

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at Council Chamber - Council Chamber on Thursday, 22nd January, 2026 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT: County Councillor Peter Strong (Chair)
County Councillor Martyn Groucutt (Vice Chair)

County Councillors: Rachel Buckler, Laura Wright, Tony Kear, Catrin Maby, Jan Butler, Ian Chandler, Sara Burch, Alistair Neill, Su McConnel, Mary Ann Brocklesby, Fay Bromfield, Jane Lucas, Emma Bryn, Meirion Howells, Paul Griffiths, Jackie Strong, Rachel Garrick, Maria Stevens, Steven Garratt, Angela Sandles, Ben Callard, John Crook, Tomos Davies, Dale Rooke, Sue Riley, Jayne McKenna, Jill Bond, Louise Brown, Lisa Dymock, Tony Easson, Christopher Edwards, Simon Howarth, Richard John, David Jones, Penny Jones, Malcolm Lane, Phil Murphy, M. Newell, Paul Pavia, Maureen Powell, Tudor Thomas, Armand Watts and Ann Webb

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Paul Matthews	Chief Executive
Peter Davies	Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer for Resources
Will McLean	Chief Officer for Children and Young People
Nicola Perry	Senior Democracy Officer
James Williams	Chief Officer Law & Governance
Deb Hill-Howells	Chief Officer Infrastructure
Craig O'Connor	Chief Officer, Place and Community Well-being

APOLOGIES:

County Councillor Frances Taylor

1. Declarations of Interest

None.

2. Chair's Announcement

Noted.

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 4th December 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th December were confirmed as an accurate record.

4. Reports to Council:

5. DIARY OF MEETINGS FOR 2026/27

The Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement presented the report for Council to approve the diary of meetings for 2026/27.

Council resolved to accept the recommendation to approve the diary of meetings for 2026/27 to ensure good governance arrangements are in place and meet the

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requirements of the Councils Constitution. In doing so, it was agreed that an additional meeting of Full Council be added to the diary on Friday 5th March 2027.

6. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2026/27

The Cabinet Member for Resources presented the report to confirm arrangements for the implementation of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and approve it for 2026/27; for Council to agree to adopt the amendments to the regulations proposed by Welsh Government, as detailed in point 3.7; to affirm that annual uprating amendments will be carried out each year without a requirement to adopt the whole Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

Council resolved to accept the recommendations:

To note the making of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations ("the Prescribed Requirements Regulations") 2013 by the Welsh Government on 26 November 2013.

To adopt the provisions within the Regulations above ("the Prescribed Requirements Regulations") and any 'annual uprating regulations' in respect of its Scheme for the financial year 2026/27 including the discretionary elements previously approved as the Council's local scheme from 1st April 2026.

7. Motions to Council:

8. Submitted by County Councillor Paul Pavia

Motion: Chepstow Infrastructure Debate Council notes that:

- Traffic congestion in and around Chepstow continues to have a significant impact on residents, businesses and the strategic road network.
- In March 2022, Monmouthshire County Council and Gloucestershire County Council agreed to jointly fund and progress the Chepstow Bypass through the next phase of Transport Appraisal Guidance Public Document Pack (TAG/WeITAG).
- Progress towards developing a full business case for a relief road has since stalled.
- The prolonged delay in completing the Highbeech roundabout WeITAG work or progressing the Burn's Commission recommendations, demonstrates the lack of momentum in addressing wider infrastructure matters.
- In early 2024, Gloucestershire County Council indicated a willingness to commit £500,000 towards further scheme development but no matching funding has been identified by Monmouthshire County Council.
- Although the majority of any relief road would be located in England and led by the UK Government, Monmouthshire County Council and the Welsh Government have important roles in cross-border partnership working and scheme development.

Council resolves to:

1. Reaffirm that addressing the traffic congestion in and around Chepstow remains a strategic transport priority for Monmouthshire County Council.
2. Request that the Cabinet bring a report to Full Council setting out:
 - the current status of previous commitments made by the Council in relation to a bypass/relief road for Chepstow
 - available options for funding and progressing the next phase of Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG/WeITAG) for a bypass/relief road for Chepstow

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- a clear timetable for engagement and decision-making with Gloucestershire County Council, Welsh Government and UK Government partners, including elected parliamentary members.
3. Confirm that Full Council should have the opportunity to debate and make recommendations to Cabinet on the Council's future role in progressing infrastructure projects, rather than the matter being deferred or allowed to stall further.

Seconded by County Councillor Chris Edwards

The meeting was adjourned at 15:00pm

Following the adjournment, it was agreed that members questions be answered in writing.

The meeting ended at 3.00 pm