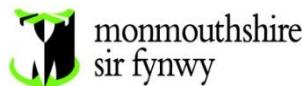


# Public Document Pack



County Hall  
Rhadyr  
Usk  
NP15 1GA

Monday, 9 January 2023

## Notice of meeting

### Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee

**Tuesday, 17th January, 2023 at 10.00 am  
The Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA 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.	
4.	Public Protection 2021- 22 Performance Report - To review the performance of the service area.	1 - 28
5.	Registration Services Annual Report 21/22 - To review the performance of the service area.	29 - 34
6.	Procurement Performance Review - Review of the joint working arrangements and benefits realised to date.	35 - 44
7.	Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme and Action List.	45 - 50
8.	Cabinet and Council Work Planner.	51 - 58
9.	To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.	59 - 66

**10. Next Meetings:**

25<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 10.00am – Special Meeting (Budget).  
23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 at 10.00am – Ordinary Meeting.

**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 Ian Chandler, Llantilio Crossenny;; Green Party  
County Councillor Tony Kear, Llanbadoc & Usk;; Welsh Conservative Party  
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 Sue Riley, Bulwark and Thornwell;; Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru  
Janice Watkins

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### **Access to paper copies of agendas and reports**

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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.

## **Monmouthshire Scrutiny Question Guide**

<b>Role of the Pre-meeting</b>	
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?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Agree the order of questioning and which Members will lead</li><li>- Agree questions for officers and questions for the Cabinet Member</li></ul>	
<b>Questions for the Meeting</b>	
<u>Scrutinising Performance</u>	<u>Scrutinising Policy</u>
1. How does performance compare with previous years? Is it better/worse? Why?	1. Who does the policy affect ~ directly and indirectly? Who will benefit most/least?
2. How does performance compare with other councils/other service providers? Is it better/worse? Why?	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. How does performance compare with set targets? Is it better/worse? Why?	3. What is the view of the community as a whole - the 'taxpayer' perspective?
4. How were performance targets set? Are they challenging enough/realistic?	4. What methods were used to consult with stakeholders? Did the process enable all those with a stake to have their say?
5. How do service users/the public/partners view the performance of the service?	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. Have there been any recent audit and inspections? What were the findings?	6. Does the policy relate to an area where there are known inequalities?
7. How does the service contribute to the achievement of corporate objectives?	7. Does this policy align to our corporate objectives, as defined in our corporate plan? Does it adhere to our Welsh Language Standards?
8. Is improvement/decline in performance linked to an increase/reduction in resource? What capacity is there to improve?	

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



# Agenda Item 4



<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>PUBLIC PROTECTION 2021/22 PERFORMANCE REPORT</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>Performance &amp; Oversight Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>17<sup>th</sup> January 2023</b>
<b>DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>All</b>

## 1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To undertake scrutiny of service delivery across Public Protection services for the financial year 2021/22, with comparison to previous years. The Public Protection division comprises of Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Animal Health and Licensing.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To consider and comment on the contents of the attached report – Appendix One - entitled 'Public Protection Performance Report 2021/22'.
- 2.2 Members receive the next annual performance report, for 2022/23 year, earlier in 2023. The report to be scheduled in the committee forward planner in June or July 2023. Members to consider whether they would like to scrutinise a specific area of Public Protection work in 2023/24.

## 3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 In January 2015 Cabinet requested that Public Protection performance was reviewed regularly by this Committee to assess any negative impacts. Initially six-monthly reports were provided to Strong Communities Select committee, but for the last two years this has been presented annually as agreed in 2019. The last annual performance report was presented to the former Strong Communities Select committee in November 2021.
- 3.2 The attached report, Appendix One, summarises performance for the twelve month period of 2021/22, and highlights the following -
  - The four service teams were diverted from normal service delivery by the need to respond to the second full year of the Covid-19 pandemic. Where services were maintained, often physical visits were replaced by virtual meetings and resolving problems remotely. All service requests continued to be risk assessed and physical visits made when deemed essential, eg. to respond to a complaint from a vulnerable housing tenant, even during heightened Welsh Government Alert Levels. Such activity could not be undertaken remotely.

- As detailed in Appendix One, reactive work has continued with some noticeable increases in demand. ‘Service requests’ refer to complaints from the public and businesses, eg noise complaints, or requests for information about consumer or licensing issues.
- The Environmental Health (Commercial) team dealt with over 15,000 cases of Covid, and 217 other notifiable diseases. The EH (Public Health) team responded to an increase in noise complaints, environmental protection and pest control issues. Trading Standards had a relatively stable year of service demand, and Licensing applications (1,515 last year) remained high.
- Organised events, for example horse racing, agricultural and music shows, increased from the previous year, as national restrictions were lifted for large parts of the year. These received help and guidance from the Monmouthshire Event Safety Advisory Group.
- External Governing Bodies were aware of Public Protection’s prioritisation of the response to Covid taking precedent. Commercial EH staff spent significant time investigating Covid clusters in schools, care homes, local workplaces, etc. Senior Leadership were fully aware of the service’s switch in prioritisation over the 20/22 two year period, so we are able to provide a robust response to any Governing Body queries on why proactive activities have dropped.
- Annual reports will continue to be made to this Committee to assess performance over time, and help inform future priorities noting the competing demands. Officers will endeavour to bring the 22/23 annual report before this Committee earlier in 2022, preferably June or July 2023.
- Services may struggle to take on any new statutory duties that protect the public and the environment, and therefore funding must be sought to support any new work.
- Future strategies for sustaining Public Protection services will be developed, (to include further income generation and collaboration), locally, regionally and nationally.
- A budget pressure mandate was successful in securing further Public Protection funding from April 2022. This provided some much needed extra capacity to the 4 PP teams.
- Services will improve linkages to the Authority’s Community and Corporate Plan 2022/23 and other key drivers when prioritising future service delivery.

#### **4. REASONS:**

- 4.1 The Cabinet decision log from 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015 stated:- ‘Noting the continually changing legislative landscape in the future, it was decided Strong Communities Select Committee would receive six monthly performance reports on Public Protection services’. As stated in 3.1, it was agreed in 2019 to report annually to allow Members to scrutinise performance across the Division.
- 4.2 It is important Members are aware how Public Protection services play a crucial role in protecting some of our most vulnerable members of society, assist local businesses and protect the ‘farm to fork’ food chain, and help protect our natural environment. An infographic at the end of the attached report (Appendix One) summarises the purpose of the division and some key activities in 2021/22 year.

#### **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

None as a consequence of this report.

**6. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS, (incorporating Equalities, Sustainability, safeguarding and corporate parenting).**

Assessments were previously completed for the Cabinet report 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2015. This report serves to update the position in relation to performance, and therefore does not require a further assessment.

**7. CONSULTEES:**

Public Protection service managers (& contributors)  
Chief Officer, Social Care, Safeguarding & Health

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Report to Cabinet, 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015, entitled 'Review of Service Delivery in Public Protection Department'.

**9. AUTHOR:**

David H Jones, Head of Public Protection

**10. CONTACT DETAILS:**

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**REPORT TO PERFORMANCE & OVERSIGHT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**17<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

**PUBLIC PROTECTION 2021/22 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In 2015 Cabinet requested that Strong Communities Select Committee receive regular performance reports on Public Protection services. Members wished to review the impact on performance of budget reductions implemented since April 2014. For the last few years Public Protection performance has been brought to this Committee for scrutiny annually, as previously agreed.
- 1.2 The Public Protection division comprises four distinct teams -
- (i) Environmental Health, Commercial
  - (ii) Environmental Health, Public Health
  - (iii) Licensing
  - (iv) Trading Standards & Animal Health

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**2. PURPOSE**

- 2.1 The purpose of Public Protection (PP) services can be summarised as follows –
- a. Protect people from harm and promote health improvement.
  - b. Promote a fair and just trading environment for the public and businesses.
  - c. Improve the local environment to positively influence quality of life and promote sustainability.
  - d. Ensure the safety and quality of the food chain to minimise risk to human and animal health.
- 2.2 These four outcomes contribute to Wales' seven well-being goals. They directly help achieve a more prosperous, resilient, healthier and more equal county. It also resonates with this Council's Community & Corporate Plan 2022/23, which sets out the

Authority's goals under the current administration. PP services contribute to the goals of making Monmouthshire (a) safe place to live, (b) a fair place to live, and (c) a green place to live.

2.3 A summary of Public Protection's purpose, staffing numbers and some key performance figures is provided at the end of this report, in an infographic.

### 3. **RESOURCES**

#### 3.1 **Staff resource**

(i) Environmental Health – Commercial:-

- 6 Environmental Health Officers including Principal EHO, 5.4 FTE's, (Full Time Equivalents). 1 FTE has been seconded to TTP since Sept 20, 1 FTE seconded to Corporate Health and Safety work, since early 2022.
- 2 Commercial Services Officers, 2 FTE's
- 1 Systems Administrator, 1 FTE

(ii) Environmental Health – Public Health:-

- 5 Environmental Health Officers, including Principal EHO, 5 FTE's
- 2 Enforcement Officers, 1.6 FTE's

(iii) Licensing:-

- 5 Licensing Officers, including Principal, 4 FTE's

(iv) Trading Standards & Animal Health:-

- 3 Trading Standards Officers, 3 FTE's (including TS&AH Manager post)
- 1 Senior Fair Trading Officer, 1 FTE
- 1 Fair Trading Officer, 1 FTE
- 1 Senior Animal Health Officer, 0.4 FTE (Other 0.6 FTE Regional Co-ordination role funded by WHoTS)
- 3 Animal Health Officers, 2 FTE (1 temporary to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, 1 temporary to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023)

(v) Support team:-

- 5 Support Officers, 4 FTE's

Above staff resource adds up to a total of 35 staff, 30.4 Full Time Equivalents. The Public Protection division also comprises the Authority's Registrar and Corporate Health & Safety services, but this report covers 1.2 services only, as directed by Members in January 2015.

### **3.2. Financial resource**

In 2021/22, the budget allocation and actual spend is shown below -

<u>SERVICE</u>	Budget	Net Spend	Under or (overspend)
Environmental Health – Commercial	£479,350	£440,148	£39,202
Environmental Health – General public health	£435,282	£400,319	£34,963
Trading Standards & Animal Health	£368,446	£374,232	£(5,786)
Licensing	£34,131	£58,346	£(24,215)
Management & generic costs (eg software)	£118,532	£69,749	£48,783
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,435,741</b>	<b>£1,342,794</b>	<b>£92,947</b>

The budget position for the 2021/22 year was an underspend of £92,947. However, £86,800 of this underspend was due to a Covid Hardship Fund payment from Welsh Government in-year. If this element was subtracted from the total, then the underspend for 21/22 was only £6,147 or 0.4% of the total annual budget.

## 4. PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 Internal performance monitoring – the four teams within Public Protection each complete an annual Business Service Plan. These outline annual targets, specific projects etc. and progress is reviewed regularly both by the teams themselves and Departmental Management Team.
- 4.2 External reporting – regular returns are made to the Food Standards Agency, Health & Safety Executive, Charted Institute of Environmental Health, Drinking Water Inspectorate, Welsh Government and other organisations.
- 4.3 In 2021/22 additional performance was monitored in relation to our Track and Trace service, noting the pandemic was still a public health emergency for the entirety of the 2021/22 year. Reports were submitted to Welsh Government and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, (ABUHB) on number of cases, clusters investigated, enforcement of isolation rules and business compliance. Significant work was done internally, supporting our care home sector and schools.
- 4.4 2021/22 Performance (and comparison to previous years)

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The right-hand columns summarises performance during the 2021/22 year. The left-hand columns cover the previous 4 years, to enable comparisons to be made.

The following table summarises performance data from the four service teams.

Figure One

<u>Service</u>	<u>2017/18 performance</u>	<u>2018/19 Performance</u>	<u>2019/20 Performance</u>	<u>2020/21 Performance</u>	<u>2021/22 Performance</u>
<b>Environmental Health (Commercial)</b>					
Food safety full inspections	513 (100%)	513 (100%)	561	28 - suspension of programme due to Covid response and businesses closed,	152 full inspections

Other interventions – sampling, verification etc (Not H & S)	427	285	336	(same as all other Welsh LA's) 287	160
Total	940	798	897	315	312
Inspection within 28 days of scheduled date	87%	88.6%	86% (incomplete programme)	As business closed and inspections suspended due to Covid this figure not collected 20/21	On catch up and carry over from lockdown when premises closed – data not collected
Number of new businesses opened	110	151	134	101	76
Broadly compliant food businesses (high risk)	94.3%	93.2%	93.4%	Proactive visits suspended	94.4%
Broadly compliant food businesses – All	97.4%	97.2%	96.9%	As above	97.4%
Service Requests - food safety	736  Total SR's 1350	456 (85% within 3 working days)  Total SR's 1463	720 (85% within 3 working days)  Total SR's 1444	453 for food (78% within target)  Total SR's 1,792 but major under recording – more likely 2,500	533 for food  Total SR's recorded on system 1,321 (84% within target)
Food Hygiene training	257 food handlers trained	208 food handlers trained	123 food handlers training (courses in March cancelled due to Covid)	nil	nil

Communicable Diseases cases dealt with	183	210 including Typhoid outbreak	191 (includes one case of Covid before end of March 2020)	3,826 Covid 142 notifiable disease	15,584 Covid 217 notifiable diseases
Health and Safety notifications  Notices served	54 accidents, of which 9 reportable (serious injuries) 24 visits re asbestos also undertaken in the year.	41 accidents notified. 12 serious incidents investigated. 90 events reviewed  12 Notices served (gas and cellar safety)	58 accident notifications 11 serious incidents investigated 25 events reviewed  2 Notices served (gas safety)	Vast amount of proactive and reactive work in relation to Covid regs. Not all work recorded due to time constraints, e.g Covid responses to schools and care homes.	36 reportable accidents with 2 formal investigations. 95 Service Requests from businesses  4 Notices served, (2 prohibition)
<b>Environmental Health (General public health)</b>					
Housing service requests (SR'S)	153 Total 133 within 3 working days = 86.9%	164 Total 141 within 3 working days = 86%	158 Total 133 within 3 working days = 84.2%	105 Total 70 within 3 working days = 66.7%	110 Total 79 within 3 working days = 71.8%
Noise	321 Total. 271 within 3 working days = 84.4%  173 closed within 3 mths = 53.9%	374 Total. 318 within 3 working days = 85%  152 closed within 3 mths = 40.6%	317 Total. 258 within 3 working days = 81.4%  181 closed within 3 mths = 57.1%	366 Total. 300 within 3 working days = 82%  199 closed within 3 mths = 54.4%	388 Total. 308 within 3 working days = 79.4%  211 closed within 3 mths = 54.4%
Statutory nuisance, excluding noise	142 Total. 122 within working 3 days = 85.9%  83 closed within 3 mths = 58.4%	176 Total. 145 within working 3 days = 82.4%  92 closed within 3 mths = 52.3%	154 Total. 127 within working 3 days = 82.5%  86 closed within 3 mths = 55.8%	236 Total. 209 within working 3 days = 88.6%  155 closed within 3 mths = 65.7%	182 Total. 153 within working 3 days = 84.1%  114 closed within 3 mths = 62.6%

Environmental Protection (fouling, littering, fly tipping etc.)	478 Total. 440 within 3 working days = 92.1%  302 closed within 3 months = 63.2%	484 Total. 446 within 3 working days = 92.1%  421 closed within 3 months = 87%	448 Total. 387 within 3 working days = 86.4%  395 closed within 3 months = 88.2%	705 Total. 651 within 3 working days = 92.3%  534 closed within 3 months = 75.7%	743 Total. 697 within 3 working days = 93.8%  598 closed within 3 months = 80.5%
Pest Control	Total 71. 54 within 3 working days =76%	Total 78. 61 within 3 working days =78.2%	Total 85. 66 within 3 working days =77.6%	Total 113. 95 within 3 working days = 84%	Total 129, 96 within 3 working days = 74.4%
<b>Licensing</b>					
Applications dealt with by Licensing	1668 which includes 383 TENs requiring a 24 hour turnaround	1813 applications dealt with (up by 145 on the previous year). This includes 425 TENs requiring a 24 hour turnaround (an increase of 42 TENs on the previous year)	1666 applications. This includes 384 TENs requiring a 24 hour turnaround (a decrease of 41 TENs on the previous year due to lead up to Covid lockdown in March and events being cancelled)	1142 applications (down by 524 on the previous year, 31% decline). This is as a direct result of Covid lockdown and restrictions. Only 2 TEN's within these applications and this is as a result of events not being permitted.	1515 applications. (up by 373 applications on the previous year – 33% increase). This includes 210 Temporary Event Notices. Huge increase due to events recommencing, after lockdowns.
Inspections carried out	329 inspections (261 of which were risk rated premises for alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment)	325 inspections (174 of which were risk rated premises for alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment)	247 inspections (133 of which were risk rated premises for alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment). Inspections were down by 78 due to long term sickness	237 inspections (no risk rated premises were included this year, concentrated on Covid advice/enforcement).	212 inspections. Frequent legislative changes 20/21 led to the slightly higher number, dealing with Covid restrictions and impact on hospitality sector.

Service Requests carried out	868 service requests (784 - 90% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response – on target).	974 service requests (895 - 92% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response – on target). An increase of 106 service requests from 17/18	821 service requests (739 - 90% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response – on target). A decrease of 153 service requests from 18/19	922 service requests, (846 - 92% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response – on target). An increase of 101 (12%) from 19/20	873 service requests, (809 - 93% - with a 3 day turnaround for first response – on target). A decrease of 49 (5%) from 20/21
<b>Trading Standards &amp; Animal Health</b>					
Trading Standards Visits	110	126	113	115	78
Trading Standards Complaints/Advice	452	443	547	1018	622
Citizens Advice Consumer Service	302 Referrals 808 Notifications	305 Referrals 863 Notifications	322 Referrals 922 Notifications	341 Referrals 956 Notifications	352 Referrals 962 Notifications
Animal Health Visits	258	219	324	231	244
Animal Health Complaints/Advice	264	242	266	282	293
Inspections at our: High Risk premises, Upper Medium premises.	23% (25/107)	No formal programme of inspection due to other pressures including loss of Feed officer now replaced	No formal programme of inspection due to other pressures	No formal programme of inspection due to other pressures.	No formal programme due to other pressures but looking to commence in 2023/24.
Feed Law Enforcement	100% - 235	100% - 212	59% - 144 supplemented by 254 ceased trading visits	Visits were suspended with database cleansing	68% - 93/136 64 ceased operations

Programmed animal health inspections	10% (30/294)	No formal programme of inspection due to long term sickness	No formal programme of inspection	No formal programme due to Covid	Combined with feed inspections.
New Business Visits	56% TS 59% AH	29% TS (23/80) 66% AH (18/27)	56% TS (32/57) 73% AH (40/55)	61% TS (32/52) 74% AH (52/70)	51% TS (48/95) 48% AH (32/66)
Animal Welfare Complaints	91.4%	92.6%	63%	74.5%	68%
Vulnerable Scam Reports	10 visits contact with 135 individuals	12 visits contact with 149 individuals	10 visits contact with 159 individuals (running total)	0 visits due to Covid 187 individuals (running total)	0 visits due to Covid 214 individuals (running total)
<b>Other</b>					
<b>Freedom of Information Requests (PP Total)</b>	51	66	74	39	79
<b>Events requiring advice via Safety Advisory Group</b>	137	156	105	39, 30 cancelled due to national restrictions	63

## 5. ANALYSIS AND ACTIVITY 2021/22

This was the second full year of the Covid-19 pandemic, so a significant element of Public Protection Officer time was involved in responding to the numerous lockdowns and changes in regulations. There were two significant impacts – (1) providing the Track and Trace (T&T) service for the county, which was a 12 hours a day, 7 days a week response, ie. 84 hours a week. There have been fluctuations in the size of the T&T team, with up to 87 staff at its' peak, (mainly externally provided and directly financed by WG), depending on the case numbers and contact tracing guidance from WG. EH Commercial Officers led the T&T response with their capacity often being 90% dealing with Covid. (2) Responding to the cases, determining likely sources of the Covid spread. This involved extensive work with care homes, schools and various workplaces. All sections of the Public Protection division

provided advice and enforced the WG requirements of the Covid legislation, which changed regularly and had to be communicated to local businesses, event organisers, internal departments, members of the public, etc.

## **5.1 Environmental Health – Commercial**

### **5.1.1 Food safety (food hygiene and food standards)**

Delivery of food hygiene and standards inspection programme – there was a backlog of food safety inspections to catch up on, due to our Covid response work taking precedence, and over 100 unrated businesses in system. The total outstanding at end of March 2022 was over 1,000. All Commercial EH Officers were engaged in setting up and working in TTP from May 2020 onwards and remained heavily involved with care homes up until the end of 2021 taking up around 2 FTE officers at most times. The Omicron variant peaked in case numbers during December 2021. The majority of businesses were closed and those that were open given advice and visits as they sought to diversify. The team prioritises high risk businesses for reactive and proactive responses, with statutory notices and a prosecution being undertaken at non-compliant premises with serious breaches.

### **5.1.2 Business improvement – typically the team provide advice to improve the food hygiene rating score of businesses, which has been recognised to improve both the economy and food safety. In 21/22 the team were unable to carry out advisory, income generating ACCESS visits due to starting recovery of the food safety programme. This was in line with the service plan and recovery plan of the Food Standards Agency, (FSA).**

### **5.1.3 Responding to complaints**

Complaint numbers remained high, as per Table One, and the public continue to have high expectations of responses to service requests.

### **5.1.4. Communicable Diseases**

Investigation of all cases of statutorily notifiable diseases received. The numbers of Covid cases remained high and cases reported on the system were over 15,000. An Officer was seconded to the TTP service, dealing with care homes and other high risk cases, and this vital work continues until March 2023. The numbers of infectious disease cases in 21/22 returned to pre-

pandemic days. Cases of E Coli, Salmonella, Giardia, cryptosporidium, legionella and high numbers of campylobacter were investigated in the year.

- 5.1.5 Income-generating consultancy work. Primarily through ACCESS programme (see 5.1.2) and Primary Authority partnerships. Income generating work was still on hold in 21/22, due to Officers being diverted to Covid-19 work.

5.1.6 Health and Safety at Work

(a) Reactive service to ensure protection of employees at work particularly at high risk premises, together with advice on event safety. 95 service requests were responded to, together with supporting 30 local businesses with advice. 49 interventions were made in relation to health and safety at events. The latter involved safety advice to music events, firework displays, travelling fairgrounds, etc. 36 accidents were followed up, 2 via formal investigations.

(b) 24 inspections were made to Special Procedure premises, for example tattoo parlours, to ensure standards upheld.

The equivalent of 1 FTE EHO has been seconded to corporate Health and Safety since February 2022.

## 5.2 Environmental Health – Public Health

### 5.2.1 Housing

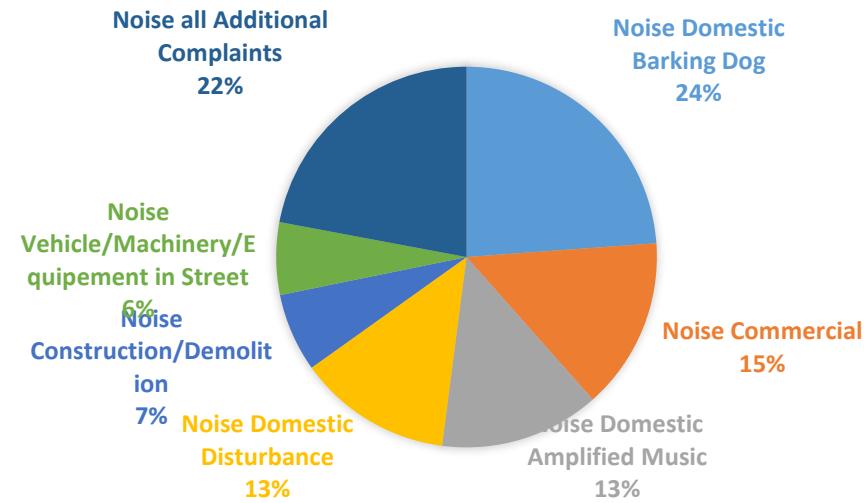
In 21/22 the team continued to provide an effective and early response to complaints and requests for advice in the private rented sector. The period saw a similar number of service requests to 20/21 with a slight increase from 105 to 110. There was an increase in the number of inspections from 23 in 20/21 to 37 in 21/22, with 22 category 1 hazards (most serious) and 70 category 2 hazards identified. Of the total of 92 hazards, a substantial number (38) related to damp, cold and fire safety issues. It will be interesting to see if the current fuel price hikes result in an increase in related cold and damp complaints in 22/23.

In the 37 dwellings inspected, 69 adults and 30 children were exposed to significant hazards. Officers engage with landlords, make clear their responsibilities under the Housing legislation and seek their cooperation to undertake the required works to remove the hazards identified. A range of enforcement actions are available and used where landlords do not cooperate such as the service of Improvement Notices and in the most serious cases Prohibition Orders. By the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, 28 adults and 7 children had been protected by landlords undertaking the required remedial works.

### 5.2.2 Noise

The 388 noise complaints received amounted to the highest recorded for the section, eclipsing the previous 374 complaints in 18/19. Complaints of noise from residential properties, mainly barking dogs, loud music and domestic disturbance, account for 58% of these (197). Noise complaints from commercial type premises saw an expected significant spike, with premises opening again after Covid lockdowns, increasing from 34 to 57 (68% increase), and construction sites remain sizeable with 26 service requests. Officers endeavour to respond and deal with complaints quickly, with 308 responded to within 3 days (79.4%) and 211 closed within 3 months (54.4%).

#### TOP 6 NOISE COMPLAINTS REC'D 01/04/21 - 31/03/22



#### 5.2.3 Environmental Protection

2021/22 also saw an increase in the number of complaints on the previous year up from 705 to 743. Of these 445 related to fly tipping incidents. Evidence gathered resulted in 3 fixed penalty notices being issued and 2 cases currently being considered for prosecution.

The team continues to lead, together with colleagues from the Waste and Street Cleaning section, in the seventh year of the '**Give Dog Fouling the Red Card**' scheme which has the majority of Town and Community councils participating. The scheme is about collaboration, maximising resources and raising awareness that dog mess must be bagged / binned. While Members continue to report generally good news dog fouling hot spot areas continue with fouling on play areas and sports pitches of particular concern. A second report was considered by Strong Communities Select Committee in March 2022 on the potential introduction of a Public

Spaces Protection Order for dog controls (fouling, dogs on leads / exemption areas) in the county. Members endorsed the proposed next stage of consultation with stakeholders which is currently underway.

#### 5.2.4 Private Water Supplies

The team has the responsibility for fulfilling the Council's duty of risk assessing all 'large' and 'small' private water supplies (PWS), where water is intended for human consumption. Improvements are undertaken where necessary to ensure a wholesome and sufficient water supply is provided.

We currently have 119 'small' and 64 'large' supplies, the vast majority of which have received an initial risk assessment. There is an ongoing statutory requirement to risk assess supplies every 5 years and this area of largely proactive work has been highlighted consistently in the last 5+ years in the service plan as an area of significant resource pressure.

The 21/22 post Covid recovery position meant that little progress was made in this proactive area of work.

41 of the 64 known large supplies in high risk category = 64%

61 of the 119 known small shared / domestic tenancy supplies in high risk category = 51%

#### 5.2.5 Pest Control

Complaint levels remain very similar with 129 received compared with 113 in 20/21. The majority of these relate to rats (101).

#### 5.2.6 Air Quality

The team met its inspection targets for the industrial permitted sites (17 inspections) and petroleum certified sites (18 inspections) which we have responsibility for from a pollution legislation perspective, ensuring continuing compliance.

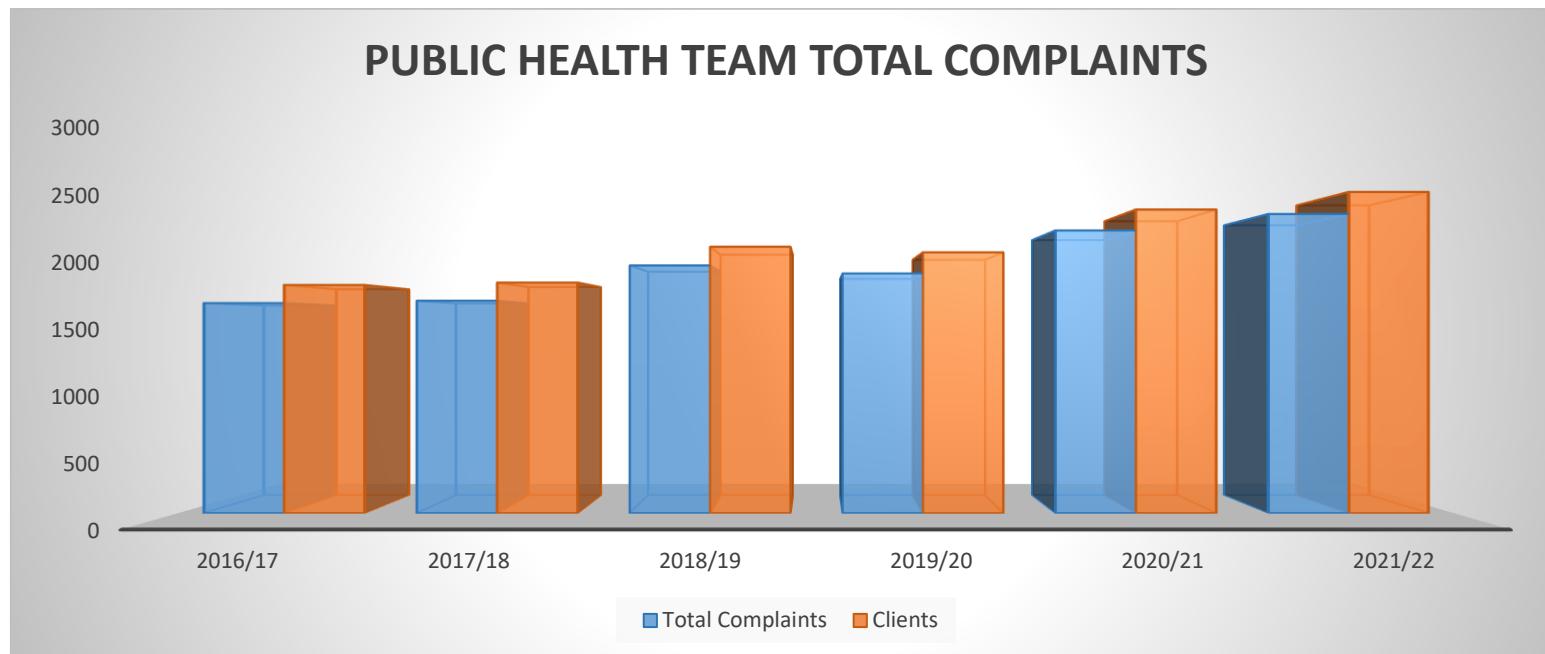
Monitoring continued of traffic related pollution (nitrogen dioxide) in our 4 major towns and advice given in meetings of the steering groups in the Chepstow and Usk Air Quality Management areas.

There were no exceedances in the county in 2021 (calendar year) of the nitrogen dioxide annual objective level, which builds on the 2020 compliant year.

2021 was the 7th year that levels in the Usk Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) were below the nitrogen dioxide objective level and the fourth year below 36 µg/m<sup>3</sup> (which is below 10% of the objective level). Welsh Government have suggested that five years below 10% of the objective level is appropriate to consider revocation of the AQMA.

### 5.2.7 Total Enquiries

2021/22 continued the trend of increasing service requests across the range of functions delivered by the team, with a substantial hike to 2426 received comparable with 2293 in 20/21 (5.8% increase). The trend is best shown as follows:



### 5.3 Licensing

#### 5.3.1 General

The Licensing team deals with a variety of licences, dealing with pubs, restaurants, off-licences and takeaways, taxis, street trading (e.g. burger vans), street/house to house collections, (e.g. charity collections in the street or bag drops at homes), gambling (e.g. betting shops, racecourse, one armed bandits in pubs/clubs, raffles etc.), scrap metal collectors and sites. The team are also authorised to deal with sex establishments, boats and hypnotism.

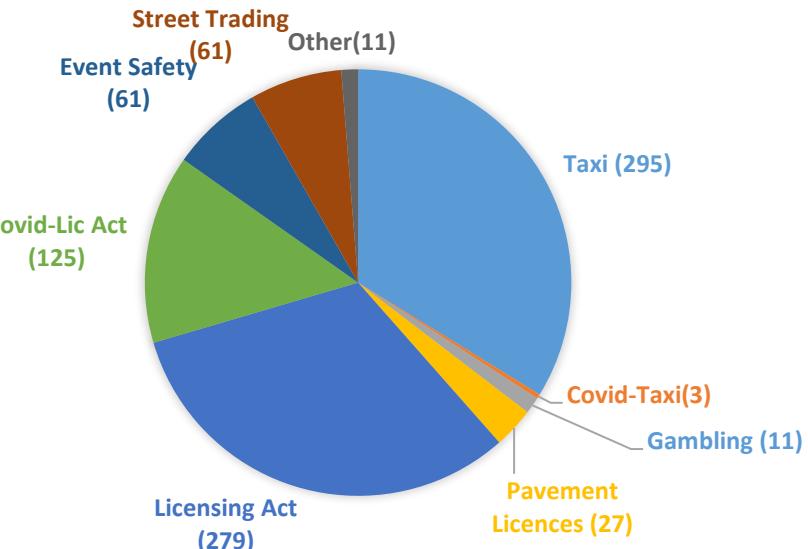
877 requests for service were processed by the Licensing between April 2021 – March 2022. A breakdown of the 877 requests is shown here -

The majority of the service requests involved giving Covid advice, enforcement and dealing with queries. Licensing were consulted upon and actively involved in the processing of pavement licences in order for the hospitality sector to open up outside, whilst putting in measures to control the spread of Covid. The team assisted the consultation to award urban grants to this sector who suffered financial hardship as a result of lockdown restrictions.

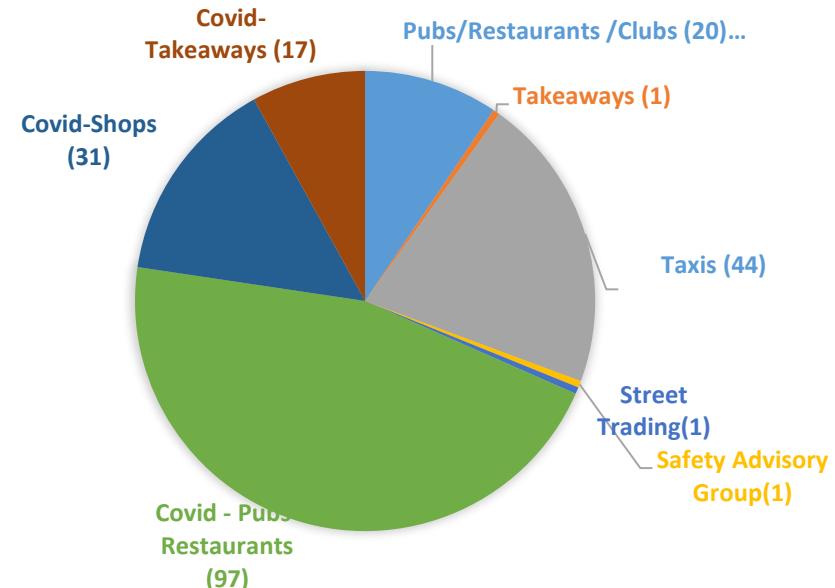
Throughout this period Welsh Government made 7 legislative changes to deal with the pandemic, which hugely affected the hospitality sector. This resulted in guidance being issued by Licensing along with inspections for compliance to such changes. 212 inspections were carried by Licensing last year. A breakdown of the 212 inspections is shown here.

1515 applications were processed in 2021/22, up by 373 on the previous year. This includes 210 Temporary Event Notices (TENs). An increase of 208 TENs on the previous year as a direct result of Covid restrictions starting to be lifted during this period, with events recommencing.

## SERVICE REQUESTS APR 2021-MAR 2022



## INSPECTIONS APR 2021-MAR 2022



Some of the work carried out by Licensing during this period included:-

### 5.3.2 Pubs, Restaurants, Off-licences, Clubs and Takeaways

#### Night Time Economy and Joint Enforcement

On 26<sup>th</sup> April Covid restrictions moved to level 3. Restrictions permitted hospitality to re-open outdoors. It also allowed events and weddings of up to 30 people to take place outdoors. Licensing gave advice on use of marquees being 51% open to be classed as outdoors. Advice was given on how this sector could get financial support in readiness for opening fully and to keep customers safe.

On 17<sup>th</sup> May they were permitted to open indoors, advice given on screens, sanitation, number permissions, seated at tables for ordering and consuming food and drink, face coverings and how to collect the correct data for Track Trace and Protect (TTP) for each person. On 27<sup>th</sup> May live music was permitted indoors, with recorded music still to be played at background level. Dancing was still not permitted and no change on the use of face coverings and table service. This all changed on 7<sup>th</sup> August when Wales went to level zero where all restrictions were lifted. Businesses and employers had to do a risk assessment and this included those licensed under the hospitality sector, shops and takeaways. The requirement to wear face coverings was required for indoor public places but it excluded the hospitality sector. This advice given to licence holders along with their duty under the risk assessment to carry out reasonable measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

26 December – Wales moved back to alert level 2 requiring 6 to a table in the hospitality sector along with table service. Further restrictions that events were limited to 30 indoors and 50 outdoors. Dancing was not permitted. Advice given to hospitality of restrictions in particular to those who had arranged events for New Year's Eve.

15<sup>th</sup> January – Outdoor event limit rose from 50 to 500

21<sup>st</sup> January – Outdoor events moved to level zero, which removed the restriction on numbers attending an event.

28<sup>th</sup> January – Indoor hospitality moved also to level zero, scrapping table only service and restrictions. However, Covid passes were still required for large events, nightclubs, cinemas and theatres. This was later scrapped on 18<sup>th</sup> February.

All of the changes put pressure on the Licensing Team to ensure compliance and that information was provided to the hospitality sector, to help and assist as much as possible at such difficult times.

Not all complied so 2 Improvement Notices were served in the Monmouth area, one being a pub and the other a takeaway. The pub was served the notice as restrictions at the time was for outside use only. They failed to have the proper facilities for this use and permitted customers inside their venue, with the excuse they did so as the weather was poor. The Improvement Notice required measures to be put in place to ensure customer use outside only, putting measures in place for customers to use toilet facilities

indoors, such as one way systems and avoiding congregation of customers inside. The takeaway failed to have in place a Covid risk assessment, along with lack of signage and social distancing. Both complied with the Improvement Notices, negating any further action.

### 5.3.3 Taxis

Welsh Government and Department of Transport introduced more stringent measures to safeguard the public by increasing the requirement for Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, from 3 years to every 6 months, for drivers along with the requirement for operators and vehicle proprietors to do DBS checks. This was approved by the Licensing and Regulatory Committee. A further measure to ensure safety was to sign up to a central register for all Local Authorities to access refusals and revocations of drivers, issued by all Authorities which were previously not recorded.

The Welsh Government secured a number of Electric Vehicles, which were offered to taxi drivers on a free trial basis from the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021. Monmouthshire has 2 vehicles allocated for this purpose. Licensing has informed the trade of this trial and carried out the requirements needed for the users to be licensed for this scheme. The pilot scheme is intended to assist Welsh Government in achieving its target of de-carbonising the taxi fleet entirely in Wales by 2028.

Licensing introduced changes to the way in which Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles could be tested by using approved garages that carry out MOT tests (subject to conditions). Previously testing was restricted to a few contracted garages. This change enabled the taxi trade to have more accessibility, choice and they could now shop around for the cheapest price.

During 2021/2022 Licensing worked closely with DVSA and Passenger Transport Unit and carried out 2 joint operations in the Abergavenny area in March. The first operation resulted in 15 vehicles being stopped, 5 of those having defects, (2 vehicles plated by Monmouthshire, 1 vehicle plated by Torfaen and 2 over 8 seater vehicles licensed by the Department of Transport). Licensing dealt with the vehicles plated by this Authority, which had minor defects and informed and worked with the respective external licensing regimes. The second operation at a school resulted in 12 vehicles being stopped, with a failure rate of 4 Monmouthshire plated vehicles. These had minor defects that were rectified. However, one vehicle plated by Blaenau Gwent failed to stop, and the matter referred to that Authority.

### 5.3.4 Gambling

The Gambling Policy, which must be revised every 3 years, was conducted. After extensive consultation and preparation, it was approved at Full Council on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021. Each Licensing Authority prepares and publishes a policy statement that it proposes to apply in exercising its functions under the Gambling Act. The policy enables consistent decisions, collaborative approaches and

follows guidance and legislative requirements under the Act. It also looks at wider issues that gambling addiction can lead to such as poverty, exploitation, family and wider society problems.

## 5.4 Trading Standards & Animal Health

### 5.4.1 Feed

The Feed Programme was reinstated for 2021/22 but based on an agreed achievable level subject to any further interruptions due to the pandemic. There were further lockdowns that impacted on front line delivery although it allowed additional database cleansing to be undertaken, with feed related advice and complaints still responded to and dealt with. New members of the animal health team were able to undertake virtual training to maintain their competence with practical experience taken at every opportunity. The final report following the Feed Audit undertaken in early 2020 was received and recognised the significant improvements that had been made through this alternative delivery mechanism.

### 5.4.2 Animal Health

The animal health function continues to be over 90% reactive but was bolstered by the recruitment of an officer to cover maternity leave who has wide experience. The Trading Standards and Animal Health Manager is strategic lead nationally for animal health matters and continues to be heavily involved in working with WG, to develop and deliver the Partnership Delivery Plan with associated additional funding. This is based on a regional approach and mirrors the footprint of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal. Monmouthshire has approximately 50% of the critical control points and animal related premises within this region. Capacity issues had been recognised and supported by a pressure in the medium-term financial process, providing much needed additional resource for 2022/23.

August 2021 saw the successful animal welfare prosecution that followed on from the previous year's seizure of 128 cattle. The defendant was sentenced to 12 weeks imprisonment, suspended for 2 years, disqualified from owning or being involved with the upkeep of cattle for 10 years and ordered to pay costs of £5,239.

An illegal dog breeder avoided prosecution after signing a consent order which included undertakings to cease such activities and sign over 8 puppies that enabled the Authority to cover the costs involved in dealing with the matter.

January 2022 saw the conclusion of an animal by-product case with a formal caution and full cost recovery.

The Trading Standards Wales Dog Breeding Project, being led by Monmouthshire, underpins the delivery of some of the Programme for Government commitments identified in the Animal Welfare Plan for Wales. During 2021/22 it evolved into the Local Authority Enforcement Project as the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations, revoked the

pet shop licensing requirements from 1952 while introducing modernised requirements for sellers of pets. October marked the start of a small team of animal licensing officers (8) based right across Wales who will form specialist support for all Local Authorities.

#### 5.4.3 Fair Trading

The enforcement strategy and toolkit for the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 work continued and resulted in a data sharing agreement being put in place with all Local Authorities across Wales and Rent Smart Wales. Work continues to identify non-compliant premises with advice and enforcement where necessary, to bring Landlords of non-complying properties up to the minimum standards required. It is proposed to look at non-domestic property when capacity allows.

The Public Health (Minimum Price for Alcohol) (Wales) Act 2018 was implemented on 2 March 2020 just before the first lockdown commenced and minimum unit pricing visits had to be put on hold. It had been requested by WG that all off-licences were visited in the first 3 months to support the implementation of the new 50p per unit minimum requirement. These were completed by the end of 2021 as agreed due to the pandemic.

2021/22 saw the commencement of two significant investigations which had a considerable impact on one particular Officer's time and subsequently knocked on to the capacity of the team. Both cases were ongoing at the end of March 2021 but one was due to Court delays due to the backlog of cases following the pandemic.

Responses to consultations on the future of single use plastics, that will undoubtedly fall to local authorities to enforce, has been contributed to as part of a wider Trading Standards Wales. One of our TSO's has also taken on a support lead officer role on environmental issues.

#### 5.4.4 Consumer Protection

A priority for the service has been dealing with a variety of scams and bringing them to the attention of both the public and businesses whenever possible. All are potential victims and, by reaching out and working alongside adult safeguarding, vulnerable victims can be kept out of overburdened local care systems. The key focus continues to be working with vulnerable victims through priority referrals and ensuring they are given the advice and assistance required and/or referred as appropriate. During the pandemic though this work has had to be put on hold as visiting often the more vulnerable in society would not have been appropriate.

Work has begun on developing a partnership approach to protecting and educating as many Monmouthshire residents as possible. A multiagency approach should ensure most efficient use of resources and hopefully prevent anyone not receive the necessary support, initially this will focus on known victims and raising awareness with those involved with potential victims in their day-to-day work.

#### 5.4.5 Weights & Measures

There was a significant increase in the number of new business enquiries during the pandemic from individuals that were looking to new areas of work that required advice and this continued in 2021/22.

#### 5.4.6 Product Safety

There has been increasing problems with the rise in sale of vapes and whilst this has included an increase of a few premises selling to underage children, it has also included non-compliant and potentially dangerous products entering the market. Construction product work continues to develop on the back of the Grenfell Enquiry with a National Lead Regulator being developed.

#### 5.4.7 Income Generation

In 2021/22 feed work undertaken increased funding to approximately £26,000 and included work undertaken to support a neighbouring LA within the region as well as AH work. Animal Health PDP regional co-ordination, and additional project work, brought in around £30,000.

### 5.5 Event Safety Advisory Group

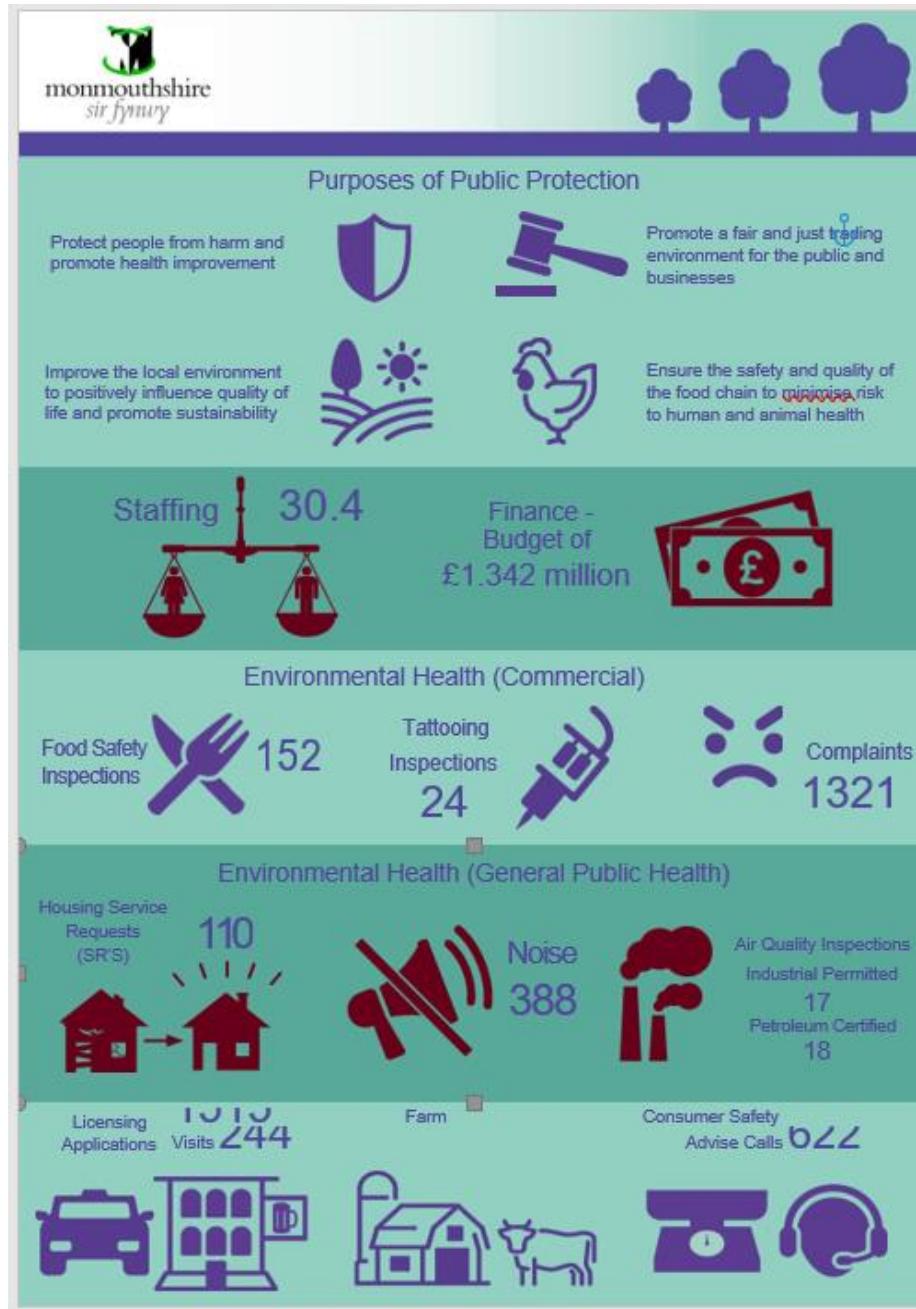
A number of Public Protection staff are involved in Monmouthshire's Event Safety Advisory Group, (ESAG). This is a partnership designed to help organisers run safe and successful events. It is recognised a proactive advisory stance is preferable to reacting to problems after events have occurred. 63 events held in 21/22 received ESAG advice, significantly less than in pre-pandemic years. A return to pre-pandemic organised event levels is expected in 22/23, with restrictions lifted on maximum spectator numbers. Advice was sought and provided from all our typical organisers of music, sporting, agricultural, food events, etc.

## **6 PERFORMANCE SUMMARY 2021/22 year**

- 6.1 Public Protection teams rallied to provide a robust response in the second full year of the pandemic. This was achieved both by providing a Track and Trace service and assisting members of the public, other MCC Departments and local businesses in responding to WG restrictions in a safe and responsible manner. The various legislative changes are outlined in 5.3.2 above and this took significant effort of PP Officers to advise businesses, internal departments and members of the public accordingly.
- 6.2 Inevitably our traditional Public Protection services – food safety inspections, proactive trading standards and animal health visits, housing inspections, etc. – continued to suffer as a consequence of dealing with this public health priority. Proactive inspections recovered to an extent, eg. routine food safety visits, but the priority throughout the year was our Covid-related responses. These included continual advice and support to our care homes, licensed premises, schools, local businesses and events.
- 6.3 Service request levels across all teams remained high throughout 2021/22 – as per Figure One - notably across Environmental Health, so reactive work was prioritised over our proactive activities.
- 6.4 A budget pressure mandate was submitted to seek further new recurring funding for Public Protection services for 2022/23 and beyond. More capacity to deal areas of work that have slipped, such as private housing interventions and consumer protection issues, was deemed essential, also noting the general increase in service demand. A £223,000 increase in the PP budget was secured since April 2022, allowing for the recruitment of 2.4 FTE EHO's, 1 FTO Trading Standards and 0.5 FTE Licensing Officer. For small teams with high service demand, this new investment was welcomed. As well as easing some capacity pressures, it also secures more sustainable services moving forward.
- 6.5 Members can gain some assurance that performance is in line with other Authorities, including the drop in proactive work, via regular monitoring by the external governing bodies.
- 6.6 Despite the typical service pressures, some innovative working was progressed in the year. This included the Dog Breeding national project (5.4.2) led by our Animal Health team, and progressing the Special Procedures work, to be implemented under the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017. This Authority has led the work in establishing a national register for tattooists and other similar procedures. The department is also changing our software system to be more user friendly to our various customers.

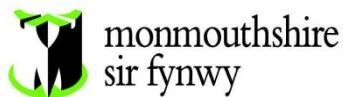
## 7 2022/23 AND BEYOND

- 7.1 It will be some time yet until Public Protection can fully recover from the pandemic. There is a significant backlog of proactive inspections needed, eg. 5.1.1. refers to a backlog of over 1,000 food safety visits that requires attention in 22/23. Our interventions to help reduce the spread of Covid-19 remained a priority until May 2022. WG funding, secured to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, ensures we can continue Environmental Health support to care homes, (eg. cluster management), and our schools for the whole of 22/23.
- 7.2 Our 2022/23 Business Plans seek to better reflect our longer term vision and future planning. This tallies with the Well Being of Future Generations expectations, with Public Protection services contributing directly to a more prosperous, resilient, healthier and more equal county. Digital solutions are being pursued to help capacity issues. 23/24 Plans will reflect the latest Community & Corporate Plan 22/23 and PP's contribution to those goals.
- 7.3 Collaborative opportunities are being pursued at regional and national level, and this Authority will play a part in developing future service models. Further income generation opportunities will continue to be explored, albeit most new income streams had to be paused in 21/22. The Dog Breeding Project, led by the TS Manager and Animal Health Regional Coordinator, shows our desire to seek more effective ways of working. The collaborative working with PHW and ABUHB, in response to the pandemic, will be built on to tackle public health priorities together. Protecting vulnerable people engaging in the night-time economy will be a key priority for MCC Licensing working with Gwent Police.
- 7.4 Our services, together with delivering statutory responsibilities, acts on local intelligence and welcomes input from local Councillors, other stakeholders, etc. to improve outcomes for our citizens and local businesses. The services enjoy an excellent reputation, due to the commitment of the Officers, and will continue to contribute to the wider agendas and our core purposes, as provided in 2.1. The profile of our Public Protection services, both locally and nationally, has never been so buoyant, so Officers are now positioned to capitalise on this momentum.
- 7.5 To maintain our high quality, well respected services, PP will continue to report progress to Members and our Governing Bodies.



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# Agenda Item 5



<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Monmouthshire Registration Service 2021/22 PERFORMANCE REPORT</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>Performance &amp; Oversight Select Committee</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>17<sup>th</sup> January 2023</b>
<b>DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:</b> All	

## 1. PURPOSE:

1.1 Scrutiny of the Registration Service and its performance during the 2021/22 year.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To consider and comment on the content of this report. The report serves to outline the services provided by the Registration Service, provided in Appendix One, describes current performance and highlights future challenges.
- 2.2 An annual performance report, to be presented to this Committee in future years. In this way, Members can assess performance over time for this crucial element of the Authority's work. Ideally the annual report would come to Committee earlier in the year, for example, June 2023 to receive and scrutinise the 2022/23 performance of the team.

## 3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 To maintain a high level of customer satisfaction for our residents whilst managing and responding to public demand and providing an excellent, value-for-money service.

## 4. PERFORMANCE DURING 2021/22:

- 4.1 The General Register Office (GRO) sets targets and key performance indicators on statutory time frames and customer service priorities. Each month GRO publishes the performance data for each District on our system so we can monitor our own performance and compare it to similar districts and nationally. Any District that is perceived to be failing to meet the standards will have meetings with their Compliance Officer to look at ways to improve performance. We have had two meetings with our Compliance Officer this year to discuss Monmouthshire's approach to pandemic recovery and to highlight and discuss legislative changes which are in the pipeline. These meetings have been productive with no performance issues causing concern. It is recognised the pandemic had an adverse effect on overall performance, but Monmouthshire District performed well in very difficult circumstances. The table below summarises 2021/22 performance –

Type of appointment	Total for year 2021-2022	% within statutory time-frame	Last year's figures for comparison
Births (births registered for another district – not in KPI)	704 (77 for another district)	78% (below target of 98%)	1308 total (49% within target)
Deaths	1104 (796 within criteria for KPI)	77% (below target of 90%)	1330 (84% within target)
Still-births	0	N/A	4
Register Office & Approved Premises Marriages (all marriages registered in Monmouthshire)	486 (602 including all church/ religious building weddings)	N/A	137
Civil Partnerships	13	N/A	20
Notices of marriage/Civil Partnerships	874	N/A	289
New British citizens	31	N/A	19
Customers seen within 10 mins of appointment/arrival time	All customers	100%	100%
Appts offered within time-frame guidelines	All types	100%	100%

Marriages: 486 registered between 36 approved premises and the register office.

Births taking place within Monmouthshire have now dropped significantly, particularly during the pandemic there were times when the maternity unit closed temporarily due to staff shortages across Gwent which meant that staff were moved to the Grange. A figure for birth registrations completed for other Districts has been included to reflect our partnership working across Gwent/Aneurin Health Board region.

Also included is the total number of marriages registered within Monmouthshire. Since the change from registers to the schedule (or marriage document) system, all marriages must be registered on the national system, whether they are religious or civil, so couples no longer receive their marriage (or civil partnership) certificate on the day of their ceremony. Each schedule or marriage document must be checked and individually registered on the system before a certificate can be issued. Over the summer, due to the high number of ceremonies, the service struggled to register ceremonies within the 7 day target set by the General Register Office. This will be monitored more closely going forward to ensure sufficient time is allocated to staff to manage this task.

- 4.2 Customer feedback – the digital solution has been delayed, unfortunately, because of other pressures within the digital team, so we are not formally receiving feedback. Traditionally feedback has been excellent, with our customers being very grateful for the efficient and compassionate service they receive. A couple of examples of positive feedback are as follows
- 

*'We just wanted to say a big thank you for all being so lovely in the run up to and on our wedding day. You helped to make it special.'* Thank you card, November 2021.

*'I called this morning to convey our appreciation for all your help with organising the paperwork for the late \*\*\*\*\*. Mr \*\*\*\*\* is most grateful, along with the family. Thank you again.'* By email, March 2022.

## **5. CHALLENGES/FUTURE PROOFING:**

- 5.1 Partnership working continues across Gwent for birth registrations. Although we had hoped to begin discussions regarding extending this to include death registrations, due to the ongoing pressures on the service it has been impossible to do so up to this point. The hope is that we can begin to plan how this will work over the winter when the ceremony programme is lighter.
- 5.2 The role of Medical Examiner and Medical Examiner Officers has been continuing to roll out nationally. Although they have started to scrutinise deaths elsewhere in Aneurin Bevan they have not as yet started in Monmouthshire. The scheme will become statutory in due course but the only information we have so far is that it will be from April 2023.
- 5.3 There have been several legislative changes for ceremonies since the last report to Members. Marriage registers became obsolete and we moved to a schedule system, plus outdoor ceremonies (in the grounds of licensed venues) have now become legal. All Register Offices also became 'designated' register offices, meaning that notices for marriage or civil partnerships for residents of any nationality must be taken within District. It has been a very pressured time, adapting to the new legislation and undergoing training to ensure that we understood and were prepared for the changes.
- 5.4 We have to be very flexible, to meet the demand for registration appointments, which can change on an almost daily basis. The biggest challenge within Registration is to keep on top of the constant developments in legislation and changes in the local environment.

## **6. REASONS**

- 6.1 It is good practice to report on performance internally to a scrutiny committee. The Registration Service is governed nationally by the General Register Office, which should provide Members with further assurance of good governance.

## **7. CONSULTEES:**

Public Protection service managers  
Chief Officer, Social Care, Safeguarding & Health

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

None

## **9. AUTHORS:**

Jennifer Walton, Registration Services Manager & Superintendent Registrar  
David H Jones, Head of Public Protection

## **10. CONTACT DETAILS:**

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## **Appendix 1:**

### **Register office remit and purpose**

**1.1** Civil registration has been mandatory in the UK since 1837. Initially Registration Officers were employed by our Head Office, the General Register Office but that changed in 2007 and we are now employed by the Local Authority. Monmouthshire became the District that it is now for the purposes of registration in 1996 as part of the Local Government restructure, prior to that it was Abergavenny, Monmouth and Chepstow and was occasionally partly in England. Boundaries historically have changed regularly which has often resulted in registers moving around between Offices, and Churches and Hospitals suddenly reporting to a different area. We are the custodians of the records of all Births, Deaths and Marriages which have taken place in Monmouthshire since 1837. They are all stored and safeguarded within our strong room.

**1.2** The Registration Service currently sits within Public Protection, under Social Care and Health and this fits well with our remit, which has expanded over the years to become more customer focussed, and to take on additional duties on behalf of the Home Office, for example reporting possible sham marriages, vulnerable persons within the community, fraudulent applications for the issue of certificates, and sending statistical information to the Office for National Statistics about births and mortality. All of this information allows the Council to make informed decisions about priorities for the future, be it school provision, or targeting specific health issues in specific areas, which in turn allows the council to contribute directly to the well-being goals in Wales.

**1.3** Each year we prepare an annual report to GRO and a Seasonal Variance Plan as well as our Monmouthshire Service Improvement Plan and Business Continuity Report.

#### **2. The purpose of the Registration Service is as follows:**

- The registration of all births, deaths and stillbirths occurring within the County
- Taking notices of intended marriages and civil partnerships from persons resident within the County
- Conducting and registering all civil marriages and civil partnerships (including conversions from civil partnership to marriage) taking place in any venue registered or licensed for the purpose, including prisons and hospitals or private residences in certain circumstances
- Registering religious marriages where required
- Conducting citizenship ceremonies for Monmouthshire residents who make successful applications for British nationality
- Safe custody of all historic records of births, deaths, civil partnerships and marriages dating back to 1837 and issue of certified copies of these records on demand
- Inspection and registration of new venues for marriage and civil partnership
- Giving assistance and advice to all customers on all aspects of registration, citizenship and nationality
- Providing data for vital work on population statistics and medical research
- Management of data; including protection of both physical and electronic data and assisting with public protection and counter fraud by reporting suspicious applications and sham marriages as well as suspicions about immigration abuse and other crimes
- Safeguarding secure stock and accounting for fees
- Promote and contribute to the Home Office priorities

### **3. Premises & staffing**

- Registration Services are based next door to MCC's County Hall, in the Old Parlour. There is a team of 17, 11 on a casual basis for ceremonies only. The staff are made up of the Superintendent Registrar, one Registrar and 5 Deputies who can all register births, deaths and marriages and also take notices of marriage. Most also conduct ceremonies. The staff are all deliberately trained to the highest level to provide the maximum flexibility and resilience to the service.
- As well as the Old Parlour we have 3 out-stations, at Nevill Hall and at the Hubs in Chepstow and Monmouth, to help us provide the best possible service to residents. During the pandemic the service ceased at the out-stations with all appointments being in the Register Office. This was to ensure could control our environment, ensure safe social distancing, reduce travel risk, etc. The service has now reverted to attending Monmouth and Chepstow and will hopefully soon return to Nevill Hall.
- Our Approved Premises, which are venues which have chosen to licence rooms for marriages and civil partnerships, cover the length and breadth of Monmouthshire, there are 36 in total at the present time, and there is a very good relationship with them all. Covering such a large area, and striving to provide the chosen days and times for each couple, can be a challenge but it is vital that we all work together to give each couple the best service possible and promote Monmouthshire at every opportunity.

December 2022

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# Agenda Item 6



<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC PROCUREMENT – PERFORMANCE REVIEW</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE &amp; OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>17<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2023</b>
<b>DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>

## 1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide Committee with an update on progress made since the Procurement Delegation Agreement came into force in August 2021.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 For Performance & Overview Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise progress and familiarise themselves with the direction of travel for the next 12 months.

## 3. BACKGROUND:

- 3.1 This report is being presented at a time of key challenges and opportunities for the Council to address, including our response to the impact of Covid-19 on our communities and businesses, climate emergency and inequality and poverty, whilst managing ongoing budgetary constraints at a time of increasing demand for services. The role of procurement remains pivotal in maximising these opportunities through our supply chains and managing the challenges faced by the Council and our communities.

- 3.2 Monmouthshire County Council spends in excess of £98 million a year procuring a diverse range of goods, services and works from over 2,800 suppliers and contractors.

- 3.3 The Council entered into a mutually beneficial Delegation Agreement with Cardiff Council in August 2021 for the discharge and provision of Monmouthshire County Council's procurement services. The additional resource has created capacity and capability to explore a number of key priorities for the short, medium and long term, which will be reflected upon later in this paper.

## 4. KEY ISSUES:

- 4.1 A key focus of our activity of the past few months has been the development of the Council's pending "Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy 2023-27" and accompanying Delivery Plan. This will act as the cornerstone for short, medium and long-term development of procurement practice across the Council and future performance reporting during the tenure of the strategy. A number of key stakeholders including the

Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources have been involved in its development to ensure corporate responsibility for its ownership and delivery.

- 4.2 The Strategy has already been scrutinised by this Committee and the Strategy and Delivery Plan are scheduled for consideration by Cabinet on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023.
- 4.3 Recruitment and retention across the whole Cardiff Council procurement team has been a challenge, however a significant recruitment exercise was successfully undertaken November / December and the team has been restructured to allow the team to be better placed to provide support in line with experience to date and Monmouthshire Council's ongoing requirements.
- 4.4 The resourcing challenge has required the procurement team to prioritise contract delivery, but the team have coordinated, resourced and awarded 37 contracts between August 2021-December 2022, with a value of £17,173,615, with a further 20 either out to tender or being developed with a projected value of £16,689,000. 24 Request for Quotes have also been advised on with a value of £751,296.
- 4.5 The delivery of contract pipeline has highlighted a number of governance matters that need to be addressed including Health & Safety, Welsh Language Standards, Data Protection and Safeguarding. We are attempting to progress these matters with the relevant teams.
- 4.6 A procurement staff survey has recently been conducted to gauge the experiences of both Monmouthshire officers and the Cardiff Procurement Team to help us learn and continue to improve the service delivered. A summary of the survey feedback is contained in Appendix A. The feedback from the survey is being used to inform a number of changes and improvements in the way the Procurement Team is structured, the governance arrangements, procedures and systems, and the availability of education, guidance and training material which are reflected in Table 1 below.
- 4.7 Table One details the focus of activity (since attendance at Economy & Development Select Committee 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021) progress to date and next steps:

**Table One: Progress to Date**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>What we said we would do</b>	<b>What we've achieved</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>
<b>Communications, staff education &amp; training</b>	Further updates planned in the new year including elected Member consultation.  Initial training to focus on Contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular engagement with SLT, Cabinet &amp; Performance &amp; Overview Committee to develop Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy 2023-2027.</li><li>• Regular engagement between operational</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meeting agreed with Communications Team to launch strategy and to establish a communications plan (internal &amp; external)</li></ul>

	<p>Procedure Rules delivered in association with Legal and Audit colleagues.</p>	<p>procurement team and key officers to develop relationships, establish priorities and assist in their delivery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract Procedure Rule (CPR) - Pre-Tender Report (PTR) &amp; Contract Award Notice (CAN) guidance has been developed with support from devolved procurement officers. CPR Training provided to around 15 officers.</li> <li>Relevant key staff have been part of the collaborative learning process with Cardiff Council. To date workshops have been delivered to identify the Council's third party spend Carbon baseline. Along with discussions to advance our thinking in areas such as Fair Work and safeguarding, whilst learning from the experiences of Cardiff with regards to Community Benefits and Social Value and how we can benefit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refresh and communicate existing procurement intranet and web pages to ensure they are easier to navigate.</li> <li>Dates have been agreed in January 2023 for the continued roll out of CPR training across the Council.</li> <li>Develop additional staff training and communications in line with procurement questionnaire feedback exercise (see Appendix 1)</li> <li>Continue to provide training and awareness sessions in areas that will support the delivery of the procurement strategy e.g. a Buying Responsibly Campaign / Policy that will challenge need for spend but also set out requirements around Carbon reduction, Community Benefits, Fair Work, Local supply provision etc</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy and Policy</b>	Continue development of strategy for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To continue to engage with</li> </ul>

	initial consideration by SLT.	<p>has been approved by SLT and Select Committee, awaiting Cabinet endorsement March 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work has been ongoing with relevant key officers across the Council to ensure corporate ownership of the delivery plan.</li> </ul>	relevant officers and working groups to enable progress against the delivery plan
<b>Governance Arrangements and Systems</b>	Develop and implement new arrangements including new e-procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Pre-Tender Report (PTR) and Contract Award Report (CAR) has progressed although some technical issues have been encountered.</li> <li>• Development of PTR and delivery of contract pipeline has highlighted a number of governance matters that need to be addressed including Health &amp; Safety, Welsh Language Standards, Data Protection and Safeguarding. We are attempting to progress these matters with the relevant teams.</li> <li>• Proactis Source-to-Contract system has been purchased and an implementation plan is currently being finalised.</li> <li>• Work is continuing to improve accuracy and completeness of Contract Forward Plan and Contract Register to improve resource planning and embedding key</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working towards an April 2023 launch of the PTR &amp; CAR e forms, however a word version will be piloted from February 2023.</li> <li>• Roll out of Proactis software is projected for delivery by June 2023</li> <li>• To continue to work with support services to tighten controls and guidance, so that officers and contractors understand the Councils expectations, with regards to Welsh Language, Health &amp; Safety etc.</li> <li>• A review of the Contract Procedure Rules will be undertaken later in 2023 ahead of new Welsh and UK Procurement legislation.</li> </ul>

		objectives into procurement cycle.	
<b>Spend Analysis and Contract Register</b>	Review and update Contract Register and Contract Forward Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial Procurement PowerBI report has been developed and shared with SLT providing analysis of spend by Service Area, spend by category, alignment with contract register and analysis of supplier by location and size.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to improve accuracy and completeness of Contract Register and Contract Forward Plan data</li> <li>Improve uptake and use of report through regular communications.</li> </ul>
<b>Contract Pipeline and Operational Support</b>	<p>Continue to support delivery of priority activity and provision of advice and guidance.</p> <p>Complete recruitment of procurement team</p> <p>Align delivery with developing governance arrangements, contract register and contract forward plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial Contract Forward Plan developed which is allowing priority tender activity to be agreed. Advice, guidance and support being provided as requested.</li> <li>Between August 2021- December 2022, 37 contracts have been awarded with a value of £17,173,615, with a further 20 either out to tender or being developed with a projected value of £16,689,000. With 24 Request for Quotes being advised on with a value of £751,296.</li> <li>There have been some issues with regards to clarifying roles and responsibilities and differences in practice which were to be expected. A staff questionnaire has been issued and responses collated to highlight areas for improvement (Appendix A)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support delivery of priority activity and provision of advice and guidance.</li> <li>Complete recruitment of procurement team.</li> <li>Align delivery with developing governance arrangements, contract register and contract forward plan.</li> <li>66 procurements have been identified within the forward contracts programme for 2023 with a projected value of £28,000,000 with 25 being prioritised with a value of £17,916,655.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment and retention across the whole team has been a challenge, however a significant recruitment exercise has been undertaken November / December and the procurement team has been restructured to allow us to be better placed to provide support in line with commitment.</li> </ul>	
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**5. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**

5.1 Not applicable as there are no changes to existing service delivery and policy.

**6 OPTIONS APPRAISAL:**

6.1 An options appraisal is not applicable for this report.

**7 REASONS:**

7.1 To provide timely, relevant information on the performance of the strategic and operational procurement function to ensure that progress is in line with expectation.

**8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no additional resource implications

**9 CONSULTEES:**

n/a

**10 BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

n/a

**11 AUTHOR(s):**

Steve Robinson ( Head of Commissioning & Procurement)

Scott James ( Strategic Procurement Manager)

**12 CONTACT DETAILS:**

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**Procurement Questionnaire & Responses – December 2022**

Questions and answers from internal Monmouthshire County Council staff

1. Are you aware of the partnership arrangement between Monmouthshire and Cardiff for the delivery of the Council's procurement functions?

95% of responses said that they were aware of the partnership.

2. Are you aware that Torfaen Council's procurement function is also coordinated via Cardiff Council?

67% stated that they were aware of the partnership between Cardiff & Torfaen Councils.

3. Do you know what is expected of you before engaging with the procurement function?

57% were aware of the expectations that the procurement function placed on them before making contact.

4. Do you understand what support and guidance will be offered via the operational procurement teams within Cardiff?

57% of responses indicated that they weren't entirely sure, as to what support and guidance would be offered from the operational procurement teams.

5. For those of you that have used the service, can you tell us what you like or have benefited from?

The majority of returns were complimentary about the support and timely advice that the procurement function provided.

Whilst other officers provided the following additional benefits:

- Having conversations with people who understood the world of Social Care was brilliant.
- They understood the nuances of the procurement rules of social care services. It really helped me feel more confident in ensuring the services being provided are the right ones and that continuity of service will remain for those directly receiving social care.
- Procurement is a tricky world to navigate if you don't understand it, you could be offering contracts in the way you thought was permissible but without the detailed advice you could be doing things incorrectly.
- Collaborative arrangement with Cardiff and Monmouthshire on Telematics, has resulted in savings for MCC.
- The bespoke category management model that Cardiff operate with is brilliant as the focused advice that they provide is very helpful.

- We are in the process of leading on a collaborative framework tender across a number of local Councils, we have found officers from Cardiff very supportive.
- We were walked through all of the steps necessary when undertaking a call off from a framework. i.e. providing copies of relevant documents, assistance in uploading to relevant procurement portals and assisting with the evaluation and award of tender.

6. What isn't working so well? What would you like us to change?

- You don't know what you don't know – navigating through procurement and legal is often complex. Do we have reference documents that are easy to read that walk us through the procurement process?
- The Accounts Payable ( AP) team spend a lot of time setting up and managing suppliers. Is this a result of anyone across the Council having the authority to place an order with any supplier, without first checking whether a preferred supplier exists?
- A repository of standard procurement templates that we can locate and utilise without involving the procurement team.
- A greater degree on handholding when utilising new frameworks.
- A more comprehensive list of frameworks that we could utilise and guidance on how to use them.
- Need guidance as to what is expected of us before we make contact with the procurement team.

7. Are you aware of the expectations that the Council's Community and Corporate Plan places on the role of procurement?

29% of responses said that they were aware of the expectations placed on the procurement function within the Community and Corporate Plan

8. Are you aware of the draft Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy and the pivotal role that officers will play in its delivery?

24% of responses were fully or in part aware of the role that officers are required to play in the delivery of the strategy.

9. If you are not aware of the Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy, how best could we communicate its vision and intentions with you?

- Hold on- line workshops Q&A sessions/information sharing with practical examples of how we can all play our part and record them.
- Easy read guides

10. From an operational procurement perspective what positive changes have you experienced since the partnership with MCC in August 2021?

- Investment in expenditure data cleansing and re-classification provides for greater clarity and understanding of spend. Whether by category or location.
- The agreement to standardise the Council's e sourcing and contract management software ( July 2022) with both Cardiff & Torfaen Councils will ensure greater visibility and compliance of spend due to Cardiff Council's familiarity with the system.
- Ability to share ideas, thoughts and resources to enhance procurement effectiveness i.e. baselining of carbon, Community benefits, development of e form for Pre Tender Reporting etc.
- Ability to look for synergies and opportunities for collaboration across all three council's to create better economies of scale.
- Standardising key messages and supporting templates i.e. forward work plan and contracts register, to ensure that staff are aware of where their resources are required and when.
- Ongoing resource committed to infrastructure changes to ensure more robust governance and value for money outcomes i.e. Contract Procedure Rule and Pre Tender Report training.

11. What challenges have you experienced?

- Guidance exists for undertaking procurements up to the value of £75,000, however significant amounts of queries are still being received which takes resources away from higher value, more complex procurement needs.
- Ensuring that all officers involved within the procurement process deliver against the timetable that has been agreed to ensure that this doesn't have a knock-on effect on future procurement commitments.
- MCC officers are not always aware of what is expected of them before they liaise with the operational procurement teams.
- A greater understanding of what the Council's requirements are in relation to health & safety and Welsh Language Standards would help speed up the tendering process.
- MCC officers are not always aware of the supply chain markets in which they procure as there is little evidence of routine contract management reviews.
- Evidence to suggest that local suppliers require support and tailored business advice if they wish to become part of the Councils supply chain.

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## Agenda Item 7

## **Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee**

## Action List

17<sup>th</sup> January 2023

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## Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2022-23

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
7 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	<b>Forward Work Programme</b>	To discuss the process for formulating a forward work programme and agree items for future inclusion.	Hazel Ilett	Work Programming
	<b>Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report 2021-22</b>	To scrutinise the Council's performance in complying with Welsh Language Standards.	Matthew Gatehouse	Performance Monitoring
	<b>Revenue and Capital Outturn 2021-22 Budget Monitoring Report</b>	To scrutinise the draft report and identify any areas of for future scrutiny	Jonathon Davies Peter Davies	Budget Monitoring
	<b>Monmouthshire Council Self-Assessment 2021-2022</b>	To scrutinise the Council's performance during 2021-2022 against the goals outlined in the Corporate Plan 2017-2022, agreeing any areas for future scrutiny.	Richard Jones Emma Davies Matthew Gatehouse	Performance Monitoring
Joint Scrutiny with People 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2022	<b>Safeguarding Performance Report</b>	To scrutinise the performance of the service area.	Jane Rodgers	Performance Monitoring
	<b>Chief Officer for Social Care and Health: Annual Report</b>	To conduct pre-decision scrutiny on the report and scrutinise the performance of the service area.	Jane Rodgers	Pre-decision Scrutiny/Performance Monitoring
	<b>Chief Officer for Education: Annual Report</b>	To conduct pre-decision scrutiny on the report and scrutinise the performance of the service area.	Will Mclean	Pre-decision Scrutiny/Performance Monitoring

## Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2022-23

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
<b>Just P&amp;O Committee items:</b>	<b>Local Development Plan annual monitoring report</b>	To scrutinise the annual monitoring report for the current adopted LDP prior to submitting to Welsh Government.	Rachel Lewis Mark Hand	Performance Monitoring
	<b>Month 4 Budget Monitoring Report</b>	Scrutiny of the Council's budgetary position (revenue and capital).	Jonathon Davies	Budget Monitoring
<b>21<sup>st</sup> November 2022</b>	<b>Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy</b>	To conduct pre-decision scrutiny on the Strategy.	Scott James Beth Macpherson Steve Robinson Councillor Maby	Pre-decision Scrutiny
	<b>Planning Annual Performance Report</b>	Scrutiny of the annual performance report prior to submission to Welsh Government.	Phil Thomas Mark Hand Craig O'Connor	Performance Monitoring
	<b>Month 6 Budget Monitoring Report</b>	Scrutiny of the Council's budgetary position (revenue and capital).	Jonathon Davies Councillor Garrick	Budget Monitoring
<b>15<sup>th</sup> December 2022</b>	<b>Welsh Education Strategic Plan</b>	To scrutinise performance against the action plan.	Sharon Randall Smith Will Mclean	Performance Monitoring
	<b>Strategic Risk Register</b>	To agree any future risks for scrutiny.	Matthew Gatehouse	Work Programming
<b>17<sup>th</sup> January 2023</b>	<b>Public Protection 2021-22 Performance Report</b>	To review the performance of the service area.	David Jones Paul Griffiths	Performance Monitoring

## Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2022-23

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
	<b>Registration Services Annual Report 21/22</b>	To review the performance of the service area.	David Jones Catherine Fookes/Angela Sandles	Performance Monitoring
	<b>Procurement Performance Review</b>	Review of the joint working arrangements and benefits realised to date.	Scott James Steve Robinson Rachel Garrick	Performance Monitoring
<b>25<sup>th</sup> January 2023</b>	<b>Scrutiny of the Budget Proposals</b>	Scrutiny of the budget mandates relating to the committee's remit.	Peter Davies Jonathon Davies Councillor Garrick	Budget Scrutiny
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023</b>				
<b>27<sup>th</sup> April 2023</b>				

### Items for future Inclusion into the Work Programme

- **Council and community resilience:** following the impact of the pandemic.
- **Use of Reserves:** Future proofing and resilience planning as well as supporting long-term strategic priorities.
- **Recruitment and retention:** Effect on the Council's performance and ability to deliver.
- **Asset Management Strategy:** Long-term strategy for these assets where there might be a change of service provision. Workshop 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

## **Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2022-23**

### **Workshops:**

- Asset Management Strategy ~ Workshop to seek some assurances on the focus of the strategy and the concept of selling or retaining assets ~ this could feed into early work on the Asset Management Strategy

# Agenda Item 8

Committee / Decision Maker	Meeting date / Decision due	Report Title	Responsible Cabinet Member	Purpose	Author	Date item added to the planner
Council	01-Sep-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
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	01-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
Cabinet	18-Jan-24	Adoption of Magor Placemaking Plan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To adopt the Magor with Undy Placemaking Plan, co-produced with Magor with Undy Town Council, to inform future regeneration priorities and grant bids	Mark Hand / Dan Fordham	3-Oct-22
Cabinet	18-Jan-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
Cabinet	13-Dec-23	Local Flood Strategy	Catrin Maby	To adopt the Local Flood Strategy Plan	Mark Hand / Ross Price	4-Oct-22
Cabinet	01-Dec-23	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
ICMD	28-Jun-23	Highways Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 10	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Agreement to make the traffic order	Mark Hand	3-Oct-22
Council	22-Jun-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	Matt Phillips	10-Oct-22
Cabinet	07-Jun-23	2022/23 Revenue and Capital Monitoring - Month 12			Jon Davies	

Cabinet	07-Jun-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	07-Jun-23	Local Transport Plan	Catrin Maby	To adopt the Local Transport Plan	Mark Hand / Paul Keeble	4-Oct-22
Council	18-May-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	10-May-23	Highways Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 9	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Agreement to make the traffic order	Mark Hand	3-Oct-22
Cabinet	03-May-23	Road Safety Strategy	Catrin Maby	To adopt the Road Safety Strategy	Mark Hand / Paul Keeble	4-Oct-22
ICMD	05-Apr-23	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 4 held on 9th March 2023			Dave Jarrett	
Cabinet	05-Apr-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	05-Apr-23	Transforming Towns Strategic Grant regeneration priorities	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To agree the priority projects for bids for WG Strategic grant funding to 24/25	Mark Hand / Dan Fordham	3-Oct-22
ICMD	22-Mar-23	Respite Opportunities for People with Learning Disabilities	Tudor Thomas - Social Care & Safeguarding	To provide an overview of the Review of Respite Services for people with learning disabilities and seek approval for implementation of the report's recommendations	Ceri York	9-Dec-22
Council	09-Mar-23	Corporate Parenting Strategy			Diane Corrister	24-Aug-22
Council	09-Mar-23	Capital Strategy & Treasury Strategy			Jon Davies	17-May-22

Council	09-Mar-23	Youth Council			Jade Atkins	7-Dec-22
Council	09-Mar-23	Final Budget Sign Off including Council Tax Resolution			Jon Davies	
ICMD	08-Mar-23	Highways Traffic Regulation Amendment Order 8	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Agreement to make the traffic order	Mark Hand	
Cabinet	01-Mar-23	2022/23 Revenue and Capital Monitoring - Month 9			Jon Davies	17-May-22
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	Monmouthshire Destination Management Plan			Matthew Lewis	10-Feb-22
Cabinet	01-Mar-23	RESERVATION OF GRAVE PLOTS IN LLANFOIST CEMETERY		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	01-Mar-23	Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy			Scott James	22-Aug-22
Cabinet	01-Feb-23	Monmouthshire ECO Flex 'Joint Statement of Intent' and Memorandum of Understanding"			Steve Griffiths	16-Nov-22
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	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	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 outcome of the wider review of MonLife	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)		<b>DEFERRED TO 26 OCT</b>	Rachel Lewis/Cllr Paul Griffiths	23/08/22
ICMD	12-Oct-22	Welsh Church Fund Working Group		<b>DEFERRED TO 26 OCT</b>	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		<b>DEFERRED TO 26 OCT</b>	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 - <b>Moved to ICMD 3rd Aug 2022</b>			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 - <b>Moved to ICMD 3rd Aug 2022</b>			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	

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## Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

**Meeting of Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Usk - Remote Attendance on Thursday, 15th December, 2022 at 10.00 am**

### Councillors Present

County Councillor Alistair Neill (Chairman)

County Councillors: Ian Chandler, Tony Kear, Paul Pavia, Peter Strong, Ann Webb, Laura Wright, Sue Riley, Su McConnel

Also in attendance County Councillor Martyn Groucott (Cabinet Member)

**APOLOGIES:** County Councillor Jill Bond

### Officers in Attendance

Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager

Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer

Richard Jones, Performance Manager

Sharon Randall-Smith, Head of Achievement and Attainment

### **1. Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **2. Public Open Forum**

No submissions were received.

### **3. Welsh Education Strategic Plan**

Sharon Randall Smith presented the report and answered the members' questions with Cabinet Member Martyn Groucott.

#### **Challenge:**

*I see a reference to new Welsh medium school in Monmouth and the report highlights resource implications. Is the project fully protected? Given the current budgetary position, might it be subject to savings being made?*

We are very mindful of current position. In order to establish the seedling class, we need funding from Welsh Government which stands at 100%, but we also need to consider the revenue costs of running the school, which will be initially small for the first few years as we grow the seedling, but these will increase. That said, pupils that choose Welsh medium education may not chose English medium, so we expect it to balance itself out. It's something we need to be mindful of going forward.

*If we compare Monmouthshire with neighbouring authorities such as Torfaen which has a waiting list, we are catching up and I wonder if the fact that we have a school in special measures may be a deterrent for parents?*

Cabinet Member: In our 2 existing Welsh medium schools, we have full nursery provision. With the new seedling coming on in Monmouth that will offer full wrap around care, this should be a positive inducement for parents to put children into Welsh medium education. Education is of lifelong importance, so taking into account the full pre-school offer, this will compare favourably with our neighbouring authorities.

*In relation to the WESP forum, have they received the action plan? What issues were raised and have those been mitigated, in terms of how realistic the ambition is?*

The action plan has been taken to the forum and they contributed to the final version, along with a representative from Welsh Government, ahead of the plan being reported to Welsh Government. It's important to note that the WESP is ours and the forum were heavily engaged. They were pleased to see the ambition but recognised the need for a baseline.

*The report highlights the workforce issues and refers to the national workforce plan being developed by Welsh Government. Is there a further update on that? And in developing and expanding provision in schools, developing the Welsh proficiency of staff in primaries from the intermediate level to the advanced level is a relatively small step and we have quite a lot of staff who can be developed at that level, but in terms of secondary school staff proficiency, developing staff from a very basic level of proficiency is a much more significant task, so how are we going to work with colleagues to develop higher levels of proficiency?*

We are working alongside the central services and have undertaken a staff survey to determine capacity and capability to develop a comprehensive plan to support and develop staff proficiency. We work closely with the Education Achievement Service to develop language proficiency at both primary and secondary level. We know the information in the plan is baseline and we are aware of a greater number of Welsh speakers than is reflected, so we will be following that up. We have also found Welsh Government's 1 year sabbatical programme has been very successful and we have fed that back to them to ask if the scheme can be extended. It has enabled staff to not only develop their proficiency but to return to the school with ideas as to how to embed Welsh into the school. If the same opportunities could be there for secondary, that would be beneficial. In terms of the continuum of English primary education to Welsh secondary education, there has been some interest, but it's some way off in the future.

*What is our ambition for Welsh secondary education in the county? We currently work in partnership with neighbouring Torfaen, but is the ambition to develop our own provisions and if so, what would that mean for us financially?*

Cabinet Member: At the moment Members will be aware that we secondary provision in Newport and Torfaen. We are in discussion with neighbouring authorities about future proposals, if pupil numbers increase. The important factors are the quality of the provision and the distance travelled. For example, for Monmouth, Abergavenny or Crickhowell pupils, travelling to Newport or Torfaen would be a long journey, so we are holding discussions with neighbouring authorities to consider what future provision might be needed in the north of the county, but to explain why it isn't an immediate priority, it's worth highlighting that in order for Welsh medium secondary education to be successful, we would need to deliver the whole range and to do that, we would need

pupil numbers to make it viable. It would be a requirement that the quality of provision be of a high standard and comparable to that of English medium. There would also be staffing implications, in relation to staff proficiency in Welsh and the home to school transport would need consideration. We are currently experiencing issues with home to school transport where we are struggling to find providers and are therefore using the Passenger Transport Unit, but this is an emerging problem, and it is therefore more complex when you take that into account. We will be reviewing home to school transport shortly, which includes considering transport to Welsh medium and faith schools to ensure those children are not losing out. So, we will see how the numbers of pupils in Welsh medium education grows, but the quality of provision and distance travelled are two important factors.

*Provision of Welsh medium education is a fundamental right and is important in strengthening the language, but recognising the challenges we've spoken about at secondary level and fact we are border county, if we are looking to increase the level of Welsh speaking, how are we improving the quality of Welsh teaching in secondary schools? If lots of pupils coming to Monmouthshire schools are coming cross border, I'm concerned that Welsh classes may be viewed by pupils as a waste of time, so how are we trying to encourage the desire to speak Welsh amongst pupils and then ensuring our provision isn't patchy?*

You are right that being border county has its challenges, but we are doing a lot of work to promote the benefits of bilingualism at a young age and how it's much easier to learn third and fourth languages if you have been bilingual at a young age. The WESP forum is promoting this and we are doing some filming in one of our schools. Whilst the filming would be of younger pupils, hopefully it will help secondary pupils to understand the importance of it. Schools are working with us to help them understand that lots of careers will require Welsh speaking abilities, but we also are looking at how to explain the wider benefits and the opportunities of speaking Welsh if they choose to live in Wales. We feel the new curriculum will also help.

Cabinet Member: Sharon has referred to the use of film and media and it will be important to show that it is a part of Monmouthshire life. In King Henry School 25 years ago, you wouldn't have heard a word of spoken Welsh, but it's very different now and the new curriculum will help. The cross-border element is important because the curriculum will be radically different to the education English children will receive, so it will be something for parents to consider – the new curriculum is focussed on young people being 'more thinkers and movers' than just 'recipients of knowledge' - that is the distinction. It's a very exciting time for education in Wales so we hope parents cross-border will choose to send their children to us.

*In terms of convincing young people about the value of being bilingual, do you think the focus on job prospects may appeal more to parents than young people themselves? How are you tracking young people's views on the value about learning Welsh?*

I understand your point about involving pupils and asking what they think and we are engaging with schools on this. Yes, we need to ensure they understand the value in terms of job prospects, but we also want them to enjoy speaking Welsh. Careers don't just start when education ends, we have the 'bring your parents to school day' and other initiatives where Welsh speaking is embedded.

Cabinet Member: historically, children were punished for speaking Welsh in school and Wales is now re-emerging and the language has a chance to blossom after years of repression.

*We've talked about pupils coming cross -border to Monmouthshire schools but have we got any data on those doing the reverse?*

It's an interesting question for a border county and often there is an ebb and flow to and from Monmouthshire over time, I don't believe it's as a result of the Welsh language or the curriculum, but they are going in very different directions now. We do have figures in our access unit that could indicate this but the reasons are often wide and varied and not always related to Welsh language.

The numbers at Chepstow for example have changed a lot with many more pupils joining, so the picture is positive.

*In respect of the joint working with Torfaen and Newport, with every council growing its own numbers, are we keeping the situation under constant review?*

Yes, we keep it under close review and look to ensure students in Welsh primary can transfer to secondary in Welsh medium and also into post 16 education in Welsh medium. Currently, we are thinking it will be 2028 before there are any pressures. We will need to see how the Monmouth school goes and we will need to wait a period of approximately 7 years to see the trends.

*In terms of the Welsh provision for children with complex needs, particularly educational psychologists, what capacity is there within the consortia for specialist training to increase the number of Welsh speaking educational psychologists?*

We are undertaking a baseline audit for additional learning needs (ALN) and we review ALN annually, but there will be a particular focus on Welsh. Training can be done through the local authority or the education consortia and all training is bilingual and online. At the moment, we do need to use some translators to fulfil our duty under the act, but as we develop our capacity at a secondary level, we are increasing the capacity for ALN too. It is a conundrum for us, but we always look for Welsh abilities in our recruitment.

*I was interested in the recent report published nationally that compared the number of Welsh speakers over a period of about 5 years reporting a decline in the numbers and I'm concerned as to whether we have too much of a push rather than a pull and encouraging the desire to learn the language.*

You are correct about the decline and your point is an interesting one, because it seems the decline is at the younger age bracket and there may be a piece of work for Welsh Government to do on that. I cannot give an answer specifically, but I take on board your point and I feel that as the language is strengthening in our county, that is a real positive and we must be doing something right. I can recall opening our first Welsh medium school, so we have come a long way and unlike Welsh heartlands where they may be more defensive about the language, here it does feel like we are doing this for the right reasons.

*How confident are we that the census figures are accurate, because the questions were very simplistic and respondents could be from the age of 3 upwards, so in some cases, adults may be responding on behalf of children, so I'm concerned about the validity of responses to some of the questions.*

*I agree with earlier points about making Welsh seem meaningful to young people. I think pupils of lower attainment may be less easily convinced that those at a higher level of attainment.*

*In terms of the Welsh A level position in English medium schools, are the courses well subscribed? I'm concerned that saving initiatives may lead to the removal of courses?*

I'm not aware of major concerns about the survey, but we are not counting the responses to the question "what does speaking Welsh mean to you?" for the reasons you have identified. Outcome 5 explains how we will work with partners on developing speaking and hearing the language in the wider context.

We have smaller numbers and courses are maintained, but we've learned a lot about distance learning during the pandemic and it may be that if we experience problems, we need to be more creative. There is also E-Ysgol which is very useful, but to reassure you that this is something we are aware of and will plan for, but we are hoping to increase the numbers over time.

### **Chairs Summary:**

Thanks to the officers and the cabinet member for attending to the committee for their questions. The committee agreed to move the report.

#### **4. Strategic Risk Register**

Richard Jones and Hannah Carter delivered a short training presentation on risk management and answered the members' questions. The Chair reminded Members that it is the committee's role to satisfy itself with the approach that has been taken and that if the committee wished to scrutinise any risks in depth, the relevant Cabinet Member would be invited to a future meeting for scrutiny of that risk.

### **Challenge:**

*Recognising that these are extraordinary times and that every council is approaching their strategic risk register in the same way, critically reevaluating the choices they make, looking at the 39 risks identified over a 3 year period, after 3 years of mitigations being put in place 23 remain high risk. This is something I find very concerning, given that the mitigations have already been built in. Please can we have a response from the senior leadership team on this. Action: Richard Jones and Hazel Ilett.*

Your point about risk levels is a fair one. It's important that we correctly assess them and some of the factors relating to the risk may be outside our control, meaning that despite us putting in our own mitigations, they remain a high risk and the proportionate assessment is that these may not reduce. But we do need to consider the risk levels and whether we are doing enough to mitigate them if the risk level is still high. Some of

the mitigations may take time to work through and therefore take time to lower the risk level.

*We are looking at this through the prism of the Local Authority and the risk that we may not be able to deliver services as we may wish to, but what we are not building in is the risk to service users if we are unable to deliver services to the standard we wish and therefore, what assessment has been undertaken of the risk to key service users and how would it affect their lives? It would be good for us to view it from the perspective of the service user rather than just the Council. Please could we ask for a response on whether we should do more to understand risk through the eyes of the service user.*

**Action Richard Jones and Hazel Ilett.**

The strategic risk register does cover some of the impacts on people, but your point about this being a council risk register is taken. For example, for risk 11, which is decarbonisation and climate change, we've tried to capture ongoing community risk, as well as the risk to our own service delivery. For example, we work with the Gwent Public Service Board and some of the risks are shared across partners and communities.

*Pages 53-54, the report begins stating that budgets have been reduced over several years and refers to budgets not being solvent, can you comment on that?*

It's quite a specific question and one that would be more appropriate for the risk owner.

**Action: Richard Jones and the senior officer**

*Recognising that the risk owners need to answer the detail, my question relates to where the risk level has changed as a result of mitigation, such as risk 4 on recruitment, where after mitigation, the risk remains 'possible'. The actions are things I would have hoped would be undertaken anyway, so what is the process about how those risks are assessed, do cabinet do it, do you do it, or is it the risk holder?*

It's done by the risk owner, supported by us so that we can offer an objective view. The example relates back to the chair's question around whether risk levels change after risk mitigation and as some are outside of our control, sometimes the risk remains high despite mitigation, so when risk levels lower, it's usually as a result of our own mitigations and we have to make an informed judgement led by those responsible for the risk, taking on board the feedback from elected members and also the public.

*In relation to risk 2 and the current financial situation and the risk that some services may become financially unsustainable, this is interesting language, given that many services are statutory and are not able to be stood down.*

We try to reflect the issues that inform the risk and how we try to respond to them, how we plan and manage our budget and how we position the risk accordingly, identifying the reasons for the risk. We try to headline it as accurately as possible and give you greater context as to the detail behind the risk.

*I'm interested in the interplay between the 'risk being the probability of bad things happening' and I'm thinking the probability of all of them happening is low whilst the probability of one of them happening may be high so my concern is how one impacts on another, such as resources.*

We have to identify what the risks are but also how they link together, so that we understand how they impact on each other, but this is a live risk register, so we do need to think about how some of the major risks such as those you have identified impacts on exiting risks, possibly creating a new risk.

### **Chair's Summary:**

Whilst many services are statutory, they can be mitigated and changed. One area for future consideration seems to be resources from the discussion we have held today, so we could invite the responsible officer and cabinet member, as this risk impacts on the delivery of everything else.

Recognising the document is a live document, it's the committee's wish to bring this back in 3 months' time, to allow the executive time to work through the mitigating actions. If Members have particular risks they would like to scrutinise, please highlight these so that we can invite the relevant portfolio holders. The committee agreed to move the report.

### **5. Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme and Action List**

Councillor Pavia highlighted that there may be a danger that the committee becomes scrutiny fodder and suggested the committee needed to shape its own forward work plan as it's theirs to dictate.

The Chair agreed that it's the purpose of the committee to add value to ensure the Council deliver better services to people and assist the cabinet in doing so. He suggested the committee may want to table the strategic risk register on a frequent basis, rather than once a year and focus on the perspective of the service user.

A Special meeting would be held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023 to scrutinise the budget proposals.

### **6. Cabinet and Council Work Plan**

The forward work plan was noted. The chair reminded the committee that it's important to keep a close watch on the Cabinet and Council Forward Work, particularly in light of the strategic risk report that has been received today.

It was clarified that this committee is solely responsible committee for the scrutiny of risk, rather than the other scrutiny committees.

### **7. To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of 21st November 2022 were confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

### **8. Next Meeting: Special Meeting - 17th January 2023**

The meeting ended at 11.46 am.

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