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County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Monday, 7 October 2024

Notice of meeting

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 15th October, 2024 at 2.00 pm

The Council Chamber, County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA with 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.	Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy - To review progress of the strategy.	1 - 22
5.	Revised NEET Reduction Strategy - To scrutinise the revised strategy prior to Cabinet decision.	23 - 76
6.	WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan) - To scrutinise performance against the plans.	77 - 118
7.	Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme.	119 - 122
8.	Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee Action lists:	123 - 126
9.	Cabinet and Council Planner.	127 - 138
10.	To confirmation of following minutes:	

10.1.	Special Meeting - Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee dated 11th July 2024.	139 - 146
10.2.	Ordinary Meeting - Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee dated 16th July 2024.	147 - 150
11.	Next Meeting: 19th November 2024 at 10.00am.	

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 Rachel Buckler, Devauden;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor John Crook, Magor East with Undy;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Steven Garratt, Overmonnow;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Meirion Howells, Llanbadoc & Usk;, Independent
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 Jan Butler, Goetre Fawr;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby, Llanelly Hill;, Labour and Co-Operative Party
County Councillor Paul Griffiths, Chepstow Castle & Larkfield;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Martyn Groucutt, Lansdown;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru

Public Information

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

To become a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life.

Objectives we are working towards

- Fair place to live where the effects of inequality and poverty have been reduced.
- Green place to live and work with reduced carbon emissions and making a positive contribution to addressing the climate and nature emergency.
- Thriving and ambitious place, where there are vibrant town centres and where businesses can grow and develop.
- Safe place to live where people have a home where they feel secure in.
- Connected place where people feel part of a community and are valued.
- Learning place where everybody has the opportunity to reach their potential.

Our Values

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

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

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

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

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

Role of the Pre-meeting

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

Questions for the Meeting

Scrutinising Performance

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

Scrutinising Policy

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

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

General Questions:

Empowering Communities

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

Service Demands

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

Financial Planning

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

Making savings and generating income

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

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

Questions to ask within a year of the decision:

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

Questions for the Committee to conclude...

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

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

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

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SUBJECT: PROCUREMENT – PERFORMANCE REVIEW

MEETING: PERFORMANCE & OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 15th October 2024

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

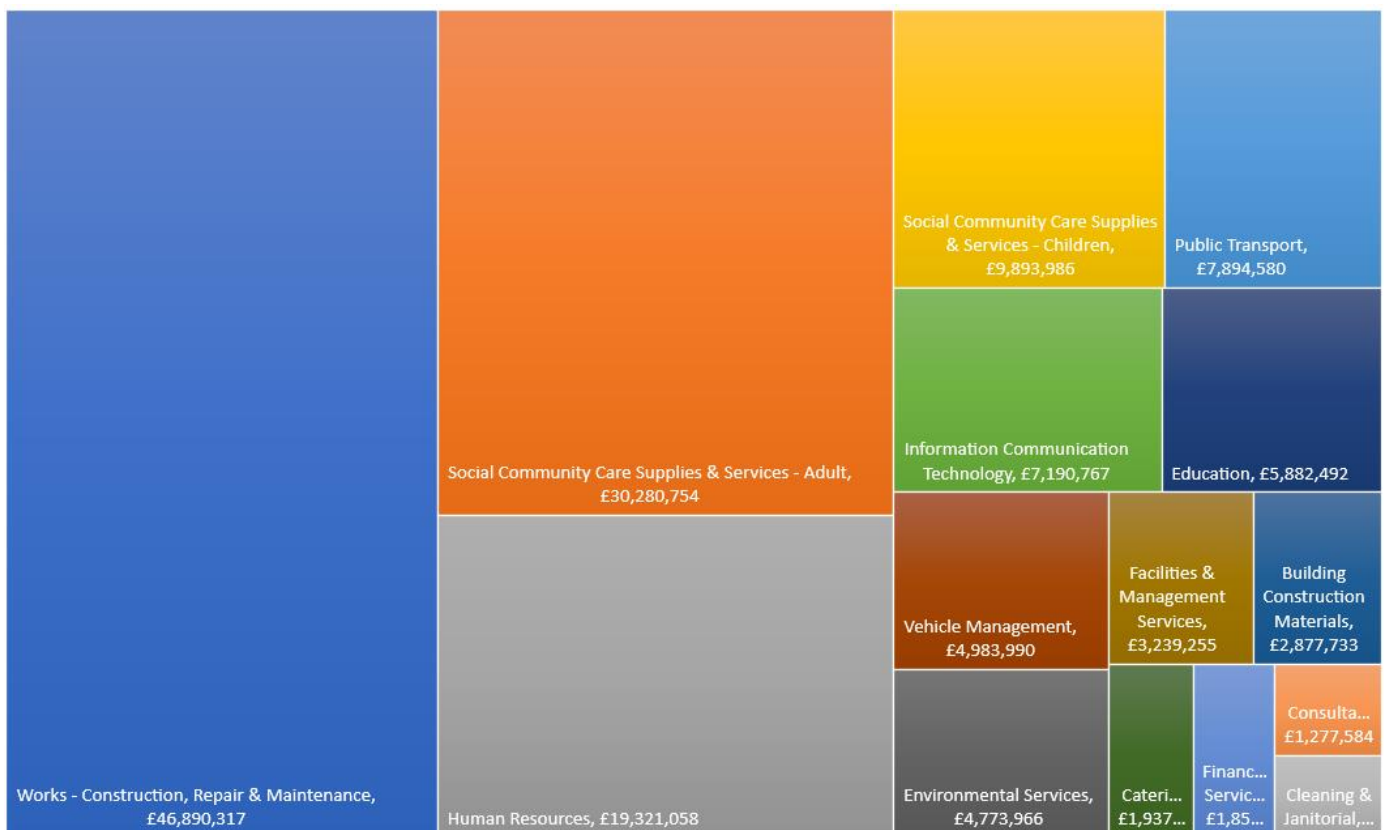
- 1.1 To provide context for the creation and expansion of the collaborative procurement partnership (Ardal).
- 1.2 To provide Committee with an update on progress since the endorsement of the Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy in June 2023.
- 1.3 To highlight key achievements and challenges faced in delivering the Strategy.
- 1.4 To identify key strategic priorities for the next 12 months.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the committee examine this report to scrutinise the Council's procurement performance from June 2023 to September 2024, see Appendix 1.
- 2.2 To note the key achievements and challenges faced and priorities for the year ahead with the delivery of the strategy

3. BACKGROUND:

- 3.1 Monmouthshire County Council spends (2023-24) in excess of £152 million a year procuring a diverse range of goods, services and works from over 2,754 suppliers and contractors. The diagram below shows spend for the Top 15 spend categories.



- 3.2 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. This was followed by a similar delegation by Torfaen County Borough Council in August 2022 and the Vale of Glamorgan in April 2023.
- 3.3 The collaborative procurement partnership (Ardal) has a combined annual third party spend of circa £1.3 billion and employs 40 FTE’s who provide advice, guidance and support across the four authorities and manage a number of collaborative frameworks. The service operates five category teams covering Social Care & Community Services, Corporate & Transport, Professional Services & ICT, Buildings & Estates and Highways, Waste & Parks. In addition, the service has a strategy and development team that is responsible for leading on the development and implementation of procurement strategy and policy, procedures, processes, guidance and training, data analytics and supporting technology as well as leading the partnerships pioneering social value programme.
- 3.4 The Council’s agreed contribution to the partnership is as follows:
- Head of Procurement 0.2 FTE
 - Strategic Procurement Manager 1 FTE (MCC employee)
 - Senior Category Manager 0.2 FTE
 - Category Manager 0.6 FTE
 - Senior Category Specialist 3.0 FTE
 - Strategy & Development Team 1.0 FTE

3.5 In June 2023 Cabinet endorsed the “Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy 2023-2028”, which aligns with the Community & Corporate Plan 2022-2028 and included an operational delivery plan which helped establish a number of key strategic priorities for the procurement function and the Council as a whole:

- Contributing to reducing the Council’s carbon emissions to Net Zero by 2030.
- Making procurement spend more accessible to local small businesses and the third sector.
- Improving Fair Work, Equity and Safeguarding practices adopted by suppliers.
- Increasing equitable community benefits and social value delivered by suppliers.
- Securing value for money and managing demand.
- Ensuring legal compliance and robust and transparent governance.
- Promoting innovative and best practice solutions.

4 KEY ISSUES-CHALLENGES:

- 4.1 Since COVID, the team, like most procurement teams across Wales and wider UK, have faced significant recruitment and retention challenges, with the service carrying a number of vacancies. This has been reflected in reduced annual charges.
- 4.2 The work of the team has also been affected by the need to prioritise preparation to adopt two new key pieces of legislation, the Procurement Act 2023, and the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (SRPP) Act 2023, and the challenges of aligning policy, procedures, and practice across the four Local Authority partners.
- 4.3 Although the implementation date for the Procurement Act has been pushed back from October 2024 to February 2025, the Ardal partnership was on track to deliver the key changes needed to deliver the new legislative requirements, including the development of a set of Ardal Contract Procedure Rules and updating supporting policies, procedures and guidance. The work we have progressed to develop our Socially Responsible Procurement Policy will not only ensure that we are prepared for the SRPP Act implementation in 2025 but is also informing Welsh Government in the development of the statutory guidance.
- 4.4 The work plan to support the implementation of the new legislation has also been planned and managed to address inconsistencies in governance, policy, procedures, processes and systems across the four partners. It has always been acknowledged that the optimisation of the Ardal partnership will be achieved through alignment and consistency.
- 4.5 However, despite these challenges the team have made good progress delivering against the Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy (2023 -2028) and its Delivery Plan, as demonstrated in the Key Achievements summary (see 5 below) and Delivery Plan update in Appendix 1, although it is acknowledged that progress has not been at the pace we would have wanted.

4.6 In particular, good progress has been made on several enabling activities which has put Ardal in a good position to make real progress over the next 12 months. This includes the development of the Ardal Socially Responsible Procurement Policy, Ardal Contract Procedure Rules and supporting policies and procedures that will reflect the requirements of the new Procurement Legislation and the strengthening of governance arrangements, including the development of a Contract Register and Contract Forward Plan.

5. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

5.1 The table below provides a summary of progress made against the procurement objectives which is reflected upon in more detail within Appendix 1:

Strategic Objective	Key progress
Contributing to reducing the Council's carbon emissions to Net Zero by 2030.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed and published Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Guidance to staff. • Carbon footprint data available to SLT & Service Areas. • Scoped and secured funding for three carbon pilot workshops.
Making procurement spend more accessible to local small businesses and third sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Socially Responsible Procurement Policy has been developed. Awaiting further WG steer before seeking endorsement. • Contract Procedure Rules have clauses inbuilt to reflect the Council's ambition to support local business.
Improving Fair Work, Equity and Safeguarding practices adopted by suppliers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cynnal Cymru have recently started discussions with the Council regarding the Real Living Wage and working towards accreditation. • Modern Slavery Statement (MSS) has been developed and is awaiting endorsement. • Fair Work question sets has been embedded within all tender pre-selection questionnaires
Increasing equitable community benefits and social value delivered by suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new data software platform (Thrive) is being used for the measurement and reporting of Social Value. The Council's Green Waste procurement will be used later this year as a pilot to drive equitable social value outcomes. • Re appointment of dedicated Ardal Social Value Lead to help coordinate and deliver social value. • Ongoing development of draft Socially Responsible Procurement Policy.
Securing value for money and managing demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buying Responsibly Guidance developed and communicated out to all devolved procurement staff • A new and revised Contract Forward Plan has been developed to mirror the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023.
Ensuring Legal compliance and robust and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened governance is being progressed via the introduction of new Contract Procedure Rules which will

transparent governance	<p>align with the pending Procurement Act & Socially Responsible Procurement Wales Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Tender and Contract Award Reports have been introduced to enhance internal governance and align expectation with the Council's strategy ambitions. Within the past year 30 PTR & CAR have been issued with a value of £64M
Promoting innovative and best practice solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The production and communication of Buying Responsibly Guidance helps to identify the processes that need to be adhered to in the promotion of best practice and innovation. • The standardised approach to and communication of timely Contract Forward Plans (Pipelines) and Contracts Registers will better inform supply chains of the procurement and Commissioning opportunities that exist across the Council

6. KEY PRIORITIES:

6.1 The following priorities have been identified for delivery over the next 12 months:

Strategic Objective - Enabler	Action	Target Date
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to invest in new entrants through Student Placement programme and recruitment. • Improve awareness, understanding and education of staff across Directorates and Service areas to embed policy into practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support partnership optimisation, to agree and embed aligned governance, procedures and processes across the four partners where appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April – May 2025
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities to utilise available technology to enhance automation within the procurement process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing with Digital Forms to be piloted from late 2024
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness and Improve use of Procurement PowerBI reports to challenge and improve quality of data through tutorial sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 2024

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop broader data analytics reports to support wider policy implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing more Knowledge Drop interactive sections to embed policy and to drive change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing from February 2025
Contributing to reducing the Council's carbon emissions to Net Zero by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote carbon footprint data through Ardal's procurement Power BI reporting dashboard. • Develop and launch Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Knowledge Drop updates to improve awareness and understanding • Facilitate carbon reduction pilot workshops in association with WRAP Cymru and reflect on effectiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • March 2025 • November 2024 to February 2025
Increasing equitable community benefits and social value delivered by suppliers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to identify opportunities to embed Social Value through reviewing the Councils Contract Forward Plan. • To review the potential for developing a Council owned Social Value Working Group. • Continue to draft, consult, finalise and seek approval of Socially Responsible Procurement Policy (SRPP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • March 2025 • March 2025
Improving Fair Work, Equity and Safeguarding practices adopted by suppliers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern Slavery Statement will have been completed and taken through the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group before being tabled at SLT for approval. • Real Living Wage Accreditation will be reviewed with the support of Ardal procurement personnel. • Socially Responsible Procurement Policy (SRPP) will work to promote the Council's requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2025 • March 2025 • March 2025
Making procurement spend more accessible to local small businesses and third sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socially Responsible Procurement Policy (SRPP) will highlight WG Well-Being Outcomes and the importance of supporting our local economy. • Work to update the Selling to the Council Guide will continue to support small and local businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2025 • May 2025

Securing value for money and managing demand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote Power BI spend and compliance data to SLT and Directorates. • Continue to review and refine governance and procedures to promote value for money outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 2024 • March 2025
Ensuring legal compliance and robust and transparent governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work with Legal, Internal Audit and Procurement to reach consensus on standardised Contract Procedure Rules. • Update and republish Buying Responsibly guidance ahead of Procurement Act go-live • Introduce new Contract Forward Plan to capture new legal requirements going forward and to monitor, review and publish. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 2024 • March 2025 • February 2025
Promoting innovative and best practice solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update Buying Responsibly Guidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 2025

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

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

8. OPTIONS APPRAISAL:

8.1 An options appraisal is not applicable for this report.

9. REASONS:

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

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

There are no additional resource implications

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2024/06/Socially-Responsible-Procurement-Strategy-2023-28-Final.docx>

12. AUTHOR(s):

Gemma Ellis (Ardal Interim Head of Procurement)

Scott James (Strategic Procurement Manager)

John Paxton (Ardal Strategy & Development Manager)

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Priority 1 - Contributing to reducing the Council's carbon emissions to Net Zero by 2030

Theme	Actions	Progress Update Headlines
<p>Understanding the carbon footprint of the Council's purchased goods, services and works to ensure our carbon reduction activity is targeted where it can have the biggest impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline the carbon footprint of our Scope 3 purchased goods, services and works in accordance with Welsh Government guidance • Provide devolved Service Areas with access to Scope 3 carbon data • Work with Service Areas to identify high carbon areas and consider opportunities to reduce carbon through challenging demand, requirements and/or service delivery models • Identify and engage with high-carbon suppliers, contractors and service providers to understand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ whether they would be able to supply us with more accurate CO2e baseline data ○ what steps they are taking to reduce the carbon footprint of the goods, services and or works we procure from them and their supply chains. ○ what steps we could take to reduce the carbon footprint of the goods, services and or works we procure from them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope 3 Report provided annually in September 2023 to the Council's Carbon Reduction Team in accordance with Welsh Government Guidance. • Since 2023 Spend Dashboards have been available in PowerBI, they are published on a quarterly basis. They provide each Directorate with the ability to review their spend data, including 'their' carbon footprint and identify their high carbon contracts. It also allows the carbon footprint for key procurement spend categories to be analysed. Quarterly • In all new tenders, carbon reduction will need to be considered. Ardal has developed Guidance Notes to support the Procurement Team and Officers within Directorates to do this: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Procurement Guidance Note (issued November 2023) ○ Ardal Buying Responsibly Guidance issued on Ardal website in June 2024. ○ Carbon Reduction Plan Guidance – issued in March 2024. This was developed by Ardal in partnership with the Southeast Wales Procurement Network and adopted by all 10 Councils in the Cardiff Capital Region. It contains a standard set of tender Carbon Reduction Plan questions to signify to the market our collective intention to work with suppliers who are working to be net zero by 2050 at the latest. • South-East Wales Procurement Network Project contacted all major suppliers (top 100 in terms of spend) in early 2024 to ask them to complete a carbon reporting spreadsheet. To date the response has been poor, we are now working on strategies to increase the response rate, including by making carbon reporting a contractual requirement on larger value contracts and working with Business Wales to enhance supplier carbon development. As information is received from contractors it will

		<p>be shared across all participating Councils so that their carbon footprint for each Council can be calculated.</p>
<p>Working with our elected members, staff, partners and contractors to ensure that carbon reduction is fully considered throughout the procurement cycle</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate Council policy decisions and good practice guidance (e.g., single use plastics, food, fleet, new buildings, etc.) into a single climate change procurement policy document • • Develop and rollout Buying Responsibly Guidance and Training to ensure that it addresses carbon reduction and incorporate Carbon Reduction consideration into Pre-Tender Report • Deliver training to decision makers and those staff responsible for specifying the goods, services and works the Council consumes to help deliver smarter, more carbon and climate responsive specifications and to embed Circular Economy thinking • Review our Contract Forward Plan to ensure carbon reduction opportunities are considered early and throughout procurement cycle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See response above. Two key pieces of Ardal Guidance have been developed, published and are being implemented. From March 2024 all tenders for over £5m now include a requirement for a Carbon Reduction Plan in line with the Ardal Guidance. • The Ardal Buying Responsibly website pages are also available to all Council staff and include a range of Guides to support Directorates through the procurement process based on the value of what they are buying. • WRAP Cymru provided three 1-hour Lunch and Learn Training sessions in the summer of 2023. These were recorded and available to view. • A further Ardal/WRAP carbon reduction workshop for 2024/25 is being finalised and due to start in late October 2024 and recommendations reported in February 2025. This will look to bring officers together from across the Ardal Councils for 3 high carbon spend categories and will be based around 3 workshops. The methodology is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online survey to be developed for key contractors/suppliers working in the 3 chosen categories exploring action taken / planned to be taken to reduce their carbon impact. • Introductory meeting to discuss information & data required, processes and contract structure with pipeline of future procurement activity and how this links sustainable procurement with low carbon impacts. • Outline on specific training and procurement categories with standardised processes, risk assessment and carbon literacy, data evaluation and interpretation • Areas of focus and impact with a strategic approach/prioritisation to be implemented and rolled out across the Ardal Procurement group.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the inclusion of Carbon Reduction Plans into tenders in line with WG guidance and best practice Review suitability and applicability of available sustainability risk assessment tools Develop and agree a whole-life cost approach to tender evaluations which incorporates carbon accounting considerations Develop a communication strategy to communicate and engage with suppliers and the wider market about the Council's low carbon requirements and expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CRPs required on all tenders above £5m and as market develops we will look to lower the threshold that we ask for a CRP down to £1m. In line with the Ardal Guidance, we are continuing to use the Irish Green Public Procurement and WLGA Sustainability tools when developing tender documentation. WRAP Cymru have issued Whole Life Costing Guidance which is referenced in the Ardal Carbon Guidance and will be addressed in the Ardal/WRAP workshop programme in 2024. The Ardal Socially Responsible Procurement Policy aims to spell out to the market each Ardal Council's commitment to a range of policy areas, including Reducing Carbon Emissions and Enhancing the Natural Environment and Biodiversity. The online survey as part of the Ardal/WRAP Carbon Programme for 2024 will question key suppliers in the 3 spend categories around what they are currently doing to reduce their carbon footprint and what they plan to do.
Collaborating with, and learning from organisations across the public, private and third sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to WG, WLGA and PSB Climate Emergency decarbonisation working groups, and share best practice and insight Be an 'early adopter' of Welsh Government Guidance, Tools and Training targeted at procurement professionals and Council decision makers throughout the procurement lifecycle Investigate opportunities for Public Sector collaboration and market engagement to signal changed requirements from suppliers (Cardiff Capital Region) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As set out above Ardal has led a programme of work in the Cardiff Capital Region to develop Carbon Reduction Plan Guidance which has already been recognised as good practice by the Welsh Government. We have presented the work that Ardal are undertaking on Carbon Reduction to Welsh Government Conferences in North and South Wales. Ardal Staff are regular contributors to carbon networks run by the WLGA and Welsh Government. This includes the Local Government Climate Strategy Panel (CSP) - Procurement Decarbonisation Group. We are also establishing regular meetings with Natural Resources Wales to share learning and look at common issues. We have started dialogue with Business Wales, Voluntary Sector Councils and others to ensure that the market is ready to report on actual carbon footprints and not carbon footprints based on proxy data. Ongoing processes whereby we will look to learn from others and best practice as it emerges in this constantly developing area. The Procurement Team are already working with WRAP

		Cymru and are members of Welsh Carbon Reduction working groups aimed at developing expertise.
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Priority 2 - Making procurement spend more accessible to local small businesses and third sector

Theme	Actions	Progress Update Headlines
Increasing the availability, visibility and timeliness of opportunities for small businesses and the third sector to supply the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish our Contracts Register and Contract Forward Plan on the Council's website so businesses are aware of the likely procurement opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good progress being made and on schedule to publish Contract Register and Contract Forward Plan in late 2024. A new online Contract Forward Plan Form has been developed to enable Directorates to add to the CFP, this was rolled out in early September 2024, where we will continue to develop and refine further. Buying Responsibly pages launched on the Ardal website which clearly set out the 4 procurement routes for all contract values. This sets out where Sell2Wales and Proactis must be used to advertise opportunities...
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the number of opportunities being advertised by the Council through Sell2Wales to identify opportunity to increase. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update standard tender documentation to ensure it encourages our suppliers and contractors to buy locally and where appropriate make it a requirement for contractors to advertise supply chain opportunities through Sell2Wales and to hold Meet the Buyer Events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract Procedure Rules already mandate that local suppliers must be invited to submit a quotation up to the value of £75,000, above this value tenders must be openly advertised. All processes and procedures will be updated in late 2024 to reflect new legislation. As part of the work preparing for the implementation of the Procurement Act from late February 2025 an updated set of Contract Procedure Rules will look to go as far as legally possible to provide opportunities for local suppliers. The publication of the Contract Forward Plan will be aligned to an ongoing communication campaign to publicise opportunities to local businesses. We are also resourcing an Ardal "Selling to the Council Guide" that will be communicated in early 2025.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update key systems to allow reporting on the number of local businesses bidding for and winning Council contracts 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an analysis of spend data to better understand where there are supply voids and opportunities to increase use of local supply 	

<p>Making it easier for small businesses and the third sector to do business with the Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update and promote our Selling to the Council Guide to help businesses understand how to do business with the Council and the wider public sector in Wales. Undertake a survey of local businesses and third sector to understand barriers to doing business with the Council Informed by survey, review systems, processes and documentation to seek to simplify where appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to update the Selling to the Council Guide has started but will be completed in early 2025 to enable full consideration of the new legislation and the Guidance issued. Survey of local businesses undertaken as part of the Cwmpas questionnaire in 2023. Under 25% of respondents to the Cwmpas Survey identified barriers to procurement, these included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of understandings about where tenders advertised. Resources required to submit a quotation/tender. Work is ongoing to review how other Councils are reducing barrier to local businesses, including the use of social media to promote low value opportunities. As part of the response to the new Procurement Act we will be simplifying the quotation processes for low value opportunities and will look to reduce the burden of information required from bidders.
<p>Working with partners to develop the capability and capacity of small businesses and the third sector to secure public sector contracts</p>	<p>Engage with partners such as Business Wales, Business in Focus and South Wales Chamber of Commerce to improve the skills of local SMEs to access public sector business opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial discussions have taken place with Business Wales and the updated Selling to the Council Guide will signpost organisations to the support available, particularly around carbon reduction. We are aiming to work with these organisations to publicise opportunities on the Contract Forward Plan to secure additional business.

Priority 3 - Improving Fair Work, Equity and Safeguarding practices adopted by suppliers

Themes	Actions	Progress Update Headlines
Ensuring that tenderers and contractors are aware of the Council's commitment to working with organisations that will support the Council to meet equality, fair work and safeguarding duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and publish a modern slavery statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modern Slavery Statement updated and currently with the Safeguarding Team where progress will be heard by the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group before being signed off by SLT in early 2025. Real Living Wage – Cynnal Cymru are in discussion with the Council and Ardal team to look at progressing accreditation in 2025. The Socially Responsible Procurement Policy sets out the Council's position in relation to "Fair Work Practices" and what it expects of its contractors. Publication of statutory guidance by WG has been delayed – SRPP Act unlikely to go live until late 2025 which is impacting on policy drafting.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a briefing paper for Cabinet on becoming a Real Living Wage accredited organisation 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and publish a "Fair Work Practices" Statement which reflects the Council's position and takes into account Welsh Government guidance in support of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement Bill 	
Using our tendering process to ensure that our suppliers are committed to support the Council to deliver its equality, fair work and safeguarding duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop fair work criteria and contractual clauses for inclusion within our tender and contract documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Ardal Standard question set has been developed and contains a range of ethical employment questions that are embedded within the tender. Initial discussions with Ardal procurement and the Council's Safeguarding Team to develop and roll out specific fair work supply chain training. Social care tenders and contracts ensure all providers of care and support services have the necessary safeguarding policies, procedures and training in place. This is checked as part of the tender process and during the management of the contract. An Ardal Contractor Safeguarding Policy and supporting Guidance for Council staff has been drafted and discussions will
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver fair work training and awareness to Council staff involved in procurement and bidding organisations 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current arrangements to ensure that all providers of care and support services that the Council purchases for its service users have the necessary safeguarding policies, procedures and training in place and where required be registered with the appropriate registration body 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Contractor Safeguarding policy and approach to safeguarding which ensures it is considered throughout the tender process 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify Fair-Trade products suitable for Council purchasing and work with service areas to increase usage 	<p>take place to assess the appetite for adoption within Monmouthshire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of Fair-Trade products is encouraged by the Ardal Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Procurement Guidance and is actively promoted across the Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy
<p>Working with our suppliers and contractors to ensure that they adopt and promote fair work practices and safeguarding within their organisation and supply chain</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop contract management arrangements to ensure suppliers provide equality training and have flexible working practices, LGBTQ+// Gender reassignment friendly work policies which are inclusive in their equality training. • Have the ability to identify abuse or exploitation and take responsibility for reporting concerns in an appropriate and timely way. • Deliver Council commitments to modern slavery and construction industry practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Ardal Procurement Safeguarding Assessment Guide has been developed to support both Directorates and the Procurement Team to ensure that Safeguarding is included within tenders and contracts are managed in a consistent way that is proportionate to the risk. The Guide will be fine-tuned in consultation with the Safeguarding Team prior to planned implementation in late 2024/early 2025. • Online Modern Slavery training has been developed by Ardal and discussions are ongoing around the best route to target this at key staff working across the Council.

Priority 4 – Increasing equitable community benefits and social value delivered by suppliers

Theme	Actions	Progress Update Headlines
Adopting a consistent approach to securing and managing delivery of community benefits and social value which is understood by the Council and its contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot use of the Welsh TOMs Social Value Measurement Framework as a scored element in suitable tenders over £250,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalising documentation and the process for rolling out the use of the Welsh Themes, Outcomes & Measures (TOM's) across the Council following an initial pilot on a number of projects including Green Waste with Community Well-being Meeting being held with the contractor and contract manager to ensure delivery. Ardal have appointed Thrive as the software platform for the measurement and reporting of Social Value which is scheduled to go live from late 2024. Initial conversations held (September 2024) between Ardal Social Value lead officer and devolved procurement officers to deliver targeted Social Value returns, with the input from Economy, Employment & Skills Team. Ardal Community Well-being Guidance and standard tender documentation has been developed. The new Thrive system is more user friendly for officers and contractors and so training is anticipated to be minimal. This will be kept under review. A wider communication piece will be undertaken to highlight the benefits of Thrive and a Quarterly Well-being Newsletter will start to be published in early 2025.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the TOMs Social Value Measurement Framework and update to reflect the Community & Corporate Plan priorities and develop tender documentation 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, publish and deliver Community Benefits and Social Value guidance and training for Council officers and suppliers 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness and education of Community Benefits and Social Value through early engagement in tender opportunities 	
Co-ordinating the community benefits and social value approach by working with Council services, our communities, partners and contractors to inform priorities and facilitate their delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a cross-Directorate Social Value Delivery Group to raise awareness, inform priorities and co-ordinate delivery across the Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Economy, Employment & Skills team are currently in discussions with the procurement function to develop a Delivery Group to identify and resource the promotion of Social Value through external contract opportunities. Initial conversations will be held with the Economy, Employment & Skills Team later this year to better understand whether there are any merits in a collaborative venture. Construction Academy has developed Guidance around local employability support which is being consulted on with the local Employability Teams across the Cardiff Capital Region prior to Council sharing with works contractors. The Guidance is scheduled to be shared with Local Into Work
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunity to align with Torfaen County Borough Council 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership with employers, training providers and employment services to promote and co-ordinate access to local employment and training opportunities. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with communities and interest groups to identify local opportunities / projects seeking support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teams, Careers Wales and Job Centre by October 2024 so that all parties are aware of how to access opportunities for local people. Local engagement has been undertaken to date on larger projects to identify how best community well-being benefits can be delivered. This learning is now being progressed through the Council with the Green Waste pilot. Further discussions are planned with the Economy, Employment & Skills Team to align Social Value with future procurement requirements. The new Thrive system will enable improved reporting on committed and delivered CWB this from late 2024.
<p>Reporting on achievements, promoting success and sharing good practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on secured and delivered Community Benefits and Social Value Raise awareness of the 'added value' delivered through Community Benefits and Social Value to Council staff, including development and publication of a knowledge bank of case studies to demonstrate the 'art of the possible' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ardal Newsletter developed (April – June 2024) and communicated through the Ardal website as well as to as to local contractors.

Priority 5 – Securing value for money and managing demand

Theme	Actions	Progress Update Headlines
Reviewing and challenging what the Council spends its money on to reduce demand and identify opportunities to deliver efficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and present procurement spend and assurance reports to Senior Leadership Team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing quarterly updates to SLT that reflect current spend analysis, legislation, governance and policy updates as well as training support.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a Buying Responsibly communication and education initiative to inform and challenge staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buying Responsibly Guidance launched on Ardal website in June 2024. Officers are now able to access operational buyers guides and legislative procurement updates that reflect the pending Procurement Act and the Social Partnership & Public Procurement Act (Wales)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work across Ardal Councils to identify collaborative opportunities, to standardise demand and drive efficiencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ardal Operational procurement specialists use the Council's Contract Forward Plan and knowledge gained by procuring goods, services and works for Cardiff Council to better inform the Monmouthshire's outcomes and where possible help to create better economies of scale given the aggregate spend.
Demonstrating value for money and considering the whole life cost of the decisions we make	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and maintain a Contract Forward Plan to allow effective management of resources and early consideration of opportunities to deliver improved value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new and revised Contract Forward Plan has been developed to mirror the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023 and the requirement to publish a Pipeline Notice of all current and future public contract opportunities that will be published in late 2024.
	Establish and maintain a Supply Directory of contractual arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council's Supplier Directory is now live and hosted as part of the Ardal website. Additional collaborative and MCC specific contracts will be added over the coming months.

Priority 6 - Ensuring Legal compliance and robust and transparent governance

Theme	Actions	Progress Update Headlines
Regularly reviewing and updating procurement documentation, processes, systems and controls to ensure they reflect regulatory changes, best practice and provide corporate oversight and assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a review of Contract Procedure Rules in response to the Procurement Reform and Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act requirements • Implement the digital Pre-Tender Report and Contract Award Report and associated guidance and documentation for all new tenders over £75,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ardal stakeholder group (Including Legal & Internal Audit) are currently assisting the procurement teams in developing a fit for purpose set of Contract Procedure Rules. It is anticipated that these will be in operation by February 2025 • Electronic Pre and post tender award reports have been embedded within all tender processes in excess of £75,000 to promote transparency. This ensures that all above threshold procurements are challenged and that consideration for Social Value, safeguarding, carbon reduction and localism are where appropriate delivered as part of the award of contract.
Training officers in the procedures and policies which must be considered to ensure legislative and governance requirements are met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Contract Procedure Rule training for all devolved staff involved in procurement and contract management activity • Develop and implement a Buying Responsibly communication and education initiative to signpost staff to guidance and documentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across 2023 a number of live and interactive training sessions were developed and rolled out where 118 officers attended. A pre-recorded session is also available on the Council's procurement SharePoint pages for all staff. • In July 2024 Ardal rolled out a "Buying Responsibly" website. To date the contents includes, collaborative framework opportunities, detailed buyers guides as well as videos on the pending procurement regulations changes and templates to aid understanding for devolved procurement officers. This will be updated in February 2025 to support the Procurement Act go live date..
Providing oversight and assurance to the Council's leadership team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish an annual procurement report in accordance with Welsh Government Guidance. • Rollout Procurement Spend and Assurance information to Service Areas through PowerBI reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As part of the pending Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 we will have a duty to produce and publish an Annual Socially Responsible Procurement report in order for Welsh Ministers to assess the extent to which we are meeting our Socially Responsible procurement and well-being goals.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and present quarterly procurement spend and assurance reports to Senior Leadership Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ongoing quarterly updates continue to SLT to reflect current spend analysis and assurance.
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Priority 7 - Promoting innovative and best practice solutions

Theme	Actions	Progress Update Headlines
Challenging existing procurement arrangements and seeking examples of market innovations and sharing models and best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early engagement, working with service areas to consider innovation options Share best practice and seek market innovation opportunities Review the procurement forward pipeline to identify innovative opportunities and ensuring early and ongoing service area engagement to scope and deliver their requirements. Work with service areas to challenge existing procurement arrangements, to identify savings and service improvement opportunities and plan forward work programmes. Support the consideration, evaluation and implementation of alternative service delivery models, including in-sourcing, where considered appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of more definitive Contract Forward Plans allows greater dedicated time for procurement professionals to liaise with operational technical leads to discuss options and undertake soft market testing if there is an opportunity for innovation, current examples include Domiciliary Care. Procurement challenge is provided within all tender opportunities via the introduction of the Pre-Tender Report, where the questions are documented to provide the Council an element of challenge to help promote value for money and innovative solutions.
<u>Encouraging outcome/problem-based procurement approach to stimulate creative and innovative solutions and engaging early with markets</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage early with markets through publication of our contract forward plan and early market engagement events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently resourcing Contract Forward Plan and publishing late 2024. We anticipate that identifying procurement requirements earlier will alert supply chains to the opportunities across the Council's spend.

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SUBJECT: Approval of NEET Prevention Strategy
DATE: 15th October 2024
MEETING: Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To present the draft Monmouthshire NEET Prevention Strategy for approval to Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee ahead of Cabinet on 6th November 2024.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee approve the final draft of the revised Monmouthshire NEET Reduction Strategy ahead of Cabinet on 6th November.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 This draft Monmouthshire NEET Prevention Strategy demonstrates our commitment as a Council to address NEET prevention in our county in order to create better opportunities and outcomes for our young people, through collaborative work with our valued stakeholders.
- 3.2 This revised NEET Prevention Strategy replaces the previous strategy A Great Start for All: NEET reduction Strategy 2018-2021.
- 3.2 The Inspire programme is currently funded by UK Governments Shared Prosperity Fund, which will come to an end in March 2025. In addition, the Engagement & Progression Coordination function is funded by Welsh Government via the Youth Support Grant, with the current funding ending in March 2025.
- 3.3 Senior Leadership Team have previously been made aware of Welsh Government Youth Engagement and Progression Framework 2013 and 2022 and the local authority's responsibility to provide a delivery model centred on individual need. The key areas of the framework are embedded in the draft Monmouthshire NEET Reduction Strategy and reflect added value whilst addressing the needs and aspirations of Monmouthshire's young people.

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

- 4.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment has been included. The decision will be evaluated by Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee, which will make recommendations of any proposed changes to Cabinet.

- 4.2 The NEET Strategy and Action Plan will be monitored through the following local forums;
- Learning, Skills and Economy Departmental Management Team

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL:

- 5.1 An options appraisal has been undertaken in Table One below.

Table One: Options Appraisal

Option	Benefits	Risks
1) Do Nothing	None identified	Lack of direction and vision for NEET prevention in Monmouthshire. Increase in the number of young people at risk or who are NEET
2) Implementation of the Monmouthshire NEET Reduction Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve young people’s skills and future employment opportunities • Increased partnership working and co-delivery of projects • Shared expertise and resources • Reduced numbers of NEET young people. 	Lack of buy –in from partners Loss of externally funded programmes that support NEET reduction

6. REASONS:

- 6.1 The previous Monmouthshire NEET Reduction Strategy 2018 -2021 is out of date and a new strategy for the next 3 years is essential to ensure continued improvements year on year in the number of young people who have entered and sustained education, employment or training at the Post 16 Transition Point.
- 6.2 We wish to demonstrate our commitment to the NEET prevention agenda as a Council with stakeholders, to implement the strategy action plan and improve outcomes for our young people and communities.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 Currently the Engagement & Coordination Function and NEET prevention programme (Inspire) are funded by Welsh Government and UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund respectively. These funding streams are unclear beyond April 2025.
- 7.2 The strategy will be used as a tool to inform and align good practise within existing resources through a partnership approach.

8. **CONSULTEES:**

- NEET Strategy Working Group: Louise Wilce – Youth Employment & Skills Lead, Tim Bird – Sustainable Education Adviser, CYP, Huw Thomas – Team Manager, Children’s Services, Mark Foster – Equality, Inclusion and Activities Lead, MonLife, Sarah Rees – Manager, Careers Wales and Sian Farquharson - Professional Learning Lead Partner (Post 16, SEREN and More Able), Education Achievement Service.

Frances O’Brien – Chief Officer for Communities & Place

Paul Griffiths – Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development

Will McLean – Chief Officer for Children & Young People

Martyn Groucott – Cabinet Member for Education

Hannah Jones – Head of Economy, Employment and Skills

9. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1: Draft NEET Prevention Strategy



2024%20Neet%20Prevention%20Strategy

Appendix 2: Integrated Impact Assessment



Integrated%20Impact%20Assessment%2

10. **AUTHOR:**

Louise Wilce – Youth Employment & Skills Lead

10. **CONTACT DETAILS:**

Email: LouiseWilce@monmouthshire.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1:

Monmouthshire County Council

NEET Prevention Strategy

2024

FOREWORD

Young people contribute significantly to their families, communities and economy and it is crucial we collectively work together to optimise the opportunities they have to learn, earn and upskill in their chosen pathways. As our young people leave compulsory education, those that become NEET (not in education, employment or training) between the ages of 16 and 18 are more likely to be unemployed in the future, receive low income, suffer from poor physical and mental health, depression and possibly find themselves involved in crime.

Our strategy for Monmouthshire sets out our commitment in creating better outcomes for young people through increasing engagement and progression in education, training and employment. We will continue to be ambitious in driving this strategy and work collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure that the challenges and barriers our young people face are minimised through shared action whilst always seeking to identify, enhance and develop opportunities in our county.

Despite the upheaval recent years has presented to our children and young people, and the lasting effects we see from it, the number of young people not entering education, employment or training have remained consistently low and often below the Welsh average. However, the economic challenges we face currently will contribute and impact on the choices our young people have when making decisions about their next steps. We have a collective responsibility to ensure young people secure and sustain a positive destination after leaving compulsory education whether that involves remaining in school, transitioning to college or work-based learning or seeking employment.

This strategy will work towards the ambition of all young people being engaged in education, employment or training, working with schools, both inside and outside of Monmouthshire, Pupil Referral Service, Careers Wales, colleges and training providers to achieve this. It recognises that early identification and intervention are vital in supporting young people to thrive in their learning and enabling them to reach their potential beyond 16. This strategy cannot be addressed by one single agency. It has been developed collaboratively with key stakeholders, identifying key priority themes and objectives that we believe will meet the needs of our young people.

ASPIRATION

Our aspiration for NEET prevention in Monmouthshire and the NEET Prevention strategy is:

Creating positive and sustained outcomes for young people through bespoke, productive and meaningful engagement in education, training and employment.

To achieve our aspiration, we will focus on five key priority themes:

- Early Identification
- Commissioning Support & Provision
- Monitoring Progression
- Employability and employment opportunities
- Accountability

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BACKGROUND

The Welsh Government [Youth Engagement and Progression Framework \(2022\)](#) provides a framework for working together to engage with young people to raise their aspirations, ensure no-one is left behind and is built around the early identification of young people aged 11 to 18 who are at risk of becoming NEET (or at risk of Homelessness) across Wales. Within Monmouthshire using the framework, we have developed a model that seeks to prevent young people becoming NEET through robust early identification tool and targeted support but also effectively monitor and identify appropriate support pathways for those who do become NEET following the Post 16 Transition.

The term NEET refers to young people who are not engaged in education, employment or training. It is now a commonly used term to describe young people who are disengaged from learning or employment and have become marginalised from society.

Post 16 transition is a key transition point in a young person's life and, if we can get this process right, it can play a pivotal role in their next steps and future career pathway. Young people in Monmouthshire have a range of choices for their post 16 education, just over half in 2022/3 enrolled in Monmouthshire secondary school sixth form, whilst others enrolled in out of county sixth forms, colleges, and specialist provision. Effective practice provides young people with the coordinated support required to make a positive next step into the destination of their choice and reduce the number of young people who are not engaged in education, employment or training (NEET).

Our aim is to ensure that learners make informed, confident choices about their future education, training or journey into work through a transition process that is a positive experience for all.

DATA – PUPIL DESTINATIONS DATA AND 5 TIER MODEL

Throughout this strategy we will talk about two key sets of data – Pupil Destinations Data and Tier Dat. Pupil Destination Data provides annual data published by Welsh Government to demonstrate the destinations of our young people. The data relates to the destinations of young people *educated* in Monmouthshire. Pupil destination data provides quantitative data on the following categories:

Continuing in Full Time Education (in school)	Continuing in Full Time Education (in College)	Continuing in full time education (in Higher Education)	Taking a Gap year (intending to go to HE following year)	Continuing in Part Time Education (Less than 16 hours a week)	Work Based Training - non employed status	Work Based Training - Employment status	Employed - Other	Known not to be in Education, Training or Employment	No response to survey	Left the area
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In Monmouthshire our young people have a range of options if they choose to leave school, Pupil Destinations Data does not provide where the young person has transitioned to. For example, if college is the destination we are unable to see which college.

Tier Data is the fluid, daily snapshot of the current tier status of young people 16-19 who are resident in Monmouthshire. Tier data and which Tier a young person is in is categorised using Careers Wales 5 Tier Model, outlined below.

TIER	Young People	Lead Worker	Responsibility for Tracking and Support
Tier 5: In further education or EET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In EET. Working or studying part time over 16 hours. 	No lead worker necessary given that young person is already engaged and not judged to be at risk of disengaging. Providers' own pastoral systems or support should be utilised as appropriate.	Careers Wales
Tier 4: At risk of dropping out of EET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged in less than 16 hours of EET. Have been identified at risk of disengagement pre-16 and/or were judged as at risk of not making a positive transition but are subsequently in further education, sixth form or training. Have been identified to Careers Wales by EET providers (or themselves) as at risk of dropping out of EET. 	Allocation of lead worker depends on level of risk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For low and medium risk use provider pastoral systems and/or allocate a learning coach as a lead worker. For High risk a lead worker may be allocated from either youth service or Careers Wales or if Families First involved Team Around the Family will decide allocation of lead worker. 	Careers Wales
Tier 3: NEET or actively seeking EET but known to Careers Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged with Careers Wales and/or known to be actively seeking EET; either ready to enter EET, or assessed as requiring career management or employability skills support to enter EET. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead worker identified for 100% of the cohort. Careers Wales will provide the lead worker in nearly all cases. 	Careers Wales

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This tier should also include those known to Careers Wales, actively seeking EET but not requiring Careers Wales enhanced support, for example accessing support via careerswales.gov.wales or awaiting a college start date. 		
Tier 2: Young people known to Careers Wales who are NEET and are not ready or available to seek EET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant or multiple barriers requiring intensive personal support. <u>Not available or unable to seek EET (for example due to illness, being a young carer, pregnancy, in custody).</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead worker identified for 100% of the cohort. Youth Employment & Skills Team will provide lead worker in most cases (in some instances this role may be allocated to other services or organisations providing intensive personal support). 	Local Authority
Tier 1: EET status unknown to Careers Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown to YEPF Stakeholders. Young person could be in a destination but will remain 'unknown' until this is confirmed. 	Once individuals are identified they are allocated to appropriate tier and allocated a lead worker accordingly.	Local Authority

If a young person is unable to make the transition into a destination beyond 16 and identified as Tier 2 (NEET) or Tier 1 (destination is unknown), we have an embedded local partnership that identifies, monitors and seeks to provide support. The Monmouthshire YEPF partnership **Keeping In Touch** group (KIT) meets monthly to monitor a young persons (tier) status using the **Careers Wales 5 Tier Model** above. KIT is coordinated and led by the local authorities Youth Employment & Skills Team with a range of post 16 stakeholders involved including Social Services, Careers Wales, Training Providers, Colleges, Youth Service and Youth Offending Service and monitors monthly Tier 1 and Tier 2 young people and the numbers of young people engaged with Careers Wales in Tier 3.

STRATGEY COLLABORATION

In developing this strategy, we sought the skills and knowledge of a number of personnel from our stakeholders through a working group.

The NEET strategy working group have been key in shaping and developing the strategy and have also assisted and scrutinised the development of the action plan. Membership included external stakeholders and officers from Monmouthshire County Council directorates.

- Education Achievement Service
- Careers Wales
- MCC Communities & Place – Economy, Employment & Skills
- MCC Children & Young People
- MCC MonLife
- MCC Social Care & Health

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Welsh Government's Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) is a systematic mechanism to identify and respond to young people at risk of becoming NEET, who are NEET and/or who are at risk of being homeless. Under the Framework there are processes in place to identify young people who require tailored support that meets their needs and to monitor their progression, this is led by local authorities, working with their delivery partners. The Framework helps young people to fulfil their potential and prevents poverty and homelessness.

The original YEPF (2013) was developed with the aim of reducing NEET rates. In this updated version, there remains a strong focus on preventing young people becoming NEET and supporting young people who are NEET into a positive destination, improving their life chances. The updated Framework has also been expanded to include the prevention of youth homelessness. This is in recognition of the fact that the 'warning signs' of a young person potentially becoming NEET can overlap with indicators that a young person may be at risk of family breakdown and youth homelessness.

This YEPF operates alongside Welsh Government's Young Person's Guarantee (YPG). The YPG for young people aged 16 to 24 aims to give young people who are NEET other opportunities to move into education, employment or training (EET). In addition, the ['Well-being of future generations: National indicators and milestones for Wales 2021'](#) will help foster this sense of collective responsibility and accountability. The national milestones, introduced following the ['Shaping Wales' Future: Using National Indicators and Milestones to measure our Nation's progress consultation'](#), will help us assess progress towards the 7 well-being goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act').

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Of particular relevance to the Framework is the following indicator and milestone value:

- Indicator No. 22: percentage of people in education, employment or training, measured for different age groups
- Milestone: at least 90% of 16 to 24 year olds will be in education, employment, or training by 2050

The YEPF also aligns with Welsh Government's overarching children and young people's plan ('the Plan') outlines the 7 cross-government priorities which will help achieve our ambition to make Wales a wonderful place to grow up, live and work, now and in the future.

Locally, Monmouthshire County Council's [Community & Corporate Plan](#) 'Taking Monmouthshire Forward' identifies 6 Key objectives including 'A Thriving and Ambitious Place'. Within this objective, we want to achieve 'People of all ages and backgrounds have the skills to do well in work or start their own business' of which Number of school leavers not in education, employment or training is a key measure. However, work the strategy will also achieve will benefit Children and Young people: A Learning Place and link across to the [Economy, Employment & Skills Strategy](#).

Monmouthshire **Economy, Employment and Skills Strategy** identifies, amongst others, the following priority: - A fairer, more successful Monmouthshire. Objectives include:

- Support a balanced change in the demographic profile of our county. However currently 45% of Year 11 school leavers opt to undertake their post 16 learning out of county.
- Support the creation of 6,240 sustainable job opportunities.

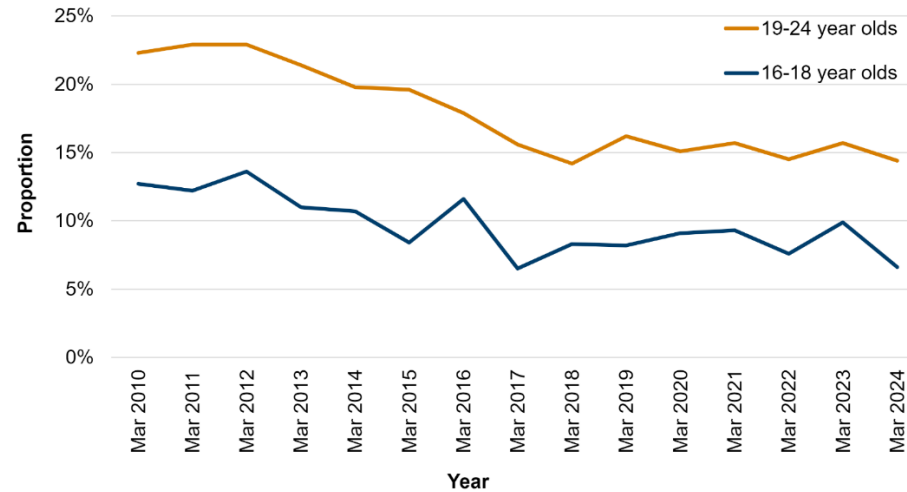
- Equip people with skills and qualifications to enter employment and enable employment progression. In addition, Monmouthshire County Council 'Community and Corporate Plan 2022 -2028' commits to promoting career paths in shortage areas such as care and construction earlier and more consistently, this strategy will aim to reduce labour shortages in these sectors by working closely with public and private sector organisations. Monmouthshire will be a place that young people will not need to leave because they will have the skills to work in new and emerging industries or set up their own businesses within the county.
- Collaborate with comprehensive schools, further and higher education partners to enhance access and networks.

Monmouthshire County Councils **Children and Young People: A Learning Place** plan identifies the following objectives:

- Develop a broader 14-19 offer including more collaboration between comprehensive schools and further education partners.
- Develop a broader educational offer to include both academic and vocational pathways and engage partners from public and private sectors.
- Provide enhanced learning opportunities and evidence-based interventions to ensure that pupils from low-income families are able to achieve their full potential.
- Promote career paths in shortage areas such as care and construction earlier and more consistently. Commit to specific activity in care apprenticeships and scale up delivery through Y Apprentis and similar schemes.
- Develop better links with further and higher education.

CURRENT POSITION

Young people not in education, employment or training in Wales, year ending March 2010 to March 2024



Line chart showing [Annual Population Survey NEET rates](#) for 16 to 18 and 19 to 24 year olds in Wales. Both age groups NEET rates have decreased overall across the last decade, despite fluctuations in each series during this time period. The NEET rate for people aged 16 to 18 in Wales was 6.6% in the year ending March 2024, down by 3.3 percentage points over the year. Over the longer term, the rate has decreased by 1.6 percentage points over the last five years and by 4.1 percentage points over the last decade.

Locally, despite the challenging times of the last 5 years, [Pupil Destinations Data](#) demonstrates Monmouthshire has continued to see consistent numbers of young people known not to be in Education, Employment or Training across our Year 11, 12 and 13 school leavers. In addition, for Year 11 and 13 particularly, we are often below the Welsh average.

Year 11

	2019	2020**	2021	2022	2023
Monmouthshire	1.3%	1.4%	2.0%	1.8%	1.8%
	10	11	16	14	14
Wales	1.8%	1.7%	1.6%	2.1%	2.0%
	537	527	507	664	670

Year 12

	2019	2020**	2021	2022	2023
Monmouthshire	1.0%	1.5%	0.2%	0.9%	1.5%
	4	7	1	4	6
Wales	0.8%	0.6%	0.4%	0.7%	0.5%
	99	76	55	80	62

Year 13

	2019	2020**	2021	2022	2023
Monmouthshire	1.36%	3.92%	1.96%	1.2%	1.1%
	5	14	8	5	4
Wales	2.54%	3.53%	2.29%	2.8%	3.6%
	269	355	251	322	375

*Figures in **bold** indicate below Welsh average.

**Covid

Our Youth Engagement & Progression Framework partners, Careers Wales, provide coordination and support for young people in Tier 3 who are known not to be in education, employment or training (NEET) as detailed in the 5 Tier Model (p5). Local Authorities are unable to access, as there is no legal basis to share, Tier 3 data but do have access to numerical data. The data below represents the number of young people known not to be in education, employment or training in Y11-13 who are NEET and in Tier 3.

	Tier 3
2023	10
2022	8

Overall number of young people that are known to not be in education, employment or training has remained steady over the last 3 years. In mapping the journey of the Tier 2 NEET young people we have seen a variety of themes that contribute to a young person becoming NEET.

Theme	Mitigation
Low or non-attendance at school	Early Identification Tool 3 times per year Inspire Outreach introduced in 2023, with capacity increased September 2024.

Early disengagement from education or pathway	Inspire In-school model changed – Inspire worker stays with young person until they are sustaining a destination Youth Employment & Skills team working with stakeholders to develop broader options for young people, for example STEM.
Unable to access Level 3 / 6 th form offer in Monmouthshire	Youth Employment & Skills team working with stakeholders to develop Level 2 offer in 6 th forms – Passport to Employment.
Missed opportunities to engage	Engagement & Progression Coordinator developed Effective Practice Guidance for transition from secondary school to post 16 education. Collaborative piece of work with stakeholders on behalf of Wellbeing Subgroup.
Young people not identified as at risk of NEET – no ‘indicators’ and a planned destination.	Early Identification Tool updated in line with Welsh Government guidance, with Monmouthshire County Council staff part of working group. NEET young people case studies and themes of NEET Destination Data shared with key stakeholders.
Planned Gap Year.	Careers Wales Working Wales programme and YEPF partners continue to offer and provide support and pathways once young person returns.

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Monmouthshire County Council’s current NEET prevention programme works across Monmouthshire to prevent young people from becoming NEET working collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure support and the best possible outcomes for our young people. Inspire has three strands which link to the Engagement and Progression Coordination and YEPF stakeholders to support and monitor at risk of or NEET young people:

- Inspire In-school – Allocated NEET prevention worker per school
- Inspire Outreach – two NEET prevention workers – Monmouth Comprehensive School & Caldicot School and KHS 3-19 School & Chepstow School.
- Inspire Post 16 Transition – one pan Monmouthshire worker
- Engagement & Progression Coordination Function* – function part of Youth Employment & Skills Leads role. Funded by Welsh Government Youth Support Grant under Youth Engagement & Progression Framework.

When considering our Pupil Destinations Data it is important to note that Youth Employment & Skills and Inspire has provided the consistent coordination and prevention programme since 2013, funded by European Structural Funds until December 2022 followed by UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund respectively with UK SPF in place until 31st March 2025.

OUR ASPIRATION, KEY PRIORITY THEMES AND OBJECTIVES

We have a clear aspiration for our NEET prevention strategy:

Creating positive and sustained outcomes for young people through bespoke, productive and meaningful engagement in education, training and employment.

In order to deliver our aspiration, we have identified five key priority themes, aligned to Welsh Governments Youth Engagement & Progression Framework but shaped to meet the needs of Monmouthshire Young People. In identifying these key priority themes we have worked collaboratively across Council Directorates and with external stakeholders and elected Members. Our five key priority themes are:

- Early Identification
- Commissioning Support & Provision
- Monitoring Progression
- Employability and employment opportunities
- Accountability

Objectives have been identified for each of the priority themes.

1. EARLY IDENTIFICATION

Monitor, develop and improve the Early Identification process in Monmouthshire to ensure the accurate and timely identification of children and young people at risk of disengagement.

Objectives

- Continue to develop and deliver the Early Identification Tool, identifying for young people aged 11-18 who are:
 - At risk of becoming NEET
 - At risk of homelessness (Collaborative Tool)
- Facilitate the Early Identification Tool to enable early intervention ahead of Key Stage 3 transition.

- Key Stage 2 Early Identification Tool (developed under ESF funding) to support early identification of at risk children in year 5 and year 6.
- Continue the identification and monitoring of young people 16-19 who are NEET.

2. COMMISSIONING SUPPORT AND PROVISION

Facilitate coordination of support by being the central point of contact through the Engagement and Progression Coordinator function.

Objectives

- Identify person-centred support for young people, ensuring services work collaboratively to meet individual needs.
- Provide continuity of support and contact for the most at-risk young people.
- Ensure appropriate opportunities and provision is available through working collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure sustainable destinations for young people, including:
 - Further education, work-based learning and apprenticeships.
 - Interventions for preventing youth homelessness as identified within the Youth Engagement & Progression Framework.
 - Specific targeted support to reduce a young person's risk of NEET and boost a young person's mental health, well-being and self-esteem.
 - Targeted support programmes to ensure young people are motivated, equipped and able to engage in their next steps.

3. MONITORING PROGRESSION

Provide a coordinated approach to support transition between alternative provisions, key stages of compulsory education, and movement from pre to post 16.

Objectives

- Monitor what support and/or provision most at-risk young people are receiving and ensure this is in place through and beyond the post 16 transition.

- Under Youth Engagement & Progression Framework support monitoring of all young people through post 16 destination to minimise risk of NEET and offer support if needed.
- For young people aged 16 to 19, identify those whose destination on leaving school is unknown or known to be NEET and then:
 - establish what they are doing (EET or if they are NEET) and if they are ready to seek EET (Tier 1 or Tier 2)
 - ensure that any young people who have not progressed or sustained a destination are offered appropriate support to take steps towards education, employment or training.
- Monitor and evaluate identification processes and support programmes or provision, so adjustments can be made, as needed.

4. EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

To form a better understanding of local employment needs and trends, to offer new opportunities for young people and to inform service design.

Objectives

- Youth employability provision which allows young people to progress into opportunities, with a balance of work experience, skills, qualifications and pathways to employment or self-employment. Supporting young people on a path that gives them the best possible life chances and a prosperous future.
- Contribute to the development of opportunities and programmes working towards enhancing local and regional skills needs and links to employment sectors in collaboration with stakeholders. (For example – Monmouthshire STEM programme)
- Identify and support local and regional developments to aid and enhance education, training and employment opportunities for young people in collaboration with stakeholders. (For example - Post 16 Level 2 offer and Curriculum for Wales' Four Core purposes and Skills for Work Qualification).
- Working with stakeholders and networks to develop employer relationships.

5. ACCOUNTABILITY

Monmouthshire County Council has a strong sense of character and purpose. We value our young people, and will work towards providing the best opportunities and outcomes for them.

Objectives

- Shared responsibility and accountability amongst stakeholders for delivering the Youth Engagement & Progression Framework. Local authorities provide the strategic and operational leadership for implementing the Framework, while local partnerships have a critical role in supporting its delivery.
- A process of review and reflection by all delivery partners to develop a deeper understanding of how well the Framework is working in their local area and identify where improvements can be made.
- Continue to monitor tier data and annual destination data but with an increased ambition to utilise quantitative data considering trends, themes and lessons learnt to drive a culture of continuous improvement and learning amongst all partners.

FORWARD PLAN

MEASURES

Year 11

	2019		2020**		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Monmouthshire	1.1%	1.3%	1.0%	1.4%	2.0%	1.8%	1.8%	1.6%	1.4%	1.3%
	9	10	8	11	16	14	14	13	12	10
							Cohort Profile:	806	832	795
Wales	1.8%		1.7%		1.6%	2.1%	2.0%			
	537		527		507	664	670			

Year 12

	2019		2020**		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Monmouthshire	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	1.5%	0.2%	0.9%	1.5%	1.2%	1.1%	0.9%
	5	4	4	7	1	4	6	5	5	4
							Cohort Profile	426	450	453
Wales	0.8%		0.6%		0.4%	0.7%	0.5%			
	99		76		55	80	62			

Year 13

	2019		2020**		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Monmouthshire	1.8%	1.36%	1.7%	3.92%	1.96%	1.2%	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
	8	5	7	14	8	5	4	4	4	4
							Cohort Profile	367	393	391
Wales	2.54%		3.53%		2.29%	2.8%	3.6%			
	269		355		251	322	375			

**Targets profiled in line with current NEET Prevention Programme delivery and outcomes – currently funded until end of March 2025 by UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund.*

ACTION PLAN

EARLY IDENTIFICATION

Monitor, develop and improve the Early Identification process in Monmouthshire to ensure the accurate and timely identification of children and young people at risk of disengagement.

Theme	Objective	The action we will undertake	How we will measure progress	Target Date	Owner
EARLY IDENTIFICATION	Continue to develop and deliver the Early Identification Tool, identifying for young people aged 11-18 who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At risk of becoming NEET At risk of homelessness (Collaborative Tool) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the Early Identification Tool three times per year for Years 7-11. Maintain EIT in line with Welsh Government guidance, contributing to WG guidance development if required. Maintain Individual EIT to be used with Y12-13 if required by schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of EIT's per academic year Numbers of young people being identified as 'at risk of NEET' Number of Y12-13 EIT's Number of young people supported by NEET prevention (Inspire) and Youth Homelessness (Compass) programmes. 	Ongoing Termly By January, then termly. Ongoing	Youth Employment & Skills Youth Employment & Skills and Housing Support Team
EARLY IDENTIFICATION	Facilitate the Early Identification Tool to enable early intervention ahead of Key Stage 3 transition. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key Stage 2 Early Identification Tool (developed under ESF funding) to support early identification of at risk children in year 5 and year 6. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and enable access to Key Stage 2 EIT if required by schools annually ahead of KS3 transition. Ensure KS2 EIT remains accurate in case of future delivery of support programmes for KS2. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of KS2 EIT's requested (and delivered). KS2 EIT. 		Youth Employment & Skills

EARLY IDENTIFICATION	Continue the identification and monitoring of young people 16-19 who are NEET. Providing clear leadership and partnership arrangements with a shared purpose of creating valuable prospects for young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to coordinate and lead monthly Keeping In Touch meeting monitoring and identifying appropriate support for young people in Tier 1 and Tier 2 • Continue to monitor numbers of young people engaged with Careers Wales in Tier 3. • Ensure appropriate membership of KIT with partners able to contribute information in and provide support pathways for young people identified in T1 and T2. 		Ongoing – monthly meeting	Youth Employment & Skills
EARLY IDENTIFICATION	Careers Wales identification tool categorising learners to ensure target groups have support:	<p>The targeted groups are young people in Key Stage 4 who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are looked after • Are in receipt of free school meals • Have ALN and are identified as School Action Plus/ Individual Development Plan • Are poor school attenders • Have been placed in EOTAS provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of young people supported. 	Ongoing	Careers Wales

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify themselves as young carers • Are identified by the Careers Adviser as being Tier 4 - at risk of NEET (based on professional judgement and information provided by partner organisations). See Tier 4 Guidelines for more information. • EAL - young people who have English as an additional language at stages A-C which means that they are not yet considered competent in their use of the English language. Schools will be asked to upload this data. 			
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COMMISSIONING SUPPORT AND PROVISION

Facilitate coordination of support by being the central point of contact through the Engagement and Progression Coordinator function.

Theme	Objective	The action we will undertake	How we will measure progress	Target Date	Owner
COMMISSIONING SUPPORT AND PROVISION	Identify person-centred support for young people, ensuring services work collaboratively to meet individual needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with stakeholders to identify and map support and pathways available to young people. • Work collaboratively with partners to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Database of support providers and pathways • KIT membership and attendance. • Annual provider Self evaluation • Pupil Destination Data 	<p>April 2025</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Engagement & Progression Coordinator /Youth Employment & Skills</p> <p>YEPF Partnership – KIT Group Careers Wales/EPC</p>

		ensure sustainable destinations for young people.		Ongoing	
COMMISSIONING SUPPORT AND PROVISION	Provide continuity of support and contact for the most at-risk young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Lead Worker function through providing NEET prevention support to young people most at risk. • Ensure young people have a central point of contact to coordinate their support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of young people enrolled or supported • Number of outcomes (Qualification / Life Skill) • Pupil destination Data 	Ongoing	<p>Youth Employment & Skills</p> <p>YEPF Partnership – KIT Group</p>
COMMISSIONING SUPPORT AND PROVISION	<p>Ensure appropriate opportunities and provision is available through working collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure sustainable destinations for young people, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further education, work-based learning and apprenticeships. • Interventions for preventing youth homelessness as identified within the Youth Engagement & Progression Framework. • Specific targeted support to reduce a young person's risk of NEET and boost a young person's mental health, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with providers and stakeholders to ensure accessible further education, work-based learning and apprenticeships. • Create opportunities to grow provision through supporting the Level 2 Passport to Employment programme in Monmouthshire Sixth Forms. • Working with MCC Apprenticeship Coordinator, increase the number of Apprenticeships for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil Destination Data (WBL/Apprenticeships/FE) • Number of Work Based Learning providers in Monmouthshire. • Number of young people supported by Youth Homelessness programme • Number of young people enrolled on NEET prevention programme • Number of outcomes achieved • Number of new programmes developed, i.e. Level 2 and STEM including number of young people to enroll. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Annually – July 2025</p> <p>Bi-annually in line with YSG returns.</p> <p>Quarterly in line with SPF reporting</p> <p>Annually</p>	<p>CYP</p> <p>Schools</p> <p>Engagement & Progression Coordinator</p> <p>Youth Employment & Skills</p> <p>MCC Housing Support Team</p> <p>MCC Apprenticeship Coordinator</p>

	<p>well-being and self-esteem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted support programmes to ensure young people are motivated, equipped and able to engage in their next steps. 	<p>school leavers within Monmouthshire County Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with MCC Apprenticeship coordinator develop a work experience programme, enabling at risk of or NEET young people to gain valuable workplace skills and experience. Through Youth Support Grant funding support young people at risk of homelessness as identified by the EIT. Provide a targeted NEET prevention programme to support young people at risk of or who are NEET. 			
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MONITORING PROGRESSION

Provide a coordinated approach to support transition between alternative provisions, key stages of compulsory education, and movement from pre to post 16.

Theme	Objective	The action we will undertake	How we will measure progress	Target Date	Owner
MONITORING PROGRESSION	Monitor what support and/or provision most at-risk young people are receiving and ensure this is in place through and beyond the post 16 transition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop transition working group with Vulnerable Learners Lead, Pupil Referral Service, Youth Offending Service and Social Services to monitor most at risk. Coordinate and Contribute to Pupil Destination Data through working with stakeholders to achieve positive destinations for young people. Work towards target of 0% Unknowns and Targets agreed for NEET young people. Monitor and support NEET prevention programmes in Monmouthshire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupil Destination Data Number of NEET Prevention Programmes 	Ongoing	CYP Vulnerable learners Lead Engagement & Progression Coordinator Pupil Referral Service Social Services Youth Offending Service
MONITORING PROGRESSION	Under Youth Engagement & Progression Framework support monitoring of all young people through post 16 destination to minimise risk of NEET and offer support if needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a coordinated approach to support transition between provisions, key stages of compulsory education, and movement from pre to post 16 for those most at risk. Also identifying support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupil Destination Data Tier Data – Tier 1 & Tier 2 Number of Transition Activities Updated guide – 1 per year 	Ongoing	Youth Employment & Skills CYP Wellbeing Subgroup YEPF Partners

		<p>needs for those that fail to make or sustain their destination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and develop the 'Next Steps' process with secondary schools, Pupil Referral Service and other providers. Identifying and providing 'enhanced' transition support including college visits, careers events and related activities. • Deliver, Update and share annually Effective Practice Guide – For Transition from Secondary School to Post 16 education. 			
MONITORING PROGRESSION	<p>For young people aged 16 to 19, identify those whose destination on leaving school is unknown or known to be NEET and then:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish what they are doing (EET or if they are NEET) and if they are ready to seek EET (Tier 1 or Tier 2) • ensure that any young people who have not progressed or sustained a destination are offered appropriate support to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to operate the Keeping in Touch (KIT) partnership • Seek to contact young people identified as Tier 1 to establish what they are doing. This will include communications, door knocks and partner knowledge • Provide Post 16 Tier 2/NEET support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier Data • Pupil Destinations Data • Number of young people enrolled on Post 16 Transition 	Ongoing	<p>Youth Employment & Skills</p> <p>EPC</p> <p>Careers Wales</p> <p>YEPF Partners</p>

	take steps towards education, employment or training.	through Post 16 Transition (Inspire) or for those without barriers to engagement signpost to Careers Wales.			
MONITORING PROGRESSION	Monitor and evaluate identification processes and support programmes or provision, so adjustments can be made, as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual evaluation at Destination Count. Allowing us to identify themes, trends and areas of improvement. • Work with stakeholders to look at themes, trends and data. • Identify annual process and update following cycle with key stakeholders – Schools, Careers Wales and youth Employment & Skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil Destination Data • Annual Review of NEET young people 	Ongoing	Youth Employment & Skills EPC Careers Wales YEPF Partners

EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

To form a better understanding of local employment needs and trends, to offer new opportunities for young people and to inform service design.

Theme	Objective	The action we will undertake	How we will measure progress	Target Date	Owner
EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Youth employability provision which allows young people to progress into opportunities, with a balance of work experience, skills, qualifications and pathways to employment or self-employment. Supporting young people on a path that gives them the best possible life chances and a prosperous future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver NEET prevention programme that includes additional qualifications and lifeskills to ensure young person has what they need to make the next step in education, employment or training • Deliver programmes that enhance young people's employability skills and opportunity for future employment. This will include school holiday programmes such as Inspire by Summer and one of or annual employability events. • Support employability and careers events in school through attending and contributing to school careers fairs and other key events.. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of outcomes achieved through NEET Prevention programmes • Number of employability events delivered • Number of school holiday engagement sessions • Number of qualifications achieved through school holiday engagement. • Number of Careers Fairs attended 	Ongoing	Youth Employment & Skills
EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Contribute to the development of opportunities and programmes working towards enhancing local and regional skills needs and links to employment sectors in collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement the Monmouthshire STEM Programme approved by Welsh Government in partnership with stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STEM programme measures • Number of regional partnerships 	December 2024 – two year programme.	CYP Youth Employment & Skills EPC

	with stakeholders. (For example – Monmouthshire STEM programme)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent regional EPC's on Regional Skills Partnership Young Person's Guarantee Group 		Ongoing	
EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Identify and support local and regional developments to aid and enhance education, training and employment opportunities for young people in collaboration with stakeholders. For example, Post 16 Level 2 offer and Curriculum for Wales' Four Core purposes and Skills for Work Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with stakeholders to support the development and implementation of the Level 2 offer in Monmouthshire Sixth Forms • Provide Mentoring and 1:1 Support for at risk of NEET young people enrolled on L2 course. • Contribute to and support implementation of New Curriculum by ensuring young people most at risk can sustain education. Also ensuring that qualifications delivered through Inspire compliment new curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of young people enrolled in Level 2 in 4 Secondary Schools • Number of young people enrolled for L2 Passport to Employment Mentoring, • Number of qualifications outcomes achieved through NEET prevention programme 	Review October 2024 August 2025	CYP Youth Employment & Skills
EMPLOYABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Working with stakeholders and networks to develop employer relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers Wales continue to deliver Year 10 Careers Check Data. Both identifying young people for Target 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 10 Careers Check • Careers Wales and the EAS CWRE 	Ongoing	Careers Wales EAS CWRE Network Economy, Employment & Skills

		<p>Group and informing sector and employment data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Employers in Monmouthshire and Careers Wales to provide insights and knowledge around Career Pathways for schools and their learners. • Utilise Economy, Employment & Skills network to enhance and develop relationships between schools and local business. <i>This will also link to STEM Programme and local opportunities in employment and training.</i> 	<p>all phase school network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of relationships with local businesses 		
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ACCOUNTABILITY

Monmouthshire County Council has a strong sense of character and purpose. We value our young people, and will work towards providing the best opportunities and outcomes for them.

Theme	Objective	The action we will undertake	How we will measure progress	Target Date	Owner
ACCOUNTABILITY	Shared responsibility and accountability amongst stakeholders for delivering the Youth Engagement & Progression Framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of YEPF and Engagement & Progression Coordination (EPC) function. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly review with Youth Support Grant (YSG) partners (Principal Youth Officer and Youth 	Ongoing	<p>Engagement & Progression Coordinator.</p> <p>Youth Employment & Skills Team</p>

	Local authorities provide the strategic and operational leadership for implementing the Framework, while local partnerships have a critical role in supporting its delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to coordinate and lead monthly Keeping In Touch meeting and ensuring appropriate membership and attendance 	<p>Homelessness Manager)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YSG 6 month and Annual Report. Annual Delivery plan (<i>if grant proceeds beyond 2025</i>). • KIT Meeting minutes • Tier 1 and 2 Data 	<p>October 2024 March 2025</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Monthly (last Friday of each Month)</p>	
ACCOUNTABILITY	A process of review and reflection by all delivery partners to develop a deeper understanding of how well the Framework is working in their local area and identify where improvements can be made.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Review and feedback from KIT partners to ensure appropriate membership and areas for development • Annual review of Pupil Destination processes with Careers Wales Pre 16 Manager • Annual Review of NEET Prevention Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Form • Updated Destination Process • NEET Strategy Review 	<p>July 2025 November 2024</p> <p>November 2025</p>	<p>Youth Employment & skills</p> <p>Careers Wales</p>
ACCOUNTABILITY	Continue to monitor tier data and annual destination data but with an increased ambition to utilise quantitative data considering trends, themes and lessons learnt to drive a culture of continuous improvement and learning amongst all partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to coordinate and contribute to Pupil Destination processes. • Review and feedback annual destination data and 'lessons learnt' to stakeholders. • More frequent and strategic sharing progress including monthly tier data, Pupil Destinations and lessons learnt with Cabinet Members and Chief Officers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil Destination Data • Annual NEET young people overview • Tier 1 and 2 Data 	<p>April 2025</p>	<p>Youth Employment & skills</p>

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Key Strategic Initiatives highlighted in the action plan above will contribute to the Key Priority Themes. These include but are not limited to:

- Maintain NEET Prevention Programme
- Level 2 Provision in Monmouthshire 6th Forms – Once established, scope to extend and grow into additional sectors and for learners not currently educated in Monmouthshire.
- STEM Programme being developed for implementation in 2025, connecting schools, communities and business, with an ambition to develop a Skills Centre in Monmouthshire
- MCC Opportunities:
 - Work experience – ambition to develop a paid work experience programme
 - Apprenticeships for school leavers – working to increase the number of apprenticeship opportunities within our organisation, particularly school leavers, returning to a grow our own ethos. We will develop a case study of the current Economy, Employment & Skills Finance team who all entered employment in Monmouthshire through apprenticeships or work programmes. They reinforce how we can attract local young people into the organisation, providing opportunities to earn, grow and learn whilst shaping our future work force.
 - Training opportunities – explore widening the current training provision available to young people in Monmouthshire with a focus on quality and timely provision.



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Integrated Impact Assessment document (incorporating Equalities, Future Generations, Welsh Language and Socio Economic Duty)

<p>Name of the Officer Louise Wilce</p> <p>Phone no: 01600 730531 E-mail: LouiseWilce@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal To implement the draft Monmouthshire NEET (not in education, employment or training) Reduction Strategy 2024-2027</p>
<p>Name of Service area Youth Employment & Skills (Economy, Employment & Skills)</p>	<p>Date: 3rd October 2024</p>

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

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	We aim to engage with young people 11- 19 years most at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) or who are NEET. The age range is in line with Welsh Government Youth Engagement & Progression Framework.	None identified	N/A
Disability	We aim to engage and support young people to meet individual needs without discrimination.	None identified	N/A

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Gender reassignment	.We aim to provide a provision which is inclusive for transgender people and groups We will address any issues in regards to work placements, employment and training opportunities.	None identified	N/A
Marriage or civil partnership	Not Applicable	None identified	N/A
Pregnancy or maternity	Risk assessment will be in place for pregnant young people ensuring all health and safety measures have been addressed and the well-being of the young person is paramount.	None identified	N/A
Race	.Young people referred onto our programmes will be given the same opportunities regardless of race. The relevant support will be provided to meet individual needs	None identified	N/A
Religion or Belief	.We aim to offer bespoke packages of support that will take into account young peoples' religion and religious beliefs.	None identified	N/A
Sex	We aim to offer opportunities that will take into account individual needs regardless of sex.	None identified	N/A

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Sexual Orientation	We aim to offer opportunities that will take into account individual needs regardless of sexual orientation.	None identified	N/A

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to **have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions** This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to **Social Justice**.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?

Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice	<p>The NEET Prevention strategy will provide a framework to ensure young people at risk of or who are NEET are identified and provided with support if required. The work completed by partners identified and Monmouthshire's NEET Prevention programme (inspire) will seek to ensure young people have the qualifications, lifeskills and support needed to make positive next steps and are able to sustain their education, employment or training destination. The strategy seeks to ensure young people have the right opportunities to be successful.</p>	<p><i>None identified</i></p>	<p><i>N/A</i></p>
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3. Policy making and the Welsh language.




How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
Policy Making Effects on the use of the Welsh language, Promoting Welsh language Treating the Welsh language no less favourably	The use of the Welsh language has been taken into consideration in delivery of the SPF projects. The promotion of Welsh language will be monitored. The delivery team will continue to ensure that they adhere to the Council's Welsh Language Standards.	No impact identified at this stage	N/A
Operational Recruitment & Training of workforce	<i>There is no planned recruitment however, where new posts are required, the need to communicate through Welsh and English as part of the recruitment process and any necessary training offered as needed.</i>	No impact identified at this stage	N/A
Service delivery Use of Welsh language in service delivery Promoting use of the language	The programmes operating under this strategy have bilingual promotional materials and qualifications workbooks can be provided in Welsh if requested by the young person. Staff will assess qualifications using incidental Welsh.	No impact identified at this stage	N/A



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

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>This strategy sets out our commitment to increase young peoples engagement and progression into education, training and employment. Responsible partners will support young people to make the right choices to move into further education, employment and training. This strategy will aim to enable young people to improve their skills and future employment opportunities.</p>	<p>Person centred approach in supporting future pathways addressing individual need.</p>
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p>The programmes outlined in this strategy will address issues such as waste, recycling, minimize energy usage and efficient use of such resources, whilst also raising awareness of environmental issues and healthy lifestyles.</p>	<p>Sharing expertise, networks and resources will ensure a good provision for our young people.</p>
<p>A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>	<p>The programmes outlined in this strategy will work with young people, supporting them to overcome health and wellbeing barriers by either delivering health or wellbeing workshops and/or support, linking learners with health care professionals, organisations and networks and other health and wellbeing services. The young people's health and wellbeing is a crucial element to reducing their overall risk of becoming NEET.</p>	<p>The one to one support from responsible partners will enable us to identify and address individual need. Setting agreed goals and reinforcing recognition and achievements. A reduction in the barriers to participation is a key element to enable young people to be engaged, supported and valued. The level of support offered will be high and consistent.</p>

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<p>Programmes in the strategy will encourage safe and appropriate use of IT and the internet, developing young peoples' digital literacy skills, preparing them for further learning, education and training. The programmes will link to the wider community, helping young people be active citizens in their community and have a greater awareness of community safety.</p>	<p>Encourage safer use of the internet and raise awareness of the harmful effects and consequences of inappropriate use of social media</p>
<p>A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<p>The strategy and activities delivered within its framework will work to enhance our young people's global responsibility through qualifications and learning opportunities.</p>	<p>Working closely with our Local Authority partners and Careers Wales we will share resources and good practices to ensure young people have the best opportunities to engage in global wellbeing activities and see how this impacts on their communities.</p>
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<p>All programmes outlined in this strategy will have marketing, publications and printed literature available bilingually where appropriate. The strategy will conform to the Welsh Language Legislation Welsh Language Wales Measure and accompanying Welsh language standards.</p>	<p>Encouraging young people to embrace the vibrant Welsh culture and language.</p>
<p>A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>	<p>The strategy will develop effective ways to engage and provide support for those individuals regardless of ethnic origin, gender, disability sexual orientation or religion to ensure all young people actively participate in and benefit from the programme. The LA Equal Opportunity's Policy stipulates how staff can best promote equality of opportunity and outcomes for young people regardless of age, race, ethnicity and disability.</p>	<p>All of our policies and procedures are guided by the current local and national equal opportunities guidance and legislation.</p>

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

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>The long term future plan is that all young people will secure and sustain a positive destination after leaving compulsory education. This strategy aims to create a NEET free county working with our schools, Pupil Referral Service, Careers Wales, colleges, training providers and local employers. This will reduce the likelihood of future or continuing poverty amongst young people. It will also deliver improved health and well-being for young people, whilst also instilling a work ethic for young people and seeing aspiration levels rise.</p>	<p>This strategy aims to support the development of resilience in those young people most at risk or who are NEET, to improve their confidence and skills. Thus enabling them to progress into education, employment or training.</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>This strategy cannot be addressed by one single agency. It has been developed collaboratively with key stakeholders including our schools, Pupil Referral Service, Careers Wales, colleges, training providers and local employers. Thus reducing the chances of young people becoming NEET.</p>	
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p><i>Young people, have been involved in the development and setting the key priorities of the strategy. Young people will be part of the monitoring and evaluation process of the strategy to demonstrate impact and value added, shaping future development through lessons learnt.</i></p>	

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>The Inspire programme and Engagement & Progression Coordination is a key part of the strategy and are preventative initiatives to enable the reduction in the risk of young people becoming NEET and reduction in the number of young people who are NEET.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the long term impact of the programmes will challenge behaviours, actions and attitudes, subsequently establishing firm foundations on which to support in the future and provide generic skills.</p>	<p>The programmes will be monitored and reviewed as part of the action plan to ensure targets are on track and then young people feel the programmes are meeting their needs and expectations.</p>
 <p>Integration</p> <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>Young peoples well being is paramount and supporting them to overcome health and wellbeing barriers by either delivering health and wellbeing programmes and/or support, linking young people with health care professionals, organisations and networks and other health and wellbeing services. The young people’s health and wellbeing is a crucial element to reducing their overall risk of becoming NEET.</p>	

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

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	Safeguarding is a priority, young people on our programmes will have a multiple barriers and are vulnerable individuals. All Youth Employment & Skills staff have completed the Safeguarding level 1. Some staff including the service lead are trained to Level 2 and all staff will maintain the level of which they are trained.	<i>.None identified</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Corporate Parenting	<i>The strategy and action plan targets young people who are looked after children (LAC) and care leavers. We aim to continue collaborative working with associated workers and young people to meet their needs and circumstances.</i>	<i>None identified</i>	<i>N/A</i>

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

The following data has identified and informed both strategy and the need to continue the Inspire programme;

- The Local Authority Early Identification process identifying young people most at risk in key stage 3 and 4.
- The Careers Wales 5 Tier model data, identifying young people 16 -18 years in tier 1 and 2 of the system who are NEET
- Pupil Destinations Data - [Pupil destinations | Careers Wales \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/pupil-destinations)

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

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.It is anticipated that the NEET Prevention Strategy will have a positive impact on the young peoples' social, emotional, health and wellbeing, education and skills. This will develop their resilience and improve their life chances. This proposal does acknowledge that due to personal, social and educational barriers, not every young person will progress into further education, training or employment. The strategy has also, and will continue to, identify and drive key strategic initiatives to improve the opportunities for young people in partnership with meeting future business skills requirements.

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

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible

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

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	NEET Strategy Working Group: Working group developed aspiration, key priority themes and action plan	July-September 2024	
1	Consultation with Cabinet Members: Updates provided to Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development and Cabinet Member for Education for discussion – focusing on asportation and key priority themes. Draft Strategy provided to Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development and Cabinet Member for Education.	July-September 2024	
1	SLT	September	Consideration to strengthen key strategic initiatives. Consideration of Targets and funding risk for NEET Prevention programmes (SPF funded)
1	Cabinet Business Meeting	1 st October 2024	Consideration to strengthen key strategic initiatives.
2	Performance and Scrutiny Committee	15 th October 2024	
	Cabinet	6 th November 2024	

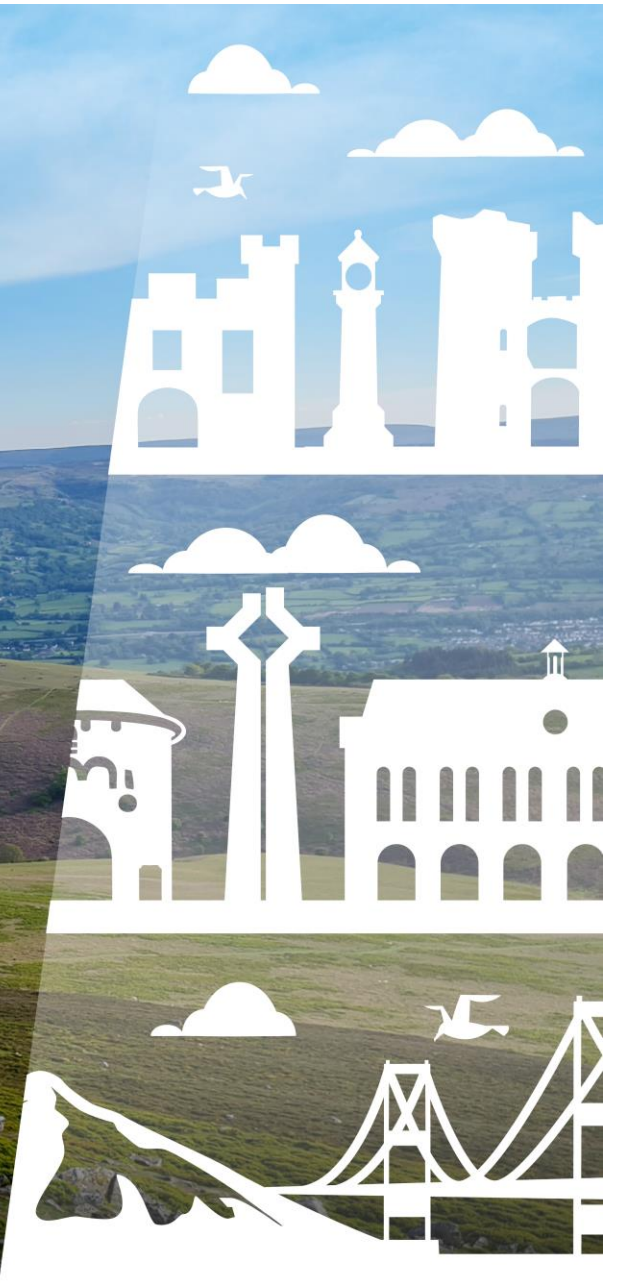
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Draft NEET Prevention Strategy 2024-2027

Louise Wilce
Youth Employment & Skills



monmouthshire
sir fynwy



Collaborative Working Group

Membership:

- Louise Wilce – Youth Employment & Skills Lead
- Tim Bird – Sustainable Education Adviser, CYP
- Huw Thomas – Team Manager, Children’s Services
- Mark Foster – Equality, Inclusion and Activities Lead, MonLife
- Sarah Rees – Manager, Careers Wales
- Sian Farquharson - Professional Learning Lead Partner (Post 16, SEREN and More Able), Education Achievement Service.



Aspiration:

Working Group put the following aspiration forward to shape our strategy:

Creating positive and sustained outcomes for young people through
bespoke, productive and meaningful engagement in education, training
and employment

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Priorities:

Previous priorities and objectives were aligned to ***Welsh Government's Youth Engagement & Progression Framework***

Working group agreed to keep consistency bar one, replacing Brokerage with Commissioning Support & Provision.

- Early Identification
- **Commissioning Support & Provision**
- Monitoring Progression
- Employability and employment opportunities
- Accountability



Strategy Measures

Year 11

	2019		2020**		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Monmouthshire	1.1%	1.3%	1.0%	1.4%	2.0%	1.8%	1.8%	1.7%	1.6%	1.5%
	9	10	8	11	16	14	14	14	13	12
							Cohort Profile:	806	832	795
Wales	1.8%		1.7%		1.6%	2.1%	2.0%			
	537		527		507	664	670			

Year 12

	2019		2020**		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Monmouthshire	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	1.5%	0.2%	0.9%	1.5%	1.4%	1.3%	1.2%
	5	4	4	7	1	4	6	5	6	5
							Cohort Profile:	426	450	453
Wales	0.8%		0.6%		0.4%	0.7%	0.5%			
	99		76		55	80	62			

Year 13

	2019		2020**		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Target	Target	Target
Monmouthshire	1.8%	1.36%	1.7%	3.92%	1.96%	1.2%	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
	8	5	7	14	8	5	4	4	4	4
							Cohort Profile:	367	393	391
Wales	2.54%		3.53%		2.29%	2.8%	3.6%			
	269		355		251	322	375			



Context & Target Setting

- Destination Data Themes:
 - Low or no attendance
 - Early disengagement from education or pathway - not sustaining
 - Unable to access Level 3 / 6th Form offer impact on Y11/12
 - Training Providers – quality and accessibility
 - Missed opportunities
 - Young people not identified as at risk
- Accountability
 - Cycle of annual review in line with Destination Data.
 - Moving forward = increased discussion around monthly Tier Data, in addition to Destination Data and NEET young people's 'story'.
- Future Targets - Discussion
 - Balance of aspiration against future uncertainty
 - Targets proposed with continuity of funding and implementation of strategic projects



Future

- NEET Prevention Programme
- Level 2 Offer in Monmouthshire 6th Forms
- STEM Programme to Skills Centre in Monmouthshire
- MCC Opportunities:
 - Work experience – paid work experience i.e. KickStart
 - Training and Apprenticeships for school leavers



Any Questions?

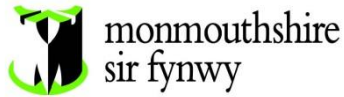
Contact Details

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SUBJECT: WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE 23/24

MEETING: PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 15th OCTOBER 2024

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

To update members on the progress against our targets in the Monmouthshire Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) during the period 31st July 2023 and 31st July 2024.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee note the update and the progress made in meeting the aspirations of the WESP and scrutinise remaining risks and challenges.

3. BACKGROUND:

- 3.1 The WESP is our long-term language planning tool which sets the strategic direction for the planning, delivery, and growth of Welsh medium education in Monmouthshire over the next ten years. The WESP must contain:

The local authority's proposals on how it will carry out its education functions to:

1. Improve the planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh ("Welsh-medium education") in its area.
 2. Improve the standards of Welsh-medium education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area.
 3. The local authority's targets for improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education in its area and for improving the standards of that education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area.
- 3.2 The local authority must produce a WESP five-year action plan setting out the actions it plans to take to meet the targets in the WESP. The local authority has a statutory duty to submit an Annual WESP Review Report to Welsh Ministers on 31st July each year.

3.3 The Monmouthshire Annual Review Report Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2023/24 (Appendix 1) outlines the progress made against Monmouthshire's five-year action plan. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the start date for WESPs moved from 1st September 2021 to 1st September 2022. As a result, this is the second annual review, covering the period from 31st July 2023 to 31st July 2024.

3.4 The report details the progress made in all seven outcomes as set in the WESP.

Outcome 1: More nursery children/ three-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Outcome 2: More reception class children/ five-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Outcome 3: More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh

3.5 Welsh Ministers provide feedback to local authorities on their Annual Review Report. However, at the time this report is presented to Members the local authority has not received feedback for the current plan.

4. KEY ISSUES 2023/24:

4.1 The opening of Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy on the site of Overmonnow Primary school in September 2024 with 19 pupils, is a significant achievement for the local authority. This is because we have faced many significant challenges along the way, including staff recruitment and unexpected construction challenges. However, our collaborative work with regional, wider partners and the temporary governing body has been a strength in supporting us to open the new school.

4.2 Immersion provision is well-established in Ysgol Y Ffin, in the south of the county. This provision continues to have a positive impact on the number of parents choosing Welsh-medium education. For example, numbers in the Cylch Meithrin show an increasing trend and this year there are 25 pupils in

reception, which is the highest since the school opened. We plan to open a second immersion during the coming year which will enable pupils from year 3 and upwards to transfer into Welsh-medium education and in doing so support an increase in demand.

- 4.3 GCSE Welsh second language is offered in all four of Monmouthshire's secondary schools, with nearly all pupils being assessed in the subject with many achieving a GCSE. Pupils within Pupil Referral Services such as the Pupil Referral Unit and EOTAS, and those following a range of alternative provisions are generally not entered for this examination.
- 4.4 Expertise in the teaching of Welsh Second Language at A level has been further developed through the collaborative delivery of the A Level across the county and an E-sgol supported professional learning group. E-sgol are a Welsh Government funded organisation who support the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum across schools in many local authorities and regions in Wales.
- 4.5 All four secondary schools are core stakeholders in the Monmouthshire E-sgol Network scheduled to commence the delivery of learning in September 2024. In preparation, all schools have attended the E-sgol annual learning conference and several professional learning and planning sessions. A Level Second Language Welsh will be at the core of the Monmouthshire universal E-sgol offer. This means that more students in Monmouthshire will be able to study Welsh AS and A level in their community school and alongside their other chosen subjects. The expectation is that we will see an increase in the number of students choosing Welsh at AS and A level over the next five-years.
- 4.6 During the last year we have made good progress in many aspects of each of the outcomes, and particularly in outcomes 2, 4 and 7 as detailed above. However, there are some areas where progress remains limited for example, in developing systems to track linguistic progression between years 6 and 7 and establishing a Cylch Meithrin in Monmouth.
- 4.7 Overall, progress towards our five-year plan is on track in most areas and in the few areas where it is not, firm plans are in place to accelerate progress and milestones agreed as follows:
1. Secure Cylch Meithrin provision in Monmouth to support growth in Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy.
 2. Open a second immersion class within the county.
 3. Develop a process, in collaboration with Torfaen and Newport, to monitor learner progression on transition from Year 6 to 7, and up to Year 11.
 4. Understand why learners do not transfer from a Welsh-medium primary school to a Welsh-medium secondary school and take appropriate action to improve transition rates.

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 See attached integrated impact assessment (Appendix 2)

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 The costs to amend the site at Overmonnow to provide the space for the new Welsh-medium primary in Monmouth will be met with Welsh-medium capital funding from Welsh Government.
- 6.2 The on-going cost of staffing and resources in the new school is an additional revenue pressure for the local authority. This is expected to remain a pressure in Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy until pupil numbers increase to reflect school budget formula funding.
- 6.3 The on-going cost of staffing for immersion provision to support latecomers to Welsh is included in the Local Government Education Grant from September 2024. Currently, the grant is sufficient to meet the costs for two immersion classes. However, as the grant is a fixed amount, increased staffing costs may mean that the costs will become an additional revenue pressure for the local authority in future years.

7. CONSULTEES:

- RhAg
- Urdd
- Coleg Gwent
- Menter Iaith
- Mudiad Meithrin
- Education Achievement Service
- DMT

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Prosperity for All: the national strategy
- Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers 2017
- Education in Wales: Our National Mission, Action Plan 2017-21
- The Welsh in Education, Action Plan 2017- 21
- Taking Wales Forward 2016-2021
- Guidance on Welsh in Education Strategic Plans
- Monmouthshire Welsh Language Strategy 2017 -2022
- Welsh-medium Education Strategy: next steps

9. AUTHOR:

Sharon Randall-Smith

Head of Service Children and Young People Directorate

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1

ANNUAL REVIEW REPORT WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN

Reporting Year 2023/24

Name of Local Authority

Monmouthshire County Council

Author:	Sharon Randall-Smith
Approver:	
Date	30 th July 2024

Introduction to the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan Review Report

As you are aware, it is a statutory requirement for you to submit your report to the Welsh Government by July 31, 2024.

We know that several of you have already started collating information using the template provided last year. We've made some minor amendments to the form and content of the template to reflect changes to Welsh Government plans, programmes or policy developments since the last reporting period. Feedback provided after the first reporting year is also reflected.

Your annual review report is used as an important information and evidence base to evaluate plans and programmes such as: Flying Start; Mudiad Meithrin' s Cymraeg i Blant and Sefydlu a Symud (Set up and Succeed) programmes; E-sgol; the Anti-Racism Action Plan, Siarter Iaith/ Welsh Language Charter; the Sustainable Communities for Learning investment programme and the Welsh Language Education Workforce Plan (amongst others). The reports are also considered in relation to wider education policy and reforms e.g. duties under the Additional Learning Needs and Curriculum and Assessment Acts, as well as to inform research to evaluate learners' linguistic outcomes and prioritisation of funding needs. This template reflects those priority areas.

We will consider progress on your targets and commitments against your 5-year action plan. We are mindful to the fact that the degree and pace of progress on different aspects of your WESP will be different. The prompts in the template are to guide you rather than limit you.

Some issues to note

Use of Data: We ask that you use local data (quantitative and qualitative) to report on your progress. We know that PLASC data will not be published in time for you to use in this report. However, you have access to the core data (which was submitted to the Welsh Government for validation in January) and we encourage you to use that to make a comparison with the data provided in your 2022-23 report.

Local Authority Education Grant (LAEG) - Cymraeg 2050 element: The grant guidance sets out the need for any expenditure under this element to be used to support our strategy for the Welsh language - *Cymraeg 2050*: One million speakers. You'll be expected to demonstrate alignment with your WESP (including your late immersion provision); Welsh in Education workforce plan; Curriculum for Wales; The National Framework for the Siarter Iaith and the expectations and responsibilities set out in the ALN Act and the ALN Code in relation to Welsh-medium provision.

In accordance with the conditions agreed in our *Funding Award letter in relation to the Welsh Medium Late Immersion Grant* dated 30 August 2022, you are expected to report on the progress of your late immersion projects, include your progress

report from 1 April 2024 to 31 July 2024 in this annual review report. A final report, summarising 2022-25 activity, will be expected at the end of March 2025. Thereafter, this annual review report will be the only reporting requirement on the Cymraeg 2050 element of the LAEG.

Information about your local curricular offer: Data on subjects offered and assessed in Welsh is collected to cross-reference with the language category of schools within your area and to monitor progress against your 10-year WESP. Arrangements for collecting the local curricular data vary from county to county, with the data collected directly by some local authorities with others using regional education consortia to support with this work. For this reporting year, we ask you to continue with your current arrangements. We are reviewing the current arrangements with a view to introducing a more streamlined and accessible approach to collecting this data in the near future.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS / HIGHLIGHTS

1. The opening of Ysgol Gynradd Trefynwy in September 2024 with 16 pupils is a significant achievement for the local authority, particularly because we have faced and overcome many challenges along the way. Our work with regional and wider partners has been a strength in supporting us to achieve this goal.
2. Immersion provision is well-established in the south of the county and is having a positive impact on the number of parents choosing Welsh-medium education. For example, numbers in the Cylch Meithrin are increasing and this year, we have 25 applications for reception, the highest we have seen. We will open our second immersion class this year and expect to see similar growth in our third Welsh-medium school and in Ysgol Fenni as they prepare to move to larger premises.
3. Through collaboration with E-sgol and all four of our secondary schools, we will be able to deliver four A level subjects, with A level second language Welsh being at the core of the Monmouthshire universal offer from September 2024.
4. We have seen the number of teachers successfully completing the Welsh-in-a-year sabbatical course double in the last two years. The impact of this work has been significant in improving Welsh as a second language in our schools and has been noted by Estyn in a few inspection reports. This is further enhanced by the sharing of good practice across clusters and partnerships between Welsh and English-medium schools to provide further Welsh immersion for graduates through teacher exchanges.

OVERALL PLAN SUMMARY

We have made strong progress in many aspects of each outcome and particularly in outcomes 2, 4 and 7 as detailed above. However, there are some areas where progress is limited for example, in developing systems to track progression between years 6 and 7 and establishing a Cylch Meithrin in Monmouth.

As a result, we feel that progress overall this year is orange,

FOREWARD LOOK MILESTONES

1. Secure Cylch Meithrin provision in Monmouth to support growth in Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy.
2. Open a second immersion class within the county.
3. Develop a process, in collaboration with Torfaen and Newport, to monitor learner progression from Year 6 to 7, and up to Year 11.
4. Understand why learners do not transfer from a Welsh-medium primary school to a Welsh-medium secondary school and take appropriate action to improve transition rates.

Outcome 1

More nursery children/ three-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

KEY ANNUAL DATA

2222/23 position	2023/24 target	23/24 uptake
2 settings offering Welsh-medium early education places	2 settings	2 settings (Summer 2024)
61 Welsh-medium early education places	67(5.6%%)	74 (6.45%) (Summer term 2024)
63 Welsh-medium childcare places in Cylchoedd Meithrin settings	63 places	47 places (March 2024)
2 settings offering Welsh-medium Flying Start childcare places	2 settings	2 settings (July 2024)
23 children (82.1%) transferring from Cylchoedd Meithrin settings to Welsh medium primary schools	40 pupils (80%)	37 pupils (74%) 2022/23
15 Flying Start Welsh-medium childcare places	30 Flying Start places	21 places (Summer term 2024)

OUTCOME SUMMARY

Please include your progress on this outcome during the second year of your WESP by responding to the following points.

Welsh-medium early years provision

- Progress in 2023-24 has been limited in relation to developing a Cylch Meithrin in each of the five towns of Monmouthshire during the life of this WESP. There are well developed plans to establish a Cylch Meithrin Trefynwy on the site of the Welsh medium seedling school as soon as there is a suitable space to accommodate it, but this is unlikely to be until September 2025 because of the lack of suitably qualified staff and premises.
- We plan to expand early years provision to the Chepstow area in 2025/26 and are working with external partners to keep to this timescale. However, we fully recognise the challenge we will face to identify premises and secure suitably qualified Welsh-speaking staff to work in the Cylch Meithrin. Currently, there is some demand for Welsh-medium provision, but further work needs to be carried out to evaluate future demand and the sustainability of a Cylch Meithrin in the area.
- Both of our Cylch Meithrin settings are signed up to offer Flying Start childcare places. Any new Cylch Meithrin settings developed will be encouraged to sign up for Flying Start and the Childcare Offer and we consider including this as part of the tendering process.

Uptake of Welsh-medium childcare places.

- Mudiad Meithrin and the other Cwlwm partner organisations are members of our Early Years Development and Childcare (EYDCP) Partnership. We meet with them regularly

to discuss plans to develop new childcare provision and to support existing settings expand their intake.

- We fund a Ti a Fi Officer through Mudiad Meithrin to raise the profile of the Welsh Language with families and encourage them to consider Welsh medium education and childcare. As a result, Cylch Ti a Fi Trefynwy has been well attended in 2023-24 and this has impacted positively on the number of families applying for a nursery place at Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy from September 2024. This year 55 children attended the Ti-y-Fi in Monmouth.
- The Promotion Group and the Family Information Service actively promotes Welsh-medium childcare provision.

Childcare Adequacy Assessment

- The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) is used effectively to inform WESP targets for outcome 1. The CSA action plan includes a target to develop a Cylch Meithrin in each of the five towns of Monmouthshire as indicated above.

Tendering arrangements

- Currently, there is an established tender process in place for early education providers, but not for Flying Start childcare. Both existing Cylch Meithrin settings decided not to tender to become early education providers because there were sufficient places available in the maintained school nursery. Our next tender process planned for 2025 will incorporate both early education and Flying Start and we will provide support to both Cylch Meithrin Y Fenni, Cylch Meithrin Cil y Coed and Cylch Meithrin Trefynwy if opened, to encourage and assist them to complete this tender.

Collaboration with wider organisations

- Basic Welsh language training for childminders took place in July 2023 and childcare practitioners are actively encouraged to take up Welsh language training provided by Cwlwm partners.

Please indicate how you ensure that information and work with the Family Information Service, your admissions teams, and external agencies

- Representatives from MCC Early Years, Admissions and Communications teams sit on the Promotion Subgroup alongside external partners. We are creating a calendar of activities to promote the Welsh language. During 2023-24, both MCC Communications and the Family Information Service have promoted the new Welsh medium seedling school and application dates through social media on numerous occasions.
- Welsh medium groups and activities are regularly promoted through social media, as well as the benefits of being bilingual. We have attended events such as the Usk Show and Miri Mynwy to promote Welsh medium education and childcare.

Promoting access to education and training

- We provide discretionary transport to Welsh medium education subject to meeting the distance eligibility criteria, which is currently 1.5 miles for primary and 2 miles for secondary. Journey times are limited to 45 minutes for primary and 60 minutes for secondary which is a reduction from the 1 hour 15 minutes in

previous years. We also guarantee concessionary seats for Post 16 learners at a subsidised cost of £488 from September. The cost can be paid in instalments throughout the academic year.

- Please note that we are currently consulting on reversion to statutory distances, which if agreed will potentially impact on 10 Welsh medium primary aged learners, subject to a walking route being available. Any changes would be implemented from September 2025.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- Targets in outcome 1 align well with those in our Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.
- Implementation and progress are monitored termly and reported to the Welsh in Education Forum and the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership; this is also fed into the CSA Annual Report.
- The WESP is taken to scrutiny on an annual basis

RISKS

- The most significant risk to our progress in this areas is the ability to identify and recruit suitably qualified Welsh speaking staff to establish additional Cylch Meithrin settings.
- Current demand for Welsh medium childcare is not sufficient to establish and as a result, there is a risk that Welsh medium childcare provision may not be sustainable in all five Monmouthshire towns.
- If building work isn't completed on schedule, there is a risk that the Cylch Meithrin Trefynwy will not be able to open in September 2025 because suitable accommodation will not be available.

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

- We have funded Mudiad Meithrin to recruit a Ti a Fi Officer to raise the profile of the Welsh language with families in Monmouthshire and to increase demand for Welsh medium childcare and education.
- We are working closely with Mudiad Meithrin to identify staff and establish a committee for Cylch Meithrin Trefynwy.
- We are exploring the feasibility of putting a demountable building on the site of the Welsh medium seedling school to house Cylch Meithrin Trefynwy.
- We are negotiating with a school in the Chepstow area to establish a Cylch Meithrin within their grounds.

FORWARD LOOK

- It is our intention to establish Cylch Meithrin Trefynwy on the site of the Welsh medium seedling school from September 2025.
- MCC Officers will work closely with Mudiad Meithrin and continue conversations with interested parties in relation to options to develop and locate a Cylch Meithrin in the Chepstow area.
- The promotion sub-group will lead on an enhanced campaign in the Chepstow area to encourage parents to consider Welsh medium early years provision and education.
- We will work with existing Cylch Meithrin settings and offer financial incentives for them to extend their provision.
- Information and support will be provided to Cylch Meithrin Y Fenni and Cylch Meithrin Cil y Coed to enable them to complete the tender to continue to offer Flying Start places. We will continue to encourage and support Cylch Meithrin leaders to consider becoming early education providers if they wish to develop their setting in this way.

Outcome 2

More reception class children/ five-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

KEY ANNUAL DATA

KEY ANNUAL DATA		
2022/23 Position	2023/24target	Current position
48 reception learners (September 2022)	69 reception learners	50 Reception learners on roll as at the mid-year check point (January 24 PLASC) The above is 6.1% of the reception population across Monmouthshire (cohort of 814) Current projection: 57 learners for September 2024
35 reception learners Y Fenni (Sept 22)	45 reception learners Y Fenni	29 reception learners on roll as at the mid-year check point (January 24 PLASC) Current projection: 30 learners for September 2024
13 reception learners Y Ffin (Sept 22)	19 reception learners Y Ffin	21 reception learners on roll as at the mid-year check point (January 24 PLASC) Current projection: 25 learners for September 2024
0 Monmouth (seedling)	5 Monmouth (seedling)	Projected numbers September 24: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 Meithrin • 2 Reception • 2 Year1 • 3 Year 2 Total 18 learners
48 /115 (55.2%) (WG target 2030)	69 /115 (79.35%) (WG target 2030)	57/115 (65.5%) Current projection for September 2024
Number of learners in Late Immersion provision	16 Cumulative	22 Cumulative
Surplus places data Welsh- medium Schools Monmouthshire	10% surplus places	<u>Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni</u> Capacity – 317 (R-6) NOR – 236 (R-6) Surplus – 81 / 25.5% <u>Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin</u> Capacity – 210 (R-6)

		<p>NOR – 113 (R-6) Surplus – 97 / 46.1%</p> <p><u>Combined</u> Capacity – 527 (R-6) NOR – 349 Surplus – 178 / 33.7%</p> <p>Overall, 5.65% of learners attend WM primary education (Cohort of 6139)</p>
Data is needed on the number of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic learners within WM education in Monmouthshire.	Not applicable	<p>White and any other ethnic group - 8 White and Asian - 1 White and Black African - 1 White and Black Caribbean - 1 Other mixed background – 1</p> <p>Total 3.1% (12 out of 389)</p>

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OUTCOME SUMMARY

Please include your progress on this outcome during the second year of your WESP by responding to the following points.

Reception and year 1 targets

- The demand for reception in 23/24 is below our target of 69 Welsh medium reception learners. 50 reception learners were recorded as being on roll as at January 2024 PLASC with the greatest differential seen in Y Fenni. However, at the end of the summer term, projected figures based on applications to Y Fenni and Y Ffin and the inclusion of Y Trefynwy show an increase of 7 learners.
- However, current allocations indicate that reception numbers in Y Fenni are lower than the previous year, whilst the number of reception pupils in Y Ffin show a growing trend.
- Overall, this means that we are currently at 65.55% of our target for 2030 (Reception number 2024 v Reception places 2030). Whilst this is an increase of 10.35pp from 2022, it is below our target of 79.35% which is due to a decline in applications to Y Fenni this year.
- To maintain this upward trend, we will continue to focus on promoting the benefits of a Welsh education and our immersion provision as widely as possible. At the same time, we will ensure that our new school, Y Trefynwy, and the relocation of Y Fenni to a larger site will be a central feature of our promotion strategy and a regular feature from our central communications team.

Strategic outline programme (9-year investment)

- The consultation process to establish a new Welsh Medium seedling primary school in Monmouth is now complete with Cabinet taking their final decision on the 6th of September 2023. The seedling school will open on 2nd September 2024 and will provide Welsh medium provision for Nursery to Year 2 learners within the Monmouth area.
- The new seedling school will be located on the Overmonnow Primary School site they will have their own classroom, office and secure entrance.
- There have been 14 pupils allocated places at the school from September 2024 which includes 10 nursery, 2 Reception and 2 year 1.
- As we have been progressing through the design development it became apparent that the concept design could not be delivered due to site constraints that would be both costly and time-consuming impacting on the budget and programme. Therefore, there has been a need to look at alternative design options to ensure the project is affordable.
- The seedling school building will be distinctly separate from Overmonnow Primary School, it will be attractive, have its own entrance, headteacher's office, staffroom, administrators' office, 2 mainstream classrooms and one classroom that will be shared by the Cylch Meithrin and the Meithrin albeit slightly smaller than originally anticipated. The building will facilitate a completely immersive education for children being educated through the medium of Welsh.
- Unfortunately, there have been delays at the design stages of the project which have impacted on the programme of works, we are currently on track to submit a full planning application on 17th July 2024.
- There will be a complex program of works and phasing strategies required, some of which can only be undertaken during school holidays. As a result of this the construction work will not be completed until December 2025.
- Our 9-year Strategic Outline Programme includes determining provision for Welsh medium secondary pupils from north Monmouthshire. Discussions have started with Blaenau Gwent Council to determine a collaborative approach to delivering a Welsh medium secondary school. Pupils from north Monmouthshire currently travel to Ysgol Gyfyn Gwynllyw in Torfaen. The distance pupils travel to access WM secondary education means that for some pupils their journey can be over an hour long each way. For this reason, we are seeing an increase in pupils not transferring to secondary education.
- Torfaen County Borough Council have also informed us that there will be a restriction on the number of pupils they will be able to admit from Monmouthshire and Blaenau Gwent schools by 2028, this is another contributing factor to discussions for Partnership working with Blaenau Gwent and other neighbouring LA's

Impact of wider school organisation proposals

- The Council is mindful of the requirement to consider the impacts that School Organisation proposals have of Welsh medium education and the aims and objectives set out with our WESP. For every School Organisation proposal, an integrated impact assessment is completed which requires the lead officer to consider the impact of proposals on various areas including the Welsh language.

- In addition, the Council has developed a specific Welsh language assessment template which is completed for every School Organisation proposal to identify the positives outcomes, risks and counter measures that proposals would have on Welsh medium education within the county.
- Finally, the survey's that we use to capture feedback from consultees during the statutory consultation process include specific questions that ask for their feedback on what they feel would be the impact of proposals on Welsh medium education. This information is then used to update our assessment prior to any final decisions being taken on School Organisation proposals.

Surplus places

- The PS has created an action plan to identify key priorities whilst providing ownership to group members. The MCC website has been updated to include videos that promote WM education, all existing promotional material has been updated and the group are working on creating new. The group is working closely with MCC communications team to create a timetable for social media posts.
- The PS have reviewed the MCC website and up-dated the Welsh-medium Education pages. A new page for the Welsh-medium school in Monmouth has been created and a marketing campaign is being launched to inform parents about the new provision. The promotion of the childcare facility at Ysgol Y Ffin is included in a revised PS plan.
- The actions regarding the promotion of childcare have been added to the action plan that the Promotion Subgroup (PS) has developed to ensure they remain a priority.
- The statutory processes concerning the relocation and increase in capacity of Ysgol Y Fenni continues. The consultation stages are complete, with the Council publishing statutory notices on 21st June 2024. It is anticipated a final decision will be taken by Cabinet in September 2024. This proposal allows the school to move to a two-form entry allowing 60 children per year group. Whilst this is likely to increase surplus places in the short term, it will support the growth in Welsh-medium education.
- Surplus places in our Welsh medium primary schools currently stand at 33.7%. Whilst this is higher than we would like, it is indicative of our investment to build capacity within our Welsh medium sector. The Council continue to work with the promotion subgroup to promote the benefits of Welsh medium education and we hope that this will lead to an increase in the numbers applying for places. It is hoped that the proposed relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni away from their current location with temporary accommodation into a building with excellent teaching and learning facilities will impact positively on the number of children applying for places at the school.

Welsh-medium provision in English-medium schools

- We do not have any immediate plans to increase Welsh-medium provision in our schools that are not Welsh-medium during the next academic year. This is because our current priority is to establish and grow our new school in Monmouth. However, we have approached all Monmouthshire schools to consider and indicate if they are considering increasing Welsh-medium provision and/or looking to transition to a different category within the next two years. No schools have approached us to date.
- Given the level of surplus places we have in our schools currently, there is no immediate pressure on Welsh-medium places. However, this will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure we plan effectively to manage an increased demand for places.
- A total of 21 practitioners from Monmouthshire have engaged with sabbatical training at all levels over the last 4 years. As a result, most English-medium schools across Monmouthshire are developing their use of Welsh incidentally and across the wider curriculum areas. Estyn has identified the approaches being taken by St Mary's RC, Chepstow and Undy Primary School to build capacity and raise the profile of spoken Welsh within the school are being shared widely.
- Three of the four EAS strategic cluster leads for Welsh are past sabbatical graduates. They promote professional learning, including the Sabbatical Scheme and have a role in providing basic training to the education workforce, which includes TAs. As a result of the above, Welsh-language in English-medium schools is improving appropriately in Monmouthshire schools.

Late immersion.

- The local authority has been successful in its bid to secure grant funding to continue the immersion provision for the next three years. Over the last two years we have seen 22 pupils benefit from late immersion provision and successfully integrate into WM education. In addition, the number of applications for Reception in Y Ffin has increased year on year and is highest this year. As part of our initial grant bid, both WM schools have received funding to train all staff in late immersion techniques to support learners in their home school.
- We have seen the uptake of places in our immersion class in Y Ffin and as a result, this is having a positive impact on pupil numbers with 25 pupils joining the school in reception in September 2024. The location of the Cylch on the site of the school is also contributing to increase in numbers and demand for school places.
- We plan to establish a second Immersion Class within Monmouthshire to support an increase access to Welsh-medium education for more pupils. We expect this to increase the demand for Welsh-medium places and contribute to a reduction in surplus places.
- Good practice established in the immersion class in Y Ffin will be shared and developed in the new immersion class. As numbers and demand for late immersion is increasing, we will need to review the model practice in other local authorities and adjust accordingly. This will include reviewing the number and age of pupils in the immersion class, dates of admission and support for transition into secondary.

Collaboration with your local equality networks and partners

- We continue to promote our Welsh medium primary schools to all eligible pupils, and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic pupils for part of this cohort. We have not yet completed any direct marketing with these group, however, we plan to discuss good practice strategies with our neighbouring authorities which we can then take forward.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- Targets in Outcome 2 align well with the actions in the Promotion group Action Plan.
- Implementation and progress are monitored termly and reported to the Welsh in Education Forum and the Departmental Management Team.

RISKS

- Demand for Welsh-medium primary education is not sufficient to establish and maintain sustainable Welsh-medium childcare provision in three towns in Monmouthshire currently.
- The decline in applications for reception in Y Fenni is a concern and particularly if this becomes a trend as the school moves to the new site when the number of surplus places would increase significantly.
- We are unable to secure enough suitably qualified Welsh-medium teaching staff to provide high quality education.
- Transfer levels between nursery WM education into primary WM education do not increase in line with our expectations.
- Delays to the build for the new Welsh-medium seedling school in Monmouth due to budgetary pressures, pandemic inflationary costs, construction constraints and contractor going into administration.
- Transport policy and time taken to travel remains a barrier to parents choosing a Welsh medium school.

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

- Promote Welsh-medium education in the Abergavenny area to support a growth in numbers in Y Fenni.
- Open a second Immersion centre within Monmouthshire to continue to support growth in Welsh-medium schools.
- WEF to work with the school and community to identify and remove any barriers or misconceptions relating to a Welsh medium education.
- At the same time, the Promotion group will deliver an enhanced and sustained programme to encourage parents to choose Welsh-medium education in the Abergavenny area.

FORWARD LOOK

- Open Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy in September 2024.
- Complete the construction work at Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy and ensure the project is delivered on time and within budget.
- Complete the statutory consultation for Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni.
- Complete the refurbishment works on the existing Deri View primary school site for Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni to move to in September 2025.
- Open a second Immersion centre within Monmouthshire.
- Identify good practice strategies with neighbouring authorities and adapt to strengthen our promotion of Welsh-medium education to all eligible pupils and particularly for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic pupils.

Outcome 3

More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

KEY ANNUAL DATA

KEY ANNUAL DATA		
2022/23 Position	2023/24target	Current position
40 children attending Welsh-medium nursery provision. (September 22)	40	61 children attending WM nursery provision at the mid-year check point (PLASC 24) 14.9% attending WM LA Nursery (Cohort of 408) 62 learners expected in September 2024 30 at Y Fenni 21 at Y Ffin 11 at Y Trefynwy 19.7% of LEA WM nursery cohort (309 cohort)
23 children transferred to a Welsh-medium primary school from Welsh medium pre-school	69	37 Reception (September 23) Current projection 55 learners (September 2024)
27 pupils transferred to a Welsh-medium secondary school. (September 2022)	41	27 pupils transferred to WM secondary September 23 (60% of WM cohort) 10 / 14 (71.4%) transferred from Y Ffin to Is Coed 17 / 31 (54.8%) transferred from Y Fenni to YGG Current projection September 2024 22 learners to transfer

		(50% of WM cohort) 9 / 14 transferring from Y Ffin to Is Coed (64.2%) 13 / 30 transferring from Y Fenni to YGG (43.3%)
30 Welsh-medium secondary school places available for Monmouthshire pupils in YGG	30	30
30 Welsh-medium secondary school places available for Monmouthshire pupils in YGIC	30	30

OUTCOME SUMMARY

Please include your progress on this outcome during the second year of your WESP by responding to the following points.

Linguistic progression

- We review learner progress with our Welsh-medium schools as part of our Professional Discussions, thematic reviews and School Improvement Partner reviews. Both schools have data from National Assessments. However, they have different ways of tracking pupil progress and use different diagnostic assessments which makes it very difficult to compare progression. Although many of our learners come from English-speaking homes and overall, most make good progress whilst in our schools and the immersion class. Currently we have not established a consistent way of tracking this progression into either of the two secondary schools. This is partly because the schools sit in two different local authorities and have developed different systems.
- We have a well-established, six-week transition programme that we offer to all year 6 learners in Welsh-medium education as they transition into year 7. This is run by the Youth Service and helps pupils develop the skills and confidence they need to make a successful transition into Year 7.
- The programme includes the following themes: team building, equality and diversity, peer pressure, on-line safety (including bullying), positive mental health and healthy relationships. The programme is delivered by a Welsh-speaking Youth worker who works in the school, and this ensures that learners have a familiar person they can go with any worries or concerns when they start secondary schools. The programme usually runs in both Welsh-medium schools however, this year it only ran in Y Ffin because Y Fenni decided not to participate.

Work with other local authorities

- We have not engaged well enough with other authorities in this area. This is because we feed into two secondary schools in different authorities. This means that we would have to manage two processes even within our schools and are reliant on the goodwill of the feeder schools to engage. Currently there is not capacity within the Monmouthshire team to engage purposefully in this work. However, we do plan to prioritise and progress this work during the coming year.

Transition arrangements from primary to secondary schools.

- Good progress has been made in increasing numbers of children attending nursery provision, particularly in Y Ffin. From September 2024, 61 children are expected to start at a Welsh-medium nursery compared to 40 in September 2022.
- Good progress has been made in securing effective transition with 100% number of children transferring from nursery into WM primary schools in September 2023.
- The proportion of pupils transferring into secondary WM education remains low at 60% for September 2023. This is particularly evident in Y Fenni, where just over half of pupils transfer to YGG.
- Currently, the number of places available for MCC pupils to continue their education through the medium of Welsh is sufficient to meet the demand.
- However, we are working in collaboration with Blaenau-Gwent, Torfaen, Merthyr and Powys to monitor pupil numbers transferring from Primary to Secondary school and whether an additional secondary school is required if Ysgol Gwynllyw reaches capacity. We have included this in years 7-9 of our SOP rolling programme.
- Preliminary discussions have taken place with MCC Early Years and Finance Managers on Welsh Government funded qualification routes within the Childcare Sector and these will form part of the MCC Post 16 curriculum from September 2024.
- The Youth service deliver a six-week enhanced transition programme at Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni and Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin to support transition from primary to secondary school. However, despite this and the work of the primary school to promote the benefits of continuing education through the medium of Welsh, rates of transition remain low, particularly into Ysgol Gwynllyw.

Work with transitional schools

- There are no transitional Welsh-medium schools in Monmouthshire at present. We have reached out to schools to encourage them to consider increasing their provision of Welsh and to meet with us to develop a plan to support them in doing so. However, to date, there are no schools who wish to pursue this option currently.
- During informal discussions with schools, the major barrier to increasing Welsh medium provision in Monmouthshire appears to be the recruitment of suitably qualified staff. Our recent experience in recruiting staff for Y Trefynwy emphasised the difficulties schools are facing in this area.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- Implementation and progress are monitored termly and reported to the Welsh in Education Forum and DMT.
- The WESP is taken to scrutiny on an annual basis where we give account for progress during the year.

RISKS

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- Transition rates between primary and secondary schools continue to decline, particularly in the north of the county. Further work is required to understand the reasons why parents are not opting for their child to transition to secondary Welsh medium.

- The lack of progression information for learners in Welsh-medium education in our secondary schools means that we are unable to monitor how well our learners are progressing from Year 7 upwards.
- Both Newport and Torfaen have confirmed that there are enough school places available for Monmouthshire pupils to attend YGG / YGGIC over the next 5 years. However, further work is needed to secure continuity in Welsh medium education in the longer term. Discussions with our partners on a long-term solution have commenced.

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

- Survey parents of WM pupils to determine the reasons for not choosing a transition into a Welsh-medium secondary school. Develop an action plan to address these areas where appropriate.
- We will continue to offer enhanced transition for year 6 pupils at our WM primary schools to support their move into a Welsh medium secondary school.
- Consider additional Welsh language immersion provision for Year 5 pupils in the summer term to support enhance transition arrangements and give pupils and parents greater confidence to continue their education through the medium of Welsh.
- Welsh language training has been offered to all childcare practitioners to increase the level of Welsh used in our English medium early education and childcare settings. We will continue to promote the benefits of bilingualism with these families and encourage them to consider Welsh medium education when they transition to primary school.
Level 2 childcare qualifications will be offered in our secondary schools from September 2024 as part of their post 16 curriculum, with the aim to increase the number of qualified childcare practitioners in the authority.

FORWARD LOOK

- Develop an action plan to address these areas reasons for not choosing a transition into a Welsh-medium secondary school. appropriate.
- Level 2 childcare qualifications will be offered in our secondary schools from September 2025 as part of their post 16 curriculum.
- Review immersion provision to include additional support to Year 5 learners.
- Ensure both Welsh-medium primary schools engage in the Youth Service six-week transition programme.
- Develop a regional approach to monitoring learner progression for Monmouthshire pupils from Year 7 upwards,

Outcome 4

More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

KEY ANNUAL DATA

The following table shows the language category for each school in Monmouthshire based on PLASC data.

School Type	English-medium	Welsh-medium
Primary School	28	2
Secondary School	4	0
PRU	1	0

2022/23 position	2023/24target	Current Position
26 students transferred to Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw or Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed.	41	27 (September 23)
20 students remaining in Welsh-medium sixth form. (Y12+Y13)	25	15 (Jan 24)
677 (91 %) pupils registered for GCSE second language Welsh	91%	90% (Summer 23)
72 (9%) pupils not registered for GCSE second language Welsh	9%	10% (Summer 23)
0 (0%) pupils registered for GCSE first language Welsh	1%	0%
12 students studying AS and A level Welsh language in Monmouthshire schools.	18	20 (June 24)
6 bilingual units available in Coleg Gwent in childcare, health and social care and public services (updated information required)	2	6
All four of our secondary schools are part of our developing MCC E-sgol network planning for first delivery in September 2024	4 subjects to be offered in Sept 2024	NA until 2025

OUTCOME SUMMARY

Please include your progress on this outcome during the second year of your WESP by responding to the following points.

Welsh courses and qualifications

- There are no Welsh-medium secondary schools in Monmouthshire. This means that all courses in secondary schools are delivered in English except for Welsh as a

second language. As we roll out our E-sgol offer from September 2024, we will be able to monitor the number of courses on offer and the uptake across the authority.

Collaboration with schools for external examinations

- GCSE Welsh second language is offered in all four of Monmouthshire's secondary schools, with nearly all pupils being assessed in the subject with many achieving a GCSE. 677 or 90% of the Year 11 cohort achieved a GCSE in Welsh in 2022/23. Pupils within Pupil Referral Services such as the Pupil Referral Unit and EOTAS, and those following a range of alternative provisions are generally not entered for this examination.
- Expertise in the teaching of Welsh Second Language at A level will be further developed through the collaborative delivery of the A Level across the county and an E-sgol supported professional learning group. E-sgol are a Welsh Government funded organisation who support the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum across schools in many local authorities and regions in Wales. Their expertise in hybrid learning was developed through the delivery of Welsh first and second language courses.

E-sgol provision

- All four secondary schools are core stakeholders in the Monmouthshire E-sgol Network scheduled to commence the delivery of learning in September 2024. In preparation, all schools have attended the E-sgol annual learning conference and several professional learning and planning sessions. A Level Second Language Welsh will be at the core of the Monmouthshire universal E-sgol offer.

Promotion of Welsh as a subject

- We have engaged with directorates across Monmouthshire County Council, our schools and further stakeholders, to develop post 16 Pathways to Employment programmes in Sport, Leisure, Play and Childcare. These innovative courses, based both in schools and in the workplace, were offered as part of the sixth form curriculum for 2024-25. Students following the Childcare programme have the opportunity to be placed in Welsh speaking settings as part of their course. Although sustainable cohorts did not coalesce for the coming academic year, all stake holders are committed to evaluate programmes ready for the 2025-26 post 16 transition cycle.
- The promotion group has identified capacity to support schools to promote the benefits of a bilingual education in future careers during the time when learners are making choices about options, A levels and further education pathways.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- Implementation and progress are monitored termly and reported to the Welsh in Education Forum and DMT.

- The WESP is taken to scrutiny on an annual basis where we give account for progress during the year.

RISKS

- The number of pupils transferring into WN secondary school does not increase at the expected rate, particularly in the Abergavenny area.
- Schools may not have the specialist teaching capacity to support an increase in the number of pupils studying and gaining a GCSE in Welsh.
- Students do not value the Welsh language enough to continue to study Welsh at AS or A level.
- The number of pupils choosing Welsh A level continues to become too small to make it an affordable and sustainable course for most of our schools.

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

- Develop a comprehensive strategy to ensure all learners appreciate the value of Welsh in future careers. For example, through social media and by supporting school careers events. All schools have included the benefits of studying Welsh language in their KS4 and Sixth Form prospectus, 'Next Step' assemblies, parents' meetings, sample lessons, careers events and open evenings.
- Continue to work with all four secondary schools to establish and embed the Monmouthshire E-sgol Network to commence the delivery of learning in September 2024. In preparation a Welsh Second Language Professional Learning Group has been set up with E-sgol's support. Expertise in Welsh teaching will be shared across Monmouthshire and with Welsh speaking networks across Wales.
- Include A Level Second Language Welsh at the core of the Monmouthshire universal E-sgol offer. Current data indicates that all four secondary schools have potential Year 12 AS cohorts for September 2024.

FORWARD LOOK

- Monitor and evaluate the impact of MCC E-sgol network on the availability and take up of Welsh Second Language A level in our secondary schools.
- Quality assure the learning and progress within collaboratively delivered E-sgol courses.
- Promote the benefits of collaborative learning programmes with all stakeholders including teachers, students and parents.
- Promote the availability, sustainability and uptake of Pathways to Employment programmes in our sixth forms, with a particular focus on Childcare and Welsh speaking placements.

Outcome 5

More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

KEY ANNUAL DATA

KEY ANNUAL DATA		
2022/23 position	2023/24target	Current position
Urdd use funding from MCC to deliver a range of courses and activities for young people. These include Youth clubs, transition programmes and residential courses	2 days a week support worker 2 six-week transition courses for Y Fenni and Y Ffin 25 young people to attend Welsh Language residential course	Average 1 day a week overall due to Urdd staff shortage 2 courses completed. No Monmouthshire young people attended the Welsh Language residential course.
2 (100%) of Welsh-medium primary schools with Siarter Iaith Silver	2 (100%)	2 (100%)
0 (0%) of Welsh-medium primary schools with Siarter Iaith Gold	1 (50%)	0 (100%)
2 Welsh-medium schools working towards the gold award		
30(100%) Primary engage in Siarter Iaith	30 (100%)	30(100%)
24(80%) of EM primary schools achieved Cymraeg Campus Bronze	24 (100%)	22 (78%)
2 EM primary schools awaiting verification. 4 English-medium primary schools working towards the bronze award.		
2 (7%) English-medium primary schools have achieved Cymraeg Campus Silver	12 (40%)	3 (11%)
23 English-medium primary Schools are working towards the silver award		
3 (11%) English-medium primary schools have achieved Cymraeg Campus Gold	3(11%)	0(0%)
3 English-medium primary schools are working towards the gold award		
100% secondary schools and PRU are working towards Cymraeg Campus Bronze	5(100%)	3(60%)
2(40%) secondary schools and PRU have achieved Cymraeg Campus Bronze	2 (40%)	2 (50%)
There are no secondary schools or the PRU engaged in Cymraeg Campus silver or gold award		

OUTCOME SUMMARY

Please include your progress on this outcome during the second year of your WESP by responding to the following points.

Support provided to schools

- To support schools, the EAS holds termly network meetings for Siarter Iaith coordinators in Welsh medium schools and for Welsh language leads in English medium schools. These opportunities provide delegates with updates on national developments, information about how to access partner support including the Urdd and Mentrau Iaith, regional resources and opportunities to hear about best practice from partner schools. Opportunities are also offered for visits to EAS partner schools within and beyond the local authority to observe best practice in action. St Mary's RC, Chepstow is a regional partner school (English medium)
- In the Welsh medium sector, school visits are offered to Ysgol Y Fenni and Ysgol Y Ffin on a termly basis.

Mapping of activities

- The EAS has held a partnership meeting with the Urdd and Mentrau Iaith to be able to share information about available opportunities with schools. Following a meeting between the EAS, Urdd Gwent and the Mentrau Iaith in the region, the EAS shared a one-page overview of the support available from the Urdd and two of the three Mentrau Iaith. Drop-in sessions were also offered for schools to get to know Urdd and Mentrau Iaith personnel and initiatives.
- The EAS has worked with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to run two regional 'Pam Cymraeg?' (Why Welsh?) events for Yr. 10 and 11 pupils in English medium schools and organised a joint session with Swansea and Aberystwyth universities for Year 12-13 pupils and their teachers. Pupils from Monmouthshire Comprehensive attended the event. Secondary schools in the region are encouraged to take advantage of the Welsh Language fund to support the teaching of A level Welsh.
- As part of their progress towards specific Siarter Iaith targets for culture, community and leadership of the learners, the Monmouth Cluster held their 2nd Cluster Eisteddfod at the Bridges Centre, Monmouth which was led by the Criw Cymraeg from each school. The EAS supported adjudication.
- Information is shared about the provision of Cewri Cymru and a number of schools in the region take advantage of this provision.
- Information received from Welsh Government and other network meeting partners are also shared via MS Teams (regional and national).
- We have mapped out provision for pupils and families in each main town. Currently there is a range of provision available in Abergavenny and Caldicot however provision is limited in both the Chepstow and Monmouth area. Coleg Gwent offer a wide range of Welsh language courses that are easily accessible to students and adults and could support the development of language skills across the board.

- This information is used to develop our action plan to ensure that we have provision in all four main towns and particularly in Monmouth where our seedling school will be established.
- We are trialling the feasibility of delivering some of the summer courses available to young people in Monmouthshire bilingually. We hope to do this by recruiting Welsh Language speakers from our secondary schools and our partner Welsh language schools to deliver the courses through the medium of Welsh as well as in English.
- In Monmouthshire, 200 pupils are members of the Urdd across the following primary schools: Y Fenni, Y Ffin, Cross Ask, Archbishop Rowan Williams, Goytre Fawr and Cantref and in King Henry VII 3-19 school. As a result, many pupils benefit for the opportunity to participate in the Urdd Eisteddfod, sporting activities and residential visits where they can practice their Welsh language skills.
- Unfortunately, no Monmouthshire young people participated in the Welsh language residential course.
- The Urdd provide a Welsh-speaking Youth worker through our service level agreement. This means that they can support our learners well to make a successful transition into secondary school. This year, Y Fenni withdrew from this programme and as a result, opportunities to provide opportunities to use the Welsh language were missed.

Impact of Siarter Iaith

- The EAS continues to evaluate progress and conducted an evaluation of impact on schools across the region in summer 2023. Progress is slow in English medium schools. The impact of COVID has meant a need to re-establish Welsh language teaching in schools and this has been the main priority for schools. However, the ethos and culture of a school is a vital step in encouraging positive attitudes towards the language therefore slow progress may be reflective of the priority given to Welsh in schools. Where the Siarter Iaith framework is fully implemented and adopted by all school stakeholders, the impact is strong.

Support for learners

- All schools are encouraged to be involved in regionally coordinated celebrations of the Welsh language and culture e.g. Dydd Miwsig Cymru, St David's day. Regional certificates of engagement were shared with participating schools with their school based celebratory activity shared on social media.

Engagement with regional celebrations (WM &EM):

Seren a Sbarc Day (May 2024): 1 school

Dydd Miwsig Cymru Celebration (February 2024): 7 schools

Diwrnod Shwmae Su'mae Celebration (October 2023): 15 schools

Celebrating success

- The EAS uses the X platform to celebrate Siarter Iaith and Cymraeg Campus activity daily. Tweets celebrating new Siarter Iaith school awards involve the local authority to provide the opportunity to promote successes.

- The local authority uses its website and social media platforms to promote school activities and those organised by wider partners to promote opportunities to speak Welsh in a range of contexts.

Training for the school workforce

- In the Welsh-medium sector, training is provided through Headteacher meetings, Language Charter, and literacy leaders meeting. Provision in the English-medium primary sector includes staff meetings, senior leadership meeting, language coordinator meetings, and cluster strategic leads network meetings.
- The professional learning programme for leaders in English medium Welsh schools includes a section about developing a school's vision and ethos and includes a section about the Language Charter/Welsh Campus. In the English medium secondary sector, specific professional learning sessions are held for members of the senior leadership team and Welsh departments. Tailored sessions are offered to respond to the needs of individual organisations. The school based open door practice sharing sessions are rich and popular experiences that add to the above provision across sectors.
- A project was actioned with the region's Welsh-medium primary schools: creating a Padlet for parents and carers to share information about the Siarter Iaith and Sbarc a Seren, annual celebrations. The resource refers parents and carers to materials that can support their children's linguistic development as well, e.g., Tric and Chlic materials and reading resources. The resource was launched by the schools as part of their St David's Day celebrations.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- Implementation and progress are monitored termly and reported to the Welsh in Education Forum and DMT.
- The WESP is taken to scrutiny on an annual basis where we give account for progress during the year.

RISKS

- Changes to the regional support model may reduce the level of Welsh language support for our Welsh and English medium schools.
- We rely on external partners such as the Urdd to offer a broader range of experiences for our learners. If this was reduced, this would limit the opportunities for learners to use Welsh in their communities.
- Reduction in school budgets may mean that participation in residential courses and regional eisteddfods is less frequent due to costs.

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

- The LA will explore additional funding structures and programmes to ensure continuation of provision.
- Continue to monitor and evaluate the impact of the Urdd on learner and young peoples' engagement in opportunities to use the Welsh language in a range of contexts.

FORWARD LOOK

- Ongoing school support in line with the regional approach and regional networking.
- Ongoing opportunities for schools to see best practice in action in regional Curriculum Partner schools for Welsh.
- Ongoing verification activity in line with schools' progress in the Starter Iaith programme.
- Work with internal and external partners to increase the range of opportunities for learners to use Welsh purposefully in all Monmouthshire four clusters.

Outcome 6

An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

KEY ANNUAL DATA

The number of children with school-based IDPs in Monmouthshire Welsh medium provision are,

- Ysgol y Fenni – 6 (2.2% of school population)
- Ysgol y Ffin – 2 (1.4% of school population)
 - Neither setting has any LA IDPs.
 - There are no MCC pupils with LA IDPs in either Gwynllyw or Is Coed.

OUTCOME SUMMARY

Please include your progress on this outcome during the second year of your WESP by responding to the following points.

Progress against your duty under section 63 of the ALNET (Wales)

- A review of Welsh-medium ALN provision took place over the spring and summer term 2024. A report has been written, which includes a gap analysis of the existing resources and where there are 'insufficiencies' in Monmouthshire Welsh medium primary schools. This has been submitted to be considered by Monmouthshire's Children and Young People's Directorate Management Team
- The report describes how coordinated meetings were arranged with the Additional Learning Needs Coordinators (ALNCOs) and Head Teachers at Ysgol Y Fenni and Ysgol Y Ffin schools. During these meetings, school staff audited their existing Welsh language resources and the impact these resources / interventions have on children to meet their identified ALN. Subsequently, recommendations have been provided to address the insufficiencies in Welsh resources for pupils with ALN, focusing on literacy, numeracy, and wellbeing.
- Recommendations contained in the report include investment in additional Welsh language ALN resources to ensure comprehensive support for ALN pupils in Monmouthshire and release time for collaboration between the two Welsh medium primary schools and the new 'seedling' Welsh medium setting. The report recognises the importance of collaboration, including the allocation of release time for educators facilitating effective teamwork and resource sharing. Specifically offering professional learning time for broader collaboration and training would enhance professional development and foster a cohesive approach to supporting ALN pupils.

Progress of actions arising from the review

- As a result of the ALN / ALP review, a gap in Welsh language resources specifically tailored for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) was identified. The report identifies that this is a Wales wide insufficiency and although money has been granted to fund projects to remedy this, not all projects are completed.

Use data to identify patterns and trends.

- A majority of children with ALN in Monmouthshire are educated in mainstream provision. Monmouthshire's Early Years Team, comprising of Advisory Teachers and Educational Psychologists, would identify children with ALN and support their transition into school. Where highly complex ALN has been identified, parents may consider English medium specialist provision, however if parental choice is to remain in mainstream Welsh medium provision, this would be supported by the local authority and school.
- There is a pattern emerging regarding transition of pupils with ALN from Welsh medium primary education to secondary education, which appears to favour English medium secondary education over Welsh medium secondary education. forward.
- Between 2022- 2024 five pupils with Statements of SEN or IDPs have transferred from Welsh medium primary schools to English medium secondary schools. In 2024 one pupil with an IDP will be transferring from a Welsh medium primary school to a Welsh medium secondary school. This will be monitored and analysed going

Work with other local authorities

- As part of the review, discussions were held with colleagues regionally and nationally. The Officer responsible for undertaking the review is committed to continuing to work with colleagues across Wales and the ALN National Implementation Lead (Welsh Language) to share expertise and develop Welsh language provision and resources.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- Progress with regard to ALN provision will be monitored through the local authority ALN Quality Assurance process, which applies to all maintained mainstream schools, including Welsh Medium primary schools.
- Implementation and progress are monitored termly and reported to the Welsh in Education Forum and DMT.
- The WESP is taken to scrutiny on an annual basis where we give account for progress during the year.

RISKS

- There are several competing demands on Monmouthshire's education budget. Financial resources are required to fund improvements to Welsh medium resources and training and will need to be prioritised.
- Difficulties in recruiting Welsh-speaking staff to support ALN pupils in Welsh medium schools mean that in some cases pupils may not receive support in their preferred language.

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

- Monmouthshire will be proactive in looking at ways of maximising available resources to ensure provision for ALN resources for Welsh medium primary schools are enhanced, this will include collaboration with regional and national partners.

- The ALN team will continue to provide ALN training and support for staff in Welsh-medium schools to build the skills of the existing workforce.

FORWARD LOOK

- Monmouthshire's CYP DMT will consider recommendations from the ALN ALP review report and request to fund Welsh-medium ALN resources/training
- Monmouthshire LA /Schools to look at how release time for collaboration between the Welsh-medium schools can be agreed and sustained.
- ALNCOs from the Welsh medium primary schools will work with Monmouthshire's Quality Assurance and Partnership lead on quality assurance policies and processes.

Outcome 7

Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh

KEY ANNUAL DATA

Welsh language skills in English-medium primary schools PLASC

	Baseline (%)	2023-24 Target (%)	2023-24 Actual (%)
No Skills	1.0	0	1.5
Entry Level Skills	24.4	20	27.3
Foundation Level Skills	55.6	40	43.9
Intermediate Level Skills	15.1	35	15.2
Advanced	1.9	3%	1.5
Proficient	1.6	2	9.1

Welsh Language Skills in English-medium secondary schools PLASC.

	Baseline (%)	2023-24 Target (%)	2023-24 Actual (%)
No Skills	66.1	40	63.9
Entry Level Skills	19.0	30	21.3
Foundation Level Skills	7.1	15	6.6
Intermediate Level Skills	0.6	5	1.6
Advanced	2.3	5	1.6
Proficient	4.8	5	3.3

Welsh Speaking Teachers working in Monmouthshire Schools.

	2023-24 Target	2023-24 Actual
Welsh speaking teachers work in Welsh-medium schools in Monmouthshire.	20	25
Welsh speaking support staff work in Welsh-medium schools in Monmouthshire.	23	24

Welsh Language Skills Across LA (not including school staff):

Level of Language skills	2023-24 Target	2023-24 Actual
Beginner	188	212
Advanced Beginner	36	25
Intermediate	50	38
Advanced	7	5
Fluent	49	43
Total	330	323

Teacher Participation in Sabbatical Courses

2022/23 Position	2023/24 target	Current position
10 teachers completed Welsh in a year intensive sabbatical	30 teachers complete the Welsh in a year intensive sabbatical	21 teachers have completed Welsh in a year intensive sabbatical (5 in 2023/24)

OUTCOME SUMMARY

Please include your progress on this outcome during the second year of your WESP by responding to the following points.

Vacancies in the local authority

- During 2023-2024 97 school vacant school posts were advertised as being Welsh language desirable and 20 posts advertised as Welsh language essential.
- In the case of Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy, attracting suitable candidates for the Headteacher post and successfully recruiting for the position has proven challenging.

Identifying additional workforce needs

- We have reviewed staffing across our two existing schools and Y Trefynwy. During this current WESP/5-year work plan, we anticipate we will need the following based on the current growth profile in all three schools, current staffing levels and the projected reduction in the birth rate across the county.

Y Fenni

- The school has sufficient staff capacity to manage current pupil numbers and to manage an increase of up to 80 pupils based on current staffing levels and class sizes. It is unlikely that the school will increase its pupil numbers significantly until after it moves onto the new site, which is anticipated to be towards the end of 2025 and near to the end of our WESP/5-year plan.

Y Ffin

- The school population is growing and whilst staffing is sufficient at present, we are likely to need another teacher and teaching assistant within the next two years.

Y Trefynwy

- We have sufficient staffing for the first two years. However, we will need to appoint a substantive Headteacher, and it is likely that we will need to appoint another teacher and a teaching assistant within this current WESP/5-year plan.

Late Immersion

- We will need to appoint a Teacher and Teaching assistant to lead the second immersion class.
- Overall, this means that we will need to recruit the following additional staff

Headteacher	1
Teacher	3
Teaching Assistant	3

- We will be working with the National Centre for Learning Welsh to enhance the Welsh language skills of teachers who have completed the Welsh in a year course, so that they can work in a Welsh-medium school if they wish to do so. In this way we will begin to develop our Welsh-medium capacity within the county.

Identifying specialist workforce for Additional Learning Needs.

- Recruitment of Welsh speakers is a challenge when looking to fill specialist positions. Within the broad Inclusion Service there is one Welsh speaking Specialist Teacher. We continue to follow recruitment guidance to try to attract Welsh speakers, and always highlight the importance of Welsh, as well as continually promoting our offer around professional learning for Welsh language to all interested existing staff, potential applicants and new starters.
- In terms of Welsh language specialists including Educational Psychologists, this remains a national challenge, but we do have access to a Welsh speaking EP if needed.
- We include consideration of Welsh medium provision, as part of our tracking/ forecasting our most complex learners with ALN to support us to ensure we have 'sufficient' provision in the future (i.e. SRB provision) as needed.
- As part of our ongoing partnership work with the Autism Education Trust, we have developed materials, resources and training in both Welsh and English to enhance our good autism practice and to develop our workforce in English and Welsh medium provision for children with additional learning needs.

Progression for students

- We have engaged with directorates across Monmouthshire County Council, our schools and further stakeholders, to develop post 16 Pathways to Employment programmes in Sport, Leisure, Play and Childcare. These innovative courses, based both in schools and in the workplace, were offered as part of the sixth form curriculum for 2024-25. Students following the Childcare programme have the opportunity to be placed in Welsh speaking settings as part of their course.

- Although sustainable cohorts did not coalesce for the coming academic year, all stake holders are committed to evaluate programmes ready for the 2025-26 post 16 transition.
- Expertise in the teaching of Welsh Second Language at A level will be further developed through the collaborative delivery of the A Level across the county and an E-sgol supported professional learning group. E-sgol are a Welsh Government funded organisation who support the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum across schools in many local authorities and regions in Wales. Their expertise in hybrid learning was developed through the delivery of Welsh first and second language courses.

Working with other local authorities to secure school leadership

- We have mapped out leadership needs within the local authority but have not yet extended this work across the region. However, after struggling to recruit a suitably qualified Welsh speaker to lead new school despite significant efforts to promote the role and making the salary very competitive. We successfully worked with regional partners to secure a secondment for an Executive Headteacher to enable us to open Y Trefynwy in September 2024. However, this process identified the fact that there are limited numbers of suitably qualified Welsh speaking leaders available in Monmouthshire area and potentially across the region and was particularly evident during our recruitment processes when several schools in the region were competing for a small number of candidates.
- During the process, we gained useful information about the challenges other partners are having in securing Welsh-medium leadership. As a result, we have revisited our requirements for our five-year plan as indicated above. We know that we will need to secure long-term substantive leadership for Y Trefynwy in the future and have started work to secure this which includes continuing to work with our regional partners. As part of this work, we hope to identify the needs across the region as well as looking at growing the number of NPQH qualified future school leaders over the next year. This will include mapping out Headteacher needs with other local authorities and considering alternative models of leadership.
- The EAS is supporting the development of education practitioners along the professional learning pathway. Practitioners from Welsh medium schools are supported to progress to HLTA status, middle leadership, senior leadership, preparing for headship and NPQH. Provision is available through the medium of Welsh or bilingually.

Collaboration with wider partners to promote training

- The EAS continues to successfully promote and recruit to the Sabbatical Scheme and supports schools and clusters to build capacity based on the expertise of trained practitioners post programme. Estyn has captured a best practice case study on the approach being taken by St Mary's RC, Chepstow to building capacity within the school and this is being shared widely. The St Mary's case study refers to regional partnership working.
- Schools are provided with additional delegated funding, through EAS business planning, to enable practitioners develop their expertise, skills and increase capacity within school's post programme. Initiatives such as the regional

Sabbatical Champion's model provides funding for past participants to develop resources for other schools and engage in regional promotional activity such as the sharing of experience at networks and professional learning to encourage application for the Sabbatical Scheme. 3 of the 4 EAS strategic cluster leads for Welsh are past sabbatical graduates. They have a role in promoting professional learning, including the Sabbatical Scheme and the provision from the National Centre for Learning Welsh. They also have a role in providing basic training to the education workforce, this includes TAs. The EAS continues to promote the offer from the National Centre for Learning Welsh via headteacher bulletins, networks, their own professional learning offer, website and @EAS_Cymraeg.

Collaboration with wider partners to improve data collection

- To support the accurate collection of data, the purpose of the SWAC in relation to planning professional learning has been outlined by the EAS via networking support opportunities to the Strategic Cluster Leads for Welsh and Welsh language coordinators. A video to support this understanding has been shared via cluster leads and via MS Teams for senior leaders.
[Planning for the development of staff language skills Welsh.mp4 - Google Drive](#)
- Grant planning sessions for Headteachers include guidance on the appropriate expenditure of delegated Welsh in education funding and this is discussed in relation to needs identification via SWAC. The EAS regional professional learning sessions for Headteachers 'Strategic development and evaluation of Welsh', includes guidance on SWAC and all supporting leadership documentation includes questions to prompt the effective audit of practitioners' language skills along the Welsh language competency framework and the use of SWAC.
[Supporting Welsh in EM Schools.pdf - Google Drive](#) and [SLO Welsh EAS FINAL \(new branding\).pdf - Google Drive](#)

Work with partners to improve teaching skills through the medium of Welsh.

- The EAS has developed a professional learning offer that supports education practitioners with opportunities to develop their understanding and ability to teach Welsh and through the medium of Welsh (Welsh and English medium schools). This includes universal and bespoke support to schools and clusters on language acquisition and immersion techniques. The EAS professional learning offer for 2024-25 has been shared with all Monmouthshire schools in a bespoke EAS LA Marketplace event for Monmouthshire on 12.7.24.
- Cross consortia working enables Welsh medium schools to engage with professional learning from other providers e.g. collaboration between EAS and CSC on secondary Welsh medium development (the Gyda'n Gilydd partnership). It also enables access to professional learning from further afield e.g. the recent GWE Ein Llais Ni provision.

Further information

- The local authority has completed a staff survey to determine the Welsh language skills of the workforce and is in the process of analysing the information. This is being used to designate additional posts as Welsh language

essential which in turn will give residence a higher degree of confidence that they can interact with the Council in Welsh as well as see the benefit of the language.

- LA Staff are incentivised to take Welsh language lessons as they are provided free from the authority and are given the time to study. We have explored options for other incentives, but these are limited by the existence of National terms and conditions as set out in the Green Book. However, all staff have opportunities to participate in Welsh language courses from beginner level to advanced level. From Sept 23 we had 40 staff members sign up for a Welsh language course which is an increase from the previous year. It is too early to determine the impact of this training.

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- Implementation and progress are monitored termly and reported to the Welsh in Education Forum and DMT.
- The WESP is taken to scrutiny on an annual basis where we give account for progress during the year.

RISKS

- There will not be enough school staff to work in our Welsh medium schools as the demand grows.
- There will not be enough Welsh speaking specialist staff to support learners with ALN and their families.
- Secondary schools will be unable to fulfil a statutory element of the curriculum if there are not enough teachers with the skills to deliver Welsh GCSE.

ASSURANCE / MITIGATION ACTION

- Continue to analyse the Welsh language skills of the local authority workforce to identify training needs and gaps in service areas for example by targeting certain posts as Welsh essential and actively promoting on Welsh language recruitment sites.
- Undertake regular analysis of data sources including staffing lists and pupil projections to understand the trends in demand for Welsh-medium teachers and project future needs as demand increases, particularly when our third Welsh-medium school opens in Monmouth.
- Further develop opportunities through joint working between Initial Teacher Training and Education (ITET) providers, the regional consortia and other work-based learning providers to recruit suitably experienced and qualified staff.
- Engage with careers events in schools and colleges as well as in the community to promote the opportunities in teaching with the Welsh Language.
- Continue to provide and promote Welsh language courses at all levels for local authority staff to increase the number of staff able to speak Welsh which in turn will increase the confidence of the public to be able use the Welsh language within their interactions with the Council. We will be able to tell this by measuring the number of calls to the authorities contact centre using the dedicated Welsh language line.
- Recruitment of Welsh speakers is a challenge when looking to fill specialist positions. Within the broad Inclusion Service there is one Welsh speaking

Specialist Teacher. We continue to follow recruitment guidance to try to attract Welsh speakers, and always highlight the importance of Welsh, as well as continually promoting our offer around professional learning for Welsh language to all interested existing staff, potential applicants and new starters.

- In terms of Welsh language specialists including Educational Psychologists, this remains a national challenge, but we do have access to a Welsh speaking EP if needed.
- We include consideration of Welsh medium provision, as part of our tracking/ forecasting our most complex learners with ALN to support us to ensure we have 'sufficient' provision in the future (i.e. SRB provision) as needed.
- As part of our ongoing partnership work with the Autism Education Trust, we have developed materials, resources and training in both Welsh and English to enhance our good autism practice and to develop our workforce in English and Welsh medium provision for children with additional learning needs.

FORWARD LOOK

- We will continue to work closely with EAS to encourage school-based staff to develop their Welsh language skills. The Cwrs Sabothol will continue to be promoted as well as courses offered through learnwelsh.cymru for the education workforce.
- The LA will soon be launching our new training platform Thingi, which is a part of a consortia which will not only improve the way Welsh language training is provided to staff but will also allow us to offer a wider variety of training materials. The new platform will also allow us to monitor more easily which members of staff have completed training and mandatory training such as Welsh Language Awareness will be assigned as a mandatory requirement within staff's personal development plans.
- We look to integrate LA staff reporting of their Welsh language skills into our new training platform, Thingi. Staff will be able to annually report their Welsh language proficiency upon completing their Welsh language awareness training. This will allow for a better understanding of the Welsh language skills across the authority and can help us better identify where further skills are needed.
- We have developed a new People Strategy for the organisation. This re-enforces the strategic aspirations in the WESP with a clear commitment to improve workforce planning and promotion to help us overcome skills shortages.
- Recruitment of Welsh speakers is a challenge when looking to fill specialist positions. Within the broad Inclusion Service there is one Welsh speaking Specialist Teacher. We continue to follow recruitment guidance to try to attract Welsh speakers, and always highlight the importance of Welsh, as well as continually promoting our offer around professional learning for Welsh language to all interested existing staff, potential applicants and new starters.
- In terms of Welsh language specialists including Educational Psychologists, this remains a national challenge, but we do have access to a Welsh speaking EP if needed. We include consideration of Welsh medium provision, as part of our tracking/ forecasting our most complex learners with ALN to support us to ensure we have 'sufficient' provision in the future (i.e. SRB provision) as needed.

- As part of our ongoing partnership work with the Autism Education Trust, we have developed materials, resources and training in both Welsh and English to enhance our good autism practice and to develop our workforce in English and Welsh medium provision for children with additional learning needs.

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee				
(Meetings at 10am unless stated otherwise)				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
Special Meeting 8th October 2024 (Invite People Scrutiny)	Development of Children's Placements Policy	To review progress on implementation of the policy.	Jane Rodgers Cllr Chandler	Performance Monitoring
	Chief Officer for Social Care Annual Monitoring Report	To scrutinise the progress and strategic direction for the service area.	Jane Rodgers Cllr Chandler	Performance Monitoring
	Safeguarding Annual Report	To scrutinise the performance of safeguarding arrangements.	Jane Rodgers Cllr Chandler	Performance Monitoring
15th October 2024 at 2pm	Socially Responsible Procurement strategy	To review progress of the strategy.	Gemma Ellis Scott James John Paxton Cath Fallon Cllr Brocklesby	Performance Monitoring
	Revised NEET Reduction Strategy	To scrutinise the revised strategy prior to Cabinet decision.	Hannah Jones Louise Wilce Cllr Griffiths	Performance Monitoring / Policy Development
	WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan)	To scrutinise performance against the plans.	Sharon Randall Smith Will McLean Cllr Groucott	Performance Monitoring

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee (Meetings at 10am unless stated otherwise)				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
19 th November 2024	Month 6 Budget Monitoring	To scrutinise the budgetary position (revenue and capital) for services falling within the committee's remit at Month 6.	Jonathan Davies Peter Davies Cllr Callard	Budget Monitoring
	School Exclusions	To scrutinise the latest figures and the Council's performance.	Morwenna Wagstaff Will McLean Cllr Groucott	Performance Monitoring
	Community & Corporate Plan progress update	To inform members of the plan's progress at the six-month stage.	Richard Jones Hannah Carter	Performance Monitoring
11 th February 2025	Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	To scrutinise the 2025/26 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals.	Jonathan Davies Peter Davies Cllr Callard	Budget Monitoring
	Month 9 Budget Monitoring	To scrutinise the budgetary position (revenue and capital) for services falling within the committee's remit at Month 9.	Jonathan Davies Peter Davies Cllr Callard	Budget Monitoring
	Complaints Process	<i>To scrutinise the performance of the Council's complaints process, and issues raised by it.</i>	<i>Annette Evans Cllr Sandles</i>	<i>Performance Monitoring</i>
11 th March 2025				
29 th April 2025 <i>(provisional)</i>				
10 th June 2025 <i>(provisional)</i>				

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee (Meetings at 10am unless stated otherwise)				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
To be confirmed (Spring 25)	Alternative Learning Provision/Specialist Resource Bases	Follow up from May 24 report: Scrutiny of MCC Alternative Learning Provision/Specialist Resource Bases.	Morwenna Wagstaff Will McLean Cllr Groucott	Performance Reporting
To be confirmed	Recruitment and retention	Effect on the Council's performance and ability to deliver.		
To be confirmed	Use of Reserves	Future proofing and resilience planning as well as supporting long-term strategic priorities.	Peter Davies Jonathan Davies Cllr Callard	
To be confirmed (early 25?)	Strategic Equality Plan AMR			
Corporate and Community Plan Items for the Committee's consideration for inclusion into the P&O Scrutiny Forward Plan:				
Social Justice Strategy progress and Tackling Poverty and Inequality Plan				
Business Monmouthshire Project monitoring				
'Learning led' review of educational provision in Chepstow				

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2024-25

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee		(Meetings at 10am unless stated otherwise)		
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
Review of Property Assets				

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee

Action List

11th July 2024

Minute Item:	Subject	Officer / Member	Outcome
1	To clarify the plans for Councillor Fookes' membership of the committee henceforth	Robert McGowan / Cllr Fookes, Cllr Crook	Councillor Garratt is to replace Councillor Fookes.
4	Request for further member training on digital platforms to the Democratic Services Committee	Robert McGowan / John Pearson	Request sent to John Pearson.
5	Find out from HR if Welsh language can be a deterrent to cross-border applicants	Nia Roberts, Pennie Walker	Response sent to members 13 th August.
5	Respond with further detail as to our capacity to provide an active offer if someone asks for Welsh in social care	Nia Roberts, Pennie Walker	Response sent to members 13 th August.

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Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee

Action List

16th July 2024

Minute Item:	Subject	Officer / Member	Outcome
4	To send list of suggested changes and improvement e.g. missing data etc.	Robert McGowan / Jill Bond	Done.
4	To check the report for informal writing e.g. word contractions	Robert McGowan	Done.
4	To look at FWP for items raised for further scrutiny	Scrutiny officers	Done.

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Committee / Decision Maker	Meeting date / Decision due	Report Title	de	Purpose	Author	Date item added to the planner
Cabinet	Jan-TBC	2025/26 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	10-Jul-24
Cabinet	Jan-25	2025/26 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Council	01-Jul-25	RLDP for Adoption	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To adopt the RLDP following receipt of the Inspector's report, making it the County's Development Plan as defined by S38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004	Mark Hand / Rachel Lewis	23-Aug-22
Cabinet	05-May-25	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
ICMD	09-Apr-25	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 4	Ben Callard - Resources			
Council	06-Mar-25	2025/26 Final Budget sign off including CT resolution	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24
Council	06-Mar-25	2025/26 Capital Strategy & Treasury Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24
Cabinet	05-Mar-25	2025/26 Final Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	05-Mar-25	2024/25 Revenue and Capital Monitoring Month 9	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	05-Mar-25	2025/26 WCF/Mon Farm Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24

ICMD	29-Jan-25	2025/26 Community Council and Police Precepts final	Ben Callard - Resources			
Council	23-Jan-25	Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2025/26	Ben Callard - Resources			Jon Davies 13-Jun-24
ICMD	15-Jan-25	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 3	Ben Callard - Resources			Dave Jarrett 13-Jun-24
ICMD	18-Dec-24	2025/26 Community Council and Police Precepts draft	Ben Callard - Resources			Jon Davies 13-Jun-24
ICMD	18-Dec-24	Council Tax Base 2025/26	Ben Callard - Resources			Ruth Donovan
Council	12-Dec-24	Remuneration Report				Julie Anthony 30-Sep-24
Council	12-Dec-24	Deforestation Free Champion Council				Hazel Clatworthy 4-Oct-24
Cabinet	04-Dec-24	2024/25 Revenue and Capital Monitoring Month 6	Ben Callard - Resources			Jon Davies 4-Jun-24
Cabinet	04-Dec-24	PSOW Annual letter 2023-24				Annette Evans 1-Oct-24
Cabinet	04-Dec-24	Shire Hall Museum, Monmouth			To update Cabinet on progress of the National Lottery Heritage Fund development phase and consider options for the stage 2 delivery bid	Tracey Thomas 23-May-24
Cabinet	04-Dec-24	UK Shared Prosperity Fund post March 2025 – financial implications and impact	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy			Hannah Jones 10-Jul-24

Cabinet	06-Nov-24	Local Flood Risk Management Strateg			Mark Hand	19-Feb-24
Cabinet	06-Nov-24	Monmouth Churches Petition			Ian Bakewell	1-Oct-24
Cabinet	06-Nov-24	Monmouthshire NEET Prevention Strategy			Louise Wilce	10-Jun-24
Council	24-Oct-24	RLDP			Craig O'Connor	
Council	24-Oct-24	Safeguarding report – Social Care & Health			Jane Rodgers	4-Jun-24
Council	24-Oct-24	Statement of Gambling Policy and proposals for casinos			Linda O Gorman	9-Jul-24
Council	24-Oct-24	Standards Committee Annual Report			James Williams	4-Oct-24
Council	24-Oct-24	Chief Officer report – Social Care & Health			Jane Rodgers	4-Jun-24
ICMD	23-Oct-24	UWN Land Charge			Amy Longford	25-Sep-24
ICMD	23-Oct-24	Welsh Church FundWorking Group - meeting 2	Ben Callard - Resources		Dave Jarrett	13-Jun-24
Cabinet	16-Oct-24	2025/26 Revenue and Capital MTFP update and process	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24

Cabinet	16-Oct-24	2024/25 Revenue Monitoring Month 4	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Daviea	4-Jun-24
ICMD	09-Oct-24	Building at Risk Strategy	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Craig O'Connor	28-Aug-24
Cabinet	25-Sep-24	People with Care Experience			John Pearson	
Council	19-Sep-24	Appointment to Outside Body			Charlotte Drury	
Council	19-Sep-24	Self-assessment report – People, Performance and Partnerships		To appoint a Monmouthshire Councillor to be a representative on the Rachel Herbert's School Endowment Charity.	John Pearson	
Council	19-Sep-24	Gov & Audit Annual Report			Matt Gatehouse	4-Jun-24
Council	19-Sep-24	Home to School Transport – response to consultation			Andrew Blackmore	21-Jun-24
Cabinet	11-Sep-24	Measurement Framework	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Deb Hill Howells	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	11-Sep-24	Consultation on the relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To approve an update to the measurement framework that enables Cabinet to track progress against the priorities in the community and corporate plan	Matt Gatehouse	7-Jun-24
Cabinet	11-Sep-24	USE OF SECTION 106 FROM N584 LAND AT FORENSIC SCIENCE CHEPSTOW	Martyn Groucutt - Education		Matt Jones	
Cabinet	11-Sep-24	Authorisation of Proper Officers - Public Protection, Environmental Health (Communicable Disease)		To receive feedback on the statutory consultation concerning the proposed relocation and increase in capacity of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni.	Christian Schmidt	7-Aug-24

ICMD	11-Sep-24	Monmouthshire Local Toilets Strategy - revised version 2024	Angela Sandles - Engagement		Louise Driscoll
ICMD	11-Sep-24	GRT sites	Angela Sandles - Engagement		David H Jones
Cabinet	21-Aug-24	Future of the former Tudor Street Day Centre, Abergavenny	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		4-Jun-24
Cabinet	21-Aug-24	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 1			Nick Keyse
ICMD	21-Aug-24	Increasing Building Regulations Charges	Ben Callard - Resources		Dave Jarrett 6-Jun-24
ICMD	21-Aug-24	Gypsy & Traveller Site Identification	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		nigel george
Cabinet	21-Aug-24	Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee ~ Feedback to Cabinet of Meeting held on 16th July 2024			Frances O'Brien
Cabinet	21-Aug-24	Older People's Champion			Alistair Neill
Council	18-Jul-24	Chief Officer report – Children and Young People	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	To formally appoint to the role of Age Friendly champion in line with the commitment made by Council in January of this year and to provide a brief update on work done towards making Monmouthshire an age friendly county	Matthew Gatehouse / Jane Rodgers 27-Jun-24
Council	18-Jul-24	Medium Term Financial Strategy			Will McLean 4-Jun-24
Council	18-Jul-24	Budden Crescent business case	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies 4-Jun-24

Cabinet	17-Jul-24	Feedback from P&O Scrutiny	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Jane Rodgers	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	17-Jul-24	Connected Care report – Social Care and Health (possible Sept)				26-Jun-24
Cabinet	17-Jul-24	Digital and Data Strategy	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Jane Rodgers	4-Jul-24
Cabinet	17-Jul-24	Revenue and Capital monitoring outturn report (including early update on 2024/25)	Ben Callard - Resources			10-Jun-24
Cabinet	17-Jul-24	SPEED LIMIT PROPOSALS – AMENDMENT ORDER NO. 14	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	10-May-24
ICMD	10-Jul-24	Whole Authority Strategic Risk Assessment	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	This report seeks Cabinet Member approval to proceed with several Traffic Orders throughout the County.	Graham Kinsella	
Cabinet	05-Jun-24	People Strategy		To provide cabinet with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority and to agree the revised strategic risk management policy	Richard Jones	26-Apr-24
Cabinet	05-Jun-24	Consultation on the relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek Cabinet approval of a revised people strategy, which is one of a suite of enabling strategies that sit underneath the community and corporate plan to ensure the authorities resources are aligned with the delivery of its purpose.	Matt Gatehouse	1-May-24
Cabinet	05-Jun-24	Feedback from P&O Scrutiny	Martyn Groucutt - Education	To receive feedback on the statutory consultation concerning the proposed relocation and increase in capacity of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni.	Matthew Jones	26-Feb-24
Cabinet	22-May-24	Strategy for Commissioned Domiciliary Care in Monmouthshire		Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee – Feedback to Cabinet of Meeting held on 14th May 2024	Hazel Ilett	14-May-24
Cabinet	22-May-24	Council Tax Assistance for MCC Foster Carers	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Ceri York	24-Apr-24

ICMD	22-May-24	Florence Jones Report & FGE	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	The purpose of this paper is to present the case for providing Monmouthshire County Council foster carers with a subsidy on their council tax.	Jane Rodgers	8-May-24
ICMD	22-May-24	Political Balance Report	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	to consider the options in relation to the collection of monies secured under a land charge on land at and- including Upper House Farm, Wonastow, Monmouth	Amy Longford	30-Apr-24
Council	16-May-24	Appointments to Committees	Angela Sandles - Engagement		James Williams	
Council	16-May-24	Outside Bodies	Angela Sandles - Engagement		James Williams	
Council	16-May-24	Uploading S106 Capital Sums into 2024/25 Capital Budget	Angela Sandles - Engagement		James Williams	
Cabinet	15-May-24	Development of a Supported Accommodation Project for care experienced young people	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Mike Moran	9-Apr-24
Cabinet	15-May-24	Repurposing of Severn View Residential Home, Chepstow	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Jane Rodgers	24-Apr-24
Cabinet	15-May-24	Local Housing Market Assessment	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To seek approval for the repurposing of Severn View Residential Home to support policy objectives around temporary accommodation, in accordance with the Rapid Rehousing Strategy.	Nick Keyse/Cath Fallon	
Cabinet	15-May-24	Local Flood Strategy	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	The LHMA provides a review of the need for affordable and market housing across Monmouthshire and an overview of the current housing market.	Sally Meyrick	8-Jan-24
Cabinet	15-May-24	Local Transport Plan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Carl Touhig	9-Oct-23
Cabinet	15-May-24	Climate and Nature Emergency	Catrin Maby	To adopt the Local Transport Plan	Debra Hill-Howells / Christian Schmidt	4-Oct-22

Cabinet	15-May-24	Greenfingers Report		To receive an update on progress made towards the Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy and to agree the new overarching Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy and action plan format	Hazel Clatworthy	19-Oct-23
Cabinet	15-May-24	Local Housing Market Assessment Refresh 2022-2037	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Jane Rodgers	26-Mar-24
Cabinet	15-May-24	Local Food Strategy		To provide an overview of the Local Housing Market Assessment Refresh 2022-2037 which provides an estimation of the additional affordable housing need across Monmouthshire.	Sally Meyrick	15-Apr-24
Cabinet	15-May-24	Placement Development Strategy			Marianne Elliot	18-Apr-24
Council	18-Apr-24	ICMD Report - 20 moh Speed Limit Revocation Order	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	To set out a strategy for the expansion and development of in-county residential and supported accommodation placements for children who are looked after. To make recommendations about i) changing the use of 3	Jane Rodgers / Diane Corrister	8-Jan-24
ICMD	17-Apr-24	ICM report - Florence Jones DEFERRED	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Graham Kinsella	22-Mar-24
ICMD	17-Apr-24	Public Spaces Protection Order Dog Controls	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Amy Longford	11-Mar-24
Cabinet	10-Apr-24	Primary School catchment areas consultation feedback	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Huw Owen	19-Feb-24
Cabinet	10-Apr-24	Sustainable Communities for Learning Strategic Outline Programme update	Martyn Groucutt - Education	For Members to receive feedback on the consultation relating to a review of Primary School catchments areas and determine whether to implement proposals	Matthew Jones	20-Nov-23
Cabinet	10-Apr-24	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	Martyn Groucutt - Education	To provide members with details of the revisions to the Strategic Outline Programme for the Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme which will inform the development of projects within the rolling programme of	Debbie Graves	12-Sep-23
ICMD	27-Mar-24	Experimental TRO Prohibition of driving except for access Goldwire Lane Monmouth	Ben Callard - Resources		Dave Jarrett	

ICMD	27-Mar-24	Increase in building control charges	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Graham Kinsella	
ICMD	13-Mar-24	To consider a Business Case for the acquisition of a property for use as a registered children's home	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Craig O'Connor	
Cabinet	06-Mar-24	Adoption of Abergavenny Placemaking Plan	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	To adopt the Abergavenny Placemaking Plan, co-produced with Abergavenny Town Council, to inform future regeneration priorities and grant bids	jane Rodgers	13-Feb-24
Cabinet	05-Mar-24	Adoption of Magor Placemaking Plan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Mark Hand / Dan Fordham	3-Oct-22
Cabinet	05-Mar-24	Adoption of Monmouth Placemaking Plan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Mark Hand / Dan Fordham	3-Oct-22
Cabinet	05-Mar-24	Road Safety Strategy	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	05-Mar-24	Agree the name of the new Welsh-medium Primary School in Monmouth	Catrin Maby	To adopt the Road Safety Strategy	Mark Hand / Paul Keeble	4-Oct-22
Council	29-Feb-24	Standards Committee Appointment	Martyn Groucutt - Education	Agree the name of the new Welsh-medium Primary School in Monmouth	Debbie Graves	15-Nov-23
Council	29-Feb-24	Strategic Equality Plan 2024			James Williams	6-Feb-24
Council	29-Feb-24	Appointment of Monmouthshire Local Access Forum		To seek approval of a new Strategic Equality Plan for the period 2024-28, incorporating MCCs contribution to national action plans on race equality, LGBTQ and other protected characteristics	Matthew Gatehouse	15-Nov-23
Council	29-Feb-24	Final Budget Proposals		To secure the appointment of members to the Monmouthshire Local Access Forum for its next 3 year period.	Matthew Lewis	18-Jan-23

Council	29-Feb-24	Capital and Treasury Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	
Council	29-Feb-24	Council Diary	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	
Council	29-Feb-24	WCF/Trust Treasury Fund Investment	Angela Sandles - Engagement		John Pearson	
ICMD	28-Feb-24	2023/24 Revenue and Capital Monitoring - Month 9	Ben Callard - Resources			
Cabinet	28-Feb-24	2023/24 Final Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	27-Apr-23
Cabinet	28-Feb-24	Economic Development Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	
Cabinet	07-Feb-24	Amendment to Street Naming and Numbering Policy regarding Replacement or additional Street nameplate signs for Existing Streets		REFRESHING THE MONMOUTHSHIRE BUSINESS GROWTH & ENTERPRISE STRATEGY and action plan in setting the economic ambition for the county and providing a strategic framework that guides future economic	Hannah Jones	9-Jan-23
ICMD	24-Jan-24	Community Council & Police Precepts - Determination	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Mark Hand	2-Jan-24
ICMD	24-Jan-24	Introduction of Council Tax Premiums for Second homes from 1 st April 2024	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	
Council	18-Jan-24	Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Ben Callard - Resources	Council to re affirm their decision on the Second Home Premium	Ruth Donovan	5-Dec-23
Council	18-Jan-24	Asset Management Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources		Ruth Donovan	

Council	18-Jan-24	Community & Corporate Plan performance update			Nick Keyse	28-Sep-23
Cabinet	17-Jan-24	REPURPOSING OF ACCOMMODATION IN THE COUNTY FARMS PORTFOLIO TO SUPPORT HOMELESSNESS AND OTHER POLICY OBJECTIVES	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To provide cabinet with the latest performance report of commitments in the Community and Corporate Plan	Richard Jones	5-Sep-23
Cabinet	17-Jan-24	consultation on the relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni		To seek approval for the repurposing of vacant cottages held within the County Farms Portfolio to support policy objectives such as alleviating pressures with homelessness and to address the reliance on unsuitable temporary accommodation.	Nick Keyse	4-Dec-23
Cabinet	17-Jan-24	Approval of the revised MCC Counter Fraud, Corruption & Bribery Policy	Martyn Groucutt - Education		Matthew Jones	23-Aug-23
Cabinet	17-Jan-24	Draft Budget Proposals	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Jan Furtek	2-Nov-23
Cabinet	17-Jan-24	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 3 held on 7th December 2023 Meeting didn't happen	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	29-Sep-23
ICMD	03-Jan-24	Community Council & Police Precepts - Proposed payment schedule	Rachel Garrick - Resources		Dave Jarrett	30-Mar-23

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Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr USK on Thursday, 11th July, 2024 at 2.00 pm

Councillors Present

County Councillor Alistair Neill (Chairman)
County Councillors: Rachel Buckler, John Crook, Meirion Howells, Paul Pavia, Peter Strong, Ben Callard, Jane Lucas, Angela Sandles and Laura Wright

Officers in Attendance

Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager
Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Peter Davies, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer, Resources
Richard Jones, Performance and Data Insight Manager
Jonathan Davies, Head of Finance
Nia Roberts, Welsh Language Officer
Pennie Walker, Equality & Welsh Language Manager

APOLOGIES: Councillors Jill Bond and Catherine Fookes

1. Declarations of Interest

None.

2. Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Financial Strategy - To provide formal feedback ahead of Council on 18th July 2024

Cabinet Member Ben Callard introduced the report and answered the members' questions with Peter Davies and Jonathan Davies.

- The difference between the medium-term financial strategy and the medium-term financial plan was queried. The explanation given was that the strategy sets out the long-term financial vision, context and framework for the Council, while the plan is a more detailed and updated document that informs the annual budget setting process.
- There was a suggestion from one Member that the report was felt to have political undertones arising from some of the language and terminology used and whether that was helpful for a Council document. It was confirmed by the Cabinet Member that this was a political document, and that the examples given by the member of a possible political inference were factually correct statements, for example, the reference to reductions in funding to local government over the last 14 years.
- A question was asked about what the main challenges and risks are for the Council's finances in the next five years. These were summarised and included the uncertainty of the Welsh Government funding, the impact of COVID-19 and Brexit, the rising demand and cost of social care and homelessness services, the

need to invest in digital and data capabilities, and the delivery of savings and transformation programmes. The Chair asked why the report did not mention the principal cause of financial challenges for the Council being that Monmouthshire County Council receives the lowest financial settlement from Welsh Government.

- A member asked how the Council would address the projected budget shortfall of £34.7 million over the medium term. The Cabinet Member and officers responded that the Council would develop a programme of change and improvement that will focus on four key areas: demand management, service redesign, income generation, and efficiency and productivity. The programme will be informed by the financial strategy and the medium-term financial plan and would involve consultation and engagement with stakeholders. The Chair asked how residents may have confidence that this future programme would deliver savings equivalent to £34.7 when over the last two financial years the Council has significantly overspent on its core social care services.
- The strategy highlights the need for 'radical change' to the council's operating model and its services, (which will be detailed in the forthcoming plans), but it would be helpful to us to explain at least in broad terms what this might entail, given that the strategy sets out the dependency on 'radical change' to manage the financial challenge of the £34.7 million shortfall. The Cabinet Member advised that this 'radical change' related to the programme of change already discussed and the improvements required. Further questions were asked as to how reducing costs on this scale, and moving to more online services would realistically 'improve' services. The Cabinet Member agreed that this may require greater clarification.
- A member asked whether and how the demand scenarios in the financial strategy are based on the latest data and forecasts.
- Another member asked whether we have drawn any comparison with other Councils and whether we were in a different position to the rest of the country.
- A member asked what the assumptions are behind the Council tax modelling in the financial strategy.
- The procurement partnership with Cardiff 'Atebion' was raised, the question being whether the 3 years of work through the partnership had enabled the Council to improve its financial modelling and planning. The member suggested that if the key element was to ensure financial data was mature and comprehensive, were we satisfied that we were capturing the right data to give us early insights and did the Cabinet Member feel the data generated was sufficiently robust to make the best budget assumptions and more informed decisions.
- A member questioned the financial scenarios outlined in Figure 5 on page 20, asking why given the narrative and context in the report, Scenario 1 would be felt to be more likely than Scenario 2.

- A member asked what greater use of Artificial Intelligence and data analytics as set out in the strategy, would actually mean in strategic terms for the authority.
- The Chair highlighted that it is important to be clear about what is being proposed and the solutions, to ensure residents can understand the plan and support its delivery, given the scale of financial challenge.
- The Chair referred to the Wales Local Government Funding Analysis study conducted by Cardiff University in Q3 2023, that forecast a £744m budgetary shortfall across Wales by 2027-2028. Based on this Monmouthshire's projected shortfall appeared to be significantly higher than the average for local authorities in Wales. He highlighted his concerns around the fiscal situation and for departments without protected budgets which he suggested could result in decreased central funding. Officers confirmed that the most recent Wales Fiscal Analysis report had taken into account of a range of scenarios and that led to a base case assumption for local government funding in Wales over the next three years, noting that this informed the Council's modelling assumption around core funding.
- The Chair also commented that given that five years ago when we would have been conducting our financial modelling, we wouldn't have anticipated a pandemic, the Ukraine invasion and the resultant energy shock and high inflation, there is the need to consider to what extent we have scope for flexibility in our financial planning for unexpected major impacts. He suggested that in relation to this, the financial strategy's depletion of our cash and capital receipts reserves is a concern, particularly in terms of dealing with the social care challenges.
- A member commented on this being the first strategy of its kind and that the plan being reviewed 6 monthly was encouraging and a member asked whether the scrutiny process would be part of the consultation with councillors on the financial plan.
- There was also a suggestion that figures 2 and 3 could be made a little easier to read within the document.

The Cabinet Member and officers present responded to all of the questions raised, which can be viewed on the live stream and via the meeting transcript. The Committee drew its conclusions as below.

Chair's Summary:

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for their time and their responses to questions from the Committee arising from the discussion of the Financial Strategy. He acknowledged that this is an extremely challenging period in which to look ahead, it's an unenviable task and he also thanked them for their efforts in drafting the report which clearly sets out the reasons for the financial challenges the Council is facing, and seeks to explain the financial strategy in an engaging way to residents. He emphasised that the questions raised at the Performance and Overview Committee were important as they raised significant concerns and issues with the aim of strengthening the strategy

and report. The report was moved and the following points by way of summary would be tabled as the Committee's feedback on the report:

- The Committee recognises that these are challenging times for any Local Authority and appreciate the efforts that have gone into drafting the report. Discussion took place on the main challenges and risks for the Council's finances over the next five years and it was felt important to clearly explain to the public the Council's proposed approach.
- Given the unpredictability of forecasting five years ahead, there is a need for flexibility in our financial planning and the position of the Council's reserves remained a concern for some members.
- The Committee felt it imperative to capture robust data to give us early insights in order to make the best budget assumptions and informed decisions.

3. Digital and Data Strategy - Pre-decision Scrutiny ahead of Cabinet on 17th July 2024

Cabinet Member Ben Callard introduced the report and answered the members' questions with Peter Davies, James Vale and Richard Jones.

- A Member queried how the digital strategy aligns with the financial strategy and other enabling strategies. The explanation was given that the digital strategy supports the financial strategy by enabling more efficient and effective use of resources, data, and technology, and by creating new opportunities for income generation and service transformation. There was reference to it also aligning with other enabling strategies by providing the tools, skills, and culture to deliver better outcomes for the organization and the community.
- Questions were asked around how the digital strategy addresses the digital divide and ensures digital inclusion for all residents and staff. A further question asked was what difficulties were foreseen in encouraging the workforce to embrace new technologies and data-driven processes. Training and developing user-friendly and accessible digital solutions were seen as key to achieving this.
- Discussion took place on how the digital strategy will measure and evaluate its impact and success, as well as use data to inform service planning and delivery.
- Members asked how the strategy supports collaboration and service integration with other local authorities and partners, particularly in terms of the extent to which we are working collaboratively with other Local Authorities, to ensure we have a common digital infrastructure should we consider integrated services in the future.
- Questions were also asked about how the digital strategy fosters a data culture and data literacy among staff, partners, and residents.
- Another question asked was in what ways the strategy will ensure a user-centred approach in mind, taking into account the needs and expectations of residents.

- A member suggested there was a need to be careful in making assumptions about whether older people can and do use digital platforms and social media.
- A member also raised the question of whether isolation due to increased use of technology had been captured in the Integrated Impact Assessment.
- Reference was made to the presentation of the Financial Strategy in the previous agenda item that had discussed the increased use of artificial intelligence and data analytics, a member asking whether the Council would be investing in those skillsets and whether it has the financial capacity to do so, and whether there would be scope for additional borrowing if required.
- Another member highlighted that residents are not finding the My Mon app user-friendly. Also, if the app retains resident's protected data, do we use this data to contact them about consultations on service change, as residents often ask how they are supposed to know about upcoming consultations, unless they proactively seek this information. It seems like a lost opportunity to consult with residents.
- A query was made around how to ensure that the data officers use is up to date.

All questions were responded to by the Cabinet Member and officers and the Committee moved the report and its recommendations, drawing the following conclusions.

Chair's Summary:

Thank you to officers and the Cabinet Member for bringing the Digital Strategy to the Committee who were supportive of its direction and would like to highlight the following points:

- It's clear from the report that this isn't simply about the Council collecting data, but also about making it easier for residents to access our services. We anticipate that if digital access methods become easier, demand for these may increase, so this needs to be modelled to ensure we have factored increased demand and that there is sufficient resource in the community hubs to deliver this.
- As councillors, we have a role to play in bridging the gap between the Council and residents and that may involve explanation and assistance, but customer engagement has been referred to in our discussions and that's encouraging.
- Members have also expressed that they would benefit from further training on digital platforms, having been in their roles for some time, so we will pass on the request for further member training on digital platforms to the Democratic Services Committee (Action: Scrutiny Team).

4. Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report 2023/24 - To scrutinise the Council's performance

Cabinet Member Angela Sandles and Pennie Walker introduced the report and answered the members' questions with Nia Roberts.

- Members asked what the main achievements of the Council were in promoting the Welsh language during 2023-2024, and heard that receiving Employer of the Year award, an enhanced programme of Welsh language courses to staff and members, and increased number of Welsh speakers in the contact centre, and the use of bilingual e-mail addresses and Welsh tips in the staff newsletter were key achievements that could demonstrate the Council's commitment.
- Discussion took place on the main challenges and risks for the Council in complying with the Welsh language standards, these including the delay in procurement of the new telephony system, the need to review the translation process, the need to monitor the staff's Welsh language skills and training, and the need to respond to any complaints from the public or the Welsh language commissioner.
- Members asked how the Council plans to improve its Welsh language provision and performance in the future, officers providing a list of suggestions that will form part of a future action plan.
- Queries included how many staff members had registered for a Welsh language course during 2023-2024 and whether it was an increased number in comparison to previous years, due to the additional flexibility and options to learn Welsh.
- Questions were asked around courses, the hours required, the various levels of proficiency, the take-up and completion rates, the number of staff progressing between the entry level and intermediate to advanced level ability, and how staff are engaged and incentivised to take up the courses. It was suggested that some case studies may better illustrate the added value to a person's role.
- The Chair questioned whether in view of 83% of Monmouthshire residents not speaking Welsh, whether the same standards applied to the Council as an authority where 75% of residents speak fluently, and this was confirmed to be the case.
- In terms of public announcements, should we ensure our policy included the need for a Welsh announcement for specific occasions.
- Staff recruitment was discussed, members highlighting that given there is a need to increase Welsh speakers in the contact centre, there may be a need to recruit from other areas of Wales and consider postholders who would primarily be home-based. A question was asked as to whether the 'Welsh speaker' requirement may be a deterrent to English applicants and it was agreed that this should be discussed with People Services, to ascertain whether there is any data on that **(Action: Nia Roberts and Pennie Walker)**.

- A member asked whether in terms of social care, being a front-line service, the Council has capacity to provide care in the Welsh language, if requested.
- Another member queried whether the Council will be seeking to provide simultaneous translation for Council meetings.
- The issue of bi-lingual signage was raised, a member highlighting how difficult it can be for people reading road signs whilst driving, particularly if a person has dyslexia and suggested future road signage could incorporate a horizontal line between the English and Welsh texts to assist drivers. **(Action: Nia Roberts and Pennie Walker to follow up and consider in relation to the Council's Strategic Equality Plan).**

All questions were answered by officers and Cabinet Members and the Committee was satisfied with the report, drawing the following conclusion.

Chair's Summary:

Thank you to the Cabinet Member for attending and answering member's questions and thanks to the officers for this report, noting you are both new in post. The Committee is satisfied with progress and the report has been moved, with some actions to be addressed following the meeting.

5. Next Meeting

16th July 2024 at 10.00am.

The meeting ended at 4.43 pm.

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Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee held at The Council Chamber, County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA with remote attendance on Tuesday, 16th July, 2024 at 10.00 am

Councillors Present

County Councillor Alistair Neill (Chairman)
County Councillors: Jill Bond, Rachel Buckler, Meirion Howells, Paul Pavia, Peter Strong and Ben Callard

Officers in Attendance

Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager
Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Peter Davies, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer, Resources
Frances O'Brien, Chief Officer, Communities and Place
Will McLean, Chief Officer for Children and Young People
Richard Jones, Performance and Data Insight Manager
Jonathan Davies, Head of Finance
Ian Saunders, Chief Officer Customer, Culture and Wellbeing.
Hannah Carter, Performance Analyst
Stacey Jones, Senior Accountant
Dave Loder, Finance Manager
Nikki Wellington, Finance Manager

APOLOGIES: Councillors John Crook, Catherine Fookes and Ann Webb

1. Declarations of Interest

None.

2. Public Open Forum

None.

3. Self-Assessment 2023/24

Richard Jones and Hannah Carter introduced the report and answered the members' questions with Peter Davies and Will Mclean.

Key points from Members:

- Members sought further detail on the specific strategies being implemented to address financial pressures, and how the medium-term financial strategy will ensure long-term financial stability without an over-reliance on reserves.
- Members asked how the council plans to achieve its net zero targets, and what steps are being taken to secure the necessary public investment to support the environmental initiatives.

- Officers were asked what measures are being put in place to improve school attendance and support vulnerable learners, and how is the council addressing the needs of care leavers to prevent homelessness.
- Concerning changes that have been made, members queried whether users and stakeholders are consulted with as much as possible in order to best adopt the changes and implement new ideas.
- Further detail was sought about the decrease in train usage.
- Further information was requested on the increase in the number of rapes and school exclusions. The Committee sought confirmation that the council is doing everything possible to ensure that schools record incidents of sexual assault accurately and are developing strategies to address them.
- Members asked for further information about the council having the lowest gross revenue spend per head in Wales in 22/23.
- It was noted that it would be useful to have further comparison data in tackling inequalities other than income e.g. age inequality
- Staff and members were encouraged to complete the Carbon Literacy training.
- Clarification was sought about some of the report's graphs, and it was noted that data on bus journeys and other active travel would be useful in addition to car and rail
- Members asked whether reports from regulators, such as the Care Inspectorate Wales report, have a bearing on the overall ratings given and whether collaborative work such as working with the Future Generations Commissioner's office has been considered.
- The Chair noted that recognising areas that require improvements, and the solutions needed, bolsters a self-assessment's credibility, and that this could be built into service reports.
- Members questioned how frequently and to what extent, performance information is used in our services to drive performance improvement.
- Regarding the transformation of services to meet budget challenges, the committee observed that it is hard to find evidence of performance review or an assessment of transformations made over the last year, and asked why, noting the importance of any radical changes being monitored closely.

Officers present responded to all of the questions raised and the Committee was satisfied with the responses given.

Chair's Summary:

The Chair welcomed the report and thanked the officers for its detail, and for having incorporated all-Wales comparisons, though he noted that more could still be done in that regard in order to give a fuller picture of performance. He also welcomed more service user feedback having been incorporated, as previously requested. The report was moved.

ACTIONS:

Members suggested making changes to errors such as missing targets and other omissions, for which a list will be sent to officers, as well as changing contractions to more formal English.

The principal areas for further scrutiny that were identified by members were long-term financial stability, homelessness and care leavers, environmental stability, and monitoring change and transformations in council services. It was noted that the first is in hand with items already on the committee's work programme and the second is being covered by People committee on 17th July. The third area is being/will be covered by Place committee, and scrutiny officers will take forward the fourth area.

4. Financial Update Report 2023/24 and 2024/25

Cabinet Member Ben Callard introduced the report and answered the members' questions with Peter Davies, Jonathan Davies and Will Mclean.

Key points from Members:

- Members asked what specific measures are being considered to address the ongoing financial risks in various areas such as Adult Social Care, and what steps will be taken to ensure that overspends are addressed promptly.
- Questions were asked about measures currently being taken to improve efficiency and reduce overspends in key areas, and whether contingency plans are being developed to manage unexpected costs.
- Members queried whether staff and service users are being engaged to identify potential efficiencies, and if plans are in place to reallocate services from underspent areas to overspent ones.
- Members asked whether staff vacancies were putting pressure on existing staff, and if any well-being issues or problems with retention have resulted. Further, it was asked if vacancies have had an effect on the delivery of services to residents.
- Further detail was sought about task management in services and where best to fit resources.
- Regarding staff shortages, it was asked if any service areas are reaching a critical point in their capacity to deliver frontline services.
- Members asked about the current expectation on Health and Social Care, with 70% of its savings targets having been met, and whether further service redesign is needed. Members expressed concern over the extent to which the overspend in social care is being addressed.
- The Committee asked if it could be updated on the position of the 13 schools in deficit, surplus places, and whether companies carrying out maintenance are being actively monitored to ensure value for money.
- Questions were asked as to whether health partners are effectively delivering their responsibilities in terms of continuing health care and what more could be done to ensure there is a shared ambition for the services they deliver.
- It was asked if care charges still running high is due to a delay in payment or genuine cases of hardship, and what measures are being put in place to increase footfall to attractions such as Borough Theatre.
- Members asked if there was an update on units being let at Newport Leisure Park and Castle Gate.
- Members asked to what extent we are dependent on short term grants, and the level of uncertainty that they entail.

- Clarity was sought as to the level of radical change needed, as reported in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, and what will be done to make radical changes to bring costs under control.
- Members asked for further information about how the underspend in strategic initiatives offset the £4m overspend.
- Concern was expressed that the largest portion (£12.2m) of the predicted shortfall over the 24-29 period will occur next year.
- Further detail was sought about the reasons for slippages in key infrastructure projects.

The Committee was satisfied with the responses given by the Cabinet Member and officers present.

Chair's Summary:

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for the report. The committee recognises the challenges faced by the council and understands that there won't be an immediate solution. The report was moved.

5. Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

Members were reminded that they are invited to attend the meeting of People Scrutiny on 23rd July, at which the Care Inspectorate Wales Inspection report and Home to School Transport policy will be scrutinised.

6. Cabinet and Council Planner

7. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 18th June 2024

The minutes were confirmed.

8. Next Meeting

23rd September 2024 at 10.00am.

The meeting ended at 12.26 pm.