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County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Monday, 16 October 2023

Notice of meeting

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 24th October, 2023 at 10.00 am,

Council Chamber, County Hall, Usk and Remote Attendance

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

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
3.	Public Open Forum	
	Scrutiny Committee Public Open Forum ~ Guidance	
	<p>Our Scrutiny Committee meetings are live streamed and a link to the live stream will be available on the meeting page of the Monmouthshire County Council website</p>	
	<p>If you would like to share your thoughts on any proposals being discussed by Scrutiny Committees, you can submit your representation in advance via this form</p>	
	<p>Please share your views by uploading a video or audio file (maximum of 4 minutes) or; Please submit a written representation (via Microsoft Word, maximum of 500 words)</p>	

You will need to register for a [My Monmouthshire account](#) in order to submit the representation or use your log in, if you have registered previously.

The deadline for submitting representations to the Council is 5pm three clear working days in advance of the meeting.

If representations received exceed 30 minutes, a selection of these based on theme will be shared at the Scrutiny Committee meeting. All representations received will be made available to councillors prior to the meeting.

If you would like to attend one of our meetings to speak under the Public Open Forum at the meeting, you will need to give three working days' notice by contacting Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk.

The amount of time afforded to each member of the public to speak is at the chair's discretion, but to enable us to accommodate multiple speakers, we ask that contributions be no longer than 3 minutes.

If you would like to suggest future topics for scrutiny by one of our Scrutiny Committees, please do so by emailing Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk

4.	Planning Annual Performance Report	1 - 40
	Scrutiny of the annual performance report prior to submission to Welsh Government.	
5.	Chief Officer for Education: Verbal Update	
	Verbal update from the Chief Officer on various education matters.	
6.	Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan and Action List	41 - 46
7.	Council and Cabinet Work Plan	47 - 62
8.	To approve the minutes of the previous meeting : 20th September 2023	63 - 66
9.	Next meeting: 22nd November 2023	

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillor Jill Bond, West End;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Alistair Neill, Gobion Fawr;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Paul Pavia, Mount Pleasant;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Peter Strong, Rogiet;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Ann Webb, St Arvans;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Laura Wright, Grofield;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Rachel Buckler, Devauden;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Catherine Fookes, Town;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Meirion Howells, Llanbadoc & Usk;, Independent

Public Information

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Welsh Language

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

Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

Our purpose

Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Objectives we are working towards

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

Our Values

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

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

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

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

Kindness: We will show kindness to all those we work with putting the importance of relationships and the connections we have with one another at the heart of all interactions.

Role of the Pre-meeting

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

Questions for the Meeting

Scrutinising Performance

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

Scrutinising Policy

1. Who does the policy affect ~ directly and indirectly? Who will benefit most/least?
2. What is the view of service users/stakeholders? What consultation has been undertaken? Did the consultation process comply with the Gunning Principles? Do stakeholders believe it will achieve the desired outcome?
3. What is the view of the community as a whole - the ‘taxpayer’ perspective?
4. What methods were used to consult with stakeholders? Did the process enable all those with a stake to have their say?
5. What practice and options have been considered in developing/reviewing this policy? What evidence is there to inform what works? Does the policy relate to an area where there is a lack of published research or other evidence?
6. Does the policy relate to an area where there are known inequalities?
7. Does this policy align to our corporate objectives, as defined in our corporate plan? Does it adhere to our Welsh Language Standards?

8. Have all relevant sustainable development, equalities and safeguarding implications
9. been taken into consideration? For example, what are the procedures that need to be in place to protect children?
- 10.
11. How much will this cost to implement and what funding source has been identified?
- 12.
13. How will performance of the policy be measured and the impact evaluated

General Questions:

Empowering Communities

- How are we involving local communities and empowering them to design and deliver services to suit local need?
- Do we have regular discussions with communities about service priorities and what level of service the council can afford to provide in the future?
- Is the service working with citizens to explain the role of different partners in delivering the service, and managing expectations?
- Is there a framework and proportionate process in place for collective performance assessment, including from a citizen's perspective, and do you have accountability arrangements to support this?
- Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out? If so, can the Leader and Cabinet/Senior Officers provide members with copies and a detailed explanation of the EQIA conducted in respect of these proposals?
- Can the Leader and Cabinet/Senior Officers assure members that these proposals comply with Equality and Human Rights legislation? Do the proposals comply with the Local Authority's Strategic Equality Plan?

Service Demands

- How will policy and legislative change affect how the council operates?
- Have we considered the demographics of our council and how this will impact on service delivery and funding in the future?
- Have you identified and considered the long-term trends that might affect your service area, what impact these trends could have on your service/your service could have on these trends, and what is being done in response?

Financial Planning

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

Making savings and generating income

- Do we have the right structures in place to ensure that our efficiency, improvement and transformational approaches are working together to maximise savings?

- How are we maximising income?
- Have we compared other council's policies to maximise income and fully considered the implications on service users?
- Do we have a workforce plan that takes into account capacity, costs, and skills of the actual versus desired workforce?

Questions to ask within a year of the decision:

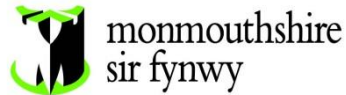
- Were the intended outcomes of the proposal achieved or were there other results?
- Were the impacts confined to the group you initially thought would be affected i.e. older people, or were others affected e.g. people with disabilities, parents with young children?
- Is the decision still the right decision or do adjustments need to be made?

Questions for the Committee to conclude...

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

- (i) Investigate the issue in more detail?
- (ii) Obtain further information from other witnesses – Executive Member, independent expert, members of the local community, service users, regulatory bodies...

Agree further actions to be undertaken within a timescale/future monitoring report...



SUBJECT:	MONMOUTHSHIRE PLANNING SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT (APR)
MEETING:	PERFORMANCE & OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE
DATE:	24 OCTOBER 2023
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide the committee with a report on the performance of the Council's Planning Service for the financial year period **2022-23**.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

- 2.1 To scrutinise the contents of the Planning Service's Annual Performance Report 2022-23 prior to its endorsement by the Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Development on 15 November 2023 for submission to the Welsh Government.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Welsh Government (WG) normally requires all Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) in Wales to submit an Annual Performance Report for their planning service by the end of November each year (albeit that this requirement was relaxed during the reporting periods affected by the Covid pandemic). This requirement links with the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, and the Welsh Government's objective of creating a positive and enabling planning service.
- 3.2 This is the ninth Annual Performance Report (APR). The report to a scrutiny committee provides the opportunity to review and discuss performance and was welcomed by previous Committees, with a request that it become an annual item.
- 3.3 The APR looks at the performance of the Planning Service against nationally set performance indicators, Welsh Government (WG) targets, the Wales average performance, and Monmouthshire's performance over the previous year. The results are considered in the context of the challenges, opportunities, priorities and resources (staffing and financial) available. The objective of the APR is to reflect on and celebrate good performance, identify areas for improvement, and look across Wales to identify potential areas of best practice that Monmouthshire could learn from or share with others. Recently there was no requirement from WG to submit an APR and no all Wales comparative data has been provided as is normally done. Again, this year WG have not provided national benchmarking figures to enable the council to review its current status against the Wales average. This is unfortunate as the comparison being made is no longer accurate or reflective of the status of planning services across Wales during 2022/23. Issues such as resources limitations and environmental considerations such as water quality in rivers would have an impact on local planning authorities across Wales and therefore the comparison is flawed. Despite that, Monmouthshire's Planning Service decided to continue to commit to submitting an APR but had to base the assessment of our performance over those two years against the Welsh average in 2018/19 (the last year the national data was published).

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

- Plan making (omitted from the APR in recent years as no performance data was provided by WG and the issues are more than adequately covered by the LDP Annual Monitoring Report);
- Efficiency;
- Quality;
- Engagement; and
- Enforcement.

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

3.5 The Annual Performance Report is provided at Appendix 1.

4.0 KEY ISSUES

4.1 The purpose of the Planning Service is 'To plan for, advise on, give permission for and ensure the best possible development', that links directly to all six of the Council's Corporate objectives. The service is directly involved with wider corporate projects such as 21st Century Schools and forms an enabling tool to help address some of the challenges and issues identified corporately.

4.2 Key areas of work for the Planning Service include:

- Carrying out a replacement of the Monmouthshire LDP.
- Preparing and co-ordinating thematic supplementary planning guidance to help to foster the interpretation and implementation of LDP policy.
- Implementing the Council's LDP through engaging and working with communities, and partnership working with both internal and external partners.
- Monitoring and evaluating development plan policies, including preparing the statutory LDP Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- Maintaining the LDP evidence base and ensuring fitness for purpose for future LDP revision.
- Providing pre-application advice to customers;
- Determining planning applications in accordance with adopted policy and material planning considerations, taking into account stakeholder comments and corporate objectives;
- Securing financial contributions from developers to offset the infrastructure demands of new development;
- Safeguarding the County's 2400 Listed Buildings and 31 Conservation Areas, areas of archaeological sensitivity, the Wye Valley AONB and the Brecon Beacons National Park;
- Providing a heritage service for our neighbouring colleagues in Blaenau Gwent County Borough that works in a manner that is consistent and as well-resourced as the one provided for Monmouthshire.
- Taking robust enforcement action against unauthorised development that is unacceptable in the public interest.

5.0 MAJOR PROJECTS FROM 2022-23

5.1 During the reporting period these included:

- Consideration was given as to how best to progress the RLDP having regard to the challenges that arose following public consultation and engagement on the previous Preferred Strategy in Summer 2021, namely the Welsh Government objection to the level of growth set out in that Preferred Strategy and water quality issues in the Rivers Wye and Usk, whilst also ensuring that the RLDP delivers on our objectives and addresses our core issues. In September 2022 Council endorsed the proposal to proceed with a new growth and spatial strategy that responds to the above. Reflecting this, a revised Delivery Agreement was agreed by Council and agreed with the Welsh Government (December 2022) and the revised RLDP Preferred Strategy and Candidate Sites Register (CSR) were subject to public consultation and engagement from 5th December 2022 – 30th January 2023, with eight engagement drop-in events held throughout the County, along with two virtual events. Approximately 220 Preferred Strategy and 650 CSR representations were submitted during the consultation period. Work progressed on the candidate site assessments, development of the RLDP evidence base and processing representations. Feedback from the Preferred Strategy and Candidate Site Register consultation is anticipated to be reported to Council in Autumn 2023. The outcome will inform the next key stage of the RLDP, the Deposit Plan.
- Continuing a joint heritage service for Monmouthshire and Blaenau Gwent Councils. This commenced in January 2019 and has provided our neighbouring authority with expert heritage advice without the need to employ its own officer or commission a consultant. MCC manages the service for BGCBC via a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and provides the staff to deliver a resilient heritage service assisted by BGBC funding.
- Towards the end of the 2021, as a planning authority we were faced with a new constraint of riverine phosphate pollution. Within Monmouthshire it was identified that within the River Usk 88% of the river's water bodies failed to meet the required water quality target and within the River Wye 67% failed to meet the target. As a result of this failure NRW have issued detailed planning guidance to ensure that the environmental capacity of the rivers (which are designated special areas of conservation) do not deteriorate any further. Any proposed development within the catchment areas of the rivers that might increase phosphate levels need to clearly evidence within a planning application 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 has impacted on all development that increases the volume or concentration of wastewater. We have been working through the guidance and applying it to all new applications in those Wye and Usk catchment areas. This has sometimes delayed applications and many were on hold until the Council had developed a clear strategy for dealing with such issues. We continue to work with a wide range of agencies including WG, NRW, Welsh Water and other authorities (including new nutrient management boards) to find sustainable solutions to this significant environmental problem. Recent work has seen DC-WW commit to providing phosphate stripping technology at Monmouth and Llanfoist waste water treatments works by April 2025. This commitment will help bring forward much needed development in the main towns of Monmouth and Abergavenny.
- Delivering our bespoke pre-application advice service for potential applicants, as well as offering planning performance agreements, pre-purchase certificates and completion certificates.
- Successfully recruiting new staff and training them to adapt to their new roles in DM and Policy Teams.

- Implementing prioritised elements of the Team’s Digital Plan to improve our processes and customer experience – including upgrades to the Idox Document Management System (DMS) and Public Access (PA).
- Securing detailed planning permissions for the new 21st Century Comprehensive School at Abergavenny, two major housing developments at Vinegar Hill and Rockfield Farm, Undy - both strategic housing sites in the LDP, a significant employment development at Wales 1 Business Park, Magor (14,400sq.m), a substantial food retail development at Bulwark neighbourhood centre, a re-development at Nevill Hall Hospital to provide a new two-storey satellite radiotherapy unit and a new Police Station to serve the Abergavenny area and the A465 corridor at Llanfoist.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF OUR 2022/23 APR

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

- The proportion of major applications determined within 8 weeks or agreed timescales was very good at 71%, and was well above the Good target of 60% (5 out of 7 applications);
- The proportion of all applications determined within 8 weeks or agreed timescales remained high at 89%, an improvement on the previous year (81%) demonstrating the effective recruitment and training up of new officers in the Applications team;
- The proportion of applications we approved remained high at 94%;
- Of those applications that had gone through our pre-application advice service, and followed our advice 100% were approved;
- We ‘won’ seven out of eleven appeals against our decisions to refuse planning permission;
- We dealt with a large number of applications for listed building consent (67 applications) and 75% of these were determined within agreed timescales – this was despite having a reduced resource in the Heritage team from January 2021 until the end of July 2022;
- Enforcement performance improved for the measure relating to the % of enforcement cases investigated in 84 days but declined in respect of the average time to take positive action – the latter was primarily due to tackling the backlog of cases built up in previous years because of reduced staff resource. Some older cases were cleared leading to the longer average measure.
- Significant s106 monies were secured (over £4M) towards important community infrastructure schemes across the county including the Magor Hub as a result of granting permission for major developments such as those at Rockfield Farm and Vinegar Hill, Undy.

6.2 A summary table of our performance can be found in Appendix A of the APR. Of the 12 ranked indicators, 6 are ranked ‘Good’, while 4 are ‘Fair’ and 2 are in ‘need of improvement’.

- The ‘need improvement’ results relate to the percentage of enforcement cases investigated (determined whether a breach of planning control has occurred and, if so, resolved whether or not enforcement action is expedient) within 84 days being 62%, and the average time taken to take positive enforcement action being 290 days. This was due to the impact of significant resource challenges within the previous reporting periods resulting in a case backlog. This has been largely cleared but led to a rise in the end to end times to resolve

cases in 2022/23. Better performance against these measures has already been identified in the early quarters of 2023/24.

	Number of indicators
Welsh Government target has been set and our performance is 'good'	6
Welsh Government target has been set and our performance is 'fair'	4
Welsh Government target has been set and our performance 'needs improvement'	2

6.3 Four actions are identified going forwards.

Action 1 – Digitise information in relation to older planning applications that held on microfiche to enable the public to self-serve, reducing the time of Support staff and the Duty Officer to assist such enquiries and to reduce the need for travel.

Action 2 – Continue to review and make positive change to the Planning Service’s enforcement function and its processes to speed up our decision-making, ensuring we are providing a good service for our customers. Digitise the enforcement notice register to help customers self-serve.

Action 3 – To finalise a Buildings at Risk (BAR) strategy to manage and prioritise any interventions to enable key heritage assets to realise a sustainable use for future generations.

Action 4 – To continue to invest in our staff to ensure professional qualifications are achieved and professional development takes place – be it via external or internal training.

6.4 Value of Planning

RTPI Cymru has published a toolkit which measures the value generated by a local authority planning service. The tool has been developed to capture the economic, social and environmental value at a local planning authority level across Wales. The tool and its 'Value Dashboard' has been designed to provide RTPI Cymru and the Welsh Government with a platform to demonstrate to local authorities, national policy makers, the private sector, researchers and other broader policy and media audiences, the value planning contributes and how planning is positively contributing to Wales' seven well-being goals. The data has been updated to reflect planning permissions and completions in the current reporting period, 2022/23. The toolkit has been a very useful means of promoting the good work undertaken by the department that is often taken for granted. Over this period, the toolkit concludes that the service has contributed £84.7M to the local economy by the allocation of sites in the LDP, the safeguarding of land, the granting and implementation of planning permissions, the operation of its enforcement function and the securing of planning obligations. We aim to update this for the ensuing reporting periods. The 'Dashboard' data summarises the Planning Service’s contribution below:

Value of Planning in Monmouthshire 2022/23

Planning service key data



31 FTE jobs in planning service



1,014 applications handled



£0.5m collected in fees

LDP Land Safeguarded



LDP Land Allocated

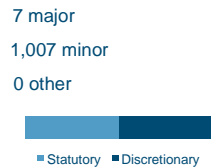


LDP Value

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

Value adding policies ? 89%

Applications



0 DCOs dealt with
2 DNS dealt with
67 LBC applications granted
11 refusals appealed
1 judicial reviews

Decisions



Permissions



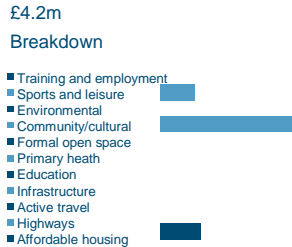
Permissions

■ Consistent with local plan
■ Departures from local plan



Contributions

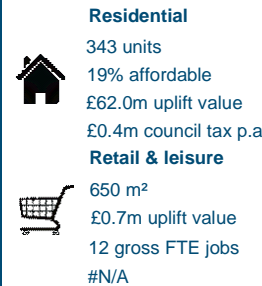
Section 106 income



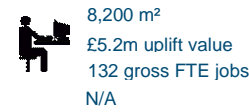
CIL income



Completions



Commercial



Renewables



Tourism



Enforcement

384 enforcement complaints
4 planning contraventions
3 enforcement notices
4 breach of condition notices
0 stop notices
3 section 125 notices



Wider indicators



In 2022/23 the total value of planning was £84.7m

SOURCES: Planning function outputs (LPA survey), Land and property value data (JLL estimates), business rates valuations (Valuation Office Agency), employment densities (English Homes & Communities Agency), Council tax rates (StatsWales), Health benefits from Affordable Housing (Department for Communities and Local Government Appraisal Guide, based on various studies outlined in app databook), Community benefit from renewables (Renewables UK Cymru). Some of the calculations require high level assumptions to convert between units/m²/ha. Where possible, benchmarks have been employed otherwise reasonable assumptions have been used. Business rate, council tax and gross FTE job estimates based on assumption of 100% occupancy and do not factor in any displacement. Numbers of applications and decisions are unlikely to match up as these can take place in different financial years for any given application. 'Value adding policies' refers to the proportion of policies the team has identified as adding 'intangible value' that are included in local plans. Approvals and refusals do not sum to 100% due to applications carry across years. The total value of planning only incorporates some of the metrics presented in the dashboard.



7.0 OPPORTUNITIES GOING FORWARD

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

- In tandem with our systems thinking approach, to use Team meetings and performance reports to drill down into specific areas of workflow and identify where problems exist and why, with a targeted approach to identifying solutions;
- Continue to roll out the project management of major planning applications, where appropriate, via planning performance agreements to seek, by best endeavours, timely and well-managed processing of such applications, providing a good customer experience for the customer;
- To digitise the information held by the Council in microfiche or paper form to improve the web site experience for customers and improve customers' pathways to information (Action 1);
- To improve the speed with which we deal with enforcement cases via the continued systems review of the Enforcement function and via analysis of individual team members' performance (Action 2);
- To digitise the Council's enforcement register as part of the digital improvement programme to help customers self-serve (Action 2);
- To finalise and implement a Buildings At Risk Strategy to safeguard some of our most precious but vulnerable heritage assets (Action 3);
- Continue with the replacement Monmouthshire LDP because of the need to address climate change and to facilitate the identification/ allocation of additional housing land as well as addressing the demographic and employment challenges of the County;
- To identify, implement and/or disseminate best practice via the Planning Officers' Society for Wales or other working groups, including the Welsh Government, the WLGA and the RTPi
- Promote the value of the work carried out by the Council's Planning Service by updating the Value of Planning toolkit on an annual basis and publicising the findings in each APR.
- To support our colleagues via training opportunities, regular reviews and one-to-ones to invest in their careers, ensure their well-being and mental health are resilient and their productivity remains high (Action 4).
- To respond to the threats resulting from the pandemic followed by the economic squeeze on households and enterprises to ensure our County's businesses can be resilient and can thrive.
- To manage the threat of phosphate pollution in our two main rivers to reduce environmental damage, while finding new ways of managing this issue that will still allow sustainable development to take place in those catchment areas.

7.2 Progress will be measured via our 2023/24 Annual Performance Report, 2023/24 LDP Annual Monitoring Report, and our 2023 - 2026 Service Business Plan.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

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

9.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

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

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

10.0 OPTIONS CONSIDERED

10.1 There is normally a requirement on Local Planning Authorities to undertake an Annual Performance Report and to submit it to the Welsh Government each Autumn. Unfortunately, this year WG have been unable to provide the benchmarking figures to enable the council to review its current status against the Wales average. Issues such as the challenging economic conditions, resource limitations and environmental considerations, such as water quality in rivers, would have an impact on Local Planning Authorities across Wales and therefore it is unfortunate that this data is not available to enable a fair comparison of our performance. We could decide not to conduct the APR for this reason however we do consider it useful to carry on with this work to help us continue to improve our service. Consequently, the following options were considered:
1) Recommend the APR for submission without any changes;
2) Recommend the APR for submission but with changes to the proposed actions for the coming year.

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

11.0 HOW WILL SUCCESS BE MEASURED?

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

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

12.0 CONSULTEES

- Planning Committee and the Performance & Overview Scrutiny Committee via a report to the latter to be considered on 24 October 2023.
- Cabinet Member for Sustainable Economy
- SLT
- Communities and Place DMT

13.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

14.0 AUTHOR & CONTACT DETAILS:

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ANNEX A - PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

MEASURE for 2022/23 APR	GOOD	FAIR	IMPROVE
Efficiency			
Percentage of "major" applications determined within time periods required	>60	50.1-59.9	<50
Average time taken to determine "major" applications in days	Not set	Not set	Not set
Percentage of all applications determined within time periods required	>80	70.1-79.9	<70
Average time taken to determine all applications in days	<67	67-111	112+
Percentage of Listed Building Consent applications determined within time periods required	80+	70.1-79.9	<70
Quality			
Percentage of Member made decisions against officer advice	<5	5-9	9+
Percentage of appeals dismissed	>66	55.1-65.9	<55
Applications for costs at Section 78 appeal upheld in the reporting period	0	1	2+
Engagement			
Does the local planning authority allow members of the public to address the Planning Committee?	Yes		No

WALES AVERAGE 2018/19	Monmouths hire LPA 2021/22	Monmouths hire LPA 2022/23
68	100	5 out of 7 applications = 71%
232	116	120 days
88	81	916 out of 1026 = 89%
77	106	110 days
75	72	50 out of 67 = 75%
9	5	2 out of 35 = 6%
68	70	7 out of 11 = 64
0	1	0
Yes	Yes	Yes

MEASURE for 2022/23 APR	GOOD	FAIR	IMPROVE
Does the local planning authority have an officer on duty to provide advice to members of the public?	Yes		No
Does the local planning authority's web site have an online register of planning applications, which members of the public can access, track their progress (and view their content)?	Yes	Partial	No
Enforcement			
Percentage of enforcement cases investigated (determined whether a breach of planning control has occurred and, if so, resolved whether or not enforcement action is expedient) within 84 days	>80	70.1-79.9	<70
Average time taken to take positive enforcement action	<100	101-200	200+

WALES AVERAGE 2018/19	Monmouths hire LPA 2021/22	Monmouths hire LPA 2022/23
Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	Yes	Yes
72	55	238 out of 384 cases = 62%
199	250	290 days

Monmouthshire Local Planning Authority

PLANNING ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT (APR) – 2022 –23

PREFACE

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

This report shows that Monmouthshire's Planning Service continues to perform effectively, with two of the thirteen indicators in need of improvement against the Welsh Government's targets. We are performing well in dealing with all types of planning applications and I am pleased to note that the committee process, which has involved a cohort of new Members, is working effectively showing a very good relationship between Members and officers in this authority. The whole team showed commendable resilience during the period in continuing to turnaround planning applications and heritage work and to investigate and resolve enforcement cases in a timely manner. This was despite having to recruit, train up and assimilate several new members of staff across all elements of the Development Management Team. There has also been significant resource issues in organisations who respond to consultations on our planning applications.

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

Good planning is central to the Council's purpose of achieving a zero carbon County and supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life, while also generating growth in the economy and protecting the heritage and landscapes that make our County the beautiful place it is. Good planning is key to achieving our well-being objectives for everyone who lives, works and spends time in our beautiful County. As part of this, Planning has a key role in tackling climate change, placemaking, delivering affordable homes for those in housing need and assisting the local economy to overcome current economic pressures.

Councillor Paul Griffiths, Cabinet Member

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This is Monmouthshire's ninth Annual Performance Report, which looks at the performance of the Planning Service against nationally set performance indicators, Welsh Government (WG) targets, the Wales average performance, and Monmouthshire's performance last year. The results are considered in the context of the challenges, opportunities, priorities and resources (staffing and financial) available to us. The objective of the APR is to reflect on and celebrate good performance, identify areas for improvement, and look across Wales to identify potential areas of best practice that we could learn from or share with others.

1.2 The nature of the performance indicators means their focus is on decision speed and customer service rather than measuring whether or not better outcomes have been achieved. It has not yet been possible to identify an objective way of measuring outcomes, however we seek to prioritise securing the best scheme possible rather than traditional indicators relating to speed of decision-making. Research has identified that our customers' priority is securing planning permission: customers generally understand the benefits of good design and, within reason, do not see the time taken as a priority.

1.3 For the purposes of this report, performance is analysed across the four key aspects of planning service delivery as set out in WG's Planning Performance Framework:

- Efficiency;
- Quality;
- Engagement; and
- Enforcement.

The performance of the Local Development Plan is more than adequately covered in the Annual Monitoring Report, also being submitted to WG in October 2023. For the other areas in the Planning Performance Framework, performance data has been obtained by Monmouthshire officers from the Development Management Quarterly Returns and our own back-office system. Comparisons have been made with the Welsh average performance for each measure over 2018/19 (the latest reporting period for this national data) as well as our own performance against the measures over 2022/23. Performance is ranked as 'good', 'fair' or 'needs improvement'.

1.4 Based on the performance information in Section 6 and Annex A, we can be pleased with the service we deliver given the challenges we have faced. During this period:

- The proportion of all applications determined within 8 weeks, or an agreed timescale, improved compared to the year before rising from 81% to 89% and remained well above the WG target of 80%;
The average time to determine all applications increased to 110 days (from 106 days in 2021/22) explained by the impact of the backlog caused by previous staffing shortages within the application team (and among our consultee organisations) as well as the delays caused by the phosphate pollution issue that led to a pause in determining many applications in the central and northern parts of the County;

- The proportion of major applications determined within agreed timescales was 71% and was above the Welsh average in 2018/19;
- 75% of listed building applications were determined within approved timescales and we provided a valued Heritage service for Blaenau Gwent Council;
- The percentage of applications that were approved remained high at 94%, well above the WG average;
- During this reporting period, we closed 361 applications seeking pre-application advice. 147 planning applications stemmed from the pre-application advice we gave. Of those that have been determined seven were refused (5%) and nine were withdrawn (6%) due to a change in the applicants' circumstances; the remainder were approved (89%). All seven that were refused had not followed the advice we gave at pre-application stage. Consequently, we have a 100% success rate of applications that went to decision stage and followed our pre-application advice.

1.5 A summary table of our performance can be found in Annex A.

The two enforcement measures are in need of improvement. We are aware that this area needs attention and are working hard to improve this element of the service. Last year's performance has to be considered in the context of a significant backlog of work due to earlier gaps in staff resources. Within the first quarter of the next reporting period (April – June 2023) these two measures have moved to 'green' and 'amber' respectively.

2.0 CONTEXT

- 2.1 This section sets out the planning context within which the Local Planning Authority operates, both corporately and in terms of Monmouthshire as a county, for the 2022-23 period.

Corporate Context

- 2.2 The Council adopted its Local Development Plan in February 2014 and submitted its eighth Annual Monitoring Report to Welsh Government in October 2022.

- 2.3 We contribute to delivering the Council's high-level objectives, set out in the Council's Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28. The objectives we contribute to are:

MCC Purpose	A zero carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life
CC Objectives	A Fair place to live where the effects of inequality and poverty have been reduced; A Green place to live and work, with reduced carbon emissions, and making a positive contribution to addressing the climate and nature emergency; A Thriving and ambitious place, where there are vibrant town centres, where businesses can grow and develop; A Safe place to live where people have a home and community where they feel secure; A Connected place where people feel part of a community and are valued; A Learning place where everybody has the opportunity to reach their potential.

- 2.4 The Planning Service's purpose, 'To plan for, advise on, give permission for and ensure the best possible development', links directly to all six of these objectives. The Planning Service sits within Communities and Place Directorate.

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

- 2.6 Key areas of work for the Service include:

- Carrying out a replacement of the Monmouthshire LDP.
- Preparing and co-ordinating thematic supplementary planning guidance to help to foster the interpretation and implementation of LDP policy.
- Implementing the Council's LDP through engaging and working with communities, and partnership working with both internal and external partners.
- Monitoring and evaluating development plan policies, including preparing the statutory LDP Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- Maintaining the LDP evidence base and ensuring fitness for purpose for future LDP revision.
- Providing pre-application advice to customers;
- Determining planning applications in accordance with adopted policy and material planning considerations, taking into account stakeholder comments and corporate objectives;
- Securing financial contributions from developers to offset the infrastructure demands of new development;
- Safeguarding the County's 2400 Listed Buildings and 31 Conservation Areas, areas of archaeological sensitivity, the Wye Valley AONB and the Brecon Beacons National Park;
- Providing a heritage service for our neighbouring colleagues in Blaenau County Borough that works in a manner that is consistent and as well-resourced as the one provided for Monmouthshire.
- Taking robust enforcement action against unauthorised development that is unacceptable in the public interest.

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

Local Context

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

Our people

2.8.1 Monmouthshire covers an area of approximately 88,000 hectares with a population of 93,000 in 2021¹. Almost 8% of residents reside within the BBNP area of the County. The County has a low population density of 1.1 persons per hectare – significantly lower than the South East Wales average of 5.3 persons per hectare – reflecting the area's rural nature. Only 53% of the population lived in wards defined as being urban areas (i.e. with a population of more than 10,000).

2.8.2 Our population has been increasing steadily, up 7.6% between 2001 and 2011 compared with the Wales average of 5.5%. The increase from 2011 to 2021² represents a lower

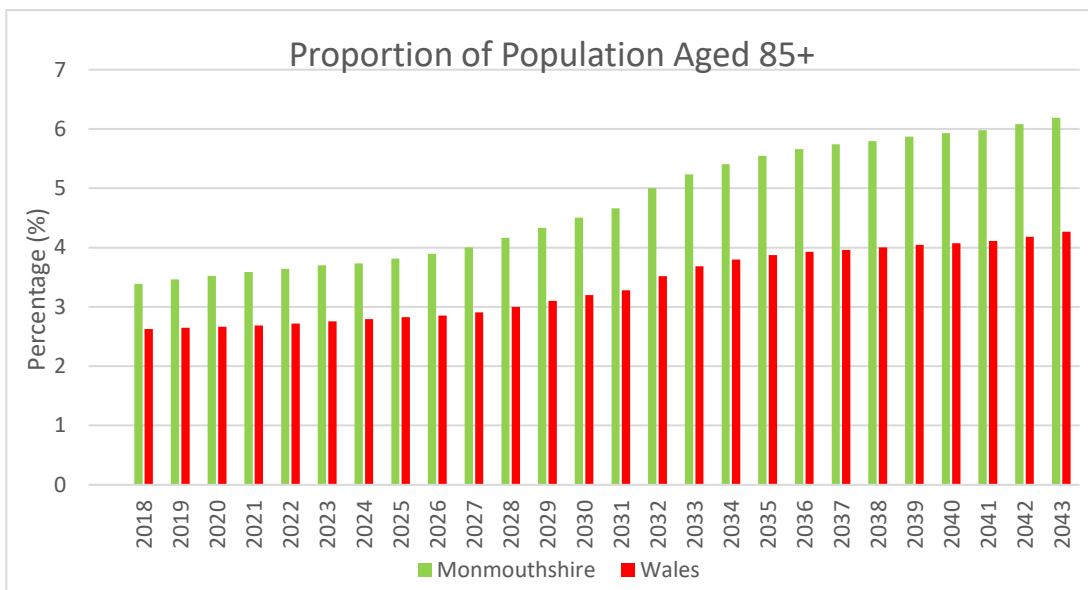
¹ Source: Census 2021 first release of results (28.06.2022). Please note figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

² Source: Census 2021 first release of results (28.06.2022). Please note figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

increase at 1.8%, however, this is marginally higher than the growth for Wales over the same period of 1.4%. This increase is wholly attributable to inward migration, with natural change showing negative growth. The County has a relatively high and increasing proportion of older age groups, and a lower and decreasing proportion of younger adults compared with the UK and Wales averages. The graph below illustrates the proportion of those aged 85+ in Monmouthshire in comparison to Wales, based upon the 2018-based local authority population projections for Wales, 2018 to 2043. It shows that the trend in the ageing demographic is likely to continue. The 2021³ Census initial release suggests the proportion of those aged 85+ is 3.4% in Monmouthshire compared to 2.7% in Wales.

Source: Office for National Statistics, Stats Wales

2.8.3
This



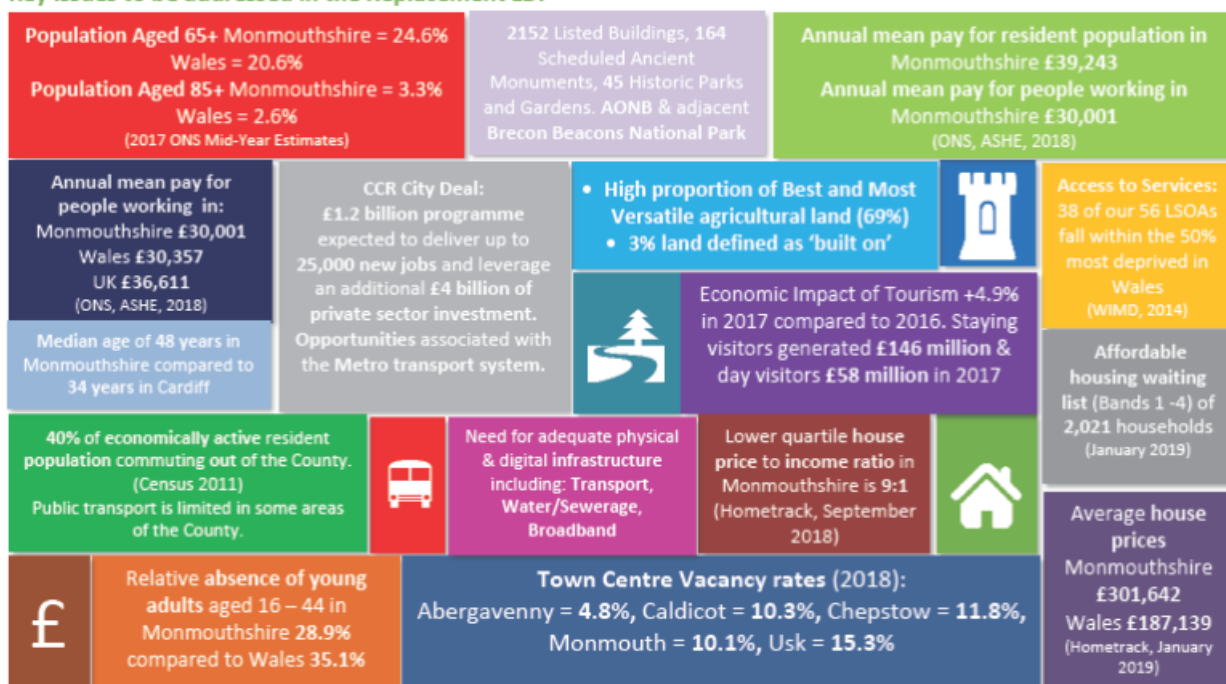
Demographic change has significant implications for economic activity and demand for services to enable our citizens to continue to live independent lives.

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

³ Source: Census 2021 first release of results (28.06.2022). Please note figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

Monmouthshire Replacement Local Development Plan – Issues, Vision and Objectives

Key Issues to be addressed in the Replacement LDP



2.9 Housing and quality of life

2.9.1 The County has three broad categories of settlement:

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

2.9.2 Over the last decade, housing completions in the Monmouthshire LPA area have averaged over 300 dwellings per annum, although there have been significant annual variations with 205 completions in 2014/15 and 443 in 2018/19. To deliver the LDP housing requirement, 488 completions per annum were required (2013-2021). During 2022/23 there were 343 housing completions. This is discussed in more detail in the LDP Annual Monitoring Report.

2.9.3 Land Registry data indicates that average house prices in Monmouthshire have increased with average prices in quarter 1 (January to March) 2022 standing at £334,148, significantly higher than the 2012 quarter 4 baseline price (£188,720).

Between 2006 (the time the Monmouthshire Unitary Development Plan was adopted) and March 2022, there have been 4,540 completions of which 903 were affordable, equating to 20% of all dwellings built. Since LDP adoption (2014) to March 2022 there have been 2,535 completions of which 530 were affordable, equating to 21% of all dwellings constructed. This affordable housing provision only relates to those units derived from planning consents but additional affordable housing provision can result if open market houses are purchased by a registered social landlord.

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

2.10 **Our economy**

210.1 The ONS Annual Population Survey suggests that the County has a high proportion of working age people in employment (77.7% January 2021 - December 2021) compared to neighbouring Authorities including Newport (72.7%), Cardiff (74.9%), Blaenau Gwent (71.1%) and Torfaen (70.3%). The equivalent figure for Wales is (73.1%). Our economy is reliant on the public sector and services for employment:

- In 2020, the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) records that the public administration, education and health sector accounts for 30.9% of jobs;
- The distribution, retail, hotels and restaurants sector accounts for 27.9% of jobs;
- Tourism, as part of the services sector, is also important in the County (see 2.16.3 below).

2.10.2 The County had 4,490 active enterprises in 2021, 10% of which were in the property and business services sector. The three sectors with the most businesses were Professional, scientific and technical services (17%); Agriculture, forestry and fishing (16%) and Construction (11%). Accommodation and food services accounted for 7%. The UK Business count dataset accessed via Nomis also suggests that 98.5% of the County's businesses are classified as small (i.e. up to 49 employees).

2.10.3 Tourism is vital to Monmouthshire's economy and generates income to support a wide range of businesses that benefit from spending by visitors. According to figures supplied by tourism economic indicator 2021 STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor), the sector brought in £182.79 to Monmouthshire in 2021 and supported the equivalent of 2,336 full-time jobs. Each visitor contributing to the county's economy by purchasing food and drink, fuel, services and accommodation spends on average over £77 per day.

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

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

2.10.5 The 2021 Welsh Government Commuting Statistics indicate that 61.2% of the County's working residents work in the area. This is an increase on previous years and suggests that there has been some progress in meeting the aspiration to increase the proportion of resident workforce working within Monmouthshire over the Plan period. However, the same data source suggests that Monmouthshire has a net outflow of 2,800 commuters – with 14,300 commuting into the Authority to work and 17,100 commuting out. There was significant in-commuting from Newport (3,000), Torfaen (1,900) and Blaenau Gwent (1,400), and from England (2,900). The main areas for out-commuting were Newport (2,600), Torfaen (2,400), Cardiff (1,600) with a further 4,600 going to Bristol. A relatively high proportion of Monmouthshire's residents travel long distances to work, with a high usage of the private car. Heavy reliance on the private car and limited opportunities for public transport is a particular issue in rural areas.

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

2.11 Our built heritage

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

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

3.0 PLANNING SERVICE

Organisational setting

3.1 Towards the end of 2021/22, the Planning Service underwent significant changes, primarily in the Applications, Heritage and Enforcement Teams. In the Applications Team, three Development Management Officers left the team, one colleague following a prolonged period of sickness, one to pursue a different career and the other following a promotion to another planning authority in S-E Wales. Unsurprisingly, this left significant gaps in staffing, diverted more work onto remaining staff and managers and led to a downturn in end-to-end performance across all types of applications, not just householder and minor

applications. As a response, a new temporary DMO post and a trainee planner post were created and successful candidates were appointed in late 2021 to address the build-up of work. Those two temporary officers have now been appointed to full time DM Officer roles following interview for the permanent (and vacant) posts. The other DMO post was taken up by the Council's former Enforcement Monitoring Officer so that all the Applications Team posts were filled towards by the end of the 2021/22 reporting period.

In Heritage there was a minor re-structure following the decision to suspend collaboration work with Torfaen Council (this was partly owing to resource pressures and partly due to the lack of ability to retain the Senior Heritage Officer post funded by Torfaen). A post for a Heritage Officer filled in July 2022. The Planning Service's Tree Officer left in October 2022 to take up a similar role in S-W England and was replaced in January 2023 by a new officer also working 0.6 FTE like their predecessor.

In Enforcement, two vacant posts were filled in early 2022. Owing to these gaps in appointments, significant pressure was experienced by the remaining team members and performance unsurprisingly dropped off.

In the Planning Support Team, a Planning Support Officer opted to take up a part-time role and the vacant element of their role was filled in 2022.

In the Policy Team, a Senior Officer retired in December 2022 and the Research Officer left for a new job in the private sector in September 2022. Recruitment proved challenging and they were replaced during summer 2023.

3.2 Department structure and reporting lines for the 2022-23 reporting period



Planning Service staffing structure for the 2022-23 reporting period



Budgets

- 3.3 The two main costs for the service are staff costs and the LDP budget (money is transferred from the above budget to sit in an LDP reserve, built up to fund the next LDP). Income is generated by planning application fees and charges for our discretionary services including our pre-application advice service (the latter amounted to approximately £47,000 over 2022/23, slightly higher than the previous year) as well as the Planning Service’s newer discretionary services that are discussed below.
- 3.4 Planning application fee income (£475k) was lower than 2021/22 and less than in most of the previous reporting periods. The prime cause was the reduction in the number of major planning applications which provide much higher fees compared to minor applications. This has inevitably been the result of the impact of the riverine phosphate constraint in settlements like Abergavenny and Monmouth (this is discussed in later sections of this Report) as well as the late stage of the lifecycle of the LDP. Fee projection work means there is likely to be more activity on housing sites over 2023/24 in respect of sites allocated in the current LDP that have not yet come forward (Tudor Road and Drewen Farm, Monmouth) although this is subject to phosphate issues being resolved. Delays to the review stages of the new LDP will mean there will be no new allocated housing sites coming forward until Deposit/ Examination stage, probably in the later part of 2024. Application fees are set periodically by Welsh Government but they do not rise by inflation each year (the last increase was in 2020) and fee income is dependent on economic activity which is also out of the Council’s hands.
- 3.5 Research by the Welsh Government identifies that application fees recover approximately 50% of the cost of dealing with planning applications. Additional costs are incurred through the work involved in the statutory Development Plan, and via other services such as enforcement and heritage management. Increased planning application fee income is used to reduce the net cost of the service to the Council. In-year windfall extra income is used to balance the Council’s budgets and offset overspend in other services. Conversely as has been the case during recent years, underspend in other services was used to offset DM’s under-recovery of income, when economic and other circumstances resulted in a sudden drop in fee income. Application fee income has fluctuated significantly over recent years, and this poses a challenge for budget management going forward. Fee income is heavily influenced by the wider economy, for example house-building (which itself is affected by mortgage lending and development viability) and other funding streams.

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Budgeted fee income	£633k	£668k	£684k	£681k	£693k	£589k	£480k	£480k	£570k
Actual income	£664k	£560k	£430k	£653k	£666k	£494k*	£651k	£554k	

N.B. Fee income includes planning application fees, pre-application advice income and the discretionary fees for fast track applications. The 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 figure also includes payment from Torfaen Council towards funding the joint Heritage Service, that has now ended.

*This reduced level of income was then offset by a grant from WG due to the pandemic

Staff resources

- 3.6 Staffing levels for the reporting period are shown in the chart at paragraph 3.2 above. Key changes over 2021-2023 saw significant turnover of staff within Planning as discussed in section 3.1 above.
- 3.7 For the reporting period, sickness levels were relatively low. The pandemic did have an impact on the capacity of officers in previous reporting periods and certainly over 2021/22 (and 2022-23 in the Policy Team) there have been notable pressures caused during the period between staff appointments – exacerbated by the relatively high turnover of staff during this period. Morale of team members had been impacted by the length of the pandemic and the sense of isolation home-working can have as well as the build-up of work as staff have left and their work has been passed onto remaining staff. It is fair to say that the recruitment of a new cohort of planners has revitalised the team, however, and has enabled the existing staff to get back on top of workloads. To tackle issues of performance and morale, managers put in place regular meetings, welfare chats, counselling and a more structured approach to performance management. In addition, we have invested in young planners who are seeking to enter the profession by providing a trainee post (one year placement) in both the Policy and DM teams – the latter assisting the workload of the planning applications case officers by having their own caseload of householder and minor applications.
- 3.8 Training and development opportunities for colleagues were primarily events organised by the Council itself or occasionally by the RTPI, including the Wales Planning Conference. There was also a law update by FTB Chambers and the annual Welsh Enforcement Conference. In-house opportunities were provided via quarterly Development Management and Planning Policy Liaison Meetings. There is also an opportunity for DM officers to discuss individual cases with colleagues at casework management meetings held twice a week. A junior officer in the team has enrolled on the RTPI-accredited Masters course studying for a planning degree, part time.

Three staff within DM have undertaken Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM) qualifications over recent years.

4.0 OUR LOCAL STORY

Workload

- 4.1 Key projects during the reporting period included:
- Consideration was given as to how best to progress the RLDP having regard to the challenges that arose following public consultation and engagement on the previous Preferred Strategy in Summer 2021, namely the Welsh Government objection to the level of growth set out in that Preferred Strategy and water quality issues in the Rivers Wye and Usk, whilst also ensuring that the RLDP delivers on our objectives and addresses our core issues of providing affordable housing, reducing the need for people to travel and seeking to address our demographic imbalance. In September 2022 Council endorsed the proposal to proceed with a new growth and spatial strategy that responds to the above. Reflecting this, a revised Delivery Agreement was agreed by Council and agreed with the Welsh Government

(December 2022) and the revised RLDP Preferred Strategy and Candidate Sites Register (CSR) were subject to public consultation and engagement from 5th December 2022 – 30th January 2023, with eight engagement drop-in events held throughout the County, along with two virtual events. Approximately 220 Preferred Strategy and 650 CSR representations were submitted during the consultation period. Work progressed on the candidate site assessments, development of the RLDP evidence base and processing representations. Feedback from the Preferred Strategy and Candidate Site Register consultation is anticipated to be reported to Council in October 2023. The outcome will inform the next key stage of the RLDP, the Deposit Plan.

- Over the last two reporting periods the work pattern has adapted from 100% of our staff working from home to a more hybrid arrangement with officers using collaboration spaces in County Hall to meet as a group on Tuesdays and Thursdays and Support Team colleagues normally using the original space in the office to meet, scan and train colleagues. Site visits for planning applications have continued although we suspended visits for pre-application advice submissions until our resources were back to full capacity. During the pandemic we had let agents know that all applications to be submitted should be done so electronically as the office was temporarily closed and paper forms of submission could not therefore be scanned for the case officer and consultation purposes. This appears to have produced a shift to almost 100% electronic submissions. Planning Committee has reverted to a hybrid arrangement with some Members preferring to attend in County Hall (others opting to attend virtually).
- Continuing a joint heritage service for Monmouthshire and Blaenau Gwent Councils. This commenced in January 2019 and has provided our neighbouring authority with expert heritage advice without the need to employ its own officer or commission a consultant. MCC manages the service for BGCBC via a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and provides the staff to deliver a resilient heritage service assisted by BGBC funding.
- Towards the end of the 2021, as a planning authority we were faced with a new constraint of riverine phosphate pollution. Within Monmouthshire it was identified that within the River Usk 88% of the river's water bodies failed to meet the required water quality target and within the River Wye 67% failed to meet the target. As a result of this failure NRW have issued detailed planning guidance to ensure that the environmental capacity of the rivers (which are designated special areas of conservation) do not deteriorate any further. Any proposed development within the catchment areas of the rivers that might increase phosphate levels need to clearly evidence within a planning application 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 has impacted on all development that increases the volume or concentration of wastewater. We have been working through the guidance and applying it to all new applications in those Wye and Usk catchment areas. This has sometimes delayed applications and many were on hold until the Council had developed a clear strategy for dealing with such issues. We continue to work with a wide range of agencies including WG, NRW, Welsh Water and other authorities (including new nutrient management boards) to find sustainable solutions to this significant environmental problem. Recent work has seen DC-WW commit to providing phosphate stripping technology at Monmouth and Llanfoist waste water treatments works by April 2025. This commitment will help bring forward much needed development in the main towns of Monmouth and Abergavenny.

- Delivering our bespoke pre-application advice service for potential applicants, as well as offering pre-purchase certificates and completion certificates.
- Successfully recruiting new staff and training them to adapt to their new roles in DM and Policy Teams.
- Implementing prioritised elements of the Team’s Digital Plan to improve our processes and customer experience – including upgrades to the Idox Document Management System (DMS) and Public Access (PA).
- Securing detailed planning permissions for the new 21st Century Comprehensive School at Abergavenny, two major housing developments at Vinegar Hill and Rockfield Farm, Undy - both strategic housing sites in the LDP, a significant employment development at Wales 1 Business Park, Magor (14,400sq.m), a substantial food retail development at Bulwark neighbourhood centre, a re-development at Nevill Hall Hospital to provide a new two-storey satellite radiotherapy unit and a new Police Station to serve the Abergavenny area and the A465 corridor at Llanfoist.



Artist impression of new police station located near A465 at Llanfoist (above) and now under construction (below)

4.2 Last year there was a decline in the number of applications received (12%), influenced by the UK's current economic challenges, the impact of phosphate pollution in the SAC catchment areas and the lifecycle of the LDP which is in the process of being replaced. The percentage of applications determined within agreed timescales improved by 8% on the previous year and is rated 'green' (89%). The proportion of approvals remained high at 94%. During 2022-23, 96% of applications were determined under delegated powers while 35 planning applications were decided by Planning Committee (Wales's average in 2018/19 was 93%).

	2014 -15	2015 -16	2016 -17	2017 -18	2018 -19	2019 -20	2020 -21	2021- 22	2022- 23
Applications received	1173	1284	1117	1188	1126	1134	1126	1154	1014
Applications determined	1053	1085	1087	1071	1101	1106	947	1152	1026
% within 8 weeks or agreed timescale	76%	79%	90%	91%	88%	91%	91%	81%	89%
% applications approved	95%	95%	96%	95%	95%	97%	97%	97%	94%

4.3 A key area of work over the last four to five years has been the development of new, bespoke services. The most popular of these has been the Fast Track services for householder applications, lawful development certificates (LDCs) (existing and proposed) and listed building consent. Unfortunately due to the Covid pandemic and subsequent staffing challenges we had to suspend the Fast Track services. We have now reintroduced the Fast Track services over the next reporting period following our successful recruitment drive. A summary of the current system as well as other bespoke services we offer is set out below.

4.4.1 The Fast Track service accelerates the administration and processing of the application for a small additional charge (currently set at 50% of the equivalent application fee for the standard service e.g. for a householder application this would be £230 plus £115 = £345). The offer is that Fast track applications are determined within 28 days following the submission of a valid application. This decision period varies for fast track applications for a certificate of lawfulness (10 days) and applications for listed building consent (35 days). In the unlikely event of not being able to achieve this target or agree a short extension of time (no more than 5 working days) we will refund the fast track service fee.

4.4.2 We also provide a *pre-purchase certificate* service aimed at people looking to buy a property in Monmouthshire. The application would provide the applicant with i) a planning history search; ii) details of planning permissions and listed building consents and iii) enforcement history relating to identified breaches of planning control. This service would include a site visit and identify whether there are any breaches of planning control and whether or not any breaches would be enforceable. The certificate confirms that any approved development at the site, up to the point of the request, has been carried out in accordance with approved plans and that there is no

breach of planning control at the site. We aim to provide a written response within 28 days. This service looks at compliance with all types of planning permissions including listed building consent: it does not provide a substitute to lawful development certificates.

4.4.3 The other discretionary service we offer is a *certificate of completion*. The certificate will indicate whether or not the planning permission and/or Listed Building Consent applied for has been carried out in accordance with the approved plans, and also it would confirm the status of all planning conditions and any approved amendments if applicable. The purpose of this service is to offer support to applicants, agents or any other interested party that the works are appropriate and acceptable once they have been built. If there is an issue of noncompliance this will be brought to the applicant's attention and an opportunity provided for the breach of planning control to be rectified. The service includes a site inspection and desk based research and investigation. We will aim to provide a written response within 28 days.

4.5 These discretionary services were commenced on 1st July 2017 (they were rolled out slowly and then gathered pace until the pandemic when lockdowns, restrictions and home-working meant the pressure on staff time needed a response; priorities were put on applications and pre-application advice so the fast track service was suspended). As they have now been recommenced, we will review the effectiveness of these services during the next reporting period.

4.6 In more recent years, we have introduced planning performance agreements (PPAs) with applicants to provide a systematic framework of project management for more complex planning applications with milestones agreed such as submission of the application, set meeting dates and a projected committee date. The first was pioneered at Fairfield Mabey strategic, mixed use site in Chepstow and was well-received by those involved including the applicant. During 2022/23, two PPAs were used for major proposals at Wales One, Magor (a large employment proposal) and the Wye Bridge active travel scheme. The fees for these two PPAs totalled approximately £40,000 which helped the Planning Team and internal consultees manage their resources to meet the target dates in the PPA.

4.6 In relation to enforcement workload, significant changes to the performance indicator definition were made over recent years, changing what is measured as an enforcement case and the definition of when a case is 'resolved'. The team were significantly hampered throughout the previous and current reporting period by vacancies in two posts due to those officers leaving for new roles either within the wider DM team or in a neighbouring authority. Thus performance declined and is in need of improvement against the relevant measures. On a more positive note the team is now fully staffed and progress is being shown during the (next reporting) 2023/24 period. Action 2 for this priority area is therefore retained to seek sustainable improvement. Improvements to internal processes have enabled cases to be closed earlier and to focus activity on the more serious breaches of control.

4.7 Value of Planning

4.7.1 RTPi Cymru has published a toolkit which measures the value generated by a local authority planning service. The tool has been developed to capture the economic, social and environmental value at a local planning authority level across Wales. The tool and its 'Value Dashboard' have been designed to provide RTPi Cymru and the Welsh Government with a platform to demonstrate

to local authorities, national policy makers, the private sector, researchers and other broader policy and media audiences, the value planning contributes and how planning is positively contributing to Wales' seven well-being goals. The data has been updated to reflect planning permissions and completions in the current reporting period, 2022/23. The toolkit has been a very useful means of promoting the good work undertaken by the department that is often taken for granted. Over this period, the toolkit concludes that the service has contributed £84.7M to the local economy by the allocation of sites in the LDP, the safeguarding of land, the granting and implementation of planning permissions, the operation of its enforcement function and the securing of planning obligations. In the two previous reporting periods this equated to approximately £87M – that higher figure reflecting more construction activity compared to 2022/23 because of the lifecycle of the LDP and the impact of the phosphate pollution issue.

We aim to update this for the ensuing reporting periods. The 'Dashboard' data summarises the Planning Service's contribution below:

Value of Planning in Monmouthshire 2022/23

Planning service key data



31 FTE jobs in planning service



1,014 applications handled



£0.5m collected in fees

LDP Land Safeguarded



LDP Land Allocated

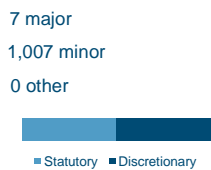


LDP Value

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

Value adding policies ? 89%

Applications

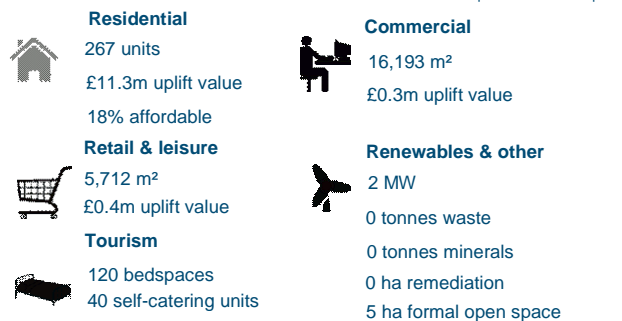


- 0 DCOs dealt with
- 2 DNS dealt with
- 67 LBC applications granted
- 11 refusals appealed
- 1 judicial reviews

Decisions

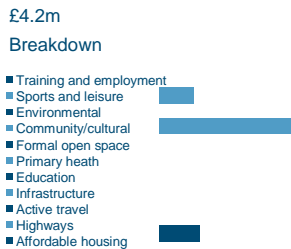


Permissions



Contributions

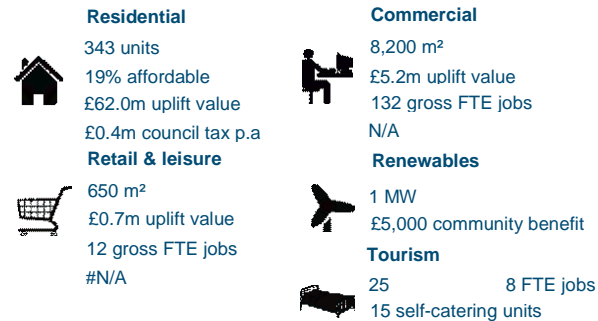
Section 106 income



CIL income



Completions



Enforcement

- 384 enforcement complaints
- 4 planning contraventions
- 3 enforcement notices
- 4 breach of condition notices
- 0 stop notices
- 3 section 125 notices



Wider indicators



In 2022/23 the total value of planning was £84.7m

SOURCES: Planning function outputs (LPA survey), Land and property value data (JLL estimates), business rates valuations (Valuation Office Agency), employment densities (English Homes & Communities Agency), Council tax rates (StatsWales), Health benefits from Affordable Housing (Department for Communities and Local Government Appraisal Guide, based on various studies outlined in app databook), Community benefit from renewables (Renewables UK Cymru). Some of the calculations require high level assumptions to convert between units/m²/ha. Where possible, benchmarks have been employed otherwise reasonable assumptions have been used. Business rate, council tax and gross FTE job estimates based on assumption of 100% occupancy and do not factor in any displacement. Numbers of applications and decisions are unlikely to match up as these can take place in different financial years for any given application. 'Value adding policies' refers to the proportion of policies the team has identified as adding 'intangible value' that are included in local plans. Approvals and refusals do not sum to 100% due to applications carry across years. The total value of planning only incorporates some of the metrics presented in the dashboard.





Housing developments recently completed – top left at Devauden that involved 60% of homes as affordable housing units; top right - a 100% affordable housing scheme on the site a former garage block off Hereford Road, Abergavenny; bottom left – a 100% affordable housing scheme on brownfield land in Caldicot and bottom right – an innovative mews development of affordable housing in Bulwark

Local pressures

4.8 Key local pressures include:

- Enabling delivery of the County’s housing needs: bringing forward allocated LDP sites; site viability; achieving good planning decisions, creating sustainable and balanced communities and seeking to achieve a good level of housing growth having regard to strong demand;
- Managing the development plan and development management process having regard to the impact of riverine phosphate pollution that has affected development proposals in the central and northern parts of the County significantly;
- Ensuring full capacity of our staffing levels and to recruit promptly where vacancies arise;
- Securing timely consultation responses from consultees, both internal and external;
- The work associated with the replacement of the adopted LDP having regard to the challenging timetable for delivery;
- The need to help resource and deliver the Strategic Development Plan for SE Wales;
- The lack of income from major planning applications due to the gap between the implementation of the current LDP and the adoption of its successor with associated impacts on budgets to resource the service;
- Career development and training support for staff in the light of limitations on budgets.

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

5.0 Customer Feedback

5.1 The number of formal complaints and letters offering compliments are recorded. There were 14 complaints received over 2022/23, compared to 18 during 2021/22. Several of these complaints stemmed from concerns about lack of communication from case officers during the processing of planning applications and were resolved following intervention by line managers and subsequently improved dialogue with the applicant. There was also a willingness for applicants to become more tolerant once they understood the team’s situation in respect of on-going vacancies and delays caused in waiting for consultation responses from key consultees. Other complaints related to a concern about lack of enforcement in respect of construction management at a large housing site and two other sites where enforcement action was not taken as quickly as the community had wanted or because it would not have been expedient to do so.

Planning is a contentious area dealing with access to land and changes to property values. It will always be the subject of complaint from third parties who are dissatisfied with a decision. This measure needs to be taken in context and the number of justified complaints is arguably a more pertinent measure. We do however aim to treat all customers with care and respect and to communicate clearly with the public so that they understand what the relevant planning issues are when we make decisions. There is always a degree of subjectivity so there will inevitably be disagreement about the weight given to the respective issues in the planning decision.

Notwithstanding the number of complaints, none of the fourteen complaints investigated under the Council’s formal Complaints Procedure were deemed to be justified and also none of the five escalated to Stage 2 (investigated by a senior council officer unconnected with the Planning Department). In addition, none were considered appropriate to be investigated by the Public Service Ombudsman.

As far as enforcement of planning control is concerned, there is often a misunderstanding within the community about the scope for enforcement action by a planning authority or an appreciation of the length of time it takes to remedy a breach of planning control. The team will continue to engage with our communities to ensure there is improved dialogue and clearer understanding of both the justification for action and the speed it takes. This ties in with Action 2 of the Action Plan.

We received seventeen recorded compliments over 2022/23.

	2015 /16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23
Number of Stage 1 formal complaints received	5	5	4	14	13	21	18	14

Number of Stage 2 formal complaints investigations received	2	2	1	4	2	2	6	5
Number of Stage 2 complaints upheld or partially upheld	0 upheld	0 upheld	0 upheld	3 partially upheld	2 elements of the complaint partially upheld	2 partially upheld	0 upheld	0
Number of Ombudsman complaints upheld or partially upheld	0	0	1 upheld	0	0	0	0	0
Number of compliments received	2	9	2	6	6	4	4	17

5.2 Quality customer service continues to be a service and organisation priority so the momentum and desire to improve remain. We aim to introduce a new feedback form (online) for customers to engage with us during the next reporting period.



Left - Planning Committee Members visiting the restored slipway at Maby Bridge housing site, Chepstow as part of their Design Tour in October 2022 and right – view of a terrace of town houses on the same development facing the River Wye, with public open space in front

6.0 OUR PERFORMANCE 2022-23

6.1 This section details our performance in 2022-23. It considers both the Planning Performance Framework indicators and other available data to help paint a comprehensive picture of performance. Where appropriate we make comparisons between our performance and the all-Wales picture, although the absence of data for 2019/20 – 2022/23 from WG means we have to compare performance to the Welsh average over 2018/19.

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

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

6.3 Based on the performance information we can be pleased with the service we deliver. During this period:

- The proportion of major applications determined within 8 weeks or agreed timescales was very good at 71%, and was well above the Good target of 60% (5 out of 7 applications);
- The proportion of all applications determined within 8 weeks or agreed timescales remained high at 89%, an improvement on the previous year (81%) demonstrating the effective recruitment and training up of new officers in the Applications team;
- The proportion of applications we approved remained high at 94%;
- Of those applications that had gone through our pre-application advice service, and followed our advice 100% were approved;
- We ‘won’ seven out of eleven appeals against our decisions to refuse planning permission;
- We dealt with a large number of applications for listed building consent (67 applications) and 75% of these were determined within agreed timescales – this was despite having a reduced resource in the Heritage team from January 2021 until the end of July 2022;
- Enforcement performance improved for the measure relating to the % of enforcement cases investigated in 84 days (rising from 55% to 62%) but declined in respect of the average time to take positive action – the latter was primarily due to tackling the backlog of cases built up in previous years because of reduced staff resource. Some older cases were cleared leading to the longer average measure. We investigated 15% more cases in 2022/23 than the previous year (384 cases) and served 14 notices.
- Significant s106 monies (over £4M) were secured towards important community infrastructure schemes including the Magor Hub as a result of granting permission for major developments such as those at Rockfield Farm and Vinegar Hill, Undy.

This shows that, despite a challenging workload, the longer-term effects of vacancies and issues such as phosphate pollution, our performance has been good and our pre-application advice service is effective.

6.4 A summary table of our performance can be found in Appendix A of the APR. Of the 12 ranked indicators, 6 are ranked ‘Good’, while 4 are ‘Fair’ and 2 are in ‘need of improvement’.

	Number of indicators
Welsh Government target has been set and our performance is ‘good’	6

Welsh Government target has been set and our performance is 'fair'	4
Welsh Government target has been set and our performance 'needs improvement'	2

6.5 Four actions are identified going forwards:

Action 1 – Digitise information in relation to older planning applications that held on microfiche to enable the public to self-serve, reducing the time of Support staff and the Duty Officer to assist such enquiries and to reduce the need for travel.

Action 2 – Continue to review and make positive change to the Planning Service’s enforcement function and its processes to speed up our decision-making, ensuring we are providing a good service for our customers. Digitise the enforcement notice register to help customers self-serve.

Action 3 – To continue to develop a Buildings at Risk (BAR) strategy to manage and prioritise any interventions to enable key heritage assets to realise a sustainable use for future generations.

Action 4 – To continue to invest in our staff to ensure professional qualifications are achieved and professional development takes place – be it via external or internal training.

Digitising the historic microfiche records, improving the experience of customers and reducing demand on officer time

6.6 We still hold substantial information on older planning applications in microfiche form. Retrieving such information is time-consuming and inefficient and the lack of accessible information for the public leads to a high volume of calls and enquiries to the Council’s Support Team and daily Duty Officer. Digitising this information will reduce phone calls and emails to all those officers and will free up time to carry out work of greater value to the service and customers, such as processing submissions for pre-application advice and the applications themselves. This action would be subject to budget approval given the pressure on resources at present (Action 1).

Action 1 – Digitise information in relation to older planning applications that are held on microfiche to enable the public to self-serve, reducing the time of Support staff and the Duty Officer to assist such enquiries and to reduce the need for customers to travel to the office.

Speed of resolving enforcement cases

6.7 The performance of the Council’s Planning Enforcement team declined in relation to the two enforcement measures in recent years as a result of staffing pressures. There is public perception that the service has and is poorly performing. While some of this is justified given the recent lack of resource and difficulty in recruitment, these issues are certainly not unique to Monmouthshire, and the problem is at least in part due to a misunderstanding of the powers available to us and/or unrealistic expectations, a matter that had been

addressed in some way by the training on enforcement in recent years for community and town councillors. There remains scope for substantial improvement. The review of the Planning Enforcement function is ongoing and has already helped to improve this team's practices and drive out waste, leading to the '84 day' measure improving from 55 to 62%. The action below therefore is a spin-off from previous years. An ongoing element is the need to digitise the enforcement register so that the information can be downloaded, reducing the need for paper copies or customers to travel to County Hall for a copy (Action 2).

Action 2 – Continue to review and make positive change to the Planning Service's enforcement function and its processes to speed up our decision-making, ensuring we are providing a good service for our customers. Digitise the enforcement notice register to help customers self-serve.

Buildings at Risk Strategy

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

Action 3 – To finalise a Buildings at Risk (BAR) strategy, and agreed by Members, to manage and prioritise any interventions to enable key heritage assets to realise a sustainable use for future generations.

Supporting and investing in our people

6.9 Over recent years there has been a relatively high turnover of staff within the team. To ensure that our colleagues feel valued and supported, we have committed to helping more junior staff to study to achieve professionally-accredited qualifications. Three of our staff are now enrolled on undergraduate courses. More established members of staff will be supported by training opportunities, many of which are organised internally to reduce costs. Some events have also been combined with training events for Council Members. These will cover issues like one planet developments / rural enterprise dwellings, S106 agreements, affordable housing and active travel.

Action 4 – To continue to invest in our people (including staff and Members) to ensure both professional qualifications are achieved and professional development takes place – be it via external or internal training.



Abergavenny King Henry VIII School – image of the new approved school (above) and the development now under construction (below)

Opportunities going forward:

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

- Continue to roll out the project management of major planning applications, where appropriate, via planning performance agreements to seek, by best endeavours, timely and well-managed processing of such applications, providing a good customer experience for the customer;
- To digitise the information held by the Council in microfiche or paper form to improve the web site experience for customers and improve customers' pathways to information (Action 1);
- To improve the speed with which we deal with enforcement cases via the continued systems review of the Enforcement function and via analysis of individual team members' performance (Action 2);

- To digitise the Council’s enforcement register as part of the digital improvement programme to help customers self-serve (Action 2);
- To finalise and implement a Buildings At Risk Strategy to safeguard some of our most precious but vulnerable heritage assets (Action 3);
- Continue with the replacement Monmouthshire LDP because of the need to facilitate the identification/ allocation of additional housing land as well as addressing the demographic and employment challenges of the County;
- To identify, implement and/or disseminate best practice via the Planning Officers’ Society for Wales or other working groups, including the WLGA and the RTPI
- To support our colleagues via training opportunities, regular reviews and one-to-ones to invest in their careers, ensure their well-being and mental health are resilient and their productivity remains high (Action 4).
- To respond to the threats resulting from the pandemic followed by the economic squeeze on households and enterprises to ensure our County’s businesses can be resilient and can thrive.
- To manage the threat of phosphate pollution in our two main rivers to reduce environmental damage, while finding new ways of managing this issue that will still allow sustainable development to take place in those catchment areas.

6.11 Progress will be measured via our 2023/24 Annual Performance Report, 2023/24 LDP Annual Monitoring Report, and our 2023 - 2026 Service Business Plan.



Image of Magor Community Hub partly funded via significant financial contributions from local developments allocated in the Local Development Plan (above); and the building as constructed in September 2023 (below)

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2022-23

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
24 th October 2023	Planning Annual Performance Report	Scrutiny of the annual performance report prior to submission to Welsh Government.	Craig O'Connor Phil Thomas Mark Hand Cllr Griffiths	Pre-decision Scrutiny
	Chief Officer for Education: Verbal Update	Verbal update from the Chief Officer on various education matters.	Will Mclean Cllr Groucott	Performance Monitoring
14 th November 2023 Joint Scrutiny with People	Safeguarding Performance Report	To scrutinise the performance of the service area.	Jane Rodgers	Performance Monitoring
	Chief Officer for Social Care and Health: Annual Report	To conduct pre-decision scrutiny on the report and scrutinise the performance of the service area.	Jane Rodgers	Pre-decision Scrutiny/Performance Monitoring
22 nd November 2023	Month 5 Budget Monitoring	To scrutinise the budgetary position (revenue and capital) for services falling within the committee's remit at Month 5.	Jonathan Davies Cllr Callard	Budget Monitoring
	Schools Funding Formula	To scrutinise the funding formula prior to Cabinet's decision.	Nicola Wellington Cllr Garrick	Pre-decision Scrutiny
	Strategic Risk Register	To agree any future risks for scrutiny.	Richard Jones Hannah Carter	Performance Monitoring
	LDP Annual Monitoring Report	To scrutinise prior to Cabinet Member sign off for dispatch to Welsh Government.	Mark Hand Cllr Griffiths	Pre-decision Scrutiny

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2022-23

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
Special – 29 th November 2023	Asset Management Strategy	Pre-decision Scrutiny ahead of full Council.	Peter Davies Jonathan Davies	Pre-decision Scrutiny
	Financial Strategy	Pre-decision Scrutiny ahead of full Council.	Peter Davies Jonathan Davies	Pre-decision Scrutiny
	Month 6 Budget Monitoring	To scrutinise the budgetary position (revenue and capital) for services falling within the committee's remit at Month 6.	Jonathan Davies Cllr Callard	Budget Monitoring
20 th February 2024	Scrutiny of the Budget Proposals	Scrutiny of the budget mandates relating to the committee's remit.	Peter Davies Jonathan Davies Cllr Garrick	Budget Scrutiny
26 th March 2024	Covid learning and pandemic preparedness (TBC)	To discuss learning following the impact of the pandemic and how we prepare for a future one, following publication of the revised Outbreak Control Plan Wales.	David Jones ABUHB(?) Cllr ?	Performance Monitoring
21 st June 2024	Public Protection Performance 23/24	To review the performance of the service area.	David Jones Cllr ?	Performance Monitoring
	Registration Services Annual Report 21/22	To review the performance of the service area.	David Jones Cllr Sandles?	Performance Monitoring
To be confirmed	Recruitment and retention	Effect on the Council's performance and ability to deliver.		
To be confirmed	Use of Reserves	Future proofing and resilience planning as well as supporting long-term strategic priorities.		

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2022-23

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
To be confirmed	Asset Management Strategy	Long-term strategy for assets where there may be a change of service provision. To seek some assurances on the focus of the asset management strategy and discuss the concept of selling or retaining assets ~ this could feed into early work on the Asset Management Strategy.	Peter Davies	Workshop
To be confirmed (was last in Jan 23)	Procurement Performance Review	Review of the joint working arrangements and benefits realised to date.	Scott James Steve Robinson Rachel Garrick	Performance Monitoring
To be confirmed JANUARY? (was last in Dec 22)	Welsh Education Strategic Plan	To scrutinise performance against the action plan.	Sharon Randall Smith Will Mclean	Performance Monitoring

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Other items in the Community and Corporate Plan which the Committee might want to scrutinise:

- Social Justice Strategy progress and Tackling Poverty and Inequality Plan progress
- Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy Delivery
- Business Monmouthshire project monitoring/updates
- Undertake a 'learning led' review of educational provision in Chepstow
- Chief Officer for Education's Monitoring Report 2024
- Review of property assets
- Data strategy
- Digital strategy

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2022-23

- Socially Responsible Procurement strategy

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee

Action List

20th September 2023

Minute Item:	Subject	Officer / Member	Outcome
4	To add Language Learning and Science Education scrutiny to the work programme	Robert McGowan	Item added to 24 th October agenda
5	To add Financial Strategy scrutiny to the work programme	Robert McGowan	Item added to 29 th November agenda
5	To add Flood Strategy scrutiny to the work programme	Robert McGowan	Item on agenda of Place committee, 14 th March 2024
5	To add Covid Preparedness and Lessons Learned scrutiny to the work programme	Robert McGowan	Item added to 26 th March 2024 agenda

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Committee / Decision Maker	Meeting date / Decision due	Report Title	Responsible Cabinet Member	Purpose	Author	Date item added to the planner
Council	01-Jul-25	RLDP for Adoption	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To adopt the RLDP following receipt of the Inspector's report, making it the County's Development Plan as defined by S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004	Mark Hand / Rachel Lewis	23-Aug-22
Cabinet	02-Oct-24	Adoption of Abergavenny Placemaking Plan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To adopt the Abergavenny Placemaking Plan, co-produced with Abergavenny Town Council, to inform future regeneration priorities and grant bids	Mark Hand / Dan Fordham	3-Oct-22
Cabinet	02-Oct-24	Adoption of Magor Placemaking Plan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Mark Hand / Dan Fordham	3-Oct-22
Cabinet	02-Oct-24	Adoption of Monmouth Placemaking Plan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To adopt the Monmouth Placemaking Plan, co-produced with Monmouth Town Council, to inform future regeneration priorities and grant bids	Mark Hand / Dan Fordham	3-Oct-22
Council	01-Sep-24	RLDP submission for examination	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To endorse the submission of the Deposit RLDP to the Welsh Government for examination by an independent Inspector. By agreeing, Council will be saying it wants this document to be the adopted RLDP for Monmouthshire.	Mark Hand / Rachel Lewis	23-Aug-22
Council	18-Apr-24	RLDP Deposit Plan endorsement for consultation	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To endorse the Deposit RLDP for public consultation and engagement.	Mark Hand / Rachel Lewis	5-Jan-23
ICMD	17-Apr-24	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 4 held on 7th March 2024	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Dave Jarrett	30-Mar-23
Cabinet	10-Apr-24	NEET Reduction Strategy			Hannah Jones	4-Sep-23
Cabinet	14-Mar-24	Local Flood Strategy	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Mark Hand	9-Oct-23
Cabinet	06-Mar-24	2023/24 Revenue and Capital Monitoring - Month 9	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Jon Davies	27-Apr-23

Council	18-Jan-24	Strategic Equality Plan 2024		To seek approval of a new Strategic Equality Plan for the period 2024-28, incorporating MCCs contribution to national action plans on race equality, LGBTQ and other protected characteristics	Matthew Gatehouse	13-Oct-23
Cabinet	17-Jan-24	Sustainable Communities for Learning Strategic Outline Programme update	Martyn Groucutt - Education	To provide members with details of the revisions to the Strategic Outline Programme for the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme which will inform the development of projects within the rolling programme of	Debbie Graves	12-Sep-23
Cabinet	17-Jan-24	Draft Budget Proposals			Jon Davies	29-Sep-23
ICMD	03-Jan-24	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 3 held on 7th December 2023	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Dave Jarrett	30-Mar-23
ICMD	20-Dec-23	LDP Annual Monitoring Report	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To endorse the LDP Annual Monitoring Report for submission to WG	Mark Hand / Rachel Lewis	16-Jan-23
Cabinet	13-Dec-23	Primary catchment review			Matthew Jones	23-Jun-23
Cabinet	13-Dec-23	Economic Development Strategy		REFRESHING THE MONMOUTHSHIRE BUSINESS GROWTH & ENTERPRISE STRATEGY and action plan in setting the economic ambition for the county and providing a strategic framework that guides future economic	Hannah Jones	9-Jan-23
Cabinet	13-Dec-23	Local Transport Plan	Catrin Maby	To adopt the Local Transport Plan	Debra Hill-Howells / Christian Schmidt	4-Oct-22
Cabinet	13-Dec-23	Community & Corporate Plan performance update	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To provide cabinet with the latest performance report of commitments in the Community and Corporate Plan	Richard Jones	5-Sep-23
Cabinet	13-Dec-23	Whole Authority Strategic Risk Assessment	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To provide Cabinet with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority and to seek approval of the strategic risk assessment	Richard Jones	5-Sep-23

Cabinet	13-Dec-23	Local Flood Strategy	Catrin Maby	To adopt the Local Flood Strategy Plan	Mark Hand / Ross Price	4-Oct-22
Cabinet	13-Dec-23	2023/24 Revenue and Capital Monitoring - Month 6	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Jon Davies	27-Apr-23
Cabinet	13-Dec-23	Pavement Café Policy	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To adopt the pavement café policy as the basis for making decisions on applications for licences	Mark Hand / Paul Keeble	4-Oct-22
Cabinet	13-Dec-23	consultation on the relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni			Matthew Jones	23-Aug-23
Cabinet	13-Dec-23	Road Safety Strategy	Catrin Maby	To adopt the Road Safety Strategy	Mark Hand / Paul Keeble	4-Oct-22
Council	07-Dec-23	Appointment of Monmouthshire Local Access Forum		To secure the appointment of members to the Monmouthshire Local Access Forum for its next 3 year period.	Matthew Lewis	18-Jan-23
Council	07-Dec-23	Financial Strategy			Jon Davies	
Council	07-Dec-23	DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT		to provide Council with an overview of SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH directorate with a focus on year 2022 – 2023.	Jane Rodgers	31-Jul-23
Council	07-Dec-23	Asset Management Strategy			Nick Keyse	28-Sep-23
Council	07-Dec-23	SAFEGUARDING ANNUAL EVALUTION REPORT		To provide Council with the annual self-evaluation of safeguarding from a whole authority perspective.	Jane Rodgers / Diane Corrister	31-Jul-23

ICMD	29-Nov-23	Museums - Accredited			Rachael Rogers	12-Oct-23
ICMD	15-Nov-23	Planning Annual Performance Report	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To endorse the Planning Department Annual Performance Report for submission to WG	Mark Hand / Rachel Lewis	16-Jan-23
ICMD	15-Nov-23	A012 Highway Traffic Regulation Amendment Order		Double yellows at Main Road, Portskewett, leading to S	Mark Hand	18-Sep-23
ICMD	15-Nov-23	A013 Highway Traffic Regulation Amendment Order		Speed limit changes at Caerwent Brook/Dewstow Road	Mark Hand	18-Sep-23
Cabinet	08-Nov-23	RIPA Review		To review RIPA strategy and arrangements	Geraint Edwards	25-Sep-23
Cabinet	08-Nov-23	2023/24 Revenue and Capital Monitoring - Month 5	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Jon Davies	
Council	26-Oct-23	Monmouthshire County Council Self- assessment 2022/23		to seek Council approval of the Self-Assessment report 2022/23 in line with requirements outlined in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and to ensure that members have a clear and transparent assessment of the Council's	Richard Jones	4-Jul-23
Council	26-Oct-23	RPB Area Plan			Jane Rodgers	4-Jul-23
Council	26-Oct-23	RLDP Preferred Strategy consultation report	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To endorse the RLDP Preferred Strategy including any proposed changes arising from the public consultation.	Mark Hand / Rachel Lewis	3-Oct-22
ICMD	25-Oct-23	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 2 held on 21st September 2023	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Dave Jarrett	30-Mar-23

Cabinet	11-Oct-23	Disposal of Land at Natgavenny Lane	Rachel Garrick - Resources	To seek Cabinet approval for the disposal of a parcel of land adjacent to the Nantgavenny Lane Busines Park, Mardy, Abergavenny	Nick Keyse	
Cabinet	11-Oct-23	Developing a base for My Day My Life in Monmouth and Abergavenny	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	Further to the recommendations from the Practice Solutions review, the report sets out the criteria and decision making in respect of which bases to develop for the My Day My Life in both Monmouth and Abergavenny, and makes a recommendation on the	Ceri York	25-Sep-23
ICMD	11-Oct-23	MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING – TCBC AND MCC HERITAGE SERVICES IN RELATION TO MAMHILAD NYLON SPINNERS LISTED BUILDING.	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	The purpose of this report is to propose that MCC join into an MoU in relation to the provision of Heritage Advice to consider the ongoing management of the Nylon Spinners listed building at Mamhilad.	Amy Longford	22-Sep-23
Cabinet	04-Oct-23	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Consultation			Cath Fallon	4-Sep-23
ICMD	27-Sep-23	Extending Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPOs) to tackle Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)		To seek approval to extend three Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) in respect of Bailey Park, Abergavenny; Lower Abergavenny (including Castle Meadows) and Monmouth Town (including Chippenham	Andrew Mason	31-Aug-23
Council	21-Sep-23	REPORT ON JOINT SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS FOR CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEES			Hazel Ilett	4-Sep-23
Council	21-Sep-23	Governance and Audit Committee Annual Report 2022/23	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To inform Council of the work and conclusions of the Governance and Audit Committee from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023	Chair of Governance and Audit Committee, Andrew Blackmore	27th July 2023
Council	21-Sep-23	Standards Committee Annual Report		This report is the first annual report from the Standards Committee to Council as required by the change in law set out in the Local Government and Elections Act 2021. It has to report on the discharge of the Committee's functions for the	Matt Phillips	10-Oct-22
ICMD	13-Sep-23	Highway Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 12 MOVED TO 25TH OCTOBER 2023	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	'Agreement to make the traffic order - parking/waiting restrictions at Justins Hill and Wyesham Avenue, Wyesham; Main Road and Castle Way, Portskewett; lane leading to Sugarloaf Llanwenarth car park; and Wonastow	Mark Hand	
ICMD	13-Sep-23	Proposed Changes to the Membership of the School Budget Funding Forum	Martyn Groucutt - Education		Nikki Wellington	

ICMD	13-Sep-23	'Highways Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 12 deferred to September 13th		Agreement to make the traffic order - parking/waiting restrictions at Justins Hill and Wyesham Avenue, Wyesham; Main Road and Castle Way, Portskewett; lane leading to Sugarloaf Llanwenarth car park; and Wonastow	Mark Hand	24-May-23
Cabinet	06-Sep-23	Respite review for people with learning disabilities			Jane Rodgers	31-Jul-23
Cabinet	06-Sep-23	Home to School Transport Policy 2024/25		To consider the adoption of the proposed Home to School Transport Policy for the academic year 2024/25	Deh Hill Howells	
Cabinet	06-Sep-23	Proposal to establish a Welsh medium seedling school in Monmouth		Cabinet to consider objection report and make final determination on how to proceed.	Debbie Graves	27-Mar-23
ICMD	16-Aug-23	Castle Wood Usk Low Cost Home Ownership Future Use	Sara Burch - Inclusive and Active Communities			
ICMD	16-Aug-23	electric vehicle charging rate for public and staff at EV	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Deb Hill Howells	20-Jul-23
ICMD	16-Aug-23	Highways Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 11	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Agreement to make the traffic order - Exception Orders to identify those restricted roads that will remain 30mph in September 2023 instead of defaulting to 20mph	Mark Hand	
ICMD	16-Aug-23	Highways Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 10	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Agreement to make the traffic order - prohibition of driving Pwll Du, Llanelly Hill and Belmont Close/Belmont Road Abergavenny	Mark Hand	
ICMD	02-Aug-23	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 1 held on 22nd June 2023	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Dave Jarrett	
ICMD	02-Aug-23	Highways Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 10 deferred to August 16th	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Agreement to make the traffic order - Exception Orders to identify those restricted roads that will remain 30mph in September 2023 instead of defaulting to 20mph	Mark Hand	3-Oct-22

Cabinet	26-Jul-23	Implementation of the My Day My Life review recommendations			Ceri York	
Cabinet	26-Jul-23	Gypsy and Traveller Site Identification			Ian Bakewell	12-Jul-23
Cabinet	26-Jul-23	•Review of the Respite Opportunities Service			Ceri York	14-Mar-23
Cabinet	26-Jul-23	2023/24 Revenue budget progress – early update			Jon Davies	8-Jun-23
Cabinet	26-Jul-23	S016 Funding Castle Park and Arch Bishop Rowan Williams Schools.			Cath Saunders	13-Jun-23
Council	20-Jul-23	Gifts & Hospitality Report			Matt Phillips	12-Jun-23
Council	20-Jul-23	Freedom of the Borough Presentation			Joe Skidmore	5-May-23
Council	20-Jul-23	Recruitment of Local Access Forum		To agree arrangements for the recruitment of the Monmouthshire Local Access Forum for the next 3 year period of appointment	Matthew Lewis	21-Jun-23
ICMD	12-Jul-23	Highways Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 10 DEFERRED TO 16TH AUG	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Agreement to make the traffic order - prohibition of driving Pwll Du, Llanelly Hill	Mark Hand	19-May-23
ICMD	12-Jul-23	transfer the school balances for both Deri View and King Henry VIII School to the new King Henry VIII 3 – 19 School.	Rachel Garrick - Resources	Both King Henry VIII school and Deri view Primary school are closing on 31 st August 2023 and the new King Henry VIII 3 – 19 School will open on 1 st September 2023, under a statutory closure of schools the financial balances transfer to the Local Authority,	Nikki Wellington	4-Apr-23

	05-Jul-23	Reopen Monmouth Cemetery for new burials			Rhian Jackson	
Cabinet	05-Jul-23	RESERVATION OF GRAVE PLOTS		To seek cabinet approval to cease the provision of reserving grave spaces (not incl cremated remains plots) in Llanfoist Cemetery	Rhian Jackson	7-Nov-22
Cabinet	05-Jul-23	2022/23 Revenue and Capital Monitoring - Outturn Report	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Jon Davies	27-Apr-23
ICMD	28-Jun-23	Highway Traffic Regulation Order	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Agreement to make the traffic order - making permanent the part-time prohibition of driving on Cross Street and Market Street Abergavenny	Mark Hand	6-Jun-23
Council	22-Jun-23	Gwent Public Services Board Well-being plan		To approve the Public Services Board's Well-being Plan that sets out the steps being taken collaboratively by public services to improve wellbeing in Gwent ahead of approval by the Gwent Public Services Board.	Richard Jones	20-Jan-23
Council	22-Jun-23	Chief Officer Children and Young People's Report 2023			Will McLean	14-Feb-23
Cabinet	07-Jun-23	Adoption of Transforming Chepstow Masterplan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To adopt the Transforming Chepstow Masterplan, co-produced with Chepstow Town Council, to inform future regeneration priorities and grant bids	Mark Hand / Dan Fordham	3-Oct-22
Cabinet	07-Jun-23	Transforming Towns Strategic Grant regeneration priorities and LUF3 bid	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To agree the priority projects for bids for WG Strategic grant funding to 24/25 and the submission for round 3 of Levelling Up Funding	Mark Hand / Dan Fordham	3-Oct-22
Cabinet	07-Jun-23	Proposal to establish a Welsh medium seedling school in Monmouth		Cabinet to consider the results of the consultation, recommendations and decide whether to publish statutory notices.	Debbie Graves	27-Mar-23
Cabinet	07-Jun-23	Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy	Rachel Garrick - Resources	To endorse the Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy	Scott James	22-Aug-22

ICMD	24-May-23	Highway Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 9	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Agreement to make the traffic order - including Llantrisant 20mph village lane, 40mph through road, possibly Llantrisant (Usk to Wentwood) 50mph; 20mph Gilwern and surrounding villages	Mark Hand	14-Apr-23
Council	18-May-23	Political Balance Report		The Council is required to review at, or as soon as practicable after, the Council's annual meeting, the representation of different political groups on the bodies to which the Council makes appointments.	Matt Phillips	2-Feb-23
Council	18-May-23	Outside Bodies Report		To appoint representatives to serve on outside	Matt Phillips	2-Feb-23
Council	18-May-23	Appointments to Committees		To appoint committees together with their membership and terms of reference in accordance with the Council's Constitution.	Nicola Perry	2-Feb-23
Council	18-May-23	Constitution update		For the Monitoring Officer to bring proposed amendments and highlight changes made over the previous 12 months	Matt Phillips	2-Feb-23
Council	18-May-23	Corporate Parenting Strategy			Diane Corrister	24-Aug-22
Cabinet	17-May-23	Review of Home to School Transport Policy 24/25.	Martyn Groucutt - Education	The purpose: Is to seek approval to commence consultation on proposed amendments to the Home to School Transport Policy for the academic year 2024/25.	Deb Hill Howells	12-Apr-23
Cabinet	17-May-23	Monnow Street public realm improvements	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To agree how we proceed with proposals for Monnow Street public realm following consultation	Mark Hand / Dan Fordham	6-Mar-23
ICMD	10-May-23	Highways Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 9 MOVED TO 24TH MAY	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Agreement to make the traffic order - including Llantrisant 20mph village lane, 40mph through road, possibly Llantrisant (Usk to Wentwood) 50mph; 20mph Gilwern and surrounding villages	Mark Hand	3-Oct-22
Council	20-Apr-23	Motion for the Rivers and Oceans update		Deferred - new date to be advised	Hazel Clatworthy	10-Jan-23

Council	20-Apr-23	Community and Corporate Plan		To seek approval of a new Community and Corporate Plan that sets the direction for the council and county of Monmouthshire, articulating the authority's purpose and priorities alongside the steps we will take to deliver these, the	Matt Gatehouse	6-Feb-23
ICMD	12-Apr-23	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 4 held on 9th March 2023	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Dave Jarrett	
Cabinet	05-Apr-23	Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	Sara Burch - Inclusive and Active Communities	To agree a plan to transition the delivery of homelessness that minimises the use of and the time homeless applicants spend in temporary accommodation	Rebecca Cresswell / Ian Bakewell	24-Jan-23
ICMD	22-Mar-23	Non Domestic Rates application for Hardship Relief - RESTRICTED	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Ruth Donovan	
ICMD	22-Mar-23	Highways Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 8	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Agreement to make the traffic order - including Monmouth Road, Raglan no right turn onto A40; resi permit parking at Exmouth Place, Chepstow and Ross Road, Abergavenny; 3T weight restriction on Old Wye Bridge Chepstow; waiting	Mark Hand	
Council	09-Mar-23	Pay Policy		To approve the publication of Monmouthshire County Council's Pay Policy, in compliance with the Localism Act."	Sally Thomas	1-Feb-23
Council	09-Mar-23	Council Tax Premiums			Peter Davies	18-Jan-23
Council	09-Mar-23	Capital Strategy & Treasury Strategy			Jon Davies	17-May-22
Council	09-Mar-23	Youth Council			Jade Atkins	7-Dec-22
ICMD	08-Mar-23	Proposed amendment to primary school catchment area – Llandenny Village	Martyn Groucutt - Education		Debbie Graves	10-Jan-23

ICMD	08-Mar-23	Highways Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 8 DEFERRED TO 22 MARCH	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Agreement to make the traffic order - including Monmouth Road, Raglan no right turn onto A40; resi permit parking at Exmouth Place, Chepstow and Ross Road, Abergavenny; 3T weight restriction on Old Wye Bridge Chepstow; waiting	Mark Hand	
Council	02-Mar-23	Final Budget Sign Off including Council Tax Resolution			Jon Davies	
Cabinet	01-Mar-23	2023/4 Final Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals			Jon Davies	17-May-22
Cabinet	01-Mar-23	2023/4 WCF/Trust Treasury Fund Investments			Dave Jarrett	17-May-22
Cabinet	01-Mar-23	Month 9 budget monitoring report			Jon Davies	6-Feb-23
Cabinet	01-Mar-23	Monmouthshire ECO Flex 'Joint Statement of Intent' and Memorandum of Understanding"			Steve Griffiths	16-Nov-22
Cabinet	01-Feb-23	Tudor Street			9-Jan-23	
ICMD	25-Jan-23	Highway Traffic Regulation Amendment Order No 7	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Agreement to make the traffic order	Mark Hand	15-Dec-22
ICMD	25-Jan-23	Community Council and Police Precepts - final	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Jon Davies	17-May-22
Council	19-Jan-23	'To determine the name for the new 3-19 School in Abergavenny		'To determine the name for the new 3-19 School in Abergavenny	Cath Saunders	28-Nov-22

Council	19-Jan-23	Council Diary		To confirm the Council Diary 23/24	John Pearson	14-Dec-22
Council	19-Jan-23	Appointments		A report for Council to appoint or ratify a number of appointments to bodies and positions	Matt Phillips	
Council	19-Jan-23	Community and Corporate Plan				
Council	19-Jan-23	Tudor Road Call-In			Nicola Perry	3-Jan-23
Council	19-Jan-23	Council Tax Reduction Scheme			Ruth Donovan	31-May-22
Cabinet	18-Jan-23	Garden Waste			Carl Touhig	21-Dec-22
Cabinet	18-Jan-23	Draft Revenue & Capital Proposals			Jon Davies	
Cabinet	18-Jan-23	Council Tax Premiums Consultation - Long Term Empty Properties and Second Homes			Ruth Donovan	
Cabinet	18-Jan-23	Proposal to establish a Welsh Medium Seedling school in Monmouth		To seek cabinet approval to commence statutory consultation processes to establish a Welsh Medium seedling provision in Monmouth.	Debbie Graves	23-Sep-22
ICMD	11-Jan-23	Clydach Ironworks Enhancement	Sara Burch - Inclusive and Active Communities	To seek approval for the transfer of land associated with the Clydach Ironworks Enhancement Scheme	Matthew Lewis	8-Dec-23

ICMD	11-Jan-23	Welsh Church Fund Working Group			Dave Jarrett	17-May-22
ICMD	14-Dec-22	Council Tax Base report			Ruth Donovan	31-May-22
ICMD	14-Dec-22	2023/4 Community Council & Police Precepts - draft			Jon Davies	17-May-22
Cabinet	07-Dec-22	Regional Integration Fund		To consider the financial liabilities and implications of the Regional Integration Fund and its tapered funding model.	Jane Rodgers	21-Nov-22
Cabinet	07-Dec-22	National Adoption Services and Foster Wales Joint Committee			Jane Rodgers	9-Nov-22
Cabinet	07-Dec-22	2022/23 Revenue and Capital Monitoring report - Month 6			Jon Davies	17-May-22
Council	01-Dec-22	Corporate Safeguarding Policy.		For Council to endorse the revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy.	Jane Rodgers	10-Nov-22
Council	01-Dec-22	Governance & Audit Committee Annual Report 2021/22			Andrew Wathan	18-Oct-22
Council	01-Dec-22	RLDP Preferred Strategy	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To seek Council endorsement of the new Preferred Strategy for eight week consultation	Mark Hand / Rachel Lewis	25-Jul-22
ICMD	30-Nov-22	TUDOR STREET		To seek a decision regarding the Council's forward use of the property located in Tudor Street ahead of the outcomes of the wider review of My Day My Life.	Jane Rodgers	14-Nov-22
ICMD	30-Nov-22	Govilon Section 106 Funding for Recreation & Play	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Mike Moran	8-Nov-22
ICMD	30-Nov-22	Highways Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 5	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Mark Hand	3-Oct-22
ICMD	30-Nov-22	Planning Annual Performance Report (APR) Deferred to 30-Nov-22	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Mark Hand Phil Thomas	3-Oct-22
ICMD	30-Nov-22	Highways Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 6	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Agreement to make the traffic order	Mark Hand	23-Aug-22
Cabinet	09-Nov-22	Implementing Sharepoint online		To secure funding to implement the project	Sian Hayward	13-Oct-22
Cabinet	09-Nov-22	A County of Sanctuary		To set out the reasons why an earlier decision is required due to time restrictions associated with TAN 15	Matt Gatehouse	20-Sep-22
Cabinet	09-Nov-22	SPF Update Report			Hannah Jones	12-Sep-22

Cabinet	09-Nov-22	Revenue & Capital MTFP update and process			Jon Davies	17-May-22
Cabinet	09-Nov-22	MonLife Heritage Strategy (or ICMD)		DEFERRED	Matthew Lewis	10-Feb-22
Council	27-Oct-22	RESPONSE TO URGENT NEED FOR HOUSING ACCOMMODATION		To present a proposal to enable Council to respond flexibly and promptly to the urgent need for housing accommodation, to address the	Cath Fallon	10-Oct-22
Council	27-Oct-22	Community and Corporate Plan		To seek endorsement of the new Community and Corporate Plan setting out the purpose, values	Matt Gatehouse / Paul Matthews	3-Oct-22
Council	27-Oct-22	Outside Bodies Appointment			John Pearson	3-Oct-22
Council	27-Oct-22	Annual Safeguarding Report			Kelly Turner	24-Aug-22
Council	27-Oct-22	Social Care & Health: Directors Report 2021/22			Jane Rodgers	6-Jul-22
ICMD	26-Oct-22	Welsh Church Fund Working Group			Dave Jarrett	14/7/22
Cabinet	19-Oct-22	PSOW annual letter		Present the Public Services Ombudsman For Wales' annual report as required by the letter	Matt Phillips	28-Sep-22
Cabinet	19-Oct-22	Regional Partnership Board - Gwent Market Position Statement		To provide a Market Stability Report produced by the Regional Partnership Board setting out a high	Phil Diamond Head of Regional Partnership Team	22-Sep-22
Cabinet	19-Oct-22	Community and Corporate Plan		To seek endorsement of the new Community and Corporate Plan setting out the purpose, values	Gatehouse / Paul Matt	20-Sep-22
Cabinet	19-Oct-22	22/23 Revenue and Capital Monitoring report - Month 4			Jon Davies	17-May-22
Cabinet	19-Oct-22	Land adjacent to Caldicot Comprehensive School - Housing Development Opportunity		To seek approval of the disposal of land at Caldicot Comprehensive School for the	Nick Keyse	
ICMD	12-Oct-22	Local Development Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)		DEFERRED TO 26 OCT	Rachel Lewis/Cllr Paul Griffiths	23/08/22
ICMD	12-Oct-22	Welsh Church Fund Working Group		DEFERRED TO 26 OCT	Dave Jarrett	14/07/22
ICMD	12-Oct-22	Ending Library Fines		enabling more people to enjoy reading without the worry of incurring a fine if they are unable to return	Cheryl Haskell/Fookes?	20-Sep-22
ICMD	28-Sep-22	Transport Policy			Deb Hill Howells - MG	22-Aug-22
ICMD	28-Sep-22	B4245 speed limit		DEFERRED TO 26 OCT	Mark Hand	18-Jul-22
Council	27-Sep-22	Tackling poverty and inequalities			Nick John	24-Aug-22
Council	27-Sep-22	RLDP Options Report			Rachel Lewis	25-Jul-22
Council	27-Sep-22	Rivers and Ocean			Hazel Clatworthy	9-Jun-22
Council	27-Sep-22	Monmouthshire County Council self - assessment report 2021/2			Richard Jones	23-May-22
ICMD	14-Sep-22	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 2 held on 21st July 2022 (no meeting/no report -			Dave Jarrett	17-May-22
Cabinet	07-Sep-22	Transport Policy Consultation Update.			Deb Hill Howells	22-Aug-22
Cabinet	07-Sep-22	Cost Of Living			Matt Phillips	25-Jul-22

ICMD	31-Aug-22	MY DAY, MY LIFE SERVICE EVALUTATION			Ceri York	15-Aug-22
ICMD	31-Aug-22	Homesearch Policy & Procedure - Amendments & Welsh Translation Requirement			Ian Bakewell	
ICMD	03-Aug-22	Additional Resources in Educations Strategy		Resources required to develop and maintain schools education systems and the implementatin	Sian Hayward	14-Jun-22
ICMD	03-Aug-22	Designation of Secondary Catchment Areas			Matthew Jones	6-Jun-22
ICMD	03-Aug-22	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 1 held on 23rd June 2022 - Moved to ICMD 3rd Aug 2022			Dave Jarrett	
Cabinet	27-Jul-22	Wye Valley Villages Future Improvement Plan			Mark Hand	1-Jul-22
Cabinet	27-Jul-22	Regen Three Year Programme			Mark Hand	1-Jul-22
Cabinet	27-Jul-22	Review of Chepstow High Street closure			Mark Hand	1-Jul-22
Cabinet	27-Jul-22	Home to School Transport Policy 2023-24.			Deb Hill Howells	27-Jun-22
Cabinet	27-Jul-22	MUCH (Magor & Undy Community Hall) report			Nick Keys	9-Jun-22
Cabinet	27-Jul-22	Shared Prosperity Fund Local Investment Plan and Regional Lead Authority Arrangements			Hannah Jones	23-May-22
Cabinet	27-Jul-22	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 1 held on 23rd June 2022 - Moved to ICMD 3rd Aug 2022			Dave Jarrett	17-May-22
Cabinet	27-Jul-22	2021/22 Revenue and Capital Monitoring outturn			Peter Davies/Jon Davies	17-Feb-22
Cabinet	27-Jul-22	Play Sufficiency Assessment and Action Plan 22/23			Matthew Lewis	10-Feb-22
Cabinet	27-Jul-22	Housing Support Programme Strategy (Homeless Strategy)			Ian Bakewell	
Cabinet						

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Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee held at on Wednesday, 20th September, 2023 at 10.00 am

Councillors Present

County Councillor Alistair Neill, (Chairman)

County Councillors: Jill Bond, Paul Pavia, Peter Strong, Ann Webb, John Crook (substituting for Laura Wright , Sara Burch (substituting for Catherine Fookes) and Mary Ann Brocklesby

Also in attendance County Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby, Leader of the Council

Officers in Attendance

Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Matthew Gatehouse, Chief Officer People, Performance and Partnerships.
Richard Jones, Performance and Data Insight Manager
Hannah Carter, Graduate Performance Analyst

APOLOGIES: County Councillors Laura Wright and Catherine Fookes.

Note: the following minutes focus on the challenge from members – for the full discussion, the recording of the meeting is at www.youtube.com/watch?v=KeulHVZogCw&list=PLLMqn4nAaFJDsC93C-EKJZrFkDEQBdiXK&index=10

1. Declarations of Interest

None.

2. Public Open Forum

None.

3. Self-Assessment Process

Councillor Brocklesby introduced the report and Richard Jones and Hannah Carter delivered a presentation. Councillor Brocklesby, Matthew Gatehouse and Richard Jones answered the members' questions.

Key points raised by Committee members:

- Noting that the availability of this report to the public alongside access to a dashboard would have been more useful, and that such coordination should be considered
- Asking for further information on the process of self-assessment, whether there are stakeholder communication plans, and whether reviews of what has been done take place
- Whether residents are asked for their views on value for money
- Asking why the percentage of people who feel they are able to influence decisions is only 40%

- Noting that some councils put self-assessment to resident groups to ask their views about the impact of the council's performance on residents – noting the importance and value of feedback from residents and the distinction between residents feeling able to influence decisions and actually engaging in that process
- Observing that with the report's focus on outputs, it would have been useful to have more information on the direct benefit of those outcomes to residents e.g. the health benefits from the increased uptake in participation in leisure facilities
- Asking how the council is using leisure facilities to delay deconditioning, ensure residents avoid urgent hospital care, and improve the mental health and wellbeing of certain groups
- Asking how we are going to capture and measure the voices of lived experience, whether there can be citizen engagement in service design, and if an early iteration of the report can be sent to the Future Generations Office for review, to see if the right datasets are being captured
- Noting that it would be useful to have relevant comparisons with other authorities, and that such data would be shown best in a dashboard
- Asking why there can't be interim targets now, how the information provided by officers is challenged, and whether the report can be less backward-looking and look more to the future
- Noting that as a dashboard won't be interactive for the residents, careful consideration needs to be given to the information we give to residents – it is very important that residents' experience and feedback be included in this evaluation, and that their feeling of not being involved in the council needs to change
- Suggesting that it would be useful to have more detail on how decision-making has been affected by strategies and surveys mentioned in the report, such as the Nature Isn't Neat survey
- Expressing doubt over the utility of certain surveys e.g. library survey, asking why the 99% of non-users haven't been asked why they don't use the library services
- Proposing that with a need to find better ways to communicate, other information be included in the annual delivery of the council tax bill
- Noting that sometimes there aren't objective criteria in order to qualify something as a success e.g. the introduction of the 20mph limits, as Monmouthshire was a pilot scheme, and that the approach to measuring success can be very subjective
- Asking whether the 'success' of a project should include public support
- Reiterating that it would be useful to know what other authorities are doing, and asking whether we can share practice with them, to ensure that we are asking ourselves the right questions
- Proposing that the summary of today's discussion be sent to the Democratic Services committee – the Chair will include the committee when sending his summary to Cabinet
- Asking if consultations could be published in community and parish newsletters
- Asking why the 2026/27 target for the annual economic impact of tourism is a third lower than the latest figure
- Noting that details of the impact of the new teaching curriculum implementation would have been useful, particularly in relation to the change in science teaching, and expressing concern

over the drop in language GCSEs and A Levels – **ACTION: add an update on language and science education to the work programme**

- Questioning the relevance of service reduction targets that were attained prior to the invasion of Ukraine and subsequent inflation rises
- Asking if the forecast budget shortfall of £23m for 26/27 combined with the forecast of reserves shrinking to £22.7m in the same timeframe is the definition of an organisation approaching insolvency, and why there isn't a specific commentary linking those two figures together
- Asking how we are planning to use improved data to improve citizen experience, and noting the importance of the service business plans to everything the council does
- Reiterating the importance of stakeholder analysis; for example, with the introduction of 20mph limits in Monmouthshire there was not enough engagement with residents – the council needs to consider a Before Action and After Action review – and noting that there is no recommendation of the learning from Spytty Park

Chair's Summary:

The Chair thanked the officers and moved the report.

4. Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan and Action List

The LDP Annual Monitoring Report item needs to move back from the next meeting, possibly to January.

Councillor Bond proposed bringing the Financial Strategy, Flood Strategy (Place Committee) and the Council & Community Resilience items forward on the work programme – **ACTIONS**

5. Cabinet and Council Work Planner

6. To confirm and sign the following minutes:

- 21st June 2023: Ordinary Meeting
- 17th July 2023: Special Meeting

The minutes were confirmed as an accurate record.

7. Next Meeting: 24th October 2023

The meeting ended at **12.21 pm**

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