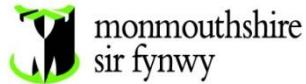


Public Document Pack



County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Monday, 23 March 2026

Notice of meeting:

People Scrutiny Committee

**Tuesday, 31st March, 2026 at 10.00 am,
The Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA**

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. Our Scrutiny Committee meetings are live streamed and a link to the live stream will be available on the meeting page of the Monmouthshire County Council website If you would like to speak under the Public Open Forum at an upcoming meeting you will need to give three working days' notice in advance of the meeting by contacting Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk The amount of time afforded to each member of the public to speak is at the Chair's discretion, but to enable us to accommodate multiple speakers we ask that contributions be no longer than 3 minutes. Alternatively, if you would like to submit a written, audio or video representation, please contact the team via the same email address to arrange this. The deadline for submitting representations to the Council is 5pm three clear working days in advance of the meeting. If combined representations received exceed 30 minutes, a selection of these based on theme will be shared at the meeting. All representations received will be made available to councillors prior to the meeting. If you would like to suggest future topics for scrutiny by one of our Scrutiny Committees, please do so by emailing Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk	

4.	Assistive Technology - To scrutinise how assistive technology is assisting people in living healthy independent lives.	1 - 24
5.	People Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan.	25 - 28
6.	Council and Cabinet Forward Work Programme.	29 - 36
7.	To approve the minutes of the previous meeting.	37 - 44
8.	Next Meeting: 29th April 2026 at 10.00am.	

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillor Jan Butler, Goetre Fawr;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Christopher Edwards, St. Kingsmark;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Simon Howarth, Llanelly Hill;, Independent Group
County Councillor Penny Jones, Raglan;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Maureen Powell, Pen Y Fal;, Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Sue Riley, Bulwark and Thornwell;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Maria Stevens, Severn;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Jackie Strong, Caldicot Cross;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Martyn Groucutt, Lansdown;, Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru

Public Information

Please note that Monmouthshire County Council will film this meeting and it will be made available to view in live and archive form online. It is possible that the public seating areas could be filmed and by entering the Chamber you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting purposes. If you make a representation to the meeting you will be deemed to have consented to being filmed.

Recordings of the meeting will be stored in accordance with the Council's data retention policy. Archived webcasts or parts of webcasts shall only be removed from the Council's website if the Monitoring Officer considers that it is necessary because all or part of the content of the webcast is or is likely to be in breach of any statutory provision or common law doctrine, for example Data Protection and Human Rights legislation or provisions relating to confidential or exempt information.

Access to paper copies of agendas and reports

A copy of this agenda and relevant reports can be made available to members of the public attending a meeting by requesting a copy from Democratic Services on 01633 644219. Please note that we must receive 24 hours notice prior to the meeting in order to provide you with a hard copy of this agenda.

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.

Public Open Forum

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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.

Monmouthshire Scrutiny Question Guide

Role of the Pre-meeting	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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? <p>- Agree the order of questioning and which Members will lead - Agree questions for officers and questions for the Cabinet Member</p>	
Questions for the Meeting	
<p><u>Scrutinising Performance</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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? 	<p><u>Scrutinising Policy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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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<p>SUBJECT: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN CARE TRANSITION PLAN UPDATE MEETING: PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE DATE: 31ST MARCH 2026 DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL</p>
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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To brief the Committee on the positive progress being made with the Council's Social Care workforce development-based approach to increasing the use and take-up of Assistive Technology in care as an enhanced option to help people remain living at home safely and independently.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To consider and comment on the progress of increasing take up and use of Assistive Technology.
- 2.2 To consider the identified risks and the proposals for mitigation, to ensure the service is resilient going forwards and the aims and objectives of the service are maintained, with no dips in performance or risks not managed.
- 2.3 To consider the proposed next phase of the project relating to Reablement at Mardy Park and Oak House, rehabilitation wing at Severn View Park and the proposal to explore establishing a presence in an acute hospital setting.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Assistive Technology is delivered through the Assistive Technology Team, formerly known as the Careline Service, in Housing & Communities. The core offer of the former Careline Service was a dispersed Lifeline service, with only a small number of clients being provided with telecare equipment, typically environmental sensors.
- 3.2 Key conclusions of a joint review in 2023 between Housing & Communities and Social Care included:
 - The service was more of a reactive service rather than a preventative service;
 - There was significant scope to expand on the availability of assistive technology provided;
 - Assistive technology wasn't part of the Social Care assessment.
 - Knowledge of assistive technology was deemed to be generally limited, particularly with professionals. There was a need for assistive technology to be better understood in how it could potentially contribute to Social Care & Health priorities to support living safely and independently.
- 3.3 The review established a transformation plan to expand the use of assistive technology in Monmouthshire. The vision of the plan is *'Assistive technology contributes to enhancing and enriching living at home, supporting people to remain living safely and independently in their own homes for as long as possible.'* Key aims to expand the use of assistive technology include:
 - Embed in future Social Care practice and to be available as part of solutions for care and support by complementing other forms of care and support
 - Provide a more preventative approach supporting a wider range of circumstances through a wider choice of equipment.
 - Increase information and awareness about Assistive Technology to facilitate access to Assistive Technology without the need for a Social Care referral (in line with intervention and prevention), although this will be for the more basic equipment.
 - A knowledgeable and confident Social Care workforce, who can refer and access the service **easily**.
 - Service delivery to be **outcome** and assessment driven and to be centred around digital coaching for professionals, clients and families/carers.

- Initially to mitigate against **falls** and **isolation** and to support **dementia** and **reablement**. This has now been extended to include **Hospital Discharge**.
- For the service to be highly visible and well marketed to professionals, potential clients and carers, who are easily able to familiarise themselves with equipment.

3.4 An action plan is in place as the basis for implementing the plan and achieving the service transformation. The following provides an overview of the current situation in terms of key outputs and outcomes, areas that still need development and ongoing risk.

3.5 Current Situation & Progress

3.5.1 **Working Group** – A joint working group meets regularly to drive and successfully implement the transformation plan.

3.5.2 Simplifying Access to Assistive Technology – for Clients, Professionals & Carers

- An online referral form was established for new clients and professionals.
- A Flo Social Care Assessment Form has been revised to prompt practitioners to consider assistive technology.
- A digital Diagnosis Tool has been created as a phone app to support Social Care professionals.
- Webpages have been improved to include access to application forms and product guides

3.5.3 **Branding & Marketing** - The previous Careline branding, considered to be outdated has been replaced by **@ssistivetech Monmouthshire** to better represent the provision of other types of smart technologies. This is now widely used in a range of ongoing marketing. For example:



3.5.3 Marketing activity is believed to have contributed to the positive increase in referrals and includes:

- Undertaking regular marketing activity e.g. social media, Leisure Centre and Hub drop-ins, newsletter, branding, video [Assistive Technology Chepstow NCN short ENG on Vimeo](#)
- In addition to Tech Hubs, establishment of display stands at Bridges, the Palmer Centre, Mardy Park and the Bus Station, Abergavenny.
- Assistive Technology Chatbot through the My Monmouthshire platform.
- Attendance at themed drop-in events.

3.5.4 The team works closely with the Council's Communication Team, who provide valuable marketing and publicity support for the project.

3.5.5 **Staffing & Capacity** – The former Careline team was restructured to support the transformation plan. There was a need for staff to understand, install and maintain more complex assistive technology, compared to the historic lifeline focus. This included the creation of the Assistive Technology Coach, whose role is to promote and demonstrate the benefits of equipment, particularly targeting professionals. This was recruited to in May 2023.

- Sustainable Living Team Manager (job-share) (1.1 full time equivalent)
- Assistive Technology Digital Coach (initially temporary, but now permanent, 37 hrs pw)
- Assistive Technology Installation Officer (30 hrs pw)
- Assistive Technology Installation Officer (15 hrs pw)
- Assistive Technology Installation Officer (15 hrs pw)
- Assistive Technology Customer Liaison Officer (30 hrs pw)

3.5.6 Going forwards there will be a need to ensure the staffing and team continue to be fit for purpose to ensure that the increase referrals and larger client base can be managed. As referrals increase and the client base increases, so do installation visits, maintenance and activities such as billing.

3.5.7 There has been an increasing need to pull the Digital Coach off training and awareness activity to cover installations at times of absence. The situation is a key risk going forwards.

3.5.8 A short-term arrangement has been established with Care & Repair to support maintenance, using Social Care Pathways of Care funding, which will release the team to focus on installing equipment.

3.5.9 **Social Care Staff Awareness, Training & Development**

- Establishment of interactive Tech-Hubs initially at the Social Care Training Unit and subsequently at Chepstow Community, Monnow Vale Hospitals and Caldicot Health Centre. Unfortunately, Chepstow Community Hospital has recently withdrawn ward space for hospital purposes, so this Tech Hub has been lost
- Assistive Technology training now forms part of the Social Care Induction training programme, which covers equipment availability. **Appendix 1.**
- The Assistive Technology Coach facilitating staff awareness and 'show & tell' sessions (**See Appendix 1**) plus regular attendance at QALG.
- The Coach attendance at Social Care Team Meetings

3.5.10 **Practical Support for Practitioners to Prescribe Equipment**

- Establishment of a staff Diagnosis Tool that can be accessed via staff mobile devices.
- The Tech Hubs, now only available at Monnow Vale and Caldicot Health Centre, have been an important tool in this regard.

3.5.11 **Alignment with Health Priorities**

- There is a continued need to strategically align with Health and neighbouring local authorities. Minimal progress has been made on this despite discussions directly through the Health, Social Care & Housing Partnership and officers of the Partnership Board. A proposal by Health to establish a Regional Strategy have not come to fruition.
- Broadening the assistive technology product range. **See Appendix 1.**
- Provision of equipment being offered to in-house Residential Homes

3.5.12 **Digital Transition**

- Necessary transition from analogue to digital lifeline units in line with the digitalisation of telephone lines. Approximately 93% of clients now have a digital unit.
- Upgrade of Alarm Receiving Centre Platform to digital to improve connectivity and communication for the service users
- Chip n Pin will be introduced shortly to enable visiting staff to take card payments for installations to maximise income and make it easier for clients to pay.

3.5.13 **Evidence & Outcomes**

Whilst there is an established suite of service activity, this does not include comprehensively capturing the benefits, outcomes and impact of the use of assistive technology, particularly from a Social Care perspective e.g. has an installation avoided a Social Care intervention or facilitated a lower level of Social Care intervention and avoided a cost.

3.5.14 **Social Care Wales Accolades 2026**

A submission was made to this award under the **Effective use of Digital and Technology** theme. The submission (one of eleven) was successfully shortlisted to the second round with four other submissions. Unfortunately, the submission wasn't shortlisted to the final three.

3.6 **Performance 22/23 to Q3 2025/26**

The following provides an overview of service activity to the end of Q3 2025/26, which generally high-lights positive progress in terms of referrals, growing client base and increased use by professionals. Whilst progress is positive, as the number of referrals and the client base increases, so does administration (such as customer contacts and billing), installation visits maintenance visits and general stock management

Indicator	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	25/26 Q3
No. of Clients	850	927	996	1074
Average Client Age	87	85	92	88
Account Closures	176	183	184	169
Total referrals	250	446	474	416
No. of Professional Referrals	70	158	172	205
Type of Professional Referral				
Falls	Not collected	77	70	103
Reablement	Not collected	8	13	17
Dementia	Not collected	29	43	57
Other e.g. Social Isolation, Reassurance etc	Not collected	44	46	28
Urgent Referrals	Not collected	68	75	89 (21%)
Reasons for Urgent Referrals				
Hospital Discharge	Not collected	Not collected	Not Collected	33
Hospital Prevention	Not collected	Not collected	Not Collected	33
Terminally Ill	Not collected	Not collected	Not Collected	3
Critical Need	Not collected	Not collected	Not Collected	20
Installations	203	317	310	254
Waiting List for Installations	Not collected	Not collected	15	113 (24.02.25)
Waiting List for Maintenance	Not collected	Not collected	Not collected	50 (24.02.25)
Average Retention of Client	1311 days	1219 days	1453 days	1311 days
Level of Digital Provision	50%	75%	88%	92%
Identified Care Costs Avoided	Not collected	£122.096	£124,127	Information not available
No. of Newport City Council Referrals	57	25	31	80
No. of Newport clients	87	91	103	99

3.7 On-Going Priorities and Key Next Steps

3.6.1 The overall priority going into 2026/27 is to maintain momentum and continue to build on the successful achievements and positive progress made over the last couple of years. On-going activity will include continuing to engage with and supporting Social Care staff and teams; marketing of the service; engaging with existing and potential new equipment suppliers to identify new equipment opportunities and aligning more closely with Social Care Reablement. Specific priorities include:

Reablement Transformation

- It is proposed that Assistive Tech becomes an integral element of the service delivery models at Mardy Park and Oak House, rehabilitation wing at Severn View Park. The aim is that residents of both settings will use Assistive Tech as part of their rehabilitation and their pathway to returning home. Resident users will, therefore, become familiar with Assistive Tech equipment

within a supportive setting and will be encouraged to take a package of equipment home with them to help facilitate both a safe return home and safer independent living.

- A further benefit is that Mardy Park and Oak House staff will be upskilled in Assistive Technology.

Prevention & Alignment with Health

- Continue to identify opportunities to further transition the service away from a reactive model to a more preventative model, in line with the Monmouthshire Living Well Strategy.
- Whilst in-roads with Health have been limited, it is considered appropriate to continue to look to engage with Health to identify opportunities to collaborate on Assistive Tech.

Better Understanding of the Benefits & Outcomes

- The need to capture improved Social Care related evidence and outcomes that demonstrate the impact of assistive technology. This will include evaluating the impact of Assistive Technology now forming part of the Social Care assessment.
- This will help to inform the strengthening of the preventative model.

Staffing

- The need to ensure the Assistive Tech team continues to be fit for purpose and able to deliver key functions such as installation and maintenance visits. Not only are there Health and Well Being related risks, there is a financial and income value to any uninstalled equipment.

Marketing & Raising Awareness

- Continuing to promote the service and benefits through regular marketing and providing Induction training.
- Providing equipment as part of the Mardy Park delivery model targeting Reablement Service Users. As residents of Mardy Park, service users will utilise the equipment as part of their recovery and pathway to returning home. The aim is that service users will take equipment home with them. Staff will need to be trained to support service users with the on-site equipment.

Social Care Priorities – Hospital Discharge

- There is a need to ensure the service maximises its alignment with hospital discharge. It is proposed that Hospital Discharge is an additional priority to dementia, reablement, falls and isolation.
- Hospital Discharge referrals are given priority for installation.
- A possible opportunity has been identified in regards to having a specialist Assistive Technology presence, perhaps similar to the existing Digital Coach, in acute hospital settings. This is currently being explored.

Financial Sustainability

- Consider the future funding arrangements of the service to ensure future financial sustainability.

Digitalisation

- Continuing the necessary switch from analogue to digital. Approximately 7% of service users need to be upgraded to digital equipment

Monmouthshire Housing Association

- Preliminary discussions are in progress about the possibility of a partnership opportunity.

3.8 Risk

3.8.1 There are two main risks associated with the delivery of the Assistive Technology Plan.

3.8.2 The first main risk relates to ensuring the service is financially sustainable.

3.8.3 The second main risk relates to ensuring as the capacity of the Assistive Tech team continues to meet the growing need and demand for the service and any capacity issues don't impact on individual well-being risks or are not detrimental to meeting service priorities.

3.8.2 A more detailed overview of risk is attached in **Appendix 2**.

- 4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**
- 4.1 The evaluation hasn't not identified any negative implications. **See Appendix 3**
- 5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL**
- 5.1 As this is a briefing report there are no options to consider.
- 6. REASONS**
- 6.1 There is a joint transformation agreement between Housing & Communities and Social Care.
- 6.2 Assistive Technology supports:
- the Community & Corporate Plan and particularly contributes to the priority of 'Safe Place.'
 - the Living Well Monmouthshire Strategy
 - the For Purpose on Purpose and the Council's need to adapt and stay relevant and helping the Council learn and continue to evolve.
- 7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**
- 7.1 There are resource implications associated with the delivery of assistive technology.
- 7.2 The 2025/26 budget projection is an overspend of £39,350.
- 7.3 The cost centre has received one-off support funding from the following during 2025/26.
- £6,000 grant funding has been provided to provide short-term assistance with maintenance.
 - £21,000 fee income over and above client fees.
 - £11,298 for the purchase of equipment.
- 8. CONSULTEES:** Service Manager Transformation, Social Care; Strategy & Sustainable Living Managers (J/S); Digital Coach.
- 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:** Transformation plan to expand the use of assistive technology in Monmouthshire
- 9. AUTHOR:** Ian Bakewell, Housing & Communities Manager
- 10. CONTACT DETAILS:** Tel: 01633 644479 **E-mail:** ianbakewell@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Appendix

Assistive Technology Equipment Availability

Assistive Technology				
Item of Equipment	Priority Application			
	Falls	Dementia	Isolation	Reablement
Lifeline & pendent	√	√	√	√
Falls detector	√			
Bed activity absence sensor	√			
Property exit sensor		√		
Smoke detector		√		
Carbon monoxide detector		√		
Epilepsy sensor	√			
Smart Technology				
GPS Tracking – Wrist		√		
GPS Tracking – Neck		√		
Echo Show		√	√	
Echo Dot		√	√	
Ring Doorbell	√			
Smart Lightbulb	√			
Smart Plug	√	√		√
Smart Motion Sensor	√			√
Smart Plug in Motion Lights	√			√
Smart Window Door Alerts		√		√
Smart Curtain Open/Closer	√			√
Komp Screen		√	√	√
Cascade – (in home motion detector)		√		√

Appendix 2

Overview of Risk

Risk	Implications	Mitigation
<p>Not having a robust evidence base informing the impact and benefits of the service.</p>	<p>The benefits of assistive technology may not be being fully realised e.g. unnecessary use of traditional care and cost avoidance opportunities not being exploited</p>	<p>Engage with working group</p> <p>Engage with Social Care management about options</p>
<p>Social Care Teams do not have understanding, ownership and responsibility of Assistive Tech</p>	<p>The use and growth of Assistive Tech will not develop.</p>	<p>Continue with the Digital Coach undertaking Social Care training and attending QALG and attending team meetings</p> <p>Proposal for additional Assistive Tech staffing will mitigate against the likelihood of the Digital Coach being used for installation</p> <p>Mardy Park and Oak House proposal will involve Social Care staff needing to be familiar with Assistive Tech and support residents to use it.</p>
<p>The service isn't financially sustainable due to increased costs, (e.g. alarm centre monitoring, SIMs etc) reliance on self-funding and one-off grant funding</p>	<p>The budget is currently overspending</p>	<p>Monitor and review service delivery costs.</p> <p>Develop evidence base to inform the benefits and impact of equipment e.g. care hours avoided.</p> <p>Continue to engage with ABUHB and the Regional Partnership Board in respect of strategic alignment</p> <p>Review charging</p>
<p>The self-funding model may continue to act as a barrier to take up and use and the full potential and benefits of Assistive Tech not realised.</p>	<p>An increased charge could deter take-up and become unaffordable.</p>	<p>The cost benefits of Assistive Tech need to be fully understood.</p>
<p>Practitioners don't refer for assistive technology</p>	<p>More likely that use of traditional care will continue and cost avoidance opportunities missed.</p>	<p>Monitor referral rates from individual teams and liaise accordingly</p>

		<p>Monitor the AT related feedback from the Social Care assessment form.</p> <p>Continue to raise awareness of the benefits and use of case studies.</p>
Practitioners don't understand the benefits of equipment and how it works, which impacts on individual confidence.	Less likely to refer clients for Assistive Tech.	<p>Continue to attend Social Care Induction, team meetings etc</p> <p>Use the newsletter to promote and explain equipment</p> <p>Promote the Diagnosis Tool</p>
Equipment is not upgraded to digital.	Analogue equipment will eventually be obsolete and, therefore, won't work, which would put service users at risk.	<p>Maintain inventory of equipment and its location</p> <p>Continue to upgrade equipment to digital by team</p>
Assistive technology is regarded as equipment for older people.	<p>Unlikely to attract younger clients.</p> <p>An older client base means that the drop-off rate will be high due to clients either moving because they're unable to remain at home or passing away.</p>	Target all Social Care and Health teams in respect of the benefits of AT e.g. Children's with Disability Team
Equipment is not regarded as attractive and is regarded as institutional/clinical.	Likely to impact on take-up	Engage closely and regularly with suppliers to identify well designed equipment.
Staff capacity is insufficient to meet the need to install equipment or attend to maintenance requirements within required timescales.	<p>This may impact on wider priorities e.g. hospital discharge</p> <p>Reputationally, it doesn't reflect well on MCC.</p> <p>Some individuals may be less safe.</p>	<p>Monitor need and demand</p> <p>Management to identify and understand delivery issues e.g. shadowing.</p> <p>Posting equipment for self-installation is to be offered as an option from March 2026 and application forms will be updated.</p>
Staff capacity is insufficient to engage with professionals, potential users, carers and families about the benefits of	Fewer staff and teams will be familiar with or understand the benefits of Assistive Technology	<p>Monitor need and demand and</p> <p>Identify opportunities to streamline delivery.</p> <p>Consider identifying 'champions' in Social Care teams</p>



Name of the Officer completing the evaluation Ian Bakewell Phone no: 07774 972014 Email: ianbakewell@monmouthshire.gov.uk	Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal Assistive technology contributes to enhancing and enriching living at home, supporting people to remain living safely and independently in their own homes for as long as possible
Name of Service area Housing & Communities	Date 18 th March 2026

- 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	<p>Assistive Tech can positively benefit people of all ages from 16+ from a preventative and reactive perspective.</p> <p>Those experiencing dementia and isolation, at risk of falls, needing reablement and those needing to be discharged from hospital will particularly benefit.</p> <p><i>.Consider the provision of inclusive services for Transgender people and groups. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training</i></p>	None, although the service is focused on ability and willingness to self pay.	<p>Anyone can access Assistive Tech</p> <p>Availability and benefits is being heavily promoted.</p> <p>Urgent cases will be prioritised.</p> <p>The aim has been to keep the charge affordable.</p> <p>Funding options are continually being explored</p>
Disability	As above	As above	As above
Gender reassignment	As above	As above	As above
Marriage or civil partnership	As above	As above	As above

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?
Pregnancy or maternity	As above	As above	As above
Race	As above	As above	As above
Religion or Belief	As above	As above	As above
Sex	As above	As above	As above
Sexual Orientation	As above	As above	As above

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?

<p>Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice</p>	<p>Whilst Assistive Tech provides a reactive service, the aim is for Assistive Tech to be increasingly a preventative service. Supporting people to live safely and independently at home can help avoid associated financial expenditure relating to crisis circumstances.</p>	<p>It is known that some people will chose not to self fund.</p>	<p>It will be an on-going action to continue to identify alternative funding options to keep charges affordable.</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	Positive impact. There is scope to increase the promotion of the Welsh Language	None	Bi-lingual service user information
Operational Recruitment & Training of workforce	Neutral impact. There are staff specifically employed for this service but this isn't due to change.	None	N/A
Service delivery Use of Welsh language in service delivery Promoting use of the language	Neutral impact	None	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>Positive: Positively contributes to increasing housing options in Monmouthshire.</p> <p>It particularly supports the efficient use of Social Care and Health resources through a preventative approach to avoid the need to access such services.</p> <p>Effective Assistive Tech use will deliver of cost benefits and cost avoidance eg Health, Social Care by helping people become more independent.</p> <p>Negative: None</p>	<p>It is a priority for the Council to ensure the Assistive Tech is as closely as possible aligned with current housing need and wider strategic priorities.</p>
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g., climate change)</p>	<p>Positive: N/A</p> <p>Negative: N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized, and health impacts are understood</p>	<p>Positive: Being more aligned to need will have a benefit in respect of positively contributing to the health of homeless persons. Good housing supports well-being.</p>	<p>The current programme specifically support health and well-being. The aim is to further strengthen this from a preventative perspective.</p>


Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	Negative: N/A	
A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	Positive: Positively contributes by effectively helping people continue to live at home safely and independently. Negative: N/A	N/A
A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing	Positive: Positively contributes to the health and well-being of people using Assistive Tech Negative: N/A	N/A.
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	Positive: N/A Negative: N/A	N/A
A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	Positive: Assistive Tech indirectly supports people to realise their potential by helping people feel safer, more confident, more reassured, more independent etc etc It similarly benefits carers and family.	It is hoped that as Assistive Tech use increases and the availability of equipment widens, the benefits and impact will increase.

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	Negative: N/A	

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 Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>Assistive Tech offers short to medium term support which aims to avoid or delay accessing long-term care options</p> <p>It recognises that small or low level issues such as mental and physical deterioration associated with age, can escalate into serious issues eg dementia, falls.</p> <p>Assistive Tech offers an alternative option to traditional forms of care and possibly the need to move home.</p>	<p>The aim is to continue to develop the Assistive Tech service through targeting Social Care workforce. Assistive Tech should be part of their toolkit.</p> <p>The Digital Coach supports the Social Care workforce to consider Assistive Tech as an alternative option to traditional care.</p>
 <p>Collaboration Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>The delivery of assistive tech is through a partnership between Housing & Communities and Social Care and a number of respective teams.</p>	<p>Arrangements already exist and the aim is to broaden the partnership to include Health and possibly other Social Care teams.</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>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>Assistive Tech delivery is through a partnership approach between Housing & Communities and a number of teams within Social Care eg reablement team.</p> <p>Their views are very important from a Housing & Communities perspective as they provide the strategic steer</p>	<p>Health services are currently are not as embedded with the approach as hoped, but the aim is to increase the involvement as part of the partnership.</p>
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>The proposal is about strengthening and improving housing support as a preventative service to offset the need for other services to be accessed, particularly at a point of crisis.</p> <p>HSG services seek to intervene early and address low level issues to prevent escalation.</p>	<p>Resources are already being directed towards mitigating against homelessness through trying to prevent homelessness and other crisis.</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 data-bbox="237 555 376 587">Integration</p> <p data-bbox="203 603 528 746">Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p data-bbox="589 312 1312 456">The proposal positively impacts on well-being eg health, financial etc by helping people retain accommodation or access good quality alternative accommodation</p> <p data-bbox="589 491 1216 568">Services have the potential to support wider priorities and services.</p>	<p data-bbox="1335 312 1391 344">N/A</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	None.	None.	N/A
Corporate Parenting	N/A	N/A	N/A

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

Evidence has been gathered in the following ways:

- Assistive Tech statistics
- Social Care advice and need
-

The legislation and good practice which have informed the proposal include:

- Social Care (Wales) Act 2014

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?

.This section should summarise the key issues arising from the evaluation. This summary must be included in the Committee report template

Positive -

The positive impacts of Assistive Tech use will:

- Increase the use of Assistive Tech to support older and vulnerable people
- It provides an additional mechanism of support that can complement traditional forms of care
- It equips Social Care workforce with knowledge and awareness
- It avoids cost
- Priority areas of hospital discharge, dementia, falls, isolation and reablement will benefit
- It supports the Council's Community & Corporate Plan priority of Safe Place
- It supports the Council's FPOP framework in terms of increasing digitalisation
- It supports the priority of prevention and the Living Well Monmouthshire Strategy

Negative

- The current arrangement focuses on self-funding which may impact on take-up and wider benefits,

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
Continue with the Assistive Tech programme	In the next quarter	Strategy & Sustainable Living Manager J/S with Social Care
Start scoping out applying Assistive Tech at Mardy Park and		

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.		18 th March 2026	
2.			

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Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2025-26

People Scrutiny Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
31 st March 2026	Assistive Technology	To scrutinise how assistive technology is assisting people in living healthy independent lives.	Ian Bakewell	Policy Review
Special Meeting 29 th April 2026	Population Needs Assessment	To conduct Pre-decision scrutiny of the Population Needs Assessment.	To be confirmed.	Pre-decision Scrutiny
12 th May 2026	Investment Package for Caldicot Leisure Centre	Consideration of proposed investment to improve facilities at Caldicot Leisure Centre.	Craig O'Connor Councillor Sandles	Pre-decision Scrutiny
	WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan) – Invite P&O Members	To scrutinise performance against the plans.	Sharon Randall Smith Will McLean Cllr Wright	Performance Monitoring
14 th July 2026	New Homelessness Legislation	To provide an understanding of the new legislation.	Ian Bakewell Rebecca Cresswell	Policy Development
	Homelessness Update	To scrutinise a progress update.	Ian Bakewell Rebecca Cresswell	Policy Development
22 nd September 2026	Youth Service	To review the service.	Josh Klein	Service Review
To be confirmed	Monmouthshire Public Library Strategy 2025-30	To scrutinise the Monmouthshire Public Library Strategy 2025-30 following public consultation.	Richard Drinkwater	Policy Development

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2025-26

People Scrutiny Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
	Invite Place Members			
17th November 2026	Welsh Language Strategy	To scrutinise the draft Welsh Language Strategy 2027 - 2032 in line with the Welsh Language Standards.	Nia Roberts Pennie Walker	Pre-decision Scrutiny
To be confirmed	WHO Age Friendly Communities update	To be confirmed		
To be confirmed	Poverty and Inequality	To be confirmed	Lucinda Boyland	
Corporate and Community Plan Items for the Committee's consideration for inclusion into the People Scrutiny Forward Plan:				
Participatory Budgeting Programme				
Race equality action plan for Wales				
LGBTQ+ action plan				
Disability Action Plan				

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2025-26

People Scrutiny Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
Gender Equality Action Plan				
Homes for Social Rent and work to bring empty properties back into use				
Review and update shared housing allocations policy				
Rapid Rehousing approach/rapid rehousing action plan delivery				
Care without profit – increase in-county placement options				
Support effective discharge from hospital – integration between health and social care				

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2025-26

People Scrutiny Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
Provide a high-quality residential care facility for people with dementia				
Chief Officer for Social Care and Health Annual Report				
Safeguarding Performance Report				
Develop a broader 14-19 education offer through collaboration with partners				

Committee / Decision Maker	Meeting date / Decision due	Report Title	Cabinet member	Purpose	Author	Date item added to the planner
Cabinet	Deferred	Pavement Café Policy	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To adopt the pavement café policy as the basis for making decisions on applications for licences	Carl Touhig	4-Oct-22
Cabinet	07-Mar-28	Strategic Equality Plan	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To To seek Council approval of the Strategic Equality Plan 2028-2033 in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty	Pennie Walker	
Council	31-Mar-27	Welsh Language Strategy	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To approve the publication of the Welsh Language Strategy 2027 - 2032 in line with the Welsh Language Standards.	Pennie Walker	19-Feb-26
Council	04-Mar-27	Adoption of Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP)2018-2033	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To consider adoption of RLDP following the public examination by PEDW	Craig O Connor	19-Feb-26
Cabinet	09-Dec-26	Caldicot Placemaking Plan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To consider adoption of the Caldicot Place making Plan	Craig O Connor	19-Feb-26
Cabinet	09-Dec-26	Strategic Risk Assessment	Ben Callard - Resources	To provide Cabinet with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority.	Hannah Carter	19-Feb-26
Cabinet	09-Dec-26	Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) Annual letter	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To fulfil the expectation of the PSOW that their report is brought to the attention of Cabinet.	Annette Evans	2-Mar-26
Council	12-Nov-26	Annual Director's Report for Social Care	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	Present the annual report to Council	Jane Rodgers	3-Mar-26
Council	12-Nov-26	Safeguarding Annual Evaluation Report	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	Present the annual evaluation of safeguarding across Council services	Jane Rodgers	3-Mar-26
Council	24-Sep-26	Self-Assessment Report 2025/26	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To seek Council approval of the self-assessment report 2025/26 to ensure that members have a clear and transparent assessment of the authority's performance during the year ending 31 March 2026 in line with requirements outlined in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.	Hannah Carter	10-Feb-26
Cabinet	08-Jul-26	Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023: Monmouthshire County Council's Annual Report	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek approval of the Social Partnership Duty Report 2026, setting out how the authority will build on existing practice and work collaboratively with trade unions to ensure compliance with the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023.	Philippa Green	9-Feb-26
Council	25-Jun-26	Panel Performance Assessment	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To receive the Panel Performance Assessment report and the authority's response to the recommendations.	Matt Gatehouse	17-Mar-26
Cabinet	10-Jun-26	Investment Package for Caldicot Leisure Centre	Angela Sandles - Engagement	Consideration of proposed investment to improve facilities at Caldicot Leisure Centre	Craig O Connor	19-Feb-26
Cabinet	10-Jun-26	Strategic Risk Assessment	Ben Callard - Resources	To provide Cabinet with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority.	Hannah Carter	19-Feb-26
Cabinet	30-Mar-26	Proposed acquisition of land to construct a road diversion at Llanthony Valley	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	To seek Cabinet approval to the acquisition of land to enable the Highway Authority to construct a road realignment away from the land slip at Llanthony Valley.	Deb Hill Howells	19-Feb-26

Cabinet	15-Apr-26	Consultation concerning the provision of Early Education at Durand Primary School	Laura Wright - Education	To provide Members with feedback following the statutory consultation process concerning proposals to replace the Local Authority Nursery with a non maintained setting at Durand Primary School	Matthew Jones	4-Mar-26
	25-Mar-26	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	Ben Callard - Resources	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications for the Welsh Church Fund Working Group Meeting 4 held on Thursday 05th March 2026.	Dave Jarrett	6-Mar-26
Council	05-Mar-26	Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025 - 2028	Ian Chandler - Social Care &	Reason is to endorse a new Corporate Parenting	Jane Rodgers	24-Oct-25
Council	05-Mar-26	2026/27 Capital Strategy and 2026/27 Treasury Management Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources	To approve the Council's 2026/27 Capital and Treasury Management Strategies, including the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy.	Jon Davies	3-Dec-25
Council	05-Mar-26	COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION and REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS FOR 2026/27	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	3-Dec-25
Council	05-Mar-26	PUBLICATION OF PAY POLICY STATEMENT AS REQUIRED BY THE LOCALISM ACT	Ben Callard - Resources	To approve the publication of Monmouthshire County Council's Pay Policy, in compliance with the Localism Act.	Philippa Green	14-Jan-26
Cabinet	04-Mar-26	2026-27 WCF/Mon Farm treasury strategy	Ben Callard - Resources	To present to Cabinet for approval the 2026/27 Investment and Fund strategy for Trust Funds for which the Authority acts as sole or custodian trustee. To approve the 2026/27 grant allocation to Local Authority beneficiaries of the Welsh Church Fund.	Jon Davies	12-Jun-25
Cabinet	04-Mar-26	Revenue and Capital Budget 2026-27 – Final proposals following scrutiny and public consultation	Ben Callard - Resources	To update Cabinet with the consultation responses to the draft budget proposals issued in respect of the Capital and Revenue budgets for 2026/27. To make recommendations to Council on the Capital and Revenue budgets including the level of Council Tax for 2026/27. To receive the statutory report of the Responsible Financial Officer on the budget process and the adequacy of reserves. To receive the Responsible Financial Officer's Prudential Indicator calculations for capital financing.	Jon Davies	3-Dec-25
Cabinet	04-Mar-26	Property Acquisition for use as Temporary Accommodation - withdrawn 11/02/26	Sara Burch	To seek authorisation to proceed with the purchase of a residential 3 bed property and continue to use it as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) to support pressures linked to the availability of temporary accommodation.	Louise Corbett	2-Feb-26
Cabinet	04-Mar-26	To consider the purchase of a Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) property Castlewood	Sara Burch	To consider the purchase of a Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) property Castlewood, Usk following receipt of the owner's intent to sell	Louise Corbett	2-Feb-26
Cabinet	04-Mar-26	Monmouthshire Draft Local Growth Fund Investment Plan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To present to elected members UK Government's new Local Growth Fund and Monmouthshire Draft Fund Investment Plan.	Hannah Jones	12-Feb-26

Cabinet	04-Mar-26	To agree funding options for additional work at the former Deri View Primary School Site	Ben Callard - Resources	To review and agree funding options for additional work at the former Deri View Primary school site, this needs to be completed prior to the relocation of Ysgol Y Fenni to the site.	Nikki Wellington	16-Feb-26
ICMD	25-Feb-26	Submission of Section 6 Biodiversity duty report to WG	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	To submit report outlining how the Council maintains and enhances biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems	Craig O Connor	7-Jan-26
Cabinet	11-Feb-26	Cultural Strategy	Sara Burch		Tracey Thomas	20-May-25
Cabinet	11-Feb-26	2025/26 Budget - Financial update 3	Ben Callard - Resources	To provide the third update of the financial year of the Councils progress against the 2025/26 revenue and capita budget	Jon Davies	12-Jun-25
Cabinet	11-Feb-26	26/27 Placemaking Delivery	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To agree funding allocations for Welsh Government Transforming Towns and Pride in Place. Impact Fund.	Craig O Connor	19-Dec-25
Cabinet	11-Feb-26	Development of a Supported Accommodation Provision for Care Experienced Young People	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	To provide details and seek approval for the acquisition and refurbishing of a residential property in Monmouth for the purpose of developing a supported accommodation provision for care experienced children.	Jane Rodgers	16-Jan-26
ICMD	28-Jan-26	Local Government (Wales)Act 1994 The Local Authorities (PRECEPTS)(WALES) Regulations 1995 - Determination of Payment Schedule	Ben Callard - Resources	To determine the schedule of precept payments to precepting authorities for 2026/27 as required by statute and following the results of the consultation process.	Ruth Donovan	28-Jan-26
Council	22-Jan-26	Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026/27	Ben Callard - Resources	The purpose of this report is to: • present arrangements for the implementation of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and to approve it for 2026/27. • agree to adopt the amendments to the Regulations, proposed by Welsh Government, • affirm that annual uprating amendments will be carried out each year without a requirement to adopt the whole Council Tax Reduction Scheme.	Ruth Donovan	28-Nov-25
Cabinet	21-Jan-26	2026/27 Draft Revenue & Capital budget proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	12-Jun-25
Cabinet	21-Jan-26	Agree S106 Funding for Caldicot Multi-User Route that connects the newly constructed Caldicot Links/Greenway Active Travel route with the Country Park	Sara Burch	To agree additional funding for the Caldicot Multi-User Route	Colette Bosley	15-Oct-25
Cabinet	21-Jan-26	Disposal of two farm cottages at Leechpool Holdings	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek approval for the disposal of two vacant farm cottages located in Leechpool Holdings, Portskewett, identified as surplus to requirements following internal review with services that no longer have an identified need.	Nick Keyse	26-Nov-25
Cabinet	21-Jan-26	Review of Nursery provision at Durand Primary School	Laura Wright - Education	To seek permission to enter into statutory consultation processes regarding proposals to replace the Local Authority Nursery at Durand Primary School with a non maintained setting.	Matthew Jones	

ICMD	14-Jan-26	Museum Service - Collections Rationalisation	Sara Burch - Rural Affairs, Housing and Tourism	To agree the removal of 2 collections - one of newspapers and one of books from the museum collections, to offer to more appropriate homes. (This is part of a series of similar decisions)	Rachael Rogers	2-Dec-25
ICMD	14-Jan-26	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	Ben Callard - Resources	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications for the Welsh Church Fund Working Group Meeting 3 held on Thursday 04th December 2025	Dave Jarrett	10-Dec-25
ICMD	14-Jan-26	Revoking the Usk Air Quality Management Area Order 2005	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To inform the Cabinet Member (Cllr Angela Sandles) of the need to revoke the Usk Air Quality Management Area Order 2005 and agree the principal steps for doing so.	Huw Owen	17-Dec-25
ICMD	14-Jan-26	Annual Health and Safety Report 2024/25	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek the cabinet members approval of the 2024/25 Annual Health and Safety Report including priorities for 2025/26	Kate Thompson	19-Dec-25
ICMD	17-Dec-25	Annual Performance Report - Planning	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	Report the Annual Performance Report to Welsh Government	Andrew Jones	15-Oct-25
ICMD	17-Dec-25	Section 6 Report to Welsh Government on Biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Report of Councils' actions taken to help maintain and enhance biodiversity	Kate Stinchcombe/Colette Bosley	15-Oct-25
ICMD	17-Dec-25	Various Traffic Regulation Orders - Amendment Order No 18	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	The report seeks Cabinet Member approval to proceed with the making and implementation of the MCC Traffic Regulation, speed limit and parking regulations Consolidation Order 2019 (Amendment Order No.18) 2025	Gareth Freeman	26-Nov-25
ICMD	17-Dec-25	Council TaxBase 2026/27 and associated matters	Ben Callard - Resources	To agree the Council Tax base figure for submission to Welsh Government, together with the collection rate to be applied for 2026/27 and to make other necessary related statutory decisions.	Ruth Donovan	28-Nov-25
Cabinet	10-Dec-25	Socially Responsible Procurement Policy	Ben Callard - Resources	1. To approve the adoption of the Socially Responsible Procurement Policy. 2. To delegate authority to approve any subsequent updates to reflect national Guidance and/ or meet new legislative requirements, to the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer for Resources, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Resources.	Cath Fallon	20-Oct-25
Cabinet	10-Dec-25	Joint Committee of the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	Joint Committee of the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales - to consider a Deed of Variation to the current Joint Committee	Jane Rogers	24-Oct-25
Cabinet	10-Dec-25	Strategic Risk Assessment	Ben Callard - Resources	To provide Cabinet with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority.	Hannah Carter	29-Oct-25
Cabinet	10-Dec-25	Community and Corporate Plan - Q2 Progress Update	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To provide Cabinet with an update on the progress that has been made to deliver the commitments set out in the Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28.	Hannah Carter	29-Oct-25
Cabinet	10-Dec-25	Approval of Placemaking Plans - Monmouth, Abergavenny, Magor and Undy	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	Approval of Placemaking Plans - Monmouth, Abergavenny, Magor and Undy	Craig O Connor	17-Nov-25

Cabinet	10-Dec-25	Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual letter 2024-25	Angela Sandles - Engagement	1) To consider the data in this letter, to understand MCC's performance on complaints, including any patterns or trends and our compliance with recommendations made by the PSOW's office. 2) To inform the PSOW of the outcome of MCC's considerations and any proposed actions on the above matters.	Annette Evans	
Council	04-Dec-25	Annual Safeguarding Report	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Diane Corrister	18-Jul-25
Council	04-Dec-25	Director's Annual Report	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Jane Rogers	18-Jul-25
Council	04-Dec-25	Regional Partnership Board Annual Report 2024/2025	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Natasha Harris (Torfaen)	24-Oct-25
Council	04-Dec-25	Appointment of Paul Matthews to the board of CCR Energy Ltd			James Williams	27-Oct-25
Council	04-Dec-25	Annual Report of the Standards Committee 2024/25	Angela Sandles - Engagement		James Williams	27-Oct-25
ICMD	26-Nov-25	LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES) ACT 1994 THE LOCAL AUTHO	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek Member approval of the proposals for consultation purposes regarding payments to precepting authorities during the 2026/27 financial year as required by statute	Peter Davies	7-Nov-25
Cabinet	19-Nov-25	Destination Management Plan	Sara Burch & Paul Griffiths		Collette Bosley	17-Apr-25
Cabinet	19-Nov-25	2025/26 Revenue & Capital Monitoring Update 2	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	12-Jun-25
Cabinet	19-Nov-25	Panel Performance Assessment	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To provide an update on the proposed approach for the Council's Panel Performance Assessment which is a requirement under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.	Matt Gatehouse	28-Aug-25
Cabinet	19-Nov-25	Car Parking Review	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	That Cabinet endorses the following recommendations 1.That Cabinet agrees the strategic objectives for the Council's parking strategy 2.That Cabinet agrees the proposed MCC actions in response to the recommendations made in the Monmouthshire car parking review	Craig O Connor	9-Oct-25
Cabinet	19-Nov-25	Inclusion Strategy and Additional Learning Needs Policy	Laura Wright - Education	The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an opportunity to consider the Inclusion Strategy and the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Policy to ensure that they are fit for purpose and meet the local priorities as outlined in the Learning Place section of the Community and Corporate Plan.	Morganna Wagstaff	13-Oct-25
Cabinet	19-Nov-25	Medium Term Financial Plan update - November 2025	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Nov-25
Council	23-Oct-25	RLDP for Adoption	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Rachel Lewis	17-Apr-25
Cabinet	15-Oct-25	A strategy to take forward a whole authority approach to wellbeing and prevention	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Jane Rogers	19-Jun-25
Cabinet	15-Oct-25	Connect to Work and Future Focus programmes	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Hannah Jones / Rory Clifford	21-Jul-25
Cabinet	15-Oct-25	2025/26 Revenue Monitoring Update 1	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	12/76/25

ICMD	08-Oct-25	WELSH CHURCH FUND WORKING GROUP	Ben Callard - Resources	1.1 The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications for the Welsh Church Fund Working Group Meeting 2 held on Thursday 18th September 2025.	Dave Jarrett	
ICMD	24-Sep-25	Health & Safety Annual Report	ben Callard - Resources		Kate Thompson	5-Aug-25
Council	18-Sep-25	Self-assessment 2024/25		To seek Council approval of the self-assessment report 2024/25 in line with requirements outlined in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.	richard Jones	10-Jun-25
Cabinet	17-Sep-25	Review of Housing Support Grant Programme. County of Sanctuary Strategy	Sara Burch Angela Sandles - Engagement	To approve a county of sanctuary strategy which establishes clear principles which will run through all council services and which promotes inclusion and welcome across the wider community.	Ian Bakewell	23-May-25
Cabinet	17-Sep-25				Sharran Lloyd and Jane Harvey	27-May-25
Cabinet	17-Sep-25	Real Living Wage Employer Accreditation	ben Callard - Resources	Further to Cabinet's decision on Wednesday 6th November 2024, and an evaluation of the authority's supply chain, to bring forward a further report detailing the plan to pay the real living wage rate to employees of third parties contracted to work at the authority's sites, and to seek approval to pursue accreditation as a Real Living Wage employer.	Philippa Green	13-Jun-25
Cabinet	17-Sep-25	Proposed endorsement of the Monmouthshire Local Area Energy Plan	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Welsh Government commissioned the production of Local Area Energy Plans for Local Authority areas which will be used to develop a regional and national Energy Plan. The Local Area Energy Plan for Monmouthshire provides data on the energy requirements of the county and the transition that will be required to support carbon neutrality of the energy demands. The report seeks Cabinets endorsement of the Local Area Energy Plan to enable the development of the regional Area Energy Plan and a supporting Investment Prospectus.	Deb Hill Howells	28-Jul-25
ICMD	20-Aug-25	Highway Traffic Regulation Amendment Order No 17	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Gareth Freeman	4-Aug-25
ICMD	23-Jul-25	Lloyds tour of Britain Stage 5 Pontypool to Tumble	Angela Sandles - Engagement		Nick John	2-Jul-25
ICMD	23-Jul-25	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	Ben Callard - Resources		Dave Jarrett	2-Jul-25
Council	17-Jul-25	Strategic Director's Report, Children, Learning, Skills and the Economy'	Laura Wright - Education		Will Mclean	18-Jun-25
Council	17-Jul-25	Chepstow Integrated Transport LUF project			Deb Hill Howells	24-Jun-25
Cabinet	16-Jul-25	Shire Hall Delivery Stage - Financial Approval	Ben Callard - Resources		Tracey Thomas	25-Mar-25
Cabinet	16-Jul-25	Play Sufficiency Update	Angela Sandles - Engagement	Play sufficiency assessment update.	Nick John	28-Mar-25

Cabinet	16-Jul-25	ADD AS FIRST ITEM Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023: Monmouthshire County Council's Annual Report 2024/25 Revenue & Capital monitoring Outturn (incl early update on 2025/26) 2026/27 Revenue & Capital MTFP update and process	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek approval of the Social Partnership Duty Report 2025, setting out how the Council will build on existing practice, and work collaboratively with trade unions, to ensure compliance with the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023.	Philippa Green	6-Jun-25
Cabinet	16-Jul-25		Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	12-Jun-25
Cabinet	16-Jul-25		Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	12-Jun-25
Council	26-Jun-25	Licensing Act Policy 2025	Angela Sandles - Engagement	Policy has to be approved by Full Council and it needs to be in place by 1 st July 2025	Linda O Gorman	10-Jan-25
Council	26-Jun-25	Appointments to Outside Bodies	Angela Sandles - Engagement		John Pearson	23-May-25
Council	26-Jun-25	Separation of Licensing Functions	Angela Sandles - Engagement		Linda O Gorman	28-May-25
Council	26-Jun-25	Strategic Officer/Leadership and Organisation Structure changes	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy		Paul Matthews	5-Jun-25
Cabinet	25-Jun-25	Nature Recovery Action Plan & Green Infrastructure Strategy	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Collette Bosley	17-Apr-25
Cabinet	25-Jun-25	Strategic Risk Assessment	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To provide Cabinet with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority.	richard Jones	10-Jun-25
Cabinet	21-May-25	Y Prentis Update	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Hannah Jones	26-Feb-25
Cabinet	21-May-25	Digital, Data and Technology Collaboration	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To develop proposals to build on existing collaborative arrangements in place for the provision of technology services through the Shared Resource Service. Expanding on these to include digital and data services will generate economies of scale enabling the authority to access expertise to accelerate progress against delivery of priorities set in the Community and Corporate Plan.	Peter Davies & Matt Gatehouse & Sian Hayward	14-Mar-25
Cabinet	21-May-25	Active Gwent Sports Partnership	Angela Sandles - Engagement	For Monmouthshire County Council to formally enter into the Active Gwent sport partnership.	Nick John	28-Mar-25
Cabinet	21-May-25	Marches Forward Partnership	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy		Peter Davies / Cath Fallon	1-Apr-25
Cabinet	21-May-25	Placemaking Grant 25/26 & 26/27	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Craig O Connor	29-Apr-25
Council	15-May-25	SAC Membership Report	Martyn Groucutt - Education	To inform Council of SAC recommendations to appoint members of SAC	Sharon Randall-Smith	16-Apr-25
Council	10-Apr-25	Senior Pay Review	Ben Callard - Resources		Julie Anthony	3-Mar-25
Council	10-Apr-25	Constitution Review	Angela Sandles - Engagement		James Williams	25-Mar-25
ICMD	09-Apr-25	PSPO Lane Closure to prevent fly tipping & off roading	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Mark Cleaver	13-Mar-25
ICMD	09-Apr-25	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 4	Ben Callard - Resources			
Cabinet	02-Apr-25	Reponse to Boundary Commission Electoral Review Consultation	Angela Sandles - Engagement		John Pearson	12-Feb-25
Cabinet	02-Apr-25	Marches Forward Partnership	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy		Peter Davies - Lead (Cath Fallon)	3-Mar-25
ICMD	26-Mar-25	Proposal to increase the fee payments to Monmouthshire Foster Carers	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Charlotte Drury	4-Feb-25
ICMD	12-Mar-25	Highway Traffic Regulation Amendment Order No 16	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment			

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
Council	06-Mar-25	Contract Procedure Rules	Ben Callard - Resources		Scott James	9-Jan-25
Council	06-Mar-25	Publication of the Councils Pay Policy	Ben Callard - Resources	To approve the publication of Monmouthshire County Council's Pay Policy, in compliance with the Localism Act.	Matt Gatehouse / Pip Green	17-Jan-25
Council	06-Mar-25	Appointment of Chief Officer - Head of Transport - Exempt info	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Deb Hill Howells	21-Jan-25
Cabinet	05-Mar-25	2025/26 Final Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	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
Cabinet	05-Mar-25	Approval of a Discretionary Policy for Council Tax Premiums	Ben Callard - Resources		Ruth Donovan	27-Jan-25
ICMD	26-Feb-25	County of Sanctuary: Homes for Ukraine	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To confirm future support arrangements for Ukrainian's living in Monmouthshire as part of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme following changes to the national arrangement for both funding & visas	Richard Drinkwater/Matt Gatehouse	7-Feb-25
ICMD	26-Feb-25	Housing Allocations Policy				
Cabinet	19-Feb-25	2024/25 Revenue and Capital Monitoring Month 9	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	19-Feb-25	UK Shared Prosperity Fund post March 2025 – financial implications and impact	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Hannah Jones	10-Jul-24
ICMD	29-Jan-25	2025/26 Community Council and Police Precepts final	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	17-Dec-24
Council	23-Jan-25	Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2025/26	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24
Council	23-Jan-25	Council Diary 2025/26	Angela Sandles - Engagement		John Pearson	
Council	23-Jan-25	GWENT REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD (RPB) AREA PLAN AND RPB ANNUAL REPORT 23/24	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Natasha Harris (Torfaen)	
Cabinet	22-Jan-25	2025/26 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	22-Jan-25	Education Middle Tier	Martyn Groucutt - Education		Will McLean	20-Nov-24
Cabinet	22-Jan-25	Business case for the purchase of a property in Abergavenny to develop supported accommodation for care experienced young people	Ben Callard - Resources		Jane Rogers	7-Jan-25
ICMD	15-Jan-25	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 3	Ben Callard - Resources		Dave Jarrett	13-Jun-24
ICMD	15-Jan-25	Decision to transfer Dixton Archive from Monmouth Museum to Herefordshire Record Office			Rachael Rogers	9-Dec-24
ICMD	18-Dec-24	2025/26 Community Council and Police Precepts draft	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24

Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of People Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr USK
on Tuesday, 24th February, 2026 at 10.00 am

Councillors Present

County Councillor Jackie Strong (Chair)

County Councillors: Jan Butler,
Christopher Edwards, Simon Howarth,
Penny Jones, Maureen Powell, Martyn Groucutt
and Peter Strong

Officers in Attendance

Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager
Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Diane Corrister, Head of Childrens Services
Pennie Walker
Rory Clifford, Adult Employment & Skills Lead
Lisa Knight-Davies, Head of Organisation Workforce
Development
Lucy Cunningham, HR Advisor

APOLOGIES: Councillors Sue Riley and Maria Stevens

1. Apologies for Absence

Sue Riley, Maria Stevens, Peter Strong as substitute.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Public Open Forum

None.

4. Corporate Parenting Strategy

Cabinet Member Ian Chandler and Diane Corrister introduced the report and answered the members questions:

Councillor Ian Chandler:

- Presented the updated corporate parenting strategy, emphasizing shared responsibilities for children and young people in care across all council members, officers, and partner organizations.
- Stressed that corporate parenting is a council-wide commitment, not limited to children's services.
- Explained the strategy updates reflect progress since 2022, including placement strategies, enhanced foster carer recruitment, and treating care experience as a protected characteristic.

- Highlighted changes in external context, such as eliminating profit from children's care, and clarified priorities and actions.
- Invited feedback before presenting to full council, underscoring the importance of corporate parenting responsibilities.

Diane Corrister:

- Noted the strategy sets out vision, priorities, and roles for corporate parents, with little change in core priorities.
- Detailed recent changes, including demographic shifts and reduced numbers of looked-after children due to investment in prevention services.
- Explained active planning for children in care, leading to a significant drop in numbers and improved outcomes.
- Addressed the inclusion and support for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, and the impact of the national transfer scheme.
- Discussed development of local residential care units to align with council vision and Welsh Government policy, supporting local placement and family relationships.

Questions:

How are care experienced children and young people involved in writing the strategy, and how does their input shape the final document? How often does Cabinet hear directly from young people?

Care experienced young people are involved through a range of formal and informal mechanisms, including twice-yearly meetings with the corporate parenting panel, participation in recruitment panels for staff and foster carers, and visits to residential homes to provide feedback. Their priorities – education, employment, accommodation, and mental wellbeing – directly inform service development, particularly in relation to accommodation for those aged 18 and over. The strategy is shaped by continuous engagement rather than a single consultation exercise. Cabinet members attend engagement sessions to hear directly from young people, rather than young people attending Cabinet meetings.

How is staff instability in the long-term support team being addressed, and what is being done about significant staff turnover in the looked after nursing service, which has led to delays in health reviews?

The backlog in health reviews was raised at senior level with the Health Board, leading to a regional approach that has reduced the backlog from 76 to 35 children. Recruitment challenges remain due to the complexity of cases, but the situation is improving and closely monitored through safeguarding and partnership meetings.

Why were foster carer recruitment targets not met in previous years, and what is being done to achieve the target of 10 new foster carers this year?

Monmouthshire faces demographic challenges in recruiting foster carers, as many residents are retirees or less likely to take on challenging placements. The strategy now focuses on consistent community engagement and making fostering appear as a real option. Currently, 14 people are in assessment, so the target is expected to be met. Competition from independent fostering agencies has been a challenge, but the council has improved its financial and support offer to make in-house fostering more attractive.

Has COVID affected the complexity of presenting children?

The pandemic has led to a significant rise in mental health and emotional well-being issues, compounded by social media pressures and family dysfunction. This has resulted in more complex needs and challenging behaviour among children. The council has increased the number of children residing with parents under shared parental responsibility, allowing for rehabilitation and safer family placements.

The support offered to foster carers is more than just "soft" support, emphasizing the importance of reassurance, experience, and knowledge available to foster carers, which helps retain them. This level of support is comparable to what independent fostering agencies provide, including access to experienced staff and financial incentives.

"Soft" refers to non-tangible support, such as building a fostering community, regular coffee catch-ups with senior managers, and partnership working groups. These initiatives allow foster carers to directly share issues and actively shape processes and documents used by children's services.

A member noted that some foster carers have transferred from private agencies to the council because they value the comprehensive support available, rather than financial incentives alone. Membership of the corporate parenting panel is a powerful reminder of the responsibility to support children who have experienced significant disadvantage.

Appreciation was expressed for the commitment of staff, particularly personal advisers supporting care leavers and care-experienced young people through advocacy, ongoing support, and preparation for independent living. It was emphasized that young people continue to receive support throughout their transition to adulthood.

How are placements with friends or other connected persons safeguarded and monitored?

Placements with connected persons are subject to clear regulatory requirements. These include both kinship carers (family members) and connected carers (friends or individuals with an existing relationship with the child). All connected carers undergo the same safeguarding checks, training, and assessments as foster carers. Placements are overseen by independent reviewing officers and fostering panels, and carers are encouraged to join the wider fostering community for support. The local authority retains shared parental responsibility.

How many children are currently placed in private sector provision, and what is the impact of the Eliminate agenda from April 2026?

Two young people are currently placed in private sector provision and will remain there until their placements end. Welsh Government policy aims to eliminate profit from children's care by 2029-2030. From April 2026, no new for-profit children's homes will be registered, and the regulator ceased accepting new applications after December 2025. Existing homes will continue to operate pending further guidance. The council remains in contact with providers regarding the future use of their properties.

Why does the private sector appear to recruit staff more easily than the council?

Recent recruitment to council run children's homes has attracted experienced staff from the private sector, largely due to instability created by forthcoming policy changes. The council has benefited from this shift and has strengthened its workforce as a result.

Will private children's homes be able to accept children from England following implementation of the Eliminate agenda?

The Welsh Government is still working through this issue. There may be a small number of homes allowed to take children from England, but the details are not yet clear. The government is aware this could be a loophole and is considering how to regulate it.

How robust is the foster carer recruitment and retention process, and is the terminology used in the strategy appropriate (e.g. "resignation")?

The recruitment process is lengthy (six to eight months), with extensive training and checks. Some candidates drop out during the process, and some resign after experiencing the reality of fostering. "Resignation" is the formal term used for any foster carer leaving, whether due to retirement or other reasons. Most resignations are due to life changes, not dissatisfaction. The process is designed to be open and honest to ensure suitable matches.

How does the strategy reflect Welsh identity while remaining inclusive, given Monmouthshire's context as a border county?

References to Welsh identity could be retained with additional context. While promoting Welsh language and culture remains important, the council works to meet the cultural needs of all children, including those from diverse backgrounds.

Is the council improving its approach to preventing unplanned placement disruptions?

Placement stability is closely monitored, recognising its importance for positive outcomes. While emergency moves are sometimes unavoidable due to market pressures, teams work quickly to stabilise placements. All placement moves are tracked and reported, enabling targeted support. The size of the authority supports detailed oversight and close understanding of individual circumstances.

Councillor Peter Strong emphasized the importance of maintaining Welsh identity for young people in Monmouthshire, noting that even if they do not identify as Welsh, knowledge of the Welsh language and political context is valuable for full citizenship and

future opportunities. He advocated keeping Welsh identity in the strategy, while recognizing the diverse backgrounds of care-experienced children.

Chair's Summary:

The Chair recapped the thorough scrutiny of the strategy, highlighting discussions on care-experienced children's involvement, input into new homes, recruitment challenges, the eliminate agenda, support for foster carers, the role of the corporate parenting panel, clarification of placement types, and technical aspects like acronyms and private sector challenges. She acknowledged positive steps and staff contributions.

The Chair asked for clarification on how progress would be reported back to the committee or cabinet.

Councillor Chandler explained the strategy would go to full council for adoption, with mid-term reporting planned (every 18 months), and regular monitoring via the corporate parenting panel. Annual reports from the Chief Officer of Social Care would also come to the committee, and specific topics could be revisited if requested.

Councillor Howarth suggested updates on government legislation affecting the private sector, noting potential risks and the need for committee updates as regulations evolve. Councillor Chandler confirmed the legislative timetable is fixed, with unresolved issues mainly affecting England, and reassured the committee about oversight and reporting mechanisms.

5. Disability Confident Pledge

Cabinet Member Angela Sandles and Pennie Walker introduced the report and answered the members questions with Lisa Knight-Davies and Rory Clifford:

The Cabinet Member stated the Council is a Disability Confident Level 2 employer, committed to inclusive recruitment and supporting disabled people, guaranteeing interviews for qualified disabled applicants, offering reasonable adjustments, and providing mandatory equality and disability training, occupational health, and colleague support networks. She highlighted regular review and continuous improvement, with Pennie Walker as the scheme lead.

Pennie Walker outlined progress in embedding inclusive practices, strengthening manager and workforce awareness, developing colleague support, and partnership working to widen employment access. She noted updates to work experience and well-being policies, collaboration with Job Centre Plus, expanded disability data collection, and improved accessibility at County Hall. She emphasized ongoing improvement, challenges in workforce data and employment pathways, and actions for regular review and accountability.

Questions:

Is there a time limit for completing actions described as "looking into" or "exploring" within the employer evidence template?

All actions are expected to be completed by the end of the council's three-year Disability Confident membership period, with the ambition to achieve Disability Confident Leader status. The council has committed to a broader range of actions than the minimum required and aims to have all actions in place by the deadline.

Do pay commitments apply to those involved in the Disability Confident scheme?

All council employees, disabled or not, are paid according to their role and pay grade, with no difference in rates.

How does the council support employees who develop long-term conditions or disabilities later in their working lives?

The Council is aware of the changing and aging workforce, has updated internal systems to capture when employees become disabled during their employment, and is actively gathering information to offer appropriate support as circumstances change. The Council is working with workforce data and new tools to track age and health changes over time, aiming to adapt and flex support throughout employees' life cycles, not just at a single point in time.

How does the council support employees who wish to work beyond retirement age?

The Council aims to enable all colleagues to maintain a good work-life balance for as long as they wish to work, uses data to understand workforce demographics, and offers options like internal work experience to help employees transition to different roles if needed, ensuring continued purpose and wellbeing.

Is Access to Work support still available for employees who develop long-term conditions and need to change roles?

Access to Work support remains available through the Department for Work and Pensions. However, there are significant delays for individuals applying after starting employment. Internal work experience opportunities provide an additional layer of support and do not replace existing HR policies on reasonable adjustments or redeployment.

Do outside organisations in Monmouthshire contact the council for guidance on the Disability Confident scheme, and what is gained from this relationship?

The Council is working with other organisations and the DWP to involve more local employers in the scheme, aiming to be a leader and example of good practice. 33 Disability Confident employers have been identified in Monmouthshire; a survey has been conducted to understand their needs, and found requests for more support and resources. There are ongoing efforts to liaise with businesses and support individuals with disabilities into employment through government-funded programs.

How do staff without computer access receive training and information about development opportunities?

The Council is introducing Page Tiger, an app allowing staff to access training via mobile phones, and that face-to-face training will be offered for frontline staff. Training

completion is monitored, and support for both physical and mental health, including initiatives for neurodivergent staff, is being strengthened. Mandated training is delivered face-to-face for frontline colleagues, with about 80% completion, and these sessions also help improve digital skills.

How accessible is the council's training platform, Thinqi, to members and staff? There are concerns Members are unaware of the platform.

Concerns regarding awareness and use of the training platform are noted. Further promotion and support are recommended to ensure wider engagement and understanding of available learning opportunities, while any issues should be flagged to John Pearson (Local Democracy Manager).

Chair's Summary:

The Chair thanked committee members and acknowledged the importance of tracking progress over the next few years. She noted the value of receiving evaluation and feedback from a range of colleagues within the Council. She expressed appreciation for the team's attendance and contributions, emphasizing the significance of ongoing improvement and monitoring.

6. People Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan and Action List

The committee agreed to add the Caldicot Leisure Centre investment item to the March meeting, if possible, noting its recent addition to the planner and the importance of timely scrutiny.

7. Council and Cabinet Forward Work Programme

Councillor Howarth raised concerns about items being added to the planner after meetings, potentially missing scrutiny opportunities, and highlighted past issues with items like Tudor Street and County of Sanctuary not being properly tracked or included.

Hazel Ilett clarified that the planner is updated live and accessible via the Council hub, and that scrutiny chairs and the team receive email notifications when new items are added. She encouraged members to check the planner regularly and noted the safeguard for scrutiny involvement.

The committee discussed the need for more advance notice and transparency, with Councillor Howarth emphasizing that last-minute additions undermine effective scrutiny and requesting improvements in planner management.

Hazel explained the planner's new features, including date stamps for item additions and the requirement for officers to indicate scrutiny relevance, aiming for earlier and clearer planning.

Members agreed to keep monitoring the planner, ensure items are not redacted, and maintain oversight of upcoming topics, including the Youth Service and Public Library Strategy.

Hazel agreed to clarify the decision-making arrangements for the Tudor Street item and advise the Committee accordingly.

8. To approve the minutes of the previous meeting

Councillor Bond had noted there was no Impact Assessment on the report and asked for it to be provided in future.

The minutes were agreed.

9. Next Meeting: 31st March 2026

The meeting ended at 12.19 pm.