-19 response helping to support local businesses and retailers. In light of these changes a need for greater flexibility will be reflected in the detailed planning policy framework which will be set out in the Deposit Plan.
- 5.74 Whilst recognising the need for greater flexibility Welsh Government in Future Wales has adopted a 'Town Centre First' approach. This puts the health and vibrancy of town centres as the starting point of locational decision-making. It also directs facilities and

⁶³ Monmouthshire's Retail Expenditure Forecasts – 2016 can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

⁶⁴ The Retail Background Paper – March 2021 can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/annual-monitoring/retail/>

services to where intended users can easily walk, cycle and/or use public transport to access them. Developments of an appropriate scale within town and local centres that maintain and/or enhance their vitality, attractiveness and viability to shoppers and visitors will be supported in the RLDP. The future size and scale of retail and commercial facilities is critical to the maintenance of the character and function of the County's settlements. It is therefore important that new developments are in keeping with the scale and function of the existing centres and have regard to their position within the overall hierarchy. Inappropriate developments which would undermine the vitality, viability and attractiveness of the main towns, local and neighbourhood centres will be strongly resisted. Detailed policies will be set out in the Deposit RLDP providing further clarification on where retail development will and will not be permitted, and where change of use will be limited.

- 5.75 The County's main towns and local centres provide employment, leisure, tourism and cultural opportunities as well as retail. Tourism, in particular, plays an important part in sustaining Monmouthshire's historic town centres of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth, as well as Usk. It is essential that the role and function of these towns as important visitor destinations is maintained and enhanced over the Plan period. The co-location of retail, commercial and leisure and tourism facilities in these centres, where they can be accessed by public transport, walking and cycling, will help to sustain and enhance their vitality, viability and attractiveness and contribute to a reduction in travel demand.

Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 1 – Economic Growth/ Employment Objective 2 – Retail Centres Objective 8 – Health and Well-being Objective 9 – Demography Objective 11 – Place-making Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities Objective 14 – Infrastructure Objective 15 – Accessibility Objective 16 – Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 6 – Town Centre First
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Active and Social Places Theme (Chapter 4) - Retail and Commercial Development
Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (Page 14) Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods (Page 16)

	<p>Revitalising our town centres (Page 18)</p> <p>Changing working practices – our future need for employment land (Page 20)</p> <p>Reawakening Wales’ tourism and cultural sectors (Page 21)</p> <p>Improving air quality and soundscapes for better health and well-being (Page 23)</p>
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	<p>A prosperous Wales</p> <p>A resilient Wales</p> <p>A more equal Wales</p> <p>A Wales of cohesive communities</p> <p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</p>
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life. • Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change. • Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.
Key Evidence	<p>TAN 4: Retail & Commercial Development – Nov 2016</p> <p>Review of Central Shopping Area and Primary Shopping Frontage boundaries – this will support the detailed boundaries defined in the Deposit LDP.</p> <p>Monmouthshire Retail Study will be prepared to inform the Deposit Plan.</p> <p>Retail Background Paper – March 2021</p> <p>Primary Shopping Frontages SPG – April 2016</p>
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

Community & Recreation Facilities

Strategic Policy S12 – Community and Recreation Facilities
<p>Development proposals that provide and/or enhance community and recreation facilities will be permitted within or adjoining town and village development boundaries subject to detailed planning considerations. Development proposals that result in the unjustified loss of community and recreation facilities will not be permitted.</p>

- 5.76 The Council is committed to protecting and enhancing community facilities to meet the needs of residents over the Plan period. Providing a range of community facilities which are accessible to as many people as possible is essential in developing sustainable, resilient and inclusive communities. Such facilities are valuable in terms of the facilities they provide, the employment they generate and in attracting people to live within an area. One of the Strategic Placemaking Principles in Future Wales considers that communities should be of a walkable scale with people able to easily

walk to local facilities. The value and importance of such local community facilities has been heightened during the current pandemic.

- 5.77 The Council is also committed to providing, protecting and enhancing open spaces in the County that are important for recreation, amenity, biodiversity, connectivity and/or heritage. Access to areas of open space is essential in enhancing the quality of life for all and promoting sustainable and resilient communities. It can help foster social inclusion, assist healthier lifestyles and allow for recreation and leisure activities. It is important that an accessible network of open space is maintained and improved.
- 5.78 The Covid-19 crisis has emphasised the importance of considering health and well-being throughout the planning system to ensure communities across Wales are healthy, vibrant and inclusive. Welsh Government's Building Better Places (July 2020) document recognises that the planning system has an important role in supporting healthier lifestyles.
- 5.79 The provision of new community facilities and areas of open space and/or contributions towards improving existing areas of open space will be sought in connection with new residential developments where they are needed and justified in accordance with Policy S6. This approach will help create sustainable developments that cater for the community's needs as well as promoting sustainable mixed use developments that facilitate access via public transport, walking and cycling.
- 5.80 For the purpose of this policy, community facilities are defined as facilities used by local communities for leisure, social, health, education and cultural purposes and include village halls and shops, schools, GP surgeries / health centres, leisure centres, public houses, places of worship, cemeteries, allotments and libraries. They can be owned by the public, private or community groups. Community facilities can be considered appropriate in residential and non-residential areas, where they satisfy the relevant policies, as they serve the needs of the wider community. Whilst there is a general presumption in favour of community facilities, they should not erode the character and appearance of the natural and built environment, nor the design qualities of their location. New facilities need to have good access to public transport and active travel routes, as well as be in walkable distance to as many homes as possible. The criteria against which proposals that involve the loss of community or recreation facilities will be assessed will be set out in Development Management policies in the Deposit Plan.
- 5.81 Recreation facilities include formal sport, recreation and leisure pursuits such as team games, children's play facilities, as well as more informal activities such as walking in the countryside. Further details on recreation categories and standards will be provided in the Deposit Plan as well as the designation of land to be protected for such purposes. Recreation and leisure facilities are an important generator of tourism and,

in practice, the difference between facilities for local residents and tourists is difficult to define. However, for the purposes of the Plan, policies which relate to recreation and community facilities refer to activities primarily undertaken by local residents as opposed to the more tourist related activities associated with visitors.

Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 3 – Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape Objective 8 – Health and Well-being Objective 9 – Demography Objective 11 – Place-making Objective 12 – Communities Objective 14 – Infrastructure Objective 15 – Accessibility
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities Policy 34 – Green Belts in the South East
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Active and Social Places Theme (Chapter 4) - Community Facilities Recreational Spaces
Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Considering Health and Well-being throughout the Planning Process (page 12) Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (Page 14) Active travel: exercise and rediscovered transport methods (Page 16) Green Infrastructure, health and well-being and ecological resilience (Page 22)
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	A healthier Wales A more equal Wales A Wales of cohesive communities A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBPP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life. • Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change. • Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.
Key Evidence	TAN 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space Monmouthshire Amenity Open Space Audit to follow with the Deposit plan.
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

PRODUCTIVE & ENTERPRISING PLACES

- 5.82 Economic growth and resilience are key priorities for Monmouthshire County Council driven by the need to address the shrinking working age population and the high levels of out-commuting the County experiences. In order to create sustainable and resilient communities, the Preferred Strategy identifies a level of growth that aims to provide an appropriate balance of household and jobs growth. The RLDP will seek to facilitate this growth by providing a policy framework that allows Monmouthshire to attract and retain investment, create jobs, improve strategic infrastructure through the identification of sufficient employment land for traditional employment uses (B use class) and the promotion of other employment generators important to Monmouthshire's economy. Job growth will also come via the growth and retention of existing Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and the formation of new ones, with supportive planning policies, marketing and other interventions as required to make this happen.

Employment Sites Provision

Strategic Policy S13 – Employment Sites Provision

Provision will be made for a minimum of 43 ha of land on a suitable range and choice of sites for industrial and business development (classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987) in accordance with the Plan's Spatial Strategy.

Existing employment land and premises that continue to be required for employment purposes will be protected from alternative forms of development.

To ensure that a range of types and sizes of employment land and premises is provided, development for the following will be permitted, subject to detailed planning considerations:

- Small units and workshops for small businesses throughout the County to assist in providing regeneration opportunities, enabling SMEs to start up and grow, and ensuring sustainable economic growth;**
- The integration of new employment opportunities in mixed-use developments.**

- 5.83 Monmouthshire's economic profile is characterised by low unemployment levels, but a high economic inactivity rate, reflecting its increasing ageing population and shrinking working age population. Levels of out-commuting and the distances travelled are also high. Combined, these factors are impacting on employment growth within Monmouthshire and the social sustainability of our communities. The Preferred Strategy seeks to address these issues by promoting a growth level and spatial strategy that will promote higher employment growth, supporting greater labour force retention and achieve a reduction in the net out-flow of workers. The Preferred Strategy provides the planning policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 jobs over the Plan period (481 jobs per annum). This level of job growth aligns

with the projected population and housing growth and takes account of adjustments to household membership rates for key younger age groups and a reduced level of commuting by retaining more of the resident workforce.

- 5.84 As noted in the Development Plans Manual (March 2020), the aim of a strategy is to achieve a balance between homes and jobs thereby reducing the need for commuting (paragraph 5.25). The Manual recognises that the scale of economic growth to be delivered in a plan will be strongly influenced by factors including the available labour force, skills, net migration levels and commuting patterns. While these factors remain relevant and are key objectives of the Plan, it is becoming widely accepted that the fundamental shift in working practices experienced as a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic, with a significant increase in people working from home/remotely, has made it less important where some jobs are located as employees no longer need to commute for work in many cases. This has provided the opportunity for many people to live and work in the same location via a new remote working approach.
- 5.85 The Preferred Strategy therefore aims to build on this shift and the benefits that have occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic, as recognised in Welsh Government's Building Better Places response to Covid-19. This acknowledges that even when all restrictions are lifted, the impacts on people working from home are likely to have longer term impacts on where and how we work. In this respect, these changes have opened up new opportunities for jobs to be secured through the increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that the trend for increased home and remote working and/or provision of community-based remote working hubs will continue over the longer term in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home, making it less important where the jobs are located as commuting is reduced as a result of changing working habits.
- 5.86 Increased remote/home working will mean both employers and employees will have greater flexibility over where to locate with quality of life and environment potentially becoming increasingly important to Monmouthshire's benefit. Monmouthshire is a very attractive proposition and stands to gain from an increased economically active population without the associated problems of increased commuting, and local businesses and services would benefit from increased custom and footfall with workers spending their wages in local businesses and supporting local services helping to create vibrant neighbourhoods and sense of place.
- 5.87 Securing local economic growth and prosperity are also a key aim of the Plan and will be achieved through a range of mechanisms and sectors. Delivering on the growth ambition will require more than simply allocating land in the RLDP; the Economic Ambition Statement sets the Council's direction of travel and the combination of measures required, including an Investment Prospectus, close engagement with the business sector, demonstrating a pro-business culture and land assembly

interventions to ensure sites come forward. Policy interventions are also likely to be needed in terms of housing mix policies, to achieve the objective of retaining and attracting a younger demographic.

5.88 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 sustainable economic growth and increasing employment opportunities in existing and emerging sectors. As noted above, Monmouthshire’s priorities for economic growth are set out in the ‘Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement’⁶⁵ and accompanying Investment Prospectus. The statement reflects national and regional policies including the ambitions for the Cardiff Capital Region and the Council’s Corporate Plan and builds on the recommendations of the ‘Economies of the Future Reports’⁶⁶. As detailed in Section 2, the Statement sets out Monmouthshire’s economic priorities moving forward as being:

- A dynamic place to do business
- A credible place to invest
- An incredible place to live, visit and stay

5.89 Monmouthshire is geographically well connected, located in a key strategic location that benefits from good links to Cardiff, Bristol and the Midlands. With the recent removal of the Severn Bridge tolls, Monmouthshire’s relationship with the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), the Bristol City Region, Forest of Dean and South Gloucestershire is also expected to strengthen and enhance the County’s economic role in the region. Monmouthshire is well located to benefit from initiatives such as the Great Western Cities⁶⁷ and the Western Power House⁶⁸, which aim to drive economic growth through regional collaboration.

5.90 Covid-19 is an ongoing situation and the nature of the full longer-term impacts on the economy have yet to be borne out and how the economy recovery transpires once restrictions are fully relaxed is yet to come. However, the Council has played an active role in administering UK and Welsh Government economic resilience funding for businesses throughout the pandemic to reduce the impact of Covid-19 and aid recovery. Welsh Government’s Building Better Places recognises that the planning system will need to adapt quickly to the economic changes that may emerge as a result of Covid-19 or trends that have been accelerated such as agile working.

⁶⁵ Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement – can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

⁶⁶ The Economies of the Future Reports can be viewed via <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

⁶⁷ Britain’s Western Powerhouse Report – February 2016 can be viewed via <http://static1.squarespace.com/static/55e973a3e4b05721f2f7988c/t/56bda7c27da24fd5476ff00d/1455269827732/Great+Western+Cities+EXEC+SUMMARY.pdf>

⁶⁸ A Powerhouse for the West – July 2019 can be viewed via <https://www.apowerhouseforthewest.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/A-Powerhouse-for-the-West-Metro-Dynamics-July-2019.pdf>

5.91 In line with PPW and Building Better Places and the requirement to provide an economic development evidence base to support LDP preparation, the Council has commissioned the preparation of an Employment Land Review (ELR)⁶⁹. This has undertaken a review of employment forecasts and B-use class land requirements for the Plan period 2018 – 2033. The study recommends that a forecast scenario based on past take-up rates is adopted for the RLDP. This provides a minimum requirement of 43ha of land, including a five-year buffer to allow for choice and uncertainty in forecasting. The ELR breaks this down by individual land use types as follows:

- B1: 3.9ha
- B2: 10.3ha
- B8: 28.8ha

5.92 Providing for this jobs growth is part of a complex picture. A fundamental element of achieving the job growth will be the provision of a deliverable range of employment land supply, in appropriate locations and in the right quantities to attract new businesses in key growth sectors and enable our existing businesses to grow. Many of the County's businesses are SMEs and may not require new land allocations to grow: the Covid-19 pandemic has seen an increase in new SMEs. Moreover, there is an increased propensity for agile and home working over the longer term, meaning demand for physical employment land or space is changing. It is acknowledged that this tends to relate more to office-based sectors, and that not all sectors are able to work from home or in an agile manner. The RLDP will continue to provide a range of sites to meet employment needs to 2033 to support the Council's ambitions and to support the local economy, being flexible to future changes. This is likely to include community-based remote working hubs that support a hybrid way of working from home and remotely at a local hub, and will support small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) needs which are a key sector in the County.

5.93 The ELR acknowledges that two large existing employment allocations – Quay Point and Gwent Europark, account for over half of the available supply of employment land. Whilst the ELR concludes that these sites should form part of the realistic supply of employment land, it also notes that it may be prudent of the RLDP to identify an increased level of employment allocations to enable further flexibility in the market and reduce reliance on these two sites. Further analysis in relation to the suitability and deliverability of existing Adopted LDP employment allocations will inform the Deposit RLDP. The outcome of this work as well as the ELR's review of candidate sites received at the Initial Call for Candidate Sites stage and sites yet to come forward as part of the Second Call for Candidate Sites will inform the employment allocations made in the Deposit RLDP.

⁶⁹ Employment Land Review (BE Group, June 2021)

- 5.94 In accordance with PPW, the ELR sits alongside the Regional Employment Study⁷⁰, which covers a Larger than Local Area of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen. This related study provides a regional scale analysis of the economic evidence base and the property and employment land market in the Larger than Local Area, up to 2040 (the ELR covers the 2018 – 2033). This Study provides a regional viewpoint of demand and land requirements within the region and recognises the important role the M4 corridor plays in the region as well as the strategic function of the north of the sub-region linking to Herefordshire and the west Midlands. Strategic employment should be geographically distributed throughout the region to support this. Gwent Euro Park is recognised as a sub-regional strategic employment site. The findings of this Study will be considered as part of the Deposit RLDP along with the ELR.
- 5.95 Having regard to the outcome of the evidence base set out above, the Deposit RLDP will allocate sufficient employment land (B use class) to cover the employment needs of the County in locations consistent with the Plan’s spatial strategy. Details of employment land allocations and existing protected sites will be provided in the Deposit RLDP, along with criteria setting out the exceptional circumstances in which the loss of existing industrial and business sites or premises will be considered acceptable.
- 5.96 It should be noted that not all these jobs will be in planning B-class uses and many will be delivered through foundational sectors such tourism, leisure, food and retail and the agricultural and forestry sector, which play an important role within Monmouthshire’s economy. Future Wales recognises and supports the significant role foundational and agricultural sectors can play in the Welsh economy generally but with significant relevance to supporting the rural economy (Policy 5 of Future Wales). The RLDP plans positively for these sectors through complementary Strategic Policies including S11 – Retail and Commercial Centres Hierarchy, S14 – Rural Enterprise and S15 – Visitor Economy.

Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment Objective 9 – Demography Objective 11 – Place-making Objective 12 – Communities Objective 14 – Infrastructure Objective 15 – Accessibility
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities Policy 5 – Supporting the rural economy Policy 6 – Town Centre First

⁷⁰ Regional Employment Study: Larger Than Local (BE Group, March 2020)

Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Productive and Enterprising Places Theme (Chapter 5) - Economic Development
Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Staying local: creating neighbourhoods Revitalising our town centres Digital Places – the lockdown lifeline Changing working practices: our future need for employment land Reawakening Wales’ tourism and cultural sectors
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	A prosperous Wales A resilient Wales A more Equal Wales A Wales of cohesive communities A globally responsible Wales
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change • Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.
Key Evidence	<p>Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement (November 2019)</p> <p>Vision 2040: Growing Your Own Business Monmouthshire Inward Investment Prospectus (March 2020)</p> <p>Monmouthshire Employment Land Review (June 2021)</p> <p>Regional Employment Study – Larger than Local Study – Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Torfaen, Monmouthshire and Newport (BE Group) (March 2020)</p> <p>Economies of the Future Analysis – Strategic Directions Report (October 2018)</p>
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

Rural Enterprise

Strategic Policy S14 – Rural Enterprise

Development to enable rural enterprise uses and the diversification of the rural economy will be permitted outside settlement development boundaries where it is of a scale and type compatible with the surrounding area and will cause no unacceptable harm to the surrounding landscape, historic and cultural heritage, biodiversity or local amenity value. Development must re-use or adapt existing buildings where possible. The exceptional circumstances in which new buildings may be permitted outside the settlement boundaries to support the rural economy will be set out in the Deposit RLDP.

- 5.97 A significant issue for Monmouthshire is the need to sustain and regenerate the County's rural economy. In allowing for an appropriate amount of diversification and enterprise in rural areas, the Plan seeks to sustain and enhance and, where appropriate, regenerate the County's rural settlements. The promotion of diverse economic activity is a key element of this, which is also recognised as a key objective of 'Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement'⁷¹. The Statement aims to continue to support and promote rural businesses and services and sits alongside the Rural Development Programme⁷² (RDP), a seven-year investment programme (2014 – 2020) supporting a wide range of activities and schemes which are due to run until 2023. The LEADER initiative of the programme is designed to get local people, businesses and communities involved in delivering sustainable and innovative solutions to address some of the economic, social and environmental challenges facing rural areas and covers the Vale of Usk region (Monmouthshire and rural parts of Newport). The project is worth £2.79M has supported over 40 projects. The RDP team has also secured more than £8M funding sourced from other measures within the RDP and elsewhere. Discussions are ongoing regarding a replacement RDP post Brexit. In the interim, the UK Community Renewal Fund⁷³ has been launched by central government as a precursor to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to replace EU funding sources.
- 5.98 Future Wales 2040 has expressed a commitment to supporting vibrant rural areas. Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy – establishes the national policy approach for LDPs to plan positively to meet the employment needs of rural areas through appropriate and proportionate economic growth. The role the rural economy can play in the Covid-19 recovery has also been recognised in Welsh Government's Building Better Places policy document. Local food production, improvements to digital infrastructure to facilitate changing working practices to work more remotely and supporting the tourism and visitor sectors are all noted as key areas to facilitate the Covid-19 recovery.
- 5.99 National policy supports rural enterprise and agricultural diversification where it is environmentally acceptable. TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010), advises that LDPs should facilitate the diversification of the rural economy by

⁷¹ Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/03/Economic-Growth-and-Ambition-Statement-November-2019.pdf>

⁷² Details of the Rural Development Programme – 2014 – 2020 can be viewed via Monmouthshire's website at [Monmouthshire Business & Enterprise | Rural Innovation | Embracing innovation and enabling big things to happen in South Wales](https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/business-and-enterprise/rural-innovation/embracing-innovation-and-enabling-big-things-to-happen-in-south-wales) and Welsh Government via <https://businesswales.gov.wales/walesruralnetwork/wrn-support-unit/rural-development-programme-funding>

⁷³ Details of the UK Community Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund can be viewed via <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus-2021-22>

accommodating the needs of both traditional rural industries and new enterprises, whilst minimising impacts on the local community and the environment. New enterprises should be small-scale and be located within or adjoining settlement boundaries and not have an unacceptable impact on the local community or environment. Detailed criteria for assessing rural enterprise will be set out in the Deposit Plan. Separate criteria apply to rural diversification as set out in TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Communities. Diversification may include livestock, non-traditional livestock and crop farming, tourism projects and renewable energy proposals that help to increase the viability of the rural enterprise by reducing their operating costs (5.6.13 – PPW11). The Deposit Plan will also provide detailed policy criteria to assess rural diversification proposals.

5.100 The significant role tourism plays in Monmouthshire’s economy particularly in assisting in the diversification of the rural economy is also recognised. Diversification for such purposes could therefore assist in maintaining and enhancing local employment opportunities.

5.101 It is recognised that an important balance exists between rural enterprise / diversification and the need to promote sustainable development and maintain the local distinctiveness and high quality of Monmouthshire’s environment. To achieve this balance, and in accordance with PPW11, priority should be given to the re-use of existing buildings rather than the development of new ones. Where this is not possible, limited new build may be acceptable in exceptional circumstances. Detailed criteria in relation to this will be set out in the Deposit RLDP.

Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment Objective 3 – Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape Objective 6 – Land Objective 7 – Natural Resources Objective 9 – Demography Objective 11 – Place-making Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities Objective 15 – Accessibility
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Productive and Enterprising Places Theme (Chapter 5)- Rural Economy

Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Staying local: creating neighbourhoods (page 14) Digital places – the lockdown lifeline (page19) Changing working practices: our future need for employment land (page 20) Reawakening Wales’ tourism and cultural sectors (page 21)
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	A prosperous Wales A resilient Wales A more equal Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change. • Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county. • Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.
Key Evidence	Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement (Nov 2019) Vision 2040: Growing Your Own Business Monmouthshire Inward Investment Prospectus (March 2020) TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (2010)
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

Visitor Economy

Strategic Policy S15 – Visitor Economy

Development proposals that provide and / or enhance sustainable forms of tourism will be permitted subject to detailed planning considerations.

Development proposals that would have an unacceptable adverse impact on features and areas of tourism interest and their settings, or that would result in the unjustified loss of tourism facilities will not be permitted.

- 5.102 Future Wales 2040 recognises that tourism and leisure is a major and growing employer and contributor to the Welsh rural economy. Policy 5 sets out that sustainable forms of tourism including opportunities for active, green and cultural tourism should be explored within the planning policy framework. The role of tourism in the Covid-19 recovery has also been acknowledged in Welsh Government’s Building Better Places policy document whereby tourism and visitor sectors within rural areas of Wales are noted as key areas to facilitate the Covid-19 economic recovery.

- 5.103 PPW11 equally values the importance of tourism to economic prosperity and job creation and its ability to act as a catalyst for environmental protection, regeneration and improvement in both urban and rural areas. In rural areas tourism related development is an essential element in providing for a healthy, diverse local economy and in contributing to the provision and maintenance of facilities for local communities.
- 5.104 Tourism plays a significant part in the Monmouthshire economy, particularly in assisting in the diversification of the rural economy and in sustaining the County's historic town centres. Monmouthshire benefits from extensive natural and cultural assets that offer considerable potential for residents and visitors to enjoy. The County is noted for its natural beauty and has a rich and diverse landscape stretching from the coastline of the Gwent Levels in the south to the uplands of the Brecon Beacons in the north and the picturesque river corridor of the Wye Valley in the east. Monmouthshire's historic market towns and cultural/heritage assets are also key attractions. The importance of the local tourism economy will increase given Monmouthshire's desirable tourism offer, increased demand for 'staycations' rather than holidays abroad, and with a particular emphasis on self-catering accommodation in the short-term.
- 5.105 The visitor economy provides jobs, services and facilities that are essential to the well-being and enjoyment of local communities and residents of Monmouthshire. According to figures supplied by tourism economic indicator STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor), the sector brought in £245m to Monmouthshire in 2019 (latest figures available) and supported the equivalent of 3,119 full-time jobs (STEAM report 2019)⁷⁴. The Council's vision and priorities for the visitor economy are set in the Council's Destination Management Plan – 2017-2020⁷⁵. Although now out of date (due to impact of Covid-19 pandemic) the Management Plan is anticipated to be updated at its next opportunity. Given the importance of tourism to the Monmouthshire economy and its potential to aid economic recovery of the Covid-19 pandemic impact, the need to safeguard, provide and enhance the visitor economy/tourism facilities is essential, in ensuring that Monmouthshire realises its potential as a high quality and competitive visitor destination
- 5.106 The RLDP has a key role in supporting the Council's vision by enabling development that safeguards, provides and enhances tourism that both supports local communities and protects the natural and built environment, key drivers of Monmouthshire's visitor economy. The RLDP will seek to support the Council's tourism industry by encouraging and planning for sustainable forms of tourism in Monmouthshire. This is

⁷⁴ STEAM Final trend report 2018-2019 <https://mediafiles.thedms.co.uk/Publication/MW-Mon/cms/pdf/STEAM%20Report%20Monmouthshire%202019.pdf>

⁷⁵ Monmouthshire's Destination Management Plan – 2017 – 2020 can be viewed via <https://mediafiles.thedms.co.uk/Publication/MW-Mon/cms/pdf/FINAL%20July%202017%20Monmouthshire%20Destination%20Plan%202017-2020.pdf>

defined as tourism that is economically viable, generates local benefits, is welcomed by and helps support local communities, reduces global environmental impacts and protects / enhances the local environment. Further advice on this can be found in the Adopted Sustainable Tourism Accommodation Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (Nov 2017), particularly in relation to ‘glamping’. This SPG was produced to provide clarity on the Adopted LDP’s tourism policies, some of which require review and simplification for the Deposit RLDP to form the basis for assessing proposals for tourism development.

Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment Objective 3 – Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape Objective 11 – Place-making Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities Objective 16 – Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities Policy 5 – Supporting the Rural Economy
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Productive and Enterprising Places Theme (Chapter 5)- Tourism Rural Economy
Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Reawakening Wales’ tourism and cultural sectors (page 21)
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	A prosperous Wales A resilient Wales A more equal Wales A Wales of Cohesive Communities
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
Key Evidence	Sustainable Tourism Accommodation SPG – Nov 2017 Rural Conversions to a Residential or Tourism Use SPG - 2017
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

Sustainable Waste Management

Strategic Policy S16 – Sustainable Waste Management
To facilitate the delivery of sustainable management of waste the Plan will:

- i) Ensure that proposals conform to the principles of the waste hierarchy supporting those that move waste up the hierarchy;**
- ii) Support an integrated and adequate network of waste management installations that has regard to the nearest appropriate installation concept and self-sufficiency principles where necessary;**
- iii) Identify suitable allocated and protected Class B2 industrial sites that are appropriate for in-building waste management treatment facilities, subject to detailed planning considerations;**
- iv) Support the circular economy by encouraging the minimisation of the production of waste and the use of reused and recycled materials in the design, construction and demolition stages of development; and**
- v) Ensure that provision is made for the sustainable management, sorting, storage and collection of waste in all new development.**

5.107 The planning system has an important role to play in facilitating sustainable waste management. Welsh Government's Policy for waste management is set out in 'Towards Zero Waste' (2010) and associated Sector Plans. Local authorities are required to develop a sustainable approach to the management of waste, including the support of proposals which move the management of waste up the waste hierarchy, with waste prevention and re-use at the top of the hierarchy, followed by preparation for re-use, recycling, recovery and finally disposal.

5.108 The Collections, Infrastructure and Markets Sector Plan (CIMSP) sets out the waste management framework considered to provide the best solutions to meet environmental, social and economic needs in Wales to 2050. The CIMSP requires the provision of an integrated and sustainable network of waste facilities. The 'Nearest Appropriate Installation' concept and the principle of self-sufficiency will only be applicable in relation to mixed municipal wastes (covered by Article 16 of the revised Waste Framework Directive).

5.109 Future Wales recognises waste as a policy area requiring a co-ordinated framework through the preparation of a Strategic Development Plan (SDP). Progress on the preparation of an SDP for the South East Wales region will continue to be monitored as the Plan progresses. In the meantime, PPW11 and TAN 21: Waste, establish regional monitoring arrangements to inform the preparation of LDPs and assist in the determination of planning applications. The most recent Waste Planning Report for South East Wales was published in April 2016⁷⁶ and concludes that there is currently no need for additional landfill capacity within the region. In addition, the report advises that any new proposal for further residential waste treatment should be carefully assessed to ensure that overprovision does not occur within the region. As

⁷⁶ The SE Wales Waste Planning Report – April 2016 can be viewed via <https://gov.wales/waste-planning-monitoring-reports>

such, no specific need for such waste management facilities has currently been identified at a regional level.

5.110 At a local level, Monmouthshire has a number of partnerships in place to deal with its municipal waste.

- Residual Municipal Waste - Monmouthshire is a member of Project Gwyrdd, a residual waste procurement partnership made up of five local authorities, (Caerphilly, Cardiff, Monmouthshire, Newport and the Vale of Glamorgan) who have entered into a 25-year contract with Viridor Waste Management Ltd to treat municipal residual waste at their Energy from Waste Facility at Trident Park in Cardiff.
- Food Waste - Food waste is dealt with via a 15-year procurement partnership involving Bridgend, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire and Torfaen with Severn Trent Water Anaerobic Digestion Facility at Stormy Down, near Porthcawl.
- Garden Waste – Monmouthshire has a three-year contract with Abergavenny Green Waste Company.
- Recycled Waste – is bulked and sent to reprocessors across the UK.
- Residual Commercial Waste – this is bulked and treated as part of the Project Gwyrdd arrangements.
- Trade Waste – Monmouthshire County Council also offer a trade collection service for residual waste, which is recycled in the same way as municipal recycled waste.
- Landfill – Less than 1% of waste from Monmouthshire goes to landfill, with the facilities used depending on where the reprocessing of material takes place.
(Source: MCC Neighbourhood Services Section)

5.111 TAN 21: Waste, notes that many general employment sites and major industrial areas are likely to be suitable locations for waste facilities⁷⁷. Details of those employment land allocations that are considered suitable for the provision of waste management facilities will be provided in the Deposit Plan as well as the detailed criteria against which planning applications for waste management facilities will be assessed. As required by TAN 21: Waste (2014), a 'Waste Planning Assessment' will be required for all applications for a waste facility classified as a disposal, recovery or recycling facility. The assessment should be proportionate to the nature, scale and size of the development proposed.

5.112 Developments should where possible minimise the production of waste in the development process through the use of secondary and recycled aggregates as part of the construction process in accordance with the circular economy principle.

⁷⁷ Paragraph 3.19 of TAN 21: Waste (2014)

5.113 It is also important that new developments facilitate sustainable waste management options for the people living in and using new developments once complete. This Policy aims to encourage the recycling of waste materials by the provision of adequate facilities for storage and collection of waste and separation at source. Waste related considerations should be taken into account in the design of the development so that they are properly integrated into it, and fully accessible to collection vehicles.

Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 5 – Minerals and Waste Objective 7 – Natural Resources Objective 14 – Infrastructure Objective 17 – Climate Change
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 19 – Strategic Policies for Regional Planning
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Productive and Enterprising Places Theme (Chapter 5) -
Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Climate Change and Decarbonisation: take forward measures to embed the principles of a circular economy (page 11).
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	A resilient Wales A Wales of cohesive communities A globally responsible Wales
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
Key Evidence	Technical Advice Note 21: Waste (2014) Waste Planning Monitoring Report South East Wales April 2016 Employment Land Review –June 2021
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

Minerals

Strategic Policy S17 – Minerals

The Council will sustainably manage its mineral resources by:

- i) Safeguarding known / potential sand and gravel and limestone resources for future possible use;**
- ii) Maintaining a minimum 10-year land bank of crushed rock and 7 years land-based sand and gravel reserves throughout the Plan period in line with national guidance; and**
- iii) Encouraging the efficient and appropriate use of high-quality minerals and maximising the potential for the use of secondary and recycled aggregates as an alternative to primary land won resources.**

- 5.114 In accordance with national and regional policy requirements, the RLDP encourages a sustainable approach to minerals planning. This seeks to ensure that valuable finite resources are safeguarded for possible future extraction and that the use of secondary and recycled aggregates is maximised in preference to primary aggregates.
- 5.115 Future Wales recognises minerals as a policy area requiring a co-ordinated framework through the preparation of a Strategic Development Plan (SDP). Progress on the preparation of an SDP for the South East Wales region will continue to be monitored as the Plan progresses. PPW11 and Minerals Technical Advice Note 1: Aggregate (2004) (MTAN1) require Local Planning Authorities to make provision for a minimum land bank of 10 years for crushed rock and 7 years for land-based sand and gravel throughout the full 15 years of a development plan period. To establish these requirements MTAN1 requires the preparation of Regional Technical Statements (RTS) for the areas covered by both the South Wales and North Wales Regional Aggregates Working Parties (RAWPs).
- 5.116 A revised RTS – 2nd Review for South Wales⁷⁸ was published in September 2020 and endorsed by the Minister for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs in March 2021. The revised RTS makes recommendations for the apportionments necessary to ensure an adequate supply of crushed rock, including the nationally recommended minimum provision of 7 and 10 years, are available for the entire duration of the RLDP. The total apportionments required for Monmouthshire are zero for land-won sand & gravel and 5.866 million tonnes for crushed rock. These compare with existing landbanks

⁷⁸ Regional Technical Statement – Second Revision main report – Final September 2020 - [1 \(swrawp-wales.org.uk\)](https://www.swrawp-wales.org.uk) & South Wales Appendix B - [1 \(swrawp-wales.org.uk\)](https://www.swrawp-wales.org.uk)

(excluding dormant sites) of zero for sand & gravel and 11.25 million tonnes for crushed rock (as of 31st December 2016), reflecting the significant unworked permitted reserves of Limestone at the inactive quarry at Ifton. When compared against the apportioned requirement as set out in the RTS2, Monmouthshire has a surplus of provision and therefore no further allocations for future working are specifically required to be identified within the RLDP when determined on a Local Planning Authority basis.

- 5.117 On a regional basis Monmouthshire forms part of the former Gwent sub-region along with Torfaen, Newport and Blaenau Gwent. Within the sub-region there is an overall shortfall of reserves. PPW11 notes that in such circumstances authorities must agree a joint approach with neighbouring authorities in line with current regional arrangements⁷⁹. Monmouthshire will work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities to consider options for satisfying regional apportionments. The latest position will be updated in the Deposit Plan.
- 5.118 Safeguarding areas for potential sources of sand and gravel and crushed rock aggregates will be identified on the Proposals Map accompanying the Deposit Plan in accordance with the National Minerals Resource Maps and the National Aggregates Safeguarding Maps for Wales.
- 5.119 The policy seeks to ensure that best use of high-quality mineral resources is achieved and is not used for a lower grade purpose than intended. The increased use of alternatives to naturally occurring minerals is also promoted. The re-use and/or recycling of construction and demolition material and industrial waste serves not only to reduce the amount of waste produced but also conserves scarce resources and minimises environmental damage.
- 5.120 The Deposit Plan will also set out detailed considerations for mineral planning including the criteria against which mineral applications will be assessed and the protection of buffer zones.

Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 1 – Economic Growth/Employment Objective 5 – Minerals and Waste Objective 6 – Land Objective 7 – Natural Resources Objective 14 - Infrastructure Objective 17 – Climate Change
Future Wales: The National	Policy 19 – Strategic Policies for Regional Planning, identifies policy areas which cut across local planning authorities and require a regional, co-ordinated planning response through the

⁷⁹ Paragraph 5.14.16 – PPW 11 – February 2021

Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	preparation of a Strategic Development Plan, including mineral extraction.
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Productive and Enterprising Places Theme (Chapter 5) - Minerals
Building Better Places (WG, July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Climate Change and Decarbonisation: take forward measures to embed the principles of the sustainable management of mineral resources (page 11).
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	A Prosperous Wales A Resilient Wales A Globally Responsible Wales
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
Key Evidence	Minerals Technical Advice Note 1: Aggregate (2004) (MTAN1) RTS 2 nd Review published in September 2020 and endorsed by the Minister for Energy, Planning & Rural Affairs March 2021 National Minerals Resource Maps National Aggregates Safeguarding Maps for Wales
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

DISTINCTIVE & NATURAL PLACES

- 5.121 Monmouthshire has significant Green Infrastructure, landscape, biodiversity and nature conservation resources, a number of which are of international or national importance.
- 5.122 The need to protect and enhance these resources is a key focus of the RLDP. A fundamental element of the RLDP Vision is to protect and enhance the distinctive character of Monmouthshire's Green Infrastructure assets. This will be achieved by providing development opportunities, where appropriate, across the County while at the same time preserving and enhancing the best of its high quality natural environment, distinctive character and delivering a placemaking approach.
- 5.123 Reflecting this Vision, the Distinctive & Natural Places section seeks to protect, enhance and manage Monmouthshire's Green Infrastructure assets including its; natural heritage, high quality open spaces, distinctive landscapes, protected sites,

habitats and species and other biodiversity interests and the ecological connectivity between them. The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the value and importance of placemaking and of the provision of locally accessible open/green spaces for health and well-being and recreation. This is essential to our core purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities.

5.124 Future Wales 2040 sets out a commitment to protect and enhance natural resources whereby Policy 9 ‘Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure’ sets out that RLDPs should identify areas to be protected and identify opportunities where Green Infrastructure can be maximised. Policy 15 ‘National Forest’ also commits to the need to identify national forest sites in order to increase woodland cover throughout Wales and help build the resilience of our ecosystems. The protection and enhancement of our natural places is further reinforced in the recent Welsh Government’s Building Better Places, which emphasises the importance of access to and provision of Green Infrastructure in aiding health benefits and well-being of people in the Covid-19 recovery. In addition to this Future Generations Report: Welsh Government Policy Recommendations sets out a commitment to large scale habitat restoration, creativity and connectivity as a top policy priority⁸⁰. The RLDP will provide a positive planning policy framework to support and enable this policy approach through the provision of locally accessible open green space and the protection and enhancement of our natural environment.

Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation

Strategic Policy S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation
<p>Green Infrastructure assets and opportunities should embrace the placemaking approach and be designed and managed to deliver a multifunctional resource; capable of delivering a wide range of social, economic, environmental and health and well-being benefits for local communities and the county as a whole, including climate change action and mitigation.</p>
<p>Development proposals must:</p>
<p>Maintain, protect and enhance the integrity and connectivity of Monmouthshire’s green infrastructure, including landscape, biodiversity, public rights of ways and heritage assets through the following key functions:</p>
<p>(i) Landscape Setting and Quality of Place, by identifying, protecting and, where appropriate, enhancing the distinctive landscape,</p>

⁸⁰ Future Generations Report: Welsh Government Policy Recommendations
<https://www.futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Welsh-Government-Recommendations.pdf>

- historical, cultural, ecological and geological heritage, including natural and man-made elements associated with existing landscape character;
- (ii) **Biodiversity and Resilient Ecosystems** by protecting, positively managing and enhancing biodiversity and geological interests, including designated and non-designated sites, and habitats and species of importance and the ecological connectivity between them;
 - (iii) **Greenspace Provision, Connectivity and Enjoyment** by ensuring the creation of accessible multifunctional interconnected spaces that offer opportunities for recreation and health and well-being;
 - (iv) **Sustainable Energy Use;**
 - (v) **Local Food Production; and**
 - (vi) **Flood Attenuation and Water Resource Management.**

Green Infrastructure

- 5.125 Green Infrastructure as defined by PPW11 “is the network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect places”⁸¹. The importance of protecting and enhancing Green Infrastructure is a key policy theme within PPW11, recognising the multi-functional roles it has in delivering the goals and objectives of the Future Generation and Wellbeing Act through; active travel, placemaking, ecosystem services, improving ecosystem resilience, climate change mitigation and improving general health and well-being.
- 5.126 Investment in green infrastructure underpins the County’s ongoing economic, social and environmental success by supporting sustainable growth, improving quality of life and place, delivering ecosystem services and tackling climate change. Monmouthshire is a green and healthy place to live, with an increasingly coherent and resilient ecological network of wildlife habitats, helping conserve biodiversity. The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the value of green infrastructure and its importance for people’s health and well-being.
- 5.127 Green Infrastructure assets are numerous and include parks, open spaces, playing fields, trees/woodlands, hedgerows, allotments, biological and geological conservation sites, landscape and heritage features, water courses, cycleways, bridleways, public rights of way and open access land.

⁸¹ Paragraph 6.2.1 – PPW – Ed11 – February 2021

5.128 The common aim of spaces and other environmental features is to embrace a placemaking approach. This should help to create a strategically planned and delivered network of green infrastructure assets that should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource; capable of delivering a wide range of social, economic, environmental, transport and health and well-being benefits for local communities that include:

- Maintaining and enhancing biodiversity;
- Maintaining and Improving public rights of way and countryside sites;
- Tackling deprivation and disadvantage by removing barriers to active travel and to enable more participation in recreation and access to the natural environment and green space;
- Mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change;
- Improving health and well-being through a Green Infrastructure approach and through the approach in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan;
- Supporting and providing opportunities for community cohesion and social engagement;
- Delivering placemaking and embracing local distinctiveness; and
- Supporting the local economy through placemaking and a Green Infrastructure-led approach.

5.129 The Council recognise the role Green Infrastructure can play in sustainable energy use through efficient building and site design and construction. Concepts such as green roofs and planting of particular species to facilitate appropriate shading and cooling reinforce the role GI can play in reducing carbon emissions and providing opportunities for climate change adaptation such as flood attenuation and water resources management. The Council's Climate Emergency Strategy and draft Action Plan also recognises Green Infrastructure as a mechanism for addressing climate change action and mitigation and is also addressed in Strategic Policy S4 – Climate Change.

5.130 Monmouthshire has a strong rural and agricultural economy, and the contribution Green Infrastructure can play in supporting and enhancing this function, should be explored through local food production opportunities. This could include allotment provision, minimum garden sizes standards, the design and management of food production, planting in public realm spaces and supporting pollinating insects through enhancement of biodiversity and plant species.

Area Statements

5.131 The Environment Act (Wales) 2016 introduced a requirement to produce an Area Statement for South East Wales, which Natural Resources Wales published in March 2020. The overarching focus for the Area Statement is to review the way in which natural resources are managed and used, support ecosystem services and build resilience. Green Infrastructure provision has been recognised as a key contributor to

both maintaining and enhancing the delivery of ecosystem services as well supporting the resilience of natural resources and therefore its protection and enhancement is a key mechanism in delivering national and local sustainability objectives. The RLDP will have regard to the Area Statement.

- 5.132 The Council has recently prepared the Monmouthshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019⁸², which has also informed the evidence base of the SE Wales Area Statement. The Strategy provides an overarching framework for positive actions by all stakeholders involved in the future protection, management and enhancement of Green Infrastructure in Monmouthshire and sets out key strategic objectives and priorities for guiding the planning management and delivery of GI in Monmouthshire. It also forms part of the baseline evidence to help inform the Strategic Regional Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Gwent Green Grid Partnership. The Adopted SPG⁸³ on Green Infrastructure will be reviewed as part of the RLDP process.
- 5.133 Furthermore, the Council has produced a Countryside Access Improvement Plan 2020-2030⁸⁴ (also known as Rights of Way Improvement Plan) which has also informed the SE Wales Area Statement and RLDP. It provides a 10-year plan to manage, promote and improve access, providing for the needs of the public both now and in the future.

Landscape Character

- 5.134 Monmouthshire benefits from major landscape resources and areas of visual quality and is home to internationally and nationally designated landscapes. The County's key landscape attributes range from exposed upland moorlands in the northwest, to well-wooded central lowlands interspersed with good quality agricultural land, dissected by three rivers, and the historically and ecologically unique coastal landscape to the south. These provide significant environmental, economic and social benefits and help to create a sense of place.
- 5.135 Criterion (i) of Policy S18 seeks to protect, maintain and enhance the character and quality of Monmouthshire's landscape. Development Management policies in the RLDP will specifically protect the internationally designated Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site and the national landscape designations, the Brecon Beacons National Park and the Wye Valley AONB. Other landscape features which contribute to the County's distinctive character will also be afforded appropriate levels of protection and their significance highlighted using the LANDMAP process.

⁸² Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019

<https://www.monlife.co.uk/connect/green-infrastructure/green-infrastructure-strategy-2019/>

⁸³ Green Infrastructure SPG April 2015 <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2015/07/GI-April-2015.pdf>

⁸⁴ Monmouthshire Countryside Access Improvement Plan 2020- 2030 can be viewed via:

<https://www.monlife.co.uk/outdoor/countryside-access/rights-of-way-improvement-plan/>

- 5.136 A review of the Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) designations was undertaken as part of the evidence base for the Adopted LDP. This identified five areas that justified designation as SLAs, effectively covering the majority of Monmouthshire. It was concluded that the designation of the majority of the County as SLA may undermine the intention of the policy to protect those more special landscapes, as reflected in PPW11. Therefore, the Adopted LDP did not contain SLA designations and instead adopted a policy approach to landscape protection and management underpinned by LANDMAP. This approach is to be taken forward in the RLDP and a Landscape Character Assessment SPG for Monmouthshire will be prepared to support the RLDP landscape policies.
- 5.137 The Council has commissioned an update of the existing Landscape and Sensitivity Capacity Assessment which was prepared by Simon White Associates in 2008/2009 to inform the Adopted LDP. The update takes account of Adopted LDP allocations, development that has occurred since the adoption of the current LDP and assesses key areas submitted at the Stage 1 Call for Candidate Sites. This work focuses on the Primary Settlements, Secondary Settlements and the Severnside area and provides an opinion on the least sensitive areas in terms of landscape in these settlements for residential growth potential. The assessment takes account of the underlying ecosystem service and resilience assets together with a range of designations.
- 5.138 The information contained within the LANDMAP Landscape Character Assessments and the Landscape Sensitivity Update Study (October 2020)⁸⁵ should be used to ensure that development proposals reflect the distinctiveness, qualities and sensitivities of the County's landscape.

Natural Environment/Biodiversity and Ecosystem resilience

- 5.139 Monmouthshire is rich in biological and geological diversity, which is reflected in the range of international, national and local designations within the plan area, which include:
- Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Areas for Conservation (SACs), Ramsar [international]
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs) [national]
 - Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) [local]

⁸⁵ Landscape Sensitivity Update Study October 2020 <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

- 5.140 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduced an enhanced Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty (Section 6 Duty) on public authorities in Wales. This places a duty on the Council to seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity by ensuring development does not cause any significant loss of habitats or populations of species and must provide a net benefit for biodiversity. PPW11 notes that the broad framework for implementing the Section 6 Duty and building resilience through the planning system will include addressing five key themes of ecosystem resilience: Diversity, Extent, Condition, Connectivity and Adaptability to Change. Section 7 habitats and species are identified by the Welsh Ministers as those they consider are of key significance to sustain and improve biodiversity in relation to Wales.
- 5.141 The RLDP will seek to maintain and improve the biodiversity and geology of the County through the protection, restoration and enhancement of valuable ecological habitats, wildlife networks and corridors, as well as the creation of new habitats. This applies to both direct and indirect effects as development outside an important site can still have a damaging impact.
- 5.142 PPW11 and Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning, provide for the tiered protection of designated sites and set a clear context for the relevant policy approach to these sites, with those of international and national importance being afforded more protection than those of local importance.
- 5.143 Natura 2000 sites are classified under EU Directives and as such enjoy statutory protection under European legislation. The Habitats Directive requires that development proposals likely to have a significant effect on a European site are subject to an Appropriate Assessment. National guidance and legislation is provided on this matter. A Habitats Regulations Assessment is being prepared as part of the RLDP process.
- 5.144 Development proposals affecting locally designated non-statutory sites, or undesignated sites that satisfy the relevant designation criteria, and Section 7 habitats/species of importance, will be assessed against the relevant Development Management Policies included in the Deposit Plan.
- 5.145 Following new evidence about the environmental impacts of phosphate in watercourses, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has adopted tighter targets for the water quality of watercourses and have assessed the nine riverine Special Areas of Conservation in Wales. Within Monmouthshire it was identified that within the River Usk 88% of the river's water bodies failed to meet the required target and within the River Wye 67% failed to meet the required target. As a result of this failure NRW has

issued a Wales-wide river SAC phosphate compliance report⁸⁶ to ensure that the environmental capacity of the rivers does not deteriorate any further. Candidate Site submissions in affected catchment areas will need to consider this issue, as detailed in Policy S8 'Strategic Development Sites' paragraphs 5.55 – 5.57.

Countryside Access

5.146 As noted in paragraphs 5.133-5.134, the Monmouthshire Countryside Access Improvement Plan has been produced after extensive consultation and assessments. The countryside access provision in Monmouthshire is extensive. There is over 2,100km of rights of way, of which over 500km is in the Brecon Beacons National Park. Only 11% of the network is either bridleways or restricted byways which can be used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. This network is fragmented and limited, therefore it is Monmouthshire County Council's policy to increase access to cyclists and horse riders wherever possible. This will give more opportunities to access the outdoors near where residents live in line with the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act 2015 and complement the provisions of the Active Travel (Wales) Act and the Environment (Wales) Act. The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the value and importance of the provision of locally accessible open/green spaces for health, well-being and recreation.

Links to Wider Policy Framework	
RLDP Objectives	Objective 3 – Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape Objective 4 – Flood risk Objective 6 – Land Objective 7 – Natural Resources Objective 8 – Health and Well-being Objective 11 – Place-making Objective 12 – Communities Objective 14 – Infrastructure Objective 17 – Climate Change
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (WG, February 2021)	Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure Policy 15 – National Forest
Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (WG, February 2021)	Distinctive and Natural Places Theme (Chapter 6)
Building Better Places (WG July 2020)	Priorities and Actions for Places - Post Covid-19 Considerations: Green Infrastructure, health and well-being and ecological resilience (page 22)

⁸⁶ NRW's Planning Interim Guidance <https://naturalresources.wales/evidence-and-data/research-and-reports/water-reports/compliance-assessment-of-welsh-river-sacs-against-phosphorus-targets/?lang=en>

	Improving air quality and soundscapes for better health and well-being (page 23)
Well-being of Future Generations Act (WBFGA) (WG, 2015)	A resilient Wales A healthier Wales A more equal Wales A Wales of cohesive communities A globally responsible Wales
Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan (MWBP) (February 2018)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life. • Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.
Key Evidence	<p>TAN5: Nature Conservation and Planning Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update Study (White Consultants, October 2020)</p> <p>LANDMAP Character Assessment SPG (to be prepared following Adoption of RLDP)</p> <p>Green Infrastructure Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019 Adopted Green Infrastructure SPG – April 2015 (to be reviewed as part of the RLDP process)</p> <p>Monmouthshire Countryside Access Improvement Plan 2020-2030</p> <p>NRWs River SAC (phosphate) Compliance Report</p>
Monitoring	TBC
Detailed Policies	TBC in Deposit RLDP

APPENDIX 1: RLDP Supporting Documents

A number of additional supporting background documents have been prepared to inform the Preferred Strategy. These are listed below and should be read alongside the Preferred Strategy as only their main findings are highlighted in this document given the significant amount of data/information they contain. The documents are available on the Planning Policy page of the Council’s website⁸⁷.

Supporting Document	Purpose
Replacement LDP Documents	
The Adopted LDP Review Report (March 2018)	Evaluates the extent to which the Adopted LDP is functioning effectively.
RLDP Delivery Agreement as Revised October 2020. (Initially agreed May 2018 and updated March 2020)	The Delivery Agreement sets out how the RLDP is to be prepared and provides a timetable for Plan preparation along with a Community Involvement Scheme which outlines the Council’s principles of community engagement.
Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021)	Sets out the key issues, challenges and opportunities facing the County along with the RLDP vision and objectives to address the issues, challenges and opportunities identified.
Review of RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence base in light of Covid-19 (September 2020 approved by Council October 2020)	This report provides an update and review on the preparation of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and in response to publication of a letter from the Minister for Housing and Local Government on 7 th July 2020 ⁸⁸ . The letter requires local planning authorities to undertake an assessment of the RLDP evidence base, strategy and policies in terms of sensitivity to the consequences of the current pandemic before progressing with plan preparation.
Candidate Site Register (February 2019)	Provides a log of the Candidate Sites submitted during the first call for sites, to be considered for inclusion for development, redevelopment and/or protection in the RLDP.

⁸⁷ Supporting Background Papers can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/development-of-an-evidence-base/>

⁸⁸ Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid-19, 7th July 2020

Growth and Spatial Options Consultation Paper (December 2020)	Provides a range of growth and spatial options for the RLDP together with the implications of each option and the extent to which they will achieve the RLDP objectives. The options presented provide the scale of growth (housing and employment) the Plan will potentially need to include and how that growth could be distributed.
Integrated Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Related Documents	
Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) Scoping Report (December 2018)	Updated to take account of responses from a targeted consultation, this sets out the background for the ISA/SEA process that will be followed throughout the RLDP process and considers the characteristics of the RLDP area through a review of relevant plans, policies and programmes, and baseline information.
Initial Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report (December 2018)	Updated to take account of responses from a targeted consultation, this outlines the requirement to undertake a HRA in respect of the RLDP and identifies the relevant European sites for consideration within the HRA process.
Initial ISA Report (AECOM, June 2021)	The Initial ISA Report is the second stage of the ISA process and appraises the social, economic, environmental and cultural effects of the RLDP Preferred Strategy. This includes the Vision, Strategic Objectives, Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy, including the Strategic Policies.
HRA of the Monmouthshire RLDP – Preferred Strategy (AECOM, June 2021)	The HRA Report provides a high level, preliminary assessment of the RLDP Preferred Strategy. At this stage, the aim of the report is to identify European sites which have the potential to be impacted by the RLDP, and to identify potential likely significant effects that the RLDP may have. It also identifies other plans, programmes and projects that may have ‘in-combination’ effects when considered alongside the effects of the RLDP. The Preferred Strategy does not identify any site-specific allocations and so a further, more detailed HRA will be carried out on the RLDP Deposit Plan.
Supporting Evidence and Background Papers	
Monmouthshire RLDP Updated Demographic Evidence Report produced by Edge Analytics (November 2020)	Edge Analytics was commissioned to prepare a range of up-dated demographic, dwelling and employment growth scenarios using the 2018-based projections as the starting point, to inform the RLDP growth options. In accordance with the requirements of the Development Plans Manual (March 2020), the Paper considers the 2018-based Welsh Government projections and applies a range of sensitivity assumptions to address key issues and challenges, to provide a range of growth scenarios for the County. The potential employment growth that could be

	supported by the demographic and dwelling-led scenarios is also set out using key assumptions on economic activity, unemployment rates and commuting ratio linked demographic and economic change. The report provides a suite of population, housing and economic growth outcomes to consider in the formulation of the RLDP.
Monmouthshire Affordable Housing Report produced by Edge Analytics (November 2020)	This report extends upon the Demographic Evidence Report (November 2020) scenario analysis, with consideration of the impacts of the affordable housing policy-led element of the strategy on dwellings, population, households and employment.
MCC Economies of the Future Reports, BE Group (2018)	The MCC Economies of the Future Reports will inform the development of the revised Economic Growth and Inward Investment Strategy for the Council. The analysis is also a fundamental piece of work that provides evidence to support the Monmouthshire RLDP.
Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement (November 2019)	The Economic Growth and Ambition Statement sets out the economic ambition for the County and will work alongside the RLDP in identifying suitable employment sites and premises, to enable existing businesses to grow and to attract inward investment from new businesses in key growth sectors.
Inward Investment Prospectus 2020: Growing your Business in Monmouthshire (March 2020)	This document supports the Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement (Nov 2019) noted above. The prospectus sets our aspirations to raise the economic profile of Monmouthshire with priorities to explore business opportunities and attract funding, while being sensitive to Monmouthshire's landscape.
Sustainable Settlements Appraisal (June 2021)	Assesses and identifies settlements within Monmouthshire, which are potentially suitable to accommodate future growth in terms of their location, size, role and function and sets out an initial settlement hierarchy arising from the appraisal to inform the Preferred Strategy.
Growth and Spatial Options Report of Consultation (June 2021)	Sets out a summary of the comments received in the relation to the growth and spatial options consultation, together with a summary of the Council's response.
Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021)	Expands upon the work completed to date on growth and spatial options, provides a summary of each option, an explanation of why specific options would/would not meet the Council's ambitions following evidence that has been collated.
Housing Background Paper (June 2021)	Identifies the amount of land the Council will be required to allocate for housing in the RLDP to meet the proposed level of growth. This process involves analysing the various components of housing supply, plus extant allocations that can be 'rolled forward' to the Replacement Plan. This paper analyses each component of housing supply in more detail before arriving at a new

	housing allocations provision based on the methodology detailed within the Welsh Government Development Plans Manual Edition 3 (March 2020). It incorporates a Housing Potential Study which aims to identify where windfall sites could potentially be located within the existing settlement areas of Monmouthshire.
Local Housing Market Assessment (2020)	Provides a detailed insight into the local housing markets across the County. It includes a quantitative assessment of housing need that will be used to inform the housing policies of the RLDP in terms of affordable housing provision, tenures and types of accommodation required.
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (May 2016). Update submitted to Welsh Government following Cabinet approval January 2021 – awaiting approval from Welsh Government.	Report assessing the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller families and establish the number of pitches required to meet the identified need.
Review of Candidate Sites against the Preferred Strategy (June 2021)	Provides an initial assessment of Candidate Sites in terms of their compatibility with the Preferred Strategy.
Monmouthshire Employment Land Review, BE Group (June 2021)	Evidence base undertaken in line with Welsh Government Guidance. The ELR provides an assessment of the supply and demand for employment land in the County, looking at the available employment allocations and existing employment areas and reviews the property market, consults with local stakeholders and forecasts employment growth to understand employment demand requirements for the Plan period.
Regional Employment Study – Larger Than Local Study, BE Group (March 2020)	The report addresses the issues of employment land on a regional basis and covers five local authorities: - Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Caerphilly and Newport. It provides an economic evidence base, reviews the property and employment land market and recommends employment sites of regional significance for consideration in each of the constituent local authority areas.
Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update Study (White Consultants, October 2020)	An update to the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study carried out in 2009 setting out detailed assessments and sensitivity evaluations of local landscape character areas and strategic candidate sites, with a view to establishing the least sensitive areas in terms of landscape for housing growth potential. The study area includes areas and defined candidate sites around primary and secondary settlements and Severnside.

Retail Background Paper (March 2021)	Provides an annual retail 'health check' of our five main towns (i.e. Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow, Monmouth and Usk).
Employment Land Background Paper (September 2020)	Provides an annual assessment of employment land take up across allocated and protected employment sites as identified in the Adopted LDP.
Minerals Regional Technical Statement – 2nd Review for South Wales (September 2020)	Minerals Technical Advice Note 1 (2004) requires the preparation of Regional Technical Statements (RTS) for the areas covered by both the South Wales and North Wales Regional Aggregates Working Parties (RAWPs). A revised RTS – 2nd Review for South Wales was published in September 2020 and makes recommendations for the apportionments necessary to ensure an adequate supply of crushed rock, including the nationally recommended minimum provision of 7 and 10 years, are available for the entire duration of the RLDP.
The South East Wales Waste Planning Report – April 2016	PPW11 and TAN 21: Waste, establish regional monitoring arrangements to inform the preparation of LDPs and assist in the determination of planning applications. The report assesses the need for additional landfill capacity and waste management facilities at a regional level.

APPENDIX 2: RLDP Issues

Full details are set out in the Issues, Visions and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021)⁸⁹. The table below provides an extract of the issues facing the County and how the RLDP can influence these issues. The RLDP issues have been reviewed in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and endorsed by Cabinet on 17th June 2020 and Council on 22nd October 2020 as remaining relevant. A number of issues were found to have increased emphasis and importance in light of Covid-19, these are indicated in the table below using an asterisk against both the headline and relevant individual Issues. An additional section has also been included within the table to provide further detail on how the RLDP can support such issues given their increased emphasis in light of Covid-19. The issues have been grouped in accordance with the Seven Well-being Goals as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to ensure that they are framed within this context. This allows for the appreciation of social, economic and environmental matters to be embedded into the Plan.

A Prosperous Wales (Well-being Goal 1)
Employment & Economy*
Issue
<p>Issue 1* - There has been a slow uptake of employment land in the past. There is subsequently a need to consider whether existing available land is suitably located and fit for purpose for appropriate growth sectors. There is also a need to consider potential future demand for employment land along with Council aspirations for innovation across Monmouthshire in light of the recent removal of the Severn Bridge tolls and the ambitions and opportunities associated with the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRC).</p> <p>Issue 2* - While unemployment is low there is a net-outflow of commuters, both levels of out commuting and distances travelled to work are relatively high. There is a need to provide support for inward investment and local employment growth/opportunities.</p> <p>Issue 3* - Wage levels available for local jobs are lower than the average for Wales and the UK. Evidence continues to suggest that the income for economically active women who both live and work within the County is significantly lower than that of men within the same category. This coupled with high property prices makes it difficult for young people and future generations to live and work locally. Additional employment opportunities for young people are required to help reduce the numbers of this age group leaving the County.</p> <p>Issue 4* - Monmouthshire has a dual economy. The qualifications, skills and earnings of the residents are above the regional and national average, however, for those working in the area earnings are lower and employment is relatively less skilled.</p>

⁸⁹ The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021) can be viewed via the following link: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/plan-preparation/issues-vision-and-objectives/>

Issue 5* - The increasing ageing population and shrinking working age population (the relative absence of 20-40 year olds and our median age of 48 years, compared to a median age of 34 years in Cardiff) is limiting employment growth within Monmouthshire and social sustainability of communities. This is exacerbated by limited Job opportunities and affordable housing availability.

Issue 6* - There is a need to sustain and regenerate the County's rural economy. There is current uncertainty regarding the impact of Brexit on agricultural subsidies.

Issue 7* - Higher levels of those in employment work at home compared to the Welsh average. Efficient digital infrastructure is essential to support home working and the general connectivity of the County's rural areas and to support economic growth⁹⁰.

Issue 8* - The role of high streets is changing due to out of town retail centres, the increase in internet shopping, changing shopping habits (e.g. top-up grocery shopping) and austerity and as a result vacancy rates in some of the County's retail centres have increased. There is a leakage of expenditure out of the County and a need to protect the County's retail centres from out of town developments.

Issue 9* - Tourism plays a significant part in the Monmouthshire economy particularly in assisting in the diversification of the rural economy and in sustaining the County's historic town centres. In 2019 2.28 million visitors came to Monmouthshire, having an overall economic impact of £244 million. Staying visitors generate a higher economic impact than day visitors at £185million compared to £59 million in 2019 (Monmouthshire STEAM Report 2019) highlighting the continued need for visitor accommodation.

How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?

A(i) The RLDP can encourage a vibrant economy within the County, specifically by ensuring that sufficient employment sites are suitably located in attractive, accessible and sustainable locations and are of an appropriate size and type to meet the needs of the market/key employment/growth sectors, including, through support of start-up and growing businesses to help diversify the economy.

A(ii) The RLDP can aim to ensure that there is a portfolio of sites available which is appropriate to market conditions and the needs of the Monmouthshire economy along with the wider Cardiff Capital Region. Consideration can be given to using CPO powers to ensure sites come forward.

A(iii) The RLDP can ensure that, wherever possible, jobs and homes are located in close proximity to each other to provide greater opportunity for people to work and live locally. The Replacement LDP can also ensure a range and choice of homes are available, in new developments, particularly where there is a need for affordable housing, to assist in regaining a balanced population.

A(iv) The RLDP needs to take a role in strengthening the local economy, ensuring an appropriate economic base to enable people to live and work in the County.

A(v) The RLDP can contain policies that support the diversification of the rural economy.

⁹⁰ The current situational analysis of Superfast Broadband Next Generation Access (NGA) coverage in the Cardiff Capital Region, based on the OMR/SAPC undertaken prior to the Superfast Cymru Phase 2 (SFC2) Procurement, paints a stark picture in terms of the current lack of coverage in Monmouthshire in comparison to our other nine Local Authority partners - currently 12.56% of premises in Monmouthshire are NOT covered in comparison to 3-4% in the other nine Local Authorities within the region.

<p>A(vi) The RLDP can help to address digital exclusion by seeking to support the improvement of rural broadband and delivery of high speed connections.</p> <p>A(vii) The RLDP must contain policies that protect the vitality and viability of existing town centres, providing additional retail opportunities where appropriate, including in relation to the regeneration of Caldicot and Usk, and ensure that the distribution of development supports these main centres in order to retain retail expenditure.</p> <p>A(viii) The RLDP will enable a review of the towns' primary shopping frontages (PSF) and related policies to have regard to the changing role of the high street.</p> <p>A(ix) The RLDP can contain policies that encourage tourism development while at the same time ensuring that the natural and built heritage that attracts visitors to the area is preserved and enhanced.</p>
<p>How can the RLDP support these Issues given increased emphasis in light of Covid-19</p>
<p>The RLDP will provide a positive planning policy framework to support and enable sustainable economic growth, including in relation to our high streets and tourism sector, over the Plan period.</p>
<p>A Resilient Wales (Well-being Goal 2)</p>
<p>Air</p>
<p>Issue</p>
<p>Issue 10 - While air pollution is not a major problem in Monmouthshire it can cause significant problems for people's health. The greatest problems associated with air quality in the County are caused by vehicle emissions, this is particularly apparent in the two Air Quality Management Areas in the County at Usk and Chepstow.</p>
<p>How can the RLDP influence these Issues?</p>
<p>B(i) The RLDP can seek to minimise any polluting effects that might arise from new development in the County by encouraging appropriate patterns of development that seek to reduce the usage of private vehicles and to allow for increased walking, cycling and use of public transport (active travel). It can also take measures to ensure that the location of new development does not worsen conditions in existing Air Quality Management Areas or result in new ones.</p>
<p>Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity & Landscape*</p>
<p>Issue</p>
<p>Issue 11* - Monmouthshire is renowned for its beautiful landscapes and major biodiversity resources including River SACs. The best of these assets should be protected, managed and enhanced for future generations.</p> <p>Issue 12* - There is a need to improve connectivity within the landscape through protecting and improving existing wildlife networks and corridors, including both green and blue infrastructure, and creating new linkages to allow species to move and adapt to climate change impacts. GI is also beneficial to human well-being.</p>

How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?
<p>C(i) The RLDP should ensure that new development is sustainable, does not cause harm to international, national and locally protected sites and species and, that where appropriate, necessary mitigation measures are taken to avoid any such adverse effects. The River Wye and River Usk water bodies within the County are currently experiencing water quality issues, specifically in relation to phosphate levels, the RLDP must ensure development in these catchment areas does not contribute to or increase phosphate levels.</p> <p>C(ii) The RLDP must ensure biodiversity is considered in any development in order to protect any interest on the site and encourage biodiversity enhancements where necessary.</p> <p>C(iii) It will be necessary to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment of the RLDP to ensure that any cumulative effects of development in Monmouthshire and adjoining areas does not result in harm to internationally designated nature conservation sites.</p> <p>C(iv) The RLDP can contain policies to protect and enhance the green and blue infrastructure networks across the County.</p>
How can the RLDP support these Issues given increased emphasis in light of Covid-19
The RLDP will provide a positive planning policy framework to support and enable placemaking and the provision of locally accessible open /green space and to protect/enhance our natural environment.
Flooding
Issue
Issue 13 - Parts of the County are vulnerable to flooding. Climate change is likely to increase the risk of flooding, as well as many other risks, so mitigating climate change and building resilience is crucial.
How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?
D(i) The RLDP must ensure new development is located away from flood risk areas and has a role to play in terms of reducing the risk from present day flood risk, as well as in relation to climate change adaptation and resilience.
Minerals & Waste
Issue
<p>Issue 14 - Monmouthshire has made good progress in the promotion of the recycling and composting of waste, and the elimination of waste to landfill. Monmouthshire also has to make an appropriate contribution to the regional requirement for waste management.</p> <p>Issue 15 - Mineral extraction plays a limited role in Monmouthshire's economy but there is a need to safeguard the County's resources in order to make an appropriate contribution to the sustainable supply of aggregates to the South Wales economy as a whole.</p>
How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?
E(i) The RLDP can identify sites that are appropriate for waste management or disposal facilities to meet local or regional requirements.

E(ii) The RLDP can ensure that mineral resources are safeguarded and exploited in a sustainable fashion that also enables Monmouthshire to meet its obligation to make a contribution to the requirements of the South Wales region.
Land
Issue
Issue 16 - There are limited opportunities for brownfield development within the County's existing urban areas. Issue 17 - Monmouthshire has a significantly high percentage of best and most versatile agricultural land (i.e. Grade 1, 2 or 3a). While there is a need to conserve these resources, there are limited opportunities within the County for brownfield development and development on lower grades of agricultural land (i.e. Grade 3b, 4 and 5).
How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?
F(i) The RLDP will seek to prioritise the use of previously developed land where opportunities arise. F(ii) The RLDP should seek to protect best and most versatile agricultural land whilst at the same time recognising that this will not always be possible where there is an overriding need for development.
A Healthier Wales (Well-being Goal 3)
Human Health*
Issue
Issue 18* - While Monmouthshire performs relatively well on indicators relating to health, there is a need to promote opportunities for healthy living particularly in the context of an ageing population. Issue 19* - While an ageing population brings many opportunities, it also brings challenges and increases in the number of people living with long term conditions can create pressures on existing health care provision. Issue 20* - On the whole Monmouthshire's residents have good access to public open space, however, there are deficiencies in many of the County's communities in relation to community and recreational facilities. This can contribute to rural isolation in certain areas. Issue 21* - Obesity is a growing problem throughout Wales. Although obesity rates in Monmouthshire are below the Welsh average consideration should be given to promoting healthy lifestyles.
How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?
G(i) The RLDP can assist in creating a healthier Monmouthshire by ensuring sufficient policies are in place to support the provision of blue and green infrastructure and retention of the existing resource. G(ii) The RLDP can provide policies to ensure health care provision is supported. G(iii) The RLDP can affect the provision of public open space and recreation by protecting, where necessary, existing open space and facilities as well as requiring new development to make a contribution to the provision of additional facilities.

How can the RLDP support these Issues given increased emphasis in light of Covid-19
The RLDP will provide a positive planning policy framework to support and enable placemaking and the provision of locally accessible open /green space and to protect/enhance our natural environment.
A More Equal Wales (Well-being Goal 4)
Population*
Issue
Issue 22* - Monmouthshire is a predominantly rural county with almost half (47%) of the total population living in wards defined as being in rural areas (i.e. with a population of less than 10,000). Issue 23* - The population of Monmouthshire has shown a steady increase over a ten year period to 2011, although more recently the rate of growth has slowed. This growth is being fuelled by in-migration. Issue 24* - Monmouthshire has a significantly higher proportion of older age groups (65+) and lower proportion of young adults (16 – 44) compared to the Welsh average, the sharpest decline of which is in the working age population. The relative absence of young adults is often linked to the affordability of housing across the County and has an impact on future prospects of economic growth.
How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?
H(i) The RLDP must decide on the level of growth appropriate for Monmouthshire and the spatial distribution of this growth between different urban and rural communities to address the challenges we face (including demography and affordability), balancing the greater sustainability of urban settlements with the difficulties of maintaining services in rural areas. H(ii) There is a need to achieve a more balanced population structure to ensure there is a sufficient population of working aged people to support the Monmouthshire economy and to provide more opportunities for young people to both to stay within and move to the area. The RLDP needs to take a role in strengthening the local economy, ensuring an appropriate economic base to enable people to live and work in the County and ensuring that demand for homes is satisfied by providing good quality affordable homes for those who need them. H(iii) The RLDP can help to address issues surrounding the ageing population through facilitating the provision of accessible services supported by connective infrastructure to meet local population growth needs.
How can the RLDP support these Issues given increased emphasis in light of Covid-19
The RLDP growth levels will deliver positive demographic change over the Plan period that is essential to support and enable the provision of balanced communities throughout the County.
A Wales of Cohesive Communities (Well-being Goal 5)
Housing*
Issue

Issue 25* - Average house prices in the County are high at £297,628 compared to a Welsh average of £187,477 (Hometrack March 2020). The most significant increases have been experienced in recent years. There is a need to consider the potential impact on house prices arising from the recent removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls, the ambitions and opportunities associated with the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and the South East Wales Metro, together with the economic growth of the Bristol/SW region and the opportunities for Monmouthshire as a border county and its location between Bristol and Newport and Cardiff, the 'Great Western Cities'.

Issue 26* - House prices are also high in relation to earnings and there is a pressing need for additional affordable housing in the County in both urban and rural areas to assist in ensuring a balanced population.

Issue 27* - A range and choice of housing is needed to both meet the needs of an ageing population and to attract and retain the younger age groups.

Issue 28* - There is limited scope for significant or long term expansion of the existing urban areas within the County due to a mix of physical, environmental and policy constraints.

How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?

I(i) The RLDP will affect the amount of housing to be provided by both deciding on overall levels of growth/spatial options and by setting thresholds and proportions to determine the amount of this residential development that is affordable. It can also ensure a range and choice of homes are available in new developments and influence the type, tenure and nature of housing built within the County.

I(ii) The RLDP will have to resolve the amount of housing to be built in rural areas, balancing the need to sustain rural settlements by supporting services and enabling people to remain in their communities with the need to protect the countryside and ensure sustainable patterns of development.

I(iii) The RLDP process must balance the extent to which the Main Towns and Severnside area can continue to accommodate further growth in the medium to long term against the potential for a new settlement in order to facilitate the creation of sustainable resilient communities.

How can the RLDP support these Issues given increased emphasis in light of Covid-19

The RLDP will ensure /enable a range and choice of homes (housing mix) in future housing developments to address affordability issues and to build sustainable and resilient communities. The Preferred Strategy allows for a level of growth and for affordable housing-led sites: this remains critical to addressing the issues and objectives.

Infrastructure*

Issue

Issue 29* - Poor access to community facilities and declining local service provision is a particular issue for rural communities.

<p>Issue 30* - Limited public transport, particularly in rural areas makes it harder to access jobs, services and facilities, which could be exacerbated by rising fuel prices. There are nevertheless future opportunities for investment in public transport through the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and advances in technology.</p> <p>Issue 31* - There is a need to ensure that adequate physical, digital and social infrastructure is provided to support new development. This includes: broadband infrastructure, the provision of sufficient water and sewerage infrastructure, transport infrastructure and active travel to support non-car modes of travel.</p>
<p>How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?</p>
<p>J(i) The RLDP can consider allocating land for housing and employment in rural areas in an attempt to sustain existing rural community facilities and services, weighing this against the need to avoid unsustainable travel patterns.</p> <p>J(ii) The RLDP can help ensure adequate provision of infrastructure to serve new development and can contain support policies to enable improvements or enhancements for existing development, e.g. provision of electric vehicle charging (EVC), broadband connectivity and renewable energy.</p> <p>J(iii) The RLDP will contain allocations and policies to support the priorities of the emerging local transport plan and cycling strategy.</p>
<p>How can the RLDP support these Issues given increased emphasis in light of Covid-19</p>
<p>The RLDP will ensure digital and charging infrastructure provision is in place or can be provided to accommodate new development and will support active travel opportunities.</p>
<p>A Wales of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language (Well-being Goal 6)</p>
<p>Cultural Heritage</p>
<p>Issue</p>
<p>Issue 32 - Monmouthshire has a significant built heritage resource in terms of scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens and archaeologically sensitive sites that, together with their settings, require protection and enhancement.</p> <p>Issue 33 - There is a need to protect, promote and enhance the best of our landscape and heritage which are an important part of our culture and play a key role in tourism and economic growth, along with providing support for the Welsh Language to ensure it is safeguarded and supported.</p> <p>Issue 34 - The distinctive settlement pattern of Monmouthshire relates to historic towns and villages and their relationship with the surrounding rural areas. There has nevertheless been substantial suburban expansion in the South of the County, particularly adjacent to the M4 corridor. This area is likely to receive further pressure for growth due to the recent removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls and the ambitions and opportunities associated with the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and the South East Wales Metro, together with the</p>

economic growth of the Bristol/SW region and the opportunities for Monmouthshire as a border county and its location between Bristol and Newport and Cardiff, the 'Great Western Cities'.
How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?
K(i) The RLDP can contain measures to preserve and enhance the built heritage and best of the historic environment of Monmouthshire. K(ii) The RLDP can help protect, promote and enhance the best of our landscape and heritage which are an important part of our culture and play a key role in tourism and economic growth, along with providing support for the Welsh Language to ensure it is safeguarded and supported. K(iii) Community involvement provides an opportunity to seek views on how Welsh language and culture interact with LDP policies and proposals. The future of the Welsh language depends on a range of factors beyond the planning system, particularly education, demographic change, community activities and a sound economic base to maintain thriving sustainable communities. The planning system can contribute to the future well-being of the Welsh language by creating conditions for well-paid employment opportunities and a range of quality housing options resulting in sustainable communities. Planning policies must not seek to control housing occupancy on linguistic grounds ⁹¹ . K(iv) The RLDP can play a key role in promoting good quality sustainable design that will enable new development and future growth to respect and enhance the existing distinctive character of Monmouthshire.
Landscape
Issue
Issue 35 - Monmouthshire has a rich and diverse landscape that brings wider benefits to the local economy particularly through tourism and health and well-being. Monmouthshire as a whole incorporates parts of the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Brecon Beacons National Park and the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site.
How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?
L(i) The RLDP must seek to protect high quality landscapes throughout the County, paying particular attention to those contained in the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Blaenavon World Heritage Site and in the setting of the Brecon Beacons National Park.
A Globally Responsible Wales (Well-being Goal 7)
Climatic Factors*
Issue

⁹¹ Technical Advice Note 20 paragraphs 1.7.3, 2.2 and 2.6.4

<p>Issue 36* - The volume of traffic in the County has continued to increase, up nearly 19% in the nine years to 2019 (StatsWales, April 2019). There is a pattern of relatively long travel to work distances, high levels of car ownership and reliance on the private car.</p> <p>Issue 37* - Small Scale and Local Authority wide Renewable Energy schemes are generally supported across Monmouthshire, however, a more proactive approach should be undertaken for schemes of a local authority scale (i.e. 5MW - 25MW).</p> <p>Issue 38* - Monmouthshire's rurality, limited public transport, high levels of car ownership and the subsequent reliance on the private car, combined with high energy consumption and waste management can all contribute to carbon emissions. MCC recognises that we are in a climate emergency and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5 degrees.</p>
<p>How can the RLDP Influence these Issues?</p>
<p>M(i) Concerns about climate change require that efforts are made to reduce the reliance on the private car and the consequent impact of carbon dioxide emissions. The RLDP needs to consider appropriate patterns of development that promote a safe, efficient, accessible and sustainable transport system that provides opportunities for walking and cycling and encourages active travel in order to support carbon reduction. The RLDP will provide a mix of employment and housing allocations with the aim of reducing the need to travel, acknowledging however that the reasons why people live where they do is complex.</p> <p>M(ii) A renewable energy assessment will be undertaken to identify areas of potential for local authority and strategic renewable energy development.</p> <p>M(iii) The RLDP will consider ways to support carbon reduction through a variety of measures including the use of renewable energy, the design and location of new development, encouraging balanced job and population growth to reduce out-commuting, the provision of broadband connectivity to reduce the need to travel, the provision of ultra-low emission vehicle charging infrastructure to reduce emissions and improve air quality, and the provision of quality Green Infrastructure. Proposals will be considered against our commitment to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C.</p>
<p>How can the RLDP support these Issues given increased emphasis in light of Covid-19</p>
<p>The RLDP policy framework will support and enable renewable energy generation and provide opportunities for active travel and integrated sustainable transport solutions.</p>

** indicates the Issue has increased emphasis and importance in light of Covid-19*

APPENDIX 3: Review of Adopted Local Development Plan Policies

The purpose of this assessment is to identify if the existing Adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) Development Management Policies are functioning effectively, whether any changes are likely to be required and if it is appropriate to carry forward the policies in the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). It should be treated as indicative at this stage as new evidence, guidance or local factors may emerge as the Plan process progresses to justify a different approach to the one noted below. The policies will also need to be regrouped/reordered to reflect the strategic themes set out in PPW11 and Strategic Policies section of the RLDP. The assessment is outlined in the table below.

	Indicates that the Development Management policy will be carried forward possibly with minor amendments.
	Indicates that the Development Management will be carried forward as a Development Management policy with amendments to reflect updated evidence, updated national planning policy guidance or Officer Working Group comments.
	Indicates that consideration is being given to deleting the policy either in its entirety or through the combination/inclusion of the policy objective with another policy.

Existing Development Management Policies		Commentary	Recommendation
H1	Residential Development in Main Towns, Severnside Settlements and Rural Secondary Settlements	Functioning effectively – slight amendment required to refer to the correct Strategic Policy and settlement hierarchy name amendments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.
H2	Residential Development in Main Villages	Functioning effectively – slight amendment required to refer to the correct Strategic Policy and settlement hierarchy name amendments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.
H3	Residential Development in Minor Villages	Main thrust of policy is functioning effectively - amendments required in response to Officer Working Group* comments relating to a maximum of 4 dwellings, along with settlement hierarchy name amendments	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments.

Existing Development Management Policies		Commentary	Recommendation
H4	Conversion / Rehabilitation of Buildings in the Open Countryside for Residential Use	Amendments required in response to Officer Working Group comments to improve clarity. Further clarity is provided in the Adopted Rural Conversions to a Residential or Tourism Use SPG, which will be amended accordingly and readopted to accompany the RLDP.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments.
H5	Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside	Amendments required in response to Officer Working Group comments. Further clarity is provided in the LDP Policies H5 & H6 Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside and Extension of Rural Dwellings SPG which will be amended accordingly and readopted to accompany the RLDP.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments.
H6	Extension of Rural Dwellings	Policy functioning effectively. Further clarity is provided in the LDP Policies H5 & H6 Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside and Extension of Rural Dwellings SPG which will be amended accordingly and readopted to accompany the RLDP	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.
H7	Affordable Housing Rural Exceptions	Policy functioning effectively. Amendments required to reflect Officer Working Group comments and PPW11 guidance on Affordable Housing Exception sites being within or adjoining existing settlement boundaries.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments and national policy guidance.
H8	Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Sites	Policy functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect Officer Working Group comments and to align with national guidance.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
H9	Flat Conversions	Policy functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
CRF1	Retention of Existing Community Facilities	Amendments required to reflect Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments.

Existing Development Management Policies		Commentary	Recommendation
CRF2	Outdoor Recreation / Public Open Space and Allotment Standards	Policy functioning effectively. Amendments may be required to reflect updated national planning policy on standards and Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to the standards.
CRF3	Safeguarding Existing Recreational Facilities and Public Open Space	Policy functioning effectively.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.
RET1	Primary Shopping Frontages	Principle of policy remains relevant. Amendments may be necessary to policy thresholds and Primary Shopping Frontages to reflect evidence, updated national planning policy and Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect updated evidence.
RET2	Central Shopping Areas	Principle of policy remains relevant. Amendments may be necessary to policy wording and Central Shopping Areas boundaries to reflect evidence, updated national planning policy and Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect updated evidence.
RET3	Neighbourhood Centres	Policy functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
RET4	New Retail Proposals	Policy functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect updated national guidance and Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
E1	Protection of Existing Employment Land	Principle of policy remains relevant. Amendments may be necessary to reflect the findings of the Employment Land Review and Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect updated evidence.
E2	Non-allocated Employment Sites	Amendments required to reflect Officer Working Group comments and limitations of current policy restricted to single user only or large employers.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments.
E3	Working from Home	Delete policy as considered unnecessary and sufficiently covered by other policies.	Delete policy from the RLDP.

Existing Development Management Policies		Commentary	Recommendation
RE1	Employment within Villages	Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be necessary to reflect the findings of the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal and the findings of the Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments to reflect updated evidence.
RE2	Conversion/Rehabilitation of Buildings in the Open Countryside for Employment Use	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
RE3	Agricultural Diversification	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
RE4	New Agricultural and Forestry Buildings	Policy is functioning effectively.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.
RE5	Intensive Livestock and Free Range Poultry Units	Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments and updated Welsh Government guidance set out in Chief Planning Officer letter of 12 th June 2018.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments and updated national policy guidance.
RE6	Provision of Recreation, Tourism and Leisure Facilities in the Open Countryside	Amendments may be necessary to reflect update national planning policy and Officer Working Group comments and amendments to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments and updated national policy guidance and to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve.
T1	Touring Caravan and Tented Camping Sites	Amendments may be necessary to reflect update national planning policy and Officer Working Group comments and amendments to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments and updated national policy guidance and to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve.

Existing Development Management Policies		Commentary	Recommendation
T2	Visitor Accommodation Outside Settlements	Amendments may be necessary to reflect update national planning policy and Officer Working Group comments and amendments to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments and updated national policy guidance and to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve.
T3	Golf Courses	Amendments may be necessary to reflect update national planning policy and Officer Working Group comments and amendments to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect Officer Working Group comments and updated national policy guidance and to address the lack of clarity identified by Economy and Development Select Committee which the Sustainable Tourism SPG has sought to resolve.
SD1	Renewable Energy	Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments will be necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and the outcome of the Renewable Energy Assessment.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and evidence.
SD2	Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency	Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect contextual changes and updated national planning policy guidance.
SD3	Flood Risk	Review report recommends to delete this policy as flood risk considerations are covered by national planning policy.	Delete policy from the RLDP.
SD4	Sustainable Drainage	Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and legislation on this issue.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and legislation.
LC1	New Built Development in the Open Countryside	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
LC2	Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.

Existing Development Management Policies		Commentary	Recommendation
LC3	Brecon Beacons National Park	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
LC4	Wye Valley AONB	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
LC5	Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments. A Landscape Character SPG will be prepared to accompany the RLDP once adopted provide further clarity on interpretation and implementation of this policy once adopted.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
LC6	Green Wedges	This policy and associated boundaries will be amended as necessary to reflect a review of the Green Wedges which will be completed in time for the Deposit Plan to ensure designations are justified and consistent with updated planning policy guidance.	Policy and associated boundaries will be amended and to reflect a review of the Green Wedges and updated planning policy guidance.
GI1	Green Infrastructure	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and Officer Working Group Comments. The Adopted Green Infrastructure SPG provides further clarity on the implementation of the policy which will be amended accordingly and readopted to accompany the RLDP.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
NE1	Nature Conservation and Development	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect changes to the legislative framework, national planning policy guidance and Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.

Existing Development Management Policies		Commentary	Recommendation
EP1	Amenity and Environmental Protection	Policy functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
EP2	Protection of Water Sources and Water Environment	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
EP3	Lighting	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
EP4	Telecommunications	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect legislative framework and updated national planning policy guidance.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
EP5	Foul Sewage Disposal	Policy is functioning effectively.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
W1	Waste Reduction	Limited application. Review Report notes the need to consider whether the policy is required. Policy has strong links to the circular economy objectives. Amendments may be required to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and MCC's climate change agenda.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to reflect contextual and national planning policy guidance.
W2	Waste Recovery Facilities: Household	Limited application. Review Report notes the need to consider whether the policy is required. Principle of policy is considered relevant and necessary, but is adequately covered by the draft Strategic Policy S16 – Sustainable Waste Management set out in the Preferred Strategy (March 2020)	Delete policy as policy objectives are addressed by the draft Strategic Policy S16 – Sustainable Waste Management as set out in the Preferred Strategy (June 2021).
W3	Waste Management Facilities	Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments are required to replace the overarching acceptability of waste management facilities on B2 sites, to list specific sites and reduce the scope of the existing policy.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments to replace the overarching acceptance of B2 industrial sites for waste management facilities with a list of specific sites and reduce the scope of the existing policy.

Existing Development Management Policies		Commentary	Recommendation
W4	Rural Composting	Policy is functioning effectively.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.
W5	Waste Disposal by Landfill or Landraising	Policy functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect national planning policy guidance.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.
W6	Waste Deposition on Agricultural Land for Agricultural Improvement Purposes	Policy is functioning effectively.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.
M1	Local Building and Walling Stone	Policy is functioning effectively.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.
M2	Minerals Safeguarding Areas	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect the findings of the Regional Technical Statement – 2 nd Revision and associated Mineral Safeguarding Maps.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments necessary to reflect the updated Regional Technical Statement – 2 nd Revision.
M3	Mineral Site Buffer Zones	Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be necessary to reflect the findings of the Regional Technical Statement – 2 nd Revision. Buffer Zone for Livox Quarry requires deletion following a refusal of planning permission to continue mineral extraction.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments necessary to reflect the updated Regional Technical Statement 2 nd Revision and planning status changes.
MV1	Proposed Developments and Highway Considerations	Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be required to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and to incorporate elements of Policy MV7 – Rear Access/Service Areas, which is recommended to be deleted.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance and incorporate elements of policy MV7 – Rear Access/Service Areas, which is proposed to be deleted.
MV2	Sustainable Transport Access	Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be required to reflect updated national planning policy guidance.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with amendments necessary to reflect updated national planning policy guidance.
MV3	Public Rights of Way	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be required to reflect the Monmouthshire	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments to reflect contextual changes.

Existing Development Management Policies		Commentary	Recommendation
		Countryside Access Draft Improvement Plan – July 2019.	
MV4	Cycleways	Policy is functioning effectively.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.
MV5	Improvements to Public Transport Interchanges and Facilities	Policy has had limited use, but the principles remain relevant.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.
MV6	Canals and Redundant Rail Routes	Policy principle remains relevant, but has had limited use. Consideration will be given to amendments or combination with another suitable policy.	Carry forward the policy principle, but with consideration to amendments or combination with another suitable policy.
MV7	Rear Access / Service Areas	Policy is functioning effectively but has limited applicability. Consideration will be given to the deletion of the policy and inclusion its objective to Policy MV1.	Consider deletion of the policy with amendments to Policy MV1 to ensure policy objectives are addressed.
MV8	Rail Freight	Policy principle remains relevant, but has had limited applicability. Consideration will be given to combining policy objectives with another Movement related policy.	Carry forward policy principle, but with consideration to combining with another suitable policy.
MV9	Road Hierarchy	Policy is functioning effectively, but has had limited applicability. Consideration will be given to whether the policy is still required.	Consider deletion of the policy.
MV10	Transport Routes and Schemes	Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments are required to reflect updated Local Transport Plan and Active Travel Act and associated schemes.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy with amendments to reflect the updated Local Travel Plan and Active Travel Act.
DES1	General Design Considerations	Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments are required to reflect contextual changes, updated national planning policy guidance, Officer Working Group comments and consideration of the suggestions from Abergavenny Civic Society.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy with amendments to reflect contextual changes, updated national planning policy guidance, Officer Working Group comments and consideration of the suggestions from Abergavenny Civic Society.
DES2	Areas of Amenity Importance	Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments are required to reflect the review of Areas of Amenity	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy with amendments to reflect updated Areas of Amenity

Existing Development Management Policies		Commentary	Recommendation
		Importance which will be completed in time for the Deposit Plan, updated national planning policy guidance on associated standards and associated changes to policy CRF2.	Importance Survey and national planning policy guidance.
DES3	Advertisements	Policy is functioning effectively. Amendments may be required to reflect Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
DES4	Advance Tourism Signs	Policy is functioning effectively.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.
HE1**	Development in Conservation Areas	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
HE2**	Alterations to Unlisted Buildings in Conservation Areas	Policy is functioning effectively. Minor amendments may be necessary to reflect Officer Working Group comments.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP with minor amendments.
HE3**	Design of Shop Fronts in Conservation Areas	Policy is functioning effectively.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.
HE4**	Roman Town of Caerwent	Policy is functioning effectively.	Carry forward as a Development Management Policy in the RLDP.

*Officer Working Group discussions refers to issues raised during a series of internal workshops with MCC Officers covering different topic areas. The findings of the workshops fed into the LDP Review Report (March 2018), including Table 2: Review of Development Management Policies.

**Historic Environment Policies to be further reviewed in light of the Historic Environment Act and consideration given to the need for new or amended policies particularly with regard to Buildings of Local Interest and Historic Landscapes.

APPENDIX 4: Potential Strategic Growth Areas

- A 2.1 In order to implement the RLDP's proposed Growth Strategy, potential strategic growth areas (for housing and job growth) have been identified for each of the Primary Settlements and Severnside. To inform these possible strategic growth areas a high-level assessment of sites submitted during the Initial Call for Candidate Sites has been undertaken to identify those sites which could contribute to delivering the level of growth required to deliver the Preferred Strategy. At this stage only strategic sites and sustainable urban extensions of around 8ha in size and above have been considered. Smaller sites which individually or combined may also be capable of contributing to delivering the required level of growth are not included, these sites will also be subject to consideration following the Second Call for Candidate Sites. The identified site options are considered in theory to have the potential to underpin the Spatial Strategy by accommodating growth and focusing development within those settlements and areas which are identified as the most sustainable locations (refer to Strategic Policy S2 Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy).
- A 2.2 Not all sites shown will be selected for inclusion in the Deposit Plan, as their combined capacity exceeds the level of growth needed to meet the employment and residual new housing allocation requirement (refer to Table 6 Breakdown of Housing Supply). Moreover, a Second Call for Candidate Sites will be undertaken alongside the publication of the Preferred Strategy and further site options which are compatible with the Preferred Strategy may be submitted at this time. The final selection of sites for the Deposit Plan will be dependent on further detailed assessment work, including:
- The ability to deliver the level of supporting infrastructure required;
 - A masterplanning process to ensure they create sustainable, cohesive, well-designed places delivered through a strong placemaking approach; and
 - A financial viability assessment to ensure sites are deliverable within the Plan period.
- A 2.3 Site promoters will be expected to submit specific information on the viability and deliverability of sites during the Second Call for Candidate Sites to facilitate this assessment work. If site promoters do not submit specific information during the RLDP Second Call for Sites, this could affect the prospect of site allocation in the Deposit Plan.
- A 2.4 In addition to the detailed assessment work an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) will also be carried out on each site that is considered compatible with the Preferred Strategy to assess whether there are any likely significant effects associated with the proposals. The ISA Report will identify likely environmental and wider sustainability effects from the delivery of all candidate sites (including potential LDP rollover sites). Where significant adverse effects are identified, sufficient information would need to be provided to demonstrate that identified constraints can be

overcome and that, after mitigation, any such effects would be acceptable, in order for the candidate site to be considered for allocation in the RLDP.

Consideration of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

- A 2.5 There is a need to protect Monmouthshire's Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land. PPW11 Paragraphs 3.58 and 3.59 clearly sets out that *'...agricultural land of grades 1, 2 and 3a is the best and most versatile and should be conserved as a finite resource for the future.'* It further states that in development plans *'...considerable weight should be given to protecting such land from development, because of its special importance. Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a should only be developed if there is an overriding need for the development, and either previously developed land or land in lower agricultural grades is unavailable, or available lower grade land has an environmental value recognised by a landscape, wildlife, historic or archaeological designation which outweighs the agricultural considerations. If land in grades 1, 2 or 3a does need to be developed, and there is a choice between sites of different grades, development should be directed to land of the lowest grade.'*
- A 2.6 Monmouthshire is a predominantly rural county and one of the key issues that has been identified (Issue 17) is that *'...there is a significant high percentage of BMV agricultural land with limited Brownfield land development opportunities'*. The preparation of Monmouthshire's RLDP therefore needs to set out an approach to protect BMV land and minimise its loss as far as possible through its growth and spatial strategy.
- A 2.7 A sequential approach to assessing the loss of BMV agricultural land, as set out by PPW11, will be undertaken in the assessment of all candidate sites. It is anticipated however, that due to the significant amount of BMV agricultural land throughout Monmouthshire it will be difficult to apply this sequential test in practice. Furthermore, at this stage the indicative grades of BMV agricultural land are based on high level predictive maps and are therefore likely to be subject to change following detailed surveys. The aim at the outset nevertheless, will be to protect the higher grades of BMV land and to avoid/or minimise the loss of BMV land. The following pragmatic approach is anticipated:
- A desktop assessment using the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) predictive map for Wales, this provides a broad overview of the ALC for a particular area; however, it is not a detailed site assessment.
 - The Second Call for Sites form will include a specific question on ALC in order to gather information regarding the quality of, and potential loss of, agricultural land direct from site promoters.
 - Those sites selected for further consideration will be required to undertake a detailed agricultural land quality survey in order to further ascertain the precise ALC and quality of the land.
 - Consultation will be undertaken with relevant stakeholders/consultees including the Welsh Government Agricultural Land Unit.

- A 2.8 It is important to note that protection of BMV agricultural land must be balanced with other considerations. For example, lower quality agricultural land is typically found in floodplains, but these areas cannot be developed for other policy reasons. Consideration must also be given to proximity to amenities and infrastructure, landscape impact, ecology and site deliverability.
- A 2.9 An Agricultural Land Classification Background Paper will be produced at Deposit Plan stage, this will clearly set out the above methodology and the outcomes from the BMV land assessment.
- A 2.10 With these caveats in mind, the potential strategic growth areas and sites under consideration at this stage are set out below. These are not shown in any particular order of rank or preference.

Abergavenny and Llanfoist

- A 2.11 Abergavenny is identified as a Primary Settlement in the RLDP settlement hierarchy. It has public transport links by rail and bus to Cwmbran, Newport, Cardiff and the Midlands, and road links to Cwmbran, Newport, Monmouth and the motorway system. It has a particularly important strategic role on the Heads of the Valleys road through its links to Brecon, Mid Wales and the wider Cardiff Capital Region. The A465 separates the town from Llanfoist to the south, and partly defines the town edge to the east. The built-up area to the north and west extends close to the Brecon Beacons National Park boundary, and Llanfoist adjoins the Blaenavon World Heritage Site.
- A 2.12 Facilities and services score well within the sustainability appraisal, as the town centre has a relatively large number and range of shops and restaurants, a theatre, cinema, and museum, and is a vibrant focus for the surrounding area. It is also one of the most self-sufficient settlements in terms of employment with a variety of employment sites within the town.
- A 2.13 Future growth of the town is constrained by a number of factors. Abergavenny's landscape sensitivity to residential development⁹² is high and high/medium, with an area of medium sensitivity to the south of Llanfosit.⁹³ The areas immediately north and west of the town adjoin the Brecon Beacons National Park, and the town centre itself is a Conservation Area. The floodplain of the River Usk is a further constraint on development to the south of the town and in parts of Llanfoist.
- A 2.14 Abergavenny sits within the River Usk Special Area Conservation (SAC) catchment area. Candidate site submissions will therefore need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body.

⁹² A standard methodology relating to the landscape sensitivity to housing development has been applied to the assessment of candidate sites in the Landscape Sensitivity Update Study – October 2020.

⁹³ Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update Study – October 2020 can be viewed via:
<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

A 2.15 Options for the future strategic direction of growth of the town are being considered. These include:-

- A - Land north of Abergavenny.** Development here would expand the existing built up area toward the boundary with the Brecon Beacons National Park (BBNP). Any development in this location would need to be carefully assessed to ensure that any effects on the setting of the BBNP are acceptable. The land is categorised as being of high/medium landscape sensitivity to residential development within the Landscape Sensitivity Update⁹⁴. Other considerations include the area’s location in an area of predominantly predictive grade 2 BMV agricultural land⁹⁵. With regard to the status of the agricultural land surrounding Abergavenny and Llanfoist it would need to be considered whether development of this area would be on ‘least bad’ agricultural land when considering the search sequence recommended in PPW11, given that much of the land under consideration is of BMV status. Development will need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body of the River Usk SAC catchment area. Other considerations will include the area’s distance from the town centre, which is just under a mile or an approximate 14 minute walking distance and the impact of development on the surrounding road network.

Candidate Reference No.	Site	Site Name	Site Area (Ha)
CS0094		Land at Penlanlas Farm	6.08
CS0128		Land at Chapel Farm Fields	9.6
CS0192		Land off Old Hereford Road	8.3

- B - Land to the east of the A465.** Development here would expand the built up area of the town beyond the A465, a natural barrier to development for some years. However, the size of the proposed candidate site as an urban extension to Abergavenny could provide the opportunity to provide a mixed-use development, which would contain a mix of residential uses alongside employment/commercial uses, facilities and services. Given the extent of this potential growth area, development would be likely to extend beyond the Plan period but its allocation could helpfully identify the long-term direction of growth for the town. In addition, the proximity of the area to Abergavenny

⁹⁴ Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

⁹⁵ At this stage the indicative grades of BMV agricultural land are based on a high level predictive map and are therefore likely to be subject to change following detailed surveys.

Railway Station could offer significant benefits to maximise opportunities for a modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport. The land is categorised as having high/medium landscape sensitivity to residential development in the Landscape Sensitivity Update⁹⁶. Other considerations include the area’s location in an area of predictive grade 2/3a BMV agricultural land. With regard to the status of the agricultural land surrounding Abergavenny and Llanfoist it would need to be considered whether development of this area would be on ‘least bad’ agricultural land when considering the search sequence recommended in PPW11 given that most of the land under consideration is of BMV status. Development will need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body of the River Usk SAC catchment area. In addition, other considerations will include the area’s distance from the town centre, which is just over a mile or an approximate 16 minute walking distance and the impact of development on the surrounding road network.

Candidate Reference No.	Site	Site Name	Site Area (Ha)
CS0125		Abergavenny Urban Extension	65

- C - Land between the B4246 and Heads of the Valleys Road.** Development here would expand the existing built up area toward the boundary with the Brecon Beacons National Park (BBNP). Any development in this location would need to be carefully assessed to ensure that any effects on the setting of the BBNP are acceptable. Development here would also further expand the existing built area along the boundary with the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site. Any development in this location would need to be carefully assessed to ensure that any effects on the setting of this historic landscape are acceptable. The land is categorised as having medium landscape sensitivity to residential development⁹⁷. Other considerations include the area’s location in an area of predictive grade 2 BMV agricultural land. With regard to the status of the agricultural land surrounding Abergavenny and Llanfoist it would need to be considered whether development of this area would be on ‘least bad’ agricultural land when considering the search sequence recommended in PPW11 given that most of the land under consideration is of BMV status. Development will need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body of the River Usk SAC catchment area. In addition, other considerations will include the area’s distance from the town centre, which is around a 1.3 mile or an approximate 19 minute walking

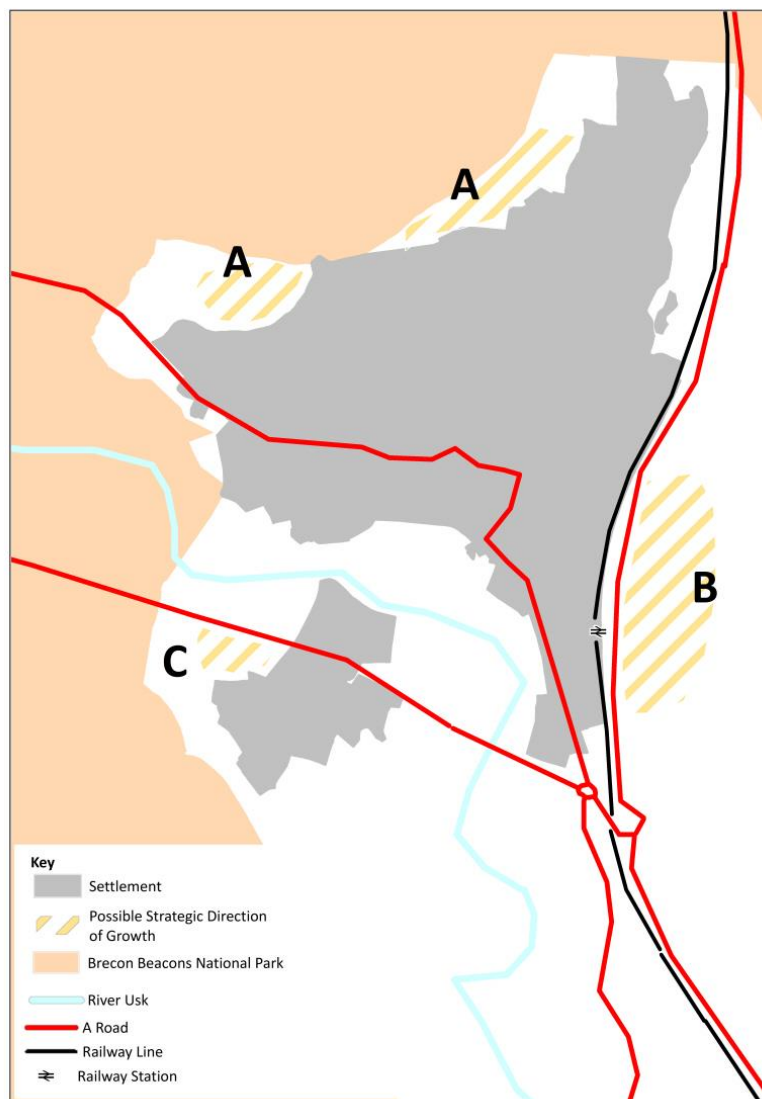
⁹⁶ Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

⁹⁷ Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

distance, the furthest of any of the possible strategic directions for growth and the impact of development on the surrounding road network. Shopping and employment opportunities are available in closer proximity than the town centre. Improved connectivity into Abergavenny would be required, such as the proposed Llanfoist bridge.

Candidate Reference No.	Site	Site Name	Site Area (Ha)
CS0093		Land at Evesham Nurseries, Llanfoist	8.3

Abergavenny Strategic Growth Options



Chepstow

A 2.16 Chepstow is identified as a Primary Settlement in the RLDP settlement hierarchy. Of all of the settlements appraised in the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal (June 2021) it

achieves the highest weighted score. Chepstow is well placed on the M4 corridor at the entrance to Wales to capitalise on its strategic road and rail links to the Cardiff Capital Region and South West England and associated economic opportunities. These opportunities have been enhanced given the recent removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls.

- A 2.17 Facilities and services score well within the sustainability assessment, as the town centre has a relatively large number and good range of shops and restaurants and is a vibrant focus for the surrounding area. The town is also one of the main focuses of employment within the County. Chepstow has a good range of employment sites within the town, with the largest being the Newhouse Farm Industrial Estate located to the south of the town on the motorway junction with the M48.
- A 2.18 Future growth of the town, however, is constrained due to a range of local and national environmental and heritage designations and its location on the River Wye / border with England. Chepstow's landscape sensitivity to residential development is high and high/medium to the north and south of Chepstow with medium sensitivity recorded for an area of land to west of Chepstow. The area immediately north of the town lies within the Wye Valley AONB⁹⁸. Land to the west of the A466 is currently protected in the Adopted LDP by a "green wedge" policy to ensure the town's physical separation from Pwllmeyric and Mathern, although current green wedge designations will be reviewed as part of the RLDP process. South of the A48, the undeveloped land is also within a conservation area and, in part, within a designated historic park and garden.
- A 2.19 There are also highway capacity issues which will need to be addressed as part of any future development proposals. A section of the A48, which passes through the town and provides the main link between the southern part of the Forest of Dean and the motorway network, is designated as an Air Quality Management Area. Some parts of the historic centre benefit from flood relief measures, but other areas close to the River Wye remain at risk. The town centre itself is a Conservation Area.
- A 2.20 In addition, Policy 34 – Green Belts in the South East, of Future Wales designates a green belt on land to the north of Chepstow. In assessing candidate sites and their relationship to Policy 34 of Future Wales consideration will be given to paragraph 3.72 of PPW11 which states that when considering a Green Belt designation, a sufficient range of development land which is suitably located in relation to the existing urban edge should be made available, having regard to the longer term need for development land, the effects of development pressures in areas beyond the Green Belt and the need to minimise demand for travel. This may require land to be safeguarded, and boundaries of proposed Green Belts must be carefully defined to achieve this. This will be given further consideration through the SDP process.

⁹⁸ Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update Study – October 2020 can be viewed via:
<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

A 2.21 Options for the future strategic direction of development of the town are being considered. These include:-

- D - Land north of the Bayfield Estate.** Development here would expand the existing built up area west of the A466. Development to the south of the Usk road (B4235) would be outside the AONB but would adjoin it. PPW11 gives National Parks and AONBs equal status in terms of landscape and scenic beauty and requires that both be afforded the highest status of protection from inappropriate developments. Any development in this location would need to be carefully assessed to ensure that any effects on the setting of the AONB are acceptable. The land is categorised as being of medium landscape sensitivity to residential development⁹⁹. Other considerations include the area’s location in an area of predictive grade 2 BMV agricultural land. With regard to the status of the agricultural land surrounding Chepstow development of this area would be considered to be on ‘least bad’ agricultural land when considering the search sequence recommended in PPW11 given that most of the land under consideration is of BMV status. In addition, other considerations will include its location in the limestone minerals safeguarding area, the area’s distance from the town centre, which is approximately a mile or an approximate 16 minute walking distance and the impact of development on the A466 and Highbeech roundabout. The site’s relationship with the green belt designated in Future Wales is also a consideration.

Candidate Reference No.	Site	Site Name	Site Area (Ha)
CS0098		Bayfield	10.07

- E - Land between the Bayfield Estate and A48.** The area between Mounon Road and the A48 is currently designated in the Adopted LDP as “green wedge” and substantial development could affect the degree of physical separation between Chepstow and Pwllmeyric. The land is a mixture of medium and high/medium landscape sensitivity to residential development. Other considerations include the area’s location in an area of predictive grade 2 BMV agricultural land. With regard to the status of the agricultural land surrounding Chepstow development of this area would be considered to be on ‘least bad’ agricultural land when considering the search sequence recommended in PPW11 given that most of the land under consideration is of BMV status. In addition, other considerations will include its location in the limestone minerals safeguarding area and the visual impact of development and its effects on the A466 and Highbeech roundabout although a well-designed scheme could create an attractive gateway to the town. The area is less than a mile or an approximate 12 minute

⁹⁹ Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

walking distance from the town centre and the railway station, the closest of any of the potential strategic directions for growth. The site offers the potential for some employment and/or tourism-based development. The site's relationship with the green belt designated in Future Wales is also a consideration.

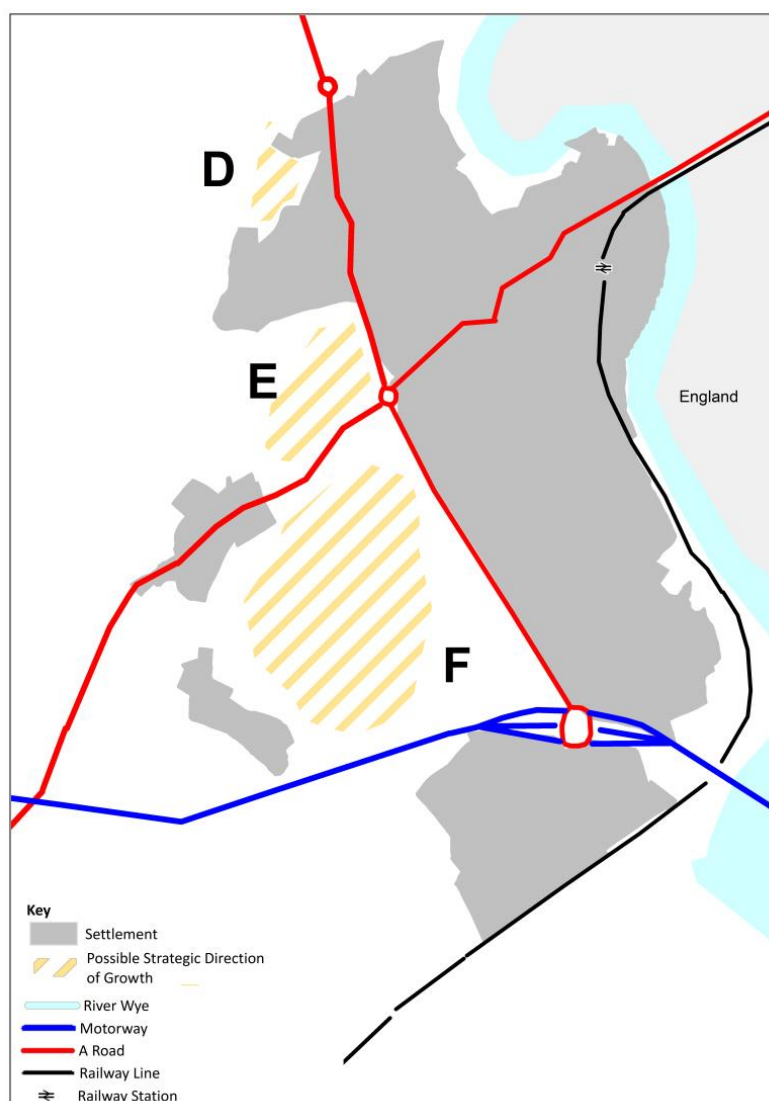
Candidate Reference No.	Site	Site Name	Site Area (Ha)
CS0112		Land at St Lawrence Lane	20.4
CS0165		Land west A466 & Mounton Road	12.8

- F - Land between the A48 and M48.** The area between the A48 and the M48, is currently designated as “green wedge”, and substantial development could affect the degree of physical separation between Chepstow and Pwllmeyric and Mathern. The land is categorised as high landscape sensitivity to residential development in the Landscape Sensitivity Update.¹⁰⁰ Other considerations include the area's location in an area of predictive grade 1 BMV agricultural land, its location in the limestone minerals safeguarding area, its location in the Conservation Area, the area's distance from the town centre, this area is the furthest away from the town centre approximately 1.1 miles or an approximate 17 minute walk, the visual impact of development and its effects on the A466 and Highbeech roundabout. Part of this area is also Historic Park and Garden. The site's relationship with the green belt designated in Future Wales is also a consideration.

Candidate Reference No.	Site	Site Name	Site Area (Ha)
CS0152		Land at Wyelands	100

¹⁰⁰ Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

Chepstow Strategic Growth Options



Monmouth

A 2.22 Monmouth is identified as a Primary Settlement in the RLDP settlement hierarchy. It has excellent road links occupying a key strategic location on the road network between Newport (A449), Abergavenny (A40) and the Midlands (A466) and has a range of bus services to the South Wales cities and to Gloucestershire and Herefordshire.

A 2.23 Facilities and services score well within the sustainability assessment, as the town centre, which itself is a Conservation Area, has a relatively large number and good range of shops and restaurants, a theatre, cinema, and museum, and is a vibrant focus for the surrounding area. It also one of the most self-sufficient settlements in terms of employment with a variety of employment sites within the town. Monmouth's

largest employment area is Wonastow Industrial Estate to the south west of the settlement. There has also been recent strategic growth to the south west of the town with a mixed-use development to the west of the Wonastow Estate allocated under the Adopted LDP, which is near completion.

A 2.24 Future growth of the town is constrained by a number of factors. Monmouth's landscape sensitivity to residential development is high and high/medium around most of the settlement edge with an area of medium sensitivity adjoining the western boundary. Immediately to the South East of the settlement is the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). There is no rail network to encourage sustainable travel by rail and therefore highway capacity issues and the need to reduce travel/carbon and support active travel options need to be carefully considered.

Monmouth sits within the River Wye Special Area Conservation (SAC) catchment area. Candidate site submissions will therefore need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body.

A 2.25 Options for the future strategic direction of development of the town are being considered. These include: -

- **G - Land west of Monmouth.** Given the potential extent of this growth area, development could extend beyond the Plan period but its allocation could helpfully identify the long-term direction of growth for the town. Development here would expand the settlement of Monmouth to the west. The land is not within a nationally sensitive landscape area, however, it has high/medium to medium landscape sensitivity as assessed under the Landscape Sensitivity Update Study¹⁰¹. Immediately west of the growth area is a designated Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), a large wooded area made up of several ancient woodlands collectively known as 'Kings Wood'. Agricultural land in this area is predicted to be part 2, part 3a and part 3b grades. With regard to the status of the agricultural land around the settlement edge of Monmouth, the land falling within the categorisation 3b would be considered to be on 'least versatile' agricultural land. Development will need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body of the River Wye SAC catchment area. There is also opportunity to accommodate employment uses by extending upon the existing Wonastow industrial estate. Out of the possible growth areas of the settlement, it is the furthest away from the town centre, taken from roughly the centre point, approximately 1.6 miles and an approximate 24 minute walk. Connectivity to the town and amenities would need careful consideration.

¹⁰¹ Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update Study – October 2020 can be viewed via:
<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

Candidate Site Reference No.	Site Name	Site Area (Ha)
CS0051	Croft Y Bwla Farm	49.9ha
CS0078	Land adjacent to Croft Y Bwla	13ha
CS0090	Land north of Wonastow Road	9.12ha
CS0196	Land at Drewen Farm	11.52ha

- H - Land central Monmouth.** This area is Greenfield land outside Monmouth's settlement boundary; however, it is located in a central position within Monmouth, located north east of the town centre and River Wye. The land is considered to have a high amenity value and is designated in the current adopted LDP as an 'Area of amenity importance' (Policy DES2) and is categorised as high/medium sensitivity under the landscape assessment of the candidate sites¹⁰². It has a predictive 3a BMV agricultural land classification. Development will need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body of the River Wye SAC catchment area. Its central location means that it is approximately 1 mile and a walking distance of approximately 16 minutes from town centre. This direction of growth would therefore be close to the existing facilities and services of Monmouth. There could be an opportunity to provide improved pedestrian links to the town centre and a car park serving the town.

Candidate Site Reference No.	Site Name	Site Area (Ha)
CS0160	Land Known as Vauxhall Fields	8.58ha
CS0099	Land at Drybridge Farm	22.5ha

- I - Land north east of Monmouth.** Given the extent of this potential growth area, development would be likely to extend beyond the Plan period but its allocation could helpfully identify the long term direction of growth for the town. This area of land is located to the north east of Monmouth's settlement boundary, north of Dixton Roundabout. There could be an opportunity to provide a road link from Osbaston to the Dixton roundabout, to avoid car travel through Hereford Road and the town centre. The land is categorised as predictive grade 2 BMV agricultural land, which is the highest predictive grade BMV land of the agricultural land, which

¹⁰² Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update Study – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

surrounds Monmouth’s settlement edge. It has been assessed as having a high/medium landscape sensitivity¹⁰³ and is at the gateway to Wales and to the town. Development will need demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or its contribution to the water body of the River Wye SAC catchment area. The site is approximately 1.2 miles from the town centre, equating to an approximate walking distance of approximately 17 minutes, and again is considered to be in close proximity and a sustainable distance from the existing services and facilities of Monmouth.

Candidate Reference No.	Site	Site Name	Site Area (Ha)
CS0182		Land North East of Monmouth and North of Dixton Road	42ha

Monmouth Strategic Growth Options



¹⁰³ Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update Study – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

Sevenside

- A 2.26 Sevenside is a cluster of settlements identified within the RLDP sustainable settlement hierarchy. Within the Sevenside area, Caldicot and Magor Undy have been classified as higher tier settlements, which have functional geographic and transport links with the smaller tier settlements of Rogiet, Caerwent, Portskewett, Sudbrook and Crick, which together are considered to share social, economic and environmental characteristics to make up the identifiable group of Sevenside. The Sevenside area, has an important role as the ‘Gateway to Wales’, with the area immediately adjacent to the Second Severn Bridge (Prince of Wales Bridge) crossing, and as a whole is well located for the nearby employment markets of Newport, Cardiff and Bristol. There are key rail links to these employment markets with stations at Severn Tunnel Junction and Caldicot connecting with the key settlements of Cardiff in the West and Bristol /Cheltenham/Midlands in the East, with enhancements recommended to Severn Tunnel Junction recommended in the South East Wales Transport Commission Final Recommendation Plan (November 2020). There are also good road links to the M4 and M48 motorways, with the M4 Junction at Magor and Undy. The A48 also runs across the north of the Sevenside region connecting settlements along the A48 with settlements in Newport to the west, and Chepstow to the east.
- A 2.27 The future growth of the Sevenside region is constrained by flood plain on land to the south of the settlements of Magor and Undy, Rogiet, Caldicot and Portskewett. South of these settlements also lies the historic and archaeologically sensitive Gwent levels, which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Furthermore, the area beyond the Severn Estuary is subject to significant environmental designations including a designated SSSI as well as a Special Area for Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site (Wetland of international importance). A large proportion of the Sevenside area is also located in a Limestone Mineral Safeguarding Area.
- A 2.28 In addition to these Policy 34 – Green Belts in the South East, of Future Wales designates a green belt to the north of the A48 within the Sevenside area. In assessing candidate sites and their relationship to Policy 34 of Future Wales consideration will be given to paragraph 3.72 of PPW11 which states that when considering a Green Belt designation, a sufficient range of development land which is suitably located in relation to the existing urban edge should be made available, having regard to the longer term need for development land, the effects of development pressures in areas beyond the Green Belt and the need to minimise demand for travel. This may require land to be safeguarded, and boundaries of proposed Green Belts must be carefully defined to achieve this. This will be given further consideration through the SDP process.

Caldicot

A 2.29 Caldicot achieves a high weighted score in terms of sustainability within the settlement appraisal. It has the largest physical urban area and population within the Severnside cluster. Caldicot has a rail station and is well placed on the road network with the M4 located south of the settlement and the M48 running adjacent to the north of the settlement, although the junction is at Magor for the M4 and at Chepstow for the M48. Caldicot is served by a town centre, currently undergoing regeneration, and has numerous educational facilities. Severnside Industrial Estate is located to the south east of the settlement, which is a significant employment base and separates Caldicot from neighbouring Portskewett. To the west of the settlement is land protected by a 'Green Wedge', which is in place to separate Caldicot from the neighbouring settlement of Rogiet. Green Wedge designations will be reviewed as part of the evidence base of the Deposit Plan. South of the settlement, the land is constrained by flood plain. Growth in recent years has been to the north east of the settlement.

Magor and Undy

A 2.30 Magor and Undy also scores well within the sustainable settlement hierarchy, it is well connected with regard to road links and has the only motorway junction within the Severnside area, which is located north west of the settlement, with the M4 bounding the settlement to the north. In addition, the settlements have easy access to the Severn Tunnel Junction Station at Rogiet and there is potential for a walkway rail station in Magor itself. Bus services also pass through the settlements linking them with Caldicot and Chepstow to the east and Newport to the west. There is land allocated for employment to the north west with the established Magor Brewery site and Wales One Business Park, which capitalises on the good road links. Recent growth has been directed to the north east of the settlement. South of the settlement is constrained by flood plain and Gwent Levels SSSI.

Rogiet

A 2.31 Rogiet is a smaller cluster settlement, which scores well in the sustainability appraisal due to its well-serviced Severn Tunnel Junction train station and proximity to nearby amenities especially in Caldicot. Located to the south of the B4245, Rogiet has public transport links to Caldicot to the east, and Magor and Undy to the west. Rogiet is constrained by Green Wedge, which lies to the east and west of the settlement, although current green wedge designations will be reviewed as part of the RLDP process. To the north of the settlement is the M48 and south of the settlement is the railway line with much of the land constrained by flood plain.

Portskewett

A 2.32 Portskewett, a smaller cluster settlement, is located to the east of Caldicot, linked to that settlement by the Severnbridge Industrial Estate. Similar to the other settlements within the Severnside region, it is bound by the railway line and constrained by flood

plain land to the south. Its close proximity to Caldicot means that a range of facilities and services are easily accessible, and it also acts as a larger hub for the smaller settlement of Sudbrook to the south, which it has close ties with. Portskewett has recently had growth directed to the north west of the settlement under an allocated site in the Adopted LDP.

Sudbrook

A 2.33 Originally established for workers constructing the Severn Railway Tunnel, Sudbrook is immediately adjacent to the Severn Estuary SSSI, SAC, SPA and Ramsar site. Sudbrook is well connected to the larger settlement of Portskewett. Sudbrook itself has grown in recent years with planning permission granted on two former employment brownfield sites, The Old Ship Yard, north east of the settlement; and at The Paper Mill, south west of the Settlement, where redevelopment is progressing well.

Crick

A 2.34 Crick, the smallest settlement (by population and size) within the Severnside cluster, is located approximately 1 mile north east of Caldicot and 1 mile east of Caerwent. Crick itself is bisected by the A48 road, which runs from Chepstow in the south east of the County to Newport and beyond. The M48, which 'fly's-over' the A48 acts as a physical barrier to the west of Crick.

Caerwent

A 2.35 The settlement of Caerwent sits astride the A48, north of Caldicot and west of Crick. Caerwent has important Roman history with the remains of the town of Caerwent acknowledged to be of European significance and to constitute one of the most important archaeological sites in Wales. The historic town of Caerwent is therefore designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and protected against development. Most recent development within the settlement, at Merton Green, has taken place to the north of the A48. There is a large expanse of Ministry of Defence (MOD) land located to the north of Caerwent, which also extends to the area north above the neighbouring settlement of Crick. The settlement's relationship with the green belt designated in Future Wales is also a consideration.

A 2.36 Options for the potential future strategic direction of growth of Severnside are being considered. Bearing in mind the constraints of the smaller cluster settlements and the recent growth directed to Magor and Undy, focus of the growth of Severnside is likely to be directed towards Caldicot, which is the most sustainable settlement within the Severnside region. The directions of potential strategic growth include:-

- **J - Land north east of Caldicot.** Development here would extend the settlement of Caldicot to the north east, towards the settlement of Crick and extend development north of the Caldicot Castle Country Park, a Conservation Area and an area currently designated as an Area of Amenity Importance under the Adopted LDP. Part of the growth area also includes a commercial equestrian centre.

Landscape sensitivity to residential development is high/medium¹⁰⁴. In terms of agricultural land, the area is classified as predictive grade 1 BMV land, which is the highest predictive grade of agricultural land¹⁰⁵. In terms of distance from Caldicot town centre, it is just under a mile (from a central point of the growth area) and approximately 14 minutes walking distance. Another consideration is that part of this area is within in the limestone minerals safeguarding area.

Candidate Reference No.	Site	Site Name	Site Area (Ha)
CS0065		Land at Bradbury Farm	29.1ha
CS0087		The Showground	36.06ha
CS0127		Land to the east of Church Road	10.09ha

- **K - Land north west of Caldicot.** Development here would extend the settlement of Caldicot to the north west, which would extend to the other side of the M48 motorway. Agricultural land here is also predictive grade 1 BMV land and part of the land to be developed is a former golf course. Other considerations include its location in the limestone minerals safeguarding area (the now dis-used Caerwent Quarry is within close proximity). The area has been categorised as being of high-medium landscape sensitivity within the Landscape Sensitivity Update¹⁰⁶ and its distance to the town centre from a central point of this growth area is approximately 1.3 miles, a walking distance of approximately 19 minutes.

Candidate Reference No.	Site	Site Name	Site Area (Ha)
CS0129		Dewstow Road	37ha

- **L - Land west of Caldicot/east of Rogiet.** The land between the settlements of Caldicot and Rogiet is level agricultural land, which is identified as predictive grade 1 BMV land. The land is also currently designated as 'Green Wedge' and substantial development could affect the degree of physical and visual separation between these two settlements, as well as the visual impact upon the surrounding landscape. The Green Wedge designations will be reviewed as part of the evidence base for the Deposit Plan. The land is designated medium landscape sensitivity in the Landscape Sensitivity Update¹⁰⁷. The walking distance to facilities

¹⁰⁴ Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

¹⁰⁵ Agricultural land around Caldicot is currently identified as Grade 1 BMV on the predictive map, however, these grades are likely to change following detailed surveys.

¹⁰⁶ Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

¹⁰⁷ Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

and services, the nearest being Caldicot town centre, is just under a mile, a walking distance of approximately 14 minutes. There are also some facilities and services available in Rogiet. Severn Tunnel Junction enhancements are also recommended as part of the South Wales Transport Commission Final Recommendation Plan (November 2020). Part of the growth area towards the south is constrained by a C1 flood plain. The site, however, is outside the limestone and minerals safeguarding area.

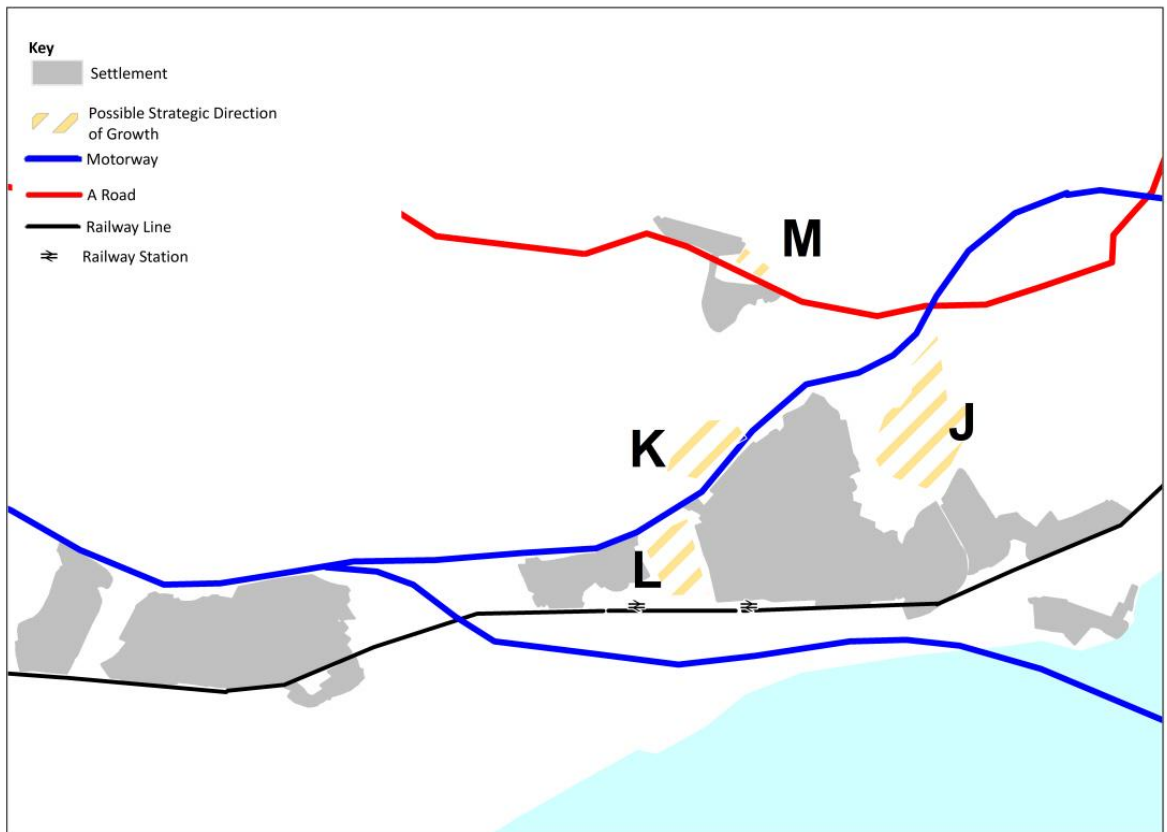
Candidate Reference No.	Site	Site Name	Site Area (Ha)
CS0150		Land East of Rogiet	35ha
CS0163		Land to the West of Caldicot and East of Rogiet	34.6ha

- M - Land east of Caerwent.** Development here would extend the settlement of Caerwent to the east, north of the A48. The land is identified as predictive grade 1 BMV agricultural land and partly within the limestone and minerals safeguarding area. The distance to the facilities and services of Caldicot town centre is approximately 2.2 miles and an approximate 33 minute walk, although it is acknowledged there are some limited facilities, such as a Post Office in the nearest settlement of Caerwent. The land is identified as being of medium/low sensitivity to residential development in the Landscape Sensitivity Update¹⁰⁸. The site's relationship with the green belt designated under Policy 34 of Future Wales is also a consideration.

Candidate Reference No.	Site	Site Name	Site Area (Ha)
CS0166		Caerwent A	8.8ha

¹⁰⁸ Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity Update – October 2020 can be viewed via: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/landscape-sensitivity-study/>

Sevenside Strategic Growth Options



APPENDIX 2

Monmouthshire Replacement Local Development Plan

**PREFERRED STRATEGY:
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

June 2021



monmouthshire
sir fynyrr

Executive Summary

Replacement Local Development Plan

- i. The Council is preparing a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) for Monmouthshire (excluding the part of the County that is within the Brecon Beacons National Park). The RLDP will identify where and how much new development will take place during the 'Plan period' (2018-2033). It will allocate land for development, identify areas to be protected, and contain policies to guide decisions on applications for planning permission. We aim to adopt the RLDP in autumn/winter 2023.
- ii. The Council has now reached the Preferred Strategy stage of the development plan process. This is the first of the statutory consultation stages in the RLDP process. However, a number of earlier pre-deposit plan preparation stages have been undertaken which have informed the Preferred Strategy. The first stage involved the preparation of an Issues, Vision & Objectives Paper. This was first published in January 2019 and amended in June 2019 to reflect the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in May 2019. A review of the Issues, Vision and Objectives was also undertaken in June 2020 in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and incorporated into the Review of RLDP Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in light of Covid-19 during September 2020. This concluded that the Plan's Issues, Vision and Objectives remain relevant to Monmouthshire with a number of issues and objectives now considered to have increased emphasis and importance consistent with the priorities identified in the Welsh Government Building Better Places Covid-19 recovery document published in July 2020. The Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper has been updated to reflect the vision for the Preferred Strategy and issues that have emerged since the original version.
- iii. The Plan had progressed to the Preferred Strategy stage of the RLDP process in March 2020. Non-statutory consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options took place between July and August 2019 and statutory consultation on the RLDP Preferred Strategy and the Second Call for Candidate Sites commenced during March 2020. Progress on the RLDP was subsequently paused in March 2020 because the Covid-19 pandemic meant the Preferred Strategy public engagement events could not continue in the format prescribed in the Delivery Agreement. Following advice from the Minister for Housing and Local Government¹, the decision was subsequently made to cease the Preferred Strategy consultation and second call for candidate sites on 20th July 2020. This enabled the Council to undertake a review of the RLDP issues, vision, objectives and evidence base² in terms of sensitivity to the consequences the Coronavirus pandemic before progressing with Plan preparation. This review was agreed by Council in October 2020.
- iv. In August 2020 the Welsh Government published a correction to the 2018-based population and household projections, which comprise important new evidence that require consideration and form the starting point of the Plan's evidence base. This

¹ Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid19, 7th July 2020

² Monmouthshire RLDP Review of Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in Light of Covid-19 (September 2020)

resulted in the need to revisit the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the RLDP process. The Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020) was prepared and subject to non-statutory consultation for a 4-week period in January and February 2021. The outcome of which has informed and helped shape the Preferred Strategy (June 2021).

What is the Preferred Strategy?

- v. The Preferred Strategy is the first statutory stage in the RLDP preparation process. It provides the strategic direction for the development and use of land over the period 2018-2033. The overall purpose of the Preferred Strategy is to:
- Identify key issues, challenges and opportunities for the County.
 - Develop a vision and set of objectives for the RLDP that respond to the key issues, challenges and opportunities.
 - Set out the Preferred Strategy including the scale of future growth in population, housing and jobs and establish the spatial distribution of growth.
 - Set out strategic policies that will deliver/implement the strategy.

Preferred Strategy – Sustainable & Resilient Communities Strategy

- vi. The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy promotes and supports a level of housing and employment growth that will be distributed proportionately³ across Monmouthshire up to 2033. The Strategy assists in addressing the demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and ultimately seeks to deliver the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Strategy conforms with Policy 1 of Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (hereafter referred to as Future Wales 2040) which is the highest tier statutory development plan (Welsh Government, February 2021) and supports sustainable growth in all parts of Wales that seeks to address local aspirations and need. The Strategy also meets a key 'Test of Soundness' of ensuring that the Plan's vision and strategy are positive and sufficiently aspirational. A Self-Assessment of the Preferred Strategy against the Tests of Soundness is published alongside this document, which includes an assessment of the Strategy's general conformity with Future Wales 2040. This demonstrates that the Preferred Strategy and the stages undertaken and processes followed to reach this stage are 'sound' and that the Strategy assists in the delivery of the Future Wales policies and is in general conformity with its overarching strategy.
- vii. A summary of the key points of the Strategy is set out in Box 1.

³ Proportionately' is deemed to mean that the level of growth directed toward a settlement will be proportionate to its population size. To calculate the proportion of development to be directed toward a settlement only the population of those settlements included in the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal has been used to contribute to the total population figure for the County. This takes into account the large areas of Monmouthshire which are rural and as such these areas would not be expected to have any significant development

Box 1: Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy

In order to deliver the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy the RLDP will:

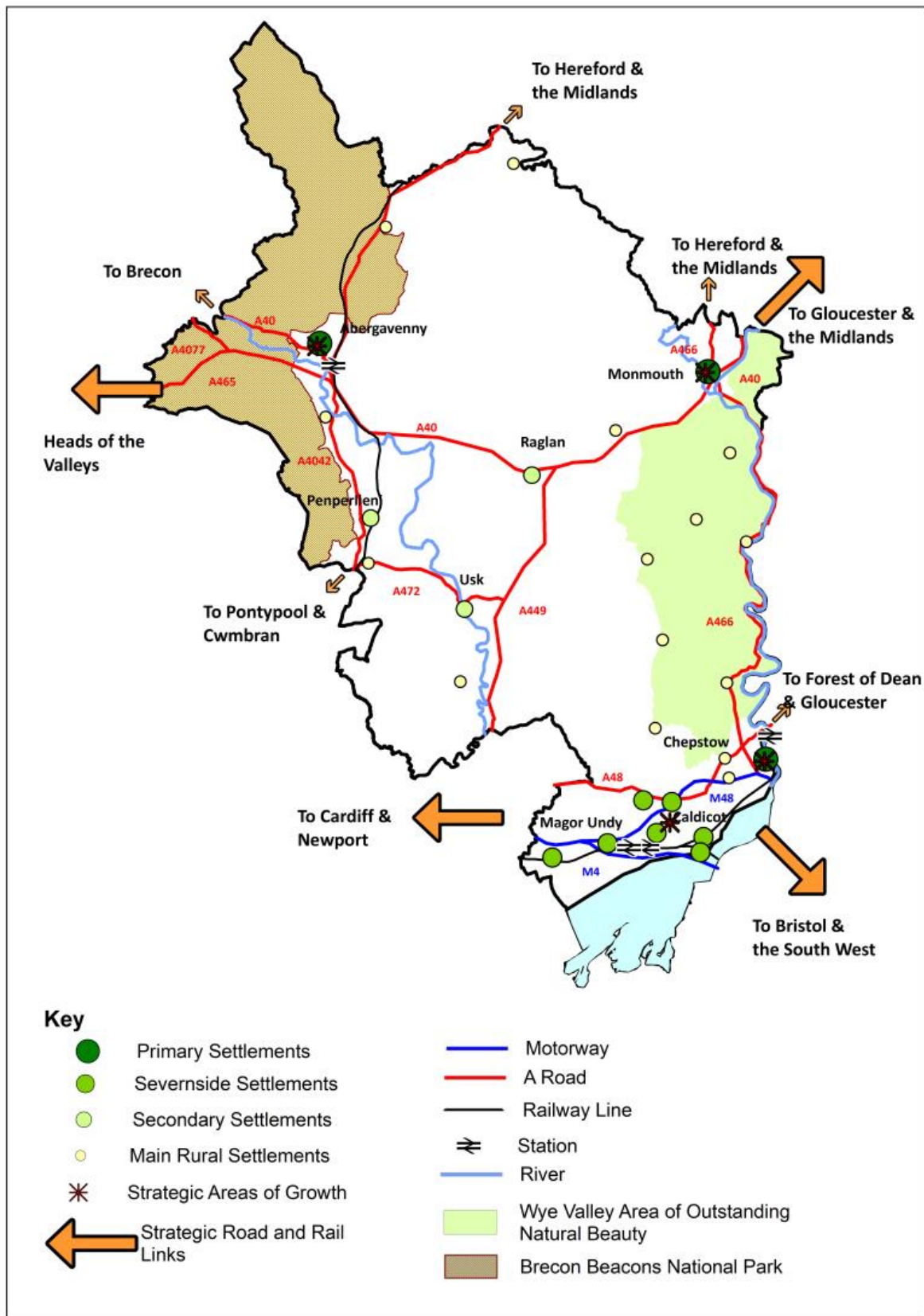
- Make provision for a total of **8,366 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,605 homes** (this provision is based indicatively on a 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This level of housing growth will enable the provision of market and affordable housing in both urban and rural areas and, importantly, provides the opportunity to address the unbalanced demography, improve labour force retention by retaining/attracting younger adult population age groups and assists in addressing the County's housing affordability challenge. Taking account of the existing housing land supply and projected windfall delivery, the RLDP will need to **allocate sufficient land to accommodate 3,658 homes**.
- Provide the **planning policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 additional jobs**. This level of job growth aligns with the projected population and housing growth and takes account of adjustments to household membership rates for key younger age groups and a reduced level of commuting by retaining more of the resident workforce and growing our working age demographic. There has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer term and in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home is something that we wish to encourage and enable. This provides residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving this level of job growth, whilst also achieving the Welsh Government and Council's aim of reducing the need for commuting. This approach will help to reduce congestion, emissions and pollution, improve the work-life balance for employees and employers, support local businesses/services and enable the creation of sustainable vibrant communities and '20 minute neighbourhoods'⁴.
- Address economic growth and resilience within the County through the **provision of a sufficient range and choice of employment land**. To enable this a minimum of 43ha of employment land will be allocated to support the provision of industrial and business development (classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning Use Classes Order 1987), the location of which will be determined in the Deposit Plan. Other key employment sectors including retail, tourism and agriculture will also be an integral part of the County's economy and supported through the policy framework in the Deposit Plan. This approach reflects the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Ambition Statement and Investment Prospectus.

⁴ 20 Minute Neighbourhoods are strong, well connected neighbourhoods where people live within a 20 minute walking distance of key everyday services. The RLDP supports a placemaking approach to future development and the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods.

- Distribute growth proportionately across the County’s most sustainable settlements. Whilst housing and employment growth will be focused on the higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy, appropriate growth will also be channelled to the County’s most sustainable rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and resilient communities throughout Monmouthshire.

Collectively these measures will help us to fulfil our core objectives and create sustainable and resilient communities where an enhanced economically active aged population can both live and work in the County through supporting/enabling remote and home working and local jobs in a range of sectors. Fundamentally, the Strategy will address the Council’s key climate change objectives and reflect national planning policy placemaking principles whereby commuting/the need to travel is reduced and residents can access and support services/businesses locally, thereby enabling sustainable and vibrant communities.

Preferred Strategy Key Diagram



Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy

- viii. The Preferred Growth Strategy makes provision for a total of 8,366 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,605 homes over the Plan period 2018-2033 (this provision is based indicatively on a 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This results in a growth of the County's population of 12,443 (13.2%) and households of 7,255 (18.1%) over the Plan period.
- ix. The Growth Strategy is based on a population-led scenario with added policy assumptions to address the County's key demographic and affordability issues. The policy assumptions adjust in-migration rates to reflect local trends over a five-year period (2015-2020) to take account the removal of the Severn Bridge Tolls, increase the household formation rates for three key younger age groups and reduce commuting ratio assumptions to reflect the Council's aim of addressing the unbalanced demographic in the County by retaining younger age groups and reducing out-commuting. The latter aligns with Welsh Government's long-term ambition of 30% of Welsh workers working from home or near home and the Welsh Government's transport policy hierarchy which seeks to reduce the need to travel in the first instance, followed by active travel, then public transport, then the private car. The strategy also incorporates an affordable housing policy-led element which aims to meet 10% of the Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) need arising from this option on housing sites which deliver 50% affordable housing. Further detail on this scenario is set out in the Edge Analytics Report - Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence Report, November 2020 - and the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021).

Delivering the Residential Growth

- x. The overall housing provision figure of 8,366 homes (including an indicative 10% flexibility allowance) will be delivered through a number of housing supply streams. These include existing commitments that have planning permission, Adopted LDP Rollover sites, and an allowance for windfall and infill sites such as barn conversions and development sites that emerge throughout the life of the Plan. Combined these account for 4,708 homes. The remaining 3,658 homes will be delivered on new allocations to be identified in the Deposit RLDP.

Economic Growth

- xi. The RLDP is underpinned by a level of growth that seeks to address the issues currently impacting on economic growth such as a shrinking working age population and high levels of out-commuting. The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy provides the policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 additional jobs over the Plan period (481 jobs per annum). It should be noted that not all of these jobs will be in planning B-class uses⁵ and will be delivered through a range of sectors such as tourism, leisure and retail. This will be achieved by enabling economic growth through supporting the delivery of the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic

⁵ B-class uses refer to industries such as manufacturing, offices and warehousing.

Growth and Ambition Statement, maximising opportunities from CCR City Deal, targeting growth in key economic sectors and providing appropriate employment land in the right locations.

- xii. Whilst the Strategy projects a significant growth in jobs over the Plan period, it is becoming widely accepted that the fundamental shift in working practices experienced as a legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic, with a significant increase in people working from home/remotely, has made it less important where some jobs are located as employees no longer need to commute for work in many cases. This has provided the opportunity for many people to live and work in the same location via a new remote working approach
- xiii. The Preferred Strategy aims to build on this shift and the benefits that have occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic, as recognised in Welsh Government’s Building Better Places response to Covid-19. This acknowledges that even when all restrictions are lifted, the impacts on people working from home are likely to have longer term impacts on where and how we work. In this respect, these changes have opened up new opportunities for jobs to be secured through the increased propensity to work from home/remotely, including via community-based remote working hubs. It is expected that the trend for increased home and remote working will continue over the longer term in accordance with Welsh Government’s ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home. While it will not be possible for all employment sectors to work from home/work remotely, policy support requiring broadband connectivity and supporting the provision of local remote/agile community-based working hubs will enable those who can and choose to do so.

Sustainable and Resilient Communities Spatial Strategy

- xiv. The Preferred Spatial Strategy seeks to distribute development across the County in a proportionate manner that reflects and address the aims of the overarching Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy. The level of residential growth will be proportionate to a settlement’s size and amenities and will reflect affordable housing need as identified in the LHMA in both urban and rural areas. The Spatial Strategy seeks to focus new development on the primary settlements of Abergavenny (including Llanfoist), Monmouth (including Wyesham) and Chepstow and the Severnside area, together with a proportionate amount of growth to the lower tier settlements to support sustainable rural communities. The exact distribution of development will follow in the Deposit RLDP following the second call for candidate sites and subsequent site assessments.
- xv. The spatial framework for distributing growth in the County has regard to the overarching principles of Future Wales 2040 by guiding growth towards building sustainable places that support placemaking principles but applied within a Monmouthshire setting to reflect the predominantly rural context. In this respect, the

dominant role of the County towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Monmouth and the Severnside Area focused on the town of Caldicot, provide the focus of urban growth within a Monmouthshire context. This will be supported by an appropriate level of growth in the smaller settlements and a number of rural settlements to facilitate the creation of sustainable and vibrant rural communities consistent with the aims of Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities of Future Wales 2040 (February 2021).

- xvi. The Strategy also has regard to Policy 34 of Future Wales 2040 which requires the South East Wales Strategic Development Plan to identify a Green Belt to the north of Cardiff, Newport and the eastern part of the region to manage urban form and growth.

Economic Growth – Land Requirement & Spatial Distribution

- xvii. The Council has commissioned the preparation of an Employment Land Review (ELR). This involves undertaking a review of employment forecasts and land requirements for the Plan period 2018 – 2033. The study recommends that a forecast scenario based on past employment land take-up rates is adopted for the RLDP. This provides a minimum requirement of 43ha of land for traditional B use class industries such as manufacturing and warehousing, including a five-year buffer to allow for choice and uncertainty in forecasting.
- xviii. Employment growth will be directed to sustainable locations across the County, which will assist in reducing the need to travel and levels of out-commuting and promoting self-contained communities which are also key objectives of the RLDP. As above, it is recognised in light of Covid-19 there has been a fundamental shift in working patterns with an increase in home and remote working, which is likely to continue over the longer term, and will further reduce commuting levels and support/enable self-contained communities. The spatial distribution of employment allocations will be set out in the Deposit RLDP and will be consistent with the spatial strategy and commensurate to the level of housing growth proposed for an area.
- xix. Details of employment land allocations and existing protected sites will be provided in the Deposit RLDP, along with criteria setting out the exceptional circumstances in which the loss of existing industrial and business sites or premises will be considered acceptable. The Plan will also include policies that allow for the assessment of non-B use class industries such as leisure, retail and tourism to facilitate job growth in these key economic sectors.

Strategic Policies

- xx. The main document also contains several Strategic Policies which form the framework for implementing and delivering the Preferred Strategy of the RLDP. A list of policies contained within the Preferred Strategy is set out below:

Preferred Strategy - Strategic Policies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth ▪ S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy ▪ S3 – Sustainable Placemaking & High Quality Design ▪ S4 – Climate Change ▪ S5 – Infrastructure Provision ▪ S6 – Delivery of Homes ▪ S7 – Affordable Homes ▪ S8 – Strategic Development Sites ▪ S9 – Gypsy and Travellers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ S10 – Sustainable Transport ▪ S11 – Retail & Commercial Centres Hierarchy ▪ S12 – Community and Recreation Facilities ▪ S13 – Employment Sites Provision ▪ S14 – Rural Enterprise ▪ S15 – Visitor Economy ▪ S16 – Sustainable Waste Management ▪ S17 – Minerals ▪ S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation

Supporting Documents

- xxi. The RLDP is accompanied by an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), which considers the environmental, equalities, health and well-being impacts of the Plan, and a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The ISA and HRA are working documents, updated as the RLDP progresses. The RLDP will also be accompanied by an Infrastructure Plan, setting out what infrastructure is needed to support the development of the allocated sites, and an updated Local Transport Plan and Economic Strategy. Together, these Plans will seek to deliver on the Council's economic ambition and its core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. The Deposit Plan will also designate land for protection and identify search areas for renewable energy and will be accompanied by a Green Wedge Review and Renewable Energy Assessment. There are also a range of technical Background Papers to provide additional detail on the evidence and methodologies used in developing the Preferred Strategy.

Consultation Arrangements

- xxii. Community and stakeholder involvement is invited during the eight-week statutory engagement and consultation on the Preferred Strategy between **Monday 5th July and Tuesday 31st August 2021**, whereby comments will be invited on the consultation questions set out in the Preferred Strategy. Our consultation and engagement arrangements have been revised in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and reflect the Coronavirus Regulations (2020) and recent Ministerial advice⁶. We have reviewed the use of digital involvement options to provide communities with information and the

⁶ Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid19, 7th July 2020

ability to engage with the RLDP in a virtual manner. Further details are provided in the Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020). Engagement/consultation will take place via:

- Notifying all parties on the RLDP database of the consultation;
- Planning Policy Officer attendance at Area Cluster meetings during July and August 2021;
- A Members' Workshop in June 2021 (hosted by the Economy & Development Select Committee);
- Scrutiny by Economy & Development Select Committee in July 2021;
- Internal discussions within the Council through an officer workshop, Department Management Team and Senior Leadership Team;
- Two Webinar Sessions during July 2021
- Several RLDP Preferred Strategy Drop-in Sessions during July-August 2021. Should there be a further lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these drop-in sessions will be replaced by additional virtual events. Full details of venues and dates are available on the Council's Current Consultations page of the website.
- We will seek to engage with seldom heard groups in particular young people, via the Youth Council and going into secondary schools, and Gypsy and Travellers via the GTAA work and reiterating the opportunity to promote sites during the Second Call for Candidate Sites.

xxiii. The closing date for the submission of comments is midnight on **Tuesday 31st August 2021**. For details of how to respond to this consultation please see the Planning Policy Current Consultations page on the Council's website. Feedback from the consultation/engagement on the Preferred Strategy will be considered and set out in the Consultation Report on the Preferred Strategy. This consultation report and the Preferred Strategy with any necessary amendments will be reported to Council in approximately November 2021 to seek approval of the Preferred Strategy. The Deposit Plan will then be prepared and considered by Council prior to a statutory six-week consultation and engagement period in Summer 2022.

Monmouthshire

Replacement Local Development Plan

Preferred Strategy
Easy Read Summary

JUNE 2021



monmouthshire
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What is the RLDP?

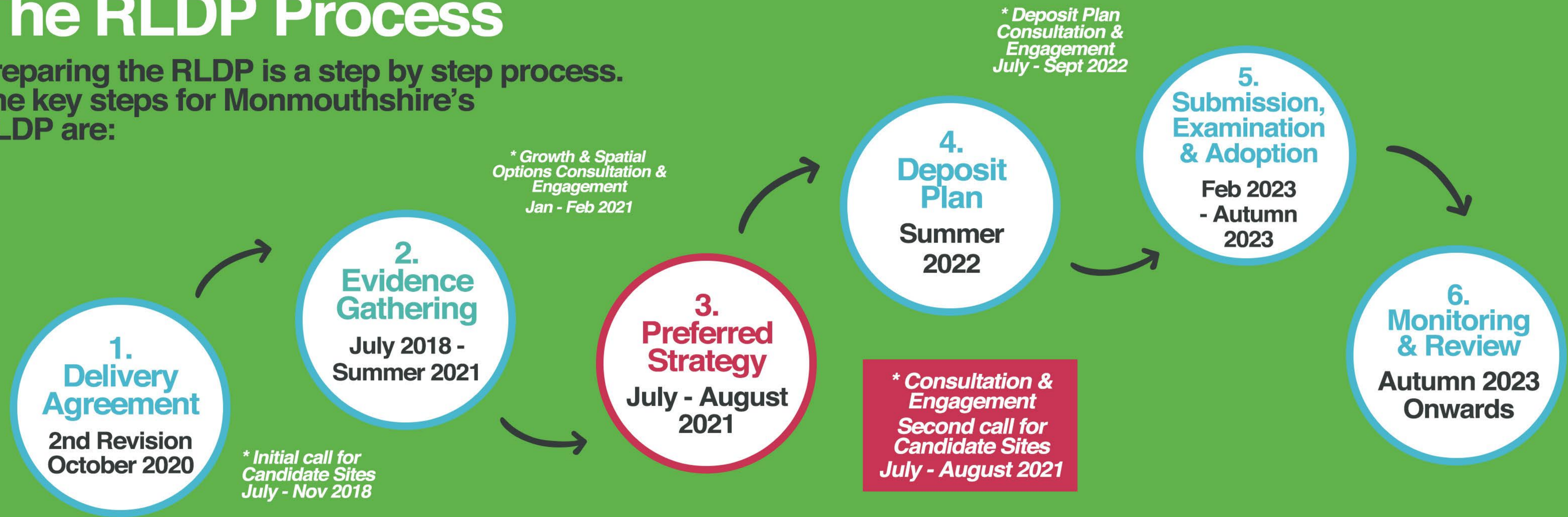
Monmouthshire County Council is preparing a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) for the period from 2018 to 2033. The RLDP will allocate land for development, designate areas for protection and contain policies to provide the basis for decisions on planning applications. It will cover the whole of the County except for the part within the Brecon Beacons National Park.

The RLDP process commenced in 2018, however the plan's timetable has been delayed primarily due to the COVID-19 pandemic and publication of updated key evidence. As a result we have revisited the Growth & Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the plan-making process.



The RLDP Process

Preparing the RLDP is a step by step process. The key steps for Monmouthshire's RLDP are:



Our Key Issues, Challenges & Opportunities

We are currently at the Preferred Strategy stage, which is the first formal publication in the preparation of the RLDP and its overall aim is to:

- Identify key issues, challenges and opportunities for the County
- Develop a vision and set of objectives for the RLDP that respond to the key issues, challenges and opportunities
- Set out the level of growth (housing and employment) and broad spatial distribution of this growth
(it does not specify sites – these will be included within the Deposit Plan)
- Set out the strategic policies that will deliver / implement the strategy

These issues, challenges and opportunities have been re-assessed and endorsed by Council in October 2020 that they still remain relevant in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Our vision for Monmouthshire

By 2033 Monmouthshire will be a place where:

People are living in sustainable, resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations and are more inclusive, cohesive, prosperous, vibrant and balanced demographically. Both urban and rural communities are well-connected with better access to local services and facilities, open space and employment opportunities.

Communities and businesses are part of an economically thriving and well-connected County.

The best of the County's built heritage, countryside, landscape and environmental assets have been protected and enhanced to retain its distinctive character.

People enjoy healthier, more sustainable lifestyles with improved access to public transport and active travel opportunities and have a minimised impact on the global environment.

The spatial implications of achieving this Vision will be that by 2033:

Monmouthshire will have grown sustainably, with a proportionate distribution of new homes and jobs across the most sustainable settlements, which are supported by amenities and infrastructure with the delivery of affordable housing to meet local needs.

Development will have contributed to facilitating sustainable lifestyles by delivering high quality places that promote low carbon developments with an appropriate mix of uses and that are well-connected both digitally and physically to the wider area in terms of character, environment and movement by public transport, walking and cycling.

** The Vision has been reviewed in light of the COVID-19 Pandemic and is considered to remain relevant and appropriate.*

The RLDP Preferred Strategy



How much growth?

By 2033 the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy aims to:

Grow Monmouthshire between **7,605 - 8,366 homes**

As the Plan period has already begun, the existing supply of housing land contributes towards the Plan's housing target. We will therefore be required to allocate new areas of growth for approximately **3,658 new homes**. * This level of housing will deliver a wider choice of market homes suitable for the younger working age population groups (smaller 2/3 bedroom homes)



Provide approximately **2,450 affordable homes**

Approximately 1,489 will be sought on a on new allocations.

* The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the need for affordable homes and revealed the extent of hidden homelessness in the County. It has also emphasised the need to ensure the provision of affordable dwellings to address the County's affordability issues.

Provide the planning policy framework to enable the provision of additional **7,215 jobs**

By allocating sufficient employment land in the right places in the County to meet the needs of new and existing businesses. The Plan will also include policies to facilitate growth in retail, leisure and tourism sectors.

* There has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer term and in accordance with Welsh Government's ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home is something that we wish to encourage and enable. This RLDP will provide residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving this level of job growth, whilst also achieving the Welsh Government and Council's aim of reducing the need for commuting.

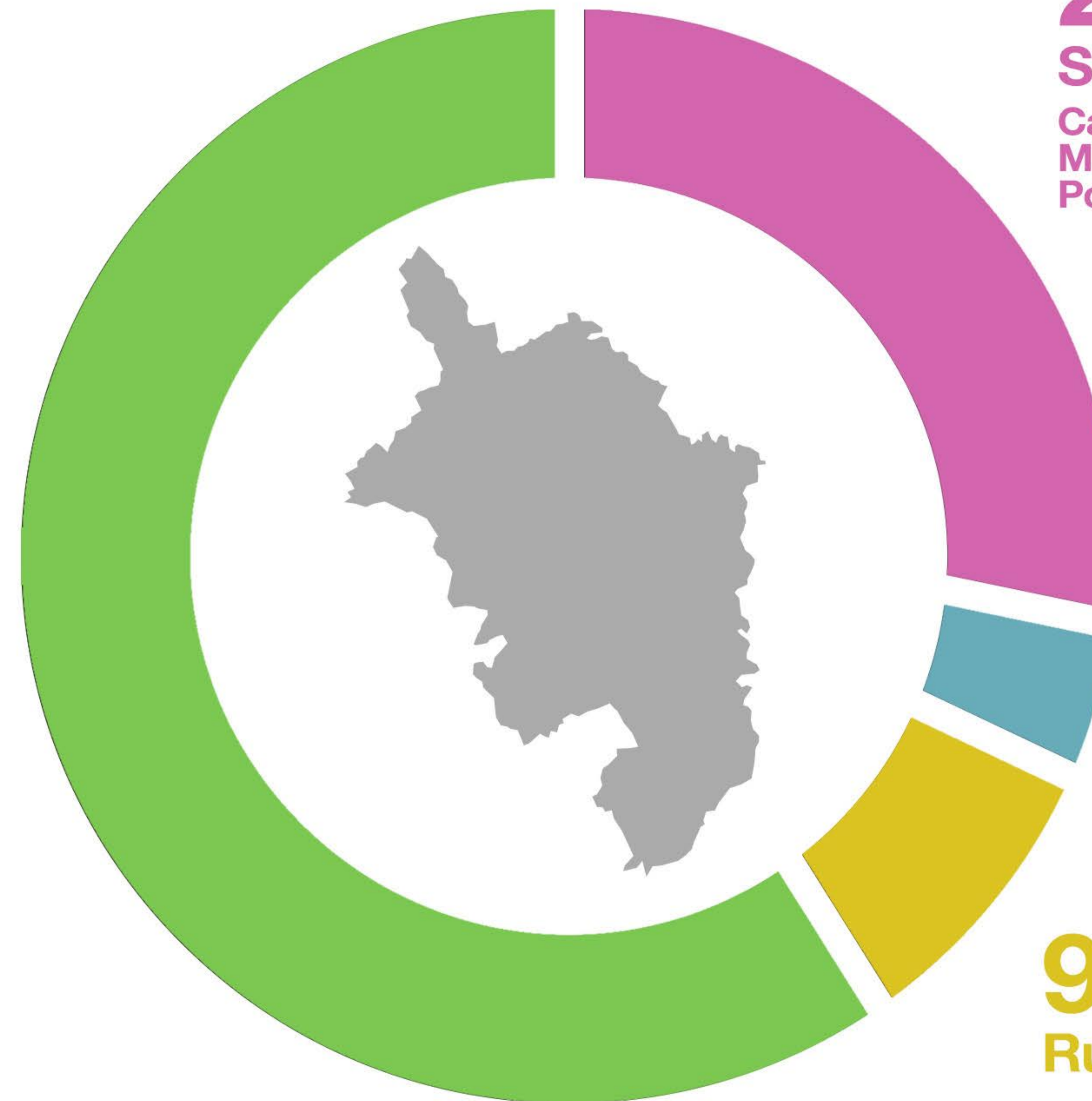


Where will the growth go?

The Preferred Strategy also looks at where the level of growth that we have chosen should be distributed across the County. In making this decision we considered factors such as:

- Reducing the number and distance of journeys by car that we make
- The location of services and facilities
- Impacts on the environment
- Access to sustainable transport links
- Where employment land is located

58%
Primary Settlements
Abergavenny (inc. Llanfoist),
Chepstow & Monmouth (inc. Wyesham)



28%
Severnside
Caldicot, Caerwent, Crick,
Magor, Undy, Rogiet,
Portskewett & Sudbrook

5%
Secondary Settlements
Penperlleni, Raglan & Usk

9%
Rural Settlements



Homes Delivered:

Primary Settlements: 4,832 homes, of these 2,365 will be new allocations

Severnside: 2,323 homes, of these 854 will be new allocations

Secondary Settlements: 449 new homes, of these 249 will be new allocations

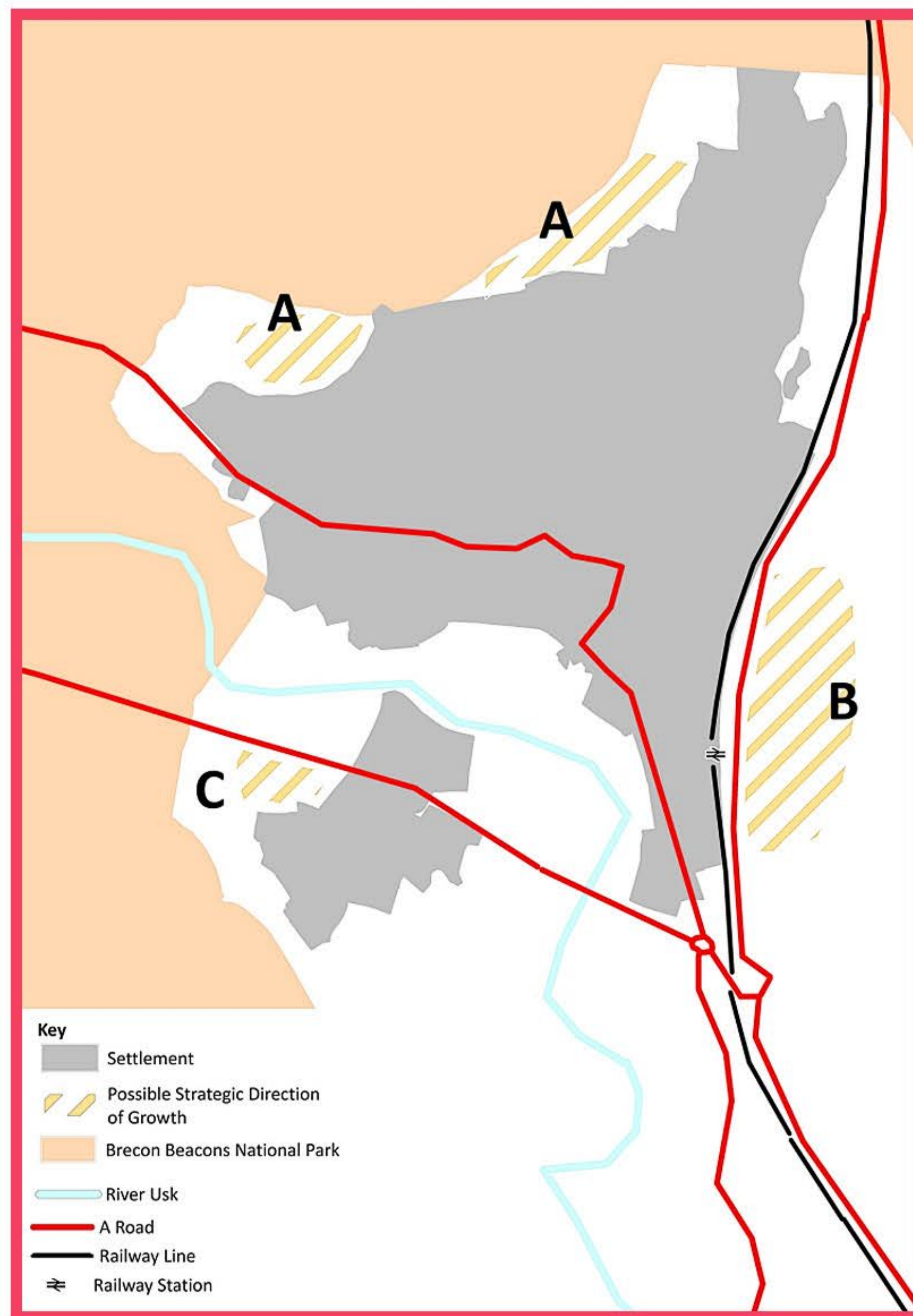
Rural Settlements: 762 new homes, of these 190 will be new allocations

* This is indicative and the exact distribution of growth will be determined at the next key stage of the process - the Deposit Plan. The housing figures include a 10% flexibility allowance as per Welsh Government Guidance.

Potential Strategic Growth Areas

We have identified possible strategic growth areas for each of the Primary Settlements and Severnside. At the present time only strategic sites and sustainable urban extensions of around 8ha in size and above have been considered. * **Not all sites indicated within each of the possible strategic growth areas in the below diagrams will be selected but we want to seek your views on which direction or directions are the best options for each town to grow.** The final selection of sites will be identified within the Deposit Plan and will be dependent on further detailed assessment work.

Abergavenny (inc. Llanfoist)



A - Land North of Abergavenny

B - Land to the East of the A465

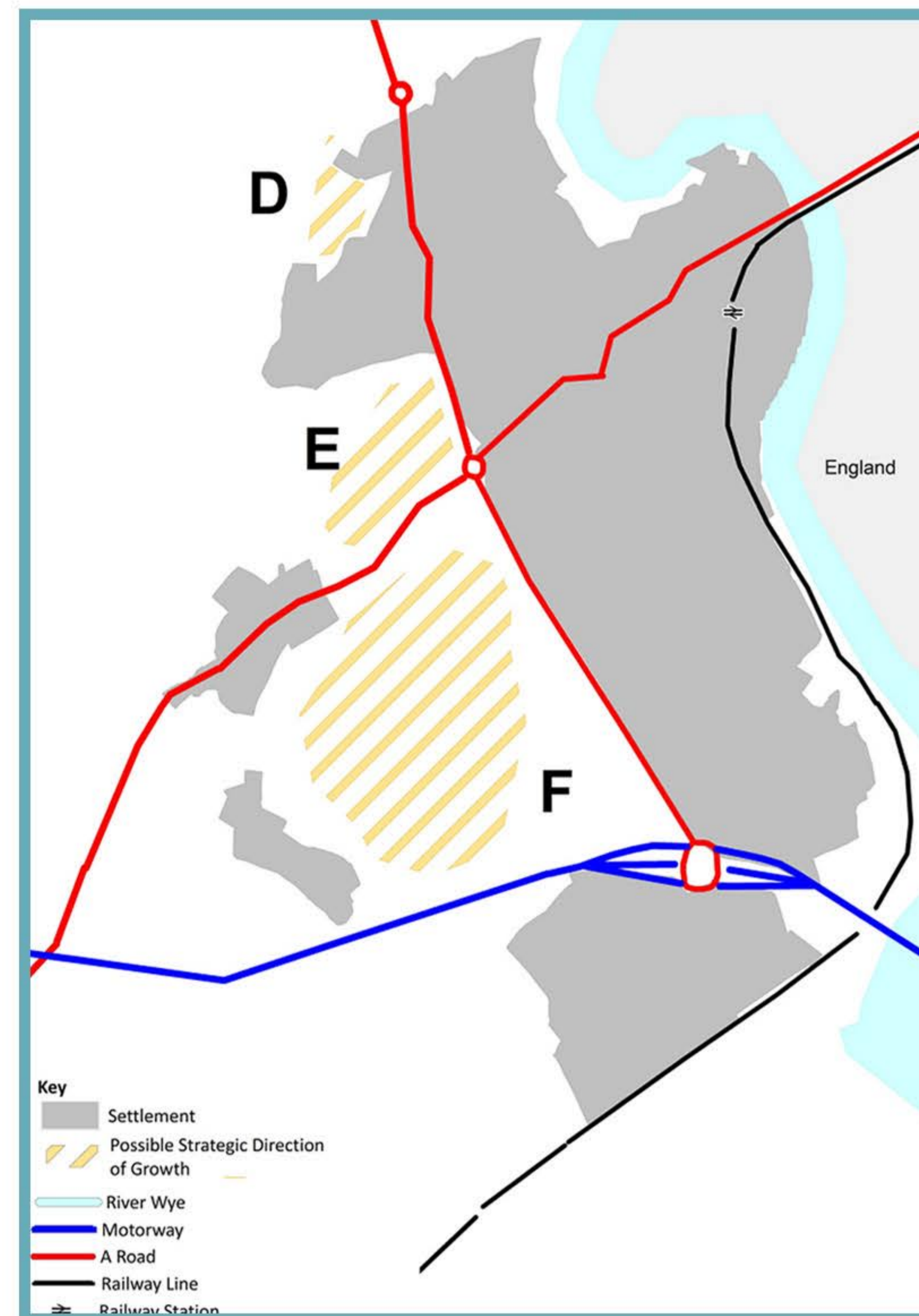
C - Land between the B4246 and Heads of the Valleys road

D - Land North of the Bayfield Estate

E - Land between the Bayfield Estate and the A48

F - Land between the A48 and M48

Chepstow



G - Land West of Monmouth

H - Land in Central Monmouth

I - Land North East of Monmouth

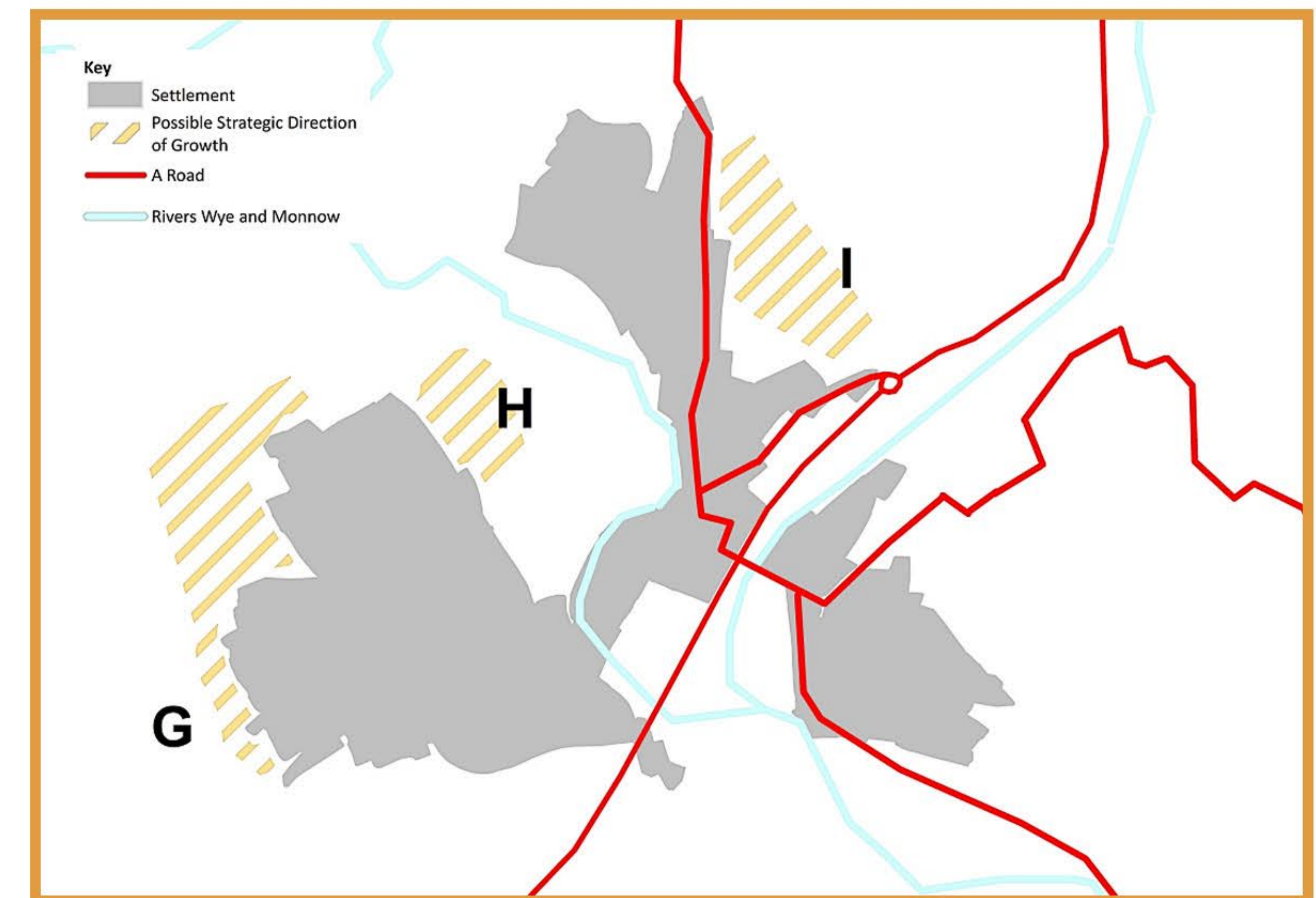
J - Land North East of Caldicot

K - Land North West of Caldicot

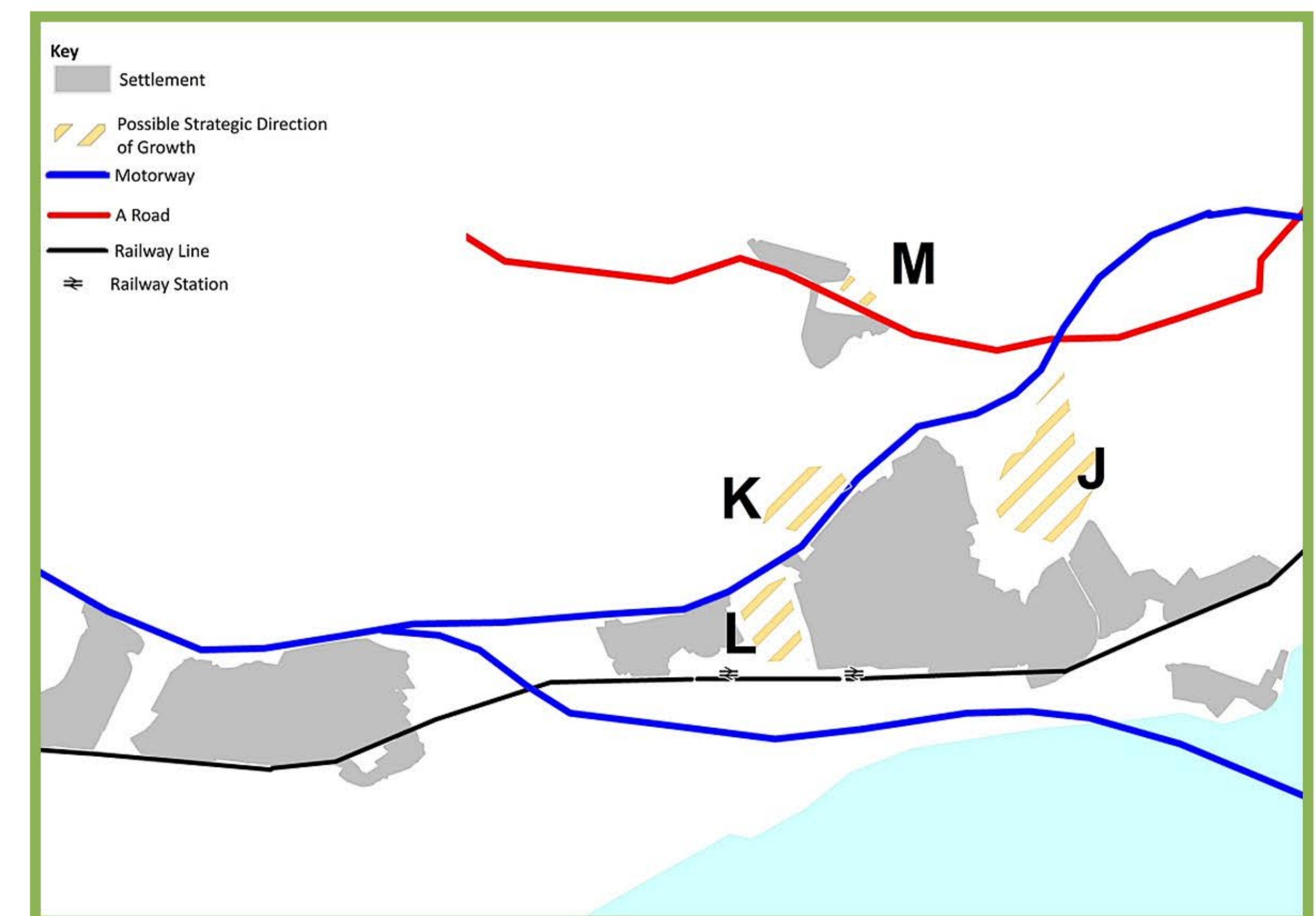
L - Land West of Caldicot / East of Rogiet

M - Land East of Caerwent

Monmouth (inc. Wyesham)

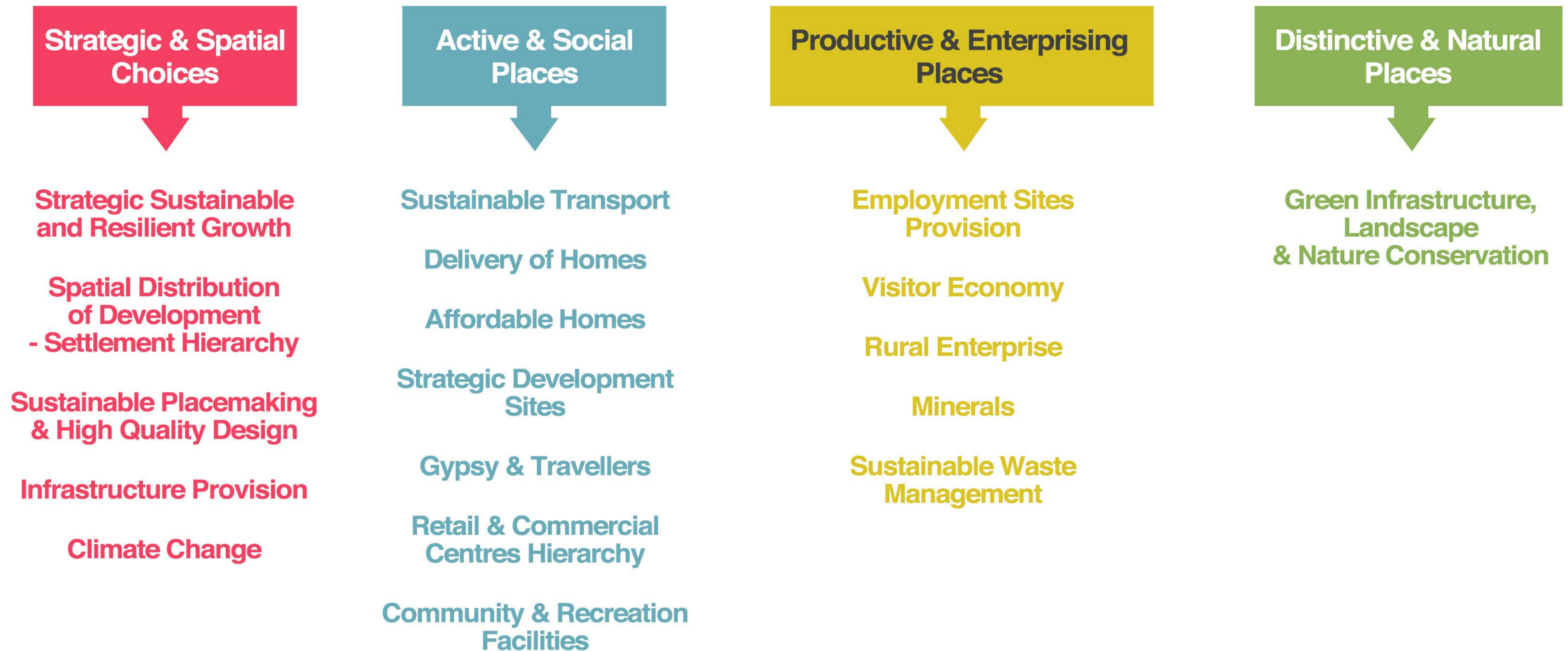


Severnside



Strategic Policies

The Preferred Strategy also sets out 18 strategic policies which cover a whole range of topic areas. These reflect the four placemaking themes in Planning Policy Wales (PPW) edition 11:



To ensure the RLDP is sustainable and that it does not have an impact on protected species the strategy is supported by an Initial Integrated Sustainable Appraisal and a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Consultation Process

An 8 week consultation will take place on the Preferred Strategy from **5th July 2021** until **31st August 2021**.

The consultation will give the public and other interested parties an opportunity to submit their views in writing to the Council. All representations received during the consultation will be recorded and considered by the Council.

It should be noted that this consultation relates to the matters set out in the Preferred Strategy; it is not an opportunity to make detailed comments on individual Candidate Sites. All comments should relate to the questions included in the Preferred Strategy which are designed to assist with your representation.

There will be also be community engagement drop-in session in various locations across the County, as well as two webinar presentations and Q&A sessions. For further information on our community engagement please visit our website on:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/news-and-consultations>



To leave a consultation response please register on the RLDP database and submit comments direct onto the database at:

<http://monmouthshire.planning-register.co.uk>

** Should there be a further lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these drop-in sessions will be replaced by additional virtual events.*



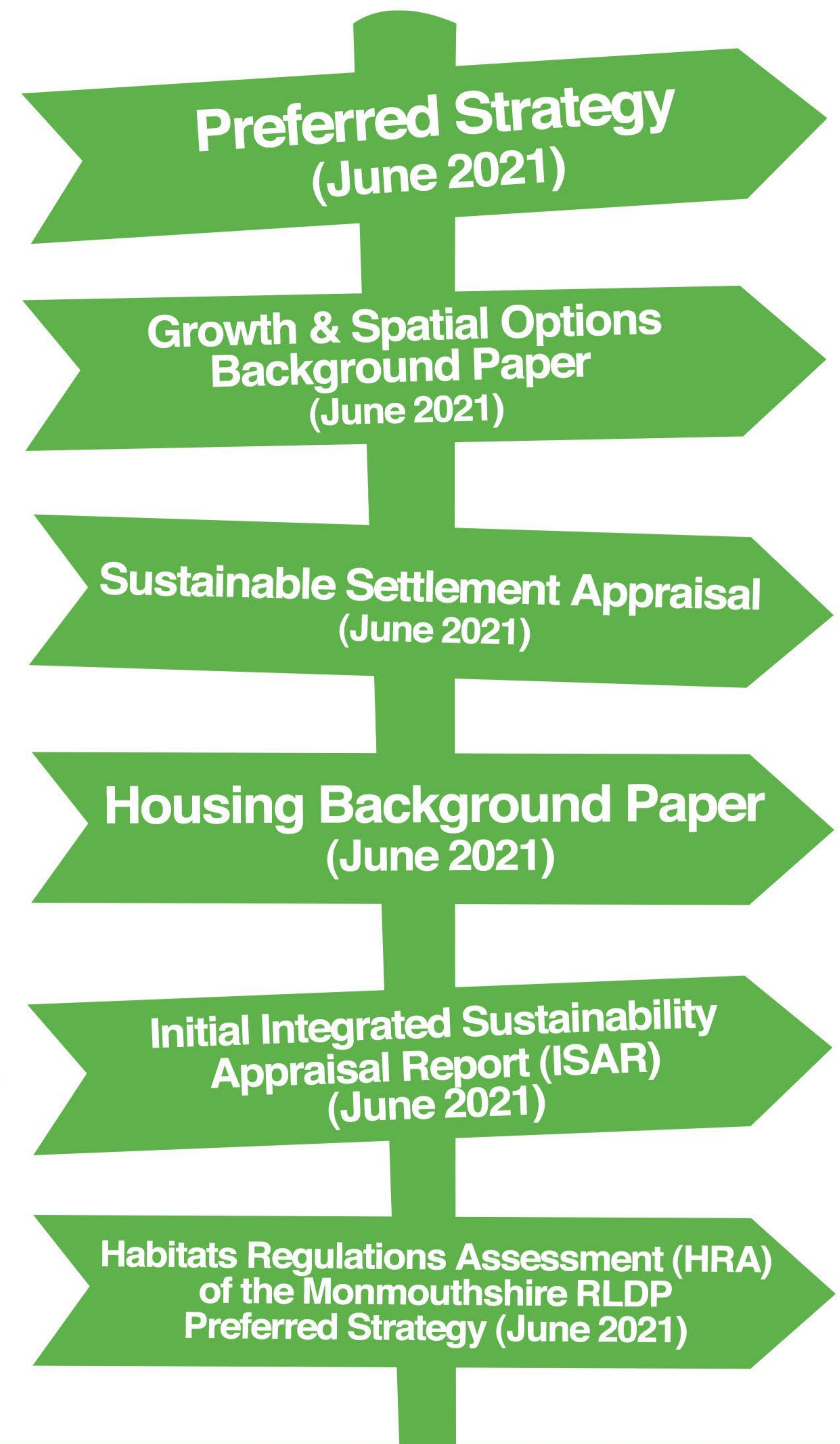
Key Preferred Strategy Documents

Next Steps

Feedback from the consultation / engagement on the Preferred Strategy will be considered and set out in the Consultation Report on the Preferred Strategy. This consultation report and the Preferred Strategy with any necessary amendments will be reported to Council in approximately November 2021 to seek approval of the Preferred Strategy. The Deposit Plan will then be prepared and considered by Council prior to a statutory six-week consultation and engagement period in Summer 2022.

Further information and documents in relation to the Preferred Strategy are available at:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/plan-preparation/preferred-strategy>



Monmouthshire Replacement Local Development Plan

Self-Assessment of the Preferred Strategy against the Tests of Soundness

June 2021





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Replacement Local Development Plan**

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Tests of Soundness**

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Planning Policy Service

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1. Purpose of this Paper

- 1.1 This Background Paper has been published alongside the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) Preferred Strategy¹. As part of the development plan process the Council needs to demonstrate that the Plan is 'sound'. The purpose of this paper is to assess the Preferred Strategy against the tests of soundness set out in the Development Plans Manual (Edition 3 – March 2020).
- 1.2 The self-assessment undertaken is considered to demonstrate that the Preferred Strategy and the stages undertaken and processes followed to reach this stage are 'sound'.
- 1.3 The soundness of the RLDP will continue to be assessed against the tests of soundness as the Plan progresses and eventually at an independent Examination by a Planning Inspector.
- 1.4 The Council's self-assessment of the Preferred Strategy is set out below.
- 1.5 One of the soundness tests relates to the Plan's general conformity with the recently adopted Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (Welsh Government, February 2021). An assessment of the Preferred Strategy against the policies of Future Wales has been undertaken and is attached at Appendix 1

¹ <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-development-plan-revision/?preview=true>

2. Self-assessment of the Preferred Strategy against the Tests of Soundness

<p>Development Plans Manual – Ed 3, March 2020</p>	<p>Response This self-assessment has been undertaken to monitor consistency with the Tests of Soundness at the Preferred Strategy stage of the Replacement Local Development Plan process. It has also helped identify future requirements as we work towards the preparation of the Deposit Plan.</p>
<p>Preparation Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has preparation of the plan complied with legal and regulatory procedural requirements? (LDP Regulations, CIS, SEA Regulations, SA, HRA etc.?) • Is the plan in general conformity with the NDF (now referred to as Future Wales: The National Plan 2040) and/or SDP? (when published or adopted respectively) <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 232</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Preferred Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the procedural requirements. Notable reference should be had to the publication of the Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) (June 2021) and the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report (June 2021) which have been published as supporting documents to the Preferred Strategy. These build on the work undertaken to accompany earlier stages of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) process – Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (December 2018) and Initial Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report (December 2018). ▪ Scheduled consultation arrangements and documents are in accordance with the LDP Regulations (2005 as amended 2015). The scope and method of consultation is considered to be consistent with the Community Involvement Scheme, which has been amended to reflect our revised consultation and engagement arrangements in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The manner in which public engagement events will take place has been reviewed in line with the Coronavirus Regulations (2020) and Ministerial advice² to ensure social distancing measures and other adjustments can be put in place when conducting any public events to ensure the safety of colleagues and our communities. The Council has also reviewed digital involvement options to provide our communities and stakeholders with information and the ability to engage with the RLDP consultation in a virtual manner through hosting two webinars. ▪ Full details of the consultation arrangements and documentation can be viewed in a number of places including the Council Report, the consultation email and letter and the Council’s website. Significant non-statutory consultation has also been undertaken to gain an understanding of the issues and options relevant to the County, with a couple of stages revisited due to updated evidence and reviewed in light of Covid-19. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consultation on the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021) followed by a review of their relevance in light of Covid-19 in June 2020 and incorporated into the Review of RLDP

² Minister for Housing and Local Government Letter to Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives National Park Authority Chief Executives – Planning System and Covid-19, 7th July 2020

Issues, Vision and Objectives and Evidence Base in light of Covid-19 prepared in September 2020 and endorsed by Cabinet in October 2020.

- A first call for candidate sites (autumn 2018) and publication of the Candidate Site Register (February 2019) for information.
 - Non-statutory consultation on the Growth and Spatial Options undertaken between July and August 2019. This stage was revisited between January and February 2021 to take account of updated Welsh Government 2018-based population and household projections which were published in August 2020 and comprise important new evidence that require consideration and form the starting point in for the Plan’s evidence base.
 - The Plan had progressed to the Preferred Strategy stage of the RLDP process in March 2020, with commencement of the statutory consultation on the RLDP Preferred Strategy and the second call for candidate sites during March 2020. Progress on the RLDP was subsequently paused in March 2020 as the Covid-19 pandemic meant we could not continue with the Preferred Strategy public engagement events. Following advice from the Minister for Housing and Local Government, the decision was subsequently made to cease the Preferred Strategy consultation and second call for candidate sites on 20th July 2020. Following this, as noted above, the publication of the Welsh Government 2018-based population projections in August 2020 represented new evidence requiring a revisit of the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages.
- Full details of the consultation methods undertaken will be set out in the Initial Consultation Report prepared to accompany the Deposit Plan.
 - Welsh Government published Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 in February 2021. This establishes the national development framework, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040 and provides the policy framework for SDPs and LDPs, with a requirement for the lower tier plans to be in general conformity with Future Wales. The policy framework set out in the Preferred Strategy is considered to be in general conformity with this and does not preclude the objectives of Future Wales being met during the RLDP Plan period. The detailed boundaries associated with many of Future Wales’ policies will be pursued through the preparation of the SDP, which has yet to commence. It provides the policy context for national and regional growth, with the RLDP providing the policy framework for growth to address and meet Monmouthshire’s local issues and needs. An assessment of the Preferred Strategy against the policies of Future Wales has been undertaken and is attached at Appendix 1.

- A particular area of relevance to Monmouthshire is the requirement of Policy 34 for the Strategic Development Plan to identify a green belt to the north of Cardiff, Newport and the eastern part of the region. The South East Wales Regional Strategic Diagram (page 163 of Future Wales) provides an indicative plan of the area for consideration with the detailed boundary to be defined through the preparation of the SDP. In advance of an SDP, the area shown for consideration in Future Wales should be treated as a designated Green Belt. In assessing the spatial strategy for distributing growth within the County consideration has been given to paragraph 3.72 of PPW11 which states that “when considering a Green Belt designation, a sufficient range of development land which is suitably located in relation to the existing urban edge should be made available, having regard to the longer term need for development land, the effects of development pressures in areas beyond the Green Belt and the need to minimise demand for travel. This may require land to be safeguarded, and boundaries of proposed Green Belts must be carefully defined to achieve this”. In this respect, the Preferred Strategy is considered to facilitate the identification of a Green Belt in southern Monmouthshire with the primary settlements situated outside the broad coverage, consistent with the indicative plan and meeting the aims of Policy 34 but allowing for an appropriate level of growth in Monmouthshire to address its local challenges and issues. The Council still has significant concerns, however, regarding the Green Belt designation as a permanent designation that would have long-term policy implications for future growth and prosperity in Monmouthshire.
- The Preferred Strategy preparation process has reflected the policies of Future Wales having regard to the strategic nature of the Preferred Strategy document. For example, following the publication of the draft NDF and subsequent Future Wales document and the identification of a Green Belt in the south/mid of the County (which would act to hinder development opportunities in this area over the long-term), focussing growth in the north of the County formed one of the spatial options consulted on as part of the Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020). Furthermore, spatial options for Dispersed Growth and New Settlement and New Settlement with Limited Growth in Primary Settlements, Secondary Settlements and Severnside only which formed part of the initial Growth and Spatial Options Consultation Paper (June 2019) have been ruled out for the RLDP on the basis that Welsh Government officials have stated that a New Settlement cannot be pursued outside of the Strategic Development Plan or joint LDP processes. Such changes are considered to demonstrate actions taken to ensure general conformity with Future Wales and SDP processes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More generally, the overarching policy framework of the Preferred Strategy is considered to align with the policy aims of the Future Wales, with many common policy themes running through both. Examples of this include the placemaking (Policy 2), active travel (Policy 12), town centre first (Policy 6) and creating resilient ecological networks and enhancing green infrastructure provision (Policy 9). Particularly relevant in a Monmouthshire context, however, is the policy focus on supporting rural communities (Policy 4) and the rural economy (Policy 5) and delivering affordable homes (Policy 7), which are key challenges for the County. In this respect the Preferred Strategy is considered to set the strategic framework for delivering many of the policy objectives of Future Wales at a local level.
<p>Test 1: Does the plan fit? (Is it clear that the LDP is consistent with other plans?)</p> <p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does it have regard to national policy (PPW) and Future Wales? Does it have regard to Well-being Goals? Does it have regard the Welsh National Marine Plan? Does it have regard to the relevant Area Statement? Is the plan in general conformity with the NDF? Is the plan in general conformity with relevant SDP (when adopted)? Is it consistent with regional plans, strategies and utility programmes? Is it compatible with the plans of neighbouring LPAs? Does it reflect the Single Integrated Plan (SIP) Well-being Plan or the National Park Management Plan (NPMP)? Has the LPA demonstrated it has exhausted all opportunities for joint working and 	<p>The formulation of the Preferred Strategy has been prepared with full regard to the relevant plans and strategies, whilst recognising that it will need to respond and develop as it progresses through its preparatory process. The national, regional and local plans are where relevant identified within the Preferred Strategy but also within the background and supporting documents and within the in-combination considerations of the ISA and HRA Reports. The ISA process reviews the relevant policies, plans and programmes and considers their implications in relation to the growth levels and spatial options considered and have subsequently informed the Preferred Strategy and associated Strategic Policies. Each of the questions is discussed in turn:</p> <p>National Policy (PPW11) and Future Wales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Preferred Strategy has had regard to national policies and guidance as set out in PPW11 and associated Technical Advice Notes (TANs). The Preferred Strategy and supporting documents refer to relevant sections of PPW11 specific to the issue being discussed and the policy requirements of PPW11 have been considered and incorporated where relevant in the preparation of the Strategic Policies. The supporting text adds further commentary on the links to national guidance, including the identification of further work to be undertaken in the preparation of the Deposit Plan. Each of the Strategic Policies is supported by a policy context section which sets out links to the wider policy framework including PPW11 and TANs and are grouped by the overarching policy themes of PPW11. The relationship between the Preferred Strategy and Future Wales is discussed above. Reference has also been made to Welsh Government’s Building Better Places (July 2020) which sets out its response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The RLDP and Preferred Strategy are recognised as a key mechanism in delivering the planning policy priorities identified in the Building Better Places document to assist in the Covid-19 recovery and maintaining and enabling the sustainable improvements that have arisen from the situation.

collaboration on both plan preparation and the evidence base?

Well-Being Goals

- The Preferred Strategy has full regard to the provisions of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and the well-being goals, as well as the five ways of working reflected in the additional non-statutory consultation and engagement undertaken on the Issues, Vision and Objectives (Updated June 2021) and the Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020). The promotion and recognition of well-being has been a consideration from the outset of the Plan preparation process. The links between the RLDP objectives and the Well-being Goals is clearly set out in the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021), which relates and groups the issues and opportunities under the well-being goals themes. Each Strategic Policy provides a table setting out its links to the wider policy framework and which of the well-being goals it will contribute to.

Welsh National Marine Plan

- The Strategic Policies cover a number of issues and policy areas which complement the aims and objectives of the Marine Plan. In particular, Strategic Policies S3 – Sustainable Place Making and High Quality Design, S4 – Climate Change and S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation complement the Marine Plan by directing development away from areas of flood risk, protecting and enhancing green infrastructure and networks and recognising the challenges posed by climate change. The relationship with the Marine Plan will be enhanced further through the preparation of detailed policies in the Deposit Plan.

Area Statement

- Monmouthshire forms part of the South East Wales Area Statement along with Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Newport and Torfaen, which was published by NRW in March 2020. The Preferred Strategy has regard to the Area Statement’s strategic themes of Linking Our Landscape; Climate Ready Gwent; Healthy Active Connected; and Ways of Working and through the Strategic Policies seeks to achieve many of the outcomes associated with each theme. Examples of this include Strategic Policy S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation which is consistent with many of the outcomes sought from the Area Statement including improved resilience of our ecosystems across Gwent and the need to safeguard and enhance core habitat networks and support ecological connectivity on and between our best sites across Gwent. Similarly, Strategic Policies S3 – Sustainable Placemaking and High Quality Design and S4 – Climate Change are consistent in their aims as many of the outcomes associated with Climate Ready Gwent and Healthy Active Connected. Overall, the Preferred Strategy is considered to be consistent with the key themes and aims of the South East Wales Area Statement.

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (February 2021)

- Conformity with Future Wales is discussed above and in Appendix 1.

Strategic Development Plan (SDP)

- The preparation of an SDP has not commenced for the region, although Monmouthshire County Council has been actively involved in the discussions and agreements put in place to date and Council has formally resolved to be part of the SDP.

Regional plans, strategies and utility programmes

- The Preferred Strategy has been prepared within the context of the relevant regional plans, strategies and utility provider programmes, with Section 2 of the Preferred Strategy, associated background papers and the supporting commentary of the Strategic Policies providing details of the documents that have been considered. Specific reference is made to the Cardiff Capital Region and the role Monmouthshire can play in contributing to its main objectives and programmes. The Initial Sustainability Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment also consider the in-combination effects of the Preferred Strategy along with other plans and strategies in the region and conclude that the Strategy is in line with both regional and local environmental protection objectives.
- The preparation of the Preferred Strategy has also involved a regional and coordinated approach to the collection of evidence, including population projection modelling, regional employment study, and Integrated Sustainability Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment. This has provided a consistent and comparable approach to methodologies and a basis to consider the evidence and any implications on a more regional basis as well as at a local level. This approach will continue through the preparation of the Deposit Plan, with a number of jointly commissioned pieces of evidence already in progress including a Development Viability Model and a Renewable Energy Assessment, with others scheduled to commence imminently including a Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment and Green Belt and Green Wedge Review. Long standing regional working methods associated with areas such as waste and minerals are continued and reflected in the Preferred Strategy.
- Utility companies have been involved from an early stage in the development of the Preferred Strategy to ensure consistency with their programmes. For example, discussions have taken place between the Council and Western Power and Welsh Water, with more detailed discussions to follow as part of the assessment on candidate sites and the preparation of the Deposit Plan.

Plans of Neighbouring Authorities (LPAs)

- The Preferred Strategy takes into account cross-border issues and the plans of neighbouring authorities and reflects the discussions and agreements reached relating to cross-border issues. Examples include agreement on the approach to the housing numbers attributed to growth in the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority area, consideration of Newport’s capacity to accommodate an element of Monmouthshire’s growth on previously developed land, and discussion with the Forest of Dean regarding their issues and objectives. Further details of joint working and collaboration are set out in paragraphs 2.46 – 2.48 of the Preferred Strategy.
- As noted above, in recognition of the value of working with neighbouring authorities, and in response to PPW11 and the Development Plans Manual (Ed 3, March 2020) emphasis on collaborative working, we have worked on or are working on a number of pieces of evidence together. These include a: Larger than Local Employment Study, Population and Household Projections, Integrated Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulation Assessment, Development Viability Model and Renewable Energy Assessment. The nature of the co-operation with authorities and sharing of approaches including comparable thematic policy areas will be developed as the Plan’s preparatory process continues. This will build on work undertaken by SEWSPG and topic-based Pathfinder groups, which have helped establish a common approach to a number of Plan preparation tasks including candidate sites assessments, sustainable settlement appraisals and retail and employment land monitoring.
- Regard will also be had to the emphasis on regional working in light of future provisions around Strategic Development Plans and Future Wales.

Single Integrated Plan (SIP), Well-being Plan or the National Park Management Plan (NPMP)

- The Monmouthshire Well-being Plan was prepared by the Public Service Board and endorsed in February 2018. The Issues, Vision and Objectives (Updated June 2021) are heavily drawn from and reflect the PSB Well-being Plan which was extensively consulted upon by the Public Service Board in 2017 and resulted in contributions from more than 1,400 people. This approach reflects Welsh Government guidance which recognises the significance of local well-being plans as a key evidence source for LDP preparation (paragraphs 1.6 and 1.21, PPW11). In this respect, the Well-being Plan has been an integral part of the Preferred Strategy preparation ensuring it seeks to address key issues identified for Monmouthshire. The Strategic Policies also set out which of the Well-being Plan objectives it has a particular link to.
- The area of Brecon Beacons National Park that sits within Monmouthshire County Council’s administrative area is excluded from the extent of the RLDP’s geographical area and does not form part of

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 29</p>	<p>Monmouthshire’s Planning Authority remit. The relationship and impact on the Brecon Beacons National Park, does, however, remain a significant consideration for the preparation of the RLDP. The Preferred Strategy is considered to reflect the aims of the ‘A Management Plan for the Brecon Beacons National Park’ (2015-2020), particularly its themes aiming to ‘Manage the Parks Landscape’ and ‘Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity’. Strategic Policy SP18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscaping and Nature Conservation is of particular relevance to achieving the aims of the Management Plan.</p> <p>Joint Working and Collaboration on both plan preparation and the evidence base</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As demonstrated above, a significant amount of the evidence base has been commissioned on a joint basis with Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen and on a regional basis with Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Caerphilly and Newport. We have also held regular joint meetings to ensure there is a consistency of approach. Further details of joint working and collaboration are set out in paragraphs 2.46 – 2.48 of the Preferred Strategy and specific examples referenced throughout the Preferred Strategy in relation to the Strategic Policies. ▪ On-going meetings and collaboration are also pursued through the longstanding South East Wales Strategic Planning Group (SEWSPG), the Planning Officers South Wales (POSW) and the South East Wales Planning Officer Society (SEWPOS).
<p>Test 2: Is the plan appropriate? (Is the plan appropriate for the area in the light of the evidence?)</p> <p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it locally specific? • Does it address the key issues? • Is it supported by robust, proportionate and credible evidence? • Can the rationale behind plan policies be demonstrated? • Does it seek to meet assessed needs and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development? • Are the vision and the strategy positive and sufficiently aspirational? • Have the ‘real’ alternatives been properly considered? 	<p>Is it Locally Specific?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Preferred Strategy builds upon the objectives of the Well-being Plan which are locally specific, having regard to the outcomes of the consultation undertaken in its preparation. The formulation of the Preferred Strategy is underpinned by the locally specific evidence of the Monmouthshire Well-being Plan. The findings of the MCC Economies of the Future Reports (2018) also helped to identify locally specific issues and options for the future of Monmouthshire. Building on these, non-statutory consultation was undertaken during January 2019 on the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper to identify the issues facing Monmouthshire and discuss possible ways forward in the RLDP. The Council’s decision to declare a Climate Change Emergency during May 2019 has also formed a key focus in the emerging Preferred Strategy. Following on from these, the Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020) sets out a range of alternative growth and spatial options to address the different issues facing Monmouthshire. As a result of these non-statutory consultations exercises, the Preferred Strategy proposed a strategy that has emerged as a direct result of a number of very locally specific issues, including an ageing demographic, high houses prices, high out-commuting rates and a commitment to locate development in Monmouthshire’s most sustainable settlements.

<p>• Is it logical, reasonable and balanced? • Is it coherent and consistent? • Is it clear and focused?</p>	<p>Does it address key issues?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In addition to the above, each growth and spatial option has been assessed to consider its contribution to the RLDP overarching objectives. Details of this assessment is set out in the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021). The growth and spatial options that form the basis of the Preferred Strategy have been chosen as it is considered these best address the key issues facing the County, including an ageing demographic, high house prices and the proposed distribution of development based on a sustainable settlement hierarchy and sustainable development principles that incorporate climate change challenges. Each Strategic Policy also highlights the links to the RLDP objectives and Monmouthshire PSB Well-being Plan objectives. The locally specific, key issues are referenced extensively throughout the Preferred Strategy and have formed the principal rationale for choosing the policy approach taken. <p>Is it supported by robust, proportionate and credible evidence?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extensive evidence building has been undertaken to support the Preferred Strategy. A full breakdown is provided in Appendix 1 of the Preferred Strategy. In addition to theses, further studies and pieces of evidence will be or are currently being undertaken and commissioned, including viability modelling, Strategic Flood Consequence, and Green Wedge Review. Further work will be undertaken during the Plan preparatory process as appropriate and necessary. <p>Can the rationale behind plan policies be demonstrated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The evidence gathered has informed the preparation of the strategic policies, which need to be read in conjunction with one another in order to gain an understanding of the overall policy direction of the Plan. Each strategic policy has a reasoned justification and a summary table setting out how it relates to the relevant RLDP objectives, national policy, and Well Being Goals, as well as the key evidence. The Strategic Policies have been grouped by PPW11's overarching policy themes and the relevant sections of PPW11 are referenced as these combined with the locally specific evidence forms a key approach to establishing the rationale to the Plan's policies. <p>Does it seek to meet assessed needs and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Preferred Strategy is derived from evidence that assesses the needs of the County, particularly in respect of homes (both market and affordable) and jobs, as well as the need to protect the most valuable areas of land. Population and household modelling has been undertaken and a selection of population, housing and economic growth options have been consulted upon in the Growth and Spatial Options
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Consultation Paper (December 2020). This also provides details on how well each option meets the needs of Monmouthshire, based on the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper. In addition to this, the Local Housing Market Assessment has provided key evidence on the level of affordable housing need in the County. An Employment Land Review has also been undertaken to quantify the future employment land requirements based on the Welsh Government Practice Guidance for Economic Development. The need for homes and jobs has also been considered alongside the need to protect the County’s land resources for environmental, agricultural and nature conservation purposes. The balance to be achieved between these differing and sometime competing needs will continue to be a key focus of the RLDP as it progresses to the Deposit stage.

- The achievement of sustainable development is a central component of the Plan. The Integrated Sustainability Appraisal process has an integral and iterative role in the preparation of the RLDP. In this respect, its use in testing or measuring the performance of the RLDP from its inception through to the preparation of the Preferred Strategy is indicative of the iterative feedback between the ISA and the RLDP as work progresses.
- The hierarchy of settlements has been developed taking account of the sustainability credentials of each settlement and how they can contribute to their wider communities. This hierarchy recognises and acknowledges the availability of services and facilities, accessibility issues and other considerations. Reference should be made to the Sustainable Settlement Appraisal Background Paper (June 2021) for full details. This work has formed the basis for the proposed spatial strategy, which seeks to ensure development is located in the most sustainable settlements within a Monmouthshire context.

Are the vision and the strategy positive and sufficiently aspirational?

- The RLDP Vision has been developed to take into account the key challenges and opportunities for change, whilst being aspirational and positive enough to seek a reversal to the otherwise projected decline in job numbers and younger age groups present in the County, as established in the Welsh Government 2018 based Principal projections. The vision for growth is a positive one which seeks to create high quality, sustainable places in both urban and rural settlements within a Monmouthshire context. The Preferred Strategy takes a positive, yet realistic approach to achieving growth within the context of Monmouthshire and tackling key national and local issues, such as the provision of affordable homes, growing Monmouthshire’s economic base, tackling climate change and creating sustainable places to live and work in. The Preferred Strategy is considered to present a balanced approach to growth by putting forward a strategy that is aspirational enough to address a number of key issues facing the County, whilst also being deliverable and building on significant changes that have occurred since the Covid-19 pandemic such as the increased propensity to work from home and the importance of creating communities with locally

accessible services. This element of the Plan will be evidenced further as the Plan progresses to the Deposit stage.

Have the ‘real’ alternatives been properly considered?

- A number of different alternative growth and spatial options were considered as part of the Growth and Spatial Options Consultation Paper (December 2020). The assessment of all options is identified in Section 4 of the Preferred Strategy and in more detail in the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (December 2020). The Strategic Options have also been considered through the ISA process.

Is it logical, reasonable and balanced?

- The Preferred Strategy has emerged from a clear understanding of the issues at a national, regional and local level. It has considered a range of options and has had regard to the views expressed during the non-statutory consultation and engagement exercises to date and made changes to the options considered as a result. The Preferred Strategy has emerged from engagement and evidence and as such it is considered to be logical and reasonable within the context of the issues facing Monmouthshire. It is considered to provide a balanced approach that integrates with other plans and strategies, whilst ensuring it is reflective of national policy and the need for a sustainable and deliverable Plan.

Is it coherent and consistent?

- The Preferred Strategy sets out a coherent strategy from which its strategic policies flow. The strategy is guided by, and consistent with, the Plan vision and objectives, the principles of sustainability set out in national planning guidance, the growth and spatial options and the evidence base.

Is it clear and focused?

- The Preferred Strategy is set out in a clear and logical form, clearly showing the links between the various elements of the Strategy. It provides a clear focus of its purpose, identifying the vision and issues associated with the Plan and how the Preferred Strategy will seek to address these.

Test 3: Will the plan deliver (Is it likely to be effective?)

Questions

- Will it be effective?
- Can it be implemented?

Will it be effective?

- The Preferred Strategy’s objectives have emerged from an understanding of the challenges and needs of Monmouthshire as well as a sound, logical and robust evidence base. The strategy seeks to integrate and reflect other Plans and Strategies as part of an integrated approach to delivery, maximising its opportunities to be effective in its implementation.

<p>Page 243</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there support from the relevant infrastructure providers both financially and in terms of meeting relevant timescales? • Will development be viable? • Can the sites allocated be delivered? • Is the plan sufficiently flexible? Are there appropriate contingency provisions? • Is it monitored effectively? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Preferred Strategy makes provision for 8,366 homes, including the provision of approximately 2,450 affordable homes, which will make significant progress in addressing the current housing waiting list. This level of growth will enable the provision of market and affordable housing and, importantly, provides the opportunity to address the unbalanced demography, improve labour force retention and assists in the County’s housing affordability challenge. ▪ In order to meet the housing provision figure of 8,366, the RLDP will need to make new allocations for 3,658 homes reflecting the number of units that already have planning permission or that will be delivered via other housing supply streams, such as windfall and infill sites. These new allocations provide the Council with the opportunity to open up longer term directions for strategic growth and implement place-making and climate change principles. ▪ The Preferred Strategy also provide the planning policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 jobs over the Plan period to help grow Monmouthshire’s economic base and reduce the out-commuting experienced within the County. This level of job growth aligns with the projected population and housing growth and takes account of adjustments to household membership rates for key younger age groups and a reduced level of commuting by retaining more of the resident workforce. There has been a fundamental shift in working practices since the start of Covid-19 pandemic with an increased propensity to work from home/remotely. It is expected that this trend will continue over the longer term in accordance with Welsh Government’s ambition of 30% of the Welsh workforce working from or near home. This provides residents with the opportunity to both live and work in the County in this new way, providing a flexible approach to achieving this level of job growth, whilst also achieving the Welsh Government and Council’s aim of reducing the need for commuting. It will also be achieved through the allocation of a minimum of 43ha of employment land to facilitate the delivery of industrial and business employment uses. Economic based initiatives such as the Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement (November 2019) and Investment Prospectus (March 2020) will support intervention options required to help deliver jobs. The RLDP will also include a policy framework to support job growth from other key employment sectors including retail, leisure and tourism. ▪ The Preferred Strategy will result in an extra 0.42% of the County land area being built upon. A key objective of the Plan remains to retain and protect the rural character, landscape and best and most versatile agricultural land. <p>Can it be implemented?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The preparation of the Preferred Strategy is with the clear intention that it will be implementable and that its policies and proposals will be delivered within the Plan period. The Preferred Strategy sets out a
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deliverable spatial framework and strategic growth which is based on sustainability principles and is responsive to the needs of the communities of Monmouthshire. The policies and proposals (both strategic and eventually specific within the future Deposit Plan) will provide the framework through which the Plan's objectives will be implemented and the decision-making process undertaken. More detailed assessment work, covering issues such as viability, phasing and deliverability of sites will be undertaken to support the preparation of the Deposit Plan.

- As part of the preparation of the Deposit RLDP an effective and appropriate monitoring framework will be developed and included within the Plan. This will form the basis for undertaking the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR will represent the main method for measuring and assessing the progress in the implementation of the policies and proposals of the adopted RLDP.

Is there support from the relevant infrastructure providers both financially and in terms of meeting the relevant timescales?

- Infrastructure providers are an important component in developing the RLDP and form a key consultee. In this respect they have and will continue to be engaged throughout the Plan making process. Notably further consultation will be undertaken in the preparation of the Deposit Plan to ensure that Plan delivery is fully evidenced. As noted above, discussions have taken place between the Council and utility providers including Western Power and Welsh Water. Other infrastructure providers have also been involved in on-going discussions including the Health Board and Transport for Wales.

Will the development be viable?

- The need for development to be viable is an important aspect in the preparation of the Plan and will be evidenced in relation to the identification of sites or the development of specific policies. Work is currently being developed at a regional level to establish a robust and consistent methodology for assessing viability across authorities in the south east Wales region. This work sits alongside viability modelling at a site-specific level ensuring that viability assessments submitted with candidate sites are appropriately informed by local conditions and policy and are robustly evidenced.
- A second call for candidate sites is being undertaken over a 6-week period, commencing at the same time as the consultation period on the Preferred Strategy. Detailed information on site viability is required as part of this exercise, with a guidance note also issued to help land owners and developers on the level and type of information required. A Viability Steering Group has also been established to inform the viability process and ensure key inputs reflect market conditions in Monmouthshire. This site-specific information

together with viability modelling will be used to evidence that the sites allocated in the Deposit Plan are viable.

Can the sites allocated be delivered?

- The Preferred Strategy does not identify specific allocations. Allocations will be identified as part of the Deposit plan with their deliverability evidenced accordingly.

Is the Plan sufficiently flexible? Are there appropriate contingencies in place?

- The Preferred Strategy has been designed to provide a flexible policy framework which is capable of providing certainty on how much growth is proposed and its broad distribution, but flexible enough to consider appropriate and acceptable opportunities that may arise during the Plan period, such as windfall sites and rural enterprise developments. The dwelling and employment land requirement figures contain a flexibility allowance to allow for unforeseen circumstances that may emerge through the Plan period. The flexibility allowance will be given further consideration as part of the Deposit Plan preparation.

Is it monitored effectively?

- As part of the preparation of the Deposit Plan an effective and appropriate monitoring framework will be developed and included within the Plan and will form the basis for undertaking the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR will represent the main method for measuring and assessing the progress in the implementation of the policies and proposals of the adopted RLDP. In the meantime, a number of annual monitoring exercises will continue to be undertaken to help ensure evidence is up-to-date. This includes the annual housing surveys, Employment and Retail Surveys and preparation of the Adopted LDP Annual Monitoring Reports.

Appendix 1

Monmouthshire RLDP Preferred Strategy – General Conformity with Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 Assessment

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (referred to as Future Wales from this point on) was published by Welsh Government in February 2021 to promote development that enhances well-being and quality of life in Wales. It considers the issues significant to Wales’s prosperity and well-being, such as the economy, housing, transport, energy, and the environment. It identifies where national developments should take place, where the key growth areas are and what infrastructure and services are needed. It is set in the context of a vision that will help deliver sustainable places across Wales by 2040, by supporting placemaking and ensuring our choices direct development to the right places, making the best use of resources, creating and sustaining accessible healthy communities, protecting our environment and supporting prosperity for all.

The requirement for a development plan to be in general conformity with the upper tier statutory development plan in Wales is set out in primary legislation. Planning Policy Wales 11 (February 2021) and the Development Plans Manual (March 2020) provide additional guidance on how to assess general conformity. Paragraph 2.18 of the Development Plans Manual notes that “the fact that a development plan may be inconsistent with one or more policies in the upper tier plan, either directly or through the omission of a policy/proposal, does not, by itself, mean that the plan is not in general conformity. Rather, the fundamental point is how significant the inconsistency is from the point of view of delivery of the upper tier plan”. It goes on to note in paragraph 2.19 “whilst it would be acceptable for the lower tier plan to provide further detail in relation to making it more locally distinctive, it fundamentally must not undermine the overarching strategy, policies or proposals in the upper tier plan(s)”. The requirement to be in general conformity with Future Wales is also a test of soundness and will be tested through the examination process.

The purpose of this this Appendix is to demonstrate that the Monmouthshire’s Preferred Strategy assists in the delivery of the Future Wales policies and is in general conformity with its overarching strategy.

The following section assesses whether the RLDP objectives and Strategic Policies set out in the Preferred Strategy are considered to be in general conformity with Future Wales Policies using the traffic light model below:

RLDP/Preferred Strategy is considered to be in general conformity with the Future Wales 2040 policy objective.
RLDP/Preferred Strategy is considered to make a neutral contribution to the Future Wales 2040 policy objective.
RLDP/Preferred Strategy is not considered to be in general conformity with the Future Wales 2040 policy objective.

Future Wales Policy*	Relevant RLDP Objectives and Preferred Strategy Strategic Policies	General Conformity with FW Strategy
<p>Policy 1 – Where Wales will grow</p> <p>The Welsh Government supports sustainable growth in all parts of Wales. In three National Growth Areas there will be growth in employment and housing opportunities and investment in infrastructure. The National Growth Areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys • Swansea Bay and Llanelli • Wrexham and Deeside <p>The National Growth Areas are complemented by Regional Growth Areas which will grow, develop and offer a variety of public and commercial services on a regional scale. There are Regional Growth Areas in three regions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The South West • Mid Wales • The North <p>Development and growth in towns and villages in rural areas should be of appropriate scale and support local aspirations and need.</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives:</p> <p>Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment</p> <p>Objective 6 – Land</p> <p>Objective 9 – Demography</p> <p>Objective 10 – Housing</p> <p>Objective 12 – Communities</p> <p>Objective 13 – Rural Communities</p> <p>Preferred Strategy Strategic Policies:</p> <p>S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth</p> <p>S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy</p> <p>S6 – Delivery of Homes</p> <p>S7 – Affordable Homes</p> <p>S8 – Strategic Development Sites</p> <p>S10 – Sustainable Transport</p> <p>S13 – Employment Sites Provision</p>	<p>Monmouthshire is not identified as a growth area in Future Wales, however, the policy allows for growth in towns and villages in rural areas of an appropriate scale and to support local aspiration and need. The Preferred Strategy growth level has emerged from an understanding of the issues, challenges and needs of Monmouthshire as well as a sound, logical and robust evidence base.</p> <p>A number of growth and spatial options were consulted on in the Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020). The paper sets out how the different levels and distribution of growth would impact on the key issues and objectives of the RLDP. Overall, the level and distribution of growth proposed in the Preferred Strategy is considered to be the most conducive to achieving the RLDP vision and the Council’s core purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities across Monmouthshire. It also performs the most positively against the RLDP objectives and better overall against the ISA themes than any of the other five growth options and three spatial options consulted on.</p> <p>Further details are provided in the Growth and Spatial Options Background Paper (June 2021). This sets out that the proposed level of growth of 8,366 homes (including 2,450 affordable), 43ha of employment land and the policy framework to enable the provision of 7,215 jobs provides the opportunity to address the County’s key challenges including an unbalanced demography, improve labour force retention</p>

		<p>and out-commuting rates and assist in the County’s housing affordability challenge. On the basis of the evidence base prepared to support the Preferred Strategy it considered the level and distribution of growth proposed is of an appropriate scale to specifically address local aspirations and needs.</p>
<p>Policy 2 – Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking</p> <p>The growth and regeneration of towns and cities should positively contribute towards building sustainable places that support active and healthy lives, with urban neighbourhoods that are compact and walkable, organised around mixed-use centres and public transport, and integrated with green infrastructure.</p> <p>Urban growth and regeneration should be based on the following strategic placemaking principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a rich mix of uses; • providing a variety of housing types and tenures; • building places at a walkable scale, with homes, local facilities and public transport within walking distance of each other; • increasing population density, with development built at urban densities that can support public transport and local facilities; • establishing a permeable network of streets, with a hierarchy that informs the nature of development; • promoting a plot-based approach to development, which provides opportunities for the development of small plots, including for custom and self-builders; and • integrating green infrastructure, informed by the planning authority’s Green Infrastructure Assessment. <p>Planning authorities should use development plans to establish a vision for each town and city. This should be supported by a spatial framework that guides growth</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 3 – Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape Objective 8 - Health and Well-being Objective 11 – Placemaking Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities Objective 15 – Accessibility Objective 16 – Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language <p>RLDP Strategic Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> S3 – Sustainable Placemaking and High Quality Design S10 – Sustainable Transport S12 – Community and Recreation Facilities S18 – Green infrastructure, landscape and Nature Conservation 	<p>The Preferred Strategy’s core aim is to deliver sustainable and resilient communities. The Strategic Policy Framework seeks to ensure development contributes to the creation of sustainable places that focus on delivering placemaking and ensuring Monmouthshire’s communities are sustainable in the long terms and are attractive places to live, work and visit.</p> <p>The policy framework set out in the Preferred Strategy is considered to reflect the policy objectives of the Future Wales policy and provide the basis to make a significant contribution to placemaking objectives at the local level within Monmouthshire.</p>

<p>and regeneration, and establishes a structure within which towns and cities can grow, evolve, diversify and flourish over time.</p>		
<p>Policy 3 – Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership</p> <p>The Welsh Government will play an active, enabling role to support the delivery of urban growth and regeneration. The Welsh Government will assemble land, invest in infrastructure and prepare sites for development. We will work with local authorities and other public sector bodies to unlock the potential of their land and support them to take an increased development role.</p> <p>The public sector must show leadership and apply placemaking principles to support growth and regeneration for the benefit of communities across Wales. The public sector’s use of land, developments, investments and actions must build sustainable places that improve health and well-being.</p> <p>Planning authorities must take a proactive role and work in collaboration with the Welsh Government and other public sector bodies to identify the best locations for growth and regeneration, and provide certainty about how they should be developed.</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment Objective 10 – Housing Objective 11 – Placemaking Objective 14 – Infrastructure</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies: S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy S3 – Sustainable Placemaking & High Quality Design S5 – Infrastructure Provision S6 – Delivery of Homes S7 – Affordable Homes S8 – Strategic Development Sites S13 – Employment Sites Provision</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy policy framework establishes a clear focus for growth in Monmouthshire with building sustainable and resilient communities as a core vision. Monmouthshire County Council recognise the significant role it must play in providing public leadership in achieving this aim. A key policy objective of the Preferred Strategy is the addressing affordable housing challenges in the County.</p> <p>The RLDP will identify specific housing areas where there is an identified need on sites where 50% of the dwellings will be affordable. To help achieve this the Council is undertaking initial appraisals to weigh up the merits of establishing its own Development Company to undertake residential and commercial development. It is also actively working with private developers and Registered Social Landlords to ensure the aims of the Preferred Strategy are delivered. Similarly, the RLDP has a key role in supporting the Council’s vision for economic growth and priorities set out in the Monmouthshire 2040: Our Economic Growth and Ambition Statement.</p>
<p>Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities</p> <p>The Welsh Government supports sustainable and vibrant rural communities.</p> <p>Strategic and Local Development Plans must identify their rural communities, assess their needs and set out policies that support them. Policies should consider how age balanced communities can be achieved, where depopulation should be reversed and consider the role of new affordable and market housing, employment</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment Objective 8 – Health and Well-being Objective 9 – Demography Objective 10 – Housing Objective 11 – Placemaking Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural communities</p>	<p>The issues identified in Policy 4 of Future Wales are directly related to the issues and challenges that the Monmouthshire RLDP is seeking to address. The Preferred Strategy proposes a level and distribution of growth that provides the opportunity to address the County’s key issues/challenges including an unbalanced demography, improve labour force retention and out-commuting rates and assist in the County’s housing affordability challenge. In this respect the Preferred Strategy is considered to offer a significant contribution to achieving the objectives of Policy 4 of Future Wales whilst also</p>

<p>opportunities, local services and greater mobility in tackling these challenges.</p>	<p>Objective 16 – Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies: S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy S3 – Sustainable Placemaking & High Quality Design S6 – Delivery of Homes S7 – Affordable Homes S10 – Sustainable Transport S14 – Rural Enterprise S15 – Visitor Economy</p>	<p>being the most conducive to achieving the RLDP vision and the Council’s core purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities across Monmouthshire. It also performs the most positively against the RLDP objectives and better overall against the ISA themes than any of the other five growth options and three spatial options consulted on.</p>
<p>Policy 5 – Supporting the rural economy</p> <p>The Welsh Government supports sustainable, appropriate and proportionate economic growth in rural towns that is planned and managed through Strategic and Local Development Plans.</p> <p>Strategic and Local Development Plans must plan positively to meet the employment needs of rural areas including employment arising from the foundational economy; the agricultural and forestry sector, including proposals for diversification; start-ups and micro businesses.</p> <p>The Welsh Government also strongly supports development of innovative and emerging technology businesses and sectors to help rural areas unlock their full potential, broadening the economic base, and creating higher paid jobs.</p>	<p>Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment Objective 9 – Demography Objective 11 – Placemaking Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities Objective 16 – Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies: S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy S3 – Sustainable Placemaking & High Quality Design S5 - Infrastructure S14 – Rural Enterprise</p>	<p>A significant issue for Monmouthshire is the need to sustain and regenerate the County’s rural economy consistent with the policy aims of Policy 5 of Future Wales. The Preferred Strategy provides the policy framework to allow for an appropriate amount of diversification and enterprise in rural areas as well as the infrastructure both physical and digital to facilitate this. The Preferred Strategy also recognises the role the agricultural and forestry, tourism and leisure sectors play in Monmouthshire’s economy and seeks to facilitate their growth at an appropriate scale.</p>

<p>Policy 6 – Town Centre First Significant new commercial, retail, education, health, leisure and public service facilities must be located within town and city centres. They should have good access by public transport to and from the whole town or city and, where appropriate, the wider region. A sequential approach must be used to inform the identification of the best location for these developments and they should be identified in Strategic and Local Development Plans.</p>	<p>S15 – Visitor Economy</p> <p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment Objective 2 – Retail Centres Objective 11 – Placemaking Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 Rural Communities Objective 15 – Accessibility</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies: S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy S3 – Sustainable Placemaking & High Quality Design S11 – Retail & Commercial Centres Hierarchy</p>	<p>In accordance with PPW11 the Preferred Strategy sets out the retail hierarchy for Monmouthshire with a view to sustaining and enhancing the County’s main town as vibrant and attractive centres and to maintain the essential local shopping facilities. The hierarchy assists the implementation of the sequential approach and town centre first principle by directing retail and commercial development to the appropriate position in the hierarchy.</p>
<p>Policy 7 – Delivering Affordable Homes The Welsh Government will increase delivery of affordable homes by ensuring that funding for these homes is effectively allocated and utilised. Through their Strategic and Local Development Plans planning authorities should develop strong evidence based policy frameworks to deliver affordable housing, including setting development plan targets based on regional estimates of housing need and local assessments. In response to local and regional needs, planning authorities should identify sites for affordable housing led developments and explore all opportunities to increase the supply of affordable housing.</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment Objective 6 – Land Objective 9 – Demography Objective 10 – Housing Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities</p> <p>Preferred Strategy Strategic Policies: S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy</p>	<p>Tackling affordability issues in Monmouthshire’s housing market has been identified as a key challenge to address through the RLDP process. Accordingly, the Preferred Strategy establishes a policy framework that seeks to address this through an affordable housing target of 2,450 affordable homes, commencing work to establish affordable housing percentage thresholds for inclusion in the Deposit Plan and seeking to allocate sites in housing market areas where there is an identified affordable housing need on a 50/50 split of affordable homes and private market homes. Additional opportunities to increase the supply of affordable housing, such as a housing mix policy will be explored in the Deposit Plan.</p>

	<p>S6 – Delivery of Homes S7 – Affordable Homes S8 – Strategic Development Sites</p>	<p>The latest Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) (December 2020) provides the evidence base on affordable housing matters within the RLDP.</p>
<p>Policy 8 – Flooding Flood risk management that enables and supports sustainable strategic growth and regeneration in National and Regional Growth Areas will be supported. The Welsh Government will work with Flood Risk Management Authorities and developers to plan and invest in new and improved infrastructure, promoting nature-based solutions as a priority. Opportunities for multiple social, economic and environmental benefits must be maximised when investing in flood risk management infrastructure. It must be ensured that projects do not have adverse impacts on international and national statutory designated sites for nature conservation and the features for which they have been designated.</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 3 - Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape Objective 4 – Flood Risk Objective 6 – Land Objective 7 – Natural Resources Objective 17 – Climate Change</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies: S4 – Climate Change S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy makes a policy commitment to avoid locating development in areas at risk of flooding, or where appropriate, minimise the risk of flooding including the incorporation of measures such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and flood resilience design. The Preferred Strategy also recognises the significant role Green Infrastructure plays in flood attenuation and water resource management and managing and enhancing biodiversity and ecosystems resilience.</p>
<p>Policy 9 – Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure To ensure the enhancement of biodiversity, the resilience of ecosystems and the provision of green infrastructure, the Welsh Government will work with key partners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify areas which should be safeguarded and created as ecological networks for their importance for adaptation to climate change, for habitat protection, restoration or creation, to protect species, or which provide key ecosystems services, to ensure they are not unduly compromised by future development; and • identify opportunities where existing and potential green infrastructure could be maximised as part of 	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 3 - Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape Objective 4 – Flood Risk Objective 6 – Land Objective 7 – Natural Resources Objective 8 – Health and Well-being Objective 17 – Climate Change</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies: S4 – Climate Change S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation</p>	<p>Monmouthshire has significant Green Infrastructure, landscape, biodiversity and nature conservation resources. The need to protect and enhance these resources is a key focus of the RLDP, recognising the multifunctional role it has in delivering active travel, placemaking, ecosystem resilience, climate change mitigation and improving general health and well-being.</p> <p>The Council has prepared the Monmouthshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2019), which has also informed the evidence base of the SE Wales Area Statement. This provides an overarching framework for positive actions by all stakeholders involved in the future protection, management and enhancement of Green Infrastructure in Monmouthshire and sets out key strategic objectives and priorities for guiding</p>

<p>placemaking, requiring the use of nature-based solutions as a key mechanism for securing sustainable growth, ecological connectivity, social equality and well-being. Planning authorities should include these areas and/or opportunities in their development plan strategies and policies in order to promote and safeguard the functions and opportunities they provide. In all cases, action towards securing the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity (to provide a net benefit), the resilience of ecosystems and green infrastructure assets must be demonstrated as part of development proposals through innovative, nature-based approaches to site planning and the design of the built environment.</p>		<p>the planning management and delivery of Green Infrastructure in Monmouthshire.</p>
<p>Policy 10 – International Connectivity The Welsh Government identifies the following Strategic Gateways to facilitate international connectivity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cardiff Airport • Holyhead Port • Haven Waterway, including the Ports of Milford Haven and Pembroke Dock • Fishguard Port <p>The Welsh Government will work with the operators, investors and local authorities to support Strategic Gateways and maintain their international connectivity roles.</p> <p>Strategic and Local Development Plans should support the Strategic Gateways by maximising the benefits they provide to their respective regions and Wales.</p> <p>New development around the Strategic Gateways should be carefully managed to ensure their operation is not constrained or compromised.</p>		<p>There are no Strategic Gateways to facilitate international connectivity identified in the Monmouthshire boundary. The RLDP is therefore considered to have a neutral impact on the achieving the Future Wales policy.</p>
<p>Policy 11 – National Connectivity</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 14 – Infrastructure</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy seeks to promote sustainable forms of transport, reduce the need to travel, increase provision for</p>

<p>The Welsh Government will support and invest in improving national connectivity. Our priorities are to encourage longer-distance trips to be made by public transport, while also making longer journeys possible by electric vehicles. The Welsh Government will work with Transport for Wales, local authorities, operators and partners to support the delivery of the following measures to improve national connectivity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rail Network – Transform the rail network and improve the quality of rail services for passengers. • Bus Network – Invest in the development of the national bus network, fully integrated with regional and local bus networks, to increase modal share of bus travel and improve access by bus to a wider range of trip destinations. • Strategic Road Network – Invest in road improvements to reduce journey times, deliver a safer and more resilient road network, and improve air and noise quality. Create a network of rapid-charging points to enable longer distance travel by electric vehicles throughout Wales. • National Cycle Network – Revitalise the National Cycle Network to create a network of traffic-free paths connecting cities, towns and countryside across Wales. Planning authorities should support developments associated with improvements to national connectivity and, where appropriate, maximise the opportunities that arise from them. Planning authorities must ensure that, where appropriate, new development contributes towards the improvement and development of the National Cycle Network and key links to and from it. 	<p>Objective 15 – Accessibility Objective 17 – Climate Change</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies: S4 – Climate Change S5 – Infrastructure Provision S10 – Sustainable Transport</p>	<p>walking and cycling and improve public transport provision. The spatial strategy of the RLDP is to focus development in those locations that provide the best opportunities for achieving sustainable development, which offer a choice of transport modes and contribute towards the development of a sustainable transport network and provide opportunities to enhance and connect to the Active Travel Networks. Enhancing the use of ultra-low emission vehicles through the provision of sufficient charging infrastructure is also recognised as a key contributor to improving sustainable national connectivity given Monmouthshire’s rural character.</p> <p>An updated Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan taking account of recent key evidence including the South East Wales Transport Commission Final Recommendations Plan: November 2020 and South East Metro will be prepared alongside the preparation of the Deposit Plan. The RLDP will support the transport schemes in identified within the updated LTP, and where appropriate, safeguard land for key transport proposals.</p>
<p>Policy 12 – Regional Connectivity</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 14 – Infrastructure</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy seeks to promote sustainable forms of transport, reduce the need to travel, increase provision for</p>

<p>The Welsh Government will support and invest in improving regional connectivity. In urban areas, to support sustainable growth and regeneration, our priorities are improving and integrating active travel and public transport. In rural areas our priorities are supporting the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles and diversifying and sustaining local bus services.</p> <p>The Welsh Government will work with Transport for Wales, local authorities, operators and partners to deliver the following measures to improve regional connectivity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Travel – Prioritising walking and cycling for all local travel. We will support the implementation of the Active Travel Act to create comprehensive networks of local walking and cycling routes that connect places that people need to get to for everyday purposes. • Bus – Improve the legislative framework for how local bus services are planned and delivered. We will invest in the development of integrated regional and local bus networks to increase modal share of bus travel and improve access by bus to a wider range of trip destinations. • Metros – Develop the South East Metro, South West Metro and North Wales Metro. We will create new integrated transport systems that provide faster, more frequent and joined-up services using trains, buses and light rail. • Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles – Support the roll-out of suitable fuelling infrastructure to facilitate the adoption of ultra-low emission vehicles, particularly in rural areas. <p>Planning authorities must plan the growth and regeneration of the National and Regional Growth Areas to maximise opportunities arising from the investment in public transport, including identifying opportunities for</p>	<p>Objective 15 – Accessibility Objective 17 – Climate Change</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies: S4 – Climate Change S5 – Infrastructure Provision S10 – Sustainable Transport</p>	<p>walking and cycling and improve public transport provision. The spatial strategy of the RLDP aims to focus development in those locations that provide the best opportunities for achieving sustainable development, which offer a choice of transport modes and contribute towards the development of a sustainable transport network and provide opportunities to enhance and connect to the Active Travel Networks. Enhancing the use of ultra-low emission vehicles through the provision of sufficient charging infrastructure is also recognised as a key contributor to improving sustainable national connectivity given Monmouthshire’s rural character.</p> <p>An updated Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan taking account of recent key evidence including the South East Wales Transport Commission Final Recommendations Plan: November 2020 and South East Metro will be prepared alongside the preparation of the Deposit Plan. The RLDP will support the transport schemes in identified within the updated LTP, and where appropriate, safeguard land for key transport proposals.</p>
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<p>higher density, mixed-use and car-free development around metro stations.</p> <p>Active travel must be an essential and integral component of all new developments, large and small. Planning authorities must integrate site allocations, new development and infrastructure with active travel networks and, where appropriate, ensure new development contributes towards their expansion and improvement.</p> <p>Planning authorities must act to reduce levels of car parking in urban areas, including supporting car-free developments in accessible locations and developments with car parking spaces that allow them to be converted for other uses over time. Where car parking is provided for new non-residential development, planning authorities should seek a minimum of 10% of car parking spaces to have electric vehicle charging points</p>		
<p>Policy 13 – Supporting Digital Communications</p> <p>The Welsh Government supports the provision of digital communications infrastructure and services across Wales. Planning authorities must engage with digital infrastructure providers to identify the future needs of their area and set out policies in Strategic and Local Development Plans to help deliver this.</p> <p>New developments should include the provision of Gigabit capable broadband infrastructure from the outset.</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 14 - Infrastructure</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies: S5 – Infrastructure Provision</p>	<p>Given Monmouthshire’s rural character, the RLDP recognises the importance of ensuring the provision of adequate digital infrastructure to enhancing the County’s economic and community connectivity and communication needs and reducing the need to travel.</p>
<p>Policy 14 – Planning in Mobile Action Zones</p> <p>The Welsh Government supports increased mobile phone coverage and the associated economic and social benefits it brings.</p> <p>The Welsh Government will identify Mobile Action Zones, showing locations where there is little or no mobile telecommunications coverage.</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 14 - Infrastructure</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies: S5 – Infrastructure Provision</p>	<p>Future Wales does not identify the Mobile Action Zones at this stage. The RLDP is therefore considered to have a neutral impact on achieving the policy aims. This will be reviewed once the Mobile Action Zones are published.</p>

<p>The Welsh Government, planning authorities and mobile telecommunications operators must work together to achieve increases in mobile coverage within Mobile Action Zones.</p>		
<p>Policy 15 – National Forest The Welsh Government is committed to developing a national forest through the identification of appropriate sites and mechanisms. Action to safeguard proposed locations for the national forest will be supported.</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 3 - Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape Objective 4 – Flood Risk Objective 6 – Land Objective 7 – Natural Resources Objective 8 – Health and Well-being Objective 17 – Climate Change</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies: S4 – Climate Change S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation</p>	<p>Future Wales does not identify the location(s) of the proposed national forest at this stage. The RLDP is therefore considered to have a neutral impact on achieving the policy aims. This will be reviewed once the location(s) are published. There is an opportunity for proposed sites for the National Forest to be submitted via the Call for Candidate Sites.</p>
<p>Policy 16 – Heat Networks Within Priority Areas for District Heat Networks planning authorities should identify opportunities for District Heat Networks and plan positively for their implementation. Large scale mixed-use development should, where feasible, have a heat network with a renewable / low carbon or waste heat energy source. Planning applications for such development should prepare an Energy Masterplan to establish whether a heat network is the most effective energy supply option and, for feasible projects, a plan for its implementation.</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 17 – Climate Change</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies: S4 – Climate Change</p>	<p>There are no Priority Areas for District Heat Networks identified within the Monmouthshire boundary within Future Wales. The RLDP does, however, establish the strategic policy framework to support the development of renewable and low/zero carbon energy generation. An assessment of the potential for renewable energy generation, using the Welsh Government Toolkit, will inform the Deposit Plan in terms of specific areas of search or the potential for particular types of renewable and low/zero carbon energy.</p>
<p>Policy 17 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and Associated Infrastructure The Welsh Government strongly supports the principle of developing renewable and low carbon energy from all technologies and at all scales to meet our future</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 17 – Climate Change</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies: S4 – Climate Change</p>	<p>There are no Pre-Assessed Areas for Wind Energy within the Monmouthshire boundary within Future Wales. Consistent with Policy 17 of Future Wales the RLDP does, however, establish the policy framework for developing renewable and low carbon energy from all technologies through Strategic</p>

<p>energy needs.</p> <p>In determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon energy development, decision-makers must give significant weight to the need to meet Wales' international commitments and our target to generate 70% of consumed electricity by renewable means by 2030 in order to combat the climate emergency.</p> <p>In Pre-Assessed Areas for Wind Energy the Welsh Government has already modelled the likely impact on the landscape and has found them to be capable of accommodating development in an acceptable way. There is a presumption in favour of large-scale wind energy development (including repowering) in these areas, subject to the criteria in policy 18.</p> <p>Applications for large-scale wind and solar will not be permitted in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and all proposals should demonstrate that they will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the environment.</p> <p>Proposals should describe the net benefits the scheme will bring in terms of social, economic, environmental and cultural improvements to local communities.</p> <p>New strategic grid infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of energy should be designed to minimise visual impact on nearby communities. The Welsh Government will work with stakeholders, including National Grid and Distribution Network Operators, to transition to a multi-vector grid network and reduce the barriers to the implementation of new grid infrastructure.</p>		<p>Policy S4 – Climate Change. An assessment of the potential for renewable energy generation, using the Welsh Government Toolkit, will inform the Deposit Plan in terms of specific areas of search or the potential for particular types of renewable and low/zero carbon energy.</p>
<p>Policy 18 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments of National Significance</p>		<p>Policy 18 of Future Wales sets out the criteria Welsh Government will use to assess renewable and low carbon energy developments of national significance. The RLDP is therefore considered to have a neutral impact on its delivery</p>

<p>Proposals for renewable and low carbon energy projects (including repowering) qualifying as Developments of National Significance will be permitted subject to policy 17 and the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. outside of the Pre-Assessed Areas for wind developments and everywhere for all other technologies, the proposal does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the surrounding landscape (particularly on the setting of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty); 2. there are no unacceptable adverse visual impacts on nearby communities and individual dwellings; 3. there are no adverse effects on the integrity of Internationally designated sites (including National Site Network sites and Ramsar sites) and the features for which they have been designated (unless there are no alternative solutions, Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) and appropriate compensatory measures have been secured); 4. there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on national statutory designated sites for nature conservation (and the features for which they have been designated), protected habitats and species; 5. the proposal includes biodiversity enhancement measures to provide a net benefit for biodiversity; 6. there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on statutorily protected built heritage assets; 7. there are no unacceptable adverse impacts by way of shadow flicker, noise, reflected light, air quality or electromagnetic disturbance; 8. there are no unacceptable impacts on the operations of defence facilities and operations (including aviation and 		<p>as it is not Monmouthshire's policy framework being used to determine the proposals.</p>
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<p>radar) or the Mid Wales Low Flying Tactical Training Area (TTA-7T);</p> <p>9. there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on the transport network through the transportation of components or source fuels during its construction and/or ongoing operation;</p> <p>10. the proposal includes consideration of the materials needed or generated by the development to ensure the sustainable use and management of resources;</p> <p>11. there are acceptable provisions relating to the decommissioning of the development at the end of its lifetime, including the removal of infrastructure and effective restoration.</p> <p>The cumulative impacts of existing and consented renewable energy schemes should also be considered.</p>		
<p>Policy 19 – Strategic Policies for Regional Planning</p> <p>Strategic Development Plans should embed placemaking as an overarching principle and should establish for the region (and where required constituent Local Development Plans):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a spatial strategy; 2. a settlement hierarchy; 3. the housing provision and requirement; 4. the gypsy and traveller need; 5. the employment provision; 6. the spatial areas for strategic housing, employment growth and renewable energy; 7. the identification of green belts, green corridors and nationally important landscapes where required; 8. the location of key services, transport and connectivity infrastructure; 9. a framework for the sustainable management of natural resources and cultural assets; 	<p>RLDP Objectives:</p> <p>Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment</p> <p>Objective 5 – Minerals and Waste</p> <p>Objective 7 – Natural Resources</p> <p>Objective 10 – Housing</p> <p>Objective 14 – Infrastructure</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies:</p> <p>S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth</p> <p>S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy</p> <p>S3 – Infrastructure Provision</p> <p>S6 – Delivery of Homes</p> <p>S9 – Gypsy and Travellers</p> <p>S10 – Sustainable Transport</p> <p>S13 – Employment Sites Provision</p>	<p>The preparation of the Preferred Strategy has also involved a regional and coordinated approach to the collection of evidence, including population projection modelling, regional employment study, and Integrated Sustainability Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment. This has provided a consistent and comparable approach to methodologies and a basis to consider the evidence and any implications on a more regional basis as well as at a local level. This approach will continue through the preparation of the Deposit Plan, with a number of jointly commissioned pieces of evidence already in progress including a Development Viability Model and a Renewable Energy Assessment, with others scheduled to commence imminently including a Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment, Green Belt and Green Wedge Review and transit Gypsy and Traveller needs. Long standing regional working methods associated with areas such as waste and minerals are continued and reflected in the Preferred Strategy.</p>

<p>10. ecological networks and opportunities for protecting or enhancing the connectivity of these networks and the provision of green infrastructure; and</p> <p>11. a co-ordinated framework for minerals extraction and the circular economy, including waste treatment and disposal.</p> <p>The Welsh Government requires the adoption of Strategic Development Plans in the North, Mid Wales, South West and South East regions.</p>	<p>S16 – Sustainable Waste Management S17 - Minerals</p>	<p>This regional approach to many of the policy areas covered in the RLDP will provide a substantial evidence base for the preparation of the South East SDP.</p>
<p>Policy 33 – National Growth Area – Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys</p> <p>Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys will be the main focus for growth and investment in the South East region.</p> <p>Strategic and Local Development Plans should recognise the National Growth Area as the focus for strategic economic and housing growth; essential services and facilities; advanced manufacturing; transport and digital infrastructure.</p> <p>The Welsh Government will work with regional bodies and local authorities in the region and in neighbouring regions of England to promote and enhance Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys’ strategic role and ensure key investment decisions support places in the National Growth Area and the wider region.</p> <p>The Welsh Government supports Cardiff’s status as an internationally competitive city and a core city on the UK stage. Cardiff will retain and extend its role as the primary national centre for culture, sport, leisure, media, the night time economy and finance.</p> <p>The Welsh Government supports an increased strategic role for Newport as a focus for sustainable, long-term growth and investment. The Welsh Government will work with authorities within the region and in England to</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 1 – Economic Growth / Employment Objective 6 – Land Objective 9 – Demography Objective 10 – Housing Objective 12 – Communities Objective 13 – Rural Communities</p> <p>Preferred Strategy Strategic Policies: S1 – Strategic Sustainable and Resilient Growth S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy S6 – Delivery of Homes S7 – Affordable Homes S8 – Strategic Development Sites S10 – Sustainable Transport S13 – Employment Sites Provision</p>	<p>Monmouthshire is not identified as a growth area in Future Wales, however, the policy supports development in the wider region which addresses the opportunities and challenges arising from the region’s geographic location and its functions as a Capital Region.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy seeks to build on Monmouthshire’s key strategic location that benefits from good links to Cardiff, Bristol and the Midlands. The RLDP recognises that given Monmouthshire position as the gateway to Wales combined with the wider opportunities associate with the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, South East Wales Metro and the County’s strategic location between the Great Western Cities of Cardiff, Newport and Bristol, the County has potential to contribute to the aims for the wider region.</p>

<p>promote Newport’s strategic role and ensure key investment decisions in Wales and England support Newport.</p> <p>The Welsh Government supports co-ordinated regeneration and investment in the Valleys area to improve well-being, increase prosperity and address social inequalities. The Welsh Government will work with regional bodies, local authorities, businesses, the third sector, agencies and stakeholders to support investment, including in the manufacturing sector, and to ensure a regional approach is taken to addressing socio-economic issues in the Valleys.</p> <p>The Welsh Government supports development in the wider region which addresses the opportunities and challenges arising from the region’s geographic location and its functions as a Capital Region.</p>		
<p>Policy 34 – Green Belts in the South East</p> <p>The Welsh Government requires the Strategic Development Plan to identify a green belt to the north of Cardiff, Newport and the eastern part of the region to manage urban form and growth.</p> <p>The Strategic Development Plan must consider the relationship of the green belts with the green belt in the West of England. Local Development Plans and development management decisions should not permit major development in the areas shown for consideration for green belts, except in very exceptional circumstances, until the need for green belts and their boundaries has been established by an adopted Strategic Development Plan.</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 3 – Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape Objective 6 – Land</p> <p>RDLP Strategic Policies: S2 – Spatial Distribution of Development – Settlement Hierarchy S8 – Strategic Development Sites S18 – Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation</p>	<p>The South East Wales Regional Strategic Diagram (page 163 of Future Wales) provides an indicative plan of the area for consideration with the detailed boundary to be defined through the preparation of the SDP. In advance of an SDP, the area shown for consideration in Future Wales should be treated as a designated Green Belt. In assessing the spatial strategy for distributing growth within the County consideration has been given to paragraph 3.72 of PPW11 which states that “when considering a Green Belt designation, a sufficient range of development land which is suitably located in relation to the existing urban edge should be made available, having regard to the longer term need for development land, the effects of development pressures in areas beyond the Green Belt and the need to minimise demand for travel. This may require land to be safeguarded, and boundaries of proposed Green Belts must be carefully defined to achieve this”. In this respect, the Preferred</p>

		<p>Strategy is considered to facilitate the identification of a green belt in southern Monmouthshire with the primary settlements situated outside the broad designation, consistent with the indicative plan and meeting the aims of Policy 34 but allowing for an appropriate level of growth in Monmouthshire to address its local challenges and issues. The Council still has significant concerns, however, regarding the Green Belt designation as a permanent designation that would have long-term policy implications for future growth and prosperity in Monmouthshire.</p>
<p>Policy 35 – Valleys Regional Park The Welsh Government supports the establishment of the Valleys Regional Park. Strategic and Local Development Plans should embed its principles into their planning frameworks. The Welsh Government will work with local authorities, the third sector and key partners to support the Valleys Regional Park and maximise opportunities for new development.</p>		<p>Policy 35 – Valleys Regional Park is not considered to be directly related to Monmouthshire. The Preferred Strategy is therefore considered to have a neutral impact of achieving its aims.</p>
<p>Policy 36 – South East Metro The Welsh Government supports the development of the South East Metro and will work with Transport for Wales, local authorities and other partners to enable its delivery and maximise associated opportunities. Strategic and Local Development Plans must support the South East Metro. Planning authorities should plan growth and regeneration to maximise the opportunities arising from better regional connectivity, including identifying opportunities for higher density, mixed-use and car-free development around new and improved metro stations.</p>	<p>RLDP Objectives: Objective 14 – Infrastructure Objective 15 – Accessibility Objective 17 – Climate Change</p> <p>RLDP Strategic Policies: S4 – Climate Change S5 – Infrastructure Provision S10 – Sustainable Transport</p>	<p>An updated Monmouthshire Local Transport Plan taking account of recent key evidence including the South East Wales Transport Commission Final Recommendations Plan: November 2020 and South East Metro will be prepared alongside the preparation of the Deposit Plan. The RLDP will support the transport schemes in identified within the updated LTP, and where appropriate, safeguard land for key transport proposals.</p>

*Table excludes FW Policies 20 – 32 as these cover the north west and south west regions

Conclusion

As the assessment above demonstrates, the Preferred Strategy aligns with the objectives of Future Wales and establishes a policy framework that is in general conformity with Future Wales and makes a positive contribution to its policy aims. At a local and regional level, the RLDP is well-placed to implement the vision and objectives of Future Wales by ensuring that it includes policies that adhere to principles of placemaking and sustainable development.

Future Wales includes policy provisions for issues at a national level such as International Connectivity and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments of National Significance. These are shown in yellow above, to indicate that the Preferred Strategy makes a neutral contribution to these areas. Similarly, a neutral affect is indicated for policies areas where locations are yet to be published such as Planning Mobile Action Zones and National Forest and also for the Policy 35 relating to the Valleys Regional Park which is not directly relevant to Monmouthshire. Whilst the RLDP does not directly include provisions for these issues, they are not considered to have a material impact on the ability of the RLDP to align with the over-arching vision and objectives of Future Wales.

APPENDIX 5

Risk Analysis and Options Appraisal of the Implications of Phosphates on the RLDP

The recent announcement of water quality (Phosphate) issues in Riverine SACs, including the River Wye and River Usk, has potential implications for the progression of the RLDP as the Council's Preferred Strategy directs future growth to key sustainable settlements within these affected catchment areas over the Plan period (2018-2033). Consideration therefore needs to be given as to how we progress with the preparation of the RLDP. The following three realistic options have been assessed:

1. Progress preparation of the RLDP with Preferred Strategy which involves proportionate distribution of growth across the County's most sustainable settlements, including those in the Wye and Usk catchment areas which are affected by phosphate.
2. Halt/pause RLDP preparation until there is certainty that the phosphate issue can be resolved i.e. solutions identified/agreed with NRW and DCWW.
3. Withdraw the RLDP and commence a new RLDP with a revised Plan period.

The risk analysis and options appraisal are set out below.

Risk Analysis

RED: High impact **AMBER:** Medium impact **GREEN:** No or minimal impact

Options	Impacts		
	Impact on Plan preparation - Resources, Work Programme, Expenditure	Impact on Addressing RLDP Issues/Challenges/ Objectives	Impact on Deliverability of the RLDP (including growth levels, market and affordable housing delivery, economic prosperity /recovery)
OPTION 1 Progress preparation of the RLDP with Preferred Strategy <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 266</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for abortive work/cost/resources up to Deposit if solution(s) not identified and agreed. • This is not an issue if solution(s) is identified and agreed by Deposit. Proactive liaison and discussions with key organisations to date suggest viable and timely solutions can be identified and agreed by Deposit plan stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If solution(s) identified by Deposit stage, RLDP can be progressed and RLDP key issues/challenges/objectives can be addressed in a timely manner. Proactive liaison and discussions with key organisations to date suggest viable and timely solutions can be identified and agreed by Deposit plan stage. • If solution(s) not identified by Deposit stage this will impact on the ability to the RLDP address issues/ challenges/objectives, many of which have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If solution(s) identified by Deposit stage, the RLDP can be progressed and delivered within Plan period. Proactive liaison and discussions with key organisations to date suggest viable and timely solutions can be identified and agreed by Deposit plan stage. • If solution(s) not identified by Deposit stage delivery of the RLDP will not be achievable within Plan period.
OPTION 2 Halt RLDP preparation until certainty that the phosphate issue can be resolved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid abortive work • But could be additional costs/ resources if need to revisit the evidence base/ early stages of the RLDP process - depending on how long process is paused. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain as to how long we would need to pause RLDP process. Unable to address issues/challenges during this time, many of which have been exacerbated in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, including delivering affordable homes, supporting economic recovery and growth, and revitalising the High Street. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain as to how long we would need to pause the RLDP process. Resultant shorter timescale to deliver the objectives of the RLDP within the Plan period.
OPTION 3 Withdraw the RLDP and commence a new RLDP with a revised Plan period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid abortive work up to Deposit stage. • But there would be additional costs/ resources associated with re-starting the Plan process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant delay in ability to address issues/challenges in short-medium term, many of which have been exacerbated in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, including delivering affordable homes, supporting economic recovery and growth, and revitalising the High Street. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RLDP could be progressed and delivered within revised Plan period. • But this also depends on solution(s) being identified and agreed.

Options Appraisal

Option	Benefit	Risk	Comment
<p>Option 1: Progress preparation of the RLDP with the Preferred Strategy which proposes proportionate distribution of growth across the County's most sustainable settlements, including a number of settlements in the affected Wye and Usk catchments areas.</p>	<p>RLDP preparation process can be progressed in a timely manner on the basis that solutions to the phosphate issue are identified and agreed by Deposit Stage. This would reduce the risks associated with a policy gap and ensure the key demographic and affordability challenges facing the County, which have been exacerbated in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, are expediently addressed.</p>	<p>If solutions to the phosphate issue are not identified and agreed by Deposit stage this will delay Plan preparation with resultant implications, including a delay in addressing the key demographic and affordability challenges facing the County, which have been exacerbated in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.</p>	<p>Proactive liaison and discussions with key organisations to date suggest viable and suitable solutions can be identified and agreed by Deposit plan stage, meaning that the Plan can be progressed and delivered in a timely manner in accordance with the Delivery Agreement (Second Revision, October 2020). This is the preferred option.</p>
<p>Option 2: Halt/pause RLDP preparation until there is certainty that the phosphate issue can be resolved.</p>	<p>This option would avoid the potential for abortive work on future key stages of the RLDP. The RLDP would be progressed once solutions have been identified /agreed which would give certainty to the deliverability of the Plan's Strategy.</p>	<p>There would be a significant delay in RLDP preparation and adoption with resultant implications, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay in addressing the key demographic and affordability challenges facing the County many of which have been exacerbated in light of the Covid-19 pandemic; • Policy gap - evidence/ policy framework in extant LDP becomes more out dated; • Associated lack of certainty for communities and investors. <p>It is likely that the Plan's evidence base would need to be revisited given the time lag in Plan preparation. There would also be implications in relation to costs and the ISA and HRA processes.</p> <p>LDPs have a fundamental role in supporting recovery post Covid-19, with Welsh Government's commitment to a Plan-led system reinforced by the Covid-19 pandemic (Future Wales 2040 and Building Better Places). Need for the RLDP to be</p>	<p>As above, it is considered that solution(s) to the phosphate issue can be identified and agreed by the Deposit Plan stage meaning that this no need to halt the RLDP process. The problems caused by this option outweigh the risk of Option 1.</p>

Option	Benefit	Risk	Comment
		<p>progressed in a timely manner. This option would significantly delay adoption and implementation of the RLDP.</p>	
<p>Option 3: Withdraw the RLDP and commence a new RLDP with a revised Plan period.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 268</p>	<p>This would result in a longer Plan period to enable us to consider/ address the phosphate issue giving greater certainty of delivery.</p>	<p>There would be a significant delay in RLDP preparation and adoption with resultant implications, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay in addressing the key demographic and affordability challenges facing the County many of which have been exacerbated in light of the Covid-19 pandemic; • Policy gap - evidence/ policy framework in extant LDP becomes more out dated; • Associated lack of certainty for communities and investors. <p>This would necessitate restarting the entire RLDP process, meaning that the issues, vision and objectives stage of the RLDP would need to be revisited and evidence base work updated with revised base date and plan period which would have resultant cost and resource implications.</p> <p>LDPs have a fundamental role in supporting sustained recovery post Covid-19, with Welsh Government’s commitment to a Plan-led system reinforced by the Covid-19 pandemic (Future Wales 2040 and Building Better Places). Need for the RLDP to be progressed in a timely manner. This option would significantly delay adoption and implementation of the RLDP.</p>	<p>As above, it is considered that solution(s) to the phosphate issue can be identified and agreed by the Deposit Plan stage meaning that this no need to withdraw the RLDP and commence a new Plan with a revised Plan period. The problems caused by this option outweigh the risk of Option 1.</p>

APPENDIX 6



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Equality and Future Generations Evaluation

<p>Name of the Officer completing the evaluation Mark Hand</p> <p>Phone no: 07773478579 E-mail: markhand@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</p> <p>To inform the Economy and Development Select Committee of the statutory consultation on the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) Preferred Strategy, and to seek Committee's feedback/comments on the document.</p>
<p>Name of Service area</p> <p>Planning (Planning Policy)</p>	<p>Date 07/07/2021</p>

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- 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 Preferred Strategy considers the demographic profile of Monmouthshire and aims to have a positive impact on people of all ages, particularly through increasing opportunities for the younger population to both live and work with Monmouthshire to assist in ensuring a balanced demography whilst also supporting the needs of the older population. The Preferred Strategy would benefit younger people but not to the detriment of older age groups.	None.	The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth (housing & employment) is needed over the RLDP period and broadly where this growth should take place. It seeks to provide a more balanced demographic profile for Monmouthshire. This will make our communities more sustainable. The Preferred Strategy will inform the Deposit Plan which will include detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations. COVID-19 has demonstrated the importance of sustainable communities and a balanced demography to support the older age groups.
Disability	The Preferred Strategy includes the need to ensure the provision of a wide-ranging choice of homes including meeting affordable and accessible housing needs as far as possible. The Preferred Strategy recognises the importance of the health and well-being of people and aims to create attractive, safe and accessible places to live, work and visit. At present, WG Development Quality Requirements for affordable housing incorporate Lifetime Homes standards.	None	The Preferred Strategy aims to support the well-being of current and future generations that are more inclusive, cohesive, prosperous and vibrant. The Preferred Strategy will inform the Deposit Plan which will include detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations.
Gender reassignment	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?
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	One of the challenges facing the County is the imbalance between male and female earnings, although this situation is improving. The Preferred Strategy aims to provide economic growth and employment provision, which could indirectly impact on wage equality.	The jobs in the foundation economy are disproportionately occupied by females. This sector is vital to support our communities, as are jobs in tourism. Neither sectors are generally well-paid, although they often offer flexible working conditions that can assist work-life balance. Wage levels are not within the remit of planning policy and policies to try to seek only high paid jobs could be to the detriment of this vital economic sector.	The Preferred Strategy aims to support economic growth and prosperity. The Preferred Strategy will inform the Deposit Plan which will include detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations.
Sexual Orientation	None	None	N/A

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions. This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
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**Socio-economic
Duty and Social
Justice**

The Social Justice strategy focuses on three main areas: tackling loneliness and isolation; tackling poverty and promoting equitable economic prosperity; and giving children the best start in life. The Preferred Strategy seeks to tackle house price unaffordability, which currently prevents some of our communities accessing suitable housing within the County. This is likely to benefit younger people in particular, which in turn will make our ageing communities more socially sustainable. Good quality and affordable housing is important in achieving poverty reduction and equitable prosperity, and supporting the best start in life. Good spatial planning helps to build cohesive communities. The provision of affordable housing combined with policy interventions in relation to the requirement of a mix of market housing will increase opportunities for those in poverty to access safe, secure and suitable housing. Improved energy efficiency requirements for new build properties will reduce the cost of living. The provision of suitable employment land, planning policy tools to support business and the use of other (non-planning) tools to stimulate economic activity will increase employment opportunities within the County. In accordance with the WFGA, the RLDP also seeks to prevent future problems and will therefore continue to avoid new development in flood risk areas and will seek low/zero carbon development to help address the climate emergency and also tackle issues such as fuel poverty.

People in poverty or on low incomes might not be able to access digital opportunities to work from home and/or are more likely to be employed in roles that cannot work from home.

We will consider the need for planning policies in the Deposit Plan to control the housing mix of the market housing on development sites, to ensure it helps create mixed communities and supports the retention of younger people who can afford an open market home were there sufficient supply of 2 and 3 bedroom homes.

We will consider the need for small affordable housing schemes in rural settlements similar to the current LDP's 60/40 sites in the Deposit RLDP.

We will consider a range of policies in the Deposit RLDP around the climate change theme to minimise the carbon footprint of new development, and therefore mitigate negative impacts associated with the proposed growth.

A policy requirement for broadband infrastructure provision will maximise opportunities for all to access the technology to work from home where possible, reducing commuting and associated costs.

3. Policy making and the Welsh language.

How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
<p>Policy Making</p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language no less favourably</p>	<p>The Welsh Language is a material planning consideration and is included within the RLDP Objective relating to Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language to ensure there is no negative impact. Any level of growth for the County relies on in-migration, some of which, whether English or Welsh or other by nationality will choose Welsh Medium education for their children. Also in-migration to Monmouthshire comes from other areas in Wales (including rural Welsh speaking areas e.g. Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion, Gwynedd, Ynys Môn, Denbighshire). This is in the main due to the significantly increased employment opportunities offered in Cardiff, Newport and in adjacent areas of England e.g. Bristol, Gloucester etc. Monmouthshire with its' border location and transport links is accessible to all of these areas. This in-migration, together with the ambition to retain and attract younger families, will expose more children to Welsh curriculum education in all schools, increasing the number of Welsh speakers in the County. The Preferred Strategy has been subject to a Welsh Language Impact Assessment</p>	<p>Any level of growth for the County relies on in-migration, being a border County a proportion of this is likely to be from England.</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy aims to support Culture and the Welsh Language. The Preferred Strategy will inform the Deposit Plan which will include detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations.</p> <p>We will liaise with the Local Education Authority to understand if the proposed level and location of growth necessitates additional Welsh medium school provision.</p> <p>There are already significant plans and proposals in place in terms of expanding Welsh Medium education in Monmouthshire. This is due to a number of factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the increased popularity of the Welsh Language. - the opportunity for children to be become bilingual - the increased employment opportunities that this affords them in Wales.

	(WLIA) as part of the wider Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (ISAR).		
Operational Recruitment & Training of workforce	An expansion of the provision of Welsh Medium education in the county will increase the opportunities for Welsh speakers to apply for vacancies within the council thus increasing the council's Welsh speaking capacity.	None of the current Planning Policy team are Welsh speakers, however, there are robust systems in place to deal with phone calls and correspondence without delaying the provision of the service.	N/A
Service delivery Use of Welsh language in service delivery Promoting use of the language	All documentation on the RLDP and the consultation along with notices, social media and correspondence will be bilingual. A document will be in English only if it comes from an external source that is not subject to compliance with the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. Emails/letters etc will make it clear that correspondence in Welsh is welcome and will not lead to a delay in response or a lesser standard of service . When requests are made for people to be added to the RLDP consultation database we will record language choice and communicate accordingly.	None of the Planning Policy team are Welsh speakers, however, there are robust systems in place to deal with phone calls and correspondence without delaying the provision of the service.	The Welsh Language is a material planning consideration and is included within the RLDP Objective relating to Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language to ensure there is no impact. The Preferred Strategy has been subject to a Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) as part of the wider Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (ISAR) we will review this further if any additional assessment is required as we go through the RLDP process.

4. 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>A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>Positive: The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and broadly where this growth should take place. It sets out the preferred growth spatial options which as well as housing growth and aims to provide economic growth and employment provision in both urban and rural areas.</p> <p>Negative: Higher levels of growth would require more land to be developed, careful site selection is required to minimise loss of best and most versatile agricultural land and mineral resource.</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives relating to economic growth/employment and retail centres, which have been set in order to address the identified issues relating to creating a prosperous Wales.</p>
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p>Positive: The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and where this growth should take place. The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives including the impact of development on the natural environment in already constrained areas. It is however recognised that developments could improve connectivity through opportunities to create new linkages. The limited supply of brownfield land within the County is a recognised issue. The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against a climate change objective which recognises that we are in a climate emergency and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C. Resilience of new development to aspects of climate change can be achieved via the design and location of new developments. Developments can provide opportunities to minimise carbon by providing opportunities for renewable energy</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives relating to Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape, Flood Risk, Minerals and Waste, Land and Natural Resources which have been set in order to address the identified issues relating to creating a resilient Wales.</p> <p>Recently it has been announced that there are phosphate water quality issues in the River Usk and River Wye SACs, any proposed development in these catchment areas needs to clearly evidence that the development can demonstrate phosphate neutrality or betterment in its design and/or contribution to the water body.</p> <p>Strategic Policy S4 specifically relates to Climate Change, and S18 relates to Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Nature Conservation.</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>generation, seeking to reduce commuting, supporting use of ultra-low emission vehicles and public transport, and the provision of quality Green Infrastructure. Recently it has been announced that there are phosphate water quality issues in the River Usk and River Wye SACs. There is a legal and national policy requirement to maintain and enhance ecology. The current pandemic has emphasised the need to enable such responses in delivering sustainable and resilient communities. The Covid-19 pandemic has also emphasised the importance of place-making and Green Infrastructure for the provision of open spaces in close proximity to homes for physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>Negative: Higher levels of growth would likely result in further pressure on the natural environment. New developments could nevertheless improve Green Infrastructure and ecological connectivity through opportunities to create new linkages. The value and importance of having access to locally accessible open/green spaces to assist in recreation and health and well-being has been heightened during the current pandemic.</p>	
<p>A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>	<p>Positive: The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and broadly where this growth should take place. It is recognised that any developments will be encouraged to support healthier lifestyles and provide sufficient open space. The RLDP will encourage Active Travel and will reflect the Integrated Network Maps. The Covid-19</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives including Health and Well-being in order to address the identified issues relating to creating a healthier Wales. The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the vulnerability of those in our communities with underlying health conditions, as well as the importance of place-</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>pandemic has emphasised the vulnerability of those in our communities with underlying health conditions, as well as the importance of place-making and green infrastructure for the provision of open spaces in close proximity to homes for physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>Negative: Higher levels of growth have the potential to increase commuting which could affect areas with air quality problems, however, the RLDP seeks to provide for jobs within the County. Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated that a significant proportion of our communities can work from home which is likely to continue over the longer term.</p>	<p>making and green infrastructure for the provision of open spaces in close proximity to homes for physical and mental wellbeing.</p>
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p>Positive: The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and broadly where this growth should take place and considers the balance of housing, employment and infrastructure in both urban and rural areas. The Covid-19 pandemic has emphasised the importance of socially sustainable communities and ensuring a balanced demography. The role of younger age cohorts providing voluntary support to the over 70s who have been self-isolating has been vital. Unchecked, our ageing demography presents a very real challenge to how such support would be offered in the future.</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives including housing, place-making, communities, rural communities, infrastructure and accessibility in order to address the identified issues relating to creating a Wales of cohesive communities.</p> <p>Detailed policies included in the Deposit Plan will consider design and placemaking in more detail.</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?
	Negative: Lower growth levels would result in communities that are not viable.	
<p>A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p>Positive: The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and where this growth should take place. It has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives including the impact of options on climate change. The climate change objective recognises that we are in a climate emergency and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C. The Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated that a significant proportion of our communities can work from home which is likely to continue over the longer term. Home/agile working combined with school closures and reduced leisure-based travel over the course of the pandemic has significantly reduced congestion and evidence suggests air quality has improved markedly. The RLDP seeks to reduce the commuting ratio and to enable home-working: Covid-19 has demonstrated that this is achievable. The Preferred Strategy also includes a specific Strategic Policy relating to climate change (S4).</p> <p>Negative: None.</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives including climate change which has been set in order to address the identified issues relating to creating a globally responsible Wales. Climate change considerations will inform the Deposit Plan which will include detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations.</p> <p>Strategic Policy S4 specifically relates to Climate Change.</p>
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<p>Positive: The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and broadly where this growth should take place. It has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives including the impact on Culture, Heritage and the Welsh Language.</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives including including including Culture, Heritage and the Welsh Language which has been set in order to address the identified issues relating to creating a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language. We will liaise with the</p>

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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>Negative: Any level of growth for the County relies on in-migration, being a border County a proportion of this is likely to be from England.</p>	<p>Local Education Authority to understand if the proposed growth necessitates additional Welsh medium school provision.</p>
<p>A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>	<p>Positive: The Preferred Strategy sets out how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and where this growth should take place. It sets out the preferred option which through housing and economic growth in both urban and rural areas aims to assist in balancing the demography across the County and in addressing the County’s affordability challenges. The preferred growth option aims to readdress the higher proportion of older age groups and lower proportion of young adults compared to the Welsh average. One of the key objectives of the RLDP is to deliver affordable housing, having a safe secure and suitable home gives people the best start in life.</p> <p>Negative: None.</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objective relating to demography which has been set in order to address the identified issues relating to creating a more equal Wales. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the links between poverty and resilience as well as the higher level of homelessness. The Preferred Strategy seeks to take action to enable younger people who are currently priced-out of the County an opportunity to remain living here by striving to maximise affordable housing delivery to help tackle this. It also seeks to provide additional jobs.</p>

5. 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>The Revised Preferred Strategy sets out the preferred option for housing/employment growth and spatial distribution of this growth across the County, including the identified level of growth and broad locations for development for the period 2018 - 2033. It also sets out the RLDP Vision, the role of which is to clarify the core purpose of the RLDP and provide a framework for developing the Preferred Strategy and future detailed policies. The Vision sets out the overarching context for Monmouthshire for the period up to 2033</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy will inform the Deposit Plan which will include detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations. Some of the long term implications of COVID-19 are not yet known, for example the impact longer term on our High Streets. The Deposit RLDP can incorporate flexible policies to seek to adjust to the unknown longer term implications.</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives in order to address the issues, challenges, opportunities and drivers facing the County. It seeks to balance the need to tackle issues facing Monmouthshire's communities such as housing affordability, our demography and community sustainability, and commuting levels with landscape protection and the climate emergency declaration. This is informed by the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal.</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>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p> <p>Collaboration</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy represents the culmination of a period of pre-deposit plan preparation and engagement which has involved engagement and consultation at an early stage of the Plan preparation process in order to gather opinions and build consensus from the outset. This has involved the preparation of an Issues, Vision & Objectives Paper (updated June 2021) and a Growth & Spatial Options Paper (December 2020). The feedback from these papers has been considered and helped shape the Preferred Strategy. Pre-deposit plan preparation and engagement has also included: collaborative working with neighbouring local authorities; Member involvement; discussions with key stakeholders including internal departments and external organisations including key infrastructure providers.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy will be made available for statutory engagement/consultation with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders in July/August 2021.</p>	<p>The Preferred Strategy will be made available for statutory engagement/consultation with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders in July/August 2021. The consultation responses received will help shape the Deposit RLDP.</p> <p>A number of events have been attended previously to seek to integrate the LDP and Climate Emergency declaration.</p> <p>The Public Service Board will be involved at key stages of Plan-making.</p> <p>The Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020) ensures full stakeholder /community's involvement to shape the RLDP.</p> <p>Future key stages of the RLDP process will be subject to engagement/consultation with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.</p>



Involving those with an interest and seeking their views

Involvement

The Preferred Strategy has been informed by pre-deposit plan preparation and engagement which has involved engagement and consultation at an early stage of the Plan preparation process in order to gather opinions and build consensus from the outset. This has included engagement/consultation on the Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (updated June 2021) and Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020) and a range of collaborative working.

Pending endorsement by Council, statutory consultation and engagement on the Preferred Strategy will take place for an eight-week period between 5 July 2021 and 31st August 2021 and will include:

- Notifying all parties on the RLDP database of the consultation.
- Planning Policy Officer attendance at Area Cluster meetings during July and August 2021;
- Members' Workshop 22nd June 2021 (hosted by the Economy & Development Select Committee);
- Scrutiny by Economy & Development Select Committee 15th July 2021
- Internal discussions within the Council through an officer workshop, Department Management Team and Senior Leadership Team;
- Several RLDP Preferred Strategy Drop-in Sessions during July and August 2021 in Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow, Monmouth, Magor/Undy, Raglan and Usk. Should there be a further lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these drop-in sessions will be replaced by additional virtual events.
- We will seek to engage with seldom heard groups in particular young people, via the Youth Council and going into secondary schools, and Gypsy and Travellers via the GTAA work and reiterating the

Feedback from Preferred Strategy consultation will be noted and considered, and will help to shape the detailed proposals, site allocations and policies which will be set out in the Deposit Plan.

A Candidate Site Advice service, similar to planning pre-application advice, has been made available and will continue to be made available to site promoters to support their Candidate Site submissions.

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>opportunity to promote sites during the Second Call for Candidate Sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Two RLDP Webinar Sessions in July/August 2021. <p>Our consultation and engagement arrangements have been revised in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and reflect the Coronavirus Regulations (2020) and recent Ministerial advice. We have reviewed the use of digital involvement options to provide communities with information and the ability to engage with the RLDP in a virtual manner.</p>	



Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse

The Preferred Strategy promotes an appropriate level and spatial distribution of housing and employment growth for the County to 2033, which assists in addressing the key demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and ultimately seeks to deliver the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. A climate change objective is included in the assessment of the Preferred Strategy which recognises that we are in a climate emergency and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C. The purpose of the Preferred Strategy is to:

- Identify key issues, challenges and opportunities for the County
- Develop a vision and set of objectives for the RLDP that respond to the key issues, challenges and opportunities
- Set out the growth and spatial options that the Council has considered in determining the Preferred Strategy.
- Set out the Preferred Strategy including the scale of future population, housing and employment growth and establish the broad spatial distribution of growth.
- Set out strategic policies that will deliver/implement the strategy.

The Preferred Strategy provides the strategic context for the preparation of more detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations which will be included in the Deposit RLDP.

The Preferred Strategy will inform the Deposit Plan which will be subject to statutory consultation in Summer 2022. The RLDP seeks to address the key issues, challenges and opportunities identified (in a land use context) and supports the delivery of the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations.

A number of events have been attended previously to seek to integrate the LDP and Climate Emergency declaration.

The Public Service Board will be involved at key stages of Plan-making.



Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies

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>The Preferred Strategy sets out the preferred option for housing/employment growth and spatial distribution of this growth across the County, including the identified level of growth and broad locations for development for the period 2018 – 2033. The Strategy has been assessed against the RLDP Objectives which seek to address the issues, challenges and opportunities identified (in a land use context) and support delivery of the Council’s vision/objectives for the future of the County and its communities. The RLDP (including the Preferred Strategy) will be subject to an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Well-being of Future Generations (WBFG), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), and Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA)). The ISA findings have informed the development of the RLDP strategy, and will inform the policies and site allocations in the Deposit RLDP in order to ensure that the Plan will be promoting sustainable development.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy sets out the Vision and overarching context for Monmouthshire for the period up to 2033. MCC recognises that we are in a climate emergency and has committed to strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C. The importance of carbon reduction is recognised as a key issue that the RLDP should seek to address.</p>	<p>The RLDP will be subject to an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Well-being of Future Generations (WBFG), Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), and Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA)). The ISA findings have informed the development of the RLDP strategy and will inform the policies and site allocations in the Deposit RLDP in order to ensure that the Plan will be promoting sustainable development.</p> <p>We will continue to work closely with our neighbours, both in Wales and England, including the joint procurement of evidence as applicable.</p> <p>An officer workshop will be held to enable colleagues in all service areas an opportunity to be involved and consider any implications for the services they deliver.</p> <p>The RLDP will align with the new Integrated Network Maps for Active Travel, and will be accompanied by an Infrastructure Plan and revised Local Transport Plan.</p>

Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: 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?
Safeguarding	None.	.None.	N/A.
Corporate Parenting	The RLDP has the potential to provide affordable housing, delivery and allocation of which should be cognisant of the needs of children leaving care.	None.	N/A.

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

An extensive range of background evidence and data has been used to prepare the Preferred Strategy, from a wide range of sources both internal and external to the Council. These are clearly referenced in the Preferred Strategy, but include:

- Monmouthshire Public Service Board Well-being Plan (April 2018) https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2017/10/Monmouthshire-PSB_well-being-plan_3.0.pdf
- Monmouthshire County Council Corporate Business Plan 2017 – 2022 (February 2018) https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2018/03/Monmouthshire-Council_Corporate-Plan_1.0.pdf
- Monmouthshire Local Development Plan Review Report (March 2018) <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2018/03/Final-Review-Report-1.pdf>
- Monmouthshire Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Reports (2015- 2020) <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/annual-monitoring/ldp-annual-monitoring-report>
- Monmouthshire Replacement Local Development Plan Candidate Sites Register (February 2019): <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/candidate-sites/monmouthshire-replacement-ldp-candidate-sites-register-february-2019/>
- Habitat Regulations Assessment Initial Screening Report (December 2018) <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/03/HRA-Screening-Report-December-2018.pdf>
- Replacement LDP Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (As amended December 2018) <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/03/Final-SA-Scoping-Report-Dec-2018-1.pdf>
- MCC Economies of the Future Reports (2018) and associated economic ambition (November 2019)
- Monmouthshire LDP ‘Retail Background Paper’, March 2021. <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2021/05/Retail-Report-2020.pdf>

- Monmouthshire LDP 'Employment Background Paper', September 2020. <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/09/Final-Report-September-2020.pdf>
- Monmouthshire Housing Land Availability Schedules (2018-2019) and 2019/2020 Trajectory <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/housing-land-supply/?preview=true> .
- Review of the RLDP Issues, Vision, Objectives and Evidence Base in light of Covid-19 (September 2020) <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/11/Monmouthshire-RLDP-Review-of-Issues-Vision-Objectives-and-Evidence-Base-in-Light-of-Covid.pdf>
- Monmouthshire RLDP Revised Delivery Agreement (October 2020) <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2020/11/Revised-DA-October-2020-Final.pdf>
- Updating the RLDP Demographic Evidence produced by Edge Analytics (November 2020)
- Monmouthshire Affordable Housing Evidence Addendum Report produced by Edge Analytics (November 2020)
- Monmouthshire Growth and Spatial Options Paper (December 2020) <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2021/04/Growth-and-Spatial-Options-Paper-Dec-2020.pdf>
- Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper (Updated June 2021)
- Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) Report for the Monmouthshire RLDP produced by AECOM (June 2021)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Monmouthshire RLDP Preferred Strategy produced by AECOM (June 2021)

External sources of data include Welsh Government, Cadw, Natural Resources Wales, Hometrack, Office for National Statistics and Stats Wales.

7. 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 RLDP Preferred Strategy promotes an appropriate level and spatial distribution of housing and employment growth for the County to 2033, which assists in addressing the key demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and ultimately seeks to deliver the Council's core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. This is a positive impact for social justice.

The Preferred Strategy provides the strategic context for /will inform the preparation of more detailed policies, proposals and land use allocations which will be included in the Deposit RLDP.

Negative –

None. There are no implications, positive or negative, for social justice, corporate parenting or safeguarding.

8. 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
<p>The Preferred Strategy was endorsed by Council on 24th June 2021 for statutory consultation and engagement. The Preferred Strategy is subject to consultation and engagement for an eight week period between 5th July and 31st August 2021. Feedback from this consultation will be noted and considered, and will help to shape the proposals, land use allocations and detailed polices in the Deposit Plan.</p>	<p>Statutory consultation and engagement on the Preferred Strategy for an eight week period between 5th July 2021 and 31st August 2021 which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Notifying all parties on the RLDP database of the consultation. ➤ Planning Policy Officer attendance at Area Cluster meetings (if held) during July and August 2021; ➤ Members' Workshop 22nd June 2021 (hosted by the Economy & Development Select Committee); ➤ Scrutiny by Economy & Development Select Committee 15th July 2021 ➤ Internal discussions within the Council through an officer workshop, Department Management Team and Senior Leadership Team; ➤ Several RLDP Preferred Strategy Drop-in Sessions during July and August 2021 in Abergavenny, 	<p>Head of Placemaking, Housing, Highways and Flood Head of Planning Planning Policy Team</p>

	<p>Caldicot, Chepstow, Monmouth, Magor/Undy, Raglan and Usk. Should there be a further lockdown due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these drop-in sessions will be replaced by additional virtual events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We will seek to engage with seldom heard groups in particular young people, via the Youth Council and going into secondary schools, and Gypsy and Travellers via the GTAA work and reiterating the opportunity to promote sites during the Second Call for Candidate Sites. ➤ Two RLDP Webinar Sessions in July 2021. 	
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9. 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	LDP Review Report and Delivery Agreement	20/04/2018	Draft for Council 10 th May 2018
1.0	Issues, Vision and Objectives scrutiny	01/02/2019	Draft for Economy & Development Select Committee 14 th February 2019

1.1	Issues, Vision and Objectives endorsement following consultation	09/04/2019	Draft for Cabinet 5 th June 2019
1.2	Issues, Vision and Objectives endorsement following consultation	14/06/2019	Amended for Cabinet 3 rd July 2019 to reflect 16 th May 2019's Climate Emergency declaration by Council
2.0	Growth and Spatial Options endorsement to consult	07/06/2019	Draft for Cabinet 3 rd July 2019
2.1	Growth and Spatial Options scrutiny	09/07/2019	Draft for Economy & Development Select Committee 17 th July 2019
3.0	Preferred Strategy endorsement to consult	11/12/2019	Draft for Council report 5 th March 2020
3.1	Preferred Strategy endorsement to consult	17/02/2020	Social Justice Strategy reviewed with Judith Langdon
4.0	Revised Delivery Agreement	05/03/2020	Timetable amended further to account for slippage as a result of the pre-election period preceding the December 2019 General Election, the additional time and work needed to inform the Preferred Strategy and delays associated with joint working with neighbouring local authorities on joint evidence base work.
4.1	Revised Delivery Agreement and review of Issues, Vision and Objectives and of evidence base in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic.	07/10/2020	Timetable amended further to account for Covid-19 pandemic and revised Welsh Government population and household projections.
5.0	Revised Growth and Spatial Options scrutiny	17/11//2020	Draft for Economic Development Select Committee 10 th December 2020
5.1	Revised Growth and Spatial Options endorsement to consult, including identifying growth option 5 and spatial option 2 as the preferred options at this stage of the process.	03/12/2020	Draft for Cabinet report 16 th December 2020
6.0	Preferred Strategy Consultation endorsement to consult	24/06/2021	Draft for Council Report 24 th June 2021
6.1	Preferred Strategy scrutiny	15/07/2021	Draft for Economy & Development Select Committee 15 th July 2021

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APPENDIX 7

Julie James AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol
Minister for Housing and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA/P/JJ/1514/19

Leaders and Chief Executives of Local Authorities

8 July 2019

Dear Colleague,

At this year's RTPI Wales Planning Conference, I outlined that the Welsh Government is committed to diversifying housing supply in Wales with the need to focus attention on the delivery of social housing. This position is supported by the findings of the Independent Review of Affordable Housing Supply and the recently published estimates of housing need in Wales by tenure. I also said that, as a result, we intend updating Planning Policy Wales (PPW). This letter sets out my expectations of development plans for the delivery of social housing in advance of changes to PPW.

Good progress has been made towards delivering our target of 20,000 affordable homes, however evidence shows we need to build more social homes. We recognise the important contribution which market housing makes to providing affordable housing, but over the last 40 years house building output has only attained the levels of need when councils built and managed substantial numbers of social homes.

The published estimates of housing need in Wales by tenure provide a range of estimates based on different demographic projections for the next 5 years. The central estimate of housing need suggests an additional 4,400 market houses and 3,900 affordable homes are needed each year. In other words, 47 per cent of the homes we need in Wales should be for social or intermediate rent. Given these estimates, and based on average new house-building statistics for the past few years, it appears that we are already building the number of market homes we need, whilst we are falling short of the number of affordable homes we desperately require. The public sector must accept the challenge and step in to ensure that everyone who needs a home has a home.

One area where the prospects for social housing have been transformed is the opportunity which now exists for local authorities to build again. The Welsh Government is determined to support the building of a new generation of council homes at scale and pace to meet the needs of communities across Wales. The direct provision of social housing requires concerted effort across the public sector. There are examples of good practice emerging across Wales where local authorities have, by extending their borrowing, begun the task of

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

building new council houses. The availability of well located affordable land is critical to the success of this policy.

Up to date Local Development Plans (LDPs) are a cornerstone for housing delivery by identifying the best sites for new homes. Local planning authorities must, when complying with their statutory duty to prepare LDPs, address the need for affordable housing.

LDPs must be informed by evidence including the estimates of housing need in Wales by tenure and Local Housing Market Assessments which together identify the type and tenure of housing required. The most recent version of PPW, published last December, requires local planning authorities to follow place-making principles. Place-making is a people-centred approach to planning, designing and managing communities to promote peoples' health, happiness and well-being which must be central to preparing LDPs and deciding planning applications. PPW already allows local planning authorities to identify sites for up to 100% affordable housing. Whilst PPW also states that such sites are likely to be small in scale and number in relation to the total number of sites available, the need for social housing is now so acute that this policy needs to be implemented in a flexible way to reflect local circumstances. PPW will be updated to reflect the revised policy as part of the current review of the delivery of housing through the planning system.

When reviewing LDPs local planning authorities must make provision for affordable housing led housing sites. **Such sites will include at least 50% affordable housing, which is defined as social rented housing provided by local authorities and registered social landlords, and intermediate housing where prices or rents are above those of social rent but below market levels and there are secure arrangements to recycle receipts to use for future affordable housing where full ownership is achieved.** In the first instance affordable housing led housing sites should make use of public land. Where public land is not available, privately owned land may be identified. Sites should not be inferior in any way to sites which are being promoted for market housing.

Yours sincerely,



Julie James AC/AM

Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol
Minister for Housing and Local Government

CC Heads of Planning Service
Heads of Housing Service

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SUBJECT: Performance Report 2020/21 – Corporate Plan Goals

MEETING: Economy and Development Select Committee

DATE: 15th July 2021

DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To present 2020/21 performance information under the remit of Economy and Development Select Committee (Corporate Plan Goal B); this includes:
- Progress made in 2020/21 to deliver the commitments set out in the Corporate Plan 2017 – 2022 (appendix 2)

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are invited to scrutinise how well the authority performed in 2020/21 against the goals set in the Corporate Plan.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Corporate Plan sets an ambitious five-year programme aligned to a clear purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities, and identifies five priority goals, which also serve as the council's well-being objectives. Each of the goals includes a number of commitments to action, 22 in total, which the organisation is committed to delivering between now and 2022.
- 3.2 Due to the impact of the pandemic, some of the aims within the plan have been paused or progressed at a slower pace than intended. This has enabled us to divert staff and resources into core services to focus on meeting the needs of the most vulnerable. To ensure accountability through this period, Cabinet developed a Coronavirus Strategy, also known as the *Plan on a Page*. This was approved in May 2020, and subsequently updated in July, December and more recently, in June, in response to the changing nature of the response. It contains a purpose, strategic aims and associated actions, and has been monitored by Cabinet throughout the pandemic.
- 3.3 The council has an established performance framework, which is the way in which we translate our vision of '*building sustainable and resilient communities*' into action, and ensures that everyone is pulling in the same direction to deliver real and tangible outcomes; this is shown at appendix 1. Further information on the council's performance framework is available on the intranet Hub.
- 3.4 Appendix 2 provides an update of progress in 2020/21 for the goal in the Corporate Plan that falls under the remit of the committee, Goal B: Thriving and Well-Connected County. An evaluation of activity and progress made is provided, with a progress rating included for each commitment. The parameters for the ratings are below:

Progressing well: most actions are underway and making good progress; improvements are becoming evident; most activity has been on schedule

Taking steps: actions have been started and are making progress, whilst some are not progressing or are yet to begin; some improvement is evident; activity has been on schedule but some are behind schedule

Attention needed: most actions are not making progress; few improvements are evident; most activity has been behind schedule.

No activity: no actions, improvement or activities are evident

The progress on the goal has also been given an indicative overall score based on the council's self-evaluation framework, level 1 – unsatisfactory to level 6 – excellent. These ratings reflect progress against the long term strategic commitments in the Corporate Plan. However, they do not illustrate the significant activities undertaken during 2020/21 to support the pandemic response. The update also includes the performance measures that are being used to track progress, and the contribution of each goal to the national well-being goals and ways of working set out within the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

- 3.5 The performance indicators provide quantitative information to support the analysis of performance and consist of both local and national measures. The council usually undergoes a benchmarking exercise of the national indicators to provide an indication of performance against other local authorities in Wales, however due to the impact of the pandemic, this information is limited for 2020/21 so does not provide adequate detail to support the analysis of performance. Data has been gathered internally, where available, and is presented with additional information where figures do not align with previous performance to provide a wider context and explanation.
- 3.6 The Corporate Plan is an ambitious five year programme; some commitments focus on the longer-term future of the county and aim to address complex challenges, in line with the Future Generations Act. This will need to be considered when assessing progress made as the impact of some activity may not be clearly demonstrable over short timescales, and some activity will be in the early stages or not yet started.
- 3.7 The purpose of bringing the information together is to allow Select Committee to understand performance in the context of the commitments made in the Corporate Plan. Committee members are encouraged to utilise their time appropriately and consider the scrutiny already undertaken in service areas, and as prescribed on the committee's work programme. The report may identify further areas of scrutiny that committee may want to consider for inclusion on the forward work programme. As some of the activity detailed cross cuts select committee remits, it is suggested that members particularly focus their scrutiny on the activity relevant to the committee with consideration of its contribution to the objective as a whole.
- 3.8 The council's annual performance report will be presented to Council on 23 September 2021 and published by 31st October 2021, in line with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure. As well as being presented to select committee, the goal detailed here will be included in this report, and will provide a detailed evaluation of performance in 2020/21 against the Corporate Plan and wider arrangements.

4. REASONS:

- 4.1 To ensure that members have an understanding of council performance in 2020/21 and can scrutinise how well the authority has performed.

5. AUTHOR:

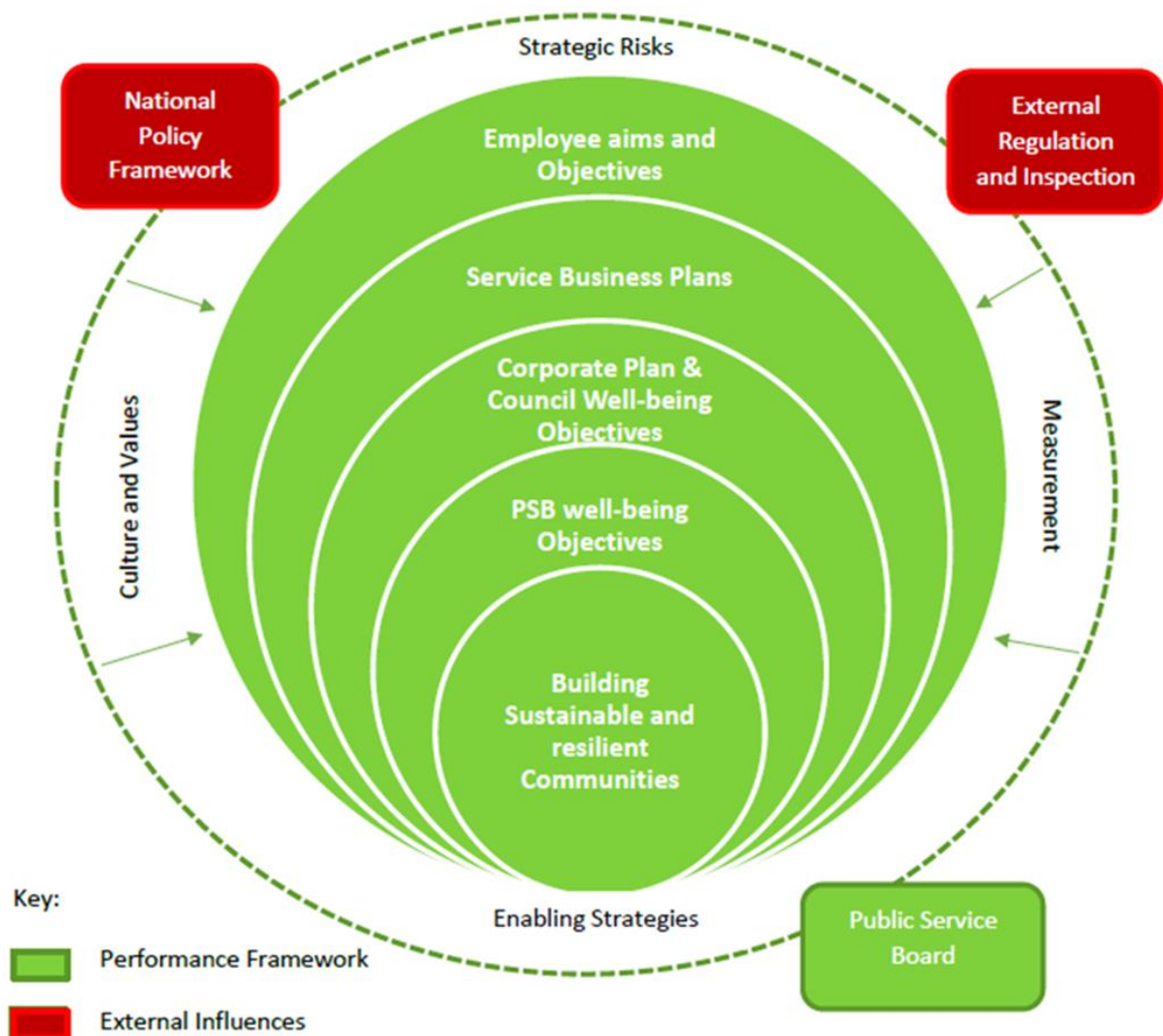
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Appendix 1 – Monmouthshire County Council Performance Management Framework

Our performance management framework ensures everyone is pulling in the same direction to deliver real and tangible outcomes. Building sustainable and resilient communities is the unifying purpose of the diverse range of services for which we are responsible. We are a partner in the Public Service Board, which is responsible for setting well-being objectives for the county. The council’s own well-being objectives are set by Council based on the same well-being assessment as the PSB objectives, and forms the backbone of our five organisational goals in the Corporate Plan. Each of our teams has a business plan that aligns to these objectives and we have a range of performance measures that are used to track progress. Our risk management policy enables us to manage strategic risks to delivery of our goals, and the employee aims and objectives show the contribution that individuals make to these objectives and to delivering our vision in accordance with our values.





Goal B: Thriving and well-connected county

Monmouthshire County Council Goal: B. Thriving and well-connected county	
Why we are focusing on this	Summary – Progress 2020/21
<p>Monmouthshire is the most competitive economy in Wales after the capital city of Cardiff, is best placed for growth per head of population and has the highest rate of business births. Whilst productivity is comparatively high, more needs to be done to increase Gross Value Added in existing and new industries. As the closest point for business relocation, post cessation of the Severn Bridge Tolls – this means seizing the opportunity to boost Research & Development capacity. We will develop a clear strategy that articulates our distinct strengths and goals for enhancing competitiveness, innovation and productivity.</p> <p>We want Monmouthshire to be a place to be – not just a place to be from - and so we will review our Local Development Plan to ensure it is meeting our needs. The delivery of quality, sustainable and affordable housing will help enable the retention of young people, helping combat ‘brain drain’ and managing the social and economic challenges associated with a rapidly ageing population.</p> <p>We will tackle the barriers to productivity, and focus sustainable infrastructure and connectivity. Externally, developing such foundations will enable businesses and community enterprises to deliver employment, growth and prosperity. This will enable businesses to look beyond our shores for customers. Internally, we will unlock the value of our own procurement spend; developing</p>	<p>Progress evaluation: 3: Adequate</p> <p>Support has been provided to businesses throughout the year to help them through the challenges and uncertainty of the pandemic, issuing over 6,500 payments of grants amounting to almost £40 million. There has been an ongoing communications campaign, regular meetings of the Monmouthshire Business Resilience Forum, and livestreamed events to share support and guidance to local businesses.</p> <p>The council has continued to work with Welsh Government to support access to Superfast Cymru, and promotion of the Access Broadband Cymru scheme for areas outside the Superfast Cymru roll out continues. In addition, Broadway Partners have connected a further 500 white premises with full fibre as of February 2021.</p> <p>Work on the RLDP has continued, but has faced delays as a result of the pandemic. A review of the evidence base and strategy to determine the consequences of the pandemic has identified a number of key messages that require ongoing consideration. A revised RLDP timetable has subsequently been agreed.</p> <p>The pandemic has had a considerable impact on tourism as lock down protocols have been introduced and reduced based on infection rates. As restrictions have begun to ease, communication has continued in order to promote Monmouthshire as a key tourist destination, including Visit Monmouthshire, and has incorporated the Welsh Government-aligned Visit Safely messaging.</p>


data-driven, enterprise and commercial mindsets and more innovative approaches to local market creation.		Following a review of the Strategic Procurement Service, a proposal to collaborate with Cardiff Council in the discharge and provision of the procurement services has been agreed.	
Detailed Progress Update			
Commitment to Action	Progress rating	What we said we would do	Progress in 2020/21
<p>THE COUNCIL DEVELOPS AND DELIVERS A NEW ECONOMY AND ENTERPRISE STRATEGY</p> 	Taking steps	Work with business to create and deliver a new strategy focused on increasing competitiveness productivity and innovation	In November 2019, The Vision Monmouthshire 2040: Economic Growth and Ambition Statement was approved by Cabinet which set the economic ambition for the County, this was closely followed by the approval of the Inward Investment Prospectus 'Growing Your Business in Monmouthshire' in March 2020. The purpose of the documents is to work alongside the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) in identifying, encouraging, and promoting the development of suitable employment sites and premises, setting the scene for Monmouthshire's growing 'inclusive economy' and an environment that nurtures new start-ups, attracts investment and enables local businesses to expand.
		Develop incentives and support to encourage indigenous business growth and inward investment	Coronavirus has had a significant impact on businesses and their investment plans. However, as Monmouthshire emerges from restrictions showing signs of economic recovery, the team will be consulting with business during Summer/Autumn 2021 in the revision of the Economic Growth and Ambition Statement, reasserting the ambition to create an environment that enables increasing competitiveness, productivity and innovation. The consultation will also serve to inform the successor Economy, Employment and Skills Strategy.
		Develop more employment opportunities, such as apprenticeships and the youth enterprise scheme, increasing the retention of a	In early 2020, the council implemented an 'Apprentice in Care Scheme', funded through the Foundational Economy Challenge Fund, which successfully introduced six apprentices within Health and Social Care. Although the programme met with challenges due to the impact of Covid-19, each of the


		<p>younger economically active demographic</p>	<p>apprentices worked throughout, providing valuable contributions to the Health and Social Care Team, and have successfully progressed with careers or further studies within the health and social care sector. The Greater Gwent Partnership are looking at the council’s model, with the potential for further rollout in other areas.</p> <p>Since the implementation of the Apprenticeship, Graduate and Internship Strategy, the council has successfully recruited 20 apprentices, seven of which have completed their studies and moved into new posts. In addition to this, there are roughly 168 existing staff members who have signed up to undertake apprenticeships.</p> <p>The council has recently secured Grant funding to act as a gateway to deliver the Department for Work and Pensions ‘Kickstart’ Scheme, which will provide 89 six-month work placements. The scheme is open to individuals aged 16 – 24 who are currently in receipt of Universal Credit, and provides opportunities to try new tasks and build new skills in a real work environment that will make a difference to the prospect of these young people finding work in the future.</p>
		<p>Ensure planning policies and land allocations for employment uses enable appropriate growth sectors.</p>	<p>The take up rate of land allocation for employment use equated to 0.38ha during 2020/21. This is below the take-up rate for the previous year, although it has fluctuated since the plan adoption. There is currently 40.16ha of employment land available across the county, which demonstrates that sufficient land has been maintained to meet the identified take-up rate of 1.9ha per annum. This is important in ensuring the planning policy framework supports and enables sustainable economic growth in the County.</p>
		<p>Raise the profile of Monmouthshire, support and grow the foundational economy including developing proposals for shorter supply chains to</p>	<p>A Food Development Action Plan has been developed, which looks at options for developing the supply chain for smaller local food growers. Monmouthshire has become a member of the Sustainable Food Places Network, and has received funding to develop a Coordinator role. A Food Resilience Data Development Programme has been established to create a picture of the county’s farming landscape, including information such as the number of farms,</p>

		<p>benefit consumers and growers. <i>(New)</i></p>	<p>existing crops and potential crop opportunities, which will be used to inform the council’s future procurement from the local supply chain.</p>
		<p>Develop support for rural businesses including improvements in rural broadband: acting as a testbed for rural applications of 5G and facilitating agricultural technology <i>(New)</i></p>	<p>Monmouthshire was one of three locations benefitting from the £2m Department of Media, Culture and Sport fund programme to trial the use of 5G technology, acting as a testbed to bring world-class digital infrastructure to Monmouthshire. The project provided Llanddewi Rhydderch with gigabit speeds.</p> <p>In February 2020, CoCoRE was approved. This is a 5G testbed in South East Wales, to connect rural communities across Monmouthshire and semi-urban communities in Blaenau Gwent. As a partner, the council will be involved in developing test cases for the use of 5G in tourism and in the diverse Rural Economy, such as farm security and safety, and farmer mental wellbeing.</p>
<p>THE COUNCIL MAXIMISES ECONOMIC POTENTIAL THROUGH DELIVERING THE CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION CITY DEAL</p> 	<p>Taking steps</p>	<p>Lead ‘Innovation theme’ and play a key governance role in the Cardiff Capital Region <i>(Completed)</i></p>	<p>The first UK Government Gateway Review of the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) City Deal has now reached a successful conclusion which has unlocked the next five-year tranche of UK government investment funding.</p>
		<p>Work as part of the Cardiff Capital Region to attract high skill, high wage jobs to ensure that people have the opportunity to raise their household income <i>(New)</i></p>	<p>The Cardiff Capital Region is now starting to transition from a pure ‘City Deal’ programme offer to a more strategic regional approach, journeying towards the transition to a Corporate Joint Committee structure. Going forward the focus will be on delivering the ‘Five for Five’ strategic imperatives - Building Back Better, Becoming a City Region, Levelling-Up, Scaling-Up and Developing Economic Clusters – all of which present an opportunity to build and support inclusive growth across the region.</p>
		<p>Develop and deliver projects of regional significance including capitalizing on new Compound Semi-conductor Foundry</p>	

<p>THE COUNCIL DELIVERS BETTER INFRASTRUCTURE CONNECTIVITY & OPPORTUNITY</p> 	<p>Taking steps</p>	<p>Develop and deliver solutions to improve rural broadband</p>	<p>Due to the pandemic, digital infrastructure works have been slower to move forward in the county, and the digital deprivation rate still stands at 12.5%. 8,000 premises in the county have poor broadband; of these, 5,600 are under review with the possibility of Altnets supplying services, and 2400 premises are still considered with ‘no potential suppliers available’.</p> <p>The council has continued to work with Welsh Government to support access to Superfast Cymru, and is one of the rural local authorities represented on the newly formed Wales Digital Infrastructure Group. Welsh Government have targeted 2163 premises under Superfast Cymru 2 for Monmouthshire, all to receive fibre to the premises.</p> <p>A number of schemes have been established for those outside of the Superfast Cymru roll out area, including the Access Broadband Cymru scheme and the BDUK operated gigabit voucher scheme. Broadway Partners have connected 500 premises with full fibre, and the programme is due to complete in June 2022 with all 6,000 white premises having access. A grant has also been awarded to upgrade this network to ‘Carrier Grade’, which will allow Mobile Network Operators to connect to it, and a second grant was awarded enabling Llanthony Valley to receive high quality broadband services.</p>
		<p>Develop a range of options to improve rural transport and better public transport linked to opportunities throughout the Cardiff Capital Region, including improvements at Severn Tunnel Junction</p>	<p>A digital transport platform has been developed with funding from the UK Government GovTech Catalyst programme; the Thrive transport module has been developed by Box Clever Digital. The platform includes a journey planner, provides access to demand responsive transport and community car schemes, and a secure lift-share scheme called Tag-Along. The difficulties of identifying exact locations in rural areas has been overcome by incorporating the What3Words tool, which pinpoints precise locations.</p> <p>As a result of social distancing and stay at home guidance, real-world testing has been delayed, which has given the developers more time to refine the solution,</p>

			<p>with beta testing planned for the second half of 2021, subject to Covid restrictions.</p> <p>At Severn Tunnel Junction, a park & ride extension, and improvements to walk access are currently out to tender, and a first design has been developed for an extension to the footbridge, which is being reviewed by Network Rail. Both projects are being funded by the CCR Metro Plus programme. In Abergavenny, the council have appointed consultants to review options for improving bus-rail integration, park & ride, active travel access and improvements to passenger facilities, also via funding from the CCR Metro Plus programme. Finally, funding has been sourced to improve bus infrastructure in the county, and officers are in the process of developing detailed plans.</p>
		Make use of new technology to improve how we maintain highways services	<p>A survey of the county's road network was completed in July 2020, with roads classified by their need for repairs. A three-year programme is being drafted to inform budget setting and programming during 2022/23. The council has invested £375,000 to improve proactive gully emptying in the county, and the MyMon app is being trialled as a means of communicating with customers.</p>
		Complete the second phase of the Chepstow Transport study in conjunction with the appointed contractors and neighbouring local authorities; and take action based on the findings (<i>New</i>)	<p>The next stage of the Chepstow Study is due to be published imminently. The council has commissioned Capita to produce an updated Local Transport Plan to sit alongside the Replacement Local Development Plan.</p>
		Identify ways to reduce the difference in pay between men and women in the county	<p>The latest information from 2020 on the average (median) weekly earnings for employees working in Monmouthshire shows there was an £11.00 difference in pay between men and women. This shows a slightly higher difference in pay than last year, but is considerably lower than previous years. The longer term trend will need to be monitored and considered to determine if the difference in pay between men and women is being reduced.</p>
THE COUNCIL PROVIDES MORE OPPORTUNITIES	Taking steps	Review the current Local Development Plan to ensure an appropriate supply of	<p>Progress on the Replacement Local Development Plan was paused in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as the Preferred Strategy public engagement events had to be postponed. These unavoidable delays have</p>

<p>FOR LOCAL LIVING, WORKING & LEISURE</p> 		<p>land for homes and businesses</p>	<p>necessitated a further revision to the RLDP Delivery Agreement timetable and community involvement scheme, which was approved by Welsh Government in October 2020, and work on the RLDP is progressing in accordance with the revised timetable. The current LDP runs until 31st December 2021, but the risks associated with expiry date legislation for the Adopted LDP have dissipated following confirmation from the Minister in September. This means that our current LDP remains an extant development plan for decision-making purposes until the RLDP is adopted.</p> <p>Natural Resources Wales have announced issues of water quality in Riverine Special Areas of Conservation, including the River Wye and River Usk, which could have potential implications for the progression and implementation of the RLDP. The council is working alongside other key organisations to seek viable and timely solutions in the affected settlements.</p> <p>In 2020/21, 419 new dwellings were completed, 71 of which were affordable homes. This is an increase from 356 completions (78 affordable homes) in 2019/20, but is still below the LDP target of 488 per year.</p> <p>Destination marketing activity has continued throughout the pandemic via Visit Monmouthshire, and collaborative campaigns with Visit Southern Wales and Over the Bridge to Wales recommenced in July, incorporating the Welsh Government’s ‘Visit Safely’ messaging. A Monmouthshire Foodscapes campaign, aimed at food and drink journalists and influencers, and key Monmouthshire food and drink producers, was delivered in March to raise the profile of Monmouthshire as the food capital of Wales. More recently, marketing communications focused on promoting safe experiences with the ‘We’re Good to Go’ industry kite mark.</p> <p>The STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor) figures for Monmouthshire show that the economic impact of tourism reduced by 67.7% on 2019 figures, to £81.16 million, as a result of the pandemic. The planned</p>
		<p>Participate in and shape opportunities for regional strategic land-use development plans</p>	
		<p>Increase the volume, quality, variety and affordability of housing</p>	
		<p>Provide flexible support for tourism development in the county</p>	

			<p>review of the Destination Management Plan was postponed until 2021 as staff were seconded to the Business Support Grants team during the pandemic.</p>
		<p>Engage with communities to create plans for the redevelopment of Usk and Caldicot town centres and begin discussions on plans for Monmouth and Chepstow <i>(New)</i></p>	<p>Temporary measures to support our town centres and allow them to function effectively and safely in light of the Coronavirus pandemic have been implemented across the county, and refined through engagement with councillors, businesses, residents, and other stakeholders. Discussions about the broader regeneration vision for Monmouth and Chepstow are ongoing, including the extent to which those temporary Covid-driven changes should be retained in the long term. In Caldicot, following the completion of the new public space at The Cross, engagement with the community around regeneration has focused on the development of plans for the pedestrianised town centre in Newport Road, as well as for Church Road where implementation is now underway. In Usk, engagement has continued in the context of the draft Usk town improvement masterplan, which proposes a strategic framework for change in the town over the next five years and beyond, and is itself based on extensive engagement with key stakeholders and the wider community.</p>
<p>THE COUNCIL UNLOCKS ECONOMIC VALUE OF ITS SPENDING POWER</p> 	<p>Progressing well</p>	<p>Review our procurement spend, improve analysis of expenditure and build local supply chains where possible</p>	<p>An updated Procurement strategy was approved in July 2018 and, in order to deliver the aspirations set out within the strategy, an external review of the Strategic Procurement Service has been undertaken. The review confirmed the council's own recognition that it had limited capacity to influence behaviours relating to its £100m third party annual spend. A proposal to collaborate with Cardiff Council, for mutual benefit, in the discharge and provision of the council's Strategic Procurement services was agreed in April 2021.</p>
		<p>Minimise the long-term impact of our activities by using resources where they are needed, reducing waste, recycling materials, increasing local value-</p>	<p>A successful Circular Economy bid for £626,000 was announced in January 2021. From this, a new re-use shop at Five Lanes, and four Benthg Libraries of Things in Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Monmouth, are about to open, with associated Repair Cafes and other repair and reuse projects.</p>

		creation and focusing on whole life costs	Given the impact of Covid-19, the Strategic Procurement Unit has refocused its purpose to keep the council's pound within the county boundaries and its neighbouring authorities, whilst ensuring compliance with the procurement rules and regulations. Some examples of this work in practice includes a four year bus maintenance and servicing contract that has been awarded to Bulwark Bus and Coach Engineering Ltd based in Chepstow to the value of £1,500,000; and the appointment of Estuary Oils, based in Caldicot, to supply all of the council's bulk fuels with an estimated value of £1,400,000.
		Ensure we play an active part in national-led commissioning consortia	

Well-being of Future Generations Act impact

Contribution of Council goal to Future Generations Act Well-being Goals

Prosperous Wales	Resilient Wales	Healthier Wales	More equal Wales	Wales of cohesive communities	Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language	Globally responsible Wales
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

This goal is aimed at the **long-term** viability of Monmouthshire as a thriving place to live, work and visit. The City Deal is one example where we work **collaboratively** with neighbouring authorities to maximise opportunity. Keeping Monmouthshire thriving and well-connected promotes **integration** and impacts on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the county. This requires collaboration with local businesses and other organisations, and **involvement** from the local community to maximise opportunities. Considering the global wellbeing of Wales is also important and this goal focuses on ensuring decisions are made with future generations in mind and takes a **preventative** approach to enable the retention of young people.

Measures of progress

Measure	Previous	Current	Target	Comment
Gross Value Added (£ per head) ⁱ	£20,985	£22,307	Increase	Gross value added estimates the total output of an economy. Current data is from 2018
Difference in average pay between men and women ⁱⁱ :	£1.60	£11.00	Reduce pay difference	The 2020 average (median) weekly earnings for employees working in Monmouthshire. Difference
Men	£563.60	£579.70		

Women	£562.00	£568.70		for last two years is significantly lower than recent years' trends.
Average weekly earnings of people who work in Monmouthshire ⁱⁱⁱ	£570.00	£574.90	Increase	Data is recorded on a calendar year basis; current is 2020 data.
Number of active business enterprises in the county ^{iv}	4165	4240	Increase	Data is recorded on a calendar year basis; current is 2019 data
Number of businesses assisted by Monmouthshire Business and Enterprise Team and referrals to partners	75	6,478*	75	*Not comparable with previous data. Figure relates to total number of support payments made to businesses, incl. support during Covid-19.
Total income generated from tourism ^v	£244.99 million	£81.16 million	10% increase by 2020	Data is recorded on a calendar year basis; current is 2020 data.
Number of market and affordable housing units built	356 (of which 82 affordable)	419 (of which 71 affordable)	488	
Number of premises with access to high speed broadband through the Superfast Cymru 2 scheme	New Measure	549	2113 (over 3 years)	Targeted intervention decreased from 2163 this year
Number of white premises gaining access to high speed broadband	480	970	0 white premises	

ⁱ Stats Wales, Gross Value Added <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/Regional-Accounts/Gross-Value-Added-GDP>

ⁱⁱ Stats Wales, Average (median) gross weekly earnings <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Earnings>

ⁱⁱⁱ Stats Wales, Average (median) gross weekly earnings <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Earnings>

^{iv} Stats Wales, Active Business Enterprises <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/Businesses/Business-Demography>

^v The total economic impact of tourism, STEAM data. The economic impact of Tourism is indexed each year.

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SUBJECT:	2020/21 REVENUE & CAPITAL OUTTURN STATEMENT
MEETING:	Economy & Development Select Committee
DATE:	15th July 2021
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Select Committee Members with information on the revenue and capital outturn position of the Authority based on capital slippage and reserve usage & deferment.
- 1.2 The financial information appropriate to this Select Committee is outlined in **Appendix 6**, with the remainder of this report following the format presented to Cabinet on the 9th June 2021.
- 1.3 This report is to be considered by Select Committees as part of their responsibility to,
 - assess whether effective budget monitoring is taking place,
 - monitor the extent to which budgets are spent in accordance with agreed budget and policy framework,
 - challenge the reasonableness of projected over or underspends, and
 - monitor the achievement of predicted efficiency gains or progress in relation to savings proposals.
- 1.4 To provide an update on the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Council.

2. CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet recognises a balanced net revenue budget position at outturn after accounting for transfers to earmarked reserves that represents a significant improvement of £5.15m from the overall deficit reported at month 9, primarily as a result of:
 - Receipt of £5.29m of Welsh Government Covid-19 hardship funding since month 9 to compensate the Council to support its enhanced costs of service delivery and loss of income as a direct result of Covid-19 impact;
 - Receipt of significant unbudgeted Welsh Government grants that were communicated to and received by the Authority late in the financial year and that have offset core budget funding;
 - Underspends across many service areas as a result of the pandemic and where services have been reduced or stopped, travel requirements have reduced, office and buildings have remained closed and substantial staff vacancies have remained unfilled.

- 2.2 That Members acknowledge the extent that the Welsh Government Covid-19 Hardship Fund has covered all Covid-19 related additional costs directly incurred during the financial year of £11.25m together with compensation for loss of income of £8.38m.
- 2.3 That Members note the 85% delivery of the service specific budgeted mandated savings as detailed in **Appendix 2** and as agreed by full Council previously and the implicit remedial action/savings included in the financial outturn to compensate for circa 15% savings (£734k) reported as delayed or unachievable by service managers.
- 2.4 That Members endorse the strategy applied to replenish earmarked reserves as noted within the report to support future financial challenges and ensure financial resilience during a period of significant uncertainty as we continue to recover from the pandemic and as the delivery of our services change in light of a severely altered socio-economic landscape, and as wider policy commitments, both locally and nationally begin to take shape.
- 2.5 In taking the approach set out above, Cabinet recognises the extraordinary nature of the 2020/21 financial year and accepts that there remains significant recurring service pressures and risks in 2021/22 and over the medium term.
- 2.6 Cabinet notes the unprecedented improvement in Schools reserve balances of £3.85m as contained in **Appendix 1** that has resulted in 15 of the 17 schools entering the year in deficit returning to a surplus balance. This reflects the significant levels of grant support from Welsh Government that was notified late in the financial year primarily relating to Schools Revenue Maintenance Grant and Recruit, Recover and Raise Standards.
- 2.7 That Cabinet endorses the requirement for schools carrying significant surplus balances that are above levels guided by Welsh Government to provide investment plans setting out how they intend to spend their significant surplus balances, whilst also appreciating that the inherent structural budget deficits that have led to 17 schools being in deficit at the start of the year remain and require resolution irrespective of additional funding received.
- 2.8 That Members consider the capital outturn spend of £19.0m, introducing an underspend of £3.18m primarily due to underspending of the capitalisation directive budget and specific grant related schemes and that this subsequently releases £1.08m of capital receipts back to reserve for future capital investment.
- 2.9 That Members note the slippage requests of £49.92m as listed in **Appendix 5** along with the related presumptions made around financing consequences as detailed in **Appendix 1**, and accept that officers will make a further assessment of the justification for scheme slippage and make recommendations back to Cabinet for final approval as part of the month 2 financial monitoring for 2021/22.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Since entering 2020 the Council had faced significant and unprecedented challenges, notably the flood response and recovery resulting from Storms Ciara and Dennis in February 2020 and the subsequent Covid-19 pandemic and the impact of the lockdown restrictions that were put into effect on 23rd March 2020.

3.2 In parallel to this the Council had faced a hugely challenging budget round which saw a significant set of service pressures needing to be considered and accommodated within the budget, notably:

- Pressures within Children’s Services relating to a continued increase in the number of looked after children (LAC) cases carrying over from 2019/20 and after the budget was approved.
- The 2.75% pay award being much higher than the original 1% budget assumption built into the budget and where it had been expected that Welsh Government funding would be forthcoming.
- Pressures remaining within the Passenger Transport Unit (PTU) and that continue to be worked on as part of the PTU review and where implementation has been impacted by the pandemic.
- Pressures in waste & recycling as a result of delays in the rollout of waste reconfiguration and changes.
- Income pressures relating to Civil parking enforcement where savings targets cannot be met.
- A shortfall against additional commercial income targets as a consequence of the impact of Covid-19 and the current level of market and economic uncertainty.
- As result of the late receipt of the final settlement from Welsh Government and the disappointment of there being no funding floor introduced, the remaining efficiency savings that were left to be identified during the financial year.

3.3 All of the above pressures continue to draw significantly on the Council’s resources, both in terms of capacity and finances and continues to place an unprecedented strain on the Council. That all said, by month 9, the previously reported non-Covid-19 related over spend had moved into a forecast £142k saving. This largely resulted from the action taken during the financial year in curtailing non-essential expenditure, through cost reductions recognising the significant and continued financial pressure on the Authority as a result of the pandemic and through Covid-19 enforced reductions in normal service delivery.

3.4 Outturn position

Table 1: Overall Revenue outturn position

	Overall Outturn	Overall Variance to Month 9	Variance due Hardship funding	Variance due to other factors
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Social Care, Health & Safeguarding	811	(497)	0	(497)
Children & Young People	75	(11)	(7)	(4)
Enterprise & Monlife	(498)	(4,328)	(3,610)	(718)
Chief Executives Unit	(141)	(137)	(20)	(117)
Resources	(847)	(1,234)	(1,492)	258
Corporate Costs & Levies	(2,569)	(2,581)	0	(2,581)
Appropriations	3,574	3,838	0	3,838
Financing	(405)	(196)	(159)	(37)

Total	0	(5,146)	(5,288)	142
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- 3.5 Since the month 9 forecast the Council has benefited from a further £5.29m of Welsh Government Covid-19 hardship funding to compensate the Council to support its enhanced costs of service delivery and loss of income as a direct result of Covid-19 impact.
- 3.6 Further to this a number of Welsh Government funding announcements were made late in the financial year that have resulted in additional specific revenue grant awards related to the continuing Covid-19 impact and also awards specific to service area pressures. These grant awards have had a direct impact in improving the revenue outturn position by offsetting core funding requirements.
- 3.7 During the financial year the continued impact of the pandemic has significantly altered the Authorities normal course of service delivery and additional savings have been realised where services have been reduced or stopped, travel requirements have reduced, office and buildings have remained closed and substantial staff vacancies have remained unfilled.
- 3.8 The analysis outlined in **Table 2** below reconciles the movement in the outturn position since the month 9 forecast was reported to Cabinet.

Table 2: Reconciliation of Revenue outturn from month 9

	£'000
Month 9 non-Covid-19 surplus	(142)
Unbudgeted grant support since Month 9 - Covid-19 specific	(3,070)
Unbudgeted grant support since Month 9 - Service specific	(803)
Reduction in budgeted use of capitalisation directive	1,080
Refinement of service outturn positions	(1,184)
Year-end surplus prior to earmarked reserve replenishment	(4,119)
Replenishment of earmarked reserves	4,119
Revised Council Fund Surplus	0

3.9 Mandated savings and budget mitigations

Table 3: Progress against mandated savings

Directorate	2020/21 Budgeted Savings	Saving achieved	Delayed Savings	Savings Unachievable	Of which due to Covid-19	Of which not Covid-19 Related	% Achieved
	£000	£000	£000	£000			

Children & Young People	(648)	(648)	0	0	0	0	100%
Social Care & Health	(1,058)	(792)	0	(266)	166	100	75%
Enterprise	(569)	(392)	(20)	(158)	178	0	69%
Resources	(418)	(198)	(220)	0	220	0	47%
Chief Executives Unit	(163)	(93)	(10)	(60)	70	0	57%
Corporate Costs & Levies	(1,479)	(1,479)	0	0	0	0	100%
Appropriations	(605)	(605)	0	0	0	0	100%
Sub-total - Services	(4,940)	(4,207)	(250)	(484)	634	100	85%
Financing	(5,397)	(5,397)	0	0	0	0	100%
Overall Total	(10,336)	(9,604)	(250)	(484)	634	100	93%

3.10 The 2020/21 budget was set based on the requirement for £10.3m of mandated savings to be achieved, with some £4.9m of these to be made directly by service areas. Given the challenging operating environment that services have performed under during 2020/21 it is pleasing to note their performance in achieving 85% of budgeted savings. This increases to 93% when taking into account savings attributable to increasing financing streams.

3.11 There has been a delay in the implementation of £250k of budget savings proposals as a direct result of staff resources being diverted to respond to the pandemic. A further £484k of savings are now deemed unachievable with £384k of these as a direct result of the pandemic.

3.12 A full list of the progress against savings mandates can be found at **Appendix 2** to this report.

3.13 The 2020/21 budget included the use of a Capitalisation direction of £2.09m where one-off costs are eligible to be capitalised under the guidance issued by the Welsh Government in respect of the flexible use of capital receipts. Given the reduced service activity during the year only £1.01m of the budgeted use was utilised resulting in £1.08m remaining in the capital receipts reserve for future use.

Those costs capitalised are listed and **Appendix 4** to this report and in summary relate to:

- Sharing back-office and administrative services with one or more other council or public sector body;
- Funding the cost of service reconfiguration, restructuring or rationalisation (staff or non-staff), where this leads to ongoing efficiency savings or service transformation;
- Driving a digital approach to the delivery of more efficient public services and how the public interacts with constituent authorities where possible;
- Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies to generate savings or to transform service delivery.

3.14 Covid-19 Impact

- 3.15 The financial challenges facing the Council and resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic were hugely significant during 2020/21 and will continue to be over the medium term as the economy recovers and demands on local services transform in line with the social changes that the pandemic has brought about.
- 3.16 The Council continues to incur significant costs in its response effort and this will continue as it transitions towards recovery. Furthermore and resulting from the restrictions that UK Government and Welsh Government have had to put in place to contain the spread of the virus we are suffering significant shortfalls in our income levels. Some of these will return more quickly than others as services are able to be safely turned back on.
- 3.17 We are grateful to Welsh Government for the emergency hardship funding that has been provided to Welsh Councils to cover the costs and income losses to date and alongside this, the Covid-19 specific grant funding notified in the latter stages of the financial year. The extent of this support is outlined in **Table 4** below.

Table 4: Direct Grant funding received to aid in Covid-19 pressures

	£000s
Welsh Government Covid19 Hardship Fund - Additional costs incurred	11,254
Welsh Government Covid19 Hardship Fund - Compensation for loss of service income	8,382
Council Tax Income Collection shortfalls	1,059
Council Tax Reduction Scheme - to assist with increased demand	348
Digital Transformation funding	658
Savings unachieved funding	658
Business Grants - administration costs	347
Total	22,706

- 3.18 As the financial year progressed the Council was given clearer commitments of the proposed Welsh Government support and significantly the announcement made of further funding for local authorities in August 2020 to supplement funding that had already been provided to assist with meeting income losses and additional costs brought about by the pandemic. A further announcement of funding to cover the first six months of the 2021/22 financial year is welcomed and continues to recognise the unprecedented impact on the Council in managing the response to the pandemic.
- 3.19 In working with all parts of the Welsh Public Sector the Welsh Government provided significant one-off support to all areas through numerous funds which have been administered by the Council during the year. This has ranged from support to local businesses via Business Support Grants, payments made to care workers and specific Freelancer and Start up grants. The extent of the support administered during the financial year is detailed in **Table 5** below:

Table 5: Welsh Government support funds administered in year

Support fund	£000s
Business Support Grants	39,468
Care Workers £500 Payments	1,367
Covid-19 Freelancer Grant	440
Covid-19 Start Up Grant	143
Total	41,418

3.20 It is inevitable that the Council will face significant financial challenges as we move into the recovery phase of the pandemic as demands on services change in light of a severely altered socio-economic landscape. Alongside this there will continue to be risks associated with Welsh Government support funding being reduced or stopped. It is therefore important that the Council looks to replenish earmarked reserves to strengthen ongoing financial resilience.

3.21 **Recommended use of 2020/21 Revenue surplus**

3.22 Irrespective of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic the Authority is already dealing with underlying service pressures which have resulted in £10.3m of pressures being accommodated within the 2021/22 budget, primarily consisting of:

- Pay and pension-related spending pressures in our schooling system;
- The increasing demand placed on children's social care services, adult social care and our children with additional learning needs budgets;
- Significant service pressures within the passenger transport unit and within recycling and waste and that look to ensure that the Council supports and sustains key service delivery;
- Investment that ensures that homeless people are provided adequate support, advice and accommodation in their time of need;
- An ongoing commitment to recognise and value the contribution made by the workforce and ensuring that local government staff are paid no less than the minimum wage set by the Living Wage Foundation, extending to the apprenticeship roles within the Council.

3.23 The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic presents its own additional financial challenges and uncertainty both in terms of additional cost and significant loss of income across services. Some of these impacts are difficult to model and will potentially only manifest themselves once a degree of normality returns to service delivery as enforced restrictions diminish.

3.24 It is inevitable that service delivery and operating models will look significantly different as we move out of the emergency phase of the pandemic, for example:

- New services have been created, some services have been stopped, staff redeployed and new working practices are in place, many of these changes may need to continue beyond this phase of the crisis;

- The pandemic has brought about Welsh Government policy change, significantly in the area of Homelessness;
- Supply chains continue to be radically altered;
- The impact of continuing social distancing on service operations;
- The financial impact on the most vulnerable members of the County and the ongoing and additional support this may require;
- There has been an increased focus on digital solutions to the issues faced, some of these may replace traditional methods of service delivery;
- The prominence of agile working and the shift in culture and its impact on future office space requirements

3.25 There remains uncertainty around the continued Welsh Government emergency hardship funding to Local authorities as a result of the Covid-19 impact, in terms of the full consequential funding continuing to be passed through and whether there will be further funding announced by UK Government which will allow Welsh Government to make further commitments beyond 30th September 2021.

3.26 It is also important to recognise that the economy will likely be in recession and UK and global economies have been hit hard by the pandemic which will considerably impact future public spending and Local Government settlements.

3.27 Given all of these uncertainties it remains difficult to identify the timing and quantum of investment required into the Council's key corporate priorities moving forward and also in responding to the wider national policy agenda commitments, notably but not exclusively:

- The Climate emergency declaration and commitment to deliver a low carbon economy
- Support for mental health provision
- Homeless support and provision
- Food policy agenda

3.28 In considering all of the above and in apportioning the outturn position the future financial stability of the Council was considered, alongside the potential additional unknown costs that could occur in dealing with post Covid-19 recovery, whilst also giving financial resilience to service areas to deal with service pressures and the wider policy commitments that will shape future service delivery. In this regard the revenue surplus is proposed to be allocated to the following reserves:

Table 6: Reserves balances and proposed replenishment

Reserve	31st March 2020	31st March 2021	Proposed replenish- ment	31st March 2021
	£000	Draft £000	£000	Final £000
Council Fund (Authority)	(8,907)	(8,907)		(8,907)
Council Fund (School)	435	(3,418)		(3,418)

Balances)				
Sub Total Council Fund	(8,472)	(12,325)	0	(12,325)
Earmarked Reserves:				
Invest to Redesign	(1,128)	(1,156)	(200)	(1,356)
IT Transformation	(254)	(254)	(600)	(854)
Insurance and Risk Management	(935)	(935)		(935)
Capital Receipt Generation	(181)	(116)	(300)	(416)
Treasury Equalisation	(990)	(590)		(590)
Redundancy and Pensions	(245)	(157)	(700)	(857)
Capital Investment	(627)	(627)		(627)
Priority Investment	(405)	(405)	(1,500)	(1,905)
Covid19 Hardship Fund Equalisation Reserve	0	0	(819)	(819)
Other Earmarked Reserves	(1,618)	(2,312)		(2,312)
Total Earmarked Reserves	(6,383)	(6,552)	(4,119)	(10,671)
Total useable revenue reserves	(14,855)	(18,877)	(4,119)	(22,996)

4 SCHOOLS BALANCES

- 4.1 In a similar manner to the general revenue activities of the Council, Schools have also benefitted from Welsh Government hardship funding to compensate for additional general Covid costs incurred (e.g. PPE, staff cover due to self-isolation, enhanced cleaning) and income lost totalling circa £1.24m and this is included within the figures outlined in **Table 4** above.
- 4.2 In terms of the overall movement in school balances, 2020/21 has been an unprecedented year. Schools have received several specific Welsh Government grants totalling £1.77m to further support them and their pupils and these have predominately displaced core budgets in 2020/21 or been committed for use in 2021/22 in line with the grant terms. Furthermore, due largely to the sustained periods of enforced closure during the financial year spending on budgets areas such as staff cover, premises, supplies & services and examination fees, were significantly curtailed and produced savings totalling £2.08m.
- 4.3 These factors mean that the overall level of the school reserves has increased by £3.85m as at the 31st March 2021, taking schools collectively out of a net deficit of £435k to an overall surplus of £3.42m. The movements in individual school balances are outlined in **Appendix 4** to this report. As a result of this 15 of the 17 schools entering the year in deficit have returned to a surplus balance.
- 4.4 The Authority requires schools carrying significant surplus balances that are above levels guided by Welsh Government (£50k for a Primary, £100k for a Secondary) to provide investment plans setting out how they intend to spend the significant surplus balances being held. It is also clear that the inherent structural budget deficits that have led to a

situation of 17 schools being in deficit at the start of the year remain and require resolution irrespective of additional funding received.

- 4.5 In particular and in specific relation to Chepstow Comprehensive, when the windfall Welsh Government grants are disregarded, it masks a significant in-year budget deficit that has been brought about significantly due to the curtailing of any staff redundancies during the pandemic and that were pivotal to their recovery plans. This leaves the school in a comparably weaker position than they would have been in if they had executed their recovery plans as intended, and where they do not now have the level of surplus balances that the other three comprehensive schools now have to strategically invest over the medium term.

5 CAPITAL OUTTURN

- 5.1 The capital expenditure outturn detailed in **Appendix 1** shows a net underspend of £3.18m against budget which can largely be attributed to specific grant funded schemes which have not progressed during the year (£1.92m) due to a combination of late notification of the grant awards, a lack of resources available to complete eligible works and a shortage of appropriate schemes that fit within the grant criteria stipulated. This under spend does not release any capital financing for future use as the grant actually paid matches the overall expenditure.
- 5.2 Alongside this there has been reduced usage of the Capitalisation Directive budget by £1.08m following clarification of the revenue outturn position. This subsequently releases capital receipts back to the capital receipts reserve to utilise for future capital investment.
- 5.3 Capital financing variances primarily follow the reasons for the above expenditure variances with grants showing a variance of £1.7m and capital receipts £1.08m, as the related expenditure was not incurred. There is a variance within unsupported borrowing and leasing where it was more cost-effective to the Authority to finance vehicle purchases from borrowing instead of leasing as initially budgeted.
- 5.4 Capital slippage totals £49.92m and is shown in detail in **Appendix 5** to this report. The vast majority of the slippage requested is due to the delays encountered relating to the impact of Covid-19 and was very much outside of the control of the Authority with two schemes (Asset Investment Fund and Abergavenny 3-19 School) accounting for two thirds of the total slippage.
- 5.5 Members are asked to note the slippage requests of £49.92m as listed in **Appendix 5** along with the related presumptions made around financing consequences as detailed in **Appendix 1**. A further assessment of the justification for scheme slippage will be undertaken and recommendations made back to Cabinet for final approval as part of the month 2 financial monitoring for 2021/22.
- 5.6 **Useable Capital Receipts Available**

- 5.7 In the table below, the effect of the changes to the forecast capital receipts on the useable capital receipts balances available to meet future capital commitments is shown. This is also compared to the balances forecast within the 2020/24 MTFP capital budget proposals.

Table 7: Useable Capital receipts forecast

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance as at 1st April	3,040	9,210	14,136	12,544	11,452
Capital receipts used for financing	(31)	(3,341)	(684)	(684)	(684)
Capital receipts used to support capitalisation direction	(1,011)	(2,208)	(2,208)	(508)	(508)
Capital receipts Received or Forecast	7,212	10,475	1,300	100	100
Forecast Balance as at 31st March	9,210	14,136	12,544	11,452	10,360
Forecast Balance 2020/24 MTFP	9,904	10,245	10,791	10,136	10,136
Variance compared to 2020/24 MTFP	(694)	3,891	1,753	1,316	224

- 5.8 Capital receipts used to support the capitalisation direction were £1.08m less than budgeted for 2020/21, however this was offset by an overall delay in generating some receipts into 2021/22 and beyond and therefore results in a slightly reduced balance of receipts compared to the original budget.
- 5.9 Forecast receipts to be generated in future years have increased since the 2020/21 budget was set and this is demonstrated in the expected overall increase in receipt balances after affording additional capitalisation direction approved as part of 2021/22 budget setting.

6 OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 6.1 This report provides an update on the current financial situation and the challenges facing the Council now and over the medium term. It has been prepared at a time of great uncertainty as the Council still transitions from the emergency response phase of the Covid-19 pandemic towards a period of recovery.
- 6.2 The outturn that has been prepared for consideration is predicated on assumptions that have been independently assessed by budget holders and subsequently reviewed as part of the budget monitoring process. These assumptions don't look to represent a policy position that Cabinet is looking to take on when services are re-opening. Rather they represent a reasoned assessment of the impact on services in year based on known information, anticipated future changes and estimates.
- 6.3 By far the greatest uncertainty that existed during the year was the level of Welsh Government hardship funding to be received to offset additional costs incurred in responding to the Covid-19 emergency response and the significant income losses that have resulted where services have ceased as a result of the enforced lockdown

restrictions in place. This risk diminished during the year as a result of Welsh Government announcements of significant funding to support Councils in Wales and this support currently extends to the 30th September 2021.

7 EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 7.1 The uncertainty around Welsh Government funding of additional costs and losses of income brought about by the response to and the impact of the pandemic has diminished during the year. However, this continues to represent a risk moving into 2021/22 that will only be mitigated by monthly and quarterly submissions to Welsh Government being agreed. And furthermore and beyond those impacts resulting from Covid-19 there exists a number of significant cost pressures that need to be managed regardless.
- 7.2 The Council has traditionally maintained formal reporting to Cabinet at month 2 (period 1), month 7 (period 2) and outturn, with more frequent budget monitoring information being undertaken at a departmental level and reported to management and the Strategic Leadership Team. Only where circumstances necessitate it is more frequent formal reporting to Cabinet required.
- 7.3 As a result of the significant financial challenges facing the Council there has been a more frequent reporting of the in-year revenue and capital outturn forecast. Formal reporting has taken place at months 2, 5, 7, 9 and outturn.
- 7.4 The update of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the development of the budget proposals for 2021/22 and the medium term were challenging. Circa £10.3m of pressures were accommodated in the budget and provides a huge challenge to services to bear down on cost to mitigate these.
- 7.5 There is also further uncertainty given that the UK Government has only undertaken a one-year Comprehensive Spending Review which consequently does not enable Welsh Government to provide any additional certainty around indicative budget settlements for Welsh local authorities in future years.

8 REASONS:

- 8.1 To ensure that the gravity of the financial challenges facing the Council are understood and that reasonable actions are being taken to safeguard the ongoing financial sustainability of the Council.
- 8.2 To provide a timely update on the current financial circumstances and challenges resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic and that will in turn lead to the Council needing to plan and plot a revised course to ensure it remains financially sustainable into the future.

9 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 9.1 The resource implications of the revenue and capital outturn are contained in this report and the attached appendices. The overall surplus on the revenue budget has enabled a

strategy of reserve replenishment which ensures a degree on financial resilience as we move into a further period of significant financial and economic uncertainty.

- 9.2 The financial challenges facing the Council and resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic will be significant over the next 4 years of the MTFP. Not just for this Council but all councils across Wales and the UK. The Council is having to incur significant costs in its response effort and this will continue as it transitions towards recovery. Furthermore and resulting from the restrictions that UK Government and Welsh Government have had to put in place to contain the spread of the virus we are suffering significant shortfalls in our income levels. Some of these will return more quickly than others as services are able to be safely turned back on and this clearly represents a funding risk in the medium term.
- 9.3 The more immediate steps during the year were to curtail non-essential expenditure. Going forward more targeted and planned cost reductions will be challenging and the Council will as always look to minimise impact on service delivery. Though this cannot be guaranteed and is expected if Welsh Government funding falls short of expectations.
- 9.4 The Council continues to work on the basis that it will be fully funded by Welsh Government. However, there is clearly a risk that this will not happen and beyond this there are significant non-Covid-19 pressures being managed. Options to mitigate these risks are limited with recourse to draw on the Council Fund, specific earmarked reserves and useable capital receipts. Replenishment of these reserves as part of the outturn is therefore critical to the ongoing financial sustainability of the Council.

10 **EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**

- 10.1 This report provides Members with information on the revenue and capital outturn position of the Authority and carries no decisions. There are therefore no equality of future generations' implications directly arising from this report.
- 10.2 Any such impacts will be fully considered subsequently when Council receives the budget recovery plan and revised budget proposals.

CONSULTEES:

Senior Leadership Team
Cabinet

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- Appendix 1** – Revenue and capital outturn report including school balances
Appendix 2 – Progress made against mandated savings
Appendix 3 – Capitalisation directive schedule 2020/21
Appendix 4 – Movement in individual school balances
Appendix 5 – Capital slippage schedule

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Overall Revenue Position

Table 1: Council Fund 2020/21 Outturn Summary Statement

Service Area	Original Budget 2020/21	Budget Adjustments 2020/21	Revised Annual Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual (Under) / Over Spend @ Outturn	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend @ M9	Variance from M9 to Outturn
	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's
Social Care, Health & Safeguarding	50,685	(170)	50,515	51,327	811	1,308	(497)
Children & Young People	55,539	480	56,019	56,093	75	86	(12)
Enterprise & Monlife	24,133	(1,946)	22,187	21,688	(499)	3,829	(4,328)
Chief Executives Unit	4,745	(81)	4,664	4,524	(140)	(4)	(136)
Resources	7,746	(445)	7,301	6,454	(847)	387	(1,234)
Corporate Costs & Levies	22,743	229	22,972	20,403	(2,569)	13	(2,582)
Net Cost of Services	165,591	(1,934)	163,658	160,488	(3,170)	5,619	(8,789)
Appropriations	4,856	2,192	7,049	10,623	3,574	(264)	3,838
Expenditure to be Financed	170,447	259	170,706	171,111	405	5,355	(4,950)
Financing	(170,447)	(259)	(170,706)	(171,111)	(405)	(208)	(197)
Net General Fund (Surplus) / Deficit	0	(0)	0	0	(0)	5,147	(5,147)

Table 2: Council Fund 2020/21 Outturn Detailed Statement

Service Area	Original Budget 2020/21	Budget Adjustments 2020/21	Revised Annual Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual (Under) / Over Spend @ Outturn	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend @ M9	Variance from M9 to Outturn
	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's
Adult Services	7,877	(55)	7,822	7,732	(90)	(62)	(28)
Children Services	14,428	(63)	14,365	15,718	1,353	1,433	(80)
Community Care	24,434	30	24,464	24,239	(225)	59	(284)
Commissioning	1,483	(65)	1,418	1,249	(169)	(106)	(63)
Partnerships	436	0	436	436	0	0	0
Public Protection	1,481	(14)	1,467	1,400	(67)	(17)	(50)
Resources & Performance	546	(3)	543	553	10	1	9
Social Care, Health & Safeguarding	50,685	(170)	50,515	51,326	811	1,308	(497)
Individual Schools Budget	47,420	(356)	47,064	46,766	(298)	(434)	136
Resources	1,234	(44)	1,190	1,176	(14)	3	(17)
Standards	6,885	880	7,765	8,151	386	518	(132)
Children & Young People	55,539	480	56,019	56,093	74	87	(13)
Business Growth and Enterprise	2,468	(260)	2,208	2,242	34	(62)	96
Facilities & Fleet Management	5,665	(1,266)	4,399	4,528	129	922	(793)
Neighbourhood Services	10,483	(259)	10,224	10,275	51	500	(449)
Planning & Housing	1,951	(130)	1,821	1,314	(507)	1,245	(1,752)
Countryside & Culture (MonLife)	1,348	(8)	1,340	1,345	5	121	(116)
Finance & Business Development (MonLife)	1,507	116	1,623	1,484	(139)	(43)	(96)
Leisure, Youth & Outdoor Adventure (MonLife)	710	(139)	571	499	(72)	1,146	(1,218)

Service Area	Original Budget 2020/21	Budget Adjustments 2020/21	Revised Annual Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual (Under) / Over Spend @ Outturn	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend @ M9	Variance from M9 to Outturn
Enterprise & Monlife	24,132	(1,946)	22,186	21,687	(499)	3,829	(4,328)
Legal & Land Charges	839	(6)	833	724	(109)	(27)	(82)
Governance, Democracy & Support	3,906	(75)	3,831	3,799	(32)	23	(55)
Chief Executives Unit	4,745	(81)	4,664	4,523	(141)	(4)	(137)
Finance	2,597	(80)	2,517	1,762	(755)	39	(794)
Information, Communication Technology	2,803	57	2,860	2,784	(76)	(431)	355
People	1,725	94	1,819	1,766	(53)	(112)	59
Future Monmouthshire	(46)	(25)	(71)	12	83	83	0
Commercial & Corporate Landlord	667	(492)	175	131	(44)	808	(852)
Resources	7,746	(446)	7,300	6,455	(845)	387	(1,232)
Precepts & Levies	20,379	1	20,380	20,382	2	2	0
Coroner's	117	0	117	152	35	35	0
Archives	182	0	182	182	0	0	0
Corporate Management	293	0	293	(26)	(319)	(231)	(88)
Non Distributed Costs (NDC)	492	0	492	684	192	215	(23)
Strategic Initiatives	(167)	228	61	(2,375)	(2,436)	(61)	(2,375)
Insurance	1,447	0	1,447	1,404	(43)	52	(95)
Corporate Costs & Levies	22,743	229	22,972	20,403	(2,569)	12	(2,581)
Net Cost of Services	165,590	(1,934)	163,656	160,487	(3,169)	5,619	(8,788)
Fixed Asset Disposal Costs	20	45	65	68	3	6	(3)
Interest & Investment Income	(252)	0	(252)	(206)	46	162	(116)
Interest Payable & Similar Charges	4,020	27	4,047	3,709	(338)	(331)	(7)

Service Area	Original Budget 2020/21	Budget Adjustments 2020/21	Revised Annual Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual (Under) / Over Spend @ Outturn	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend @ M9	Variance from M9 to Outturn
Charges Required under Regulation	6,251	(108)	6,143	6,075	(68)	(81)	13
Other Investment Income	(1,153)	1,153	0	(25)	(25)	(14)	(11)
Borrowing Cost Recoupment	(3,425)	50	(3,375)	(3,538)	(163)	(6)	(157)
Contributions to Reserves	143	688	831	4,950	4,119	0	4,119
Contributions from reserves	(747)	86	(661)	(661)	0	0	0
Capital expenditure financed from revenue	0	252	252	252	0	0	0
Appropriations	4,857	2,193	7,050	10,624	3,574	(264)	3,838
Expenditure to be Financed	170,447	259	170,706	171,111	405	5,355	(4,950)
General Government Grants	(64,824)	(2,899)	(67,723)	(67,723)	0	0	0
Non Domestic Rates	(32,936)	2,899	(30,037)	(30,037)	0	0	0
Council tax	(79,572)	(259)	(79,831)	(80,238)	(407)	(367)	(40)
Council Tax Benefit Support	6,885	0	6,885	6,887	2	159	(157)
Financing	(170,447)	(259)	(170,706)	(171,111)	(405)	(208)	(197)
Net General Fund (Surplus) / Deficit	0	0	0	0	0	5,147	(5,147)

DIRECTORATE – DIVISION VARIANCE COMMENTS

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & SAFEGUARDING	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	1,630	1,448	1,707	1,308	811

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & SAFEGUARDING DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY:

The directorate outturn for 2020/21 was an overspend of £811K, a £497K decrease since month 9, as a result of late Discharge to Reassess funding from Health of £553K. Of the over spend, £346K is as a result of the pressure from the additional 1.75% unfunded staff pay award and £242K unachievable 2% staff efficiency saving. The directorate budget was also assisted by the Social Care Workforce and Sustainability Grant from Welsh Government of £984K.

The Adult Services division finished the financial year with an underspend of £474K, an increase in underspend since M9 of £365K, largely due to funding received from Health via the Discharge to Reassess scheme. This area of the directorate has also benefitted in year from the Social Care Workforce and Sustainability (SCWS) grant of circa £1M and Intermediate Care Funding (ICF), with ICF having a planned termination date of 31st March 2022.

Children's Services has a predicted overspend of £1.353M, a £81K reduction since the reported M9 forecast. This element of the directorate received a significant injection as part of the 2020/21 budget allocation, however, this was based on CLA numbers at that time being 197. Since the budget for 2020/21 was set, the service had a further influx of children to 219 at the end of 2019/20, and at the close of the financial year CLA numbers stood at 213.

Public Protection continues to strive to remain within its budget, turning out an underspend of £67K, an increase in underspend since M9 of £50K, due to some reduced activity as a result of COVID 19.

ADULT SERVICES

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	24	156	180	(62)	(90)

Net effect of additional pay award, not achieving the 2% staff efficiency saving and additional spend in the care at home service, less reduced premise expenditure with day service closures as a result of COVID 19 plus Winter Pressures funding from Health.

CHILDREN SERVICES

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	1,575	1,459	1,460	1,433	1,353

£1M overspend in providing care and placements for our Looked After Children which closed at 213 at year end, £260K overspend in legal costs and the remaining overspend as a result of continued use of agency staffing which currently stands at 9 being employed plus the increased staff pay award.

COMMUNITY CARE

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(63)	(209)	(4)	60	(225)

This division is being held up by a circa £1M SCWS grant plus Winter Pressures funding from Health.

COMMISSIONING					
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'s	(118)	(63)	(103)	(106)	(169)
Ongoing vacant Commissioning Officer post and realignment of Service Level Agreements, netting the costs of increased staff pay award.					
PARTNERSHIPS					
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	0	0	0
No variances					
PUBLIC PROTECTION					
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'s	211	109	177	(17)	(67)
Underspend is as a result of reduced activity, mainly within commercial and environmental health, as a result of COVID 19.					
RESOURCES & PERFORMANCE					
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	1	(5)	(4)	0	10
As a result of the increased staff pay award.					

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	84	19	125	87	75
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY:					
The Directorate's Outturn position is an over spend of £75k, which can be attributed to ALN. However, this has been partially offset by the surplus balance following the closure of Mounton House, which has been transferred to the central CYP budgets to support the wider education budgets.					
INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS BUDGET					
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	(264)	(316)	(434)	(298)
The decrease in underspend of £136k since month 9 is due to an increase in Monmouth Comp Rates for 2020-21 and a provision for possible discrepancies regarding back pay for a school.					
RESOURCES					
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	37	22	14	3	(14)
The underspend is due to vacancy savings					

STANDARDS					
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	47	261	426	518	386
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recoupment increased by (income received from other LA's) (£151,000) Independent placement costs overspent by £127,000 Other LA placement costs overspent by £186,000 Additional support for pupils attending our schools overspent by £493,000 Underspend on early years (rising 3's) due to school closure (£150,000) Overspend on breakfast clubs £45,000 Underspend on ALN Transport due to school closure (£109,000) <p>Within the overspend of £493,000 relating to the additional support for pupils attending our own schools, £200,000 relates to additional funding for the additional learning needs units in Overmonnow (£100k) and Monmouth Comprehensive (£100k). Both these units are able to accommodate more MCC pupils, resulting in less pupils needing to be educated either in independent or other LA schools. While this has resulted in an over spend, the fees paid for the other schools would have resulted in the over spend being higher.</p> <p>Included in the independent placement costs is £107,000 relating to the three remaining pupils at Mounton House, this cost has been transferred from Mounton House to support this.</p> <p>Breakfast clubs have seen a reduction in numbers since re-opening following the Summer and Spring Term lockdowns, which has led to a reduction in income.</p>					

ENTERPRISE	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	5,950	5,113	4,617	3,829	(499)

ENTERPRISE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY:

The Enterprise and MonLife Directorate is forecasting an outturn position of £499k surplus at year end. This is an improved position since Month 9 and the details of these changes are provided within the next sections of this report.

The impact of COVID-19 has been significant across all of the services with both a loss of income and additional costs incurred to operate critical front line services during the pandemic. In addition to the direct impacts of the pandemic service areas identified pressures where budget savings have not been implemented or ongoing pressures continued to affect services.

Across all Services, all eligible additional costs and income losses have been claimed against any Welsh Government funding that has been made available. In addition, service areas have been successful in securing grant funding which has enabled us to passport core costs to grant funding activity. Since month 9 a number of service areas have been able to report a significantly improved position as WG has confirmed that costs or income losses can be covered by the support grants available due to COVID.

BUSINESS GROWTH & ENTERPRISE

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
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Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	46	29	(50)	(62)	34
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Business Growth & Enterprise has underspent by £34k, this can be split down to the following :-

- Abergavenny Borough Theatre – Break-even.
- RDP & Youth Enterprise - £3k underspent due to offsetting core staff costs with grant funding.
- Communications - £10k underspent due to improved income.
- Community & Pship Development - £44k underspent, mainly due to staff savings as we have been able to passport core costs to grant funding.
- Enterprise Mgt & Strategic Projects - £90k overspent mainly due to unfunded pay award and over-accrual of public transport subsidy grant.

FACILITIES & FLEET MANAGEMENT

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	1,339	1,097	1,222	923	129

Facilities & Fleet Management has overspent by £129k.

- **Catering** - £103k underspent. The service was adversely affected by the pandemic but WG Covid income support has enabled the unit to recover lost meal income based on 19-20 performance, as a result 20-21 outturn has mirrored the 19-20 outturn producing an underspend against budget.
- **Building Cleaning** - £36k underspent. This is mainly due to an increase in internal income as the unit has picked up a number of contracts that have been brought back in-house.
- **Passenger Transport** - £24k overspend, due in the main :-

Private Hire & Service 65 - £5k overspent due to vehicle maintenance costs, receipt of Covid income support to cover lost hire income has improved the outturn from M9.

School Transport Operations - £96k overspent – due to a combination of historic staff pressure c/fwd from 19-20 and additional hours required to cover new Covid transport arrangements and additional staffing required to cover recent contract hand backs. The reduction from M9 relates to a number of factors; overtime payments were not as high as anticipated, agency staff were not required, furlough income included for February and March all of this is due to schools not going back until later than predicted.

Commissioning - £87k underspent due to staff vacancies, and a reduction in contract costs due to the school closures.

- **Fleet Maintenance** - £248k overspent, due to:-
 - Vehicle maintenance costs have increased over and above available budget, an element of this could be attributed to the requirement for additional vehicles due to Covid requirements.
 - Increased maintenance of our depots in Raglan and Caldicot.
 - A reduction in members of the Green Car scheme has hit savings (£6k).

The £793k positive swing from Month 9 can be mainly attributed to WG income support payments driving down service overspends in Passenger Transport and Catering.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
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Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	1,456	1,153	783	500	51
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Neighbourhood services has overspent by £51k.

- **Highways & Street Lighting** - £63k underspent. Street Lighting has underspent by £103k, LED lamp replacement has generated savings from reduced output, in addition KWH rates were lower than budgeted, this has resulted in an underspend against our electricity budget. This has been offset by a net £40k overspend in Highways Operations as plant purchases that were to be reserve funded are to remain within the service.
- **Waste & Street Scene** - £114k overspent – This can be broken down into 2 main areas:-
 - Waste Services - £57k overspent – Main issues :-
 - Impact of Covid – Even though all the additional expenditure and the loss of external income has been covered off by the WG support grant covid still has impacted on the service in 20-21, this is because most of the planned interventions to help improve the budget deficit were stopped or delayed due to the pandemic.
 - Non-Covid related pressures – the volatility in the global recycling market continues to impact negatively on treatment and disposal costs for recycling and waste materials. In addition the abeyance of Usk CA site closure delayed service savings (£30k), there was also pressure caused by no budget increase for contracts and fuel inflation and the delayed roll out of polyprop bags. We have been fortunate that many of these pressures have been offset by the receipt of a number of WG Circular Economy grants and it has allowed us to passport core costs such as officer time against grant reducing service spend, this is the main reason for the improvement from Month 9.
 - Grounds Maintenance – £57k overspent – mainly due to additional expenditure incurred in meeting contractual obligations later in the year as a result of Grounds supporting waste collections during April and May.

PLANNING, HOUSING and Highways Dev & Flooding

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	1,011	1,067	993	1,245	(507)

Planning, Housing and Highways Dev & Flooding has underspent by £507k.

- **Planning & Building Control** - £102k underspent – this is due to a staff vacancy and savings against professional fees. The income shortfall has been covered off by the WG Covid support grant and is the reason for the improvement in outturn from Month 9.
- **Planning Policy** - £137k underspent - this is due to savings in professional and specialist fees costs due to delays in the LDP.
- **Housing** - £165k underspent - The majority of the underspend is found in our Shared Housing and Private Leasing schemes where net rental received from tenants has exceeded budgeted expectations, the final position on rent accounts cannot be calculated until financial year end so the extent of underspend was not known during the year and is the reason for the positive swing between reporting periods. In addition we have also been able to fund some staffing from grant funding. The increased expenditure relating to Welsh Government Covid related requirements to support homeless households and implement new Welsh Government homeless policy, has been funded by the WG Covid support grant so has not affected outturn position.
- **Car Parking, Highways Development & Flooding** - £103k underspent. Main areas:-

- Car Parks - £108k overspent – this is due to increased costs in car park rates, transport and supplies and services. All of the income shortfall reported at M9 has been covered off by the WG support grant and is the reason for the improvement between reporting periods.
- Highways Development & flooding - £211k underspent – mainly as a result of staff vacancies across the department where the decision was made to freeze vacant posts to help with recovery of car park overspend.

There has been a very large positive swing between outturn and Month 9, this is mainly due to the receipt of WG income support grant in Housing, Car Parks and Planning that has reduced service overspends.

(MONLIFE) Countryside & Culture

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	42	40	81	121	5

Countryside & Culture - £5k overspent- The service has been heavily impacted by Covid and flooding in 20-21. All income lost due to event cancellation has been covered by the WG Covid support grant, the small overspend relates to additional costs as a result of the flooding that could not be covered by grant.

(MONLIFE) Finance & Business Development

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(118)	(150)	(106)	(43)	(139)

Finance & Business development- £139k underspent – Mainly due to staff savings from vacant posts throughout the service. All income losses have been covered by WG support grant and is the reason for the positive swing from Month 9.

(MONLIFE) Leisure, Youth & Outdoor Adventure

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	2,173	1,877	1,694	1,146	(72)

Leisure, Youth & Outdoor Adventure - £72k underspent.

The closure of our Leisure centres and Outdoor Adventure sites due to Covid has had an adverse impact on income generation in 20-21. Without the WG income support grant we would have been reporting a sizable overspend but the grant has allowed us to cover off any shortfall so our revenue outturn position is not affected. The £72k underspend is mainly due to staff vacancies across the department.

CHIEF EXECUTIVES UNIT	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	187	144	63	(4)	(140)
LEGAL & LAND CHARGES					
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn

Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	78	92	40	(27)	(109)
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Legal - £93k underspend - this is mainly as a result of staff savings due to the employment lawyer post not being filled in 20-21 and a reduction in supplies and services.

Land charges – £16k underspend – this is mainly due to the small ‘boom’ in the house market as CV restrictions eased resulting in a considerable improvement in search income over the last 2 quarters, augmented by WG covid support that covered the initial period of the housing market being shut down.

The £82k improvement from M9 is due to the extent of staff and supplies savings in legal not being fully known at M9 and the pick up in search income in the last quarter in land charges.

GOVERNANCE, DEMOCRACY & SUPPORT

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	109	52	23	23	(32)

The **Community Hubs** sections is forecasting to overspend by £8k - this is due to over spends in Usk Post Office as this budget area is not being completely funded and therefore running at a loss and insufficient budget for Gilwern Library. This is offset in part by savings across some of the other hubs due to a decrease in spend on supplies and services.

The **Contact Centre** is reporting a £15k overspend, this is due to a proposed budget saving that can no longer be delivered and is now reflected as a pressure in the 21-22 budget model.

The **Corporate Section** is forecasting to overspend by £11k, this is due to an overspend relating to supplies and services and a copyright licencing fee.

The **Democratic Services Section** is forecasting to underspend by £86,000, this is due to savings in Elections where we have had savings from not having to undertake the annual canvass, grant windfalls relating to voting for 16/17 year olds and underspends in supplies and services mainly due to Members working from home. The extent of grant windfalls were not known at M9 and is the main reason for the improvement.

Policy and Partnerships is forecasting to overspend by £25k, this is mainly due to an increase in Welsh Language Translation costs.

RESOURCES	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	782	694	192	387	(867)

RESOURCES DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY:

Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic has adversely impacted front line services the directorate has equally suffered significantly but in different ways. The outturn position has moved significantly and positively from that reported at month 9. This is principally as a consequence of the shortfalls in income as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic being fully covered from Welsh Government's COVID Hardship Fund. A significant pressure resulting from B&B claims for homeless people, and which didn't attract full subsidy from DWP, has also been funded by Welsh Government's COVID-19 Hardship Fund.

The outturn position has also benefitted from vacancy savings and notably where senior finance posts and property posts are not being filled. This is not a sustainable position and will not be a permanent

feature and is currently being addressed.

FINANCE

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	137	189	173	39	(755)

Finance - £237k underspent – This is due to staff savings from senior finance staff vacancies.

Audit - £52k underspent due to staff savings as we have funded collaboration costs through capital as part of capitalisation directive (£36k) and savings due to maternity leave (£14.5k).

Revenues - £374k underspend. This can be attributed to :-

- **Benefits** - £63k overspent. This reflects the net position against the Housing Benefit budget once all subsidies and grants have been taken into account. Certain projects, especially for drug and alcohol support, are not eligible for full subsidy and fall to the council to finance any shortfall.
- **Council Tax** - £59k overspend. This is mainly due to an over spend against salary costs as budget has been moved as part of the Resources restructure, this has been offset by underspends in finance above.
- **Charity Relief** - £477k underspend. This is due to 2 main reasons 1) We haven't used any funding set aside in 20-21 for Business Rate support (this is separate to the covid support grants) 2) We also received £347,000 funding from Welsh Government for the administration of the Business Support Grant process. The income is to cover additional staff and admin costs incurred but these are held within the relevant services department.
- **Debtors** - £19k underspend – this is due to a staff vacancy saving, due to the financial impact of covid19 the decision was made not to fill this post until April 2021.

Systems & Cashiers - £95k underspend – main reasons relate to software and system development savings and security carrier costs as activity is down due to Covid shutdown.

There is a large positive swing from month 9 of £796k – this is due to the receipt of Covid support payments driving down the over spend in housing benefits. In addition the extent of funding available from the Business Support grant was not known at M9.

INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	40	(128)	(431)	(431)	(76)

The ICT section has underspent by £76k. This is due to savings within SRS that meant our annual cost was £55k below budgeted contribution and underspends in the Digital Programme Team of £17k.

The £355k negative swing from Month 9 is due to 1) we had anticipated moving staff costs from the DPO to capital as part of the capitalisation directive, due to the overall positive position of the authority this adjustment was not undertaken. 2) we had reported at M9 that we would be drawing back from SRS some MCC specific reserves – this has now not happened as we are anticipating these reserves will be needed in 21-22 to finance specific projects.

PEOPLE

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(2)	6	(68)	(112)	(53)

- **People Services** - £32k overspend - this is due to system development costs of the new payroll system offset by staff savings as a result of posts only been filled part way through the year. It was reported at M9 that the system development costs would be moved to capital but it has been decided to leave these within the service and is the reason for the reduction in underspend between the reporting periods.

- **Organisational Development** - £63k underspend, this is mainly due to staff savings as we have transferred staff costs involved with service transformation to capital as part of the capitalisation directive.

- **Customer Relations** - £23k underspend due to a reduction in professional fees and staff secondment savings.

FUTURE MONMOUTHSHIRE

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	112	112	82	82	83

Future Monmouthshire - £83k overspend. £112k of Corporate Agency and travel savings have been built into the budget for 20-21 – currently these are deemed unachievable or are being achieved within directorate budgets and are thus contained in their respective forecasts. This has been offset by staff savings of £30k as we are covering secondment costs of a member of staff from WG.

COMMERCIAL & CORPORATE LANDLORD

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	495	515	437	808	(44)

Commercial & Corporate Landlord is forecasting a £44k underspend:-

- **Investment Properties** has underspent by £200k, this can be split into 3 areas:-

- **Investment Assets other** - £200k overspent, our MTFP for 20-21 included a £200k saving to reflect additional income from the purchase of more investment properties. No additional purchases were made in 20-21 (due to Covid) so the saving could not be achieved.
- **Newport Leisure Park** – On Budget. The pandemic has affected the leisure and retail sector greatly in 20-21, this has impacted on rental receipts at our Newport site as most of the units have been closed for the majority of the year. Officers have worked with tenants to recover owed rent where applicable, any rental shortfall due to lockdown restrictions has been fully funded by the WG Covid 19 Hardship fund, and this additional support has enabled us to report a break-even budget for 20-21.
- **Castlegate** – On Budget. Castlegate has seen in year savings of £165k relating to windfall loan repayments and reductions in consultant and insurance costs – this saving has been moved to reserves, this reserve is set up to provide a sinking fund to support the investment and protect MCC position against any negative impacts as set out in the investment plan. This movement to reserves brings the budget back to a break-even position.

- **Estates** - £22k underspent – this is mainly due to a shortfall in income of £100k as the creation of a development company has been delayed, offset by staff savings (£120k) as a result of vacant posts not being filled during the year.

- **Solar Farm & Sustainability**- £97k underspent – despite a drop in ROC unit prices due to a drop off in demand because of lockdown our renewables are still returning a surplus and we have generated enough income to exceed budget, in addition we have seen a small underspend in rates, maintenance and professional fees.

• A combined net underspend in **County Farms, Cemeteries, Markets & Industrial units** of £27k – this is mainly due to staff savings in Markets being offset by a reduction in rental income in County Farms due to the change in farm portfolio.

• **Property Services & Facilities Mgt** has underspent by £109k, made up as follows:-

- Property & Office Services underspent by £28k, this is mainly due to staff savings as vacant posts were not filled during the year, this has been offset by a reduction in capital income as we were unable to charge fees on projects delayed due to Covid.
- Corporate Building Maintenance has underspent by £52k, we were able to move elements of school maintenance costs to a WG grant – this has created an under spend that was not known at M9.
- Property Accommodation has underspent by £70k due to savings in maintenance and utilities costs as offices have been closed or in limited operation due to Covid19.
- Telephony underspent by £15k as contracted call charges came in below budget.

There has been a large positive swing of £852k from what was reported at Month 9, this can mainly be attributed to the receipt of WG Covid support grant driving down overspends in Investments and Estates.

CORPORATE COSTS & LEVIES	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	1,480	66	43	12	(2,569)
PRECEPTS & LEVIES					
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	2	2	2	2	2
Small overspend on National parks levy of £2k due to notification of levy late in the budget process.					
CORONERS SERVICES					
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	23	23	23	35	35
An increase in workload and staffing requirements along with DDA compliance works will lead to a forecast £35k overspend against budget.					
CORPORATE MANAGEMENT					
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	(114)	(191)	(231)	(319)
Primarily due to the forecast receipt receivable on the final dissolution of Capita Gwent Consultancy (£109k), rate refunds on Authority owned premises which were not known about until mid-way through the year (£120k), and additional unbudgeted dividend from the Greater Gwent Crematorium (£73k)					
NON DISTRIBUTED COSTS					
Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	108	108	215	215	192

Additional pension strain costs relating to redundancies. Strain costs relate to staff who retire before their normal pension age and where the employer is required to top up the pension fund to cover the shortfall in contributions. The majority of these costs would not have been known about at budget setting stage due to the uncertainty over the timing, value and individual pension implications of redundancies.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	1,300	0	(61)	(61)	(2,436)

The budgets held for incremental pay pressure (£420k pressure) and cross directorate efficiency savings (£359k saving) are to remain centrally and not be distributed to service budgets.

Alongside this and notified since month 9, receipt of significant specific Covid-19 grants from Welsh Government totalling £2.38m that have been taken corporately and to assist in future financial resilience.

INSURANCE

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	47	46	56	53	(43)

A slight over spend against the premium budget of £27k based on the results of the Insurance renewal and the increase in costs for the period Oct 2020 to April 2021 due to the worsening of claims experience. The flooding events led to a significant property claim at Monmouth LC and Covid19 has led to significant travel claims relating to cancelled school trips.

This is more than offset by savings in self-insured costs and professional fees based on claims activity during the year of £70k.

APPROPRIATIONS	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(77)	(83)	(163)	(263)	3,574

FIXED ASSET DISPOSAL COSTS

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	25	6	6	3

Costs forecast over and above the current budget due to unforeseen surveys and studies relating to disposal sites.

INTEREST & INVESTMENT INCOME

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	163	181	162	162	46

The forecast rate of return achievable following the Covid1-9 pandemic has reduced significantly from budgeted levels as the UK Government refines its economic response. To a lesser extent this has also impacted forecast returns on Property and combined funds which are propping up the current returns. The improvement since month 9 reflects the finalisation of returns in year on these combined funds which are often hard to estimate during the year given Foreign Exchange market adjustments.

Government deposits have largely returned 0% and have at times given a negative rate of return on deposits, especially when taking into account transaction fees.

INTEREST PAYABLE & SIMILAR CHARGES

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(126)	(164)	(230)	(330)	(338)

In October 2019 the PWLB took the unprecedented step of increasing its borrowing margin across the board by 1% in reaction to increased levels of borrowing by Local Authorities to fund commercial investments. This resulted in PWLB borrowing being uneconomic when compared to short term borrowing sourced from other public bodies and consequently the Authority's approach has been modified resulting in lower borrowing costs in the short term. PWLB has since reversed this decision but longer term rates continue to remain unattractive in the near term until capital spending plans are firmed up. Rates remain low on inter local authority borrowing further reducing costs.

CHARGES REQUIRED UNDER REGULATION

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(113)	(113)	(82)	(82)	(68)

A high level of slippage in the capital programme has resulted in some assets not being operational by 31/03/2020 and consequently the MRP charge for those assets being deferred by at least one year.

OTHER INVESTMENT INCOME

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(1)	(12)	(14)	(14)	(25)

Unexpected recoupment following the final winding up of Heritable bank which had previously defaulted, alongside small wayleaves and easement receipts.

TRANSFERS TO/FROM EARMARKED RESERVES

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	0	0	4,119

As outlined in the covering report

BORROWING COST RECOUPMENT

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	(5)	(6)	(163)

The variance reflects the late addition of recoupment of unbudgeted borrowing costs in relation to energy efficient street lighting capital schemes. The scheme arrangements were clarified well into the financial year and as a result the borrowing cost recoupment was not forecast during the year.

FINANCING	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	336	20	(156)	(209)	(405)

COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT SUPPORT

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	336	324	229	159	2

This budget has been under particular pressure, as a direct result of Covid 19. Since the beginning of the year caseload has increased rising from 5,721 at the start of April 2020 to 6,168 by the end of March 2021. This increase in cases resulted in a £350,000 overspend by year end. However the Welsh Government released specific funding to Local Authorities to help manage this pressure. Monmouthshire received £348,000 such funding, resulting in a small over spend at year end.

COUNCIL TAX

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	(305)	(385)	(368)	(407)

A council tax surplus has been anticipated throughout the year. Whilst the in year collection rate is down by 1.1% compared to the same time last year, the council tax base remained healthy. By the end of the year an additional 400 properties had been added to the tax base resulting in the surplus reported above.

2. SCHOOL BALANCES

- 2.1. A Board of Governors who are responsible for managing the school's finances directly governs each of the Authority's Schools. However, the Authority also holds a key responsibility for monitoring the overall financial performance of schools. Below is a table showing the outturn forecast Schools' balances position based on month 9 projections for each Educational Cluster.
- 2.2. The monitoring earlier in the year at month 2 included a surplus balance of £206,518 for Mounton House. As the school has now closed this balance has been transferred into central education budgets, of which, £107,000 has been used to support the placement costs for the 3 remaining MCC pupils and the remaining £100,000 has been used to offset the overspend in CYP.

Council Fund Outturn 2020/21 – School Balances Summary outturn position	Reserves (Surplus) / Deficit 01/04/2020	Movement from / (to) School Balances	Reserves (Surplus) / Deficit 31/03/2021	Number Schools in deficit 01/04/2020 Primary/ Secondary	Number Schools in deficit 01/04/2020 Primary/ Secondary
	£000's	£'000	£'000		
Cluster					
Abergavenny	(118)	(1,040)	(1,158)	2 1	0 0
Caldicot	160	(1,250)	(1,091)	4 1	0 0
Chepstow	24	(373)	(349)	2 1	0 1
Monmouth	518	(1,313)	(794)	4 1	1 0
Special	(149)	123	(26)	1 0	0 0
Total	435	(3,853)	(3,418)	13 4	1 1

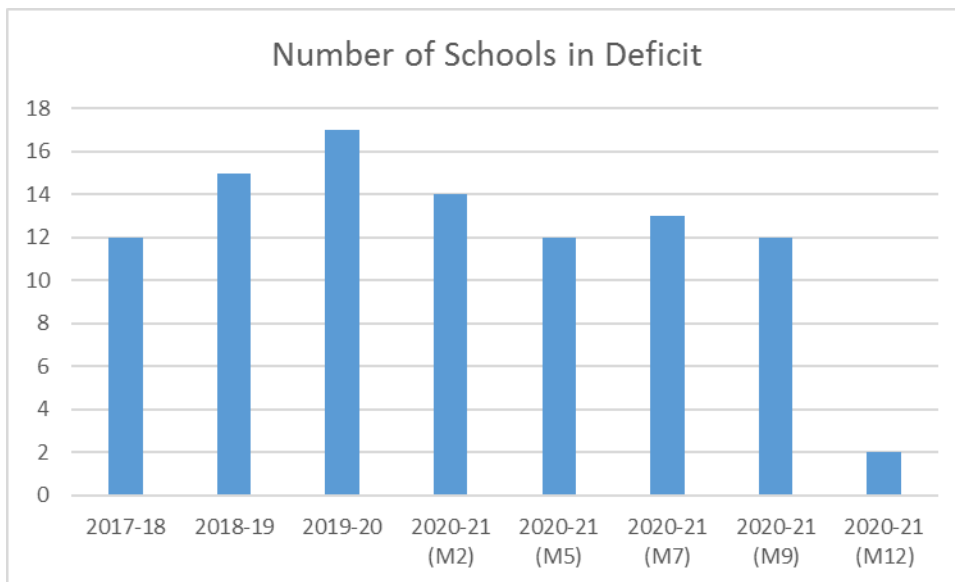
- 2.3. In terms of the overall movement in school balances, 2020/21 has been an unprecedented year. Schools have received several specific Welsh Government grants totalling £1.77m to further support them and their pupils and these have predominately displaced core budgets in 2020/21 or been committed for use in 2021/22 in line with the grant terms. Furthermore, due largely to the sustained periods of enforced closure during the financial year spending on budgets areas such as staff cover, premises, supplies & services and examination fees, were significantly curtailed and produced savings totalling £2.08m.
- 2.4. These factors mean that the overall level of the school reserves has increased by £3.85m as at the 31st March 2021, taking schools collectively out of a net deficit of £435k to an overall surplus of £3.42m. As a result of this 15 of the 17 schools entering the year in deficit have returned to a surplus balance.
- 2.5. The two main grants received from Welsh Government relate to a Schools Revenue Maintenance Grant and Recruit, Recover and Raise Standards. Schools carrying significant surplus balances that are above levels guided by Welsh Government (£50k for a Primary, £100k for a Secondary) will be asked to provide investment plans setting out how they intend to spend the significant surplus balances being held. It is also clear that the inherent structural budget deficits that have led to a situation of 17 schools being in deficit at the start of the year remain and require resolution irrespective of additional funding received.
- 2.6. In particular and in specific relation to Chepstow Comprehensive, when the windfall Welsh Government grants are disregarded, it masks a significant in-year budget deficit that has been brought about significantly due to the curtailing of any staff redundancies during the pandemic and

that were pivotal to their recovery plans. This leaves the school in a comparably weaker position than they would have been in if they had executed their recovery plans as intended, and where they do not now have the level of surplus balances that the other three comprehensive schools now have to strategically invest over the medium term.

2.7. The movement of individual schools forecast to be in deficit during the year and the final position is shown below:

Start of year	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	End of year
Total: 17	Total: 14	Total: 12	Total: 13	Total: 12	Total: 2
Caldicot Comprehensive	Caldicot Comprehensive	Caldicot Comprehensive	Caldicot Comprehensive	Caldicot Comprehensive	
Chepstow Comprehensive	Chepstow Comprehensive	Chepstow Comprehensive	Chepstow Comprehensive	Chepstow Comprehensive	Chepstow Comprehensive
King Henry VIII Comprehensive	King Henry VIII Comprehensive	**			
Monmouth Comprehensive	Monmouth Comprehensive	Monmouth Comprehensive	Monmouth Comprehensive	Monmouth Comprehensive	
Llandogo Primary	Llandogo Primary	Llandogo Primary	Llandogo Primary	Llandogo Primary	Llandogo Primary
Llantilio Pertholey CIW Primary					
Magor CIW Primary					
Osbaston CiW Primary	Osbaston CiW Primary	Osbaston CiW Primary	Osbaston CiW Primary	Osbaston CiW Primary	
Overmonnow Primary			Overmonnow Primary	Overmonnow Primary	
Pupil Referral Service	Pupil Referral Service	Pupil Referral Service	Pupil Referral Service	Pupil Referral Service	
Raglan CiW Primary	Raglan CiW Primary				
Rogiet Primary					
St Mary's RC Primary	St Mary's RC Primary	St Mary's RC Primary	St Mary's RC Primary	St Mary's RC Primary	
	The Dell Primary School	The Dell Primary School	The Dell Primary School	The Dell Primary School	
Thornwell Primary	Thornwell Primary	Thornwell Primary	Thornwell Primary		
Undy Primary	Undy Primary	Undy Primary	Undy Primary	Undy Primary	
Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	
Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin	Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin	

** King Henry VIII Comprehensive School forecast balance at month 5 onwards included a Local Authority loan of £250,000 which was estimated to result in a surplus year-end balance. Given the current year end surplus, the school will not be taking the loan at this time.



- 2.8. All schools in a deficit budget have, or are in the process of agreeing recovery plans. These recovery plans will be confirmed with both the Local Education Authority and each School's Governing Body. Once finalised the schools with significant deficits will be monitored by the Cabinet member for Children and Young People and Resources on a termly basis.
- 2.9. Total schools balances have been exhibiting a fluctuating trend with some schools showing a continuing reduction in schools balances, which is of concern, and others a more balanced trend. However, as previously mentioned, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, several grants were awarded to schools at year end, which has resulted in a large increase in school balances for 2020-21.

Financial Year	School Balances (Surplus)/Deficit £000	Year on Year Movement £000	Number of Schools in Deficit
2014-15	(1,140)		5
2015-16	(1,156)	(16)	6
2016-17	(269)	887	12
2017-18	(175)	94	12
2018-19	232	407	15
2019-20	435	203	17
2020-21	(3,418)	(3,853)	2

3 CAPITAL OUTTURN

3.1 The summary Capital outturn position is as follows:

Capital Outturn Position 2020/21

Select Portfolio	Slippage B/F	Original Budget	Budget Revisions	Approved Slippage	Revised Budget 2020/21	Actual Outturn	Variance at Outturn	Variance at M9
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Expenditure								
Children & Young People	1,245	14,423	1,872	(15,381)	2,160	2,151	(9)	0
Economic & Development	17,496	3,068	30	(19,274)	1,320	1,320	0	0
Adult	300	5,678	0	(5,964)	14	14	0	0
Strong Communities	5,801	10,139	12,079	(9,301)	18,718	15,546	(3,171)	(157)
Total Expenditure	24,842	33,308	13,981	(49,920)	22,211	19,031	(3,180)	(157)
Financing								
Supported Borrowing	0	(2,417)	0	0	(2,417)	(2,417)	0	0
General Capital Grant	0	(2,423)	0	0	(2,423)	(2,423)	0	0
Grants and Contributions	(393)	(18,229)	(10,826)	19,095	(10,353)	(8,623)	(1,730)	157
S106 Contributions	(1,052)	0	(166)	711	(507)	(507)	0	0
Unsupported Borrowing	(22,546)	(5,275)	(2,032)	27,217	(2,637)	(3,442)	805	0
Reserve & Revenue Funding	(239)	(2)	(252)	241	(252)	(252)	0	0
Capital Receipts	(612)	(3,462)	(705)	2,656	(2,123)	(1,042)	(1,080)	0
Leasing	0	(1,500)	0	0	(1,500)	(325)	(1,175)	0
Total Financing	(24,842)	(33,308)	(13,981)	49,920	(22,211)	(19,031)	(3,180)	157

3.2 The capital expenditure outturn for 2020/21 shows a saving of £3.18m against budget, however it is important to note that this does not fully represent released capital financing available for future use. The variances can be explained as follows:

- Reduced usage of the Capitalisation Directive budget by £1.08m following clarification of the revenue outturn position. This subsequently releases capital receipts back to the capital receipts reserve to utilise for future capital investment.
- Specific grant funding budgets of £1.92m that have not been able to be spent within the financial year primarily due to a combination of late notification of the grant awards, a lack of resources available to complete eligible works and a shortage of appropriate schemes that fit within the grant criteria stipulated. This under spend does not release any capital financing for future use as the grant actually paid matches the overall expenditure.

- Vehicle replacement has under spent by £172k due to clarification of vehicles requirements during the year. These purchases were originally budgeted to be funded by leasing but following an options appraisal it was more cost-effective to finance the majority of vehicles via borrowing. The under spend does not release any capital financing for future use.

3.3 The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has caused significant disruption to the progress of budgeted capital schemes with slippage at outturn totalling £49.92m (£40.45m at month 9). The Covid-19 impact is affecting both internally and externally managed projects, with disruption to external supply chains, increased contract risk and potential inflationary cost pressures sitting alongside internal resourcing pressures.

3.4 The slippage is broken down as follows:

Scheme	Forecast Slippage Month 2 (000's)	Forecast Slippage Month 5 (000's)	Forecast Slippage Month 7 (000's)	Forecast Slippage Month 9 (000's)	Actual Slippage At Outturn
Asset Investment fund		18,142	18,142	18,118	18,067
Tranche 'B' King Henry Future Schools			12,484	13,421	14,092
Crick Road Care Home	5,978	5,978	5,978	5,978	5,964
RE-FIT Programme					2,031
Flood Recovery Grant					1,337
City Deal					830
Highways Maintenance					812
Schools Maintenance					749
County Hall 'J' block		544	544	544	774
Section 106 schemes		131	78	148	692
Disabled Facilities Grants					613
21 st Century Schools Team				525	572
School Refurbishment				300	415
Car Park Improvements					328
'IT' Schemes					296
WG 'Resilient Roads'					292
Bridges & Retaining Walls					278
Recycling Vehicles and Boxes					261
'Green Infrastructure'					247
Abergavenny Borough Theatre Works				236	239
Access for All				390	238
County Farms					215
Council Chamber refurbishment & IT upgrade		200	200	200	200
Sewage Treatment Works				200	199
Abergavenny Community Hub development				47	73
Property schemes		229	74	138	0
Other schemes				203	106
Total	5,978	25,224	37,500	40,448	49,920

3.5 Useable Capital Receipts Available

3.6 In the table below, the effect of the changes to the forecast capital receipts on the useable capital receipts balances available to meet future capital commitments are illustrated. There is also a comparison to the balances forecast with the 2020/24 MTFP capital budget proposals.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance as at 1st April	3,040	9,210	14,136	12,544	11,452
Capital receipts used for financing	(31)	(3,341)	(684)	(684)	(684)
Capital receipts used to support capitalisation direction	(1,011)	(2,208)	(2,208)	(508)	(508)
Capital receipts Received or Forecast	7,212	10,475	1,300	100	100
Forecast Balance as at 31st March	9,210	14,136	12,544	11,452	10,360
Forecast Balance 2020/24 MTFP	9,904	10,245	10,791	10,136	10,136
Variance compared to 2020/24 MTFP	(694)	3,891	1,753	1,316	224

- 3.7 Capital receipts used to support the capitalisation direction were £1.08m less than budgeted for 2020/21, however this was offset by an overall delay in generating some receipts into 2021/22 and beyond and therefore results in a slightly reduced balance of receipts compared to the original budget.
- 3.8 Forecast receipts to be generated in future years have increased since the 2020/21 budget was set and this is demonstrated in the expected overall increase in receipt balances after affording additional capitalisation direction approved as part of 2021/22 budget setting.

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Disinvestment by Directorate 2020-21	2020/21 Budgeted Savings	Value of Saving forecast at Month 2	Value of Saving forecast at Month 5	Value of Saving forecast at Month 7	Value of Saving forecast at Month 9	Value of Saving achieved at Outturn	Delayed Savings	Savings deemed Unachievable YTD	Covid related	Non Covid	% Achieved
REVENUE MONITORING 2020-21	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000			
Children & Young People	(648)	(648)	(648)	(648)	(648)	(648)	0	0	0	0	100%
Social Care & Health	(1,058)	0	(792)	(792)	(792)	(792)	0	(266)	166	100	75%
Enterprise	(569)	0	(422)	(432)	(392)	(392)	(20)	(158)	178	0	69%
Resources	(418)	0	(198)	(198)	(198)	(198)	(220)	0	220	0	47%
Chief Executives Units	(163)	0	(98)	(98)	(93)	(93)	(10)	(60)	70	0	57%
Corporate Costs & Levies	(1,479)	(1,479)	(1,479)	(1,479)	(1,479)	(1,479)	0	0	0	0	100%
Appropriations	(605)	(605)	(605)	(605)	(605)	(605)	0	0	0	0	100%
Sub total - Service Specific	(4,939)	(2,732)	(4,242)	(4,252)	(4,207)	(4,207)	(250)	(484)	634	100	85%
Financing	(5,397)	(5,397)	(5,397)	(5,397)	(5,397)	(5,397)	0	0	0	0	100%
DIRECTORATE Totals Disinvestments 2020-21	(10,336)	(8,129)	(9,639)	(9,649)	(9,604)	(9,604)	(250)	(484)	634	100	93%

Children & Young People	2020/21 Budgeted Savings	Value of Saving forecast at Month 2	Value of Saving forecast at Month 5	Value of Saving forecast at Month 7	Value of Saving forecast at Month 9	Value of Saving achieved at Outturn	Delayed Savings	Savings deemed Unachievable				ASSESSMENT of Progress
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000				
CYP capitalise direction for Mounton House recoupment income loss and repayment of reserve funding for inclusion centres	(348)	(348)	(348)	(348)	(348)	(348)						
School based redundancies	(300)	(300)	(300)	(300)	(300)	(300)						
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE Budgeted Savings Total 2020-21	(648)	(648)	(648)	(648)	(648)	(648)	0	0	0			

Social Care & Health	2020/21 Budgeted Savings	Value of Saving forecast at Month 2	Value of Saving forecast at Month 5	Value of Saving forecast at Month 7	Value of Saving forecast at Month 9	Value of Saving achieved at Outturn	Delayed Savings	Savings deemed Unachievable				ASSESSMENT of Progress
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000				
Renegotiate Severn View section 28A contract sum	(166)		0	0	0	0		(166)	166			No formal renegotiation of the section 28A agreement has taken place due to COVID 19 demands
Service Contract efficiency savings	(20)		(20)	(20)	(20)	(20)						
Practice change	(150)		(150)	(150)	(150)	(150)						
Fairer charging weekly threshold increases from £70 to £80 generating income following means test	(116)		(116)	(116)	(116)	(116)						
Disability Services - reduce budget in line with current year demand and forecast	(7)		(7)	(7)	(7)	(7)						
My Day My Life - Development of single Monmouth MDML Hub	(15)		(15)	(15)	(15)	(15)						
Fees and charges increases	(189)		(189)	(189)	(189)	(189)						

LAC savings - reduced legal costs	(100)		0	0	0	0		(100)		100		Based on the new Legal team structure allowing legal/court work to be done in house	
SCH Safeguarding team recruitment & training (capitalisation directive)	(45)		(45)	(45)	(45)	(45)							
Myst project consequences	(250)		(250)	(250)	(250)	(250)							
SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH Budgeted Savings Total 2020-21	(1,058)	0	(792)	(792)	(792)	(792)	0	(266)	166	100			
Enterprise	2020/21 Budgeted Savings	Value of Saving forecast at Month 2	Value of Saving forecast at Month 5	Value of Saving forecast at Month 7	Value of Saving forecast at Month 9	Value of Saving achieved at Outturn	Delayed Savings	Savings deemed Unachievable				ASSESSMENT of Progress	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000					
ENT - School Meals - School Meals Price increase from £2.45 to £2.50.	(20)		0	0	0	0		(20)	20			Income is down due to Covid.	
ENT - Planning & Building Control - Planning Application fee increase - WG set to increase price by 20%	(60)		(40)	(40)	0	0		(60)	60			Income down overall due to covid	
ENT - Planning & Building Control - Charging customers who wish to amend application during process.	(2)		(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)						Achieved	
ENT - Planning & Building Control - Increasing Pre-app fees by 2.5%	(2)		(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)						Achieved	
ENT - Planning & Building Control - New income from S106 monitoring fees	(20)		(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)		(18)	18			Income down due to covid	
ENT - Planning & Building Control - Increase in L2 Pre-app income - fee increase	(2)		(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)						Achieved	
ENT - Planning & Building Control - Staff restructure	(27)		(27)	(27)	(27)	(27)						Achieved	
OPS - Waste - Issue "Tax Disc" style permits to all residents with council tax to reduce cross border traffic of waste (2019-20 Budget)	(50)		(50)	(50)	(50)	(50)						Achieved	
First year implementation costs of car parking proposals (2019-20 Budget)	(106)		(106)	(106)	(106)	(106)	0					This is a reversal of a pressure provided in 19-20. Budget adjustment has been made.	
ENT - Highways & Flooding - Charge For Access Markings	(2)		(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)						Achieved	
ENT - Highways & Flooding - Charge for Events signing	(5)		(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)						Achieved	
ENT - Highways & Flooding - Increase Road Closure Income Budget	(32)		(32)	(32)	(32)	(32)						Achieved	
ENT - Highways & Flooding - Increase in Street Name & Numbering Charges (in particular developers)	(5)		(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)						Achieved	
ENT - Highways & Flooding - Increase in S50 Licences for Utilities	(15)		(15)	(15)	(15)	(15)						Achieved	
ENT - Highways & Flooding - Software savings from new asset management system.	(7)		(7)	(7)	(7)	(7)						Achieved	
ENT - Highways & Flooding - Provide design service for drainage schemes	(5)		(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)						Achieved	
ENT - Highways & Flooding - Utilising grant to cover staff costs	(10)		(10)	(10)	(10)	(10)						Achieved	

ENT - Passenger Transport Unit - PTU - Route Optimisation and workforce planning	(60)	0	0	0	0	0		(60)	60			This saving is unlikely to be made in 20/21.
ENT - Waste transfer station contract review	(40)		(40)	(40)	(40)	(40)						Achieved
ENT - Waste - Waste - Close Usk Recycling - but is dependant on policy approval by cabinet. Open Troy another day.	(30)		0	(10)	(10)	(10)	(20)		20			Awaiting decision
ENT - Hwys Operations - Staff Savings - Efficiencies in workforce and reception @ Raglan depot.	(9)		(9)	(9)	(9)	(9)						Achieved
ENT - Hwys Operations - Winter Maintenance - Net saving from Route based forecasting software improving pre-salting accuracy.	(5)		(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)						Achieved
ENT - Hwys Operations - Reduction in Plant & Equipment Hire through investment	(3)		(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)						Achieved
ENT - Hwys Operations - Provision of recycled tarmac to other local authorities.	(5)		(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)						Achieved
Discretionary fees & charges	(48)		(48)	(48)	(48)	(48)						Achieved
ENTERPRISE Budgeted Savings Total 2020-21	(569)	0	(422)	(432)	(392)	(392)	(20)	(158)	178	0		
Chief Executive's Unit	2020/21 Budgeted Savings	Value of Saving forecast at Month 2	Value of Saving forecast at Month 5	Value of Saving forecast at Month 7	Value of Saving forecast at Month 9	Value of Saving achieved at Outturn	Delayed Savings	Savings deemed Unachievable				ASSESSMENT of Progress
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000				
GOVDEMSUP - Reduction in annual grant provided to Monmouth CAB (1k), releasing budget saving (3k)	(1)		(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)						Achieved
CEO - legal services to Fire and police	(10)		0	0	0	0	(10)		10			Covid has affected Fee earning capability
CEO - offsetting legal costs against capital projects and investment activity	(40)		(15)	(15)	(10)	(10)	0	(30)	30			Savings target too high, £20k is more achievable but this year has been affected by Covid.
CEO - Market and increase take-up of community education courses across all sites	(30)		0	0	0	0		(30)	30			Covid has prevented this happening so saving is unachievable now
CEO - staffing realignment across policy, and governance	(79)		(79)	(79)	(79)	(79)						Achieved
Discretionary fees & charges	(3)		(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)						Achieved
CHIEF EXECUTIVES' UNIT Budgeted Savings Total 2020-21	(163)	0	(98)	(98)	(93)	(93)	(10)	(60)	70	0		
Resources	2020/21 Budgeted Savings	Value of Saving forecast at Month 2	Value of Saving forecast at Month 5	Value of Saving forecast at Month 7	Value of Saving forecast at Month 9	Value of Saving achieved at Outturn	Delayed Savings	Savings deemed Unachievable				ASSESSMENT of Progress
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000				
CORPLORD Estates RE-FIT Energy Savings (net after funding repayments)	0		0	0	0	0						
Commercial income	(200)			0	0	0	(200)		200			No further investments in commercial property has been undertaken this year due to Covid so this will not be achieved.
Senior officer reduction	(100)		(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)						Achieved

Exchequer savings	(20)		0	0	0	0	(20)		20		Due to a decision to halt the removal of cheques as a payment option in the light of Covid 19.
Discretionary fees & charges	(1)		(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)					Achieved
RES - Senior Officer reduction	(60)		(60)	(60)	(60)	(60)					Achieved
Disinvest from top-up on discretionary business rate relief scheme	(37)		(37)	(37)	(37)	(37)					Achieved
RESOURCES Budgeted Savings Total 2020-21	(418)	0	(198)	(198)	(198)	(198)	(220)	0	220	0	
Corporate Costs & Levies	2020/21 Budgeted Savings	Value of Saving forecast at Month 2	Value of Saving forecast at Month 5	Value of Saving forecast at Month 7	Value of Saving forecast at Month 9	Value of Saving achieved at Outturn	Delayed Savings	Savings deemed Unachievable			ASSESSMENT of Progress
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000			
Freeze pension contribution rate at 23.1% for next two years	(370)	(370)	(370)	(370)	(370)	(370)					Achieved
Review of the full-cost corporate costs and insurance budgets	(50)	(50)	(50)	(50)	(50)	(50)					Achieved
Living Wage Budget Reduction	(42)	(42)	(42)	(42)	(42)	(42)					Achieved
Review of in year efficiency savings	(359)	(359)	(359)	(359)	(359)	(359)					Achieved
CORP - Redundancy budget review	(400)	(400)	(400)	(400)	(400)	(400)					Achieved
Housing completions forecast	(258)	(258)	(258)	(258)	(258)	(258)					Achieved
CORPORATE COSTS Budgeted Savings Total 2019-20	(1,479)	(1,479)	(1,479)	(1,479)	(1,479)	(1,479)	0	0			
Appropriations	2020/21 Budgeted Savings	Value of Saving forecast at Month 2	Value of Saving forecast at Month 5	Value of Saving forecast at Month 7	Value of Saving forecast at Month 9	Value of Saving achieved at Outturn	Delayed Savings	Savings deemed Unachievable			ASSESSMENT of Progress
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000			
Interest Receivable	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)					Achieved
Net Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) increase based on additional activity	(204)	(204)	(204)	(204)	(204)	(204)					Achieved
Earmarked treasury eq reserve review	(400)	(400)	(400)	(400)	(400)	(400)					Achieved
APPROPRIATIONS Budgeted Savings Total 2020-21	(605)	(605)	(605)	(605)	(605)	(605)	0	0			
Financing	2020/21 Budgeted Savings	Value of Saving forecast at Month 2	Value of Saving forecast at Month 5	Value of Saving forecast at Month 7	Value of Saving forecast at Month 9	Value of Saving achieved at Outturn	Delayed Savings	Savings deemed Unachievable			ASSESSMENT of Progress
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000			
FIN - Council tax levels increased based on 2019-20 activity (RES DMT 11/10)	(322)	(322)	(322)	(322)	(322)	(322)					
AEF increase (+1% presumption)	(900)	(900)	(900)	(900)	(900)	(900)					
AEF increase - additional funding resulting from provisional settlement	(1,076)	(1,076)	(1,076)	(1,076)	(1,076)	(1,076)					
AEF transfers in - teachers pay, teacherspensions and NHS funded nursing	(1,375)	(1,375)	(1,375)	(1,375)	(1,375)	(1,375)					

AEF funding - assumed 100% WG funding of teachers pay increase - Apr to Aug '20	(491)	(491)	(491)	(491)	(491)	(491)						
AEF funding - assumed 100% WG funding of teachers pension increase	(689)	(689)	(689)	(689)	(689)	(689)						
Council tax increase to 4.95%	(575)	(575)	(575)	(575)	(575)	(575)						
CTRS 4.95% impact	66	66	66	66	66	66						
Council tax increase to 4.95%	(35)	(35)	(35)	(35)	(35)	(35)						
FINANCING Budgeted Savings Total 2020-21	(5,397)	(5,397)	(5,397)	(5,397)	(5,397)	(5,397)	0	0				

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Appendix 3 - Capitalisation directive 2020/21

Directorate	Expenditure	Justifacation to capitalise	Amount £000s
ENT	PTU Software - Route/pupil optimisation.	Driving a digital approach	45
RES	Capitalising work on Payroll and HR replacement system	Driving a digital approach	29
	Sub-Total Driving a digital approach		74
All	Capitalisation of redundancy costs - non-schools	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	30
CYP	Capitalisation of redundancy costs -schools	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	124
CYP	Accommodating income decline at Mounton Hse and Inclusion Centre implementation during service provision redesign	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	298
CYP	Inclusion centre costs	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	50
ENT	Waste Costs - Consultnant costs for new service delivery, bins related to new service.	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	95
RES	Innovation Team - Service Transformation/Systems Thinking	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	69
SCH	Safeguarding Team additional training & recruitment costs	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	45
	Sub-Total Funding the cost of service reconfiguration		711
SCH	Joint Local authority working (GWICES, Sc. 33, Frailty, regional safeguarding board, Gwent foster fee harmonisation and care home pooling	Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies	124
SCH	Deprivation of liberty safeguards	Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies	66
	Sub-Total Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies		190
RES	Audit - Sharing Audit manager with Newport CC	Sharing back-office and administrative services	37
	Sub-Total Sharing back-office and administrative services		37
	Total		1,011

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Appendix 4 - Movement in individual school balances

School	Balance 1st April 2020	Movement	Balance 31st March 2021
Caldicot School	179,693	(409,257)	(229,564)
Chepstow School	63,570	23,231	86,801
King Henry VIII Comprehensive	225,700	(423,196)	(197,496)
Monmouth Comprehensive	462,530	(676,722)	(214,192)
Mounton House Special School	(172,060)	172,060	0
Cross Ash Primary School	(64,157)	(18,313)	(82,470)
Durand Primary School	(12,691)	(65,193)	(77,884)
Gilwern Primary School	(64,549)	(102,302)	(166,851)
Goytre Fawr Primary School	(34,893)	(56,646)	(91,539)
Llandogo Primary School	176,535	(89,705)	86,830
Llantilio Pertholey CiW Primary School (VC)	21,016	(88,231)	(67,215)
Llanvihangel Crucorney Primary School	(49,684)	(54,986)	(104,670)
Magor CiW Primary School (VA)	18,785	(135,987)	(117,202)
Overmonnow Primary School	33,928	(75,032)	(41,104)
Raglan CiW Primary School (VC)	33,112	(141,989)	(108,877)
Rogiet Primary School	4,404	(82,499)	(78,095)
Shirenewton Primary School	(128,890)	(47,356)	(176,246)
St Mary's RC Primary School (VA)	46,518	(67,378)	(20,860)
The Dell Primary School	(3,032)	(45,378)	(48,410)
Thornwell Primary School	47,150	(112,037)	(64,887)
Trellech Primary School	(50,948)	(64,743)	(115,691)
Undy Primary School	145,925	(152,295)	(6,370)
Usk CiW Primary School (VC)	(45,942)	(97,113)	(143,055)
Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	4,408	(38,775)	(34,367)
Archbishop Rowan Williams CiW Primary School (VA)	(83,716)	(122,680)	(206,396)
Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin	45,883	(61,521)	(15,638)
Deri View Primary School	(73,956)	(74,153)	(148,109)
Cantref Primary School	(105,193)	(94,604)	(199,797)
Osbaston CiW Primary School (VC)	11,250	(51,859)	(40,609)
Dewstow Primary School	(136,455)	(101,356)	(237,811)
Our Lady & St Michael's (OLSM) RC Primary School (VA)	(15,859)	(38,534)	(54,393)
Pembroke Primary School	(1,205)	(124,302)	(125,507)
Kymin View Primary School	(37,955)	(97,350)	(135,305)
Llanfoist Fawr Primary School	(24,871)	(68,562)	(93,433)
Castle Park Primary School	(2,153)	(119,700)	(121,853)
Pupil Referral Unit	22,931	(48,943)	(26,012)
Total	435,129	(3,853,406)	(3,418,277)

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SELECT	CODE	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROJECT SCHEME CATEGORY	TOTAL APPROVED BUDGET	APPROVED SLIPPAGE	Reason Project has been delayed against original budgeted profile	Was delay Authority Controllable?
E&D	90325	Asset Investment Fund	Development Schemes Over £250k	19,222,294.00	18,067,403.48	Investments delayed due to Covid	No - Covid Delays
SCH	90328	Crick Road Care Home	Development Schemes Over £250k	5,977,869.73	5,964,030.13	Delayed due to wider Covid 19 impacts	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	90334	RE:FIT Programme	Development Schemes Over £250k	2,031,329.43	2,031,329.43	Delayed by Covid - will start in 21-22 once access to buildings is granted.	No - Covid Delays
E&D	90041	Capital Region City Deal	Development Schemes Over £250k	952,487.29	829,625.63	Funding not required in 20-21	No
SCOMM	90317	Usk County Hall J Block Major Refurb	Development Schemes Over £250k	794,471.26	773,617.26	Covid has halted the construction of new car park.	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	90330	Abergavenny Borough Theatre Works	Development Schemes Over £250k	385,724.50	239,489.47	Covid has delayed the internal structural refurbishment until 21-22.	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	98852	Car Park Improvements/Refurb	Development Schemes Over £250k	149,772.00	149,772.00	Works delayed by Covid	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	90321	Abergavenny Community Hub Development	Development Schemes Over £250k	1,024,462.46	72,582.89	Covid has delayed the external painting until 21-22.	No - Covid Delays
E&D	90320	Caerwent House, Major Repairs	Development Schemes Over £250k	50,800.00	50,800.00	Funding not required in 20-21	No
CYP	98218	Schools Improvement Grant 1819	Development Schemes Over £250k	180,105.64	33,513.34	£89k to be used to offset 98901	No - Covid Delays
E&D	90333	Chepstow LC Feasibility Study	Development Schemes Over £250k	30,000.00	30,000.00	Project delayed due to Covid	No - Covid Delays
CYP	98906	Caldicot Cluster Project	Development Schemes Over £250k	20,000.00	4,280.89	This is fully committed and will be used for projects in 2021-22	No - Covid Delays
CYP	98219	Upgrade School Kitchens	Development Schemes Under £250k - Essential Works	71,066.75	71,066.75	Delayed due to Covid 19 restrictions	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	98060	Fixed Asset disposal costs	Development Schemes Under £250k - Essential Works	277,369.50	15,973.79	Not all funding required in 20-21.	No
SCOMM	91100	Access For All	Development Schemes Under £250k - Other Recommend	500,000.00	184,941.00	Access to buildings affected by Covid.	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	98826	Car Park Granville St & Wyebridge St	Development Schemes Under £250k - Other Recommend	184,254.02	177,989.02	Construction delayed by Covid and ecological and drainage surveys - works are now due to begin in June so budget needs to be slipped.	No
CYP	98845	King Henry VIII - Future Schools Tranche B	Education Strategic Review	14,333,333.00	14,092,048.56	This is fully committed and will be used for band B in 2021-22 onwards	No - Covid Delays
CYP	96632	21st Century Schools Team	Education Strategic Review	638,678.32	572,302.18	This is fully committed and will be used for projects in 2021-22	No - Covid Delays
CYP	98621	ESR: Access For All	Education Strategic Review	96,207.91	53,142.18	This is fully committed and will be used for projects in 2021-22	No - Covid Delays
CYP	98681	Monmouth Leisure Centre/Pool Redesign	Education Strategic Review	42,088.97	42,088.97	Fully Committed	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	97369	Highways OPS: Minor improvements	Infrastructure	812,000.00	812,000.00	Projects have been delayed by a mixture of Covid and weather. Resources have been redirected to deal with flooding matters that have been separately funded by WG grants - request to slip into 21-22 to help offset known pressures in the programme.	No - Covid & Weather Delays
SCOMM	97215	Reconstruction of Bridges & Retaining Walls	Infrastructure	399,041.00	278,209.34		
SCOMM	97302	Signing Upgrades And Disabled Facilities	Infrastructure	38,091.00	38,091.00		
SCOMM	97239	Safety Fence Upgrades	Infrastructure	66,181.00	26,196.00		
SCOMM	97306	Structural Repairs - PROW	Infrastructure	60,091.33	24,814.53		
SCOMM	97381	Mounton Road Footpath	Infrastructure	17,837.00	17,837.00		
SCOMM	97352	Road Safety & Trafficman Programme	Infrastructure	114,508.00	5,094.94		

SCOMM	99523	Recycling Vehicles and Boxes	Infrastructure	261,021.68	261,021.68	Part of green waste service reconfiguration, plant & equipment will be purchased in 21-22 so budget needs to be slipped.	No
SCOMM	90900	Council Chamber IT equipment replacement & building works	Infrastructure	200,000.00	200,000.00	Refurbishment delayed by Covid.	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	97379	New Street Lighting Enhancement Project	Infrastructure	542,742.76	133,372.74	Part of Salix Loan - unspent budget will be needed in 21-22 to complete LED installation programme	Yes - Replacement programme was always going to extend into 21-22
SCOMM	97389	Penyrhiw Sewage Treatment Works	Infrastructure	100,000.00	100,000.00	Delayed due to Covid 19 restrictions	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	97388	Shirenewton Sewage Treatment	Infrastructure	100,000.00	99,385.00	Delayed due to Covid 19 restrictions	No - Covid Delays
E&D	96636	SRS administered network and infrastructure replacement	IT Schemes - Infrastructure/Hardware	170,000.00	170,000.00	Developments delayed by Covid	No - Covid Delays
E&D	96634	Windows 10 Laptops	IT Schemes - Infrastructure/Hardware	112,630.80	112,630.80	Supply affected by Covid - slippage requested into 21-22	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	96621	Provision of online facilities Revenue's section	IT Schemes - Infrastructure/Hardware	13,000.00	13,000.00	System development delayed.	No - Covid Delays
CYP	98226	School Refurbishment Grant	Maintenance Schemes - General	644,843.25	415,071.79	This is fully committed and will be used for projects in 2021-22	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	98059	County Farms Maintenance & Reinvestment	Maintenance Schemes - General	348,136.19	215,328.20	Delayed due to Covid 19 restrictions	No - Covid Delays
CYP	95860	Various Schools - Legionella remedial works	Mechanical Services	10,000.00	9,858.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	95227	Trellech Primary - Refurbish kitchen & upgrade equipment	Property - DECORATION	135,754.00	135,754.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95228	Usk Primary - Replacement of defective dining tables	Property - DECORATION	5,506.00	5,506.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	98860	Various properties: Rectification after Fixed Wire Testing	Property - Electrical Services	84,554.04	68,785.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95219	Shirenewton Primary - Replace End of life EMS Wireless Fire Alarm	Property - Electrical Services	36,700.00	36,700.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95220	Thornwell Primary - Provision of lighting to foot path main entrance including additional ductwork	Property - Electrical Services	33,276.00	33,276.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95218	Osbaston Primary - Replace End of life EMS Wireless Fire Alarm	Property - Electrical Services	31,700.00	31,700.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95217	Osbaston Primary - Provision of lighting to foot path between buildings including additional ductwork	Property - Electrical Services	23,240.00	23,240.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95215	Chepstow Comprehensive - Change Federal Electric Sub mains boards to MCCB Panel.	Property - Electrical Services	16,724.00	16,724.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95241	Ysgol Y-Fenni School Lighting Enhancement	Property - Electrical Services	10,625.00	10,389.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95174	Various properties - Works to ensure safe access to school properties	Property - External Areas	75,000.00	40,702.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95236	Monmouth Leisure Centre - Upgrade car park area	Property - External Areas	39,168.00	39,168.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95238	Undy Primary - Repairs to uneven pathways & yards	Property - External Areas	18,205.00	18,205.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95175	Various properties - Repair to boundary walls for health & safety reasons	Property - External Areas	15,000.00	14,703.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95237	Raglan Depot - Relay drainage to septic tank	Property - External Areas	3,000.00	3,000.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95188	Caldicot Castle - Commencement of Phase 2 works to deweed & conserve ancient walls	Property - External Walls, Doors & Windows	91,679.00	91,679.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A

SCOMM	95195	Various Properties - Continue works to safely remove asbestos materials in conjunction with surveys & site works	Property - External Walls, Doors & Windows	50,000.00	44,929.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95126	Abergavenny Castle - Rolling works to deweed & maintain ancient walls	Property - External Walls, Doors & Windows	14,728.00	12,728.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95187	St Marys Primary - Replacement of floor year 3/4	Property - Floors & Stairs	4,183.00	4,183.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95242	Usk J Block Wall & Floor Repair	Property - Internal Walls & Doors	87,271.00	81,877.24	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95197	Thornwell Primary - Refurbishment of toilet areas	Property - Internal Walls & Doors	48,530.00	48,530.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95198	Magor Primary - Refurbishment of toilet areas	Property - Internal Walls & Doors	48,503.00	48,503.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95196	Various Properties -Continue works to upgrade wall, doors & screens as recommended in fire risk assessment reports	Property - Internal Walls & Doors	40,000.00	40,000.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95011	Various properties - refurbish & upgrade fire doors & screens	Property - Internal Walls & Doors	23,384.00	25,013.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95839	Aber Market - Repair & Dec Corn Exh	Property - Internal Walls & Doors	17,217.00	2,902.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	98720	Various Sites - Replace out of date air conditioning	Property - Mechanical Services	40,000.00	29,326.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95096	Various properties : Legionella remedial works	Property - Mechanical Services	27,251.00	25,550.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95144	Caldicot Leisure Centre - Water mains replacement work	Property - Mechanical Services	24,446.00	24,446.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95212	Various properties - BMS upgrade - controls to new Trend System	Property - Mechanical Services	20,000.00	20,000.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95211	Shire Hall - Replacement of boiler(s)	Property - Mechanical Services	18,000.00	17,250.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95204	Chepstow Comprehensive - New water heaters	Property - Mechanical Services	15,000.00	15,000.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95203	Castle Park -Upgrade flow sensor to return pipe in Plaza	Property - Mechanical Services	6,099.00	2,074.28	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95205	Chepstow Comprehensive - Upgrade underfloor manifolds	Property - Mechanical Services	4,592.00	1,789.67	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95180	Chepstow Museum - Investigate & repair roof leaks to stack & flat roof	Property - Roofs	50,000.00	50,000.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95183	Usk Primary - Replace defective guttering & downpipes	Property - Roofs	17,861.00	17,861.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	94985	Innovation House Magor – Roofing	Property - SANITARY SERVICES	231,796.00	80,235.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95201	Caldicot Leisure Centre - Renew mains water supply pipe	Property - SANITARY SERVICES	50,000.00	50,000.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95200	County Hall - Refurbishment & form new shower facilities in the PTU building	Property - SANITARY SERVICES	34,085.00	33,735.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	95138	Osbaston Primary - Upgrade infants toilets	Property - SANITARY SERVICES	16,441.00	16,441.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	94984	Chepstow Comprehensive – Replacement of Water Heaters.	Property - SANITARY SERVICES	13,000.00	13,000.00	Slip - Expenditure reallocated via School Refurbishment Grant	N/A
SCOMM	99202	Disabled Facilities Grants (Private)	Renovation Grants	1,075,402.99	601,571.62	Covid delayed works due to access issues - slippage requested to help cope with backlog in 21-22.	No - Covid Delays

SCOMM	90904	S106 – Chippenham Mead Play Area	Section 106	111,421.00	111,421.00	Scheme not started.	No
SCOMM	90850	S106 – Lion Street Works	Section 106	168,304.84	96,966.65	Works have been delayed by design and SABS requirement from WG - slippage requested to help fund works in 21-22	No
CYP	90870	S106 – ALN Overmonnow Special Needs Resource Base	Section 106	201,000.00	87,263.00	This is fully committed and will be used for ALN projects in 2021-22	Yes
SCOMM	90905	S106 – Clydach Ironworks Enhancement Scheme	Section 106	53,000.00	53,000.00	Scheme not started.	No
SCOMM	90827	S106 Destination Play Area (Monmouth)	Section 106	49,741.26	49,741.26	Scheme not started.	No
SCOMM	90902	S106 – Linda Vista Gardens	Section 106	30,000.00	30,000.00	Scheme not started.	No
SCOMM	90890	S106 - Rockfield Central Open Space and Play Area (Wonastow Road)	Section 106	29,000.00	29,000.00	Awaiting Cabinet Report	No
SCOMM	90831	S106 Little Mill Trail (Little Mill)	Section 106	27,636.22	27,636.22	Awaiting planning permission. Project will continue in 2021/22	No
SCOMM	90882	S106 Children's Voices in Play Project (Forensic Science Lab)	Section 106	25,000.00	25,000.00	Scheme not started.	No
SCOMM	90889	S106 - Monmouth Allotments (Wonastow Road)	Section 106	25,000.00	25,000.00	Works Delayed due to Covid	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	90903	S106 – Abergavenny Skate Park	Section 106	25,000.00	25,000.00	Scheme not started.	No
SCOMM	98881	Cae Meldon S106 Off Site Recreation	Section 106	23,020.00	23,020.00	Held up by A465 duelling works.	No
SCOMM	90844	S106 Llanelly Hill Welfare Car Park (Cae Meldon)	Section 106	22,441.00	22,441.00	Unspent - allocation to be reviewed in 2021/22	No
SCOMM	90891	S106 - Capel Ed Chapel Internal Alterations (School Lane Goytre)	Section 106	20,000.00	20,000.00	Works Delayed due to Covid	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	90839	S106 Gilwern Towpath Upgrade (Cae Meldon)	Section 106	18,000.00	18,000.00	Unspent - allocation to be reviewed in 2021/22	No
SCOMM	90854	S106 Wyesham Highways Road Safety Improvements	Section 106	13,645.29	13,645.29	Scheme not started.	No
E&D	90885	Warrenslade Woodland Management	Section 106	9,569.20	9,119.20	Works delayed by Covid	No - Covid Delays
E&D	90883	Magor Walking Routes, Access & Promotion	Section 106	4,608.00	4,608.00	Works delayed by Covid	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	90842	S106 Gilwern OEC (Cae Meldon)	Section 106	4,190.46	4,190.46	Majority of works complete - slight delay due to Covid	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	90898	S106 - Mardy Growing Space Group (Croesonen Farm - Infants School)	Section 106	24,669.00	2,669.00	Works Delayed due to Covid	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	90887	S106 -Monmouth Leisure Centre 3G MUGA resurfacing (Wonastow Road)	Section 106	21,528.00	2,255.00	Majority of works complete - slight delay due to Covid	No
SCOMM	90895	S106 - Goytre Scouts – Kayaking Resources (School Lane Goytre)	Section 106	20,658.00	2,066.00	Works Delayed due to Covid	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	90894	S106 - Goytre Primary School Environmental Sustainability (School Lane Goytre)	Section 106	30,870.00	1,885.00	Works Delayed due to Covid	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	90892	S106 - Goytre Community Garden (Pleasant R – School Lane Goytre)	Section 106	1,425.00	1,425.00	Works Delayed due to Covid	No - Covid Delays
SCOMM	90868	S106 – Pen Y Fal Footbridge Major Maintenance	Section 106	950.00	950.00	Scheme not started.	No
SCOMM	99229	WG – Flood Recovery Grant 2021	Specific Grant Funded	1,973,224.96	826,853.00	Repair work has been delayed due to Covid & weather, WG have given permission to use in 21-22 to clear backlog.	No - Covid & Weather Delays
SCOMM	99207	SLSP Programme - AONB Office	Specific Grant Funded	128,700.00	107,860.83	Delayed	No
SCOMM	97392	Monmouthshire Infrastructure & Place Regeneration	Specific Grant Funded	200,000.00	24,759.29	Not all allocation was required in 20-21, schemes to continue in 21-22 so slippage requested.	No

SCOMM	98861	WELTEG Chepstow Transport Study 2020-21	Specific Grant Funded	212,500.00	9,670.46	Scheme to extend into 21-22 - slippage required to help fund our match contribution.	Yes - Scheme was always going to extend into 21-22
		Total		57,045,462.05	49,919,829.46		

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ECONOMIC & DEVELOPMENT SELECT

Overall Revenue Position

Table 1: Council Fund 2020/21 Outturn Summary Statement

Service Area	Original Budget 2020/21	Budget Adjustments 2020/21	Revised Annual Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual (Under) / Over Spend @ Outturn	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend @ M9	Variance from M9 to Outturn
	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's
Social Care, Health & Safeguarding	50,685	(170)	50,515	51,327	811	1,308	(497)
Children & Young People	55,539	480	56,019	56,093	75	86	(12)
Enterprise & Monlife	24,133	(1,946)	22,187	21,688	(499)	3,829	(4,328)
Chief Executives Unit	4,745	(81)	4,664	4,524	(140)	(4)	(136)
Resources	7,746	(445)	7,301	6,454	(847)	387	(1,234)
Corporate Costs & Levies	22,743	229	22,972	20,403	(2,569)	13	(2,582)
Net Cost of Services	165,591	(1,934)	163,658	160,488	(3,170)	5,619	(8,789)
Appropriations	4,856	2,192	7,049	10,623	3,574	(264)	3,838
Expenditure to be Financed	170,447	259	170,706	171,111	405	5,355	(4,950)
Financing	(170,447)	(259)	(170,706)	(171,111)	(405)	(208)	(197)
Net General Fund (Surplus) / Deficit	0	(0)	0	0	(0)	5,147	(5,147)

Table 2: Economy & Development Select 2020/21 Outturn Detailed Statement

Service Area	Original Budget 2020/21	Budget Adjustments 2020/21	Revised Annual Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual (Under) / Over Spend @ Outturn	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend @ M9	Variance from M9 to Outturn
	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's
Public Protection	1,481	(14)	1,467	1,400	(67)	(17)	(50)
Social Care, Health & Safeguarding	1,481	(14)	1,467	1,400	(67)	(17)	(50)
Business Growth and Enterprise	2,468	(260)	2,208	2,242	34	(62)	96
Planning & Housing	1,951	(130)	1,821	1,314	(507)	1,245	(1,752)
Countryside & Culture (MonLife)	1,348	(8)	1,340	1,345	5	121	(116)
Finance & Business Development (MonLife)	1,507	116	1,623	1,484	(139)	(43)	(96)
Leisure, Youth & Outdoor Adventure (MonLife)	710	(139)	571	499	(72)	1,146	(1,218)
Enterprise & Monlife	7,984	(421)	7,563	6,884	(679)	2,407	(3,086)
Future Monmouthshire	(46)	(25)	(71)	12	83	83	0
Commercial & Corporate Landlord	667	(492)	175	131	(44)	808	(852)
Resources	621	(517)	104	143	39	891	(852)
E&D Select Net Cost of Services	10,086	(952)	9,134	8,427	(707)	3,281	(3,988)

DIRECTORATE – DIVISION VARIANCE COMMENTS

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & SAFEGUARDING	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	1,630	1,448	1,707	1,308	811

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & SAFEGUARDING DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY:

The directorate outturn for 2020/21 was an overspend of £811K, a £497K decrease since month 9, as a result of late Discharge to Reassess funding from Health of £553K. Of the over spend, £346K is as a result of the pressure from the additional 1.75% unfunded staff pay award and £242K unachievable 2% staff efficiency saving. The directorate budget was also assisted by the Social Care Workforce and Sustainability Grant from Welsh Government of £984K.

The Adult Services division finished the financial year with an underspend of £474K, an increase in underspend since M9 of £365K, largely due to funding received from Health via the Discharge to Reassess scheme. This area of the directorate has also benefitted in year from the Social Care Workforce and Sustainability (SCWS) grant of circa £1M and Intermediate Care Funding (ICF), with ICF has a planned termination date of 31st March 2022.

Children's Services has a predicted overspend of £1.353M, a £81K reduction since the reported M9 forecast. This element of the directorate received a significant injection as part of the 2020/21 budget allocation, however, this was based on CLA numbers at that time being 197. Since the budget for 2020/21 was set, the service had a further influx of children to 219 at the end of 2019/20, and at the close of the financial year CLA numbers stood at 213.

Public Protection continues to strive to remain within its budget, turning out an underspend of £67K, an increase in underspend since M9 of £50K, due to some reduced activity as a result of COVID 19.

PUBLIC PROTECTION

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'s	211	109	177	(17)	(67)

Underspend is as a result of reduced activity, mainly within commercial and environmental health, as a result of COVID 19.

ENTERPRISE	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	5,950	5,113	4,617	3,829	(499)

ENTERPRISE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY:

The Enterprise and MonLife Directorate is forecasting an outturn position of £500k surplus at year end. This is an improved position since Month 9 and the details of these changes are provided within the next sections of this report.

The impact of COVID-19 has been significant across all of the services with both a loss of income and additional costs incurred to operate critical front line services during the pandemic. In addition to the direct impacts of the pandemic service areas identified pressures where budget savings have not been implemented or ongoing pressures continued to affect services.

Across all Services, all eligible additional costs and income losses have been claimed against any Welsh Government funding that has been made available. In addition, service areas have been successful in securing grant funding which has enabled us to passport core costs to grant funding activity. Since month

9 a number of service areas have been able to report a significantly improved position as WG has confirmed that costs or income losses can be covered by the support grants available due to COVID.

BUSINESS GROWTH & ENTERPRISE

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	46	29	(50)	(62)	34

Business Growth & Enterprise has underspent by £34k, this can be split down to the following :-

- Abergavenny Borough Theatre – Break-even.
- RDP & Youth Enterprise - £3k underspent due to offsetting core staff costs with grant funding.
- Communications - £10k underspent due to improved income.
- Community & Pship Development - £44k underspent, mainly due to staff savings as we have been able to passport core costs to grant funding.
- Enterprise Mgt & Strategic Projects - £90k overspent mainly due to unfunded pay award and over-accrual of public transport subsidy grant.

PLANNING, HOUSING and Highways Dev & Flooding

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	1,011	1,067	993	1,245	(507)

Planning, Housing and Highways Dev & Flooding has underspent by £507k.

- **Planning & Building Control** - £102k underspent – this is due to a staff vacancy and savings against professional fees. The income shortfall has been covered off by the WG Covid support grant and is the reason for the improvement in outturn from Month 9.
- **Planning Policy** - £137k underspent - this is due to savings in professional and specialist fees costs due to delays in the LDP.
- **Housing** - £165k underspent - The majority of the underspend is found in our Shared Housing and Private Leasing schemes where net rental received from tenants has exceeded budgeted expectations, the final position on rent accounts cannot be calculated until financial year end so the extent of underspend was not known during the year and is the reason for the positive swing between reporting periods. In addition we have also been able to fund some staffing from grant funding. The increased expenditure relating to Welsh Government Covid related requirements to support homeless households and implement new Welsh Government homeless policy, has been funded by the WG Covid support grant so has not affected outturn position.
- **Car Parking, Highways Development & Flooding** - £103k underspent. Main areas:-
 - Car Parks - £108k overspent – this is due to increased costs in car park rates, transport and supplies and services. All of the income shortfall reported at M9 has been covered off by the WG support grant and is the reason for the improvement between reporting periods.
 - Highways Development & flooding - £211k underspent – mainly as a result of staff vacancies across the department where the decision was made to freeze vacant posts to help with recovery of car park overspend.

There has been a very large positive swing between outturn and Month 9, this is mainly due to the receipt of WG income support grant in Housing, Car Parks and Planning that has reduced service overspends.

(MONLIFE) Countryside & Culture

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	42	40	81	121	5

Countryside & Culture - £5k overspent- The service has been heavily impacted by Covid and flooding in 20-21. All income lost due to event cancellation has been covered by the WG Covid support grant, the small overspend relates to additional costs as a result of the flooding that could not be covered by grant.

(MONLIFE) Finance & Business Development

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(118)	(150)	(106)	(43)	(139)

Finance & Business development- £139k underspent – Mainly due to staff savings from vacant posts throughout the service. All income losses have been covered by WG support grant and is the reason for the positive swing from Month 9.

(MONLIFE) Leisure, Youth & Outdoor Adventure

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	2,173	1,877	1,694	1,146	(72)

Leisure, Youth & Outdoor Adventure - £72k underspent.

The closure of our Leisure centres and Outdoor Adventure sites due to Covid has had an adverse impact on income generation in 20-21. Without the WG income support grant we would have been reporting a sizable overspend but the grant has allowed us to cover off any shortfall so our revenue outturn position is not affected. The £72k underspend is mainly due to staff vacancies across the department.

RESOURCES	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	782	694	192	387	(867)

RESOURCES DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY:

Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic has adversely impacted front line services the directorate has equally suffered significantly but in different ways. The outturn position has moved significantly and positively from that reported at month 9. This is principally as a consequence of the shortfalls in income as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic being fully covered from Welsh Government's COVID Hardship Fund. A significant pressure resulting from B&B claims for homeless people, and which didn't attract full subsidy from DWP, has also been funded by Welsh Government's COVID-19 Hardship Fund.

The outturn position has also benefitted from vacancy savings and notably where senior finance posts and property posts are not being filled. This is not a sustainable position and will not be a permanent

feature and is currently being addressed.

FUTURE MONMOUTHSHIRE

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	112	112	82	82	83

Future Monmouthshire - £83k overspend. £112k of Corporate Agency and travel savings have been built into the budget for 20-21 – currently these are deemed unachievable or are being achieved within directorate budgets and are thus contained in their respective forecasts. This has been offset by staff savings of £30k as we are covering secondment costs of a member of staff from WG.

COMMERCIAL & CORPORATE LANDLORD

Outturn Forecast	Month 2	Month 5	Month 7	Month 9	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	495	515	437	808	(44)

Commercial & Corporate Landlord is forecasting a £44k underspend:-

• **Investment Properties** has underspent by £200k, this can be split into 3 areas:-

- **Investment Assets other** - £200k overspent, our MTFP for 20-21 included a £200k saving to reflect additional income from the purchase of more investment properties. No additional purchases were made in 20-21 (due to Covid) so the saving could not be achieved.
- **Newport Leisure Park** – On Budget. The pandemic has affected the leisure and retail sector greatly in 20-21, this has impacted on rental receipts at our Newport site as most of the units have been closed for the majority of the year. Officers have worked with tenants to recover owed rent where applicable, any rental shortfall due to lockdown restrictions has been fully funded by the WG Covid 19 Hardship fund, this additional support has enabled us to report a break-even budget for 20-21.
- **Castlegate** – On Budget. Castlegate has seen in year savings of £165k relating to windfall loan repayments and reductions in consultant and insurance costs – this saving has been moved to reserves, this reserve is set up to provide a sinking fund to support the investment and protect MCC position against any negative impacts as set out in the investment plan. This movement to reserves brings the budget back to a break-even position.

• **Estates** - £22k underspent – this is mainly due to a shortfall in income of £100k as the creation of a development company has been delayed, offset by staff savings (£120k) as a result of vacant posts not being filled during the year.

• **Solar Farm & Sustainability**- £97k underspent – despite a drop in ROC unit prices due to a drop off in demand because of lockdown our renewables are still returning a surplus and we have generated enough income to exceed budget, in addition we have seen a small underspend in rates, maintenance and professional fees.

• A combined net underspend in **County Farms, Cemeteries, Markets & Industrial units** of £27k – this is mainly due to staff savings in Markets being offset by a reduction in rental income in County Farms due to the change in farm portfolio.

• **Property Services & Facilities Mgt** has underspent by £109k, made up as follows:-

- **Property & Office Services** underspent by £28k, this is mainly due to staff savings as vacant posts were not filled during the year, this has been offset by a reduction in capital income as we were unable to charge fees on projects delayed due to Covid.

- Corporate Building Maintenance has underspent by £52k, we were able to move elements of school maintenance costs to a WG grant – this has created an underspend that was not known at M9.
- Property Accommodation has underspent by £70k due to savings in maintenance and utilities costs as offices have been closed or in limited operation due to Covid19.
- Telephony underspent by £15k as contracted call charges came in below budget.

There has been a large positive swing of £852k from what was reported at Month 9, this can mainly be attributed to the receipt of WG Covid support grant driving down overspends in Investments and Estates.

2 CAPITAL OUTTURN

2.1 The summary Capital outturn position is as follows:

Capital Outturn Position 2020/21

Select Portfolio	Slippage B/F	Original Budget	Budget Revisions	Approved Slippage	Revised Budget 2020/21	Actual Outturn	Variance at Outturn	Variance at M9
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Expenditure								
Children & Young People	1,245	14,423	1,872	(15,381)	2,160	2,151	(9)	0
Economic & Development	17,496	3,068	30	(19,274)	1,320	1,320	0	0
Adult	300	5,678	0	(5,964)	14	14	0	0
Strong Communities	5,801	10,139	12,079	(9,301)	18,718	15,546	(3,171)	(157)
Total Expenditure	24,842	33,308	13,981	(49,920)	22,211	19,031	(3,180)	(157)
Financing								
Supported Borrowing	0	(2,417)	0	0	(2,417)	(2,417)	0	0
General Capital Grant	0	(2,423)	0	0	(2,423)	(2,423)	0	0
Grants and Contributions S106	(393)	(18,229)	(10,826)	19,095	(10,353)	(8,623)	(1,730)	157
Contributions	(1,052)	0	(166)	711	(507)	(507)	0	0
Unsupported Borrowing	(22,546)	(5,275)	(2,032)	27,217	(2,637)	(3,442)	805	0
Reserve & Revenue Funding	(239)	(2)	(252)	241	(252)	(252)	0	0
Capital Receipts	(612)	(3,462)	(705)	2,656	(2,123)	(1,042)	(1,080)	0
Leasing	0	(1,500)	0	0	(1,500)	(325)	(1,175)	0
Total Financing	(24,842)	(33,308)	(13,981)	49,920	(22,211)	(19,031)	(3,180)	157

2.2 The capital expenditure outturn for 2020/21 shows a saving of £3.18m against budget, however it is important to note that this does not fully represent released capital financing available for future use. The variances can be explained as follows:

- Reduced usage of the Capitalisation Directive budget by £1.08m following clarification of the revenue outturn position. This subsequently releases capital receipts back to the capital receipts reserve to utilise for future capital investment.
- Specific grant funding budgets of £1.92m that have not been able to be spent within the financial year primarily due to a combination of late notification of the grant awards, a lack of resources available to complete eligible works and a shortage of appropriate schemes that fit within the grant criteria stipulated. This under spend does not release any capital financing for future use as the grant actually paid matches the overall expenditure.
- Vehicle replacement has under spent by £172k due to clarification of vehicles requirements during the year. These purchases were originally budgeted to be funded by leasing but following an options appraisal it was more cost-effective to finance the majority of vehicles via borrowing. The under spend does not release any capital financing for future use.

2.3 The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has caused significant disruption to the progress of budgeted capital schemes with slippage at outturn totalling £49.92m (£40.45m at month 9). The Covid-19 impact is affecting both internally and externally managed projects, with disruption to external supply chains, increased contract risk and potential inflationary cost pressures sitting alongside internal resourcing pressures.

2.4 The forecast slippage is broken down as follows:

Scheme	Forecast Slippage Month 2 (000's)	Forecast Slippage Month 5 (000's)	Forecast Slippage Month 7 (000's)	Forecast Slippage Month 9 (000's)	Actual Slippage At Outturn
Asset Investment fund		18,142	18,142	18,118	18,067
Tranche 'B' King Henry Future Schools			12,484	13,421	14,092
Crick Road Care Home	5,978	5,978	5,978	5,978	5,964
RE-FIT Programme					2,031
Flood Recovery Grant					1,337
City Deal					830
Highways Maintenance					812
Schools Maintenance					749
County Hall 'J' block		544	544	544	774
Section 106 schemes		131	78	148	692
Disabled Facilities Grants					613
21 st Century Schools Team				525	572
School Refurbishment				300	415
Car Park Improvements					328
'IT' Schemes					296
WG 'Resilient Roads'					292
Bridges & Retaining Walls					278
Recycling Vehicles and Boxes					261
'Green Infrastructure'					247
Abergavenny Borough Theatre Works				236	239
Access for All				390	238
County Farms					215
Council Chamber refurbishment & IT upgrade		200	200	200	200
Sewage Treatment Works				200	199

Abergavenny Community Hub development				47	73
Property schemes		229	74	138	0
Other schemes				203	106
Total	5,978	25,224	37,500	40,448	49,920

2.5 Useable Capital Receipts Available

2.6 In the table below, the effect of the changes to the forecast capital receipts on the useable capital receipts balances available to meet future capital commitments are illustrated. There is also a comparison to the balances forecast within the 2020/24 MTFP capital budget proposals.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance as at 1st April	3,040	9,210	14,136	12,544	11,452
Capital receipts used for financing	(31)	(3,341)	(684)	(684)	(684)
Capital receipts used to support capitalisation direction	(1,011)	(2,208)	(2,208)	(508)	(508)
Capital receipts Received or Forecast	7,212	10,475	1,300	100	100
Forecast Balance as at 31st March	9,210	14,136	12,544	11,452	10,360
Forecast Balance 2020/24 MTFP	9,904	10,245	10,791	10,136	10,136
Variance compared to 2020/24 MTFP	(694)	3,891	1,753	1,316	224

2.7 Capital receipts used to support the capitalisation direction were £1.08m less than budgeted for 2020/21, however this was offset by an overall delay in generating some receipts into 2021/22 and beyond and therefore results in a slightly reduced balance of receipts compared to the original budget.

2.8 Forecast receipts to be generated in future years have increased since the 2020/21 budget was set and this is demonstrated in the expected overall increase in receipt balances after affording additional capitalisation direction approved as part of 2021/22 budget setting.

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Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2021

Economy Select Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
1 st June 2021	Local Development Plan WORKSHOP	Infrastructure 2 - Primary Health Care	Mark Hand Rachel Lewis	Scrutiny Workshop ~ Policy Development
10 th June 2021	Future Economies	To consider the Future Economies Ambition Statement and to link the regional picture with local direction.	Cath Fallon	Policy Development
22 nd June 2021	Local Development Plan WORKSHOP	Preferred Strategy Presentation	Mark Hand Rachel Lewis Craig O'Connor	Scrutiny Workshop ~ Policy Development
6 th July 2021	Local Development Plan WORKSHOP	Infrastructure 3 - Local Transport Plan, sustainable transport	Mark Hand Rachel Lewis Craig O'Connor	Scrutiny Workshop ~ Policy Development
15 th July 2021 Page 375	Local Development Plan	To scrutinise the Preferred Strategy.	Mark Hand Rachel Lewis Craig O'Connor	Policy Development
	Performance Reporting	Report on the performance against the 5 goals	Richard Jones Frances O'Brien	Performance Monitoring
	Budget Monitoring	Scrutiny of the Revenue and Capital Outturn reports for 2020-2021	Jon Davies	Budget Monitoring
Potential Later July Meeting	Town Centre Regeneration	To discuss the future of town centre regeneration and the bids being taken forward on a place based approach. To discuss lessons learnt from covid, future measures (subject to community and business and stakeholder engagement) and future town centre regeneration.	Cath Fallon Mark Hand	Policy Development
16 th September 2021	Employment and Skills	To scrutinise the Inspire to Achieve programme and the progress on developing the skills and employment sector.	Cath Fallon	Policy Development

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2021

TBC September 2021	Local Development Plan WORKSHOP	Landscape and natural environment – including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GW /GB • GI 	Mark Hand Rachel Lewis Craig O'Connor	Scrutiny Workshop ~ Policy Development
TBC October 2021	Local Development Plan WORKSHOP	Affordable housing 2 – with viability evidence	Mark Hand Rachel Lewis Craig O'Connor	Scrutiny Workshop ~ Policy Development
21 st October 2021	Strategic Procurement			
TBC November 2021	Local Development Plan WORKSHOP	Once Candidate Sites have been assessed: Site allocations (residential, employment, tourism, renewable energy)	Mark Hand Rachel Lewis Craig O'Connor	Scrutiny Workshop ~ Policy Development
19 th December 2021				
TBC 2022	Local Development Plan WORKSHOP	Deposit Plan Member workshop	Mark Hand Rachel Lewis Craig O'Connor	Scrutiny Workshop ~ Policy Development
3 rd February 2022				
17 th March 2022				
28 th April 2022				
May 2022 TBC				

Future Meeting Items: Agreed Scrutiny Focus

- Affordable housing, transport and the LDP
- Tourism and enterprise
- Business and Enterprise Strategy

Items to diarise:

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2021

- **Supplementary Planning Guidance on S106 Agreements**
- **Car Parking Review**
- **MonLife**
-

Social justice ~ strong

Infrastructure ~ high streets, town centres, ev... wide ranging ~ Strong

Decarbonisation and climate change ~ Strong

Home to school transport ~ possibly CYP

POST EU funding ~ shared prosperity funding....

LDP and critical issues around phosphates....

Town plans/strategic plans

Reopening town centres

Housing agenda/affordable housing

Food development

Members top ones: Inward investment strategy.... How we build on regional assets.... And facilities, so we have the right ones....
And what type of businesses we would want to attract. LDP allocations. Also procurement.

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

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

Committee / Decision Maker	Meeting date / Decision due	Subject	Purpose	Author	Date item added to the planner	Date item originally scheduled for decision
Council	04/11//2021	Final Statement of Accounts		Peter Davies	07/05/21	
Council	01/10/23	RLDP for Adoption		Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Council	01/02/23	LDP submission for examination		Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Council	01/07/22	RLDP Deposit Plan endorsement for consultation	Endorsement of Deposit Plan	Mark Hand	23/01/20	
Cabinet	06/04/22	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 9 held on 10th March 2022		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Council	10/03/22	2022/23 Treasury Policy		Jon Davies	07/05/21	
Council	10/03/22	2022/23 Final Budget sign off including Council Tax Resolution		Peter Davies	07/05/21	
Cabinet	02/03/22	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 8 held on 27th January 2022		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	

Cabinet	02/03/22	2022/23 WCF/Treasury Fund Investments		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Cabinet	16/02/22	2022/23 Final Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals		Peter Davies	27/04/21	
Cabinet	16/02/22	2021/2 Revenue and Capital Monitoring report - month 9		Jon Davies	27/04/21	
Council	27/01/22	Council Tax Reduction Scheme		Ruth Donovan	07/05/21	
IMCD	12/01/22	2022/23 Community Council and Police Precepts - final		Jon Davies	07/05/21	
Cabinet	05/01/22	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 7 held on 16th December 2021		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Cabinet	05/01/22	2021/2 Revenue and Capital Monitoring report - month 7		Peter Davies/Jon Davies	27/04/21	
IMCD	18/12/21	2022/23 Community Council and Police Precepts draft		Jon Davies	07/05/21	
Cabinet	15/12/21	2022/23 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals		Peter Davies	27/04/21	
IMCD	08/12/21	Council Tax Base and associated matters		Ruth Donovan	07/05/21	

Cabinet	01/12/21	Consultation on the proposals to establish an all-through school, Abergavenny.	Cabinet to receive objection report and decide whether to proceed with the proposal.	Debbie Graves	26/05/21	
Cabinet	01/12/21	Review of Monmouthshire's Destination Management Plan 2017-2020	Purpose: to approve the revised Destination Development Plan	Matthew Lewis	22/09/20	
Cabinet	01/12/21	Welsh Church Fund Working group - meeting 6 held on 4th November 2021		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
ICMD	24/11/21	SPG S106 Supplementary Planning Guidance	Adoption of SPG clarifying how S106 contributions are calculated following consultation	Mark Hand / Phillip Thomas	26/04/21	
Council	04/11/21	Climate and Decarbonisation Strategy	To endorse an updated climate strategy and action plan which will introduce new programmes of activity to achieve the council's clear policy commitment to reduce carbon emissions.	Matthew Gatehouse / Hazel Clatworthy	19/05/21	
Council	04/11/21	RLDP Preferred Strategy endorsement post consultation	Endorsement of preferred strategy to inform deposit plan	Mark Hand / Craig O'Connor	20/05/20	
Council	04/11/21	ISA260 - MCC Accounts				
Cabinet	03/11/21	2021/22 Revenue and Capital Monitoring report - month 5		Peter Davies/Jon Davies	27/04/21	
ICMD	27/10/21	Museum object disposal		Rachael Rogers	09/06/21	
ICMD	13/10/21	LDP Annual Monitoring Report and Development Management Annual Performance Report	Endorsements of reports for submission to WG	Mark Hand / Craig O'Connor	26/04/21	

Cabinet	06/10/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 5 held on 23rd September 2021		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Cabinet	06/10/21	Revenue and Capital MTFP update and process		Peter Davies	27/04/21	
Cabinet	06/10/21	Active Travel Network Maps		Paul Sullivan	13/11/20	
Council	23/09/21	Capital Strategy		Jon Davies	20/05/21	
Council	23/09/21	Review of Reserves and revised reserves & Capital receipts		Jon Davies	20/05/21	
Cabinet	01/09/21	Consultation on the proposals to establish an all-through school, Abergavenny.	Cabinet to receive the consultation report and consider recommendations on proposed way forward / whether to publish statutory notices.	Debbie Graves	26/05/21	
Cabinet	01/09/21	Welsh Church Fund Working group - meeting 4 held on 22nd July 2021		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Cabinet	01/09/21	LDP Preferred Strategy endorsement post consultation		Mark Hand	20/05/20	
Cabinet	01/09/21	Gilwern Site Developments		Marie Bartlett	23/05/21	
Cabinet	01/09/21	Placemaking Charter	Council signs up to the Placemaking Charter	Mark Hand / Craig O'Connor	28/04/21	

ICMD	18/08/21	SPG S106 Supplementary Planning Guidance		Matk Hand / Phillip Thomas	01/05/21	23/06/21
Cabinet	28/07/21	Securing resources for ICT resilience	To provide appropriate investment for security resilience in ICT systems	Sian Hayward	30/06/21	
Cabinet	28/07/21	2021/22 Revenue and Capital Monitoring report		Peter Davies/Jon Davies	27/04/21	
Cabinet	28/07/21	Abergavenny CRC (Racecourse Farm)	CM	Mike Moran	14/10/20	
Council	22/07/21	Audit Committee Annual Report		Phillip White	29/06/21	
Council	22/07/21	investments in Leisure Centres		Marie Bartlett / Ian Saunders		
ICMD	14/07/21	Museum object Disposal		Rachael Rogers/Lisa Dymock	19/05/21	
Cabinet	07/07/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 3 held on 24th June 2021		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Cabinet	07/07/21	Capital Slippage		Jon Davies	11/06/22	
Cabinet	07/07/21	•Mutual Delegation of Strategic Procurement Services		Cath Fallon		

Council	24/06/21	Chief Officer's Report		Will Mclean	19/05/21	
Council	24/06/21	Shire Hall / Monmouth Museum		Matthew Lewis	24/05/21	
Council	24/06/21	LDP Preferred Strategy endorsement for consultation		Mark Hand	21/09/20	
Cabinet	09/06/21	2020/21 Revenue and Capital Monitoring outturn	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information on the forecast outturn position of the Authority at end of month reporting for 2020/21 financial year	Peter Davies/Jon Davies	27/04/21	
Cabinet	09/06/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 1 held on 15th April 2021 and meeting 2 held on 13th May 2021		Dave Jarrett	27/04/21	
Cabinet	09/06/21	Digital and Data	To seek approval for the creation of a new Digital Design and Innovation Team, to strengthen our information governance arrangements and to broaden the remit of the existing performance team to include data analytics'.	Emma Jackson	13/05/21	
Cabinet	09/06/21	Shire Hall / Monmouth Museum – to consider the outcome of the feasibility study		Matthew Lewis/Ian Saunders	05/02/21	
Council	13/05/21	Outside Bodies		John Pearson		
Council	13/05/21	Appointment to Committees		John Pearson		
Council	13/05/21	Political Balance		Matt Phillips		

Council	13/05/21	Freedom of the Borough		Joe Skidmore	22/04/21	
Council	13/05/21	Climate and Decarbonisation Strategy and Action Plan		Hazel Clatworthy	14/04/21	
ICMD	12/05/21	A Nation of Sanctuary - Asylum Dispersal Scheme - Moved to Cabinet	To provide Council with an progress update on the Climate and Decarbonisation Strategy and Action Plan which was developed following the passing of a motion to declare a climate emergency.	Matt Gatehouse	19/04/21	
ICMD	12/05/21	Play Action Plan	Cabinet Member Richard John Report originally on Cabi	hew Lewis/Mike Moran/Ian Saun	16/03/21	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Leisure Centre Investments		Marie Bartlett	22/03/21	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Statutory Consultation to establish 4-19 school in Abergavenny		Cath Saunders	03/03/21	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Welsh Church Fund Working Group meeting	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications 2020/21 - meeting 6 held on 11th March 2021	Dave Jarrett	02/04/20	
Cabinet	14/04/21	Whole Authority Strategic Risk Assessment		Richard Jones	02/03/21	
ICMD	07/04/21	Strategic Procurement		Cath Fallon/P Murphy	09/03/21	
ICMD	24/03/21	SPG S106 Supplementary Planning Guidance	To Clarify how S106 contributions are calculated/ deferred from 13/1/21 and 24/02/21 deferred UFN	Phil Thomas/Mark Hand	01/05/19	

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

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

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

Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of Economy and Development Select Committee held at County Hall, Usk with Remote Attendance on Thursday, 10th June, 2021 at 10.00 am

Councillors Present

County Councillor P. Jordan (Chairman)
County Councillor R.Roden, (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: J.Becker, A.Davies, B. Strong
and V. Smith

Also in attendance County Councillor S. Jones,
Cabinet Member for Economy:

Officers in Attendance

Frances O'Brien, Chief Officer, Enterprise
Cath Fallon, Head of Economy and Enterprise
James Woodcock, Business Insights Manager
Hannah Jones, Youth and Community Officer
Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager
Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer

APOLOGIES: County Councillors D. Evans and M.Feakins

1. To note the appointment of County Councillor P. Jordan as Chair.

The appointment of CC P. Jordan as Chair was noted.

2. To appoint a Vice-Chair.

Councillor Richard Roden was proposed by Councillor Davies and seconded by Councillor Jordan.

3. Declarations of Interest.

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Public Open Forum.

No members of the public were present.

5. To consider the Future Economies Ambition Statement and to link the regional picture with local direction (report to follow).

Cath Fallon and Hannah Jones presented the report, with additional contributions from Cabinet Member Sara Jones, and answered the members' questions with Frances O'Brien and James Woodcock.

Challenge:

How are we encouraging businesses to come into the county from outside, when we don't have any sites ready yet? Sites that were previously earmarked for B1/B2 have now been given consent for residential use – is there not therefore a reduction in available sites? Will businesses therefore be attracted to places in SE Wales like Newport, leading to workers living in Monmouthshire but working out of county?

There's a call at the moment from our Planning colleagues for candidate sites to come forward. There have been issues with take-up in the past, which is why some industry has gone to housing. But, recently, some sites that were locked for a while are starting to reopen. A number of us, including the Chief Exec, have been in discussions with businesses looking to come into Monmouthshire on those sites, which is very encouraging.

In dealing with enquiries as they come in, we do tailored searches with our local agents to ensure that we provide the right property to the right business. We are in a situation, however, with our indigenous businesses (particularly in the north of the county) that are becoming site-constrained. We are doing a lot of work with them at the moment on an individual basis to see how they might expand locally – putting them in touch with Planning – or looking at potential other sites. This is on a day-to-day basis. It's a bespoke local offer, and we find businesses value and benefit from that service. Inward investment enquiries can come either directly from a business or, more often, via Welsh Government. We seek to understand the needs of that business in terms of premises and any other queries they have as they consider a potential relocation. Identifying premises is a key part of that but also understanding potential future skills or staff needs, and any assistance that we or partner organisations can provide. Finance is also an area that generates a number of queries, in terms of grant funding or investment available, particularly from the public sector. We support enquirers in all of those areas, and link them with other organisations that can provide that assistance. The enquiries that we receive from Welsh Government are often shared with a number of authorities; an organisation can look at a number of options as they seek to relocate. Sometimes we're able to get feedback on the decision that an organisation has made when selecting their location. Unfortunately, though, it's sometimes not possible to understand the reasons behind a business' final decision in their choice of location.

In terms of inward investment, and how that works across the region, the CCR plays a key role for us in trying to support and coordinate inward investment opportunities and conversations. They also interlink with Welsh Government in terms of their foreign inward investment teams and working to identify where a business is looking to land within Wales, and identifying potential sites. If an inward investor is coming into the region, they will contact us if they are looking for specific sites or locations that they think might be suitable, based on that company's requirements. It can be quite challenging for us at a local level to influence what happens on a national and global scale. Trying to ensure that we work with those relevant departments within Welsh Government is key for us, in terms of building those relationships so that they understand what opportunities we have in Monmouthshire, and staying on their radar. We are meeting with WG colleagues in the regional economic team towards the end of July, at which time we will go through with them our ambitions and plans regarding the economy and how that interlinks with what we and they can be doing.

Regarding Aim 3 and apprenticeships, we only have 16 apprentices in MCC, 1 marketing graduate, no interns and some additional employees in Kickstart, but only for a limited period. Could that be explained?

We continually work with managers across directorates to look at new opportunities. There are more graduates than was just quoted. The Kickstart placements are short term but we are working with managers on succession planning. The calibre of apprentices and Kickstart candidates currently coming through the authority is exceptional. There are 2 graduates in our

team who are on that pathway. It is the start of a journey in that there is an appetite for more apprentices and to look into graduates more, whether it's joining with the Cardiff Capital Region graduate scheme or looking at opportunities that are more external. We would like to come back with updated figures and details of forward planning.

Do we create strategic sites or do we wait for candidate sites to come in? Do we try to persuade people coming forward with candidate sites to utilise them for other purposes than they initially envisaged?

We and our Planning colleagues have held breakfast meetings in which we have encouraged owners of strategic sites to come forward, and to explain to them where we want to get to, in terms of our economic growth and ambition plan. They have sat down with Planning and looked at sites that they own. This was done pre-Covid; it is key, and we are looking to do it again as soon as possible. We will place another call for candidate sites after full council considers the preferred strategy on 24th June. We encourage anyone who has connections or networks of landowners or people who might be interested in bringing forward a candidate site, please tell them to do so – businesses are often unaware that they need to come forward through that process. The window of opportunity to bring forward sites will open on 5th July, running into early August.

Regarding inward and outward mobility from the county and pollution, perhaps the focus could be on a wider approach to employability?

Yes, we have noticed that people have learned to enjoy their environment more while they've been at home, and have started to shop more locally. Thus, while the city centres have been hit hard, we are starting to see that vibrancy come to our market towns – though there are some concerns in a few of them that we need to address. It is of huge benefit that we are now working more closely with Planning colleagues. We are on the same page and have the same ambition.

We are surrounded by a talented pool of graduates coming out of the city universities – perhaps we could emphasise that to employers looking for sites and workers in the county?

We hope that our Prospectus will go some way towards selling our offer, in terms of the quality of graduates that we have in the county.

We are neglecting the Climate aspect of the plan, and need to make more of the net zero aspirations. The people that we want in county – the 30% working from home – that is important to them.

In terms of the authority's progress against the climate emergency action plan, a report is coming to full council this month, or in July, and we are looking to also reset and review that action plan and strategy; we can then bring it to members for review later this year. It's a valid point that all the strategies and documents need to align to the climate emergency and the ambition. We will take that away as an action from today's meeting.

Co-working spaces is very welcome; people are attracted by the aesthetic and feel, not just the opportunity to interact with others – so we need to be careful about incorporating that.

Yes, we understand it's about the 'vibe' and things like the coffee available – our initial research has confirmed this. It will be built in as we move forward e.g. in our bids for the 'levelling up' fund. We need to ensure it's a nicer environment for people than being at home, otherwise they won't come.

Regarding the app, any functioning wellbeing system is based on listening, rather than telling. An app therefore needs to be 50% asking what young people need.

We are currently consulting with our young people, adults, and stakeholders, around our services and what we offer. We are keen to implement this point about asking users to tell us what they want.

We have discussed the ambitions before and are fully behind them, but we need to see more details. There doesn't seem to be a reporting method back to this committee concerning delivery.

Yes, we need to demonstrate that we are moving forward with our ambitions. We've completed our service plans, which are part of the wider performance framework. We will happily update this committee with our progress on it in a future meeting, perhaps towards the end of the year.

Are the educational establishments and businesses talking to each other to determine what skills and qualifications the businesses require, and whether the colleges and universities actually provide what the businesses want?

Yes, they are talking to each other. It doesn't happen on a local authority level but is tasked by the Regional Skills board and the Cardiff Capital Region. There are sector areas that have cluster group meetings, e.g. Advanced Material and Manufacturing. Within those cluster meetings there's intelligence gathering from those employers regarding their skills challenges in those areas. We were on a call this week looking at hiring more manufacturing apprentices. How they influence post-16 training: Welsh Government provides higher education with less funding, rather than further education, but those conversations do take place. There is particular buy-in from the employers in those sector areas and the FE and HE colleges. They all link with Industry Wales and it's part of the Cardiff Capital Region drive going forward. Higher apprenticeships have always been there, but there is a definite need for further advancement and offering those opportunities across the ten local authorities.

It must be frustrating when neighbouring counties have premises already up and running for businesses to move into immediately, when we don't seem to have very many at all?

The fact that vacant stock is limited is perhaps testament to the attractiveness of Monmouthshire as a location, along with the growth of businesses. We are working closely with landowners to bring forward new sites and premises and utilise land that has been allocated and is available within the local development plan.

Is there the possibility of us working with counties across the border, to produce more opportunities for Monmouthshire?

Frances O'Brien is a member and stakeholder of the Western Gateway, which extends into Bristol, Bath and across south Gloucestershire. The Western Gateway has appointed Deloitte to undertake an economic review, which is currently underway, in which they are identifying where there could be strategic opportunities for partners across the Western Gateway, to work together to improve economic outputs. We haven't played a significant role in the Western Gateway conversation to date, but we (together with the Leader and Chief Executive) are fully engaged in doing so as they undertake this review.

Chair's Summary:

Officers agreed to take forward the points made about the app, and to change the wording 'Pledge to strive to be carbon neutral' to 'Pledge to be...'. They will give updates to the committee at future meetings, particularly regarding progress with attracting businesses, and sites being ready for doing so. It was agreed that all the strategies and documents need to align to the climate emergency and the ambition in facing it: officers will take that away as an action

from today's meeting. Cabinet Member Sara Jones thanked members for their questions and confirmed the importance of reporting to the committee. At a future meeting, the committee would like to see detail on the process of working with landowners to bring forward new sites, and updates about it.

In addition to the questions, members made the following points. Councillor Davies noted that one of the committee's concerns is preparation: the priority needs to be to put ourselves in pole position so that we are ready for companies when they express an interest in locating here. Councillor Becker felt that the report doesn't explain much about the approach to Tourism, and there is a disconnection between our aspirations and what is being done on the ground in Climate, Tourism and FutureTech e.g. 5G aspirations. The Chair noted that if we don't have sites ready, our dormitory status will continue: the figures show how many people have to go out of county to work but back into county to live, which is not the desired arrangement.

6. Economy and Development Select Committee Forward Work Plan.

The next meeting will consider Town Centre Regeneration and bids, and whether rearrangement of the town centres due to the pandemic should remain.

7. Council and Cabinet Work Planner.

8. To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes were confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

9. Next meeting: Thursday 15th July 2021 at 10.00am.

The meeting ended at **11.05 am**

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