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County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Wednesday, 16 September 2026

Notice of meeting

County Council

Thursday, 24th September, 2026 at 2.00 pm,
Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA

AGENDA

Prayers will be said prior to the Council meeting at 1.45pm. All members are welcome to join the Chair for prayers should they wish to do.

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	**Apologies for absence**	
2.	**Declarations of interest**	
3.	**Public Questions**	
4.	**Chair's announcement**	1 - 2
5.	**To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16th July 2026**	3 - 14
6.	**Appointment to South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority**	15 - 16
7.	**Self-Assessment Report 2025/26**	17 - 126
8.	**Maintenance of Highways - Motion to review pothole repair techniques**	127 - 174
9.	**Motions to Council**	
9.1.	**Submitted by County Councillor Alistair Neill** This Council: Notes that overspending in the schools' budget was reported last week by officers to be a 'major financial risk'. It is also a major education risk. The cumulative deficit was reported in June to have increased by £2.8million to £6.9million. Officers have advised that action is belatedly being taken to reduce this unprecedented level of overspend.	

	Resolves that: A report is brought back to Council in advance of the 2027/28 budget being set, in which the cabinet member explains how this overspend will be managed downwards without impacting school staffing levels which are critical for our schools.	
9.2.	**Submitted by County Councillor Richard John** This Council: Notes that the legal maximum Fixed Penalty Notice a local authority can issue for littering or dog fouling was set at £150 in the Environmental Offences (Fixed Penalties) (Misc. Provisions) (Wales) Regulations 2007 and has not been increased. Calls on the Cabinet Member to propose amendments to Monmouthshire's enforcement policies to increase Fixed Penalty Notices for littering and dog fouling to the maximum currently permitted under the above regulations. Resolves to write to the Welsh Government to offer support for proposals to increase fines for fly-tipping but request additional measures to increase the maximum fines for littering and dog fouling.	
10.	**Members Questions**	
10.1.	**From County Councillor Tomos Davies to County Councillor Sara Burch, Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs, Housing & Tourism** To ask the Cabinet Member what consideration is being given to improving pedestrian and active travel connections between Llanellen and Abergavenny.	
10.2.	**From County Councillor Tomos Davies to County Councillor Catrin Maby, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment** To ask the Cabinet Member what progress has been made in utilising covert surveillance and enforcement measures to tackle littering and fly-tipping across Monmouthshire.	
10.3.	**From County Councillor Richard John to County Councillor Laura Wright, Cabinet Member for Education** Why were parents informed of a change to the council's school attendance policy in July before that change has been discussed, consulted upon or formally approved by the council?	
10.4.	**From County Councillor Tony Kear to County Councillor Ben Callard, Cabinet Member for Resources** How many MCC Grounds staff are in training for or currently hold valid qualifications and certifications for the professional application of pesticides using hand held equipment and the safe handling of the whole process (via SA1 & SA6 courses)?	
11.	**Date of next meeting - 12th November 2026**	

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive / Prif Weithredwr

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillor Rachel Buckler	Devauden;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Laura Wright	Grofield;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Tony Kear	Llanbadoc & Usk;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Catrin Maby	Drybridge;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Jan Butler	Goetre Fawr;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Ian Chandler	Llantilio Crossenny;	Green Party
County Councillor Sara Burch	Cantref;	Labour and Co-Operative Party
County Councillor Alistair Neill	Gobion Fawr;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Su McConnel	Croesonen;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Mary Ann Brocklesby	Llanelly Hill;	Labour and Co-Operative Party
County Councillor Fay Bromfield	Llangybi Fawr;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Jane Lucas	Osbaston;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Emma Bryn	Wyesham;	Independent Group
County Councillor Peter Strong	Rogiet;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Meirion Howells	Llanbadoc & Usk;	Independent
County Councillor Paul Griffiths	Chepstow Castle & Larkfield;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Jackie Strong	Caldicot Cross;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Rachel Garrick	Caldicot Castle;	Labour and Co-Operative Party
County Councillor Maria Stevens	Severn;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Steven Garratt	Overmonnow;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Angela Sandles	Magor East with Undy;	Labour and Co-Operative Party
County Councillor Ben Callard	Llanfoist & Govilon;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor John Crook	Magor East with Undy;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Tomos Dafydd Davies	Llanfoist & Govilon;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Dale Rooke	Chepstow Castle & Larkfield;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Sue Riley	Bulwark and Thornwell;	Independent Group
County Councillor Jayne McKenna	Mitchel Troy and Trellech United;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Jill Bond	West End;	Independent Group
County Councillor Louise Brown	Shirenewton;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Lisa Dymock	Portskewett;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Tony Easson	Dewstow;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Christopher Edwards	St. Kingsmark;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Martyn Groucutt	Lansdown;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Simon Howarth	Llanelly Hill;	Independent Group
County Councillor Richard John	Mitchel Troy and Trellech United;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor David Jones	Crucorney;	Independent Group
County Councillor Penny Jones	Raglan;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Malcolm Lane	Mardy;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Phil Murphy	Caerwent;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Martin Newell	Town;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Paul Pavia	Mount Pleasant;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Maureen Powell	Pen Y Fal;	Welsh Conservative Party
County Councillor Frances Taylor	Magor West;	Independent Group

County Councillor Tudor Thomas	Park;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Armand Watts	Bulwark and Thornwell;	Welsh Labour/Llafur Cymru
County Councillor Ann Webb	St Arvans;	Welsh Conservative Party

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Public Speaking at Full Council

Members of the public may register to ask a question of the members of cabinet at full council meetings. There is no facility for the public to register to speak as part of the debate of an item on the agenda at full council meetings. The total time allocated for all questions at a meeting of full council is 15 minutes.

No more than one question is permitted per questioner at a meeting of full council and questions will be asked in the order that they are submitted.

In order to submit a question at a full council meeting, notice must be given in writing or by email to the head of democratic services no later than midnight three workings day before the day of the meeting with each question providing the name and address of the questioner.

Questions may be rejected if the question;
- Is not about a matter for which the council has responsibility or which affects the county
- Is defamatory, frivolous or offensive
- Is substantially the same question which has been put at a meeting of full council in the past 6 months
- Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information

Where a person is not able to ask the question to full council in person, the chair may decide to read the question out on their behalf, instruct a written response be provided or choose to not deal with the question in their absence. Those who do ask a question in person will be entitled to one supplementary question which must arise out of the original question or the reply. The chair may reject a supplementary question on these grounds.

Any questions that cannot be dealt with at the meeting due to exceeding the time limit for public questions will be dealt with by a written response.

Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

Our purpose

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

Objectives we are working towards

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

Our Values

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

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

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

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

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

Report for Council
16th July – 12th September

Thursday 16th July 9 a.m.	Llanfoist to Abergavenny Active Travel Bridge Castle Meadows, Abergavenny
Wednesday 29th July 12 p.m.	Food and Fun Education Programme King Henry VIII 3 – 9 School
Tuesday 4th August 11 a.m.	Citizenship Ceremony Registrars, Usk
Saturday 8th August 12.30 p.m.	Asian Month Now Event Park Road, Abergavenny
Wednesday 12th August 12 p.m.	Food and Fun Education Programme Thornwell Primary School, Chepstow
Sunday 30th August 2 p.m.	Abergavenny Civic Service Borough Theatre, Abergavenny
Tuesday 1st September 11 a.m.	Citizenship Ceremony Registrar's Office, Usk
Saturday 5th September 10 – 3 p.m.	Welsh Pop-up Cafe Methodist Church, Castle Street, Abergavenny
Saturday 12th September 8 a.m.	Opening of the Pilates challenge in aid of St Davids Foundation PT Pilates, Maryport Street, Usk
Saturday 12th September	Judging at Usk Show Usk Showground
Saturday 12th September 12.30	President and Patrons Lunch Usk Show

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MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 16th July, 2026 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT: County Councillor Tudor Thomas (Chair)
County Councillor David Jones (Vice Chair)

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

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Paul Matthews	Chief Executive
Jane Rodgers	Chief Officer for Social Care, Safeguarding and Health
Will McLean	Chief Officer for Children and Young People
Nicola Perry	Senior Democracy Officer
James Williams	Chief Officer Law & Governance
Deb Hill-Howells	Chief Officer Infrastructure
Craig O'Connor	Chief Officer, Place and Community Well-being
Adam Fall	Democratic Services Officer

1. **Declarations of interest**

- County Councillor Tomos Davies declared a non-prejudicial interest in the motion 7.3 relating to solar energy. Councillor Davies advised that they are a trustee of a charity involved in solar energy and confirmed that there is no financial gain associated with this role.

- County Councillor Rachel Garrick declared an interest in motion 7.3, stating that they are employed by an energy company whose business includes renewable energy. Councillor Garrick advised that they believed this constituted a prejudicial interest and confirmed that they would withdraw from the debate and any decision on the item.

- County Council Catrin Maby declared a non-prejudicial interest in motion 7.3, as a Trustee of Awel Aman Tawe, a charity which develops and runs a range of sustainable energy projects, including wind and solar.

2. **Public Questions**

2.1. Question from Kelvin Vater to County Councillor Catrin Maby, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment

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Why is the evidence sent to the Council in the form of the 1881 Census, our electoral roll address and a petition signed by 35 residents of the village - to support the historic Welsh name of our road as Banal Lane - deemed to be circumstantial and unsubstantiated?

County Councillor Catrin Maby, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment, advised that officers had responded in detail to the correspondent, the local MP and MS regarding the matter. The Council's only authoritative source is the statutory list of streets originally compiled by Gwent County Council and transferred to Monmouthshire County Council in 1996. Council records show the road as Panel Road, and there is no record of a formal name change.

It was explained that all official Council documentation, including the highways register, historical highways maps, local street gazetteer and local land and property gazetteer, refers to Panel Road. Checks with Royal Mail and the Land Registry did not identify an alternative street name.

The Cabinet Member acknowledged research provided by the questioner, which indicated that the name had evolved over time from the Welsh word *Banadl* through several variants. Officers had also reviewed a number of other rural road names and found several discrepancies between official records and names used locally.

It was advised that, should a formal road name change be sought, an application could be submitted subject to the relevant administrative process and fee.

As a supplementary the questioner asked whether the Council could provide any evidence predating its existing records that conclusively demonstrated the road had never been known by another name.

The Cabinet Member advised that the Council held no earlier evidence capable of conclusively proving that the road had never been known by another name. It was noted that several names appear to have been used historically for the road. The Council's position remains based on the official records currently held.

The Cabinet Member reiterated that a formal application could be made should the resident wish to pursue a road name change, noting that any proposed name would also need consideration in relation to Welsh language requirements. The complexity of the issue and the resident's frustration were acknowledged.

3. **Question from Charles Heaven to County Councillor Paul Griffiths, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development**

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Please can the Council explain what long-term, sustainable measures the Council intends to implement to protect both Sudbrook Cricket Club and the neighbouring school playing fields from repeated unauthorised encampments?

The Cabinet Member for Engagement and Equalities acknowledged the significant impact that repeated unauthorised encampments had had on Sudbrook Cricket Club, the neighbouring school fields and the wider community. It was noted that these sites are important community assets that support sport, recreation and education, and that the disruption caused to local residents and users of the facilities was fully recognised.

The Council is reviewing a range of measures aimed at reducing the likelihood of future incursions and improving the resilience of the affected sites. This includes assessing enhanced access control measures and considering physical deterrents designed to prevent unauthorised vehicle access. Any measures implemented will need to balance site protection with maintaining appropriate access for legitimate users and preserving the character and appearance of the area.

The Council will continue to work closely with the school, community organisations and the police to identify the most effective and proportionate solutions. It was also noted that, while measures can reduce the risk, it is not possible to completely eliminate the possibility of future unauthorised encampments.

As a supplementary the questioner asked what short-term temporary measures could be implemented immediately and whether all access points to the area could be blocked pending the funding and delivery of a more permanent solution.

The Cabinet Member advised that work was ongoing and noted that Council officers had attended the site on the day of the first encampment to explore ways of minimising disruption and preventing future incursions. Discussions and assessments remain underway, taking into account similar issues at other locations across the county.

It was confirmed that the Council would continue to engage with local members, residents and the wider community throughout the process and that any decisions regarding preventative measures would be communicated once they had been agreed.

4. Chair's Announcement

Noted.

5. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 25th June 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th June 2026 were approved as an accurate record.

6. Response to Council Motion: Review of Council and Greater Pension Fund Investments

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The Cabinet Member presented a report to provide Council with an update on progress made in response to the motion agreed at Full Council on 18 September 2025 concerning the review of Monmouthshire County Council's own treasury investments and the request that the Greater Gwent (Torfaen) Pension Fund reviews relevant pension fund investments.

The report asked Council to note the action taken to date, the current position reported by the Greater Gwent (Torfaen) Pension Fund and Wales Pension Partnership, the findings of the Council's own treasury investment review, and the proposed next steps for ongoing monitoring and reporting.

Upon being put to a vote Council resolved to accept the recommendations:

That Council notes the progress made in response to the motion carried on 18 September 2025.

That Council notes the separate role and fiduciary responsibilities of the Greater Gwent (Torfaen) Pension Fund Committee in relation to pension fund investments, and the update provided by the Chair of that Committee.

That Council notes the revised Wales Pension Partnership (WPP) Responsible Investment Policy and exclusions framework approved by the WPP Joint Governance Committee on 10 March 2026 and implemented from 1 April 2026.

That Council notes the outcome of the review of Monmouthshire County Council's own treasury investment portfolio and the finding that no direct holdings in individual defence contractors, arms manufacturers or military companies have been identified within that portfolio.

That Council agrees the proposed next steps set out in section 6 of this report, including continued engagement with treasury advisers, investment managers and the Greater Gwent (Torfaen) Pension Fund on responsible investment matters.

That Council notes the Integrated Impact Assessment at Appendix 1.

7. **Motions to Council**

8. **Submitted by County Councillor Peter Strong**

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This council notes that in the manifesto of Plaid Cymru for the most recent Senedd election, commitments were made to review and reform the Local Government funding formula, including the statements: "And we will review and reform the Local Government funding formula, so that it fairly reflects the realities of serving largely rural populations" And "Review the funding formula for Local Government so that it better reflects the real cost of delivering services in different parts of Wales."

Any changes to the Local Government funding formula could have significant implications for Local authorities across Wales, including Monmouthshire County Council. The importance of ensuring that any reform to the funding formula reflects fairness, transparency and does not disadvantage communities within Monmouthshire.

This council therefore resolves to: Write to the Welsh Government Minister for Finance and the Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning, seeking urgent clarification on the detail scope and proposed implementation of the commitments made regarding reform of the Local Government funding formula.

To also, seek assurances that any proposed reforms will not have a detrimental impact on communities within Monmouthshire.

We request that Monmouthshire County Council be fully consulted on any proposed changes to the funding formula prior to implementation.

Seconded by County Councillor Ben Callard.

County Councillor Richard John proposed an amendment to the motion, that the last paragraph be removed and replaced with *'The letter should make the case for a fundamental review of the* *local government funding formula, explaining the significantly higher costs of delivering services in rural counties and seek a funding settlement that brings Monmouthshire closer to the Welsh average'.*

The amendment was accepted by Councillor Peter Strong.

Upon being put to a vote the motion was carried.

8.1. Submitted by County Councillor Emma Bryn

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Council notes: The considerable impact that the current lane closure on Staunton Road (A4136) is having on residents, businesses, public & school transport operators travelling between Monmouthshire and Gloucestershire. The growing concern amongst residents regarding the lack of certainty around a permanent solution to the land slippage affecting the highway.

Council believes: That restoring the A4136 to a condition that safely accommodates two-way traffic should be a priority for the Authority. That residents and businesses deserve clarity regarding the long-term future of this important route. That transparency around the options, costs and timescales for delivery is essential in maintaining public confidence.

Council therefore resolves: To request that the Cabinet Member responsible for Highways brings forward a report to Full Council setting out: - The proposed long-term solution for the restoration of the A4136. - The estimated cost of delivering that solution. Including funding options. - A projected timetable for delivery of the scheme. - The risks associated with delaying or not proceeding with the preferred option.

Seconded by County Councillor Martin Newell.

Upon being put to a vote the motion was carried.

8.2. Submitted By County Councillor Fay Bromfield

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This Council: Notes the increasing number of proposals for large-scale ground-mounted solar farms on productive agricultural land in Monmouthshire, including the proposed Candwr Solar Farm between Ponthir and Llangybi.

Believes that renewable energy development should prioritise previously developed land, commercial and industrial rooftops, public buildings, car parks and other suitable brownfield sites before productive farmland is considered.

Is concerned about the cumulative impact that multiple large-scale solar developments could have on the county's rural landscape, agricultural economy, biodiversity, tourism and food security.

Resolves to:

a) Ensure that the Council's Local Impact Reports on Developments of National Significance give full consideration to the loss of agricultural land, landscape and visual impact and the impact on biodiversity, highways and the local economy.

b) Write to the Cabinet Minister for Enterprise, Connectivity and Energy calling for planning frameworks and policies to be strengthened by introducing a presumption against large-scale ground-mounted solar developments on prime agricultural land.

c)Request that the Welsh Government adopt a "Rooftops Before Fields" approach to solar energy, prioritising rooftop, brownfield and previously developed land for solar generation before productive agricultural land is considered.

Seconded by County Councillor Rachel Buckler.

Upon being put to a vote the motion was carried.

8.3. Submitted by County Councillor Tony Kear

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This Council:

Notes that current methods of controlling weeds largely rely on manual and mechanical methods, which can be time-consuming, damage highways and raise concerns about effectiveness.

Calls on the Cabinet to commission a review of the Weed Management Policy, including:
- A cost-benefit analysis of current and alternative methods; assessment of environmental impact, operational effectiveness and whole-life costs;
- Consideration of an Integrated Weed Management approach combining targeted herbicide use with non-chemical methods where appropriate;
- Identification of pilot locations, particularly near schools, parks and environmentally sensitive areas; and - consultation with residents, community councils, environmental groups and staff.
- Expects findings and recommendations, including any policy or budget implications, to be reported to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet within six months.

Seconded by County Councillor Lisa Dymock.

Upon being put to a vote the motion was defeated.

9. <u>Members questions</u>

10. <u>From County Councillor Meirion Howells to County Councillor Mary Ann Brockelsby, Leader of the Council</u>

In light of the recent period of exceptionally high temperatures, which has affected communities across Monmouthshire, could the Leader outline what measures the Council has taken to support residents—particularly vulnerable individuals such as the elderly, young children, and those with health conditions—during the recent heatwave?

The question was withdrawn, to be answered in writing.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 16th July, 2026 at 2.00 pm

10.1. From County Councillor Jackie Strong to County Councillor Angelas Sandles, Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement

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Can the Cabinet member provide an update on progress made towards protecting Monmouthshire County Council property in Caldicot from further unauthorised encampments.

The Cabinet Member advised that officers continue to work across departments to reduce the likelihood of future unauthorised encampments, including consideration of appropriate physical measures and improvements to internal processes to enable a faster and more coordinated response. It was noted that any response must remain lawful, balanced and compliant with Welsh Government guidance, while recognising the Council's responsibilities to both Gypsy and Traveller communities, and local residents.

The Cabinet Member highlighted the wider shortage of authorised transit sites across Wales and reiterated the need for a strategic, Wales-wide approach to provision.

Thanks were also recorded to Councillor Strong for her ongoing engagement with residents, community groups and businesses during recent encampments.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Strong referred to reports from residents regarding anti-social behaviour, vandalism and concerns over police responsiveness during recent encampments, and asked whether discussions were taking place with Gwent Police.

In response, the Cabinet Member confirmed that meetings had taken place with Gwent Police and that several actions had been agreed in principle, including:

- Sharing policies and operational procedures between the Council and Gwent Police.
- Arranging a members' seminar on the legal powers and responsibilities of local authorities and the police in relation to unauthorised encampments.
- Holding further discussions between council leaders and police representatives to identify lessons learned and improve future coordination and communication.
- Supporting a Gwent-wide meeting involving all five local authorities to develop a more consistent regional approach.

The Cabinet Member welcomed the positive dialogue with Gwent Police and emphasised the shared commitment to improving partnership working and future responses to unauthorised encampments.

10.2. From County Councillor Paul Pavia to County Councillor Paul Griffiths, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development

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Will the Cabinet Member provide an update on plans to improve the Highbeech Roundabout in Chepstow?

The Cabinet Member advised that a Welsh Government-commissioned study had considered a wide range of options and had now identified a number of proposals, including:

- Improved active travel links.
- Enhanced public transport opportunities.
- Changes to roundabout entry and exit arrangements.

It was reported that the next stage would be a public consultation exercise. Discussions are ongoing between Monmouthshire County Council, Welsh Government and Transport for Wales regarding the timing and delivery of the consultation. Progress had been delayed during the election period but discussions have now resumed.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Pavia referred to the time taken to progress the scheme and requested that the study report be shared with members, together with a member briefing before public consultation takes place.

The Cabinet Member acknowledged frustrations regarding the timescale of the project and confirmed his support for a members' briefing in advance of consultation. He advised that this request had been raised with the Welsh Government project team, although precise timings were not yet available.

10.3. From County Councillor Paul Pavia to County Councillor Catrin Maby, Cabinet Member for for Climate Change and the Environment

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Will the Cabinet Member make a statement on the financial and operational implications of transitioning the Council's fleet of heavy goods vehicles, including refuse trucks, to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles?

The Cabinet Member advised that the Council is undertaking feasibility work with external consultants to assess options for decarbonising the fleet, including electric, hydrogen and hydrotreated vegetable oil technologies.

Initial findings indicate that vehicles currently available on the market do not fully meet the Council's operational requirements due to limitations relating to:

- Vehicle range.
- Capacity requirements.
- Availability of suitable vehicle body types and chassis configurations.

The Cabinet Member added that the financial implications are complex and extend beyond vehicle purchase costs to include operational, logistical and workforce considerations.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Pavia referred to fleet-related budget pressures identified in the Council's outturn report and requested that projected costs of meeting decarbonisation targets be published. He also suggested that representations be made through the Welsh Local Government Association regarding the impact of net-zero fleet requirements on rural authorities.

In response, the Cabinet Member agreed that the findings of the fleet studies and associated cost information should be shared with members once available, potentially through the scrutiny process. She noted that it was not yet clear whether the issues identified were primarily related to policy requirements or vehicle availability within the market and suggested that any future policy representations should be informed by the completed feasibility work.

10.4. From County Councillor Paul Pavia to County Councillor Laura Wright, Cabinet Member for Education

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Will the Cabinet Member make a statement on the resilience of Monmouthshire's school estate to periods of extreme heat and the council's plans to respond to the increasing frequency of such events?

The Cabinet Member advised that recent periods of extreme heat had highlighted the importance of ensuring that the school estate remains safe, resilient and fit for purpose. It was noted that newer school buildings are designed in accordance with Welsh Government net-zero operational energy requirements, incorporating measures such as energy efficiency, passive cooling, natural ventilation and renewable energy generation. Similar principles are also applied to refurbishment and retrofit projects.

The Cabinet Member acknowledged that some older school buildings face challenges during prolonged periods of extreme heat and confirmed that lessons learned from recent weather events are being reviewed. Work is underway to strengthen guidance and support for schools, including risk assessment processes and practical measures to manage high temperatures. Climate change resilience also forms part of the Council's wider strategic risk management arrangements.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Pavia thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for their engagement with members during the recent heatwave. He expressed concern that, in the absence of specific heat-related thresholds within existing guidance, headteachers had been required to make difficult decisions regarding school closures and operational arrangements. He suggested:

- The development of a Council extreme heat plan and decision-support framework for schools.
- Representations to Welsh Government and Public Health Wales seeking updated guidance, including indoor temperature thresholds.
- A review of the recent heatwave response, including the impact on school buildings, childcare arrangements, school meals and learning continuity, with findings reported to Scrutiny Committee.

In response, the Cabinet Member agreed that the recent heatwave had placed significant responsibility on headteachers and noted that decisions had been informed by guidance from Public Health Wales and health partners. She confirmed that the Council had worked closely with schools throughout the period and supported further consideration of the issues raised, including reviewing guidance and exploring the introduction of maximum indoor temperature guidance alongside existing minimum standards.

10.5. From County Councillor Lisa Dymock to the Cabinet Member for Resources

[Click here to watch the meeting]

Can the Cabinet Member please provide an update on the current status of the Section 106 funding associated with ARW Primary School expansion and the Church Road development?

The Cabinet Member confirmed that the Section 106 contributions associated with the Church Road development had now been received in full, totalling £441,484.

It was noted that when funding from the Sudbrook development was allocated to Castle Park School, assurances had been given that contributions from the Church Road and Crick Road developments would instead be available for investment at Archbishop Rowan Williams School.

The Cabinet Member advised that officers are currently working with Archbishop Rowan Williams School to identify the most beneficial use of the funding and to develop investment proposals. Local ward members and the wider community will be informed as proposals progress.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Dimmick welcomed confirmation that the funding had been received but stated that the school and governing body were unaware of the allocation and had been seeking information on the matter.
In response.

The Cabinet Member reiterated that discussions are taking place regarding the most appropriate use of the funding and acknowledged the importance of ensuring that ward members and school governors are kept informed as the proposals develop.

10.6. From County Councillor Lisa Dymock to the Cabinet Member Resources or Planning and Economic Development

Click here to watch the meeting

Can the Cabinet Member please confirm the total cost to the Council of clearing and restoring the site following the previous unauthorised encampment, alongside Sudbrook Cricket Club and Caldicot Comprehensive School?

The Cabinet Member for Resources advised that the costs identified to date, including site security, enforcement notices, court order costs, site clearance and waste collection, amounted to £2,923.

It was noted that this figure represented the best estimate currently available and did not include officer time associated with case conferences and coordinating the Council's response across multiple service areas.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Dimmick referred to previous assurances regarding preventative measures at sites affected by unauthorised encampments and stated that she had submitted information identifying vulnerable sites within the Severnside area. She sought confirmation that proactive measures would be implemented to protect community facilities and open spaces.

In response, the Cabinet Member advised that he had not personally received the information referred to but undertook to liaise with relevant Cabinet colleagues to ensure that the concerns raised were followed up and considered.

10.7. From County Councillor Jan Butler to County Councillor Catrin Maby, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment

Click here to watch the meeting

Can Cabinet Member Catrin Maby give residents of Goytre Fawr some idea when repairs and resurfacing might take place in Lapstone Lane and Nant-y Derry Road from Goytre Hall to Chainbridge?

The Cabinet Member advised that neither road is currently included within the 2026/27 resurfacing programme. However, both roads will continue to be inspected, maintained and repaired as necessary to ensure they remain safe for highway users. Officers are currently reviewing condition survey data to develop the 2027/28 forward works programme.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Butler stressed the importance of providing councillors and residents with clearer information regarding highway maintenance programmes. Whilst recognising budget pressures, she noted that residents would welcome greater clarity on where roads sit within the planned programme of works.

In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged the importance of communication and advised that members can obtain updates on individual roads from highways officers. She noted that major resurfacing schemes are reported annually to members, whilst smaller maintenance works are often identified and prioritised throughout the year. The Cabinet Member further advised that, following the recent highways and pothole review, work is underway to improve access to information and communications for members, with proposals expected to be reported in September.

11. <u>Date of next meeting - 24th September 2026</u>

The meeting ended at 19:00

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MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
REPORT

SUBJECT:	**Appointment to South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority**
MEETING:	**Full Council**
DATE:	**24 September 2026**
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: N/A	

1. PURPOSE:

1.1 To appoint a member of the executive to represent the Council on the South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That Council approve the appointment of Councillor Angela Sandles to the South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.

3. REASONS:

3.1 Since February 2024, the South Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (SWFRA) has been managed by Commissioners appointed by Welsh Government who replaced Councillors appointed to it from each constituent local authority.

3.2 It is the intention of Welsh Government to retain the Commissioners in place until after the local elections next year, at which point responsibility for the governance of SWFRA will be handed back locally appointed Councillors. In the interim period however, they are looking to onboard locally appointed councillors to help guide the future arrangements and direction of the Authority.

3.3 The Fire and Rescue Services (National Framework and Variation of Combination Schemes) (Wales) Order 2026, sets out the new governance arrangements of SWFRA and requires Council to appoint one member to SWFRA to represent the Councils interests on the authority. The regulations require that the member appointed to SWFRA must be a member of the executive.

3.4 It is therefore proposed that Councillor Angela Sandles is appointed to represent the Council on SWFRA.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

4.1 Not applicable.

5. CONSULTATION:

Cabinet

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

The Fire and Rescue Services (National Framework and Variation of Combination Schemes) (Wales) Order 2026

7. AUTHOR: John Pearson, Local Democracy Manager

johnpearson@monmouthshire.gov.uk

SUBJECT: **Self-Assessment Report 2025/26**

MEETING: **County Council**

DATE: **24th September 2026**

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1 PURPOSE:

1.1 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.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That the self-assessment for 2025/26 be approved.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 The Community and Corporate Plan established a clear purpose for Monmouthshire to be a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life. Self-assessment is a way of evaluating, critically and honestly how well the authority is progressing with the delivery of the objectives set in the plan and the effectiveness of our supporting arrangement such as finance, workforce and asset management. The full self-assessment report is included as appendix 3 with a summary at appendix 2.

3.2 The objectives within the plan seek to address complex challenges in an increasingly uncertain environment. The plan sets a long-term ambition focused on the well-being of current and future generations. Delivery continues against a backdrop of sustained financial and demand pressures across local government.

3.3 An evaluation score of between 1 (unsatisfactory) and 6 (excellent) has been applied to each of the council's six objectives. For 2025-26 four objectives have been assessed as level 4 (good) and two as level 5 (very good). The table below highlights the scores in the previous two years showing a positive trajectory of improvement since the plan was approved by Council in 2023.

Objective	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend
A Fair Place to Live	4	4	4	⇔
A Green Place to Live	3	3	4	⇧
A Thriving and Ambitious Place	4	4	4	⇔
A Safe Place to Live	4	4	4	⇔
A Connected Place Where People Care	4	4	5	⇧
A Learning Place	4	4	5	⇧

3.4 The focusses on the 'what we want to achieve' outcome statements for each of the six objectives. These are each underpinned by specific actions for each objective. The report also describes the progress that has been made following the recommendations made in last years' evaluation as well as highlighting future areas of development.

3.5 The report demonstrates that the council has made progress in achieving its intended outcomes including:

- Improving life chances for people irrespective of their income or background. We have provided targeted support to those experiencing disadvantage including providing warm spaces in winter, emergency food aid and practical cost-of-living support.
- Continuing our commitment to locally produced, sustainable food. We improved or revived 220 allotment plots and served more than 200,000 portions of Wesh veg in our schools.
- Residents have made a significant contribution to the green agenda by recycling 73.4% of household waste - one of the highest rates in the UK.
- Delivered a range of projects to develop a diverse local economy in which businesses and working people can thrive, including supporting 120 people into employment.
- Since 2022, the council has secured over £35m to implement transport projects across the county to enhance access, safety and infrastructure. Changes have been made to increase local bus services improve connections and efficiency.
- Since 2022, we have made strides in homeless prevention and reduced the use of B&B accommodation for homeless households by 93.5%.
- Changed the way social care is provided by taking a more preventative approach, intervening earlier and bringing some provision back into the county, for example by opening new childrens' homes. In adult social care, there has been a significant reduction in the amount of unmet domiciliary care need from 804 hours to 271 hours per month.
- Supporting pupils to return and remain in schools through developing an understanding and inclusive school environment. Primary school attendance is now at 93.9%, and secondary attendance is at 89.5%.

3.6 Self-assessment is a continuously evolving process which we aim to improve each year. This has been enhanced by the involvement of the Governance and Audit and Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committees alongside regular input from cabinet members. Changes to our approach include:

- Increased use of feedback from residents and services users including the resident survey, make your mark and service satisfaction surveys.
- Seeking views from residents through our *Let's Talk* forum on the accessibility of the report, providing them with the summary of the report as well as the assessment of the objectives during its development.
- Incorporating independent evidence from Panel Performance Assessment, regulators and inspectors.
- Developed the strategic assessment to provide an integrated overview of impact
- Assessing progress and the impact made over the four years of the plan.
- Incorporating case studies for each objective
- Developing a visually engaging summary of the report to increase accessibility of the document for residents.
- Striving to improve how impact and outcome are measured. This remains an ongoing area for development.

3.7 The self-assessment report 2025/26 has been informed by the independent peer Panel Performance Assessment undertaken in February 2026. Overall, the panel found that "Monmouthshire is an ambitious, well-run Council with communities at its heart and a reach that transcends boundaries." It also noted that the council has "The capability to become 'great'". The findings of the assessment, along with the council's response to the recommendations, was presented to Council in June.

3.8 To support the delivery of the objectives, it's important that all teams are working efficiently and effectively. The report assesses the effectiveness of the enabling functions that support front line delivery to meet changing demands and ensure their sustainability. These include corporate planning, performance and risk management, financial planning, workforce planning, procurement, assets, digital and data.

3.9 Alongside the assessment of the delivery of our objectives, the report assesses how well we have achieved the areas for development identified in the 2024/25 self-assessment report. This can be found in the 'our actions' section. This section also sets out additional areas for development that have been identified as part of the 2025/26 assessment.

3.10 This report is primarily an evaluation of what did in 2025/26. It informs our future work but it does not purport to set out detailed action or delivery plans. That work sits elsewhere, including in the service business plans that are produced annually by teams across the authority. Nor does it cover the authority's budget position which is considered in more detail in the financial monitoring reports received by Cabinet and Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee.

3.11 As well as being an incredibly useful tool for councillors and officers, the production of a self-assessment report is a legal requirement under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The Act requires each local authority in Wales to keep under review the extent to which it is meeting the 'performance requirements' defined in the Act. This means the extent to which: it is exercising its functions effectively; is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively and its governance is effective for securing these.

3.12 The Act creates a duty to publish a report setting out the conclusions of the self-assessment once in respect of every financial year. This informs decisions on how to secure improvement for the future. The self-assessment process has been embedded as part of the council's performance management framework (appendix 1 of the assessment). This ensures it can help the council continually learn and achieve sustainable improvement and better outcomes for citizens, service users and its own workforce. Our self-assessment began with a desk-based evaluation of available evidence. The initial findings were tested refined through a series of workshops with Directorate Management Teams before being subject to challenge by Strategic Leadership Team and Cabinet members.

3.13 A draft assessment of the objectives was provided to Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee. Members conducted a thorough scrutiny of performance and the content of the assessment. The committee did not recommend any changes to the proposed scores. The draft report was also presented to Governance and Audit Committee, which has a statutory role to review the draft assessment. The report was used by the committee to seek assurance on the effectiveness of the council's governance and assurance arrangements. Governance and Audit Committee are also able to make recommendations for changes to the conclusions or actions the council intends to take as set out in paragraph 2.40 of the statutory guidance. The committee did not make any recommendations for changes to the report.

3.14 The commissioning of an external Panel Performance Assessment is also a requirement of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, which requires councils to make arrangements for an independent panel, appointed by the council, to assess the extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements. The implementation of the recommendations made by the panel will be monitored as part of future self-assessment reports.

3.15 The self-assessment is a public document and should be accessible to a wide audience. Once approved the assessment and summary will be published on the council's website and shared with key partners in accordance with paragraph 2.42 of the statutory guidance.

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

4.1 This report is an evaluation of previous commitments and is not seeking a decision that would have an impact on these areas. The progress the council has made on the Well-being of Future Generations Act, equalities and safeguarding is set out in the report. Any action the Council takes that requires further decision will be evaluated in line with the decision-making process.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

5.1 The self-assessment report is an evaluation of previous commitments and is not seeking a decision on a future policy direction. The report provides an analysis, using a range of information, on the council's performance in 2025/26. The structure of the report has been informed by the legislation it is required to meet.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

6.1 The report provides a comprehensive evaluation of the performance of the council in 2025/26 using a range of performance information and evidence.

7. REASONS:

7.1 To ensure that the council can be held to account for performance and can demonstrate progress towards delivering better outcomes for citizens.

7.2 To comply with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 This report is a review of performance in 2025/26. This report does not commit the council to any explicit actions which result in additional resource commitments. Any resource implications of action the Council takes in future in response to the assessment will be dealt with in accordance with the usual decision-making rules.

9. CONSULTEES:

Directorate Management Teams
Strategic Leadership Team
Cabinet

The draft self-assessment report has been scrutinised by Performance & Overview Scrutiny Committee and reviewed by Governance & Audit Committee. The feedback from the committees is set out in this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021
Performance and governance of local authorities: statutory guidance
Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28
Self-assessment Report 2024/25
Panel Performance Assessment 2026 and recommendation action plan

11. AUTHORS:

Matthew Gatehouse, Chief Officer People, Performance and Partnerships
Richard Jones, Performance and Data Insight Manager
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Hannah Carter, Performance Officer

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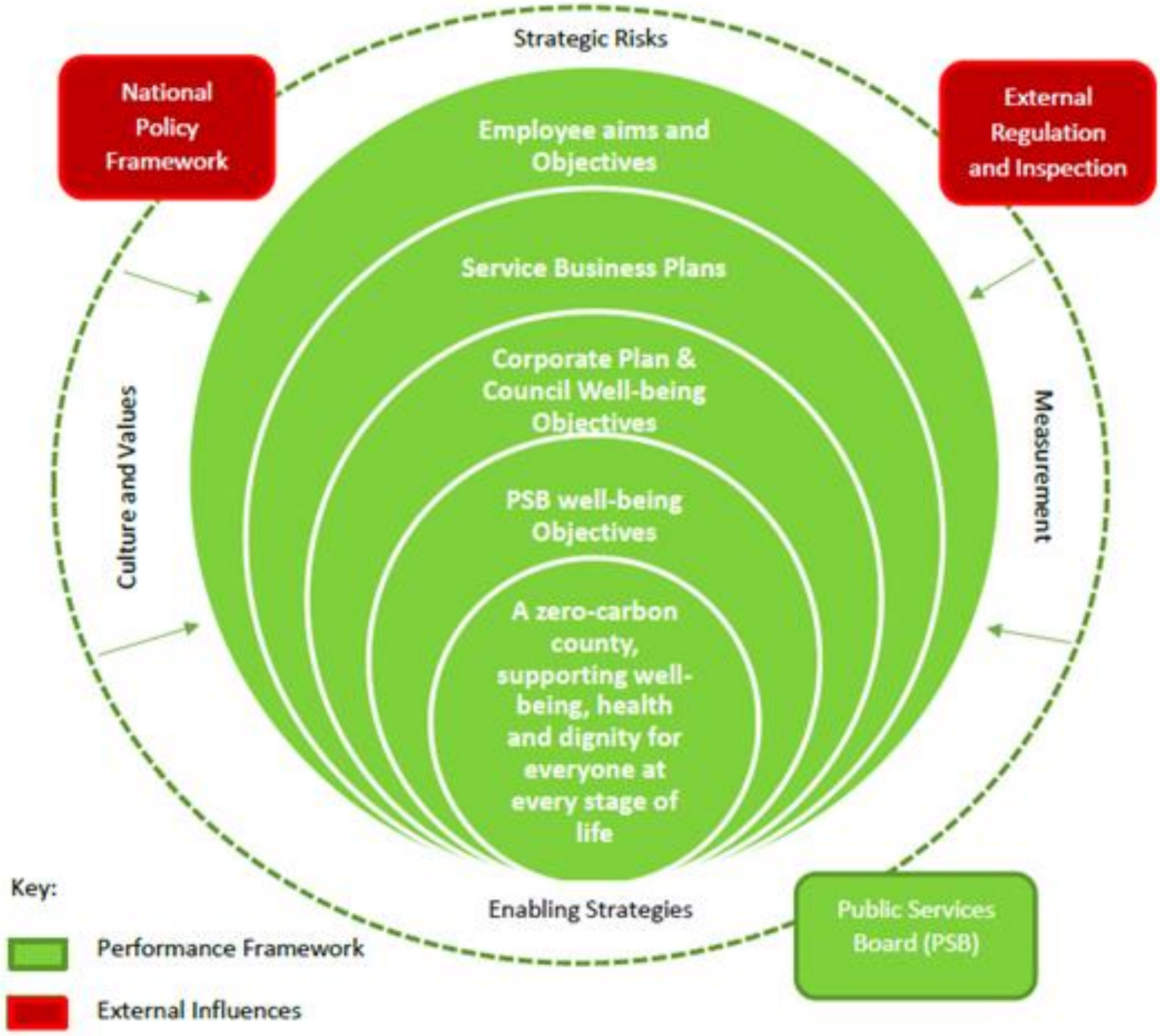
Appendix 1

Performance Management Framework

Our performance management framework makes sure that everyone is pulling in the same direction to deliver real and tangible outcomes.

Building a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life is the unifying purpose of the diverse range of services for which we are responsible. We are a partner in the Public Service Board, which is responsible for setting well-being objectives for the county. The council's own well-being objectives are set by Council and form the backbone of our Community and Corporate Plan. Each of our teams has a service business plan that aligns to these objectives. We have a range of performance measures that we use to keep track of our progress. Our risk management policy enables us to manage strategic risks to our delivery. Our employee aims and objectives show the contributions that individual colleagues make to these objectives and delivering our vision in accordance with our values.



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Monmouthshire County Council Self-Assessment 2025-26

Monmouthshire County Council Self-Assessment 2025-26

Version Control

Title	Monmouthshire County Council Self-Assessment 2025/26
Purpose	To self-assess the council's goals and arrangements as required by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
Owner	Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships
Approved by	
Date	September 2026
Version Number	0.3
Status	Draft
Review Frequency	Annual
Next review date	2027
Consultation	Cabinet Strategic Leadership Team Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee Governance and Audit Committee Lets Talk Forum

Contents

Introduction

Our ambition for Monmouthshire County Council and the people it serves is set in our Community and Corporate Plan. We want to be a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life. We will do this working with, and alongside, our communities. These are ambitious goals and it's vital that we track and evaluate our progress. We are clear about what we want to achieve, and this self-assessment is a critical tool in helping us achieve that. This will make sure we can respond to changing circumstances and opportunities and, most importantly, be held accountable for how well we are doing.

Local councils deliver a wide range of services. Some, such as roads and waste collection are universal, others such as social care are there at times of need. Many of our services act as a safety net when people are at their most vulnerable or are targeted at those experiencing disadvantage. Others, such as schools are there to help young people get the best start in life and make sure we are educating and developing the next generation of Monmouthshire residents. This evaluation cannot cover every single service. We have scrutiny committees and business plans in place to allow our councillors to hold senior officers and Cabinet members to account for those. Instead, it focuses primarily on how well we have delivered the six well-being objectives described in the Community and Corporate Plan.

The report also evaluates some of the key governance aspects that underpin our work such as the effectiveness of our workforce planning, use of assets and our financial management arrangements. It dovetails with the Annual Governance Statement, which is coordinated by our Chief Internal Auditor on behalf of the leadership team. It draws on audit and inspection work carried out by regulators including Audit Wales, Estyn and the Care Inspectorate Wales.

Like many public services we are facing budget pressures as a result of rising costs and increasing demands. We have made tens of millions of pounds in savings over recent years. We have had to take difficult decisions to balance our books but we always do this with the needs of communities in mind. This evaluation helps us understand the impact of the changes we make and allows us to learn from these so we can strive to continually improve what we do.

Our Self-Assessment

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, requires councils to keep their performance under review through self-assessment. We need to publish a report setting out the conclusions of the assessment once every financial year. This report predominantly looks back over the period from April 2025 to March 2026. It also makes reference to the cumulative effect of changes since 2022 when we began to develop our Community and Corporate Plan.

Effective self-assessment helps the council to continually learn and to achieve sustainable improvement and better outcomes for citizens, service users and its own workforce. This is focused on three questions:

- How well are we doing?
- How do we know?
- What and how can we do better?

This is integrated with our annual reporting arrangements on the progress and impact we have made in meeting our well-being objectives, which is a requirement under the Well-being of Future Generations Act. Further details on the process of the self-assessment are shown in Appendix 2. We also produce a short summary of this assessment.

We welcome views from residents on this assessment along with any areas of our work that you think should be considered by the scrutiny committees that hold decision-makers to account. Please get in touch via:

improvement@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Matthew Gatehouse, Chief Officer People, Performance and Partnerships, Monmouthshire County Council, County Hall, Usk, NP15 1GA

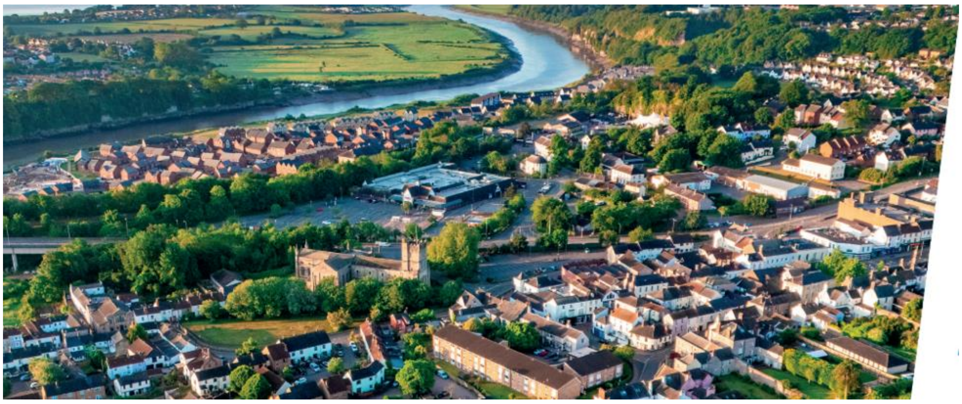
@Monmouthshire

Understanding our local place

Monmouthshire is a diverse county. As a council we need to ensure we are meeting the needs of a wide range of groups, from residents to businesses. We strive to better understand the challenges facing our residents.

The context that we operate in is complex. Having a clear and current understanding of the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being in Monmouthshire is essential for the council to inform its purpose and priorities.

Local place

How well do we understand our local context and place and has this informed our purpose and priorities?	How do we know?
The council has a good understanding of residents' well-being. We use and analyse a wide range of statistical information, including data on health, income and the local economy. We also carried out a residents' survey, receiving more than 1,000 responses. The findings have helped us understand residents' views about their local area, the council and their interactions with council services. The survey is one way we gather residents' views. It sits alongside feedback collected by individual services, which gives more detailed insight into people's experiences of council services. Services such as social care, libraries, housing adaptations and building control also gather feedback through user surveys. However, given the breadth of our responsibilities, we recognise that we do not yet have a comprehensive understanding of how well all services and policies meet the needs of the people who use them. Audit Wales has also concluded that, like other councils, we need to do more to understand the impact of our services on residents. We supported the Make Your Mark survey in 2025, which had a record 3,509 responses from young people. A youth conference was held in May 2025, bringing together young people from schools across the county to explore three priority areas identified in the survey: the cost of living, mental health, and employment and skills. This enabled young people to develop recommendations for decision-makers, public services and young people themselves to take forward over the coming year.  Our 46 ward councillors represent their communities and bring forward local insight. This is supported by public open forums at scrutiny meetings and Council, which give residents opportunities to raise issues of concern.	National Resident Survey Customer Surveys Audit Wales Report - *Use of Performance Information: Service User Perspective and Outcomes* Make Your Mark survey Informational from the National Statistics Office and other sources Let's Talk Monmouthshire Population Needs Assessment Gwent Well-being Assessment & Plan Community and Corporate Plan Replacement Local Development Plan

We have launched Let's Talk Monmouthshire as a single platform for consultation and engagement. It gives residents clearer information and one place to take part in online consultations across the organisation, helping to ensure they do not miss opportunities to have their say. Use of the platform has grown, with 1,000 registered contributors, including residents, businesses, visitors and colleagues. We continue to encourage residents to register for regular updates from all directorates. We have also established a Let's Talk forum for people who are passionate about the county and want to represent their communities. The forum provides valuable feedback on council projects, policies, strategies and consultations. We continue to develop the forum, including working with members to agree topics for future panel sessions. We also consult directly when planning service changes or considering action in a specific area. For example, we engaged with more than 1,200 people to understand how we could make our communities more age friendly. The Community and Corporate Plan commits us to working with and alongside communities, empowering people to support one another and develop long-term solutions. We engaged extensively during the development of the replacement Local Development Plan, which will shape land use across the county. The plan will increase opportunities for younger people to live and work in Monmouthshire, supporting a more balanced population and more socially and economically sustainable communities. We have also worked with residents, businesses and town and community councils to develop Placemaking Plans that reflect the priorities of individual town centres. The placemaking process has strengthened partnership working and created a shared understanding of local challenges and opportunities. Every five years, we also work with partners across Gwent to carry out a detailed well-being assessment and population needs assessment. The Gwent Public Services Board has engaged widely in developing the area's well-being assessment and plan.	Town centre masterplans

Our Outcomes

The Community & Corporate Plan 2022-28 contains six well-being objectives which focus on the longer-term future of the county and aims to address complex challenges, in line with the Future Generations Act.

In assessing the performance of the six objectives, we have considered the extent to which:

- Our objectives contribute to the achievement of the seven well-being goals identified in the Well-being of Future Generations Act
- We are taking all reasonable steps to meet them.
- They remain consistent with the sustainable development principle and the five ways of working. More detail on the how the five ways of working are applied is provided in the progress on each goal later in this report.

It is important that outcomes are not considered in isolation since they can affect each other and need to be considered in an integrated way. How they integrate with each other is shown in Appendix 1.

We have included the following icons to illustrate each objectives contribution to the Well-being of Future Generations Act goals:

- Prosperous Wales
- Healthier Wales
- Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- Resilient Wales
- More equal Wales
- Wales of cohesive communities
- Globally responsible Wales

The long-term nature of our objectives means that the effects of some activity may not be clearly demonstrable over short timescales, and some activity will only have an impact over the longer term. Informed by the evidence gathered, we have assessed progress against each of our objectives on a scale of 1-6 based on the following principles:

Level	Definition	Description
6	Excellent	Excellent or outstanding – all performance measures have achieved the target set and all actions have been delivered
5	Very Good	Major strengths – a significant majority of actions and measures are on track. No more than one or two falling short
4	Good	Important strengths with some areas for improvement – the weight of evidence shows that the successes are greater than the areas that have not been achieved
3	Adequate	Strengths just outweigh weaknesses – the evidence of success marginally outweighs areas that are not on track. Some actions are behind schedule and some measures are falling short of planned targets
2	Weak	Important weaknesses – the majority of measures and actions have not been achieved
1	Unsatisfactory	Major weakness – in most areas, performance is assessed as moving in the wrong direction and the vast majority of actions have not been delivered

A guide showing the layout of the template we have used, and what each section means, is included as an appendix to the self-assessment.

Community & Corporate Plan Objective: A Fair Place to Live

Our rating: 4 (Good)

What we want to achieve:

- Improved life chances for people regardless of income or background.
- Residents have better access to council services and support needed to live a healthy life.
- Citizens are able to participate in council and community decision-making and take actions which enable them to shape their own futures.

Strategic Assessment

Nobody should be left behind in Monmouthshire or feel their voice does not count. Many of our residents are prosperous and very capable of looking after themselves and their loved ones, but this is not the case for all and, in a rural county, inequality can be more hidden than in urban areas. We have therefore focused on improving life chances, reducing the effects of poverty and disadvantage and ensuring residents can access support, improve their health and help shape the future of their communities.

A wide range of council services contribute to making Monmouthshire a fair place to live. These include early years and family support, schools and support for pupils eligible for free school meals, leisure and cultural services, our benefits service, social care and safeguarding services. These services help residents to access opportunities, stay well, feel included and build stronger and more resilient communities.

Our resident survey shows high levels of satisfaction. Ninety percent of respondents would recommend Monmouthshire as a place to live, and 74% were very or fairly satisfied with their local area. The survey also highlights strong community connections, with 79% of residents saying that people in their area get on well and help each other, and 66% saying that people pull together to improve the local area. This shows that residents continue to support one another and contribute positively to their communities.

We know this isn’t always the case for everyone and through this objective we have increased the support we provide to residents to improve their life chances and enabled our communities to develop the places they live. We have expanded childcare provision, increased the number of eligible children accessing early education from 82% to 97% since 2022/23, and continued to focus Flying Start where need is greatest. We have gone beyond our statutory duty by providing both a free breakfast and a freshly cooked lunch to all primary pupils who choose to receive them. Uptake of universal free school meals has increased from 64% in 2022/23 to 68.6% in 2025/26, although this still varies between areas and requires further targeted work. We have also continued to provide practical support to those who need it most through targeted initiatives such as Food and Fun, free or subsidised play provision, warm spaces, emergency food aid and practical cost-of-living support in communities across the county.

We have also made good progress in improving access to services and opportunities that support health, participation and inclusion. We have committed to becoming a Marmot region, increased the number of people completing the National Exercise Referral Scheme, developed our Cultural Strategy and opened the Magor and Undy Community Hub. We have strengthened local volunteering and community capacity through the Be Community programme, launched Let’s Talk Monmouthshire to improve engagement, achieved Disability Confident Employer Level 2 status and became the first accredited Council of Sanctuary in Wales.

Our evidence shows important strengths, with many milestones completed, increased support for residents, progress in health and community participation, and a range of services adapting to meet need. There are, however, some areas we have identified for improvement. We need to ensure our interventions are clearly communicated, better targeted and more consistently evaluated. We need to increase take-up of support where inequality is greatest and continue to work with communities to develop a shared understanding of community resilience.

A Fair Place to Live			
Fair place	Evaluation Score:	Level 4 Good – Important strengths with some areas for improvement – the weight of evidence shows that the successes are greater than the areas that have not been achieved. We have increased the support we provide to residents to improve their life chances and enabled our communities to develop the places they live. We have set plans to deliver most of what we to achieve. We have adjusted and expanded our services and delivered a range of projects to support residents who require it. We need to ensure all our interventions to achieve this objective are targeted, clearly communicated and evaluated to assess impact on our objective.	
Why we focused on this?			
Nobody should be left behind in Monmouthshire or feel their voice does not count. Many of our residents are prosperous and very capable of looking after themselves and their loved ones. However, this is not the case for all and in a rural county inequality is often more hidden than in urban places. We will increase the intensity of our work to help those who need support to live the lives they want.			
How well are we achieving our agreed outcomes?			**How do we know?**
What we want to achieve: Improved life chances for people regardless of income or background			
We are supporting working families with our childcare offer in Monmouthshire. We have increased the number of childcare settings from 94 to 97 during the year. We have established a new childcare setting at Trellech Primary School and submitted a full Business Justification Case to Welsh Government regarding a new setting at Archbishop Rowan Williams Primary School. We have also increased the number of eligible children accessing Early Education from 82% to 97% since 22/23. We have remained committed to ensuring Flying Start provision is available for parents in areas of the county that need it most. We develop our Flying Start offer based on demand. Some settings currently having no eligible children and choosing not to offer the service. This has contributed to an overall, slight reduction in the number of Flying Start settings, from 45 to 43. Our expansion of the childcare offer is supporting families in Monmouthshire to access childcare and parents to return to work. We are committed to providing Welsh-medium childcare. The number of children accessing Welsh-medium early education has grown by 25% during 25/26, from 74 to 93. We have faced challenges in developing additional Cylch Meithrin settings due to limited site space and uncertainty around the permanent location for the Welsh school in Monmouth. This has meant that families in Monmouth and Chepstow cannot yet access Welsh-medium childcare, including Flying Start. We have approved the existing Cylch Meithrin to offer Flying Start places to support families in the interim while a longer-term approach is developed. We aim to ensure that we are able to meet the growing demands of Welsh medium early education in the future. We have gone above our statutory duty to provide universal free school meals to all primary school pupils by providing a free breakfast and a freshly cooked meal at lunchtime to all who choose to receive them. Presently, 68.6% of pupils are receiving meals, up from 64% in 22/23. This is supporting pupils to receive healthy, free meals at school. This also helps to reduce food insecurity and improve equity in health and education outcomes. We continue to promote the uptake of Universal Free School Meals, however have seen variances in uptake between areas. This means that not all children who may benefit from free school meals are receiving them. We have gathered a targeted list of schools using data on deprivation, eligibility for free school meals and additional learning needs to try to increase take-up where it will make the biggest difference.			Number of childcare and Flying Start places Free school meals uptake Community Development Team action plan Carbon and monetary saving from Benthyg library of things

We know that nutritious food benefits children and young people by improving their physical and mental health, which enhances their ability to learn and grow. We know that some families may also require support with meals during school holidays. We have continued to deliver our Food and Fun programme to support families during this time. We've worked with schools to identify children who may benefit the most from this provision, ensuring our offer is targeted. The programme provides two healthy meals and activities for children during the summer holidays, aiming to reduce the financial burden on families and promote the health and well-being of children through physical activity. We achieved 6,377 attendances and served 12,849 meals during the summer of 25/26. We are ensuring children have access to activities and play, no matter their background. We have continued to deliver our programme of free or subsidised play provision through MonLife. This year, 2,217 children benefitted from this service. We have undertaken refurbishments at our outdoor play areas and parks to ensure play and activity are available to every child at no cost. We understand that the cost of living is still too high for many people. We have focused our efforts on delivering practical support that residents can access directly in their towns and communities. We have held 46 public-facing engagement events across the county, which were attended by 1,213 people. These events helped people to find local support, get advice, and connect into activities that improve well-being and reduce isolation. During the year we have supported the Warm Spaces programme which delivered 32 warm spaces, hosting 868 sessions for 1,238 attendees, and provided 10,315 meals/refreshments alongside advice and enrichment activity in venues. We also supported food provision through Emergency Food Aid. We backed 14 organisations for summer provision and 21 for winter provision, including £2,400 for emergency supermarket food vouchers via Monmouthshire Citizens Advice. We have continued to support circular economy projects. We have supported Benthyg libraries of things across the county which mean residents can borrow or buy things that they only use occasionally, supporting the environment and reducing costs. Our initiatives have saved residents approximately £100k since opening in April 2022, as well as resulting in a carbon saving of 45,841kg. We are continuing our commitment to wider circular economy initiatives which help people on lower incomes to reduce expenditure. These include our repair cafes, swap shops, and bike repair workshops.	
What we want to achieve: Residents have better access to council services and support needed to live a healthy life	
We are working with our partners in other public services to take action to reduce unfair and unjust inequalities in health. We have committed to becoming a Marmot region and recognise that the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age play a major factor in their health. We have continued to help residents to improve their health and fitness levels through the National Exercise Referral Scheme. This is a national scheme designed to improve health and well-being for adults with chronic conditions or those at risk. We have supported 522 people to complete the scheme this year an increase from 456 in 24/25. Those completing the scheme reported improvements in balance, fitness levels and independence, and importantly their mental health. Overall, 75% of people reported that their general well-being had improved and that they felt happier after completing the scheme. The positive experience of those taking part has resulted in an increase in Exercise Referral Memberships at our leisure centres over the last decade from 300 in 2015 to 1,134 in 2025. We are ensuring our leisure services are accessible for all residents no matter their income through our Passport to Leisure scheme which offers discount for residents in receipt of benefits. We have worked with the creative sector in Monmouthshire to develop our Cultural Strategy. We facilitated workshops with local and national organisations and the creative and economic sector, and held a consultation on the draft strategy. Monmouthshire's Cultural Strategy 2025-2035	School Holiday Play provision Food and Fun scheme National Exercise Referral Scheme completion Cultural Strategy

outlines a visionary plan for the next decade. This strategy emphasises that culture is not an isolated endeavour, but a key driver of well-being, economic growth, community resilience, and collective identity.

CASE STUDY – NATIONAL EXERCISE REFERRAL SCHEME

The National Exercise Referral Scheme (NERS) is a national scheme funded by the Welsh Government. It aims to improve the lives of adults at risk of developing or currently managing chronic conditions through a structured 16-week physical activity regimen. Patients are referred to the scheme by their GP.

Philip was referred to NERS following a heart attack which left him feeling shaken. Following his heart attack, Philip struggled to walk and was becoming out of breath quickly. Through his NERS class, Philip has been able to progress his recovery and regain his stamina. He described the programme as “the best thing for me” and said it has “given me back my life”, allowing him to regain his strength and confidence. When asked if he would recommend the programme to others, Philip said he would “seriously recommend” the programme to others in his position to allow them to get back to doing the things they could before.

Philip’s fitness goals for the future include continuing to attend his NERS and Fit4Life classes twice a week to keep his fitness up and continue his recovery.

We developed and opened the new £2.9 million Magor and Undy Community Hub in partnership with MUCH group. The development was based on extensive involvement of the community and is designed based on residents’ feedback. The site provides spaces for community use and commercial events, as well as potential for small business growth. The MUCH group now occupies and manages the community hub for the direct promotion of social, cultural, leisure, sporting and other community activities.

What we want to achieve: Citizens are able to participate in council and community decision-making and take actions which enable them to shape their own futures	
We are lucky to have high levels of social capital in Monmouthshire. We want to ensure we are engaging with our excellent community of volunteers. We are strengthening local volunteering and community capacity through the Be Community programme, which aims to equip individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to make a meaningful difference. We supported 122 organisations and delivered 48 training opportunities throughout the year to help build community capacity. Nearly all participants in our programme reported improved skills and confidence. We are focused on working with our communities to grow community resilience further. Our residents survey showed 66% of felt that people in their local area pull together to improve the local area. This shows that residents continue to support their local place in Monmouthshire. We recently underwent an inspection from an external panel of peers to assess how we function as a Council. This panel recommended that we work closely with communities and volunteers to develop a shared understanding of community resilience. To address this, we have developed a set of actions which include co-producing a practical definition of community resilience with our stakeholders and moving from broad engagement to targeted work and action with community groups.	'Lets Talk Monmouthshire' Disability Confident Employer status County of Sanctuary status Number of staff completing a Welsh language course

We have launched 'Lets Talk Monmouthshire' as a platform for consultations and engagement. This is enabling greater clarity of information for residents and providing a single place to visit for online consultations right across the organisation, to ensure residents do not miss the opportunity to engage. So far, over 930 residents have signed up to receive regular updates. Our resident survey showed 39% of respondents felt the council keeps residents well informed about the services and benefits it provides, while 55% feel did not feel well informed. We need to grow our engagement and encourage more residents to register for regular updates on Let's Talk so they receive updates directly. We are committed to tackling inequality. We have achieved the accredited Disability Confident Employer (Level 2) status. We committed to encourage local firms to become accredited disability confident employers. The number of Disability Confident Committed firms has fallen from 39 to 27. Some of these businesses have ceased trading during this period. The number of Disability Employers has also decreased slightly, from 7 to 6. We are working with the Department for Work and Pensions on an authority-wide engagement programme with small and medium enterprises that have premises in Monmouthshire. This work will promote the Disability Confident pledge and inclusive work practices, aiming to increase opportunities in the workplace for disabled residents. Council passed a motion in September 2023 committing us to formally becoming a County of Sanctuary. This was secured at the end during 2025-26 with Monmouthshire becoming the first accredited Council of Sanctuary in Wales recognising our commitment to building safe, compassionate, and resilient communities. Supporting and promoting the use of the Welsh language is vital to ensuring its growth. We are providing opportunities for our staff to improve their Welsh language skills; 42 staff members were completing a Welsh language course during 25/26. We currently have 382 members of staff with some level of Welsh language skills that can be used to provide a service in Welsh to residents. There has been a decrease in the percentage of the Monmouthshire population who can speak Welsh, from 21.3% to 19.7%. We are continuing to work with partners to promote the use of the Welsh language in our county.	Number of staff that have a level of Welsh speaking ability
Further areas for development identified through our 2025/26 self-assessment	
Work with communities and stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of community resilience.	

Well-being of Future Generations Act impact

Contribution of Council goal to Future Generations Act Well-being Goals

Prosperous Wales	Resilient Wales	Healthier Wales	More equal Wales	Wales of cohesive communities	Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language	Globally responsible Wales
✓		✓	✓		✓	

Well-being Objective: A Fair Place to Live

Adopting community-focused approaches promotes **collaboration** which in turn will support well-being. By working with communities, empowering people and ensuring they can access support we hope to **prevent** problems from occurring. Opportunities are plentiful in our county, so it is vital that everyone can be **involved** to maximise benefits to well-being. This should have a **long-term** benefit to individuals and communities. Our actions will have an **integrated** benefit for many aspects of the act, they will promote a Wales of cohesive communities and overall, help to create a more equal Wales.

Measures of progress

Milestone	**Target for completion**	**Progress**	
A new poverty and inequality action plan is approved by Cabinet	December 2024		It has been agreed that a new strategy or formal tackling poverty and inequality action plan is not the preferred option. Instead, we have ensured a focus on addressing poverty and inequality is mainstreamed by embedded it throughout our strategies and plans.
All four library of things are fully operational	March 2025		All sites are currently operational.
Establish two additional Cylch Meithrin	First established September 2025, second established January 2027		These have not been established as planned due to a lack of suitable accommodation.
Establish childcare settings on the sites of Archbishop Rowan Williams Primary school and Trellech Primary schools	To establish the site at Trellech by March 2025 and Archbishop Rowan Williams by January 2027		The setting at Trellech Primary School has now been completed. A business case for the site at Archbishop Rowan Williams Primary School has been submitted to Welsh Government.
Opening of the Magor and Undy Community Hub	August 2023		This has now been completed.
A new inclusive Cultural Strategy is approved by Cabinet	March 2025		This has now been completed.

Disability Confident Employer (Level 2) Status attained	June 2024				This has now been completed.
County of Sanctuary Status attained	December 2024				This has now been completed.
Measure	**Previous[1]**	**Latest[2]**	**Target for 2025/26**	**Quick View**	**Comment**
Percentage of pupils choosing to receive universal free school meals	75	68.6	77	↓	This is the figure at the end of March 2026
i) The financial saving to communities (£) ii) Carbon saving (Kg Co2) from items borrowed through Benthyg Library of Things	i) 28,028 ii) 12,402	i) 41,986 ii) 18,199	i) 20,000 ii) 10,000	↑	These figures refer to annual savings
Percentage of people participating in sporting activities three or more times a week	42	43	45		Previous figure is for the year 2021/22, latest is 2022/23. This is based on national data. The Quick View column is blank as we do not have recent data available to assess.
Number of children benefitting from MonLife-run free or subsidised play provisions	2,463	2,217	3,708	↓	Changes to the funding and parameters of some schemes included in this data set has resulted in a reduction in the number of children accessing schemes. As a result, targets will be reviewed to ensure they are appropriate.
Number of local employers who make the disability confident employer pledge	46	33	70	↓	Some businesses who had made the disability confident pledge have now ceased trading. We are working with the DWP to increase the number of businesses taking up the pledge.
Percentage of people who volunteer	32	39	40		Previous is 2019/20, latest is 2022/23. This is based on national data. The Quick View column is blank as we do not have recent data available to assess.
Percentage of the population who can speak Welsh	21.3	19.7	18	↓	This is measured by a national survey. The previous is figure is for March 2025, latest is December 2025. There is an overall improvement since the beginning of the plan when 18.4% of people said they could speak Welsh.

Quick View of Trend: ↑ Improving performance; ↓ Declining Performance; ↔ Unchanged Performance

Quick View of Target: Green – Target achieved; amber – just missed the target; red – fell some way short

[1] Previous data is 2024/25 unless otherwise stated.
[2] Latest data is 2025/26 unless otherwise stated.

A Green Place to Live

Community & Corporate Plan Objective: A Green Place to Live

Our rating: 4 (Good)

What we want to achieve:

- Council operations are net zero by 2030 and local communities are supported to reduce their own carbon footprint
- Nature recovery, improved environmental and river health
- Sustainable local agriculture and farming practices with public services and residents consuming more local and seasonal produce

Strategic Assessment

Monmouthshire's natural environment is central to our quality of life, local identity and visitor economy. We need to protect and conserve the county's outstanding landscapes, improve biodiversity and river health, reduce carbon emissions and strengthen resilience to climate change. These are complex, long-term challenges and the full impact of our actions will take time, but it is vital that we continue to act now to safeguard the environment for current and future generations.

A wide range of council services contribute to making Monmouthshire a green place to live. These include waste and recycling services, estate and building management, transport and fleet services, planning and community development. These services help to reduce emissions, protect and enhance the environment and enable residents and communities to play their part in creating a greener Monmouthshire.

Generally, residents views of Monmouthshire as a green place to live are positive. Fifty-nine percent of residents said their local area has a clean environment, 65% said local air quality is good and 75% said there are enough green spaces in their area.

We have refreshed our Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy and translated it into clearer action plans. We have completed costed decarbonisation surveys across our estate and reduced estate emissions by 17.8% from the 2019/20 baseline. We have continued to invest in low carbon technologies, renewable energy and ultra-low emission vehicles. We have also increased our recycling performance, with 73.4% of municipal waste sent for recycling, reuse or composting, exceeding our target, and independent assessment shows our work on waste reduction and food to be particularly strong.

Our evidence shows that the scale of the challenge to meet our decarbonisation ambitions remains significant. This is a similar picture across the UK. Overall emissions increased between 2022/23 and 2024/25, largely due to procurement and construction activity, and our current rate of reduction is not sufficient to reach net zero by 2030 without substantial further investment. We have made important progress and are building the evidence, plans and partnerships needed for the next stage, but the path to net zero remains extremely challenging.

We have made good progress in supporting nature recovery, improving environmental resilience and strengthening local food systems. We have enhanced 47 hectares of public land for biodiversity, delivered 13 green infrastructure projects, supported 25 nature recovery projects and continued to work through catchment and nature partnerships to improve habitats and river health. We have developed action plans for biodiversity, nature recovery, rivers and flood risk, and have continued to support communities through nature-based projects and local green space activity.

We have developed a Local Food Strategy and made practical progress on sustainable food. We have improved or revived over 220 allotment plots and more than 200,000 portions of Welsh organic vegetables have been supplied to pupils through the Welsh Veg in Schools scheme.

Our evidence shows important strengths that outweigh the areas not yet completed. We recognise river health remains a major concern and some resident perceptions of the local environment are lower. We also recognise the scale of the challenge to reduce our carbon emissions and resources required to deliver the pace of change required.

A Green Place to Live

Green place	Evaluation Score:	Level 4 Good – Important strengths with some areas for improvement – the weight of evidence shows that the successes are greater than the areas that have not been achieved. We are continuing to implement projects that are contributing to achieving our objective. The range of work that we are undertaking is helping us to understand the scale of the challenge and the path we need to take to reach our net zero goals. We have supported nature recovery and improved river health. We are also enabling the use of more local and seasonal produce. We remain ambitious in our aim of becoming net zero by 2030. However, unless there is significant public investment, the evidence that we are gathering suggests that reaching our target will be extremely challenging.

Why we focused on this?

Climate change, nature loss and declining biodiversity are among the most significant challenges facing our communities, economy and future wellbeing. Monmouthshire's natural environment is one of its greatest strengths, shaping the places people value, supporting health and wellbeing, sustaining local food and farming, and underpinning our tourism and visitor economy. More frequent extreme weather, increased flood risk, rising temperatures and pressure on habitats are already affecting people, places and services. At the same time, the loss of nature and biodiversity weakens the ecosystems we rely on for clean air, water, food, carbon storage and resilience to climate impacts. We recognise the need to protect and restore the natural environment, reduce carbon emissions, support nature recovery and adapt to unavoidable climate impacts. Which will ensure that future generations can continue to enjoy and benefit from Monmouthshire's outstanding landscapes and rich natural heritage**.**

How well are we achieving our agreed outcomes?	How do we know?
What we want to achieve: **Council operations are net zero by 2030 and local communities are supported to reduce their own carbon footprint**	
We are taking local action to reduce our carbon emissions and play our part in tackling climate change. Like many other public bodies, we are facing systemic challenges to reach our ambition of achieving net zero by 2030. However, we are making good progress with the resources available. We have completed costed decarbonisation surveys across our estate. We are using them to develop an estate decarbonisation plan, carbon heat strategy and wider Decarbonisation Strategy to meet our Net Zero ambition. We are also improving our use and availability of internal energy management data. We are using this to identify high-emitting sites and develop a corporate energy policy to support lower consumption and better carbon management. We have invested in low carbon technologies such as the use of renewable energy to decrease emissions from our estate. We have decreased our estate emissions by 17.8% from our 2019/20 baseline. We have established an informal stakeholder working group to co-ordinate further opportunities to use alternative delivery models and capabilities to reduce our emissions. We are developing Refit Phase 2, which focuses on further energy efficiency and renewable projects for our buildings. We have noted the Local Area Energy Plan that has been produced in conjunction with the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR). This outlines actions for key aspects of our energy transition locally, as well as joining up actions regionally and nationally. We have invested in the transition of our fleet to ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEV). We have increased the percentage of our fleet which is ultra-low emission from 8% in 22/23 to 17.2% in 25/26. We have not seen tangible changes to the emissions from travel since 22/23 and since the baseline year of 2019/20. We are developing a fleet transition plan to accelerate the transition. We have also implemented a new pool car scheme to increase access to shared vehicles, lower business mileage and support behavioural change.	Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy Carbon emission reporting data Recycling and waste data Local Area Energy Plan Climate Emergency UK Assessment

Overall carbon emissions increased between 2022/23 and 2024/25. This was largely due to rises in emissions from procurement and our supply chains. This included the development of Severn View Park care home and the carbon-neutral Abergavenny 3-19 school. We have ensured that, while these construction activities have temporarily raised emissions, both buildings have been designed to ensure minimal environmental impact and reduce carbon emissions in the long-term. We recognise that our current rate of reduction is not sufficient to reach net zero by 2030 due to the complexity of the challenge and the high costs involved in decarbonising our fleet and estate. Substantial further investment would be required to transition at the desired pace. We have identified that 87% of our emissions are linked to emissions coming from procurement, staff commuting and similar activities. This mirrors the picture across Wales where these emissions make up 83% of total local authority emissions. Achieving net zero will therefore be dependent on reducing our supply-based emissions, along with direct energy use in council buildings and fleet. We have updated and expanded our Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) at multiple sites across the county. We have commissioned a technical report to forecast demand to ensure we are targeting suitable locations. We are using the findings of this report to develop an EVCI strategy for the county which will increase the availability and accessibility for all residents. This will support the transition to electric vehicles within communities, helping to reduce emissions.  We have continued to support low-income households to access grant funding to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. We are promoting the Eco4 scheme which provides funding for low-income households and those living with medical conditions worsened by damp or cold to access energy efficiency improvements. We have increased the rate of recycling. At the end of 25/26, 73.4% of municipal waste was sent for recycling, reuse or composting. This exceeded the statutory target of 70%, and our internal target of 72%. We have achieved this through the continued participation of residents in household recycling schemes. Our resident survey showed, 68% of residents were satisfied with waste management services. We have achieved the highest UK score for Waste Reduction & Food in the independently run Climate Emergency UK assessment, at 93%. We have identified that the amount of residual household waste produced per person per year has risen from 198kg in 2022/23 to 202kg in 2024/25 and remains above the Wales average.	
What we want to achieve: Nature recovery, improved environmental and river health	
The natural world in all its guises is the backdrop to life in Monmouthshire. We need to do all we can to ensure its protection and conservation. We have reviewed and updated our Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy to include a biodiversity and ecosystems resilience action plan. This is ensuring biodiversity and nature recovery sits at the heart of what we do to address climate change. We have developed a Local Nature Recovery Action Plan to provide a roadmap for local conservation efforts. This plan will support everyone, from individuals and communities to businesses and conservationists. Our efforts have resulted in 47 hectares of public land being enhanced for biodiversity this year. Alongside this	Biodiversity and ecosystems resilience action plan

work, we have also developed a Green Infrastructure Strategy. Through this we aim to create a network of green spaces to improve both our local environment but also support residents' health and access to green space. During the year, we delivered 13 Green Infrastructure nature-based projects across the county. These delivered a variety of benefits including ecosystem resilience and climate change mitigation.

We continue to actively participate in partnerships, including coordinating of the Monmouthshire Local Nature Partnership and roles in the Usk catchment partnership. We have supported the delivery of 25 nature recovery projects, including improvements to green spaces, purchase of machinery to facilitate meadow management, and the continued delivery of our Nature Isn't Neat work which promotes conscious grassland management to enhance nature. We have empowered local nature champions to carry out their existing vision for local green spaces and the wider community to enhance biodiversity. We have fostered conversations with local community groups about protecting local nature and biodiversity planting and provided opportunities for primary schools and gardening volunteers to help with enhancement of green spaces outside their normal sites. Our resident survey show resident are fairly satisfied with the environment in their areas. 59% of people felt their local area has a clean environment, 65% said local air quality is good, and 75% felt there are enough green spaces in their area.

CASE STUDY – NATURE ISN'T NEAT

Nature Isn't Neat is an approach that encourages us all to alter the way we manage grassland on our verges, open spaces and parks to benefit nature. By letting areas of grassland grow we're encouraging more wildflowers to flower for longer, providing food and habitat for wildlife and pollinating insects like bees and butterflies. Not only does it benefit nature, by allowing plants to grow bigger roots they store more carbon in the soil and help mitigate climate change. Bigger roots also create more air in the soil and help reduce the impact of flooding.

We work in partnership with the Gwent Green Grid to deliver this work, and during 2025/26, we managed or enhanced 47 hectares of public land for biodiversity. This is the maximum area of publicly owned land we can deliver. Our efforts are helping to restore nature in our county and improve the resilience of our local environment.

The health of our rivers has suffered in recent years. Phosphate targets for the Usk were being failed at a rate of 88% and the Wye at 68%. We have continued to lobby for change, and Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water is now installing phosphate stripping plants to improve the health of our rivers. Improvements are already visible, with the Lower Wye no longer being classed as failing for phosphorus levels. We have developed an action plan showing how we will work in partnership to improve the health of our rivers and oceans. The Climate and Nature Emergency Steering Group is monitoring its progress. We are working with partners and the community to improve river health and water quality through practical action including invasive species removal, litter clearance and community activities that build understanding of river ecology. We continue to support joined-up action through partnerships, including Gwent Green Grid Partnership (GGGP) and wider Gwent collaboration with Natural Resources Wales (NRW) through programmes such as Rivers for Life activity delivered through the Resilient Ecological Networks (REN) programmes, as well as active involvement with the Usk and Wye Catchment Partnerships. We also support and deliver action through the Wye Valley National Landscape, the Living Levels Partnership, the Severn Estuary Partnership and ASERA (Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities). Collectively, these arrangements provide coordination, shared evidence and governance, and help to secure external funding and deliver capacity to support statutory duties and the council's priorities and targets.

We have developed and consulted on a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and action plan, which assesses flood risk on a catchment-based approach and will identify Strategic Flood Risk Areas and support community resilience. We have secured external funding to work with partners

Nature Recovery Action Plan

Green Infrastructure Strategy

to assess the feasibility of natural flood management approaches. This nature-based approach looks at upstream land management to reduce downstream flooding risk. We continue to work with partners to advocate for flood defences and wider environmental resilience for our main rivers. We also operate as the Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) approving body to ensure that all new developments in the county have a sustainable drainage system in place, reducing the risk of flooding whilst also providing water quality and biodiversity benefits. With extreme weather events becoming more frequent we understand more than ever the importance of supporting communities at risk of flooding. We have developed updated emergency flood response plans for sites across the county and regularly engage with our communities through one-to-one sessions and community meetings. Storm Claudia had a significant impact on our communities, particularly in Monmouth, Skenfrith, and Abergavenny. We recognise the impact this has on residents and business in the County. We have worked with partners, including Welsh Government, to provide financial support to those affected in their recovery. We are also reviewing flood protection measures in each community and collaborate with the Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales, and other stakeholders to develop improved protections, given the increasing frequency of severe weather events.	
What we want to Achieve: Sustainable local agriculture and farming practices with public services and residents consuming more local and seasonal produce	
We have created a Local Food Strategy to facilitate access to council land for growing food and have allocated land for community use. We have supported the Welsh Government's Allotment Support Grant. This has improved, created or revived over 220 allotment plots across six sites in Monmouthshire. This investment increases access to locally grown produce, encourages sustainable food practices at a household level and supports wider health and well-being outcomes. A Green Flag Award application was submitted in January 2026 for Incredible Edible Usk, recognising community-led food growing, sharing and education initiatives that encourage residents to grow, consume and value local, seasonal produce. We have successfully secured external funding through the Marches Food Partnership to expand the delivery of our strategy. We are working towards a more sustainable local food system, increasing the use of local and seasonal produce used across our services while strengthening local supply chains and supporting sustainable farming. Currently 23% of our food spend is on Welsh produce. We are working with partners to increase this. Targeted initiatives are beginning to shift the system further, particularly the Welsh Veg in Schools programme, which is now operating in 10 schools, reaching approximately 2,100 pupils and supplying 180kg of locally grown produce. This is directly supporting local growers and embedding fresh, seasonal food into school settings, while demonstrating how public procurement can drive demand for local produce. This has also enabled us to supply pupils in ten schools with nutritious, local food regardless of socio-economic background. We have also supported the development of new safety standards and logistics, enabling growers to expand and new farmers to diversify into organic horticulture as part of this scheme. We are supporting the development of more sustainable farming practices. Targeted programmes have worked with farms covering over 1,400 acres, delivering improvements in soil health, reduced chemical inputs and increased diversification. This is being complemented by wider engagement, with 377 members in the local regenerative farming network and further expansion planned through regional programmes expected to work with around 120 farmers. Our initiatives are supporting a growing momentum towards more sustainable land management and food production across the county.	Local Food Strategy Welsh Government Allotment Support Grant

Well-being of Future Generations Act impact

Contribution of Council goal to Future Generations Act Well-being Goals

Prosperous Wales	Resilient Wales	Healthier Wales	More equal Wales	Wales of cohesive communities	Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language	Globally responsible Wales
	✓	✓		✓		✓

Well-being Objective: A Green Place to Live

Monmouthshire is a beautiful place, with a stunning natural and built environment. We have a collective responsibility to ensure this is available for future generations to enjoy so our plans must be focused on the **long-term** and look to **prevent** problems from occurring in years to come. **Involvement** is required with partners and communities to maximise the potential of the environment within the county. Working in **collaboration** with organisations who can enhance our environment will provide expertise in all aspects of our work, for example this will allow us to trial the latest technologies in renewable energies. Creating a healthy and resilient area for people to enjoy demands the **integration** of this objective as the environment within Monmouthshire forms such an important part of achieving a range of goals.

Measures of progress

Milestone	Target for completion	Progress	
New climate and nature emergency strategy approved by Cabinet	May 2024		This has now been completed.
Food strategy developed and approved	May 2024		This has now been completed.
Increased use of seasonal and/or local produce in schools, care homes and domiciliary care	May 2026		Work with partners is ongoing to increase the use of seasonal, local produce in schools and play activities across the county.

Measure	Previous	Latest	Target for 2025/26	Quick View	Comment
Carbon emissions (kgCO2e) from the council's assets and operations[i]	54,859	56,911	36,000	↓	Latest figure is for 2024/25, previous is for 2023/24. 2025/26 data will be included when available. This increase is largely due to significant construct ion

					projects such as the Net Zero school in Abergavenny which emit carbon during construction but which will result in significant carbon over time.
Percentage of our local authority fleet which is ultra-low emission	16.5	17.2	18	↑	
Capacity (MW) of renewable energy equipment installed on the council's estate	6.722	6.815	6.75	↑	This is a cumulative figure. Latest figure is for 2024/25, previous is for 2023/24. 2025/26 data will be included when available.
Amount (kwh) of renewable energy generated from council installations	5.3m	5.5m	4.89m	↑	This is an annual figure. Latest figure is for 2024/25, previous is for 2023/24. 2025/26 data will be included when available.
Percentage of municipal waste sent for recycling, reuse or composting	72.2	73.4	72	↑	This is provisional data which may be subject to change.

Quick View of Trend: ↑ Improving performance; ↓ Declining Performance; ↔ Unchanged Performance
Quick View of Target: Green – Target achieved; amber – just missed the target; red – fell some way short

Community & Corporate Plan Objective: A Thriving and Ambitious Place

What we want to achieve:

Our rating: 4 (Good)

- Vibrant town centres which bring people together and attract investment
- People of all ages and backgrounds have the skills to do well in work or start their own business
- Sustainable Transport and Infrastructure

Strategic Assessment

Monmouthshire should be a place where people, businesses and communities can thrive, where town centres remain active and welcoming, where residents of all ages can develop the skills they need to succeed, and where good transport and infrastructure connect people to opportunity. This matters because a thriving and ambitious county supports prosperity, helps retain young people, strengthens community resilience and makes it easier for residents to access work, services and cultural opportunities. Monmouthshire starts from a comparatively strong economic position, with high employment and qualification levels, however this is not experienced equally by everyone or in every place. We need to build on these strengths in a way that is inclusive, sustainable and rooted in the needs of our towns and communities.

We are seeing positive signs of progress, such as an improvement in our economic position as measured by the UK Competitiveness Index. Evidence shows that Monmouthshire has a highly qualified and economically active population, with 57% of residents qualified to level 4 and above and 79% of people economically active, both above Wales averages.

A wide range of services contribute to making Monmouthshire a thriving and ambitious place. These include planning and regeneration, culture and heritage, tourism, property and asset management, highways and transport, digital and infrastructure services, education and lifelong learning, and business and employment support. Together, these help create the conditions for investment, improve the attractiveness and function of our towns, support enterprise and employability, and enable residents to access opportunity and participate in the county’s economic and civic life.

We have made good progress putting in place the strategies, partnerships and investment needed to deliver this objective. We have worked with residents, businesses and town and community councils to develop placemaking plans for our towns, creating a clearer shared understanding of local priorities and a basis for targeted regeneration. We have strengthened the strategic framework for promoting the county through our Destination Management Plan and linked this with wider work such as the Cultural Strategy. We have also continued to use Welsh and UK Government and UK funding to improve town-centre buildings, public-facing assets and the visitor offer. This is helping to increase footfall, support local trade and make our towns more attractive places to live, work and visit.

We are building on Monmouthshire’s strong skills and employment base while responding to areas where more targeted action is needed. We have continued to support residents to move into work, gain qualifications and develop businesses. During the year, council-supported programmes helped 120 people into employment, while 90 pre-start and existing businesses were supported and 10 new businesses were created. We have also made strong progress supporting young people at risk of becoming disengaged from education, employment or training, with 44 NEET young people supported into employment. The proportion of school leavers who are NEET remains above where we want it to be. We know that retaining young people in the county remains a challenge because of housing costs, limited higher education presence and the need for stronger local pathways into work and training. We have ensured our Deposit Replacement Local Development Plan is focussed on addressing these challenges. We have secured funding to develop a new Monmouthshire Skills Centre which will also help support post-16 pathways for learning.

Transport and infrastructure remain critical enablers of this objective. In a largely rural county, limited public transport can restrict access to employment, learning and services and can reduce the benefits of growth for some communities. We have adopted a new Local Transport Strategy, strengthened regional transport planning, established an infrastructure project team and secured significant external funding for transport and active travel schemes. Since 2022, we have secured £35 million to implement transport projects. We have also secured more than £24 million for active travel, with more than 100 active travel routes now in place and usage of routes increasing by 4.1%. We have also improved the frequency of buses in some areas and continue to support major regional rail and road proposals that would improve connectivity.

We continue to face significant challenges in maintaining our highways network. We saw further deterioration in the condition of roads last winter and the maintenance backlog remaining beyond available resources. We have taken a planned approach to prioritising investment, responding to urgent need and reviewing how pothole repairs are delivered and communicated. The funding gap remains substantial and continues to limit the pace at which overall road condition can improve.

A Thriving and Ambitious Place		
	**Evaluation score:**	Level 4 – Good – Important strengths with some areas for improvement – the weight of evidence shows that the successes are greater than the areas that have not been achieved. We have developed our strategies to deliver the objective; our focus is now on delivering these. We have provided support for residents and businesses to gain new skills, develop and grow. We have delivered projects to enhance connectivity in the County. We are building from a strong economic and skills base. Our assessment shows we need to grow this base and provide targeted support and projects for people, business and places that need them most.

Why we focused on this?

Our starting point is a comparatively strong one. Monmouthshire has a strong local economy and is well placed for growth in Welsh terms. There is strength in a number of key sectors which are highlighted and supported at a national level. Employment rates are high, as are qualification levels. But more can be done. Monmouthshire can be more vibrant. The conditions exist to achieve this. We will work with national, regional and local partners to increase investment, improve connectivity and continue the development of an economy which is thriving, ambitious and enterprising.

How well are we achieving our agreed outcomes?	How do we know?
What we want to achieve: Vibrant town centres which bring people together and attract investment	
Attracting residents and visitors to our town centres is vital for the local economy. We are committed to ensuring that town centres remain vibrant and welcoming places that meet the needs of the local communities, businesses and visitors. We are working to create an environment that allows town centres, tourism and businesses to thrive. We have worked with residents, businesses and town and community councils to develop Placemaking Plans for all six towns that reflect the priorities of individual town centres. Plans for Monmouth, Abergavenny and Magor with Undy have been recently agreed, and work is progressing on a plan for Caldicot. The placemaking process has strengthened partnership working and created a shared understanding of local challenges and opportunities. The local placemaking partnership groups, which include both town and county councillors, have developed recommendations for how the available funding should be deployed locally in 2026/27 to support town-specific priorities. Delivery is supported by Welsh Government Transforming Towns funding and the UK Government Pride in Place Impact Fund, providing a strong basis for locally prioritised regeneration activity across Monmouthshire's town centres. We have continued to invest in projects that strengthen town centres, increase footfall and support local businesses. We have used Shared Prosperity Fund support to deliver improvements to visitor and public-facing assets. We have utilised grants for tourism and event activity that help bring more people into our town centres and support local trade. Our efforts have seen an increase in the number of visitors to our heritage sites from 189,000 in 24/25 to almost 245,000 in 25/26. We have developed a Destination Management Plan that sets a clear strategic framework for managing and promoting Monmouthshire as a destination. We have completed a Destination Policy Impact Assessment, consulting with 30 businesses, to ensure our approach continues to be informed by local insight and business needs. There has been a continued gradual increase in visitor spend and stays in the county. We are ensuring our strategies, including also our Cultural Strategy, are closely linked and work together to foster the right environment for our county's towns.	Placemaking plans Destination management plan

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We are also making investments in key town-centre assets. Since 2022, we have secured £2.4 million from the Welsh Government Transforming Towns Placemaking Grant and used this investment to improve or bring back into use almost 30 town-centre buildings and make shop front and public realm improvements. This is directly strengthening the appearance, use and economic resilience of our town centres. We have also secured a further £2.2 million from UK and Welsh Government sources for projects in 2026/27, maintaining momentum for future regeneration and investment. **CASE STUDY – SHIRE HALL** We are investing in our historic buildings in the county, ensuring they are fit for purpose and sustainable for future generations. Supported by a £2.8 million investment, including £1.5 million from the National Heritage Lottery Fund, we are undertaking a refurbishment of a Monmouthshire landmark, Shire Hall. This project will see Shire Hall revitalised as an inspiring community museum and dynamic learning hub. Changes include: innovative displays telling Monmouth's story, flexible learning spaces, visible object storage, and improved conditions for our internationally significant collections; Upgrades to the heating system and energy efficiency will enhance environmental sustainability, reducing the carbon footprint of this Grade I listed building; Redesigned retail spaces and a renewed visitor welcome will improve the experience for all, supporting Monmouth's regeneration and the Destination Management Plan; removal of physical, financial, and social barriers to access, ensuring Shire Hall is a welcoming space for everyone. Extensive consultation with a wide range of communities, including ethnic minority groups and individuals living with dementia, has shaped the project. Initiatives such as the Dynamic Collections and Anti-Racist Wales projects have already resulted in co-curated exhibitions and more inclusive museum experiences. A Citizens Panel will continue to guide future exhibitions and events, ensuring ongoing community representation.	
What we want to achieve: People of all ages and backgrounds have the skills to do well in work or start their own business	
Monmouthshire values all of its citizens and the people who work for our businesses. In 2023 we developed an Economy, Employment and Skills Strategy. We are committed to helping people of all ages and backgrounds develop the skills needed by new and established businesses helping them to grow and thrive. We have continued to support residents who want to start or grow their own business through Business Monmouthshire. We supported 90 pre-start and existing businesses during the year. The service has provided advice, clinics, networking and tailored support to pre-start and existing businesses, helping more residents become business-ready, progress towards self-employment and launch new businesses. Ten new businesses were created this year as a result of our support. We have ensured a focus on developing our relationships with business across the county, hosting networking events to connect our vast variety of businesses. In 2025/26, 60% of Monmouthshire start-ups are active after three years, compared to 53% for Wales and 50% for Great Britain. We will continue to support our thriving business community to grow. We have continued to provide targeted employment and skills support to help people move into work, progress in employment and gain new qualifications. During the year, council-supported programmes helped 120 people into employment, above our target of 82. We have continued to support areas with skills shortages such as construction by supporting residents through our Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) drop-in	Entrepreneur and business assistance Employment support NEET young people support

club. We have enabled 209 qualifications to be achieved by people we support and supported 254 people to improve their skills. We are developing plans for a Monmouthshire Skill Centre to provide a centralised location for residents of all ages to develop skills. This includes provision for our young school leavers looking to gain vocational qualifications and older residents who may be looking to upskill or change career.

CATE STUDY – STEM PROGRAMME

In July 2025, we launched our STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics – programme. The programme, supported by the Welsh Government, aims to attract new businesses to Monmouthshire and establish strong links between businesses and schools, promoting inspirational STEM learning and expanding pathways at Post-16. The programme also explores the feasibility of establishing an apprenticeship centre in Monmouthshire.

Through engagement with Welsh Government, Cabinet Members, EAS, Coleg Gwent, local businesses and headteachers (primary and secondary), a comprehensive programme of resources, training and support is being developed. Resources for each school will include a range of coding, robotics, engineering and 3D printing equipment, and will be complemented by a programme of school-to-school networks, class workshops and business engagement to help fully embed STEM in the school Curriculum.

Across the UK, the level of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is increasing. This is an issue we are also facing in Monmouthshire. We are supporting our young people to access training and employment through our NEET strategy. We are working with young people through our Inspire programme to help them remain in education where possible or to support a transition to a suitable alternative. During the year, we supported 285 young people to achieve an additional qualification and / or achieve a life skill. We have supported a 12-week Future Focus employability pilot for 18-24-year-olds in partnership with the Jobcentre in response to rising youth unemployment and confidence barriers, with early cohorts already securing employment. We continue to face challenges in ensuring suitable training provision for school leavers. We are continuing to work with sixth forms to develop pathways to employment. The development of a Monmouthshire Skills Centre will support our ability to ensure suitable post-16 pathways are available. Through our efforts, we have supported a total of 44 NEET young people into employment, an increase on 10 during 24/25. Overall, the percentage of Year 11 leavers were NEET, decreased from 3.1% to 2.5% in the last year, this remains higher than the 1.8% in 2023.

The latest data shows that 57% of Monmouthshire residents are qualified to level 4 of the national framework (the highest level), compared to 45% for Wales and 48% for Great Britain. The ratio of jobs to population in Monmouthshire is also higher than the figures for Wales, however slightly lower than the UK as a whole. We want to ensure there is opportunity for our resident to work and grow within the county. We have developed a deposit replacement Local Development Plan. This highlights new possible employment sites and aims to address the shortage of sites seen in recent years. We are seeing positive signs of progress in the Monmouthshire economy, such as an improvement in our economic position as measured by the UK Competitiveness Index, and sustained levels of people economically active: 79% of people in Monmouthshire are economically active which is above the rate for Wales (76%).

What we want to achieve: Sustainable Transport and Infrastructure	
Good transport and infrastructure are vital to our communities and economy, enabling access to a wide range of services and opportunities for all residents. We adopted a new Local Transport Strategy in May 2024. This sets out a clear ambition for transport infrastructure in Monmouthshire over the next five years. It has also enabled us to contribute to the development of a regional transport plan which now guides how transport funding is allocated in the region. We have established an infrastructure project team to ensure all transport and highways programmes of work are aligned to maximise additional benefits and ensure all funding is used effectively. Since 2022, we have secured £35m to implement transport projects to enhance access, safety and infrastructure. Work includes road resilience projects to adapt to the effects of climate change and increased bus service frequency. The UK Government has allocated £445m of resources to enable rail infrastructure improvements across Wales, this includes the delivery of the recommendations made by the Southeast Wales Transport Commission. The upgrades to the South Wales Mainline will increase train service frequency and the provision of five new railway stations – including Magor Walkway. We will continue to work with the Welsh Government and our neighbouring authorities to deliver the other recommendations of the Commission which includes the provision of a new link road between the M48 and the B4245 to enhance park and ride facility at Severn Tunnel Junction Railway station.  Monmouthshire is not alone in facing challenges maintaining its highways. We have a significant backlog in roads maintenance, similar to areas across the UK, and there was a further deterioration in the condition of roads through the last winter. We simply cannot afford to fund all the necessary improvements from our capital budget. We commission independent assessments of key highways infrastructure, and these have enabled us to prioritise maintenance expenditure in line with our maintenance strategy. We are also undertaking surveys of road and pavements to gain a further detailed understanding of their condition. We are using Welsh Government's Local Government Borrowing Initiative to allow us to borrow money to fund an increased number of improvements projects, though this will still not meet the identified funding gap required. We have also completed a number of repairs and maintenance to our highway network in response to emergency or urgent need. We are reviewing our approach to pothole repairs and will set out the findings in September 2026. This includes testing different approaches to repairs, reviewing prioritisation and allocation of schemes and increasing availability of information to residents. We have continued to use funding successfully awarded from Welsh Government to expand Active Travel infrastructure. Over the past four years, we have secured more than £24 million in funding for our Active Travel projects. We now have over 100 active travel routes across the county, these include routes which connect residential areas with town centres and links to key transport hubs and services. We have another 23 routes being developed, including the Abergavenny-Llanfoist bridge. We have established baseline monitoring data for active travel across key towns over several years; this shows that usage of these routes has increased by 4.1%, helping more people to use their cars less, and build more physical activity into daily life.	Local Transport Strategy Highway planned programme maintenance

Well-being of Future Generations Act impact

Contribution of Council goal to Future Generations Act Well-being Goals

Prosperous Wales	Resilient Wales	Healthier Wales	More equal Wales	Wales of cohesive communities	Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language	Globally responsible Wales
✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

Well-being Objective: A Thriving and Ambitious Place

This goal is aimed at the **long-term** viability of Monmouthshire as a thriving place to live, work and visit. The location of Monmouthshire as the gateway to South East Wales means we must embrace working with neighbouring areas to maximise opportunities. Keeping Monmouthshire thriving and well-connected promotes **integration** and impacts on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the county. This requires **collaboration** with local businesses and other organisations, and **involvement** from the local community to maximise opportunities. Considering the global well-being of Wales is also important and this goal focuses on ensuring decisions are made with future generations in mind and takes a **preventative** approach to enable the retention of young people.

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Measures of progress

Milestone	Target for completion	Progress	
Placemaking Plans for Abergavenny, Magor with Undy and Monmouth	March 2025		This has now been completed.
Develop Economy, Employment and Skills Strategy	February 2024		This has now been completed.
Develop and approve NEET strategy	November 2024		This has now been completed.
Local Transport Plan supporting modal shift is produced	May 2024		This has now been completed.

Measure	Previous	Latest	Target for 2025/26	Quick View	Comment
Number of NEET young people supported into employment during the year	10	44	25	↑	This is an annual figure. Support reflects the capacity for delivery of projects.

Number of pre-starts and existing businesses assisted during the year by the local authority and its partners	71	90	100	↓	Support reflects the funding available each year and the size and scale of projects delivered.
Number of working age people supported into employment during the year through action by the local authority	82	120	82	↑	Support reflects the funding available each year and the size and scale of projects delivered.
Percentage of school leavers not in education, employment or training	3.1	2.5	1.5	↑	Latest is 2025, previous is 2024. This percentage equates to 20 young people.
Percentage of care experienced young people who have completed at least three months in education, training or employment	65	57	60	↓	
Number of visitors to our heritage & culture sites during the year	189,541	244,915	200,000	↑	
Number of schools who reported that MonLife Heritage Learning has had a positive impact on teaching and learning in their school	11	10	12	↓	
Number of active travel routes created or enhanced	19	9	18	↓	These figures show number of projects in each year. We now have over a hundred active travel routes.

Quick View of Trend: ↑ Improving performance; ↓ Declining Performance; ↔ Unchanged Performance

Quick View of Target: Green – Target achieved; amber – just missed the target; red – fell some way short

A Safe Place to Live

Community & Corporate Plan Objective: A Safe Place to Live

What we want to achieve:

Our rating: 4 (Good)

- Increased supply of good quality affordable housing
- Reduce the number of people who become homeless
- A more energy efficient housing stock with a lower carbon footprint
- Communities in which everyone feels safe and respects each other

Strategic Assessment

Monmouthshire should be a place where everyone has access to a safe, secure and affordable home and feels part of a community where they are respected and protected. This matters because having a stable home is fundamental to health, well-being and life chances, while safe and cohesive communities help people to feel connected, supported and able to thrive. In a county with high house prices, limited rental supply and growing pressures on housing affordability, access to suitable housing remains a significant challenge for many residents and continues to shape wider inequalities in the county.

Generally, residents feel Monmouthshire is a safe place to live. Eighty-nine percent of residents taking part in our annual resident’s survey told us that they feel safe in their local area during the day, and 65% felt safe after dark.

A wide range of council services contribute to making Monmouthshire a safe place to live in addition to specific commitments we made in our Community and Corporate Plan. These include, trading standards, environmental health, licensing, community safety partnerships, youth services, public protection, safeguarding and regulatory services. Together, these services help protect residents from harm, support vulnerable households and strengthen safe, stable and resilient communities.

We have made progress in increasing the supply of affordable homes and putting in place the longer-term framework needed to improve the supply and affordability of housing. Our Replacement Local Development Plan has been developed with affordability and net zero housing standards at its core and includes a strong policy ambition. During the year, 102 additional affordable homes were delivered, and the number of affordable homes granted planning permission increased to 66. This shows positive progress, however we recognise the gap between current delivery and the level of need in the county which the development plan aims to address.

We have made strong progress in reducing the use of temporary accommodation and improving homelessness prevention. By applying a Rapid Rehousing approach, increasing prevention capacity and remodelling our housing support services, we have increased the proportion of homelessness applications successfully prevented from becoming homeless to 69.7%. We have worked with social landlords, private landlords and through property acquisition and repurposing to expand the availability of temporary accommodation. This has contributed to a 93.5% reduction in the use of bed and breakfast accommodation since 2022/23 and no families or 16- and 17-year-olds currently placed in bed and breakfast. However, homelessness demand remains high, the number of households in temporary accommodation remains significant, and the average time people spend waiting for settled accommodation has increased substantially, showing that permanent housing supply remains a critical pressure.

We have continued to support a more energy efficient housing stock and safer communities. Through schemes such as Eco4, Solar Together and Nest, we are helping residents, particularly lower-income households and those affected by cold and damp homes, to improve energy efficiency and reduce costs. We have also worked with partners to respond to community safety concerns, including work with young people on knife crime and anti-social behaviour. Most residents continue to feel safe in their local area, although concerns about anti-social behaviour remain and resident confidence after dark is lower. We will maintain a strong focus on prevention, partnership working and targeted reassurance in communities where concern is greatest.

Objective: A Safe Place to Live		
Safe place	**Evaluation Score:**	Level 4 – Important strengths with some areas for improvement – the weight of evidence shows that the successes are greater than the areas that have not been achieved. We have drafted our ambition for development in the county and implemented projects and support to deliver our objective. Our assessment shows that the delay in progressing our plans has limited the impact we have made to deliver our objective in the short term.

Why we focused on this?

For most people, Monmouthshire is a really good place to live, but not for everyone. This needs to change. We will work with partners to create a safe place that people are proud to call home, increase the availability of good quality affordable housing, reduce homelessness and promote approaches to help homeowners to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.

How well are we achieving our agreed outcomes?	How do we know?
What we want to achieve: Increased supply of good quality affordable housing	
Having a safe, secure and warm place to call home is one of the most important contributors to well-being. High property prices and a limited supply of affordable housing in the County mean this is currently out of reach for too many local people. We have developed a deposit Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) to address these key issues. The plan allocates 50% affordable housing on each new development and will introduce enabling policies which will allow for further affordable housing developments to come forward. This includes facilitating more single person accommodation in the county which is currently extremely limited and is a factor contributing to homelessness. We will also ensure this plan supports our efforts to tackle climate change and reduce bills for residents by ensuring new developments are of the highest energy efficiency standards. The deposit plan was approved by Council in October and is currently with Welsh Government for public examination. We have increased the number of affordable homes available in the County. The improved the health of our rivers is enabling appropriate development to be permitted within areas where it was previously restricted. This is contributing to the increase in the number of affordable homes granted planning permission. The number granted planning permission each year across the county has increased from 50 in 22/23 to 66 in 25/26, although this is below our target of 75. The number of affordable homes delivered per year has also increased from 48 in 22/23 to 102 in 25/26, this is above our target of 80. We recognise that more affordable homes are needed to meet demand in the county. Our deposit Replacement Local Development Plan aims to increase delivery.	Draft RLDP Number of affordable homes granted planning permission Number of affordable homes delivered

CASE STUDY – REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A Local Development Plan (LDP) provides the framework the council uses to decide what development, including the building of new houses, retail and infrastructure, takes place. These plans are developed by the council and examined by external inspectors, such as Welsh Government. Monmouthshire's most recent LDP ran until 2021 – we have developed a new plan, a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) to replace this and create the environment for key and sustainable development for the county.

Monmouthshire's RLDP will aim to address key issues in the county, including:

- making provision for approximately 5,400-6,210 new homes over the plan period (2018-33), including approximately 2,000 affordable homes.
- making provision for the use of employment land to support job growth of up to 6,240 additional jobs, and include policies to facilitate growth in foundational sectors such as retail, leisure, tourism and agriculture.
- focusing growth in the county's most sustainable settlements of Abergavenny, Chepstow, Monmouth and Caldicot, including Severnside, as well as some growth in our most sustainable rural settlements to deliver much needed affordable homes and to address rural inequality and rural isolation in these areas.

What we want to achieve: Reduce the number of people who become homeless	
We have seen increased demand for homelessness services in recent years. Alongside this, limited temporary accommodation has meant we have been dependent on costly and unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation to fulfil our responsibilities to citizens. We have applied a Rapid Rehousing approach and increased the resources for homeless prevention. This includes increased staffing, procedural changes and closer partnership working to support more people at risk. We are also providing grants from the Homeless Prevention Fund to help tackle arrears/debt and enable households to remain in their current accommodation or to access alternatives. We remodelled our Housing Support service to include dedicated substance misuse support, temporary accommodation support and re-settlement support. This also includes dedicated support for young people with higher need. This has contributed to us increasing the prevention of homelessness. The percentage of applicants successfully prevented from becoming homeless has increased from 50% in 22/23 to 69.7% in 25/26. We have reviewed our Housing Support Grant programme and are increasing capacity in to ensure effective delivery. We will also increase alignment with work on youth homelessness to support young people at risk. We understand the importance of ensuring suitable and secure temporary accommodation for our residents. We are engaging with local landlords, including registered social landlords, to ensure the availability of temporary accommodation within our communities. We have increased our number of property acquisitions to provide accommodation. This includes including the re-purposing of the previous residential home, Severn View to provide includes 17 units of accommodation, providing suitable temporary accommodation for a range of individuals, including those with complex needs While we have evolved our approach to meet needs, the demand for temporary accommodation in the county has remained high in recent years. The number of homeless households in temporary accommodation has increased form 117 in 22/23 to 136 in 25/26.	Homelessness data

We have significantly reduced the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation. Our work to increase the availability of temporary accommodation, combined with a slight reduction in demand, has resulted in a 93.5% reduction in the use of bed and breakfast accommodation since 22/23, from 92 to 6. We have also ensured there are no families or 16-17 year-olds in bed and breakfast accommodation. This means that families and individuals in need are accessing more suitable accommodation, which is also resulting in cost savings for the authority. We know that temporary accommodation should be a temporary, not permanent, solution to demand. Securing settled accommodation remains a challenge. The average time that homeless households spend in Band 1 with a homeless duty before moving on to settled/permanent accommodation has almost doubled in recent years, from 10.2 months in 22/23 to 20.1 months in 25/26. This is mainly driven by those waiting for one bedroom and four bedroom properties, of which waiting times were 20.5 months and 24 months, respectively. To address these challenges, we are working to increase the number of suitable permanent affordable homes across the county. We have successfully secured grant funding and are using this to increase the number of affordable homes available within communities and new housing developments. Our Replacement Local Development Plan has a clear focus on ensuring increased affordable housing. This will help us to address some of this need, particularly the demand for single person accommodation, of which there is a limited supply. We are also working to increase the number of properties available through Leasing Scheme Wales, which provides long-term, affordable private accommodation for families and individuals.	
What we want to achieve: A more energy efficient housing stock with a lower carbon footprint	
We are committed to tackling the climate emergency and reducing emissions. Domestic properties are one of the biggest contributors to carbon emissions in Monmouthshire. We have ensured our Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) has lowering carbon emissions at its core by requiring new homes in the county to be net zero carbon. This will contribute to reducing our carbon footprint as a county and reduce energy costs for residents in new homes, including affordable homes. We are supporting the energy schemes, Solar Together, which is a group-buying scheme for residents wanting to install solar panels and Nest Scheme which provides advice and support for energy efficiency improvements. We have continued to support low-income households to access grant funding to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. We are promoting the Eco4 scheme which provides funding for low-income households and those living with medical conditions worsened by damp or cold to access energy efficiency improvements. We supported the approval of 328 applications during this year and are working with the NHS to identify residents with respiratory or immune suppression illnesses who may benefit from the scheme. We will undertake a targeted campaign to try and increase take-up from those who can benefit from the scheme.	Number of people supported to access Eco4
What we want to achieve: Communities in which everyone feels safe and respects each other	
Everyone should have the right to feel safe and have a sense of belonging in their local community. In general, most people in Monmouthshire feel safe - 89% of residents taking part in our annual resident's survey told us that they feel safe in their local area during the day, and 65% felt safe after dark. We have worked closely with young people across the county to tackle knife crime and anti-social behaviour. We have secured funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office to support this work. We have partnered with the charity Fearless to deliver workshops on critical topics such as county lines and knife crime at our youth centres, supporting young people to deal with these challenges. We have targeted young people involved in anti-social behaviour in Caldicot and other town centres and have seen a reduction in the number of ASB incidents. We are	Resident's survey results Feedback from young people at youth centres Annual safeguarding evaluation report

strengthening the relationship between young people and local police by regularly inviting officers to our youth centres to engage directly and listen to their concerns. We have undertaken an annual evaluation of our safeguarding arrangements. This evaluates the cornerstones of safeguarding in Monmouthshire and provides assurance that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place across the county. This evaluation also forms an integral part in the improvement of safeguarding practice across the Council. We have worked with partners to develop a Gwent Serious Violence Prevention Strategy. This has helped to identify the serious violence priorities across Monmouthshire. We are now working with key partners and agencies to deliver a range of targeted interventions to address these. We have contributed to the development of the Gwent regional violence against women and domestic sexual violence (VAWDASV) strategy. The strategy is now being implemented through partnership arrangements and will ensure that more people feel safe, and free from abuse and violence.	Gwent Serious Violence Prevention Strategy VAWDASV strategy

Well-being of Future Generations Act impact

Contribution of Council goal to Future Generations Act Well-being Goals

Prosperous Wales	Resilient Wales	Healthier Wales	More equal Wales	Wales of cohesive communities	Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language	Globally responsible Wales
	✓		✓	✓		✓

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Well-being Objective: A Safe Place to Live

It is important the council **collaborates** with partners and **integrates** with their plans to reduce homelessness and ensure people can stay in their own homes and communities wherever possible. **Involving** and working with partners and community members is essential to develop communities in which everyone feels safe and respects each other. The Replacement Local Development Plan has a focus on **long term** and has affordable housing and a well-connected net zero carbon development at its heart. A focus on **preventing** problems occurring is essential to creating a safe place that people are proud to call home.

Measures of progress

Milestone	Target for completion	Progress	
Replacement Local Development Plan approved by Council	July 2025		The RLDP was approved by Council for consultation in October 2025. This is now with Welsh Government for examination.
The use of B&B accommodation is eliminated for households with children and young people	March 2027		There are currently no families in B&B accommodation. Ensuring increases in both temporary and permanent accommodation will be key to achieving this milestone.

Rapid Rehousing Approach introduced	April 2023		This has now been completed. The Rapid Rehousing Approach was implemented in April 2023 and has contributed to increased focus on homeless prevention.

Measure	**Previous**	**Latest**	**Target for 2025/26**	**Quick View**	**Comment**
Number of affordable homes granted planning permission in the year	108	66	75	↓	
Number of additional affordable homes delivered in the year	71	102	80	↑	
Percentage of homeless applications who are successfully prevented from becoming homeless	71	69.7	70	↓	This is an annual figure for 2025/26.
Number of 16 and 17 year olds in bed and breakfast accommodation	0	0	0	↔	Latest figure is the position at the end of March 2026.
Number of families in bed and breakfast accommodation	0	0	0	↔	Latest figure is the position at the end of March 2026.
Number of homeless households in bed and breakfast accommodation	20	6	25	↑	Latest figure is the position at the end of March 2026. This represents a significant decline since 2022.
Number of homeless households in temporary accommodation	140	136	150	↑	Latest figure is the position at the end of March 2026.

Quick View of Trend: ↑ Improving performance; ↓ Declining Performance; ↔ Unchanged Performance
Quick View of Target: Green – Target achieved; amber – just missed the target; red – fell some way short

Community & Corporate Plan Objective: A Connected Place Where People Care

Our rating: 5 (Very Good)

What we want to achieve:

- High quality social care which enables people to live their lives on their terms
- A healthy and active Monmouthshire where loneliness and isolation are reduced, well-being is promoted, and people are safeguarded
- A professional and passionate social care workforce

Strategic Assessment

Monmouthshire should be a place where people's contributions are valued, they feel part of a community and they can access care and support that helps them live well on their own terms. This matters because strong health, social care and well-being services protect the most vulnerable residents, support independence and dignity, reduce loneliness and isolation and help people remain connected to their families and communities. Demand for these services is increasing, particularly as our population ages and needs become more complex. In this context, the quality, availability and resilience of care and support are critical to peoples' well-being now and in the future.

Making Monmouthshire a connected place where people care depends on partnership working across the council, public services and communities. A wide range of services contribute to this objective, including adult and children's social care, housing adaptations, leisure and youth services, community development, safeguarding, public health, carers support, education inclusion and wider partnership work with health and voluntary sector organisations. Together with support from residents and communities, these services help residents stay independent for longer, strengthen community connections, improve well-being and ensure people receive the right support at the right time.

We are delivering care and support while also building the preventative and community-based approaches needed for the future. Demand for social care services continues to increase and needs are becoming more complex, particularly as more residents require support later in life and with higher levels of need. This creates an ongoing risk to our ability to meet people's needs as quickly and consistently as we would want and brings significant financial pressures. We have continued to respond to this through innovation, partnership working and the development of more preventative models of support, including reablement, assistive technology, early help, community-based well-being support and stronger pathways that help people remain independent for longer. Although these pressures remain significant, we have made progress across children's services, adult care, well-being and workforce development to deliver our objective.

In children's services, we have strengthened early help and family support, and we have achieved greater stability in the number of children looked after. We have also made good progress in developing more in-county placements for children and young people, improving the ability to keep them close to their communities and support networks. We have strengthened the foster carer offer and contributed to a more cohesive fostering community. Recruiting and retaining foster carers remains challenging, reflecting similar pressures seen across Wales and the wider UK.

We have also made progress in developing and adapting services and increasing provision in response to rising demand for adult social care. We have also increased the focus and capacity of preventative services. We have increased reablement activity with over half of packages mitigating the need for further support. We have strengthened commissioned domiciliary care and reduced unmet care hours substantially, from 804 hours a month in March 2023 to around 271 hours a month over the last year, meaning we are now able to fulfil more domiciliary care need. Feedback from adult social care service users shows slightly lower satisfaction with care and support than previous years, with 83% of adults reporting they were happy. We have also opened Severn View Park, a new specialist care home that increases local capacity for people living with dementia and provides both long-term, reablement and respite care.

We are also strengthening wider well-being and community support. We have developed strategic approaches such as the Living Well Strategy and our work to become a Marmot Region, helping to focus action on prevention, resilience and the wider determinants of health. We have expanded assistive technology, which is helping more residents live safely and independently at home, and we have increased the delivery of housing adaptations that improve quality of life and confidence. We have supported young people's mental health through youth service programmes, with all participants in the Emotional Logic programme reporting improved emotional well-being, and we have significantly expanded participation in nature-based health and well-being projects.

We continue to recognise and support carers, with stronger information, signposting and practical support. We are aiming to reduce waiting times for carers assessments. We have developed our social care workforce through recruitment, retention and new models such as micro-care, which has grown from eight carers in 2022 to 59 carers, between them delivering over 900 hours of support each week.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">A Connected Place Where People Care</th></tr>
<tr><td>Connected place</td><td>Evaluation Score:</td><td>Level 5 – Very Good – Major strengths – a significant majority of actions and measures are on track. No more than one or two falling short.

We have increased access to care and support in the county and provided services to support health and well-being of residents. Our evidence shows we are supporting higher levels and greater complexity of demand. We are developing preventive approaches to help people live well. The resources required to meet existing demand and develop further preventative approaches remains a challenge to ongoing delivery.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Why we focused on this?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Monmouthshire will be a place where people's contributions are valued, they feel part of a community and are connected to others. The health and social care system is facing significant challenges, and statutory services across the UK are struggling to cope with the volume and complexity of demand. Monmouthshire has a track record of delivering innovative approaches and rich partnership working. We recognise that well-being is about far more than treating people when they get sick. There are many factors that can affect our health including the environment, housing, what we do for work, how much we earn, our lifestyles, transport and community cohesion. These wider determinants of health, sometimes called the social determinants, can affect physical and mental health in either a positive or negative way.</td></tr>
</table>

How well are we achieving our agreed outcomes?	How do we know?
What we want to achieve: High quality social care which enables people to live their lives on their terms	
We are delivering a long-term strategy to prevent and safely reduce the need for children to come into care. We have established a coordinated approach to early intervention and prevention in Children's Social Services. This allows families to receive support at the right level of intensity to enable parents to provide their children with the safety, nurture and care that they need. We have developed our practice at the front door of children's services, particularly through mechanisms such as the Early Help Assessment Team (EHAT) and the SPACE well-being panel. The SPACE Well-being and Family Support Panel supports effective partnership working and continues to be a hub for early intervention and coordinated support for children, young people and their families. Evaluation and feedback of family support services indicate clear and positive outcomes for families. 100% of families continue to report a positive outcome following a Building Stronger Families team intervention. We have developed a range of services that focus on practice development and working with families to support strengths, manage risks and achieve good outcomes, reducing the need for children to be looked after. We have services in place to support the rehabilitation of children following periods of being looked after through Families Re-connect. We provide medium-term, holistic support to families making sustainable change through the Achieving Change Together Team. We provide a therapeutic response to parents and carers in supporting children with trauma presentations through My Support Team (MyST), for example. We have reduced the number of children with lower support needs entering statutory services and reduced escalation of need within services. Overall, this work creates more stable outcomes, reduces pressure on statutory services, and helps families get the right support at the right time. If families do require help from children's services we are focused on preventative family support throughout our processes in children's social care,	Early help service evaluations Placement Development Strategy Children Social care performance data Hospital discharge monitoring information Reablement service performance information

from first referral to complex cases. We have achieved stability in the number of children looked after, with a gradual reduction from 208 in March 2022 to 192 in March 2026. We have invested in foster care recruitment, developed support arrangements, and increased foster carer fees to retain and attract foster carers to provide support for children who require it. This has strengthened the foster carer offer and contributed to a more cohesive fostering community. This has supported an increased willingness among carers to accept placements. We continue to face challenges recruiting and retaining foster carers, a challenge seen across Wales and the rest of the UK. The number of Local Authority foster carers is not increasing at a rate sufficient to meet our needs. We have increased the use of kinship care and Special Guardianship Orders (SGOs), which align with earlier and more effective family-based interventions. This is resulting in more children who need care being placed with our own foster carers or kinship carers rather than with independent fostering agencies (IFA). In September 2025 for all children in foster placements, 36% were placed with IFAs and 64% placed to in-house foster cares or kinship carers. We are delivering our placement development strategy to develop children's residential and 16+ supported accommodation placements within the county. This is addressing a shortage of suitable placements for children requiring support particularly locally, and especially those who need additional support or who cannot be placed with foster carers. We have completed four projects of the six identified. We have provided aged 16+ supported accommodation for five placements, a four-bed residential children's home and two therapeutic residential children's home with potential for two placements each. Progress in developing residential provision is affected by a range of external factors and ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. We are developing a further two projects: one children's residential home and a further aged 16+ supported accommodation. We have not yet identified, and continue to explore the market, for a suitable and appropriate property to develop a further 16+ supported accommodation service. The delivery of the placements strategy is improving the availability of support and helping to ensure children and young people can remain close to their communities. The proportion of children looked after who were supported to remain in Monmouthshire has varied over the last few years. Currently, In March 2026, 55.7% were supported to remain in Monmouthshire; this has increased from 50.5% in March 2024 but remains lower than 59.2% in March 2023. We continue to review the demand of placements and try to forecast demand by identifying children who may need, at some point, to be accommodated. Predicting demand, however, remains a challenging and dynamic process with evolving need and changes in the type and intensity of provision required. This is also complicated by uncertainty within the care market nationwide. We continue to experience demand pressure across the social care and health system, with an ageing population in Monmouthshire, particularly, meaning an increase in the amount of support required and complexity of people's support needs. These demand pressures are seen across Wales and the rest of the UK. We have developed and adjusted our delivery of adult social care to meet the increasing and more complex needs of our older residents. We have developed preventative approaches such as increasing capacity in reablement, and use of assistive technology, which is helping to mitigate ongoing care needs, particularly for people with lower care needs, and helping to reduce the need for domiciliary care. We are continuing to manage an increase in need for residential care, driven by the ageing demographic and increasing complexity of need. In some situations, delayed requests for support, reduce the ability to provide preventative and community-based support which otherwise could allow people to remain in their own homes for longer. We are continuing to focus on the consistency of support provided at the front door of adult's social care to make sure that people receive the most appropriate information, advice and assistance they need. We are also continuing to ensure we have capacity and support available to review and assess care requirements to provide support that meets needs with the right services, allowing choice and consistency including the provision of reablement to try to reduce further needs.	Adults Social care performance information Strategy for commissioned domiciliary care

We are implementing a long-term strategy for commissioned domiciliary care. We have increased capacity across home care and significantly and reduced the number of unmet care hours from 804 hours a month in March 2023 to an average of around 271 hours a month over the last year. We are now able to provide an average of 96.4% domiciliary care hours in the last year. This is due to a combination of our activities and external factors resulting in the market for home care stabilising. This is improving access to vital support to enable people to remain living in their own home. We have seen a gradual reduction in the number of adults in receipt of home care, from 636 in March 2023 to 452 in March 2026. This is due to a combination of adjustment in the assessment of care and support, including an increase in reablement services, along with a range of other factors that influence care needs. Feedback from Adults' social care services users shows lower levels of satisfaction with care and support. In the last year 83% of adults were happy with their care and support which is marginally lower than the 83.5% in 2022/2023. We have seen an increase in the number of adults in receipt of residential care over the same period, rising from 317 in March 2023 to 369 currently in 2026. This increase is contributed to by an increasing complexity of support needs from residents. We are developing new provision and the way we provide care and support to meet this demand. We opened Severn View Park, a specialist care home for people living with dementia, in March 2024. The home provides 32 bedrooms for both long-term support and short-term support in the form of respite based on a relationship-centred care model. The new care home aims to maintain connections with the surrounding community. We continue to work with partners in both primary and secondary health to prevent unnecessary admissions to hospital and to support timely discharges. Ensuring well-coordinated and timely discharges and managing the pressure within the hospital system remains challenging. We convene weekly multi-disciplinary meetings to identify and unblock delays when they arise. We continue to develop and embed our practice, working in an integrated way with multi-disciplinary teams to support hospital discharge from acute and community hospitals. The number of patients awaiting discharge for social care varies during the year, having risen in the last couple of years, delays have stabilised this year. We continue to face challenges in responding to all people's care and support needs in as timely a manner as we would want. We have decreased waits for adult social care assessments over the last year supporting residents to have their needs assessed sooner. The ageing demographic and complexity of people's needs has also increased costs needing to be met from our Adults' Social Care budget. We continue to actively plan for current and future demand in our service provision and budget setting. We continue to deliver early intervention and preventative community-based support to help support residents to remain independent for as long as possible. We recognise that this will not remove the need for more specific care and support and continue to plan for this as part of our domiciliary care strategy and working with care providers in the county.	
What we want to achieve: A healthy and active Monmouthshire where loneliness and isolation are reduced, well-being is promoted, and people are safeguarded	
We know that generally residents feel connected to their place in Monmouthshire, with 69% of respondents to our resident survey felt part of their local area. This is not the case for everyone. We also recognise the vital role that residents play in their local community and 57% of residents who responded to the survey expressed interest in taking part in local community activities or events. We have developed a Living Well Strategy to promote a whole authority approach to wellness and well-being and address inequality by promoting healthier lifestyles and building resilience, particularly among deprived communities. This will coordinate our own council activity and work with partners to facilitate healthier lifestyles and build individual and community resilience so that residents, especially our more deprived residents, are enabled to live healthier and independently for longer. This aims to support residents' well-being as well as delaying or reducing their call on statutory services.	Youth Service provision Carers and Young Carers service Living Well Strategy

We are also committed to work with others across Gwent and the Institute of Health Equity to tackle health inequalities as part of being a Marmot Region. This is focusing on the determinants of health, sometimes called the social determinants, such as the environment, housing, income and lifestyles, transport that can impact in either a positive or negative way on physical and mental health.

We have developed our services to support adults to live independently for longer. We are delivering a transformation plan to expand the use of assistive technology in Monmouthshire. 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. The Assistive Tech service has grown from supporting 850 clients in its first year in 2022/23 to 1070 in 2025/26. The service has completed around 300 installations a year. This has provided a range of technology that helps support someone to live independently at home for longer. We continue to aim to increase the use of assistive technology equipment within care and support planning in social care to support a more preventative approach. We also continue to engage with suppliers to identify new equipment opportunities.

CASE STUDY – ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Mary has lived in Abergavenny all of her life and has many fond memories of the town.

The assistivetech equipment helps both her and her family to feel safer and independent knowing that help is at hand should she need it.

Mary had falls previously with the most recent fall leading to hospital admission with a fractured pelvis. Due to the increased risk of falls, Mary has since been provided with a falls detector. A falls detector not only allows Mary to call for help at the press of a button, it is dual purpose and will automatically call the operator by the lifeline should a complete fall be detected. The alert informs the operator if the alarm raised is a pendant press or a falls which enables them to follow the set protocol for the type of emergency alerted.

Having lived at her flat for many years, Mary wants to remain living there. The provision of a Lifeline Alarm with the falls detector goes some way to providing the security and peace of mind Mary needs to remain living in her own home.

We provide housing adaptions which help people stay independent, live with dignity and return home safely from hospital or care. In the last year we have delivered 57 adaptations. Following an adaption, 73% of people felt that their quality of life has improved and 69% of respondents felt more confident and /or independent.

We have increased the capacity and number of people accessing reablement. Reablement provides support to people to relearn how to do daily activities and is helping to reduce people's need for further support and reduce the demand on longer term care services. We have increased the number of packages of reablement we deliver from 184 a year in 2022/23 to 445 in 2025/26. In the last year 53.3% of reablement packages delivered mitigated the person's need for further support.

We are enabling healthier, more active lives by increasing outdoor access. We supported 574 schools, volunteers, and partners to participate in nature-based well-being projects county wide. We have supported young peoples' mental health and well-being across the county through the youth service Shift project. We have expanded the offer with a focused grant funded programme called Emotional Logic. Every young person engaged in the project reported an improvement in their mental health/emotional well-being.

We recognise the vital role that carers undertake in supporting people in the county. We have commissioned carers services, provided information and advice and offered a range of free events and activities to support carers and young carers' needs. We have focused on re-shaping the information we provide to carers, informed by feedback from the young carers and carers strategy group. This feedback is informing the redevelopment of our website, a revised carers handbook and improved signposting to other organisations with specific expertise and knowledge. We are strengthening links with information, advice and assistance services in social care to improve early identification of carers. The number of adults carers known to us has grown by over 100 in the last year. We provide the 1,166 adult carers on our database with advice and assistance through our biannual carer newsletter and discounted leisure offer. The number of young carers registered with the Young Carers Service has reduced from 136 to 103 this year. This reflects improved identification processes and regular reviews of known young carers. Those who have not engaged with the service in the past year are contacted three times (by email, telephone and letter) to check whether they require a review. If there is no response, their details are archived, with the option to re-engage should their circumstances change. We undertake carers needs assessments to ensure that carers needs are understood in their own right. There continues to be increasing demand for carers support. The number of carers awaiting a needs assessment has continued to increase from 8 in 2023/24 to 27 in the same period in 2025/26. Increased demand and reduced capacity due to a staff vacancy in the carers team has resulted in longer waiting lists for assessment. This has also reduced our ability to prioritise preventative support, as capacity is focused on undertaking needed assessment. We are continuing to develop clearer information about a carer needs assessment to ensure that all age unpaid carers are correctly supported by the appropriate agencies at the right time. We are also re-focusing and increasing capacity in the carers in team to support the increase in support requirements from carers.	
What we want to achieve: A professional and passionate social care workforce	
We have developed our workforce planning arrangements in social care. We have focused our social care workforce development on addressing areas where there is high demand and recruiting to essential posts to meet the care needs of our residents. Recruitment is focused on demonstrating the opportunities, career progression, work life balance and job satisfaction that people experience who work within the sector. We are also developing opportunities for work experience and apprenticeship pathway opportunities for roles in social care. Generally, the workforce in social care remains stable. Our social services workforce continues to experience pressures in responding to increasing complexity and intensity of demand with limited resources. We have recently experienced increasing challenges in both recruiting and retaining staff, particularly in Children's Social care, a significant driver of which is increased work demand and pressures. We also continue to experience recruitment challenges for certain roles across social care. We have fewer vacancies across social care overall over the year, with 19 vacancies in March 2026 compared to 26 vacancies in March 2025. We have enhanced the development and well-being offer for our existing social care staff. We have undertaken a training needs analysis and used this to develop training plans that focus on professional development and practice, as well as coaching, mentoring and personal development reviews. We have delivered a range of activities and support working with care providers and our partners. We have developed a micro-care project to increase the availability of care in the county. The project supports self-employed carers to develop their businesses as well as providing the opportunity for greater oversight and governance of self-employed care workers operating within Monmouthshire. The number of micro-carers is steadily increasing. The scheme started as a pilot in 2022 where there were 8 micro-carers registered. The number of carers has grown to 59, who are now delivering over 900 hours of care and support each week, supporting Monmouthshire residents in their local community. We have allocated additional funding to pay fees for care providers to increase the placements available for people who require care. We have provided additional funding from the recent budgets for care provider fees across Children's and Adults' social care. This includes allocating an	Social care workforce recruitment and retention data Micro-care project Fees for care providers

additional £290k this year to support the payment of the increase in National Minimum Wage and Real Living Wage. This ensures that providers can continue to pay the real living wage to attract and retain key staff to meet increasing demand. We also continue to aim to ensure that our fee rate remains a viable and attractive option for care providers so that residents can choose the best support for them.	

Well-being of Future Generations Act impact

Contribution of Council goal to Future Generations Act Well-being Goals

Prosperous Wales	Resilient Wales	Healthier Wales	More equal Wales	Wales of cohesive communities	Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language	Globally responsible Wales
		✓	✓	✓		

Well-being Objective: A Connected Place Where People Care

Adopting community-focused approaches promotes **collaboration** which in turn will support well-being. By working with communities, we hope to **prevent** problems from occurring. Opportunities are plentiful in our county, so it is vital that everyone can be **involved** to maximise benefits to well-being. This should have a **long-term** benefit to individuals and communities. Our actions will have an **integrated** benefit for many aspects of promoting a healthier Wales. They will promote a Wales of cohesive communities and overall, help to create a more equal Wales. There is also strong integration with our responsibilities under the Social Services & Well-being Act.

Measures of progress

Milestone	Target for completion	Progress	
Development of a young persons' Placement Development Strategy	April 2024		This has now been completed.
Approval of a commissioning strategy to support a sustainable domiciliary care sector	May 2024		This has now been completed.

Measure	Previous Period	Latest Period	Target for 2025/26	Quick View	Comment
Percentage of packages of reablement completed during the year that mitigated the need for support / positive outcome from reablement	55.7	53.3	60	↓	The overall number of packages of reablement being delivered and completed have increased.

Percentage of adult service users who are happy with the care and support they have had	84.7	83	85	↓	
Percentage of hours of long-term domiciliary care fulfilled	97.5	96.4	96	↓	This is the average provided over the year April 25 – March 26
Percentage of families reporting a positive outcome following a building stronger families team intervention	100	100	90	↔	
Percentage of adult service users who have had the right information or advice when they needed it	78.0	71.2	80	↓	We are increasing our resources through additional staff to ensure more people have access to the correct information when they need it.
Percentage of placements of children who are looked after by the local authority made with in-house foster carers	35.8	40.6	43	↑	This measure shows the percentage of children looked after by the local authority who are placed with in house foster carers.
Percentage of young people engaged in the youth service Shift project who perceive an improvement in their mental health / emotional well-being	90	100	85	↑	
Number of schools, volunteers, local interest groups and partners involved in nature-based health and well-being projects and initiatives across the county	41	574	30	↑	This increase is a result of two significant grant funded projects in the year.

Quick View of Trend: ↑ Improving performance; ↓ Declining Performance; ↔ Unchanged Performance

Quick View of Target: Green – Target achieved; amber – just missed the target; red – fell some way short

A Learning Place

Community & Corporate Plan Objective: A Learning Place

Our rating:
5 (Very Good)

What we want to achieve:

- Improved school attendance and reduced levels of exclusion which remove barriers to learning for vulnerable pupils
- The benefits of the new curriculum in Wales are maximised through excellent teaching and learning
- A truly inclusive educational system that recognises learners' starting points, strengths and educational needs
- Continue our programme of school modernisation

Strategic Assessment

Monmouthshire should be a place where every child, young person and adult can learn, develop skills and achieve their potential. Education is one of the strongest foundations for well-being, employment and health. A strong start in life helps children and young people build confidence, resilience and ambition, while lifelong learning enables residents to adapt, retrain and contribute throughout adulthood. The pandemic caused significant disruption to learning, attendance, emotional well-being and social development, and its effects are still being felt. At the same time, education continues to change through the Curriculum for Wales and the Additional Learning Needs Act. This means we must ensure all learners, particularly those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, receive the right support at the right time.

A wide range of council services help make Monmouthshire a place where people can learn and develop the skills they need to reach their potential. These include early years and childcare, school transport, youth services, safeguarding, education inclusion, additional learning needs, adult and community learning, education welfare, school estate management, libraries, leisure, culture and partnership work with health, social care and the voluntary sector. Together, these services support access to education, remove barriers to learning, help learners and families stay engaged, improve well-being and create inclusive environments for lifelong learning.

We have strengthened the systems, strategies and provision needed to meet increasing learner needs. We have updated key policies and guidance and strengthened multi-agency support for vulnerable pupils. Primary attendance is close to pre-pandemic levels and above the Wales average. Secondary attendance has also improved and remains above the Wales average, although it is still below pre-pandemic levels. Attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals remains a challenge, especially in secondary schools. The causes are often complex and linked to wider disadvantage, well-being, family circumstances and additional learning needs.

We have responded to increasing complexity and behaviours that challenge by reshaping inclusion services, improving data, establishing an inclusion panel and working with schools to use managed moves, additional learning provision and other support to avoid escalation. Fixed-term exclusions remain high and continue to place pressure on schools and specialist provision. However, all permanent exclusions issued during the last year were rescinded through stronger multi-agency work and alternative support arrangements.

Teaching, learning and curriculum development remain strong overall. Learners in secondary schools continue to achieve higher results than the Wales average, with a capped 9 score of 375.9. Estyn inspections demonstrate that many schools are developing broad, balanced and purposeful curricula that reflect their context and meet pupils' needs. Variation remains, particularly for lower-attaining pupils and disadvantaged learners, so our support and challenge will continue to focus on where improvement is most needed.

We have strengthened inclusive education helping to create a more consistent and equitable approach for learners with additional learning needs and other barriers to learning. We are reducing reliance on out-of-county provision by expanding local specialist provision, including a Social, Emotional and Mental Health Specialist Resource Base, and by developing additional provision within schools. Demand for additional learning needs support is increasing, and schools face ongoing financial and capacity pressures.

We have also widened opportunities for learners and residents. The Inspire programme supported 285 young people to gain an additional qualification or life skill during the year. Estyn recognised the Youth Service for supporting young people's confidence, resilience and life skills, and young people were able to express their views through the Make Your Mark ballot and youth conference. Adult and community learning has become more accessible through subsidised courses and partnership work with Coleg Gwent, with 963 enrolments during the year.

We have made progress in school modernisation and Welsh-medium education. The new King Henry VIII all-through school in Abergavenny, provides modern, inclusive net zero learning facilities for pupils aged 3 to 19, including specialist accommodation for pupils with complex neurodevelopmental and learning needs. We have also improved and remodelled pupil referral service accommodation in south Monmouthshire, completed the new Trellech nursery building, opened Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy and secured a new site for Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni.

A Learning Place

Learning place	Evaluation Score:	Level 5 – Very Good – Major strengths – a significant majority of actions and measures are on track. No more than one or two falling short. We have developed our approaches and increased our support to schools and pupils to respond to an increased demand and complexity of support children and young people require, particularly vulnerable learners. Our assessment identifies the progress made in attendance, attainment and support for vulnerable learners. We continue to adjust, develop and target our support to meet further support and need.

Why we focused on this?

Monmouthshire will be a place where everybody experiences the best possible start in life and has the opportunity to learn, developing the skills and knowledge they will need to reach their potential. The pandemic has had a substantial effect on schools and pupils. The two years of uncertainty and significant disruption to learning have inevitably left a legacy. Before the pandemic we knew that our disadvantaged learners did not achieve the outcomes we would wish. The pandemic has worsened the learning experiences of many vulnerable students such as those eligible for free school meals. The emotional and mental well-being of pupils was often affected, with many experiencing increased uncertainty, anxiety and loneliness. In line with our guiding principles, it is vital that we develop more opportunities to listen and learn from our pupils and students. Since schools have reopened the education system in Wales has continued to evolve with reforms and developments including the new curriculum for Wales and the introduction of a new Additional Learning Needs Act.

How well are we achieving our agreed outcomes?	How do we know?
What we want to achieve: Improved school attendance and reduced levels of exclusion which remove barriers to learning for vulnerable pupils	
Lower attendance in schools has been a challenge across Wales since the pandemic. We know that being in school supports children's well-being and development. We are working with schools to improve pupil attendance, which has increased in both primary and secondary schools, although progress remains gradual. We have updated our attendance and engagement policy. This is providing a graduated approach for schools to support improvements in attendance. We have a dedicated Education Welfare Service (EWS) that provides targeted support for vulnerable pupils. Family Liaison Officers are also ensuring support for pupils and their families. We are also working closely with partners such as Inclusion, Social Services, Health Services and the Police to ensure a cohesive approach. Of the 80 primary pupils supported by the Education Support Team across 24/25, 79% showed increased attendance. We are broadening our understanding of the drivers of low attendance. We have, as part of our updated attendance and engagement policy, developed additional emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA) guidance. We have also undertaken extensive multi-agency work to enhance the understanding of, and support offered, around EBSA by professionals including school staff. We are focused on providing early identification and preventative support which is helping to promote positive outcomes and prevent persistent absenteeism. We have developed a Children Missing Education (CME) Policy which sets out the action we will take to support and engage with CME and those at risk of non-attendance. We are engaging in developmental work with Welsh Government to strengthen processes for Children Missing Education (CME). This is ensuring that we are well informed to monitor and support this group of vulnerable pupils effectively. We have robust policy processes in place to ensure the notification of CMEs are followed up and investigated by the EWS in a timely manner. We are supporting these children to return to school as soon as possible, where possible.	Education Welfare Service School Attendance School Exclusions Whole school approach to emotional and mental well-being Trauma Informed Schools Training Estyn Inspection of Monmouthshire's Education Services

An Estyn inspection of education services completed in November 2025 identified the Authority's trauma-informed, relationship-centred approach to improving attendance as a strength, with clear improvements in primary school attendance and early signs of progress for some vulnerable groups. Estyn is also clear that attendance for secondary-age pupils and pupils with ALN requires further improvement. They also noted that evaluation of attendance strategies is not yet sufficiently rigorous to determine which interventions are having the greatest impact. Attendance in primary schools is returning to pre-pandemic levels at a quicker pace, from 92.9% in 22/23 to 93.9% in 24/25. Despite being lower than pre-pandemic levels, this is 1.1 percentage points above the Wales average. Secondary school attendance has proven more challenging to increase due to the complex range of factors driving lower attendance. Secondary school attendance has increased from 88.1% in 22/23 to 89.5% in 24/25. This is more than 5 percentage points lower than pre-pandemic levels, however is above the Wales average. We recognise that more needs to be done to address ongoing challenges in attendance, particularly in secondary schools**.** Ensuring high levels of attendance amongst pupils eligible for free school meals (eFSM) is a more complex challenge. We are committed to increasing attendance of pupils eFSM. Attendance of eFSM pupils in primary schools was 89.1% in 24/25, almost 4 percentage points lower than non-eFSM pupils, however is 0.9 percentage points above the Wales average. In secondary schools, attendance of eFSM pupils was 79.8%, almost 10pp lower than non-eFSM pupils and slightly below the Wales average. We are seeing increases in challenging behaviours in schools. This is a challenge seen across the UK since the pandemic. As a result, the number of fixed term exclusions (FTEs) in our schools have more than doubled between 22/23 and 24/25, with 2,198 issued in the last academic year. We are improving how we capture and analyse exclusions data. This is enhancing our knowledge of reasons for exclusions and is facilitating challenge and support to schools. We have identified priority areas for support including increasing the ability of schools to support learners presenting behaviours of concern who may require additional learning provision (ALP). Schools continue to face financial pressure, and some struggle to provide learners with the additional support they require. We have implemented an Inclusion Panel to manage permanent exclusions (PEx). This allows for multi-agency decision making on next steps and monitoring. We are ensuring, through this panel, that the interests of the learner are held central to this decision. We are working with schools to utilise managed moves to an appropriate setting, including Cysgod y Coed (formerly the Monmouthshire Pupil Referral Service). We are also working with schools to increase support available or adjust ALP where possible to avoid escalation. These improvements in the process have resulted in all permanent exclusions issued during 24/25 being rescinded. This is enabling pupils who were at risk of permanent exclusion remaining supported in an appropriate setting, improving life chances for these pupils. We are providing additional funding to schools to enable every school to have on-site additional provision. This will allow more young people with additional needs to remain in their school setting and aligns with our values of promoting an inclusive and understanding school environment.	
What we want to achieve: The benefits of the new curriculum in Wales are maximised through excellent teaching and learning	
We need to support all learners to secure the necessary skills and knowledge that we would expect them to have at the relevant point in their education. We are ensuring that schools in Monmouthshire are embracing the new curriculum. Through our regular monitoring and Estyn inspections we know that, overall, many schools are making good progress in developing a broad, balanced and purposeful curriculum that reflects the context of the school and meets pupils' needs well. Nearly all schools have aligned their curriculum with the principles of the Curriculum for Wales and most have a clear vision for the curriculum. They have carefully designed their curriculum to promote pupils' moral, social and cultural development effectively. The results of learners in our secondary schools continue to be higher than elsewhere in Wales. On average, the capped 9 points score was 375.9 in Monmouthshire in 2025, compared to 354.3 across Wales. Most of our pupils performed in line with their expectations. Overall, two schools in	Estyn Inspection reports Attainment data Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

Monmouthshire were above Welsh Government modelled capped 9 outcomes, and two below in some categories. Breaking groups of learners in each individual school into 'thirds' compared with modelled outcomes shows that all schools are above expectation for the highest achieving thirds. We are seeing more variation from the modelled outcome in the middle and lowest thirds, particularly in the lowest third. This suggests a need for targeted intervention to support lower-attaining learners. When schools evaluate their own performance, they assess this against similar schools. This is a more informative and detailed assessment of attainment and wider progress, given the varying make up and individual plans of schools, than comparing against Wales averages. These groups of similar schools are called 'families'. When comparing our comprehensive schools with those in their 'family', two schools outperform schools in every category (including capped 9, literacy, numeracy, science, Welsh Baccalaureate, 5+ A*-A, no qualifications). One of our schools underperforms in all categories and one in a majority of categories compared to similar schools. We continue to support our schools to raise attainment levels beyond expected levels to levels where they and we want attainment to be. We have a clearly articulated school improvement strategy. This has supported us to establish robust systems of support and challenge. An Estyn inspection of education services completed in November 2025 found "well-defined roles, strong accountability and consistent information-gathering enable leaders and School Improvement Partners (SIPs) to develop an accurate understanding of schools." Our work is ensuring that barriers to improvement are addressed promptly. We have seen improvements in the quality of teaching and learning in our schools. Since February 2022, Estyn has inspected 20 primary schools, 11 non-maintained settings, 3 secondary schools and Cysgod y Coed in Monmouthshire. Two secondary schools and the Cysgod y Coed were judged to require significant improvement. Since this time, one secondary school in significant improvement has closed. Of the remaining schools, no follow-up was required, with many having spotlights of good practice or case studies identified. We have an agreed Welsh in Education Strategic Plan which sets our strategic direction for the planning, delivery, and growth of Welsh medium education in Monmouthshire over the next ten years. We are mainly on track with our delivery targets of the plan. We opened a new Welsh-medium primary school to serve both Monmouth and the surrounding towns and villages, Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy, in September 2024. Uptake of places has been positive, with 33 learners currently enrolled. We are expanding provision at Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni. This expansion, combined with the opening of Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy, will mean there are 120 school places available for each cohort. This exceeds the Welsh Government target of 115 places, and meets the aspirations and targets of our WESP. We are increasing the number of Welsh language learners through our immersion provision. This allows for pupils to join our Welsh medium schools later on. Immersion classes have supported growth in pupil numbers in reception classes as it allows parents to choose a Welsh-medium education for all their children, not just those starting school. Since opening our first immersion class at Ysgol Gymraeg y Ffin, 32 pupils have benefitted from this provision. We have now expanded our provision to Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni, and plan to open provision at Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy from September 2026. We are working with all three schools to co-construct a sustainable, county wide model for immersion. Although this work is at an early stage of development, the alignment of provision across the two established immersion classes will support any future changes.	
What we want to achieve: A truly inclusive educational system that recognises learners' starting points, strengths and educational needs	
In recent years, schools have seen a consistent increase in the number of children eligible for free school meals. These students may face challenges that not all students will face. We need to ensure that we are supporting our learners eligible for free school meals (eFSM) to achieve their potential.	Attainment data

We continue to address the gap in attainment between eFSM and non-eFSM learners. This is a complex issue that is influenced by many factors, including lower attendance among the eFSM cohort and pupils who are eFSM being more likely to have additional needs or require additional learning provision. During 2025 the gap in attainment of eFSM and non-eFSM learners has increased in Monmouthshire, sitting now at around 1.8 GCSE grades. Schools continue to undertake a detailed assessment of attainment and wider progress based on the varying make up and individual plans of each school to ensure that each pupil has an equal opportunity to succeed no matter their socio-economic background. We are also working with schools to ensure pathways and opportunities are available which interest all learners. We are exploring options with Coleg Gwent on developing Junior Apprenticeships in the county, and have continued work to further opportunities to complete childcare qualifications. We have developed a new Inclusion Strategy and an updated Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Policy to shape our work with children and young people in schools and settings in Monmouthshire. The Inclusion Strategy sets out our priorities to improve outcomes for children and young people in vulnerable groups and their families. The Additional Learning Needs Policy outlines our approach to supporting children and young people with barriers to learning and additional learning needs, ensuring they receive the necessary support, resources, and opportunities to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. These policies and strategies are enabling the delivery of an inclusive and understanding school environment. We are ensuring nearly all learners with ALN in Monmouthshire can have their needs met by their local mainstream school through our Special Resource Bases. This is enabling more children to remain in their local school, and is reducing the need for out-of-county placements. We have established an Additional Learning Provision (ALP) Review and associated quality assurance cycle to ensure that there is a consistent and equitable approach to meeting the needs of Monmouthshire children and young people with ALN. The assessment demonstrates many strengths in provision across Monmouthshire, as well as identifying some recommendations for development on the consistency of ALN provision across the county. We are seeing rising demand for ALN provision across the county, which we may be unable to meet within existing provision. We are expanding our local specialist provision through the establishment of a Social, Emotional and Mental Health Specialist Resource Base at the former Ysgol Y Fenni. This will ensure more children are able to access the support needed and reduce reliance on out of county placements. We are continuing to operate the Inspire programme across the county. This programme supports young people who may be facing barriers to learning such as attendance, attainment, behaviour and wellbeing. We work with young people to overcome challenges, return them to a school setting where possible or identify appropriate alternative pathways. During the year we supported 285 young people to achieve an additional qualification and / or achieve a life skill. The council's Youth Service provides and a range of inclusive services to support young people's confidence, resilience and life skills. The positive difference the Youth Service makes for children and young people across the county was recognised in an Estyn inspection of the service in November 2025. The Youth service also ran the "Make Your Mark" ballot, where almost three-quarters of 11–18 year olds took part in 2025 and Youth Conference. Young people stated that the top three priorities were the cost of living, mental health matters, and employment and skills. This enabled young people to express their views clearly and democratically and their views to inform the development of policy. We are reducing financial barriers to our adult education courses to make them more accessible to our residents. We have reviewed our course funding model that now means that all our community education courses are directly subsidised. We have also continued our partnership with Coleg Gwent to offer low-cost foundation-level learning. We recognise the importance of removing any barriers to involvement in adult education and the effect it can have on adults gaining new skills and knowledge. In 25/26, the total number of enrolments on community education courses was 963.	Additional Learning Needs Policy Inclusion Strategy Additional Learning Provision (ALP) Review Inspire programme Adult education courses participation
What we want to achieve: Continue our programme of school modernisation	

The environment in which children and young people learn is important to their development and well-being. We have invested £1.2 in improving and remodelling our south Monmouthshire pupil referral service. This is providing the service with a permanent and dedicated high-quality environment that is conducive to the needs and increasing demands of the vulnerable population of pupils it serves. We are expanding our provision of Welsh medium education. We have secured a new site for Ysgol Y Fenni which will increase the capacity of the school from 210 to 420 pupils. Delays in construction have meant the opening of this site has been delayed. We opened Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy on the site of Overmonnow Primary school in September 2024, with 24 pupils attending, which has now increased to 33 pupils. To continue the expansion of our Welsh medium provision we need to focus on promoting Welsh medium education and securing appropriate staff to ensure a high-quality education for our young people. **CASE STUDY – KING HENRY VIII SCHOOL** In July 2025, we celebrated the official opening of the new King Henry VIII all-through school in Abergavenny. The facility provides a hub for learning in Abergavenny, providing the tools for young people to thrive as well as well wider community facilities. The building is the first operationally net zero carbon all-through school in Wales, in line with our commitment to decarbonise our operations. The school has the capacity for 1,200 secondary school age pupils, 420 primary age pupils and 200 places for post-16 education. There will also be suitable accommodation for 71 pupils with complex neurodevelopmental and learning needs within the school. This will help to reduce the number of pupils attending an out-of-county secondary school.	King Henry VIII all-through school Welsh in Education Strategic Plan Pupil Referral Service

Well-being of Future Generations Act impact

Contribution of Council goal to Future Generations Act Well-being Goals

Prosperous Wales	Resilient Wales	Healthier Wales	More equal Wales	Wales of cohesive communities	Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language	Globally responsible Wales
✓		✓	✓		✓	

Well-being Objective: A Learning Place

The **long-term** nature of this goal is intrinsic to its success. Working with and **involving** children and young people, as early as possible, to identify their needs will give them the best chance of achieving their maximum potential. **Preventing** problems before they start will provide our young people with the best chance to develop. Using a **collaborative** approach and aligning services provides a rounded resource that works in harmony for the young person. Overall, this approach **integrates** the needs of our young people, ensuring they have the best opportunity to achieve their goals.

Measures of progress

Milestone	Target for completion	Progress	
Attendance and Engagement Strategy updated to strengthen systems and processes to improve and sustain high levels of attendance in line with new Welsh Government Guidance	September 2024		This has now been completed.
Inclusion Strategy approved by Cabinet	November 2024		This has now been completed.
Quality Assurance of Additional Learning Provision across the county via school's finance forms and provision pyramids is completed. Additional Learning Provision (ALP) meets the needs of vulnerable learners in the county and is of good quality	Regular Assessment		An Additional Learning Provision (ALP) Review associated quality assurance cycle has been established. An update on the outcomes and recommendations from the quality assurance was presented to Performance & Overview Scrutiny Committee in June 2025.
Additional Learning Need Coordinators and Specialist Resource Base Leads are engaged in quality assurance processes around the consistency and impact of Additional Learning Need provision through Additional Learning Provision forum and cluster / Specialist Provision and Outreach Team	Regular Assessment		Individual Development Plans moderation has taken place at both a cluster and Local Authority level. Secondary supported self-evaluation for ALN / ALP outcomes have been shared with ALN coordinators and Headteachers; where relevant action plans have been developed with schools or existing plans added to.
A new carbon neutral, 3-19 school is opened in Abergavenny	Phase 1 April 2025, Phase 2 April 2026		Phase 1 was completed in April 2025 with completion of the new school building. Phase 2 is not yet complete.
A strategic review of school catchments is completed, and recommendations are made to Cabinet	Annual review of policy		The School Admissions Policy 2025/26, including a review of school catchment areas, was approved by Cabinet in April 2024, in which it was agreed to accommodate the villages of Tredunnock, Llanhennock and Llandegveth into the catchment area for Usk Church in Wales Primary School. These changes were implemented for the academic year 2025/26.
Deliver a new non-maintained nursery in Trellech, invest S106 funding to improve the infrastructure at Castle Park and Archbishop Rowan Williams schools and improve and develop the buildings used to accommodate the Pupil Referral Service	Trellech March 2025, Archbishop Rowan Williams January 2027		Trellech Nursery building was completed and opened in February 2025. We are investing S106 funding to improve the infrastructure at Castle Park and Archbishop Rowan Williams schools and expect to complete this by January 2027.
A new Welsh-medium seedling provision is opened in Monmouth	September 2025		This has now been completed.
A newly refurbished Welsh-medium primary school is opened	Opened and refurbished September 2025		We have secured a new site for Ysgol Y Fenni which will increase the capacity of the school from 210 to 420 pupils. Delays in

					construction have meant the opening of this school has been delayed to 2026.
Measure	**Previous**	**Latest**	**Target for 2025/26**	**Quick View**	**Comment**
Percentage pupil attendance (brackets show eFSM figures) i) Primary ii) Secondary	i) 93.6 (89.0) ii) 88.2 (75.8)	i) 93.9 (89.1) ii) 90.1 (79.8)	i) 94 (92) ii) 94 (92)	↑	Data measured in academic years. The Previous column shows 2023/24 academic year data. Latest shows the 2024/25 academic year.
Percentage of schools engaged in professional learning related to Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA); Trauma Informed Approaches; and Autism	79	94	100	↑	
Number of Reception learners in Welsh medium schools	56	57	85	↑	Previous figure is for the academic year 2023/24, latest is for academic year 2024/25.
Number of children transitioning from a Welsh language primary school to a Welsh language secondary school	27	22	46	↓	Previous is academic year 2023/24, latest is academic year 2024/25.
Number of young people supported by Inspire (in school support/outreach support/post 16 support) to achieve an additional qualification and / or achieve a life skill	186	285	133	↑	This is an annual figure for 2025/26.
Number of enrolments by adult learners on community education courses including Coleg Gwent franchise courses	909	963	950	↑	

Quick View of Trend: ↑ Improving performance; ↓ Declining Performance; ↔ Unchanged Performance

Quick View of Target: Green – Target achieved; amber – just missed the target; red – fell some way short

Using Our Resources

The council needs to remain relevant and viable for the next generation, while continuing to meet the needs of residents, visitors and businesses in the here-and-now. To support the delivery of our goals, we must make sure that all aspects of the council are working efficiently, effectively and in line with the sustainable development principle set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

The Act specifies core areas in an organisation that need to adapt to meet the changing demands on our services and ensure their longevity and sustainability. We have evaluated our arrangements for these areas and included digital and data as another important enabler of how we deliver the council's services. The areas we have assessed are:

- Corporate planning, performance and risk management
- Financial planning
- Workforce planning (people)
- Procurement
- Assets
- Digital & Data
- Democracy & Scrutiny

Annual Governance Statement

The council has a governance framework, our Code of Corporate Governance, for the year end March 2026. The framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the Authority is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. It enables the Authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

We have produced a draft Annual Governance Statement for the year 2025/26 that demonstrates that we have appropriate governance arrangements in place to meet the governance principles and that a review has been undertaken to assess the effectiveness of those arrangements. This self-assessment of our resources integrates with the findings from the Annual Governance Statement and will also contain further actions and recommendations related to these arrangements.

Corporate Planning, Performance and Risk Management – Evaluation Score: Level 4 - Good

How effective is corporate planning?	How do we know?
We have developed and agreed a Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28. This sets a clear direction for the council. An Audit Wales review of our objective setting in the Community and Corporate Plan found 'the council has set its well-being objectives in accordance with the sustainable development principle and is aligning its key strategies and business plans to support their delivery, but it could further strengthen its approach by increasing the diversity of citizen involvement in future'. We have developed an accompanying performance measurement framework. We have reviewed the measurement framework to increase the focus on outcomes, where possible. We have set targets against these measures that demonstrate the ambition of the council to residents. This is allowing us to be held to account for performance and measure our performance on areas that can be directly affected by the council and the progress of wider outcomes that are not directly in the council's control. In line with the findings from our Panel Performance Assessment, we need to continue developing a more consistent evaluative culture so that reporting increases its focus on outcome and impact. Supporting and enabling strategies have been developed to ensure they are fit for purpose and support the new policy aims and objectives set out in the Community and Corporate Plan. These will enable the delivery of the ambitions of the plan. We have developed arrangements to monitor the impact of these strategies and regularly evaluate performance against outcomes, through an annual performance assessment.	Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28 and measurement framework Panel Performance Assessment Enabling strategies Annual performance assessment of enabling strategies
How effective is performance management?	**How do we know?**
The approval of the Community and Corporate Plan has ensured that there is a clear direction for the council. This has been embedded in our performance management framework. Regular reporting ensures accountability at all levels and demonstrates progress to residents. We have embedded the self-assessment process in the council's performance management framework. The self-assessment process has facilitated the completion of a robust evaluation of performance. These performance management arrangements have helped to clearly identify areas of progress and areas for development. An Audit Wales review of our performance management arrangements found 'the council has a maturing performance management system that supports delivery of its corporate objectives'. The Panel Performance Assessment recognised some progress had been made in demonstrating outcomes and impact as part of our performance management framework. The Panel reinforced the need to communicate progress more clearly to councillors, residents, partners and businesses. We need to continue moving from describing what we have done to explaining what has changed, who has benefited, what has not worked as intended and what we will do differently as a result. Service business planning principles, supporting templates and guidance are in place and regularly reviewed. Service business plans are facilitating services to plan for the next three years, assess what went well, learn from what did not and measure the impact their service has made on people and places of Monmouthshire. Overall, service business plan completion rates and quality have developed, however these remain varied and require improvement. Quality assurance on service business plans has shown areas of planning still require development to ensure the principles are consistently applied. We are developing an updated suite of performance management training to ensure officers completing plans are equipped with the information and guidance needed.	Community and Corporate Plan progress report Draft Self-assessment report Service business plans & quality assurance Panel Performance Assessment

How effective is risk management?	How do we know?
We have developed an updated strategic risk management policy and guidance. This defines the approach, process and responsibility for managing strategic risk in the council. This also defines risk tolerance and a risk appetite for the council. The policy is now embedded in the council and requirements have been integrated as part of the council's performance management framework. There remains some part of the new policy that need to be strengthened in their application through the organisation. The strategic risk register is updated regularly and available to all members and officers to view at any time. There are arrangements to formally review the whole strategic risk register and report it six monthly to scrutiny, Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet. This facilitates and demonstrates that risk management is embedded in the council and strategic risks facing the council are being robustly identified and managed. The risk assessment in service business plans is not always completed robustly. This limits the ability of services to use their service business plans to robustly manage and mitigate risks and may impact the escalation of risks onto the strategic risk register. We are developing an updated performance management training suite, including risk management. This should support the improvement of risk identification and management at a service level.	Strategic risk management policy, appetite statement and guidance Strategic risk register

Financial Planning – Evaluation Score: Level 4 – Good

How effective is financial monitoring?	How do we know?
The Council continues to maintain robust core financial governance arrangements, including regular budget monitoring, annual budget setting, treasury and capital reporting, statutory accounts production and oversight through Cabinet, scrutiny and Governance and Audit Committee. The Annual Governance Statement concluded that the Council's governance arrangements remain effective and provide a sound framework for delivering services, and financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government. There has also been external assurance on the Council's financial sustainability arrangements. The Audit Wales financial sustainability review acknowledged the Medium Term Financial Strategy positively and confirmed the robustness of arrangements more widely in place. The Council has also committed to progressing the delivery plan associated with the Medium Term Financial Strategy, including self-assessment against the CIPFA Financial Management Code and an independent financial resilience review. The 2025/26 draft accounts were prepared and published, and the budget and outturn reports demonstrate continued compliance with statutory and professional financial management requirements. The 2026/27 budget also included the Responsible Financial Officer's assessment of robustness and reserves, and the Council Fund was maintained at the Medium Term Financial strategy minimum of 5% of net revenue budget. We still need to formalise a structured self-assessment framework, update financial regulations and standing orders where required. We also need to ensure learning from external review, internal audit, budget monitoring and the Annual Governance Statement is brought together into one coherent improvement plan. This will help ensure the Council continues to meet changing regulatory expectations and strengthens resilience in a more complex financial environment.	Financial monitoring reports Annual Governance Statement Audit Wales review

How effective is financial planning?	How do we know?
We have made progress in strengthening the financial and organisational foundations needed to deliver change over the medium term. The Medium Term Financial Strategy is now embedded as the framework for budget planning, with six-monthly updates to the Medium Term Financial Plan used to refresh assumptions, assess risks and support early engagement with Cabinet, scrutiny and services. This has helped move the Council towards a more disciplined and forward-looking approach to financial planning. The 2026/27 budget was set on a balanced basis, without reliance on the Council Fund reserve, and included a package of service efficiencies, reform and income measures alongside targeted investment in priority services. The budget process continued to be supported by scrutiny, public consultation and impact assessment, helping ensure that difficult choices were considered in the context of the Community and Corporate Plan, equality, climate and the needs of residents. Our capital planning is based on an established prioritisation process informed by evidence and assessment of risk to develop a programme within the financial constraints on the council. We have reviewed and agreed a current and forward capital programme for 2026/27. The core capital programme is being sustained and sets planned investment in the council's infrastructure. There remains a considerable number of backlog pressures that sit outside the core capital programme. These have varying levels of risk associated with them. Our financial planning arrangements identify current and future budget pressures which pose a risk to the deliverability of our objectives in the Community and Corporate Plan. A programme of change reserve has been strengthened through the 2025/26 outturn, with additional resources set aside to support transformation activity and invest-to-save work. This gives the Council greater capacity to progress change in a planned way. However, the scale of the medium-term financial challenge remains significant. The indicative 2027/28 revenue gap is currently estimated at £9.9m and further work is needed to translate change activity into fully costed, deliverable and recurrent savings options. Capital pressures, particularly highways and infrastructure, also have revenue consequences through borrowing costs, so future change plans will need to be selective, affordable and clearly linked to service priorities.	Budget setting reports 2026/27 Medium -Term Financial Strategy

Workforce Planning – Evaluation Score: Level 4 - Good

How effective is workforce management?	How do we know?
We have a loyal, dedicated and talented workforce that continue to deliver our services and objectives for residents. We have an established set of policies and procedures that guide our Human Resources function. These support standards and behaviours we expect employees to deliver. They also allow flexibility and opportunity for our workforce to develop their careers in Monmouthshire. If employees do not meet these standards, we have arrangements to manage and resolve these issues. We have re-instigated the staff conference and a more impactful People Leaders' Workshop programme. Alongside this we have held Q&A sessions with colleagues, the leader and chief executive have also visited many teams. The percentage of respondents to the staff survey saying they feel up to date has improved at team, directorate and whole authority level. The percentage of colleagues who say they feel valued and listened to and increased from 65% to 71%. Our workforce radar is beginning to give management teams data to form a clearer view of people-related risks. This should enable better targeted action to improve sickness, turnover, and workforce planning. Progress is positive, however work is still needed to embed the appraisal approach consistently and make communications about starters, leavers and internal moves more systematic. We have improved how colleagues understand and access our wellbeing and benefits offer by promoting it through the jobs website, colleague conferences and filmed material for wider access. We have also developed better early-warning mechanisms through the workforce radar, team Q&A sessions and colleague survey, giving us stronger insight into cultural issues before they become more serious.	People Strategy Workforce management data Staff survey

How effective is workforce planning?	How do we know?
We have a flexible approach to workforce planning to attract and retain people to roles in the council. This includes long-standing agile working arrangements, for jobs that do not require employees to travel to their base every day and targeted recruitment campaign for certain jobs. We have strengthened our position as an employer of choice by improving our recruitment platform, refreshing the jobs section of the website, promoting development opportunities and laying the foundations for stronger workforce planning. Turnover is at 8.1% which is healthy but marginally higher than the optimal position. We are not making full use of exit interview data to understand the reasons people are leaving the organisation alongside other data sources. However, our survey shows us that 89% of colleagues would recommend MCC as an employer to friends and family, an increase of five percentage points on the previous year. This was reenforced by the Peer Panel Assessment conducted in February 2026 which highlighted that staff were seen as loyal, committed, and integral to the council's culture and delivery model. We are experiencing recruitment challenges in specific sectors, most of which match wider national recruitment issues. We have launched our e-recruitment system and improved the applicant experience, although there have been some challenges and	People Strategy Workforce management data learning management system

automation benefits have not yet been fully realised. We have also developed a work experience policy, an apprentice-first approach and internal work experience options to widen routes into careers with MCC. We are in the early stages of developing our workforce planning arrangements. We have become a member of workforce planning networks, to learn from others in the development of our practice. We do not yet have all the arrangements in place to facilitate the organisation to plan the workforce it needs to meet current and future demands. This is a commitment made in the People Strategy and also highlighted in the Peer Panel Assessment report. The development and retention of existing staff is an essential component of workforce planning. We have significantly improved access to learning by launching Thinqi authority-wide and using it to deliver essential learning alongside broader development opportunities. 84% of colleagues said they have access to the training they need, up from 81%. However, response rates for the survey tend to be lower for those who do not have access to a laptop and the next stage is to improve access to training for colleagues who do not regularly use a laptop or PC.	

Procurement – Evaluation Score: Level 3 - Adequate

How effective is strategic procurement?	How do we know?
We have a Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy 2023-28 which sets an enabling platform for the development of progressive policies that will achieve greater and more targeted social, economic, environmental and cultural gains through working with our supply chains. In line with this, we have developed a Socially Responsible Procurement Policy in collaboration with Ardal to ensure that Ardal Councils maximise the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing that it delivers through its procurement activity. We have developed training and guidance to ensure officers are supported to deliver the requirements of the strategy and ensure increased compliance. We have delivered training sessions across the council and are developing a procurement intranet site to provide a repository for all necessary procurement routes, forms and guidance. We have also commissioned the development of a 'procurement bot' to assist officers in accessing data and required documentation. Feedback has shown that officers do not always feel supported during the procurement process. Our initiatives aim to reduce strain on officers and increase confidence in their ability to meet the requirements of the strategy. Through the development of the strategy, we have continued our focus on contributing to reducing the carbon emissions produced by the council. We have developed a dashboard to enable teams to identify services with high carbon usage and explore carbon reduction opportunities. We have also developed carbon reduction guidance to support officers in considering carbon emissions as part of their procurement processes. More targeted communications are being developed to increase supplier knowledge, and a communication strategy is being developed to highlight the Local Authority's low-carbon requirements. We are working to increase opportunities for local businesses to bid for work. We have held a 'Meet the Buyer' networking event to increase awareness of procurement opportunities for local suppliers. An additional event will take place in partnership with the Economy, Employment and Skills team through their established Business Forums to promote tender opportunities above the £75k threshold. Whilst a Contract Forward Plan exists, it is recognised that further work needs to be undertaken to ensure it captures future activity more accurately to allow greater dedicated time for suppliers to plan and consult on opportunities. Targeted activities	Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy 2023-27 Socially Responsible Procurement Policy Updated guidance and training Tools developed 'Meet the Buyer' events held

will be undertaken with directorates to raise awareness of the need to ensure that the Contract Forward Plan is kept up to date to ensure adequate support for officers can be put in place, in advance of procurement activities being undertaken.

We have committed to increasing the community benefits and social value delivered by suppliers. A cross-directorate Social Value Delivery Group has been established which meets regularly and includes officers from a range of service areas. It is intended that the Group will raise awareness of the need to include opportunities for the under employed or apprentices within local authority contracts, to increase the community well-being value and benefits of Council procurements to the wider local community. Tailored support will also be provided to contractors and contract managers to assist them to deliver their 'Themes, Outcomes and Measures' commitments to ensure maximum value from local procurement spend.

Ensuring value for money, legal compliance and transparency is key to our work. Ardal Councils Contract Forward Plans have been developed. These will be used to identify opportunities to collaborate to create better economies of scale given the potential aggregate spend across the Ardal Partnerships. The Forward Plans will also be used to identify potential officer support required from the Ardal Category Management teams when significant procurement spend is scheduled. Ardal Category Management Teams will also use the Contract Forward Plan to initiate discussions with directorates to identify efficiencies and opportunities to innovate and review compliance of Contracted Spend vs Non-Contracted Spend. As part of the new legislation a Contract Register must also be published to ensure transparency. Whilst a Contract Register exists it is not as extensive as needed therefore the Strategic Procurement Lead will be working with directorates to increase entries and subsequently visibility of procurement activities.

Further areas for development identified through our 2025/26 self-assessment
Strengthen arrangements that support officers undertaking procurement to meet the ambitions of the Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy

Assets – Evaluation Score: Level 5 - Very Good

How effective is strategic Asset Management?	How do we know?
We have developed an Asset Management Strategy that informs the way decisions and day-to-day management of council land and property is undertaken. It sets five clear objectives for land and property to deliver the council's objectives. It also establishes the supporting policy framework from which the strategy is implemented. The strategy is supported by an Asset Management Plan which identifies the actions to deliver the strategy. Landlord services continue to play a crucial role in supporting services across the organisation to meet their objectives. Work has continued throughout this year to acquire properties to create supported accommodation, particularly for care experienced young people. These developments are enabling us to meet the needs of more vulnerable people in our county and ensure all have access to a safe place to live. We have also undertaken and progressed a range of projects across our school estate, ensuring buildings are safe and fit for purpose. This includes the refurbishment of the former Deri View Primary School which will enable the relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni to the site, increasing pupil numbers. Low carbon design principles continue to shape our capital maintenance programme, with a particular focus on the net zero initiative. Decarbonised heating options have been installed in new developments, including the new 3-19 King Henry School and in temporary accommodation developments. Alongside these improvements, Electric Vehicle (EV) charging facilities have been installed at various council locations, including County Hall and Severn View Parc Care Home. These installations have supported the expansion of the public EV network throughout the county.	Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plan

How effective is operational Asset Management?	How do we know?
We are undertaking feasibility studies, technical assessments and surveys on property, infrastructure**,** and assets. These are informing our capital budget planning and maintenance schedules in line with established processes. Decision making on managing our assets needs to be strengthened in line with our Asset Management Strategy. We have a considerable number of maintenance pressures for, including property and highways infrastructure and public rights of way, that sit outside any potential to fund them within the capital medium term financial plan. These carry significant risk. We continued to work across the Council to understand and plan for future accommodation needs, supporting services and ensuring the estate evolves in line with organisational priorities. To underpin stronger, more efficient decision-making, we have procured a new Asset Management System, which will improve the strategic review of property options, identify opportunities to rationalise and optimise space, and strengthen our ability to track life-cycle costs, repairs, and investment needs over time. Whilst good progress has been made to strengthen the enablement role and governance arrangements around Landlord Services and use of council assets, further work will be done to develop individual Service Asset Plans so that more proactive planning on the potential for assets and developing service requirements can be forecast. Service Asset Working Groups will be established for each directorate to inform the development of the capital maintenance budget. We will continue to work with directorates to determine whether the spaces they occupy remain fit for purpose, in the right places, accessible and best meet current and future service needs.	Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plan Asset Management System

Digital & Data – Evaluation Score: Level 3 - Adequate

How effective is the development of digital?	How do we know?
We have developed a revised Digital and Data Strategy that sets the direction for the organisation over the next three years We have strong partnership arrangements in place for digital with the Shared Resource Service (SRS). To accelerate our use of digital as means to transform the way we work and deliver our ambitions in the strategy. We have implemented a shared service model for digital and data in collaboration with Torfaen County Borough Council and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council through an expanded role for the Shared Resource Service. The transfer of our digital team into SRS has been completed. This gives us access to broader digital expertise. As part of this collaboration, we are progressing a partnership-wide approach to AI. We have agreed an AI proposal that will create a secure, shared and well-governed approach to using AI across SRS partners. The initial phase will reduce duplication, strengthen consistency and give staff access to approved tools for tasks such as summarisation, translation, redaction and handling common enquiries. As the use of AI develops, this should help deliver more efficient services, better value for money and improved outcomes for residents. To support this**,** we are developing an AI Policy to strengthen governance of the use of AI. We also need to ensure there is enough capacity to support implementation. We are strengthening how we priorities digital and data projects based on the outcomes they can achieve and how we subsequently evaluate impact of digital and data, including efficiency and effectiveness. We have established routes for services to advocate, champion and shape the use of digital and data in their areas. These are supporting the council's digital and data activity to become more closely aligned with the Council's priorities, including the For Purpose On Purpose change programme transformation and service improvement priorities. We are developing a benefits and value framework to improve how digital and data projects are identified, prioritised, resourced and evaluated We have established information security and technology arrangements ensuring that information held by the council to ensure that information remains confidential, maintains its integrity and is available to those who need to access it as part of our work. We actively support, advise, and train our workforce. Mandatory training is provided for GDPR and cyber security, alongside comprehensive guidance, and policies for all aspects of data management. We have developed a range of training for officers to improve digital literacy across the organisation. These includes foundational digital skills programme on our corporate training platform. We know that continuous development in digital skills is essential to achieve our ambition. We need to continue to develop digital training resources to allow staff to continue to improve their digital skills.	Digital Service Business Plan Digital and Data Strategy Information security and governance arrangements. Digital, data and technology collaboration Data & AI investment case

How effective is the development of data?	
We have been implementing projects in line with our digital and data strategy that are focused on providing insight using our data to inform our service delivery and policy development. For example, we have improved our Local Info website providing residents with more and easier to access tailored information specific to their property. We have developed the use of geo-spatial data, including automating updates from internal systems and external sources through our Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to inform service delivery. We have run the national resident survey and analysed responses to provide insights into resident views of their local place and council. We have analysed the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025 and population projections, helping services and senior leaders better understand changing demographics and deprivation to inform decision making. We have not been able to fulfil all our data ambitions in the year. We need to further harness and connect data as council-wide asset. We have made investments in our data capability and capacity through the SRS collaboration. We have agreed a further business case to generate more advanced insights by developing a develop a modern data platform working with Gwent-wide partners. This will enable previously separate data sets to be ingested, cleansed, matched and visualised. This has the potential to support stronger insight, self-service analytics and, over time, predictive analytics. We also need to improve our data maturity across the organisation. We have begun to develop our training for officers to improve data skills. These include training on the use of business intelligence tools and developed data standards for the organisation. We need to continue to develop training resources to allow staff to continue to improve their data skills.	Performance & Data Insight Service Business Plan Digital and Data Strategy Data & AI investment case

Democracy & Scrutiny – Evaluation Score: Level 4 - Good

How effectively are resources being used?	How do we know?
The use of remote attendance at Council, Cabinet and committee meetings is fully embedded. This brings positive benefits for those with work or family commitments who are able to participate in meetings they would otherwise not be able to attend. Attendance at meetings has remained high. Revisions to the changes of scrutiny committees have reduced duplication, for example budget and performance reports are now presented to Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee rather than having the same report presented to four separate meetings. There is robust challenge from scrutiny members. The outcomes of scrutiny meetings are clearly captured and shared with cabinet and officers to consider. A forward work planner is used to identify decision making reports due to considered by Council, Cabinet and Individual Cabinet Member decision. This is also used to inform the work programme of scrutiny committees. The Panel Performance Assessment report notes that the “timeliness of the Cabinet forward plan can hinder scrutiny’s effectiveness”. Work is needed to improve the use of the planner and ensure decision making reports are included on it at the earliest opportunity to support improved democratic work planning. The report also found that “there is a lack of clarity around how members can deploy “deep dive” approaches within task and finish methodologies, suggesting further support and clearer frameworks are needed.”	Attendance Figures Forward work planner
Further areas for development identified through our 2025/26 self-assessment	
Strengthen democratic planning to ensure effective scrutiny and decision making	

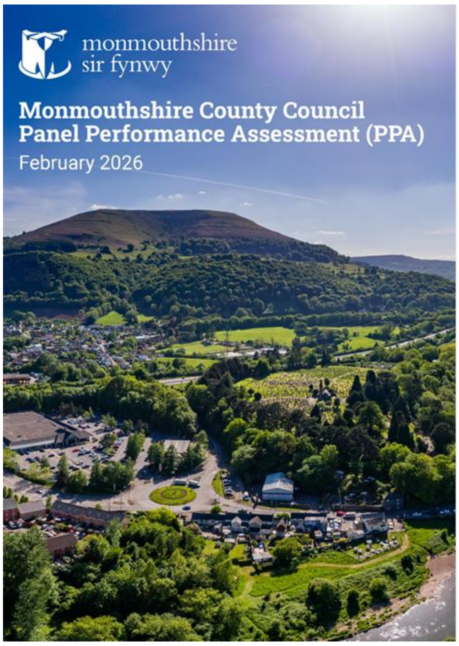
Panel Performance Assessment

In February 2026, Monmouthshire County Council underwent its first Panel Performance Assessment under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The assessment provided an independent peer view of the Council.

The assessment focussed on how well the Council is meeting its performance requirements: exercising its functions effectively, using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively, and maintaining effective governance arrangements. The Panel also considered three locally agreed areas of focus linked to alignment to across directorates to deliver priorities, prevention and person-centred working, and the Council's ability to demonstrate and communicate outcomes from the Community and Corporate Plan.

The Panel's overall conclusion was positive. It described Monmouthshire as:

"An ambitious, well-run Council with communities at its heart and a reach that transcends boundaries."



This assessment provides valuable external assurance that the Council has important strengths in leadership, partnership working, governance and its commitment to community well-being. It also reinforces the need for continued focus, prioritisation and disciplined delivery if the Council is to turn its ambition into measurable, sustainable outcomes for residents.

We recognise from the Panel's findings that the Council has a strong foundation to build from. Our purpose, set through the Community and Corporate Plan, is well understood and provides a clear framework for improving well-being, reducing inequality and supporting a zero-carbon county. The Panel recognised the Council's ambition, its constructive relationships with partners, and the commitment shown by members, officers, communities and stakeholders.

The assessment challenges us to be sharper about how we prioritise, sequence and evidence our work. The Council operates in a demanding financial and service environment, with increasing demand, complex community needs and limited organisational capacity. The Panel's findings therefore reinforce the importance of being more explicit about the major changes that will deliver better outcomes at lower cost, and about how these will be governed, resourced and evaluated.

The Panel made three recommendations:

1. Prioritise major opportunities to deliver better outcomes for residents at lower cost.
2. Strengthen community resilience and shared understanding.
3. Workforce and succession planning

We accepted these recommendations and developed a response to address them. This includes using the Council's change programme For Purpose, on Purpose as the mechanism to prioritise major change opportunities, defining and strengthening an approach to Resilient communities and embedding workforce planning as part of our commitments in the People Strategy.

The full report can be found at: Monmouthshire-PPA-Report-2026-Final.pdf.

Our work with others

To deliver the outcomes required for the county we need to work together with a range of partners, stakeholders and our communities. The council will not have all the answers to solve the challenges facing the county and we will not be able to deliver the outcomes required on our own. Working collaboratively with others increases the likelihood of us developing effective and sustainable solutions.

Stakeholders and partnership working

How effectively does the council work with stakeholders and partners on agreed outcomes?	**How do we know?**
Working in partnership is one of the ways we can achieve our objectives while delivering value for money. We enter into collaborative arrangements thoughtfully and with a clear articulation of how they can help us achieve our objectives. Regionally we work with many large organisations in partnership including Welsh Government, Cardiff Capital Region, Regional Partnership Board and the Gwent Public Services Board to fulfil our commitments on, for example, decarbonisation, transport, health and social care, housing and regeneration. An Internal Audit review identified a reasonable level of assurance was in place for the authority's governance arrangements based on a sample of partnerships. The audit identified we need to strengthen our guidance on the arrangements that partnerships need to have in place and assure ourselves these are subsequently adhered to. We have created a partnership toolkit to support lead council officers to develop and capture the arrangements for their partnership. We need to complete its implementation for those partnerships we have identified on our partnership register. Including, applying it to evaluate if the expected outcomes of the partnerships are being realised. The South East Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) has responsibility for preparing Regional Strategic Development Plans, Regional Transport Plans and enhancing or promote the economic well-being of the area. The committee is made up of the leaders of the ten local authorities in South East Wales. All governance papers are published on the Cardiff Capital Region website. The arrangements are overseen by a joint committee comprising representatives from the ten local authorities with additional regulatory activity undertaken by Audit Wales. We extend our reach beyond borders through our work with the Marches Forward Partnership. This brings us together with councils covering Herefordshire, Powys County and Shropshire to reshape the economic landscape of the Marches region by fostering collaboration and innovation. Work is overseen by the Marches Forward Partnerships Board which consists of leaders and chief executives from councils involved. Our recent Panel Performance Assessment recognised Monmouthshire's strong social capital and outward-facing partnership culture. It found that communities, partners, town and community councils and stakeholders are ready and willing to work with the council. The assessment encourages us to channel these strengths more deliberately into co-production and preventative work. It recommended we strengthened shared understanding of community resilience in the Monmouthshire context. The panel found the council works effectively with neighbouring authorities and plays leading roles in key partnerships and is seen as a partner others want to work with. The panel highlighted the that now is the time to build on this investment and begin realising tangible returns, supported by sensitive and valued leadership. Partnerships and collaborations of all scales are important to deliver improved outcomes in the county. We are committed to strengthening our collaboration with community and town councils and lean into the expertise and enthusiasm of the many volunteers and community groups that make this county so special.	Internal Audit review of Partnerships and collaborations Corporate Joint Committee Marches Forward Partnership Panel Performance Assessment

Our Actions

Through the self-assessment, we have identified how well we are doing and what we can we do better. Identifying these is not the end of the self-assessment process. We will look to build on and learn from the areas that are going well and address areas that we can do better.

The action plan focuses specifically on what, and how, we can do better for the significant conclusions of the assessment. All of the findings will inform the development of the council's well-being objectives and delivery plans. They will inform how internal processes and procedures should change to support more effective planning, delivery and decision-making to drive better outcomes, and ways to deliver the council's functions. These also integrate with further actions identified in the council's Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 and actions in response to the recommendations in the Panel Performance Assessment completed in 2026.

The actions will be monitored through the year as part of the council's performance management arrangements. The next self-assessment report will also include an assessment of the progress made on these actions.

Progress with 2024/25 Actions

We have provided an update on progress against the actions we identified in the 2024/25 self-assessment report. A more detailed assessment of these arrangements is provided in the relevant section of the report.

Section	What can we do better	How	Progress
Outcomes	Develop more childcare places, including Flying Start and Welsh-medium childcare provision	Implement the action plan as part of Childcare Sufficiency Assessment	We have increased the number of childcare settings. We develop our Flying Start offer based on demand. We aim to ensure that we are able to meet the growing demands of Welsh medium early education in the future.
Outcomes	Understand the reasons for the rise in young people Not in Employment, Education or Training	Implement the NEET Prevention Strategy and targeted support with partners	We continue supporting our young people to access training and employment through delivering our NEET strategy.
Outcomes	Develop the support offer for disadvantaged learners to achieve their potential	Develop a whole authority approach on supporting disadvantaged learners, including working with the EAS	We continue to work with schools and the EAS to support disadvantaged learners.
Enablers	A programme of service change which identifies sustainable ways to deliver services whilst addressing the forecast funding gap.	Develop a programme of change to enable delivery of required savings over the medium term.	We have developed a Whole Authority programme for change - 'For Purpose, On Purpose – F-POP'. Next steps include the development of a pipeline of future change projects, which will include projects informing the Council's medium term financial plan.
Enablers	Strengthen arrangements that support officers undertaking	Develop consistent guidance, training, and support for officers	We have developed and delivered guidance and training to officers across the council, in partnership with Ardal. We are

	procurement to meet the ambitions of the Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy	undertaking procurement	investing in a procurement hub and AI bot to simplify the process for officers. Further work is needed to ensure officers feel supported and confident in the procurement process.
Enablers	Strengthen the capacity and capability to deliver the ambition in the digital and data strategy.	Develop and deliver the action plan in the Digital and Data Strategy	We have continued to deliver the action plan in the digital and data strategy and produced an annual assessment of its progress. We have made further investments in collaborative digital and data capability to deliver our ambitions.
Stakeholder and Partnership	Evaluate if the expected outcomes of partnerships are being realised and impact on delivering the council's objectives.	Implement the partnership toolkit to facilitate lead council officers for identified partnerships to evaluate if the expected outcomes of the partnerships are being realised.	A partnership toolkit has been developed. This provides support for Council lead council officers for identified partnerships to use as part of overseeing arrangements for their partnerships.

New Areas for Development 2025/26: What and how can we do better?

Section	What can we do better	How	Who	When
Outcomes	Work with communities and stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of community resilience.	Actions are identified in response to the Strengthening Community Resilience and Shared Understanding recommendation in the Panel Performance Assessment	Head of Customer, Communication and Engagement	December 2027
Enablers	Strengthen democratic planning to ensure effective scrutiny and decision making	Ensure earlier inclusion of reports in committee, cabinet and council forward planners and improve the coordination between decision making and work programmes.	Chief Officer Law & Governance	March 2027

Actions from Panel Performance Assessment

The Panel Performance Assessment made three recommendations for the Council to address. The actions we have committed to in response are set out below, and we will report on progress in our next self-assessment.

Recommendation	Action	Timescale & Responsibility
Prioritising major opportunities to deliver better outcomes for residents at lower costs.	Establish and maintain a single, live change portfolio within For Purpose, On Purpose (including major opportunities), with clear entry criteria, stage- gates and decision papers routed via the Programme Assurance Board.	Short Term: now – September 2026 Chief Executive – All actions
	Apply the FPOP Benefits and Value Framework to assess investment required, organisational capacity, expected returns (financial and non financial) and delivery confidence; use this to prioritise opportunities and sequence delivery.	Short Term: now – September 2026
	Strengthen programme management discipline through the FPOP Programme Management Office, including consistent templates, reporting, risk management and a portfolio dashboard to support early intervention where delivery is off-track.	Medium Term: October 2026 – March 2027
	Ensure opportunities that require member decisions progress through existing approval routes (Cabinet/Council) with clear business cases and benefits realisation expectations.	Long Term: April 2027 – December 2027
Strengthening Community Resilience and Shared Understanding.	Co-produce a clear, practical definition of Resilient Communities with communities, partners, Town and Community Councils and frontline officers, with equity embedded throughout the process.	Short Term: now – September 2026 Head of Customer, Communication and Engagement – All actions
	Undertake proportionate mapping of existing community assets, networks and activity, focusing on strengths and gaps that matter for prevention. This will include a digital community asset map, supported by local points of contact for residents who are less digitally enabled	Medium Term: October 2026 – March 2027
	Move from broad engagement to targeted action by identifying a small number of priority places and/or themes where strengthening Resilient Communities can deliver the greatest preventative and equity benefit.	Medium Term: October 2026 – March 2027
	Establish a Resilient Communities Network to support alignment, shared learning and reduced duplication across the Council, partners, health, the voluntary sector and Town & Community Councils.	Long Term: April 2027 – December 2027
	Use a proportionate mix of lived experience, qualitative insight and proxy measures to demonstrate progress, reflecting the PPA's expectations for meaningful short and medium term evidence.	Long Term: April 2027 – December 2027
Workforce and Succession Planning	Run a development session for managers on succession planning with the LGA	Short Term: now – September 2026 Chief Officer, People,

	Performance and Partnerships – All actions
Upskill HR Business Partners in strategic workforce planning	Medium Term: October 2026 – March 2027
Produce a workforce development plan to sit underneath the People Strategy to provide clarity on the steps that need to be taken to ensure a future focused workforce	Medium Term: October 2026 – March 2027
Implement the workforce of the future through expanding talent entry points, including work experience, apprenticeships, traineeships and graduate opportunities	Medium Term: October 2026 – March 2027
Develop a training pathway for all job roles to ensure existing staff are developed to maximise their capability	Medium Term: October 2026 – March 2027
Undertake research to understand the future skill requirements across the authority and develop or commission training to future proof our workforce	Medium Term: October 2026 – March 2027

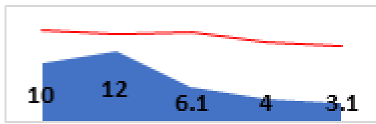
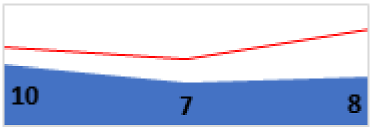
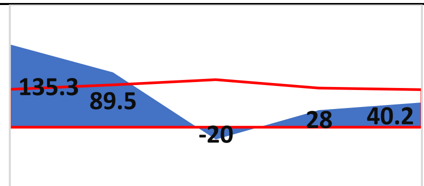
Performance Measures

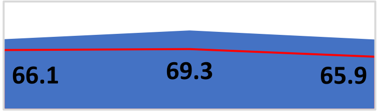
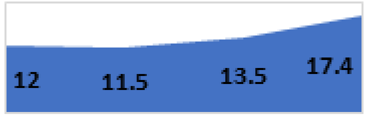
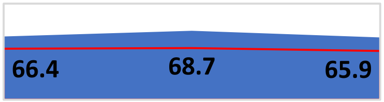
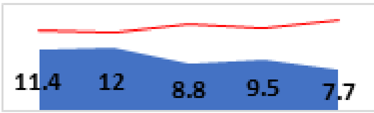
The use of performance measures is one of the important mechanisms we use to assess our performance. Each of our objectives has specific performance measures set to monitor progress. Some further relevant performance indicators we use to assess our services' performance are set out in this section.

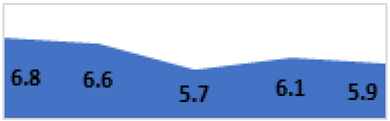
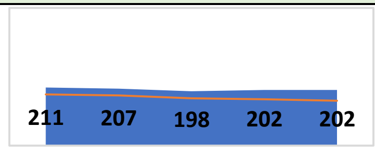
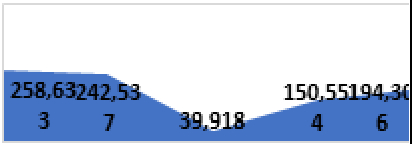
National indicators have been set as part of the Future Generations Act for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the well-being goals in Wales as a whole. While the national indicators will not measure the performance of individual public bodies or public services boards, it is important that they are considered to track the progress being made to improve well-being in Monmouthshire. Some of the national indicators that are relevant to the objectives we have set, where an update is available at a county level, are included in the table below.

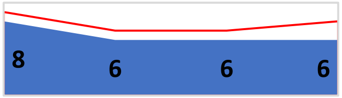
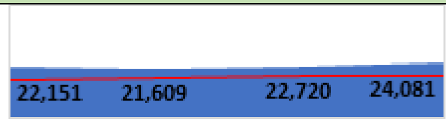
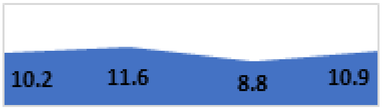
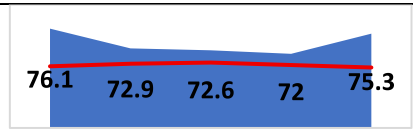
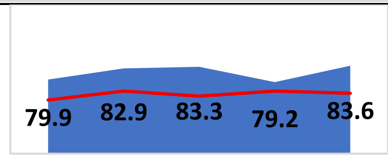
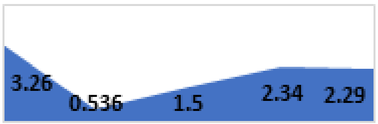
Longer term measures in the Community & Corporate Plan 2022-28

Alongside the specific measures included under each objective the Community and Corporate Plan also includes measures for each objective that we want to track because they will inform our work. We want to see positive movement in these measures, but they are things where our input is only part of a much bigger picture. The latest update of the measures can be seen below. The red comparator line in some graphs seen below displays the Wales average data, where available.

Longer term measures	Trend (Wales trend in red where available)	Latest	Longer term measures	Trend (Wales trend in red where available)	Latest
A Fair Place to Live					
Percentage of people satisfied with their ability to get to/ access the facilities and services they need		86	Gap in healthy life expectancy between most and least deprived areas – male (years)		3.1
Percentage of people living in households in material deprivation		8	Difference in average pay between men and women working in the county (£)		40.2

Longer term measures	Trend (Wales trend in red where available)	Latest	Longer term measures	Trend (Wales trend in red where available)	Latest
Healthy life expectancy - female (years)		65.9	Percentage of children living in relative low-income families		17.4
Healthy life expectancy – male (years)		65.9	Percentage of residents who feel 'People in my local area get on well and help each other'		79.1
Gap in healthy life expectancy between most and least deprived areas - female (years)		7.7	Percentage of residents who feel 'People in my local area pull together to improve the local area'		65.5

A Green Place to Live					
Average carbon emissions per capita in Monmouthshire (tonnes)		5.9	Average annual residual household waste produced per person (kilograms)		202
Number of rail passenger journeys		194,306	Percentage of the Special Area of Conservation river catchment waterbodies that fail the phosphorus targets	Trend data not available	88 for Usk 67 for Wye

Longer term measures	Trend (Wales trend in red where available)	Latest	Longer term measures	Trend (Wales trend in red where available)	Latest
Average level of nitrogen dioxide pollution in the air (µg/m3), measured at Air Quality Management Areas in Monmouthshire		6	Percentage of people who agree that their local area has a clean environment		59.5
A Thriving and Ambitious Place					
Percentage of people satisfied with their local area as a place to live		95	Gross disposable household income per head (£)		24,081
Average hourly town centre footfall		288	Percentage unemployed i) females ii) males	Data not available	Data not available
Percentage of vacant town centre premises		10.9	Percentage employed – female		75.3
Annual economic impact of tourism (£)		329.8	Percentage employed – male		83.6
Number of tourists visiting the county (million)		2.29	Percentage of council expenditure spent in local supply chain through public sector contracts	Data not yet available	Data not yet available

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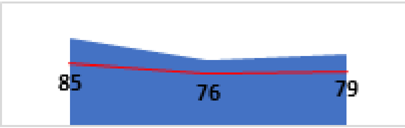
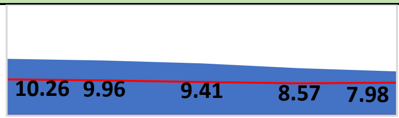
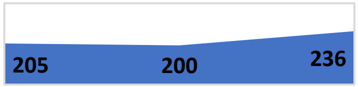
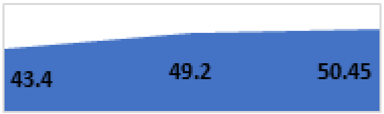
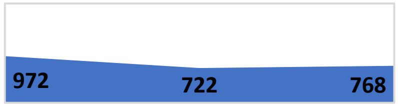
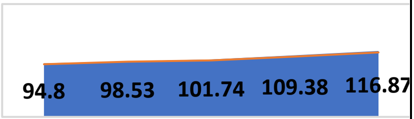
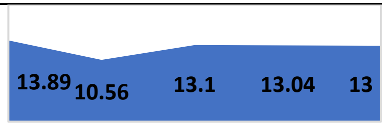
Longer term measures	Trend (Wales trend in red where available)	Latest	Longer term measures	Trend (Wales trend in red where available)	Latest
Percentage of people who attend or participate in arts, culture or heritage activities three or more times a year	 85 76 79	79	Percentage increase in active travel route usage	New measure – trend data not yet available	4.1
Percentage of adults with qualifications at different levels of the national qualification framework	Update in learning place below				

A Safe Place to Live					
Median house prices compared to median workplace-based earnings	 10.26 9.96 9.41 8.57 7.98	7.98	Number of recorded crimes - sexual offences	 205 200 236	236
Percentage of all homes in the county with an energy efficiency rating of 'C' or above	 43.4 49.2 50.45	50.45	Number of recorded crimes - public order offences	 972 722 768	768
Average weekly rent for social housing in Monmouthshire	 94.8 98.53 101.74 109.38 116.87	116.87	Rate of anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population	 13.89 10.56 13.1 13.04 13	13

Longer term measures	Trend (Wales trend in red where available)	Latest
Average time (months) homeless households spend in Band 1 with a homeless duty before moving on to settled/permanent accommodation	8.6, 10.2, 11.5, 10.96, 20.07	20.07
Percentage of social housing allocated to homeless households	46.7, 62, 57, 58, 40.64	40.64
Number of overall crimes recorded	5807, 6152	6152

Longer term measures	Trend (Wales trend in red where available)	Latest
Percentage of residents who feel safe when outside in their local area during the i) day ii) night	i) 90.29, 89.5 ii) 66.19, 65.4	i) 89.5 ii) 65.4
Percentage of those referred to the youth offending service who subsequently re-offend	18.6, 12.5, 12.4, 22	22
Number of recorded crimes - sexual offences	205, 200, 236	236

A Connected Place

Percentage of children supported to remain living with their family (not including children looked after)	58.6, 59.8, 61.1, 60.2, 67.5, 69.3	69.3
Percentage of adult service users who feel part of their community	51, 45.4, 51.5, 50.2, 45.9	45.9

Percentage of adults with two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours	Trend data not available	93
Healthy life expectancy at birth (women)	66.1, 69.3, 65.9	65.9

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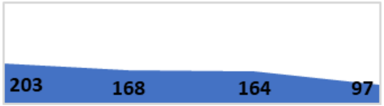
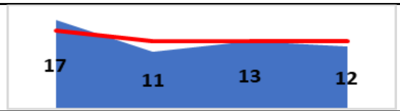
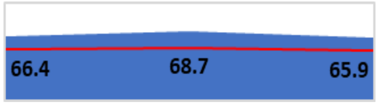
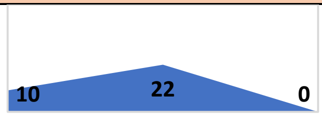
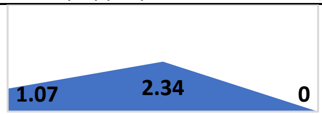
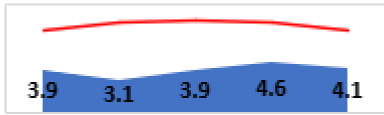
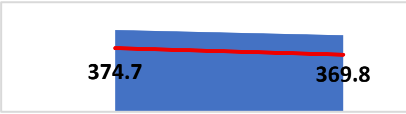
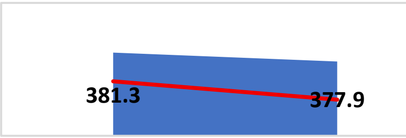
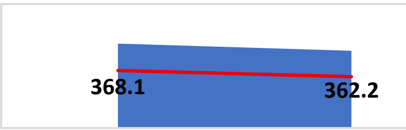
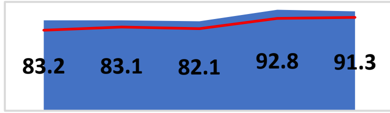
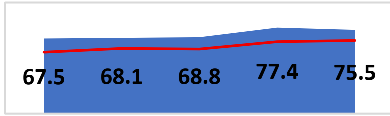
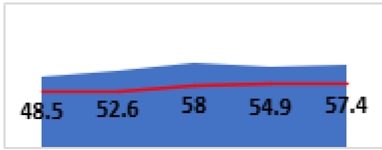
Longer term measures	Trend (Wales trend in red where available)	Latest
Percentage of children looked after supported to remain in Monmouthshire		55.7
Number of carers and young carers supported by the carers team		97
Percentage of people who are lonely		12

Longer term measures	Trend (Wales trend in red where available)	Latest
Healthy life expectancy at birth (men)		65.9
Percentage of people who agree 'People in my local area get on well and help each other'		79.1

A Learning Place

Number of upheld permanent exclusions across primary and secondary schools	 (this decline is a result of the introduction of an inclusion panel to manage and mitigate exclusions and identify appropriate alternatives)	0
Rate of permanent exclusions across primary and secondary schools	 (this decline is a result of the introduction of an inclusion panel to manage and mitigate exclusions and identify appropriate alternatives)	0
Capped 9 Point Score - eFSM		304.7
Percentage of adults with qualifications at different levels of the national qualification framework i) no qualifications		4.1

Longer term measures	Trend (Wales trend in red where available)	Latest
Rate of fixed term exclusions 5 days or less: i) primary ii) secondary More than 5 days: iii) primary iv) secondary	Trend data not yet available	i)29.1 ii)394.0 iii)1.1 iv)9.0
Capped 9 Point Score – All pupils		369.8
Capped 9 Point Score - Females		377.9
Capped 9 Point Score - Males		362.2

Longer term measures	Trend (Wales trend in red where available)	Latest
Percentage of adults with qualifications at different levels of the national qualification framework ii) qualified to level 2 or above		91.3
Percentage of adults with qualifications at different levels of the national qualification framework iii) qualified to level 3 or above		75.5
Percentage of adults with qualifications at different levels of the national qualification framework iv) qualified to level 4 or above		57.4
Percentage of learners studying for an assessed qualification in Welsh as a subject	Trend data not yet available	93.3%

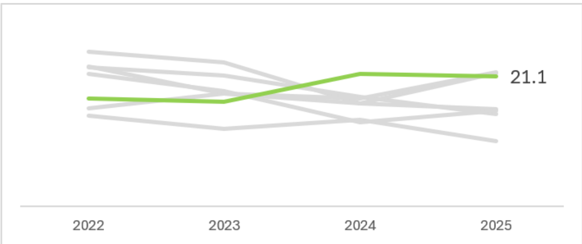
Performance comparable with other areas

When assessing performance, it is essential to ensure wider context and relative performance is considered to offer a well-rounded evaluation.

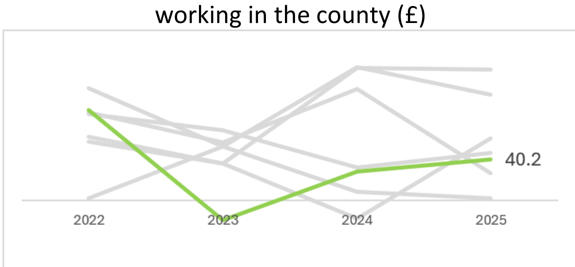
Through our self-assessment we have assessed our progress using both local and national metrics. Some of these national metrics are comparable with other local authorities across Wales. The table below provides an overview of how we are performing against some of our ‘nearest neighbours’. These ‘neighbours’ are those authorities with which we share a wide range of similar characteristics, for example rurality, population demographics, and local economic factors. These may not always correlate with nearest geographic neighbours. The selection of nearest neighbours is based on ONS analysis which assesses a range of data and evidence to ensure a meaningful comparison.

Objective: A Fair Place to Live

Percentage of people who say they can speak Welsh

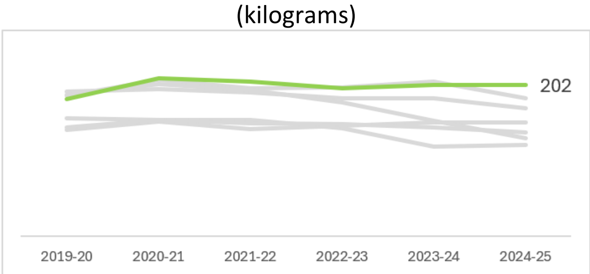


Difference in average pay between men and women working in the county (£)

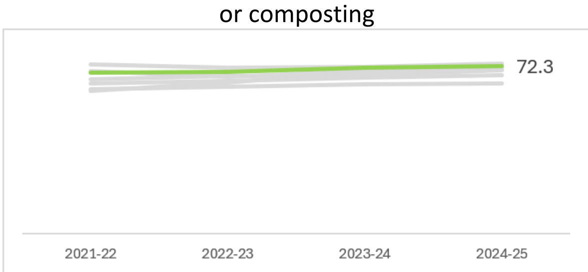


Objective: A Green Place to Live

Annual residual household waste produced per person (kilograms)

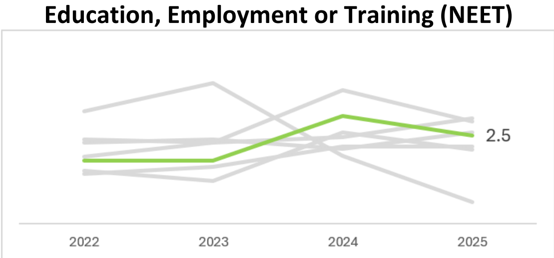


Percentage of municipal waste sent for recycling, reuse or composting

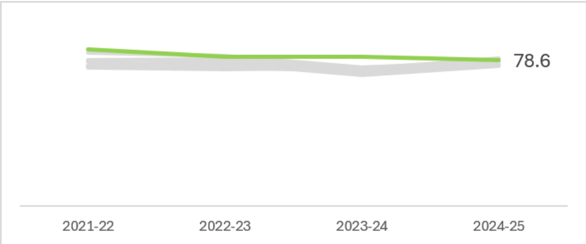


Objective: A Thriving and Ambitious Place

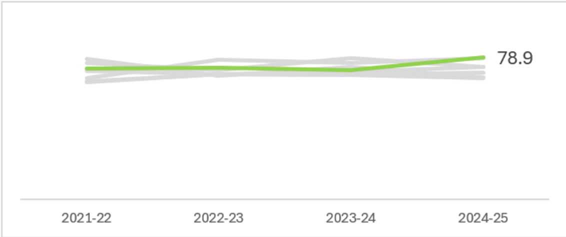
Percentage of school leavers known not to be in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)



Percentage employed (aged 16-64) - Male

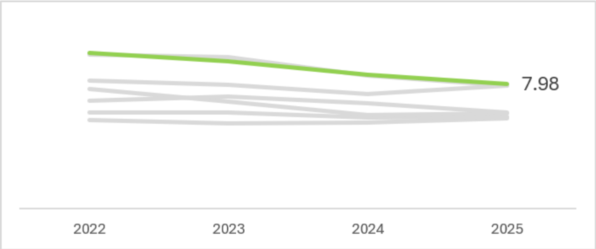


Percentage employed (aged 16-64) - Female

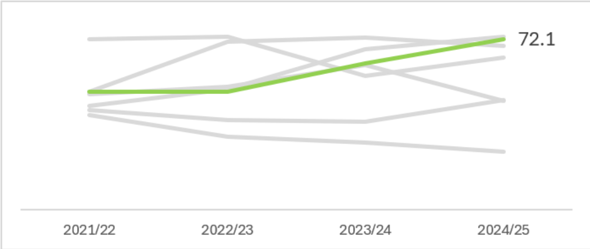


Objective: A Safe Place to Live

Ratio of median house prices compared to median workplace-based earnings

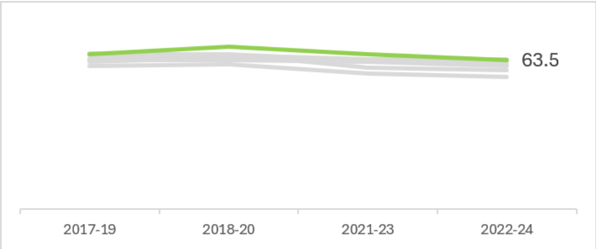


Percentage of households successfully prevented from becoming homeless

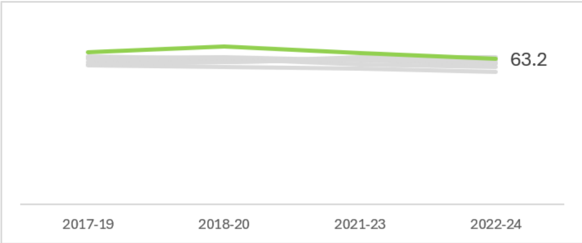


A Connected Place Where People Care

Healthy life expectancy (female)

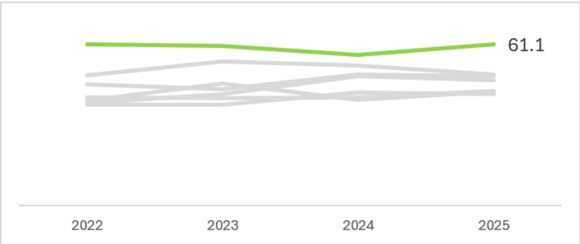


Healthy life expectancy (male)



A Learning Place

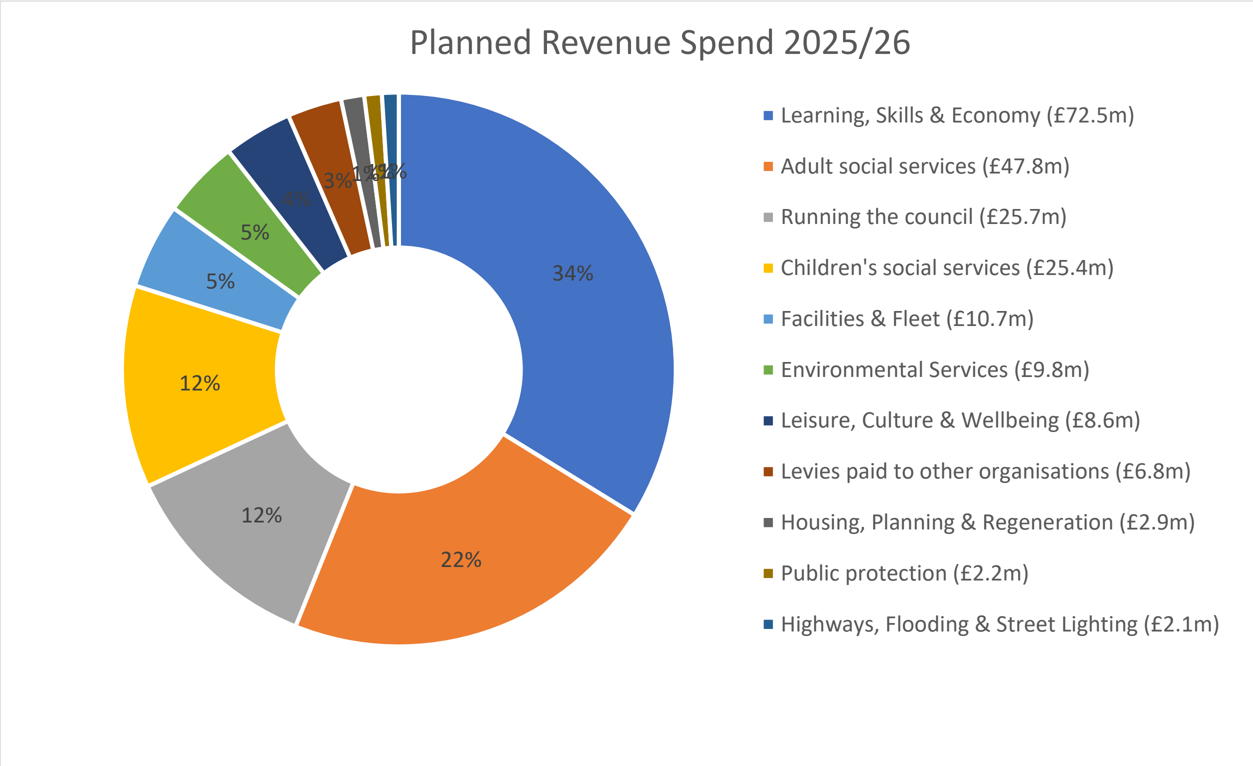
Percentage of adults qualified to level 4 or above of the National Qualification Framework



What we spent in 2025/26

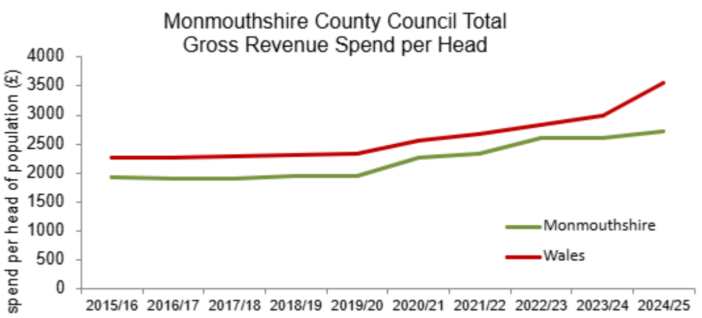
In 2025/26, the council's planned spend was £214.5 million to provide services for Monmouthshire residents.

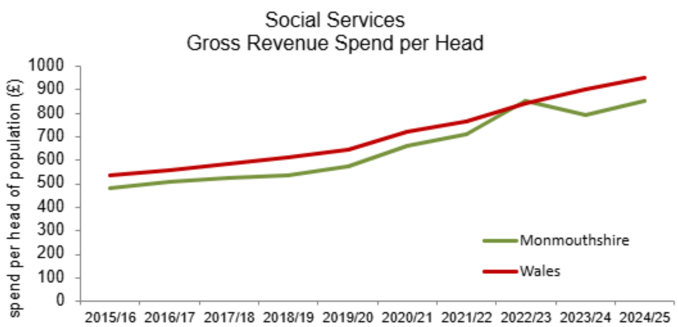
The proportion of our spending on different services in 2025/26 is shown in the diagram. These services are paid for by a combination of central government grants, council tax and non-domestic rates. Council tax is also used to fund the services of the Police and crime commissioner for Gwent and Community Councils.



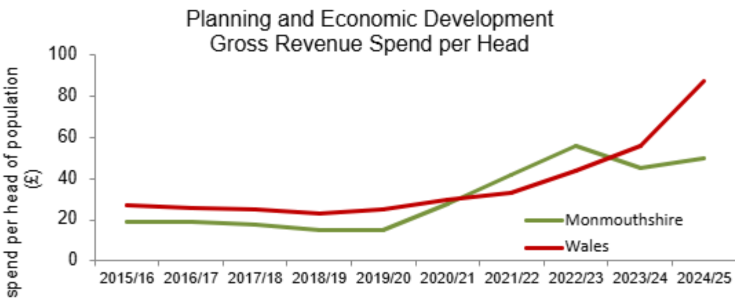
How our revenue spend compares with other areas

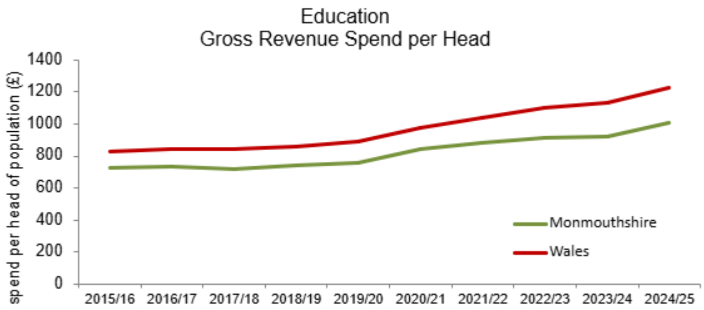
The graphs below show how much we spend per head of population in some of our priority areas. In 2024/25, the latest year comparative data is available, we had the lowest gross revenue spend per head of all councils in Wales. We spend less than the Wales average on education services, social services and planning and economic development. We have continued to work hard to make sure this money goes





where it matters. For 2024/25 we received an increase in core funding; however, our budget settlement from the Welsh Government was the lowest per head of population of councils in Wales.





What citizens said

Involvement and working together with residents and communities in Monmouthshire is essential to develop and deliver solutions to achieve outcomes and ensure residents are involved in the decisions that affect them.

Through our self-assessment we have used the views of service users and residents to inform our assessment. Some of the specific engagement exercises we have undertaken to involve citizens this year include:

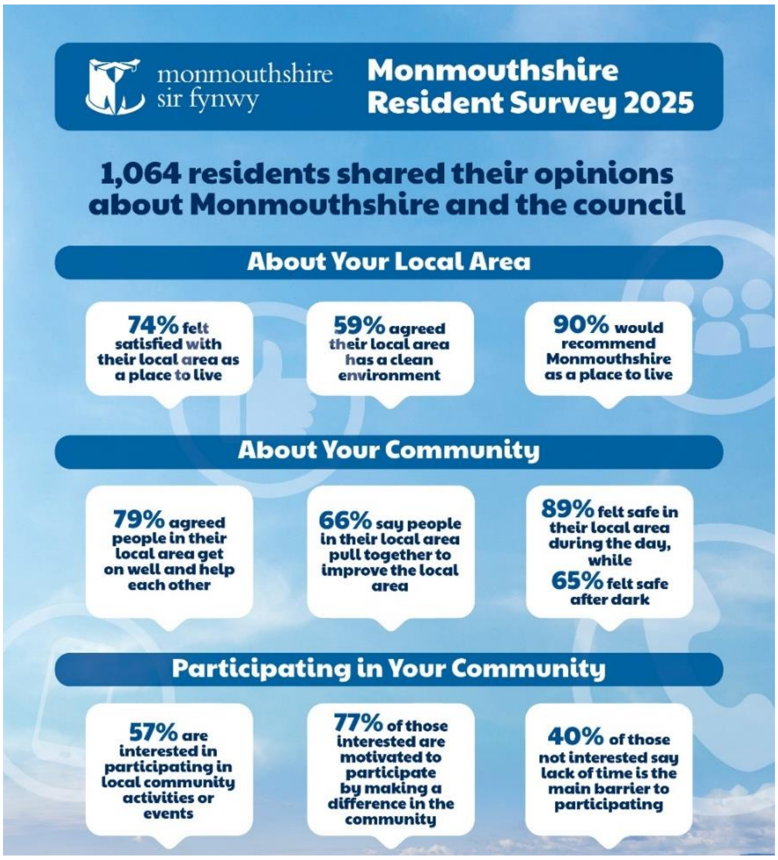
Budget engagement: Monmouthshire County Council launched its draft budget proposals for 2026-2027 in January 2026. Communities were invited to share their views on these possible changes in an open consultation process. A range of information on the proposals and their potential impacts was shared. Face-to-face budget consultation events took place, as well as online budget sessions. For those unable to join the livestream, the session was uploaded to the website to watch after the event. As part of the consultation process, residents were also asked to share their thoughts via a feedback survey on the budget proposals, which were shared across our social media platforms. The feedback received informed the development of our final budget proposals.

Cultural Strategy: We have worked in partnership with our creative sector to develop a Cultural Strategy for the county. This strategy sets out how we will work with creative groups, communities and individuals across the county to celebrate and champion our culture. Through the strategy we will work to create more opportunities and link with the economic sector to ensure the creative sector can thrive. We held a consultation of our draft strategy between October and December 2025 to ensure residents views were captured and considered in the development of the final strategy.

Customer Complaints and Compliments: We monitor and learn from feedback received from customers. These are reported to the Governance and Audit Committee. Issues included the length of time we can take to respond to people. Not only is it important to deal with complaints effectively, investigating and putting things right for the complainant where necessary, it is also vital to learn from them to minimise the chances of the same problem occurring twice. Nineteen complaints about Monmouthshire County Council were received by Public Service Ombudsman for Wales in 2024-25, the last year for which data is available, a decrease from twenty-nine during 2023-24. Monmouthshire is below the average levels of complaints reported to the Ombudsman at 0.30 per 1,000 residents. This ranges from 0.22 to 1.08 with an average of 0.45.

National Residents Survey: During the Autumn of 2025, we conducted a resident survey on everyday life in Monmouthshire. Hosted by Data Cymru, the survey was part of their National Residents Survey, designed to support local councils in increasing their understanding of performance and perception. Residents were asked about their experiences in the local area, their views on the council's services, and how we, as a council, can improve things. Thanks to the engagement from residents, we received 1,064 responses. We have analysed the survey results to understand what respondents said about their local area, the council and their interactions with the council. The evidence from the survey provides us with a fuller picture of how people feel in the county and the valuable feedback will help inform our services. The full results are available on https://www.letstalkmonmouthshire.co.uk/resident-survey-2025 . The survey is one mechanism to help us understand residents' views, alongside a range of feedback collected across services, which will provide a more detailed understanding of the council's services.

Respondents were asked questions about their local area, some of the key results are shown in the graphic below:



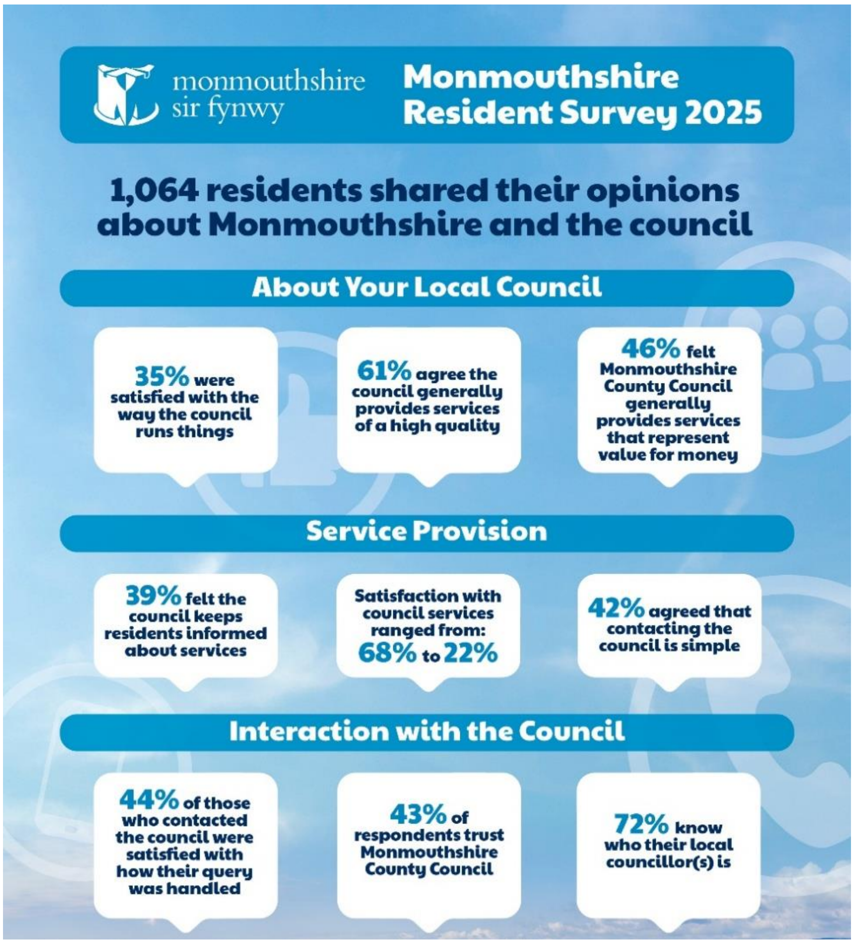
The responses show that residents continue to be satisfied with their local area as a place to live, assist each other in their communities and support their local place in Monmouthshire. We know this isn't always the case for everyone, and we remain focused on our objective in the council's Community and Corporate Plan to make Monmouthshire a Fair Place to live where the effects of inequality and poverty have been reduced.

Overall, a significant majority of respondents felt safe in the day, with most feeling safe at night, although fewer than in the day. Feelings of safety continued to vary by age and place. We are focused on delivering our objective for Monmouthshire to be a safe place to live where people have a home and community where they feel secure.

Younger respondents to the survey reported lower levels of satisfaction with Monmouthshire as a place to live. The council's Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) identifies this as one of its key issues, ensuring our communities are socially and economically sustainable by providing accessible places to live and work and a choice and range of homes to retain and attract younger people and rebalance our ageing demography. We have made progress with agreeing the plan, the RLDP was approved by council in October 2025 and will be sent to Welsh Government for public examination. The response rate to the survey was also lower in the younger age groups. We continue to focus on strengthening our engagement with young people.

Respondents also expressed an interest in participating in their local community. We recognise the vital role that residents play in their local community. We are committed to working with and alongside our communities, so citizens are able to participate in council and community decision-making and take actions which enable them to shape their own futures.

We asked questions about the council to understand people's views on local service delivery, interaction with the council and democratic representation. Key results about the council are shown below:



Overall, fewer than half of the respondents were satisfied with how the council operates, its communication methods, their access to information and the level of trust they felt toward the council.

The council's core values are Teamwork, Openness, Fairness, Flexibility, and Kindness. We are dedicated to upholding these values in the delivery of our services, and the survey responses highlight the importance of consistently reflecting these principles in all the council's activities.

We have launched 'Let's Talk Monmouthshire' as a platform for consultations and engagement. This aims to provide greater clarity of information for residents and a single place to visit for online consultations right across the council to ensure residents do not miss the opportunity to engage. Let's Talk Monmouthshire has also been created to ensure that in-person events are easily identified as opportunities for people to discuss and share opinions on council consultations and surveys.

More than half of respondents felt the council provides high-quality services overall. Satisfaction varied by services, from higher levels in waste management to lower levels in other service areas. Respondents reported generally higher satisfaction levels with their experience of specific council processes, such as making payments and requests.

The council's Community and Corporate Plan sets the objectives we are trying to achieve to deliver our outcomes for the county and improve services. We have a framework to review the performance of all our services. We continue to strengthen how we use residents and services users' views when assessing our performance. Service areas will use the responses from this survey to inform their planning and evaluate their performance against the objectives we have set in the plan.

Staff engagement

As part of our process to collate the self-assessment, we held directorate and enabling-service workshops to provide an opportunity for staff to directly feed into the self-assessment via identification of their own strengths and areas for development. Workshop attendees were presented with evidence packs, collated from existing information sources such as scrutiny reports, external regulator feedback, and service business plans, and were facilitated to self-assess their performance. A range of evidence was gathered from the workshops, both in terms of successes and areas for development associated with our strategic goals and our enabling functions, but also on how to strengthen the self-assessment process.

We have also used evidence gathered from a range of staff events and groups. These include the relaunched People Leaders Workshops and team Q&A sessions which are held face-to-face in peoples' workplaces. We also completed a new staff survey to enable us to understand how connected people feel to the organisation. The use of these sessions, networks, digital communication, surveys and feedback loops to senior managers, has extended the reach of contact with the workforce.

Businesses

We have continued to engage with businesses through our new customer relationship management system which acts as a database of Monmouthshire businesses and a tool to promote the advice and guidance services that we can provide to pre-starts and existing businesses. Our Economy, Employment and Skills team continue to improve our links with businesses and have helped to improve feedback loops with businesses to ensure we are capitalising on the conversations that are taking place and can improve our service as a result. We have re-established our Business Forum which is enabling us to expand our networks and strengthen relationships and feedback loops with local businesses. This feedback will continue to inform our self-assessment.

Trade Unions

We engage well with Trade Unions to achieve our outcomes. We have briefed them on the process we undertake to complete our self-assessment and shared our initial findings with them as part of our self-assessment process. We have developed a Social Partnership Duty Report 2025, setting out how we will build on existing practice, and work collaboratively with trade unions, in line with the requirements of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023.

What Regulators and Inspectors Said

We work closely with our regulators and inspectors to quality-assure our activities as this is vital to ensuring improvement. Their feedback is valued, and we use their assessments to help us focus on the things we need to improve across the council.

Each year, Audit Wales publishes an Audit Plan setting out the work they plan to undertake at the council. As part of the plan, they have undertaken a range of audits during the year. These included:

- Counter-fraud Arrangements: The report found that the council fosters an anti-fraud culture and is actively strengthening its approach to training, however recognises there are further steps that it can take. The council does not currently maximise its use of data analytics and could strengthen its intelligence sharing arrangements.
- Arrangements for commissioning services: The report found that the Council does not have consist arrangements in place across the organisation to secure value for money. Though individual services exhibit positive action, a whole authority approach is needed to ensure consistency.
- Implementing Audit Wales recommendations to improve the council's digital approach: The report found that the Council has made good progress in addressing the digital strategy recommendations and its longstanding arrangements support oversight of external audit recommendations. Audit Wales provided no recommendations for improvement.
- Assurance and Risk Assessment work in the council during 2025/26. This reviewed the arrangements the council has put in place to secure value for money in the use of its resources in line with the Auditor General's duties. The assessment is also used to inform our work planning for future years.

We have developed responses to the recommendations in these reports and the progress in delivering these is regularly reported to the council's Governance & Audit Committee. Reports produced by Audit Wales are available to download on their website (www.audit.wales/publications). This includes local government national reports.

We underwent an Estyn Inspection into Local Government Education Services in November 2025. The inspection highlighted a coherent and strategically led approach to improving outcomes for children and young people. The inspection recognised improvements made in the authority's approach to meeting additional learning needs and fostering an inclusive environment, paired with strong partnership working which allows barriers to improvement to be addressed promptly. It also identified areas requiring further development, including ensuring consistency in evaluation processes to evaluate the impact of local authority work more effectively and improving attendance in schools, particularly for secondary-age pupils. Progress in addressing the three recommendations will be monitored within the Children, Learning, Skills and Economy's Strategic Director Report. The full Estyn report, and other Estyn reports related to Monmouthshire and schools in the county, can be found on www.estyn.gov.wales.

Care Inspectorate Wales carried out an improvement check of Monmouthshire County Council's adult services in April 2025, following up on their Performance Evaluation Inspection (PEI) conducted in July 2022. The inspection assessed the progress made in addressing previously identified areas for improvement. The review found key strengths in our establishment of a place-based approach and implementation of the commissioning strategy, the improved availability of domiciliary care and development of reablement approaches reducing or mitigating the need for ongoing support. Areas requiring further development identified include the need for improvement in risk identification, staff engagement and communication and support for carers. We have developed a response to address the areas for improvement identified.

The full inspection report, and other inspection reports about Monmouthshire social services by Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), can be found on www.careinspectorate.wales.

Equality and Diversity

The council has a long-standing commitment to equality and diversity. Our fourth Strategic Equality Plan, produced under the Equality Act 2010 sets the council's objectives to ensure we deliver better outcomes for people with protected characteristics. This is clearly aligned with the evidence provided by the Well-being Assessment, and evidence provided by the Equality and Human Rights Commission's report "Is Wales Fairer 2023".

As well as this, it is important to us as it is the right thing to do. We produce annual monitoring reports that provide updates on progress on the action plan in the Strategic Equality Plan and evidence good practice being carried out across the council departments. These can be found here.

The Welsh Language

The Welsh language is central to the goals introduced as part of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, particularly for our contribution to a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. It also makes an important contribution to the Welsh Government goal of having a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, and accompanying Welsh Language standards, place a legal duty on councils to treat Welsh and English equally, to promote the Welsh Language and provide services to the public through the medium of Welsh. The are 176 standards that apply to the council. This is a significant challenge, but systems have been put in place to comply with these. We have a Welsh Language Strategy for 2022-2027, which identifies a vision of how the language will look in Monmouthshire in five years and is accompanied by targets to help achieve it. We produce annual monitoring reports that assesses our progress against our Welsh language commitments under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Welsh Language Standards. These can be found here.

Armed Forces

We have taken the Armed Forces Community Covenant pledge to encourage support for the Armed Forces community working and residing in Monmouthshire and to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of this Armed Forces community, particularly those who have given the most. This includes in-Service and ex-Service personnel, their families and widow(er)s throughout Monmouthshire. We are committed to working with charities, local businesses, communities and individuals to ensure service personnel and their families, as well as reservists and veterans, are supported.

We have established a Monmouthshire Armed Forces Group to ensure the needs of the Armed Forces Community are built into relevant policies, strategies and day-to-day service delivery in a consistent and practical way.

Appendix 1 – Self-assessment process

Legislation

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 provides the legislative framework for local government elections, democracy, governance and performance. The Act requires each council in Wales to keep under review the extent to which it is meeting the ‘performance requirements’, that is the extent to which it is exercising its functions effectively; it is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively; its governance is effective for securing these.

The performance and governance provisions in the Act are framed within the context of the well-being duty in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which sets out a legally binding common purpose for public bodies to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

Each year councils must publish a report setting out the conclusions of the self-assessment once every financial year. Self-assessment is complemented by a panel performance assessment once in an electoral cycle, providing an opportunity to seek external insights (other than from auditors, regulators or inspectors) on how the council is meeting the performance requirements.

Why?

Self-assessment is a way of evaluating, critically and honestly, the current position to make decisions on how to secure improvement for the future. It is about the council being self-aware, understanding whether it is delivering the right outcomes, and challenging itself to continuously improve. It needs to be embedded as effective self-assessment helps the council to continually learn and achieve sustainable improvement and better outcomes for citizens, service users and its own workforce.

The WLGA have identified draft principles for self-assessment for councils to ensure that they have arrangements in place that:

- demonstrate self-awareness derived from evidence-based analysis that focuses on outcomes;
- are owned and led at a strategic level and are not an exercise in compliance;
- further develop a culture of challenge to facilitate improvement as part of an ongoing process;
- are integrated as part of the council’s corporate planning, performance and governance processes; and
- enable an organisation-wide assessment rather than an assessment of individual services.

Further developing this culture and embedding an evaluative mindset will be a key development point through the continued production of the self- assessment report.

Process

The council has developed a process to undertake its self-assessment under the Act, assessing performance in the 2025/26 financial year. The main component parts of the process and timeline are:

April - May	May - June	June	July – August	September
Desk-based evidence gathering	Directorate self-assessment Workshops	Draft self-assessment report produced and objectives presented to Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Refinement of report and consultation with stakeholders through the Let’s Talk Forum	Draft report to Governance and Audit Committee and Self-assessment agreed in line with council process

This timeline ensures that the self-assessment can inform and be informed by the policy direction of the council and how it uses its resources efficiently and effectively, particularly the budget setting process.

Evaluative evidence to inform the assessment has been compiled at a directorate level. Most of the evidence has been collated by using intelligence already held corporately in an insightful way; this includes, for example, the Annual Governance Statement, audit and inspection reports, and service level business plans.

The evidence gathered has been explored further, and challenged where necessary, at directorate and enabling function based self-assessment workshops, to determine if the objectives (outcomes) of the council are being achieved.

Self-assessment workshops

Directorate workshops	**Enabling functions workshops**
Learning, Skills & Economy	People
Social Care & Health	Asset Management
Place	Finance
Infrastructure	Procurement
Customer, Culture & Well-being	Digital & Data

The workshops were facilitated through the following questions:

- How well are we achieving our agreed outcomes? (Community & Corporate Plan objectives)
- How do we know? (Evidence)
- How effectively are resources being used to deliver our priorities? (Enablers)
- How effectively does the council work with stakeholders and partners on agreed outcomes? (Partnership working)
- What could we do better? (Actions – including a review of actions from the previous report)

The full evidence and conclusions from workshops have been collated and will be used by directorates and enabling functions to inform their services business plans.

Following the workshops, the evidence has been reviewed, further challenged, and collated into a corporate level evaluative self-assessment. This has been integrated with the council's requirement to report on the progress it has made in meeting its well-being objectives for the preceding financial year (2025/26) under the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

The report is structured under these headings:

- Understanding our local place
- Outcomes (progress against our objectives):
  - How well are we achieving our agreed outcomes?
  - How do we know?
  - Areas for development
- Enabling functions
  - Corporate planning, performance and risk management
  - Financial planning
  - Workforce planning
  - Procurement
  - Assets
  - Digital & Data
  - Democracy & Scrutiny
- Our work with partners
- Our Actions (including progress against previous actions)

The self-assessment report will be scrutinised by the council's Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee. A draft of the self-assessment report will be made available to Governance and Audit Committee to review the draft report in line with the requirements of the legislation. The self-assessment will be presented for approval at a meeting of full Council.

Objective template explained **Appendix 2**

Evaluation Score: This provides our assessment of performance against the objective using the evaluation scoring mechanism	
Why we focused on this?	
Why we are focussing on this objective to improve well-being in Monmouthshire.	
How well are we achieving our agreed outcomes?	**How do we know?**
Row 1 - This sets 'What we want to achieve' from the Community & Corporate Plan 2022-28	
Column 1 - This provides the self-assessment of our performance during 2025/26 based on 'what we want to achieve'	Column 2 - The evidence sources we have used to inform our assessment.
Further areas for development identified through our 2025/26 self-assessment	
These are specific conclusions from the self-assessment that inform our action plan.	

Well-being of Future Generations Act impact				
This provides an explanation of how our activity contributes to the Well-being of Future Generations Act well-being goals and ways of working. It also identifies the council's well-being objective(s) that were set as part of the Community and Corporate Plan in April 2023.				
Measures of progress				
Measure	**Previous**	**Latest**	**Target for 2025/26**	**Comment**
This provides an update using the measurement framework of the Community and Corporate Plan.	Previous data is 24/25 unless otherwise stated	Latest data is 25/26 unless otherwise stated	This is the target we set for 25/26	Any further explanation on the performance measure

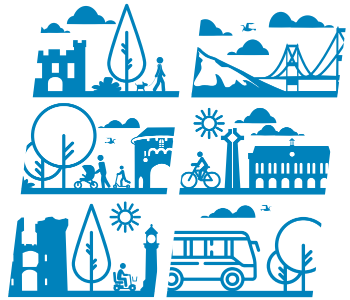
Monmouthshire County Council Self-Assessment Summary

2025-26

monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Self-Assessment 2025-26: Summary

We want to be a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life. We are committed to working with, and alongside, our communities to achieve this. This is the clear purpose established by our Community and Corporate Plan. Our annual self-assessment is a progress report and identifies where we need to make further improvements. Importantly it allows us to be held to account by elected councillors and local people.



Fair place

To live where the effects of inequality and poverty have been reduced

Our rating: 4 (Good)

We have:

- Expanded childcare provision. Flying start is now available at 41 sites and the proportion of eligible children accessing early education has increased from 82% to 92%.
- Rolled out provision of universal free school meals. All primary pupils can now have a free, freshly cooked lunch. Uptake is at 68.6%.
- Provided warm spaces in winter, emergency food aid and practical cost-of-living support benefiting hundreds of local people.

We are committed to strengthening the resilience of communities and increasing take-up of targeted support where inequality is greatest.

Thriving & ambitious place

Where there are vibrant town centres, where businesses can grow and develop

Our rating: 4 (Good)

We have:

- Worked with residents, businesses and town and community councils to develop targeted placemaking plans for town centres.
- Supported 120 people into employment and assisted in the creation of ten new businesses.
- Secured over £35 million of investment for local transport projects since 2022.

Maintaining our road network is costly and exceeds our available budgets. We are prioritising investment where it can make the biggest difference.

Connected place

Where people feel part of a community and are valued

Our rating: 5 (Very Good)

We have:

- Developed approaches that reduce peoples need for long-term care including reablement, assistive technology and investing in communities.
- Created more in-house placements for children looked-after and opened specialist residential provision locally, enabling more young people to remain in their communities.
- Reduced the amount of unmet domiciliary care need from 804 hours to 271 hours per month.

Demand for social care continues to increase and needs are becoming more complex. We focus on preventative approaches and building resilient communities.

Green place

To live and work, with reduced carbon emissions, and making a positive contribution to addressing the climate and nature emergency

Our rating: 4 (Good)

We have:

- Doubled the amount of our vehicles in our fleet from 8% to 16%. These burn less fossil fuel and improve local air quality.
- Residents recycled, re-used or composted 73.4% of household waste - one of the highest rates in the UK.
- Continued our commitment to locally produced, sustainable food. We improved or revived 220 allotment plots and served more than 200,000 portions of Welsh veg in our schools.

We recognise the scale of the challenge and are committed to working with, and alongside, residents and partners to both mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Safe place

To live where people have a home and community where they feel secure

Our rating: 4 (Good)

We have:

- Worked with partners to increase housing supply. Last year 102 families moved into a new, affordable home.
- Introduced a rapid rehousing approach. Last year 69.7% of households at risk were prevented from becoming homeless.
- Increased the availability of temporary accommodation and reduced our use of B&Bs by 93.5%.

We are committed to delivering a replacement Local Development Plan which will increase land supply for homes and jobs so more families can live and work locally.

Learning place

Where everybody has the opportunity to reach their potential

Our rating: 5 (Very Good)

We have:

- Improved school attendance which fell in the years following the pandemic. Primary attendance is now at 93.9%. Secondary attendance 89.5%
- Modernised our school estate. The new net zero King Henry VIII school in Abergavenny opened in 2025.
- Create a more consistent, inclusive and equitable approach for learners with additional learning needs.

We will ensure all learners, particularly those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, receive the right support at the right time.

How well do we understand our local context and place?

Monmouthshire is a great place to live, work and visit. We have made a clear commitment to work with and alongside communities, empowering people to support each other and come up with long-term solutions. We have launched the Let's Talk Monmouthshire website and have over 1,000 residents and organisations signed up to make it easier for people to have conversations about the policies and changes that affect them. We have also established a Let's Talk forum for people who are passionate about the county and want to represent their communities in more in-depth conversations. In Autumn 2025, over 1,000 people completed our residents survey for the second year. This further helped increase our understanding of peoples' perceptions of their local council and the place they live

We have also engaged residents, businesses and town and community councils in the production of partnership placemaking plans to improve Monmouthshire's town centres. The placemaking process has strengthened partnership working and created a shared understanding of local challenges and opportunities.

How well are we achieving our agreed outcomes?

We have assessed progress against our objectives using a six-point scale. This scores each objective from 1 (unsatisfactory) through to 6 (excellent). After the local elections in May 2022, we took time to understand what matters to people and put the foundations in place for improvement. This included new strategies for the climate, the economy and food. We have been delivering these strategies, and our assessment evaluates the impact they have made so far over the last three years.

Many of the things we are committed to, such as improving the health of the Wye and Usk rivers, achieving net zero and tackling inequality are complex challenges that will not be solved quickly. This assessment shows a positive trajectory of improvement. The arrows next to each of the objectives below indicate the change in assessment over the last year while the colours correlate with the scores.

A fair place to live

Our rating: 4 (Good)

We have focused on improving life chances, reducing the effects of poverty and disadvantage and ensuring residents can access support, improve their health and help shape the future of their communities.

We have expanded childcare provision, increased the number of eligible children accessing early education from 82% to 97% since 2022/23, and continued to focus Flying Start where need is greatest.

We have gone beyond our statutory duty by providing both a free breakfast and a freshly cooked lunch to all primary pupils who choose to receive them. Uptake of universal free school meals has increased from 64% in 2022/23 to 68.6% in 2025/26, although this still varies between areas and requires further targeted work.

We have also continued to provide practical support to those who need it most through targeted initiatives such as Food and Fun, free or subsidised play provision, warm spaces, emergency food aid and practical cost-of-living support in communities across the county.

We have made good progress in improving access to services and opportunities that support health, participation and inclusion. We have committed to becoming a Marmot region, increased the number of people completing the National Exercise Referral Scheme, developed our Cultural Strategy and opened the Magor and Undy Community Hub.

We have strengthened local volunteering and community capacity through the Be Community programme, launched Let’s Talk Monmouthshire to improve engagement, achieved Disability Confident Employer Level 2 status and became the first accredited Council of Sanctuary in Wales.

There are some areas we have identified for improvement. We need to ensure our interventions are clearly communicated, better targeted and more consistently evaluated. We need to increase take-up of support where inequality is greatest and continue to work with communities to develop a shared understanding of community resilience.

Green place

To live and work, with reduced carbon emissions, and making a positive contribution to addressing the climate and nature emergency

A green place to live

Our rating: 4 (Good)

Monmouthshire's natural environment is central to our quality of life, local identity and visitor economy. We need to protect and conserve the county's outstanding landscapes, improve biodiversity and river health, reduce carbon emissions and strengthen resilience to climate change. These are complex, long-term challenges and the full impact of our actions will take time, but it is vital that we continue to act now to safeguard the environment for current and future generations.

Generally, residents views of Monmouthshire as a green place to live are positive. Fifty-nine percent of residents said their local area has a clean environment, 65% said local air quality is good and 75% said there are enough green spaces in their area.

We have refreshed our Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy and translated it into clearer action plans. We have completed costed decarbonisation surveys across our estate and reduced estate emissions by 17.8% from the 2019/20 baseline. We have continued to invest in low carbon technologies, renewable energy and ultra-low emission vehicles. We have also maintained strong recycling performance, with 71.3% of municipal waste sent for recycling, reuse or composting, exceeding the statutory target, and independent assessment shows our work on waste reduction and food to be particularly strong.

Our evidence shows that the scale of the challenge to meet our decarbonisation ambitions remains significant. This is a similar picture across the UK. Overall emissions increased between 2022/23 and 2024/25, largely due to procurement and construction activity, and our current rate of reduction is not sufficient to reach net zero by 2030 without substantial further investment. We have made important progress and are building the evidence, plans and partnerships needed for the next stage, but the path to net zero remains extremely challenging.

We have made good progress in supporting nature recovery, improving environmental resilience and strengthening local food systems. We have enhanced 47 hectares of public land for biodiversity, delivered 13 green infrastructure projects, supported 25 nature recovery projects and continued to work through catchment and nature partnerships to improve habitats and river health. We have developed action plans for biodiversity, nature recovery, rivers and flood risk, and have continued to support communities through nature-based projects and local green space activity.

We have developed a Local Food Strategy and made practical progress on sustainable food. We have improved or revived over 220 allotment plots and more than 200,000 portions of Welsh organic vegetables have been supplied to pupils through the Welsh Veg in Schools scheme.

We recognise river health remains a major concern and some resident perceptions of the local environment are lower. We also recognise the scale of the challenge to reduce our carbon emissions and resources required to deliver the pace of change required.

A thriving and ambitious place

Our rating: 4 (Good)

Monmouthshire should be a place where people, businesses and communities can thrive. Monmouthshire starts from a comparatively strong economic position, with high employment and qualification levels, however this is not experienced equally by everyone or in every place. We therefore need to build on these strengths in a way that is inclusive, sustainable and rooted in the needs of our towns and communities.

We have made good progress putting in place the strategies, partnerships and investment needed to deliver this objective. We have worked with residents, businesses and town and community councils to develop placemaking plans for our towns, creating a clearer shared understanding of local priorities and a basis for targeted regeneration activity. We have strengthened the strategic framework for promoting the county through our Destination Management Plan and linked this with wider work such as the Cultural Strategy.

We have also continued to use Welsh Government and UK Government funding to improve town-centre buildings, public-facing assets and the visitor offer. This is helping to increase footfall, support local trade and make our towns more attractive places to live, work and visit.

We are building on Monmouthshire's strong skills and employment base while responding to areas where more targeted action is needed. We have continued to support residents to move into work, gain qualifications and develop businesses. During the year, council-supported programmes helped 120 people into employment, while 90 pre-start and existing businesses were supported and 10 new businesses were created.

We have also made strong progress supporting young people at risk of becoming disengaged from education, employment or training, with 44 NEET young people supported into employment. The proportion of school leavers who are NEET remains above where we want it to be. We know that retaining young people in the county remains a challenge. We have ensured our Deposit Replacement Local Development Plan is focussed on addressing these challenges. We have secured funding to develop a new Monmouthshire Skills Centre which will also help support post-16 pathways for learning.

Transport and infrastructure remain critical enablers of this objective. We have adopted a new Local Transport Strategy, strengthened regional transport planning, established an infrastructure project team and secured significant external funding for transport and active travel schemes. Since 2022, we have secured £35 million to implement transport projects. We have also secured more than £24 million for active travel, with more than 100 active travel routes now in place and usage of routes increasing by 4.1%. We have also improved the frequency of buses in some areas and continue to support major regional rail and road proposals that would improve connectivity.

We continue to face significant challenges in maintaining our highways network, with further deterioration in the condition of roads last winter and the maintenance backlog remaining beyond available resources. We have taken a planned approach to prioritising investment, responding to urgent need and reviewing how pothole repairs are delivered and communicated. The funding gap remains substantial and continues to limit the pace at which overall road condition can improve.

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Safe place

To live where people have a home and community where they feel secure

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Our rating: 4 (Good)

A safe place to live

Monmouthshire should be a place where everyone has access to a safe, secure and affordable home and feels part of a community where they are respected and protected. This matters because having a stable home is fundamental to health, well-being and life chances, while safe and cohesive communities help people to feel connected, supported and able to thrive.

We have made progress in increasing the supply of affordable homes and putting in place the longer-term framework needed to improve the supply and affordability of housing. Our Replacement Local Development Plan has been developed with affordability and net zero housing standards at its core and includes a strong policy ambition. During the year, 102 additional affordable homes were delivered, and the number of affordable homes granted planning permission increased to 66. This shows positive progress, however we recognise the gap between current delivery and the level of need in the county which the development plan aims to address.

We have made strong progress in reducing the use of temporary accommodation and improving homelessness prevention. By applying a Rapid Rehousing approach, increasing prevention capacity and remodelling our housing support services, we have increased the proportion of homelessness applications successfully prevented from becoming homeless
to 69.7%

We have worked with social landlords, private landlords and through property acquisition and repurposing to expand the availability of temporary accommodation. This has contributed to a 93.5% reduction in the use of bed and breakfast accommodation since 2022/23 and no families or 16- and 17-year-olds currently placed in bed and breakfast. However, homelessness demand remains high, the number of households in temporary accommodation remains significant, and the average time people spend waiting for settled accommodation has increased substantially, showing that permanent housing supply remains a critical pressure.

We have continued to support a more energy efficient housing stock and safer communities. Through schemes such as Eco4, Solar Together and Nest, we are helping residents, particularly lower-income households and those affected by cold and damp homes, to improve energy efficiency and reduce costs. We have also worked with partners to respond to community safety concerns, including work with young people on knife crime and anti-social behaviour.

Most residents continue to feel safe in their local area, Eighty-nine percent of residents taking part in our annual resident's survey told us that they feel safe during the day. Although concerns about anti-social behaviour remain and resident confidence after dark is lower, at 65%. We will maintain a strong focus on prevention, partnership working and targeted reassurance in communities where concern is greatest.

A connected place where people care

Our rating: 5 (Very Good)

Monmouthshire should be a place where people's contributions are valued, they feel part of a community, and they can access care and support that helps them live well on their own terms. The quality, availability and resilience of care and support are critical to peoples' well-being now and in the future.

We are delivering care and support while also building the preventative and community-based approaches needed for the future. Demand for social care services continues to increase and needs are becoming more complex, particularly as more residents require support later in life and with higher levels of need. This creates an ongoing risk to our ability to meet people's needs as quickly and consistently as we would want and brings significant financial pressures.

We have continued to respond to this through innovation, partnership working and the development of more preventative models of support, including reablement, assistive technology, early help, community-based well-being support and stronger pathways that help people remain independent for longer. Although pressures remain significant, we have made progress across children's services, adult care, well-being and workforce development to deliver our objective.

In children's services, we have strengthened early help and family support, and we have achieved greater stability in the number of children looked after. We have also made good progress in developing more in-county placements for children and young people, improving the ability to keep them close to their communities and support networks. We have strengthened the foster carer offer and contributed to a more cohesive fostering community. Recruiting and retaining foster carers remains challenging, reflecting similar pressures seen across Wales and the wider UK.

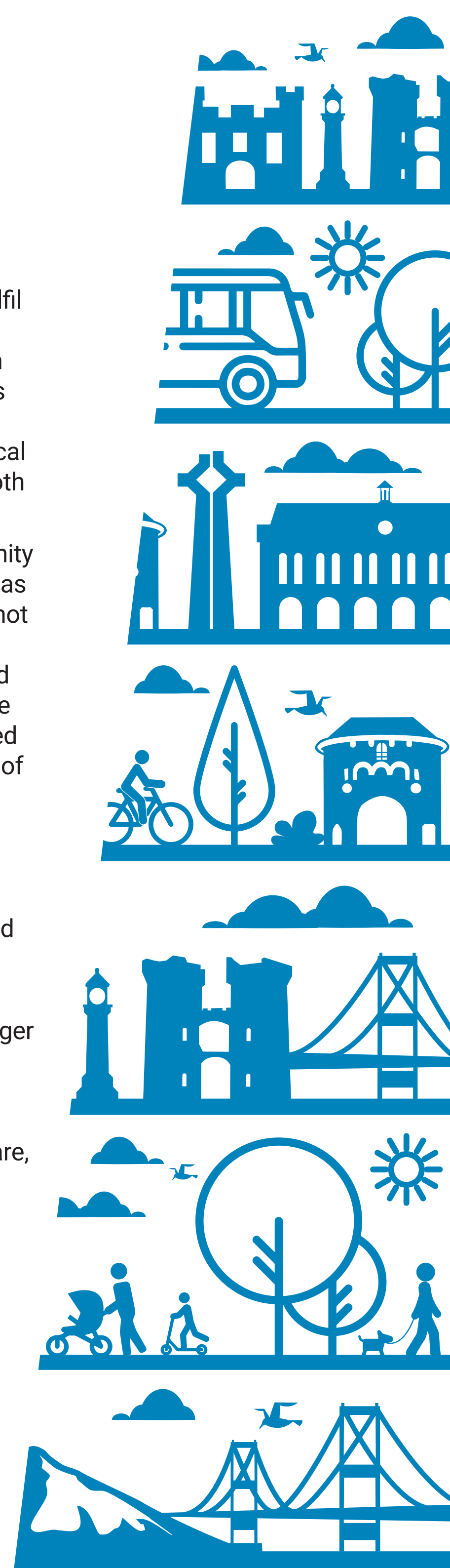
We have made progress in developing and adapting services and increasing provision in response to rising demand for adult social care. We have also increased the focus and capacity of preventative services. We have increased reablement activity with over half of packages mitigating the need for further support.

We have strengthened commissioned domiciliary care and reduced unmet care hours substantially, from 804 hours a month in March 2023 to around 271 hours a month over the last year, meaning we are now able to fulfil more domiciliary care need. Feedback from adult social care service users shows slightly lower satisfaction with care and support than previous years, with 83% of adults reporting they were happy. We have also opened Severn View Park, a new specialist care home that increases local capacity for people living with dementia and provides both long-term, reablement and respite care.

We are also strengthening wider well-being and community support. We have developed strategic approaches such as the Living Well Strategy and our work to become a Marmot Region, helping to focus action on prevention, resilience and the wider determinants of health. We have expanded assistive technology, which is helping more residents live safely and independently at home, and we have increased the delivery of housing adaptations that improve quality of life and confidence.

We have supported young people's mental health through youth service programmes, with all participants in the Emotional Logic programme reporting improved emotional well-being, and we have significantly expanded participation in nature-based health and well-being projects.

We continue to recognise and support carers, with stronger information, signposting and practical support. We are aiming to reduce waiting times for carers assessments. We have developed our social care workforce through recruitment, retention and new models such as micro-care, which has grown from eight carers in 2022 to 59 carers, between them delivering over 900 hours of support each week.



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Learning place

Where everybody has the opportunity to reach their potential

A learning place

Our rating: 5 (Very Good)

Monmouthshire should be a place where every child, young person and adult can learn, develop skills and achieve their potential. A strong start in life helps children and young people build confidence, resilience and ambition, while lifelong learning enables residents to adapt, retrain and contribute throughout adulthood. This means we must ensure all learners, particularly those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, receive the right support at the right time.

We have strengthened the systems, strategies and provision needed to meet increasing learner needs. We have updated key policies and guidance and strengthened multi-agency support for vulnerable pupils. Primary attendance is close to pre-pandemic levels, at 93.9%. Secondary attendance has also improved, at 89.5%, although it is still below pre-pandemic levels. Attendance of pupils eligible for free school meals remains a challenge, especially in secondary schools.

We have responded to increasing complexity and behaviours that challenge by reshaping inclusion services, improving data, establishing an inclusion panel and working with schools to use managed moves, additional learning provision and other support to avoid escalation. Fixed-term exclusions remain high and continue to place pressure on schools and specialist provision. However, all permanent exclusions issued during the last year were rescinded through stronger multi-agency work and alternative support arrangements.

Teaching, learning and curriculum development remain strong overall. Learners in secondary schools continue to achieve their expected results. Estyn inspections demonstrate that many schools are developing broad, balanced and purposeful curricula that reflect their context and meet pupils' needs. Variation remains, particularly for lower-attaining pupils and disadvantaged learners, so our support and challenge will continue to focus on where improvement is most needed.

We have strengthened inclusive education helping to create a more consistent and equitable approach for learners with additional learning needs and other barriers to learning. We are reducing reliance on out-of-county provision by expanding local specialist provision, including a Social, Emotional and Mental Health Specialist Resource Base, and by developing additional provision within schools. Demand for additional learning needs support is increasing, and schools face ongoing financial and capacity pressures.

We have also increased opportunities for learners and residents. The Inspire programme supported 285 young people to gain an additional qualification or life skill during the year. Estyn recognised the Youth Service for supporting young people's confidence, resilience and life skills, and young people were able to express their views through the Make Your Mark ballot and youth conference. Adult and community learning has become more accessible through subsidised courses and partnership work with Coleg Gwent, with 963 enrolments during the year.

We have made progress in school modernisation and Welsh-medium education. The new King Henry VIII all-through school in Abergavenny, provides modern, inclusive net zero learning facilities for pupils aged 3 to 19, including specialist accommodation for pupils with complex neurodevelopmental and learning needs. We have also improved and remodelled pupil referral service accommodation in south Monmouthshire, completed the new Trellech nursery building, opened Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy and secured a new site for Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni.

How effectively are resources being used to deliver our priorities?

Over the past year we have developed enabling strategies to ensure we align all of our resources to deliver the priorities set out in the Community and Corporate Plan. We have evaluated these and concluded that we have sound arrangements in place to enable and support service delivery.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act defines the core set of activities that are common to the corporate governance of public bodies. We have assessed each of these using our evaluation framework:

Corporate planning, performance and risk management. We assessed this as **level 4 (Good).** Unchanged from last year

Financial planning. We assessed this as **level 4 (Good).** Unchanged from last year

Workforce planning (people). We assessed this as **level 4 (Good).** Unchanged from last year

Procurement. We assessed this as **level 3 (Adequate).** Unchanged from last year

Assets. We assessed this as **level 5 (Very Good).** Unchanged from last year

Digital and data. We assessed this as **level 3 (Adequate).** Unchanged from last year

Democracy and scrutiny. We assessed this as **level 4 (Good).** Unchanged from last year

Further detail on these is available as part of the full evaluation available at: **www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/improvement**.

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How effectively does the council work with stakeholders and partners on agreed outcomes?

Working in partnership is one of the ways we can achieve our objectives while delivering value for money. Key partners include Welsh Government, the Cardiff Capital Region and the Gwent Public Services Board. Our recent peer Panel Performance Assessment recognised Monmouthshire's strong social capital and outward-facing partnership culture. The assessment encouraged us to channel these strengths and recommended we develop a shared understanding of community resilience in the Monmouthshire context.

Areas for Development

As a result of the self-assessment, we have identified a number of areas for development. These include:

- Work with communities and stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of community resilience.
- Consolidate existing and prioritise future projects to deliver better outcomes through our change programme For Purpose on Purpose
- Strengthen workforce and succession planning

Measuring Progress

We use a wide range of performance measures to evaluate our progress against our priorities. These are found throughout the assessment. We also track progress against a range of outcome measures at population level. Key measures are presented regularly to Cabinet and the Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee so that we can actively manage performance and adjust delivery where we are falling short of our expectations.

What do you think?

We have used some of the feedback we have received from other organisations to shape this report and would be delighted to hear your views to help us inform future assessments. Please get in touch: **improvement@monmouthshire.gov.uk**

monmouthshire
sir fynwy

SUBJECT:	**MAINTENANCE OF HIGHWAYS – MOTION TO REVIEW POTHOLE REPAIR TECHNIQUES**
MEETING:	**FULL COUNCIL**
DATE:	**24th SEPTEMBER 2026**
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	**ALL**

1. PURPOSE:

1.1 To report back to Council on the work undertaken to address the highways reactive maintenance motion agreed by Council on 5th March 2026. The motion called for a review of alternative methods of road repairs; a full cost analysis; action plan and production of performance data.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 To agree to allocate resources to fund the creation of two additional highways inspector posts.

2.2 To consider the allocation of additional revenue funding through the 27/28 budget setting cycle, to secure the long-term position of the two additional pothole teams.

2.3 To agree the adoption of the Bobcat Skid Steer as the preferred delivery mechanism for planned maintenance.

2.4 To agree the acquisition of a Bobcat Skid Steer.

2.5 To agree the reporting and communication methodology as set out in the report.

2.6 To agree to direct all reporting of potholes and other highways issues through My Council Services (My Monmouthshire) to improve data collection and reporting capability.

2.7 To undertake a review of reactive highways maintenance in 24 months to assess the effectiveness of the agreed changes implemented following this review.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 To ensure cross-party engagement in responding to the issues raised in the motion, a cross-party member reference group was established to consider the existing practice and alternative equipment and methodology that could be deployed.

3.2 Work had previously been initiated to consider how to improve communications and the availability of information for members and the public alike, however, to accelerate this work to coincide with the motion response, a cross-directorate officer working group was implemented to consider the following work packages:

- Service delivery model
- Digital solutions
- Data and performance indicators
- Communications

3.3 The combined outputs of the member and officer working groups have enabled the development of a comprehensive suite of improvements including reporting and communication methods, the proposed implementation of an end-to-end digital process for the reporting and resolution of potholes; improved data collection and therefore performance reporting and improved outcomes for highways users. A summary of the workstreams and their outputs is provided below, and further details can be found in the accompanying appendices.

Context

3.4 During 2025/26, 4,300 service requests were received by Highways Operations, which was an increase of 46% on the previous year. The cost of making safe through a combination of cold lay and hot poling works was £494,000, broken down as follows:

	£000s
Labour – 4 operatives	200
Material – Hot Lay (1,356t)	136
Material – Cold Lay (452t)	51
Plant & Machinery	89
Disposal & other sundries	18
Total	**494**

3.5 Reactive pothole repairs are undertaken through either cold lay deferred set material that is stored at the highways depots for reactive make safe work or hot tarmac material for “hot Potholing” that is collected from the dispatching plant daily and is therefore more planned in its delivery. These repairs are intended to make the highway safe until such time a planned intervention of patching, surface dressing or re-surfacing is undertaken. Patching is different from the cold and hot fill methods as it is used in a planned way to provide a permanent repair on a road that has structurally failed and needs partial replacement. Further information on existing methods can be found in Appendix 2.

Workstream 1: Alternative Technologies

3.6 Trials were established to test alternative equipment within a Monmouthshire context. The member reference group were invited to see the technology in action and officers have continued to assess the durability of the different methods to determine their effectiveness.

Reactive cold fill methods

3.7 The trials considered the opportunity to improve the existing cold fill material which is deployed to fill potholes which are considered to pose a risk to safety and therefore require an immediate response. The existing practice is for crews to use tarmac which is hand filled and tampered down. This can lead to the solution standing proud and is prone to degradation in highly trafficked areas or poor weather conditions.

3.8 To improve the resilience of this method we have been trialling Viafix as a substitute for reactive repairs. The cost of the fill material is four times the cost of tarmac, however the product is water activated and self-compacting which makes it a more resilient product in winter and wet weather conditions.

3.9 As the Viafix method results in improved durability, creates a smoother surface and reduces the need for repeat visits, it is proposed that the existing cold fill method continues to be deployed during the summer months and the Viafix solution is deployed during the winter months. The cost per m^2 is approximately £50 - £80 laid.

Cost comparison over a 16-week period

	Viafix Cold Lay	Tarmac	Variance	
Price Per Ton	450	105	345	Viafix is delivered to site whereas we need to collect tarmac from dispatch plant. We will see a saving in travelling time.
Est Number of tonnes used (over 16 week winter period)	160	160	-	
Total Cost	**72,000**	**16,800**	**55,200**	

Hot Fill Alternative Technology Trials

3.9 A number of trials were arranged which included spray injection patching, elestomac sealing and mobile planning. Further information on the trials is available in Appendix 3. In summary, the spray injection system worked well in rural locations, can address all defect sizes, achieves a 65% reduction in carbon emissions compared to standard patching and produces a good finish. However, the method is not suitable for high stress locations and is restricted by weather conditions.

3.10 The elestomac sealing solution seals the surface of filled potholes, providing a smooth finish and extending the life of reinstatements. As it uses recycled material it has a lower environmental impact. It is not proposed that this method is taken forward as the solution is weather dependent, does not fill potholes and material costs are high.

3.11 The planing method[1] was trialled using the JCB Pothole Pro and the smaller Bobcat Skid Steer. The planing equipment prepares the pothole for filling by cutting, cropping and cleaning the void. The reinstatement is undertaken by hand with following crews. This solution was the most effective trial achieving high output; however, this is constrained by the resource capacity of the crews filling the holes and the cost of the fill. The solution is

[1] Planing involves removing the defective road surface and then clearing the debris from the hole so that it can be filled.

not suitable for reactive responses as the work must be planned to ensure that there are adequate resources to complete the works and any necessary traffic management is in place. Both the Pothole Pro and the Skid Steer have additional attachments that improves the utilisation of the equipment. The Pothole Pro has a higher capital cost than the Skid Steer and needs to be driven to site, the Skid Steer is compact, more affordable and can be trailered to site. Given the rural nature of the County, the Skid Steer is the preferred technology from an operational perspective. A comparison of the costs is provided in the table below.

3.12 The Highways Service has rightly been challenged about the recommendation to only purchase one Skid Steer. Resources are currently being deployed to deal with the existing backlog of reported potholes using the cold fill method. Whilst we are keen to transition to a more planned approach using the Skid Steer, the current backlog needs to be resolved first, and the cold fill approach is the quickest method of achieving that. This position will be reviewed early in the new financial year and if the position has stabilised, and the Skid Steer has been as effective as we expect, a further a Skid Steer will be acquired.

3.13 Following a consideration of the trials, the recommendation is;

- That Highways Operations continue to make safe high-priority defects on a reactive basis using a combination of hot and cold lay materials.
- Viafix will be the preferred fill method in wet and cold conditions due to its durability and longevity.
- Permanent, planned reinstatements are undertaken using the Bobcat Skid Steer with planer attachment.

	Bobcat £000's	**Pothole Pro** £000's	**Variance** £000's	**Notes**
Up-front Cost	60	215	**155**	
Annual Running Costs				
Annual Borrowing Cost (over 10 years)	6.5	23	**16.5**	
Operatives	200	250	**50**	Bobcat requires 4 operatives, Pothole Pro requires 5 operatives
Material 5t per day for 226 days	113	113	**0**	
2 vehicles (hot box and flat bed)	40	40	**0**	
TM and Plant	30	35	**5**	
Disposal	35	35	**0**	
Fuel	12	15	**3**	
Total	**436.5**	**511**	**74.5**	

Workstream 2 - Digital

3.14 This workstream has considered the existing end to end operating model and the opportunities to improve it through digitisation and the My Council Services reporting module. A review of the current operating model identified that reports generated through My Monmouthshire were being referred directly to Highways Operations without any categorisation or review due to a lack of Inspector capacity. At the point that the reports were transferred to Highways Operations the digital process ceased and job sheets and reporting back on progress and completion of the job was undertaken using hard copies. This is in part due to the lack of a consistent software solution between Highways Asset Management and Operations which prevents the sharing of electronic data and activities. The consequence of this is that works were undertaken based on the allocation of duties to teams rather than a prioritised basis and reporting back through My Monmouthshire was inconsistent and inaccurate as it relied on the supervisor returning to the depot to update the system. This was not always consistently undertaken resulting in delays in reporting and the failure to close jobs.

3.15 To address this and improve communication flows, six tablets have been acquired to digitise the Highways Operations process. Supervisors are using this to report on progress of My Council Services reports and take photographs of completed works whilst on site. With the support of SRS, the Causeway software has been acquired which will be rolled out over the autumn and will be the common platform for Highways teams. As well as improved reporting and communications it will also result in improved data, which will be used to populate new performance indicators.

3.16 The digital team also considered the existing reporting format for pothole reporting through My Council Services. The review identified that data quality was poor as there was limited opportunity to identify the precise location of the pothole, the underlying GIS solution was not consistently attributing pothole reports to the correct location, there was no mechanism to identify repeat reports and the form did not allow for the collection of all the information required by Highways Operations.

3.17 Colleagues from Infrastructure, SRS, Policy & Performance, Communications and Data have developed a new form and improved the functionality of the application through the acquisition of What Three Words and parish and ward data capabilities. This is currently being trialled and when the final amendments have been completed will be rolled out, alongside a how-to video produced by the Communications team. Improved functionality includes the ability for members of the public to reference a pot hole through What Three Words, placing a pin on a map or adding an address, they can also upload photographs and are made aware if the pot hole has already been reported. If the latter applies, they can elect to be notified of progress without placing a duplicate report.

3.18 The end-to-end flow of data has been reviewed and documented to ensure that information captured through pothole reports from initial customer submission meets what is required to support both the operational response, preventative maintenance planning and performance reporting.

Workstream 3 – Data & Performance Indicators

3.19 The changes that we are implementing to improve the collection, and reporting mechanism will improve the integrity of the data and enable us to generate performance statistics with a higher confidence level. The proposed indicators are as follows:

How Much

- Number of pothole reports received
- Number of potholes
- Number of potholes repaired

How Well

- Percentage of potholes repaired in target time

What difference has this made

- Percentage of roads in good, average and poor condition

Highway Maintenance

- Total spend on highways maintenance programme
- The length of road repaired through highways maintenance programme
- The number of potholes repaired through highways maintenance programme
- The number of potholes prevented through highways maintenance programme

3.20 Not all of the proposed indicators will be available immediately but will be rolled out in 27/28 following the implementation of Causeway.

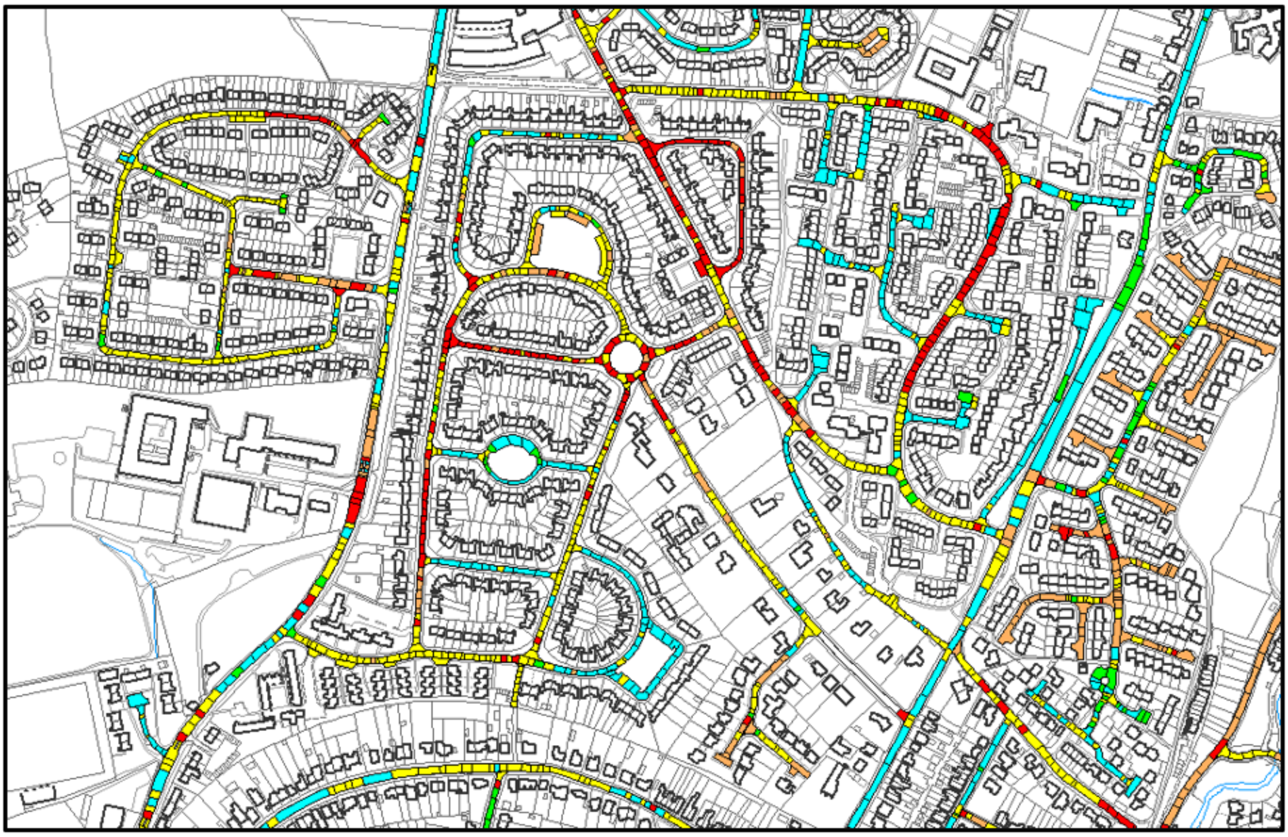
3.21 In addition to the above we are intending to increase the availability of highways data. The annual (plus 2nd year indicative) forward work programme will be advertised on the website and whilst this does not achieve the expectation of programming all requests it will give members and residents a transparent view of the priorities identified for the next 24 months.

3.22 The list of schemes would be published at start of the financial year with a caveat that the programme is fluid and subject to change due to factors such as funding constraints, third party highway works, and the introduction of unplanned urgent works.

3.23 We periodically commission a large-scale condition survey of our highways network, known as a GAIST survey. This provides us with a baseline dataset of the condition of our highway at the point in time the survey is completed using Red, Amber and Green categories. This dataset contributes to our highway maintenance planning. It is used alongside a range of other factors such as road classification, level of traffic and services accessed via the road etc to prioritise planned investment. We are exploring the potential of making the more detailed findings of the survey available to members through our mapping tools.

3.24 We will use the survey as base data and produce an annual update to assess the improvement in the highway condition as a result of investment in the network. This will be reported to residents through the network condition performance indicators percentage of roads in good, average and poor condition. Whilst capital investment will result in improvements to the network where they are undertaken, roads and footways where no improvements have been undertaken will not remain static and their condition will continue to deteriorate. Funding dependant, we will repeat the full survey every few years to understand condition changes across the whole network.

Extract of the GAIST Condition Data



3.25 This information will provide members and public alike with increased access to data that has not been previously available and evidences the scale of the challenge to maintain our highways infrastructure.

Workstream 4 - Operating Model Review

3.26 The combination of the above workstreams has enabled a review of the existing practices and resources required to deliver the intended improvements and operating efficiencies arising from the study. Whilst the majority can be delivered through the implementation of digital solutions and changing work practices, there are some aspects that would benefit from additional resources to achieve the desired outcomes.

3.27 As outlined above, the existing practice is to allocate the pothole reports directly to Highways Operations without any prioritisation by the Assets team. To address this, the review concluded that the service would benefit from increased capacity through the creation of two additional Inspector roles. Because of previous budget savings, there are currently two filled Inspector roles and a third remains vacant. One of the two occupied roles is filled on a job share basis by two of the Highways operational staff for 10 months of the year. This enables the completion of scheduled inspections and retains winter maintenance resource capacity in Highways Operations as well as providing them with an income stream to offset their income generation target. Conversely this has reduced capacity in the Asset Management team leaving no resources to undertake the inspection or categorisation of reported pot holes.

3.28 The increase in wet weather events is accelerating the deterioration of the network increasing reporting demands. To ensure that the urgent and or dangerous potholes are remedied appropriately, a prioritisation regime should be implemented. This will require the creation of two additional Inspector posts to ensure that we continue to undertake scheduled inspections alongside ad hoc service requests. It is acknowledged that this proposal creates an additional unbudgeted revenue pressure, and it is therefore recommended that this is considered as part of the 27/28 budget development.

3.29 In 2026/27 council agreed a £2million capital investment to be split over the next three years (£667k a year) to focus on pot holes, patching and small scheme work. This complimented an additional £1,000,000 small scheme funding provided for 3 years from 2024/25 that ends this financial year. This £1m funding was split over 3 years and utilised to repair the small sites that fall between potholes and full resurfacing and generally require between thirty to hundred tonnes of tarmac. Approximately sixty sites across the County were completed as part of this programme.

3.30 The new £667k provides six additional operational staff plus approximately £367k for tarmac and equipment. It is anticipated that once the teams have reduced the backlog the focus will move from temporary repairs to patching and, if practical, small schemes.

3.31 Maintaining this level of funding will be critical to improving highways maintenance, service request and inspector categorisation response times. While the large injection of LGBI funding was welcomed the “feast and famine approach” to funding is not beneficial in the long term. When it is possible to provide consistent core funding, planned programmes can be developed giving the public confidence in the data provided.

3.32 This report recognises the budget challenges the Council faces, but without additional core funding the condition of the highway network will continue to deteriorate. The motion calls for a revised pro-active plan for road maintenance, achieving this will need consistent year on year investment from Welsh Government or the Council.

Workstream 5 - Communications

3.33 It is acknowledged that the need for improved communication continues to be a key theme for members and the wider public alike. The workstream considered how to improve information flows for planned maintenance works, reactive events and the publication of performance updates through a data dashboard.

3.34 Steps have already been taken to improve the notification of re-surfacing programmes and was recently implemented at Little Mill. This included earlier engagement of the resurfacing works with members and residents; longer consultation lead in times to respond to feedback and where possible consider mitigations to specific disruptions and the display of warning signs including digital VMS signage. We recognise that all highway works create inconvenience, but by engaging earlier and publishing the forward programme it gives residents and other road users more time to plan. These interventions worked particularly well during the resurfacing works in Little Mill and are being implemented for the next scheme in Frogmore Street.

3.35 The Causeway platform allows the integration of My Council Service requests enabling a seamless update for the request originator. Further development of this integrated approach should provide real-time data on service requests, anticipated timelines for repairs and the publication of dashboard data on the Councils website. This robust data capture and record keeping process will strengthen audit trails and provide MCC with meaningful, evidence-based data that can be utilised to identify trends, drive continuous improvement and support future strategic planning.

3.36 Improvements to data quality will also enable better reporting capabilities. The council's corporate data tools, dashboards and maps are being utilised to create views of the data. To increase transparency and help to keep members informed about performance within their wards, a member's dashboard is currently in development, which will provide a ward-level view.

3.37 The review and update of a dedicated website to host key information has progressed because of the review including the development of key messages, frequently asked questions and social media content. A particular focus has been placed on helping residents understand how potholes are inspected, prioritised and repaired, managing expectations around timescales and encouraging the use of digital reporting channels to improve data quality and performance monitoring.

3.38 This coordinated approach aims to improve public confidence, provide greater visibility of service performance, and ensure communities are better informed about both ongoing maintenance activity and the council's longer-term plans to improve the condition and resilience of Monmouthshire's highway network.

3.39 Whilst only service requests submitted through MyCouncil Services are actioned by Highways Operations, it is worth noting that there are other platforms which enable residents to report issues such as FixMyStreet, Facebook, Street Repairs etc which are not monitored by the Council. An outcome of the review is the need to promote My Council Services as the preferred way to report issues and to be clear that no other reporting mechanisms are supported. It is essential that members and residents alike use this channel to report issues so that we can develop a single data source which can be used for both reporting and performance management.

3.39 As evidenced above, cross-directorate collaboration has been able to identify opportunities to improve existing practice both for residents and the Highways service, some of which are already being deployed. Further improvements will be dependent on additional funding to acquire new equipment and to support increased capacity within the service which are discussed in more detail in the Resources Section of this report.

4 REASONS:

4.1 It is widely accepted that the highways network across the UK needs substantial investment. Under investment and challenging budgets over the last 20 years coupled with increased storm damage over the last 7 years have increased maintenance backlogs and are reflected in the public perception of a failing road system.

4.2 The Department for Transport (DfT) previously commissioned the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT) to review the current state of the highway network. The ADEPT & DfT_Potholes - a repair guide_March 2019.pdf which concluded that " Potholes mainly form in the winter due to freeze thaw/cycles at a time when highway maintenance departments are focussed on winter maintenance duties. Water, traffic and aging roads contribute to deterioration. Long-term asset management and a risk-based approach is recommended. Repair choices depend on defect size, location traffic and safety and should focus on permanent solutions where possible. Prevention through surface treatments and drainage is vital but limited by funding challenges".

4.3 The situation has continued to deteriorate as costs have continued to escalate and highways budgets have shrunk in real terms both at a national and local level. The local context has seen a reduction in depots and staffing levels and reduced resources for reactive maintenance. The Highways Operations Service is partly funded through the generation of £1.8m of income which is achieved through the completion of small schemes funded by the capital programme. This results in resources being diverted to the completion of scheduled maintenance which limits capacity to undertake reactive repairs. The recent three-year additional funding to support two new reactive teams has reduced this pressure, albeit on a temporary basis.

4.4 Additional funding for highways has been provided through capitalisation programmes and as core revenue in 2026. The additional funding is often time limited and requires specific works to be addressed e.g. Additional sweeping capacity, small schemes etc. This funding has been crucial over the last 5 years, but long-term improvement requires long term and consistent investment

4.5 Whilst the purpose of the motion is to consider reactive repairs, these must be seen in the wider context that further investment is required to undertake permanent repairs such as surface dressing and resurfacing. Given the scale of the investment required, this is best placed to be addressed at both a national and regional context.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 The review recommends the creation of two additional Highways Inspector posts to provide the capacity required to inspect, categorise and prioritise reported highway defects alongside the Council's scheduled inspection programme. The estimated full-year recurring cost of the two posts is £100,000 per annum, subject to the outcome of the job evaluation and recruitment processes. It is proposed that recruitment commences immediately. Given the anticipated recruitment timescales, the part-year cost in 2026/27 is expected to be no more than £25,000 and will be managed from within existing Infrastructure budgets. This does not represent a permanent funding solution.

5.2 The full-year recurring cost of the additional Inspector posts will therefore need to be considered through the 2027/28 budget-setting process, as part of the Infrastructure portfolio's overall package of budget proposals and alongside the Council's other financial pressures and priorities. Approval of the posts through this report does not confirm the source of permanent funding from 2027/28. The Infrastructure budget proposal will need to set out the recurring funding requirement, any available mitigating savings or income, and the implications should permanent funding not be agreed.

5.3 The Council has also provided three-year funding for two additional pothole teams. Continuation of these teams beyond the existing funding period would create a further recurring budget requirement, including associated staffing, vehicle, plant and material costs. The future of the teams will therefore be considered as part of the 2027/28 budget-setting process, informed by service demand, delivery performance, the reduction achieved in the existing backlog and the extent to which activity can move from temporary reactive repairs towards planned and more permanent interventions. No commitment to funding the teams beyond the existing approved period is made through this report.

5.4 The proposed use of Viafix during wet and cold conditions is estimated to increase material costs by approximately £56,000, reflecting its higher unit cost compared with the Council's existing cold-lay material. The trials indicate that the product should provide a more durable repair and reduce the requirement for repeat visits, but the resulting operational savings have not yet been quantified. Usage, repair durability, repeat visits and overall cost effectiveness will therefore be monitored following implementation, with the financial impact reported through the Council's established budget monitoring arrangements.

5.5 The acquisition of one Bobcat Skid Steer, at an estimated capital cost of £60,000, can be met from existing approved highways capital funding. Any proposal to acquire a second machine in 2027/28 will be subject to evidence from the operation of the first machine, confirmation that sufficient workforce and supporting resources are available to utilise it effectively, a proportionate business case, and identification of an affordable funding source.

6. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING QUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)

The proposed recommendations if agreed and implemented will result in changes to the Councils reactive maintenance operating model designed to improve communication, prioritise pothole reports to ensure that resources are deployed more effectively, improve the resilience of repairs which combined should result in a better service and more resilient highways network. There are no safeguarding or corporate parenting impacts arising from the proposals.

7. CONSULTEES:

Cabinet
Member Reference Group
Officer Working Group
SLT
Finance

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

County Council 5th March 2026

9. AUTHOR:

Carl Touhig **Head of Neighbourhood Services**

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Appendix 1 – Agreed Motion 5th March 2026

Submitted by County Council Tony Kear

This Council:

Notes the growing frustration of residents across Monmouthshire at the deteriorating state of our roads and the persistence of potholes.

Recognises the financial strain placed on families and businesses through vehicle damage and unsafe road conditions.

Recognises the ongoing decline in the condition of the county's roads and the authority's continued failure to effectively address hazardous and recurring potholes.

Considers that the administration's short-term practice of repeatedly patching and re-patching potholes delivers poor value for money and does not provide a sustainable solution

Calls for a revised proactive, preventative and more sustainable approach to road repairs

Resolves to commission an urgent and transparent review of alternative methods of road repairs including a full cost analysis.

Requests that the administration brings forward a clear action plan within six months with proposals to repair the county's highways in a more sustainable and cost-effective way.

Calls for the publication of clear and transparent performance data on highways maintenance spending and outcomes.

Appendix 2 – Existing Processes

Process	Nature of Repair	Status	Scheduling	Process Description	Comments/Benefits/Risks
Cold lay	Temp	Make Safe	Reactive Emergency	Minimal preparation of defect. Fill pothole with material to suitable level and compact.	All year round process. Addresses immediate risk. Reactive to demand, can be carried by all crews and response is effective in and out of hours for emergencies on all roads. Quick, high volume of cost effective repairs. Doesn't address cause of failure. May result in further visits to that defect or adjacent. Low level of resources required - small crew, vehicle and material, minimal TM.
Hot Potholing	Semi Temp	Make Safe	Planned non emergency	Minimal preparation of defect, tack coat, lay and compact.	All year round process. Used in larger areas where immediate intervention is not required so proactive. Can be adapted to respond to periods of high demand. Developed by crews to be a more enduring repair for safer roads. Can be used on all roads.
Patching	Permanent	Replace/repair	Planned	Use mini planer to prep the defect for repair. Can be hand laid or surfaced with a paver. Seal joints	Generally a seasonal process during dry weather. Not a pothole repair, considered and deliberate for surface failure before full failure of the highway. More expensive, requires resource for TM, plant and material (disposal and new). More acceptable finish Own plant used.
Minor resurfacing	Permanent	Replace/repair	Planned	Plan and reinstate	Generally seasonal process but can be undertaken all year round. Surface defects machine planed and laid. Smaller sections of highway rather than whole length. Plant hired and works delivered by operational crews.
Resurfacing	Permanent	Replace/repair	Programmed	Removal and relay of failed surface.	Generally seasonal process but can be undertaken all year round. Machine planed and laid surface finish. Longer continuous sections of road. Plant hired in and delivered by operational crews.
Reconstruction	Permanent	Replace/repair	Programmed	Extensive removal and reconstruction of lower structural layers.	Generally seasonal process but can be undertaken all year round. Full replacement/reconstitution of highway structure. Machine laid. May be delivered by operational crews or external contractors
Surface Dressing	Preventative	Arrest Deterioration	Programmed	Applied binder and chippings to surface	Seasonal process during dry weather. Does not fill potholes, used to prevent their formation. A limited amount of prep work is required. Considered as part of whole life maintenance. Works delivered by specialist external contractor.

Appendix 3
Workstream 1: Options Appraisal of Existing and Proposed Technologies

1. The objective of this options appraisal is to review alternative repair methods, processes and materials against current process to establish if they could be implemented alongside or replace current maintenance methods and in turn reduce the overall demand for pothole repairs through the delivery of permanent repairs.

2. A number of alternative pothole repair methods, equipment, materials and process trials have been carried out and considered based on capital investment, output, productivity, operational costs, flexibility and environmental impact against the existing methods utilised by the authority. Due to the unique nature of these processes and the environment in which they are individually best suited, it has not been possible to make direct comparisons but assessed for their suitability in repairing potholes across the network and throughout the year particularly when potholes are prevalent in winter and wet periods. Appendix 2 provides details of the current repair processes undertaken by the authority as part of the highway maintenance programme. Structural maintenance information has been included for completeness but falls outside of the pothole repair review.

3. The processes and methods assessed are listed along with a summary of the trials carried out and their outcome. Refer to Appendix 3 for additional process information. Taking supplier advice into consideration, various road conditions and locations were selected for each of the processes so that the limitations could be evaluated including at high stress sites.

4. **Method 1 – Viafix Cold Lay Pothole Repair Material Trial**

4.1 *Outcome:* Material used as a direct substitute to hot and cold lay tarmac carrying out reactive, make safe temporary repairs at various locations.

4.2 *Advantages:* Minimal defect preparation required. The product is water activated and can be used in all weather conditions. Self-compacting. The material enables a feathered edge to achieve an improved finish, reduces water ingress and the likelihood of repeat visits. Use for reactive make safe in and out of hours. Shelf-life of product. Approved product for highway use.

4.3 *Disadvantages:* Higher cost than deferred set cold lay and hot materials.

Finances: Cost comparison over a 16-week period:-

	Viafix Cold Lay	Tarmac	Variance	
Price Per Ton	450	105	345	Viafix is delivered to site whereas we need to collect tarmac from dispatch plant. We will see a saving in travelling time.
Est Number of tonnes used (over 16 week winter period)	160	160	-	
Total Cost	**72,000**	**16,800**	**55,200**	

4.4 *Conclusion/Recommendation:* Viafix offers a viable replacement for the cold lay deferred set material currently used particularly in wet conditions where the product provides a more durable repair with a better-quality finish reducing the need for repeat visits.

5. **Method 2 – Spray Injection Patching. Velocity Patching Trial**

5.1 *Outcome:* Alternative process to hot potholing in rural locations achieving approximately $74m^2$ of repairs per day at an average cost of £29/m^2

5.2 *Advantages:* Mobile and self-contained process with minimal disruption. Find and Fix process that can be diverted on a reactive basis if required. Can address all defect sizes and depths with good surface finish when laid. Minimal waste. Reduced non-productive time compared to the collection of material for hot potholing process. Estimated 65% carbon reduction compared to standard patching.

5.3 *Disadvantages:* Weather sensitive process restricting activities to settled and dry conditions over spring/summer. Better suited to rural locations unless additional resources and extensive planning undertaken. Will not address underlaying failure mechanisms. Not suitable for high stress locations.

5.4 C*onclusion/Recommendation:* Based on the trial undertaken, the estimated costs over a 6-week period are £65,000 inclusive of materials. For the network in Monmouthshire, this process is best suited to rural locations. The process is relatively costly and does not represent a cost-effective process without an extensive, pre-planned programme of works in dry conditions.

6. Method 3 – Elestomac Sealing, Roadmender Trial

6.1 *Outcome:* Regulating and sealing of approx. 55m2 of existing temp repairs and joints during the one-day trial.

.2 *Advantages:* Regulates to provide a smooth finish. Material is flexible and bonds to existing surface. Limited preparation required other than surface to be treated being clean and dry. Eliminates joints and defects in the surface and extends the life of reinstatements. Lower environmental impacts with the use of recycled materials.

6.3 *Disadvantages:* Does not fill potholes, only seals the surface and regulates. Highly weather dependent process. High material costs but applied as a thin surface.

6.4 *Conclusion/Recommendation:* This is not a reactive process and requires potholes to have been filled prior to application. The advantages of the process are noted but it is not recommended that it be included further specifically for the repair of potholes. This process would not address the demand for pothole repairs during wet periods and over the winter.

7. Method 4 – Mobile Planing – JCB Pothole Pro (Trial)/Bobcat Skid Steer

7.1 *Outcome:* Over the two-day trial period, the Pothole Pro planed out over 170m2 of defects that were then reinstated by hand. Demo of Bobcat equipment in extreme hot weather highlighted how adaptable the equipment and process are in terms of where the equipment can be utilised and material used.

7.2 *Advantages:* High output by planing units. Plant is versatile with alternative attachments available to enable higher utilisation of machine when not carrying out pothole repairs. Lower cost of attachments for Bobcat. Bobcat is more compact and easily transported to site. JCB can be driven to site but at low speeds. Year-round process. Durable repairs when coupled with traditional permanent reinstatement techniques.

7.3 *Disadvantages:* Suited to planned works to varying degrees depending on demand and equipment. Not responsive to reactive demands due to overall process resources. Potholing productivity and utilisation is limited by capacity of crew undertaking the reinstatement although higher than traditional manual methods.

7.4 Capital cost particularly for the JCB. Additional resources required to plan works, manage site and carry out reinstatement. Accessibility of JCB plant in confined sites. Higher attachment costs for JCB. Preparation standard of JCB cutting blade not as defined as a saw cut for the joint between patch and adjacent surface.

Finances: A breakdown of the annual running costs per machine is provided below.

	Bobcat £000's	Pothole Pro £000's	Variance £000's	Notes
Up-front Cost	60	215	**155**	
Annual Running Costs				
Annual Borrowing Cost (over 10 years)	6.5	23	**16.5**	
Operatives	200	250	**50**	Bobcat requires 4 operatives, Pothole Pro requires 5 operatives
Material 5t per day for 226 days	113	113	**0**	
2 vehicles (hot box and flat bed)	40	40	**0**	
TM and Plant	30	35	**5**	
Disposal	35	35	**0**	
Fuel	12	15	**3**	
Total	**436.5**	**511**	**74.5**	

7.5 *Conclusion/Recommendation:* A mobile planning unit provides a process for permanent repair/reinstatement that would sit between the reactive make safe/hot potholing activities and the patching programme that the authority currently undertakes throughout the year. The equipment enables relatively small areas to be prepared for permanent patch reinstatement. Utilisation of the plant can be further improved with the adoption of alternative attachments.

8. Summary of Methods

Method	Estimated Cost £000s	Preferred Option	Notes
Existing Cold Lay & Hot potholing	494	**Yes**	This is an established approach that is a timely method to address immediate hazards with minimal additional resource required.
Method 1 – Viafix Cold Lay Pothole Repair Material	56	**Yes**	Viafix can be utilised in place of current cold lay material due to its durability and performance in winter conditions
Method 2 – Spray Injection Patching. Velocity Patching (6-week period)	65	No	This process would not address the demand for pothole repairs during wet periods and over the winter.
Method 3 – Elestomac Sealing, Roadmender Trial (Discounted)	N/A	No	This process would not address the demand for pothole repairs during wet periods and over the winter.
Method 4 – Mobile Planing – JCB Pothole Pro	511	No	More expensive, needs more resources to run, not as adaptable as Bobcat for MCC road network.
Method 4 – Mobile Planing – Bobcat Skid Steer	436.5	**Yes**	More efficient to operate, more flexible and adaptable for MCC road network.

9. Recommendations

9.1 Highway Operations continue to make safe high-priority defects on a reactive basis using hot and cold lay materials. This is an established approach that is a timely method to address immediate hazards with minimal additional resource required.

9.2 Implement Method 2 - During periods of wet and cold conditions, Viafix be utilised in place of current cold lay material due to its durability and performance in these conditions. Long term, utilisation of this material will reduce the quantity of return visits due to failed make safe temporary repairs.

9. Implement Method 4 - Based on cost of investment, suitable productivity levels, output, operational costs and durability of repair, it is recommended that the authority invests in a Bobcat skid steer with planer attachment to undertake permanent reinstatements of defects and temporary cold and hot laid make safe repairs.

10. Post Trials

10.1 Since completion of the trials, weather conditions have been exceptionally warm and dry for prolonged periods. No repairs undertaken have failed, however, the deeper patches carried out by the injection jet patching process on rural roads have shown signs of settlement resulting in undulations of the surface. Wheel tracking marks have been noted on the Roadmender patches at the higher stress locations subjected to turning movements of large vehicles. All repairs will continue to be monitored over the coming 12 months.

10.2 There is no single pothole repair process or product that could be adopted to address all challenges faced when undertaking pothole repairs on such a varied highway network. Each process having strengths in differing aspects of pothole repair work in various conditions and settings.

10.3 Highest demand for pothole repairs is during the wettest months and winter period. It is acknowledged that, at present, there is not a resource to carry out permanent reinstatement of individual pothole defects or reinstatement temporary repairs. Of the methods reviewed, mobile planning units offer the ability to carry out permanent defect repairs in the widest of conditions.

10.4 By way of planned proactive works, mobile planing units offer a year-round flexible and responsive process to repair individual defects and permanently reinstate make safe temporary repairs. The smaller Bobcat skid steer option offers a flexibility in where it can be deployed. The JCB Pothole Pro has a capability to prepare patch repairs in excess of the capacity to reinstate the carriageway.

10.5 Adopting the recommendations will ensure that temporary repairs undertaken in adverse weather and permanent repairs will extend the life of a repair and reduce the need for repeat visits, lowering the overall demand on the operational teams, improved quality of the repair finish, reduce risk exposure for the authority and enhanced reputation based on the quality of the repair.

10.6 To varying degrees, suppliers of all processes claimed to reduce CO_2 emissions in comparison to traditional pothole repair methods.

Process	Nature of Repair	Status	Scheduling	Process Description	Comments/Benefits/Risks	Additional resources	Trial/Demo
Viafix Cold Lay	Temp/Perm	Make safe/reinstatement	Reactive	Minimal preparation of defect. Fill and leave	Direct replacement for current cold lay process. Viafix can be used in all conditions without the need for prep. Must have water to set/cure so works well in winter conditions. Self-compacting and can be trafficked immediately. Feathered edge improving driving surface. HAPAS approved material. Durable repair with fewer return visits. Cost is high in comparison to deferred set.	Requires pothole crew in line with existing pothole process	Trial of materials available through supplier. 10 x 1t bags purchased and used through the Llanfoist reactive pothole team in the Hereford Road and Highfield Road area of Monmouth during June
Velocity/Jet Patching	Temp/perm	Make safe/semi-permanent repair	Planned	Self-contained process. Vehicle equipment blows out the defect and spray injects coated chippings into the defect.	Seasonal process to achieve for best and durable results. Mobile, self-contained requiring little additional resource. Can be deployed on a "find and fix" basis. Most effective in rural locations with low traffic volumes and low stress sites. May not treat underlaying failure mechanism. Follow up sweeping required. Large/deep defects addressed. Good surface finish when laid as can be over laid past extents of defect. Reduced non-productive travelling time. Works to be planned in order to gain highest productivity.	Generally, works contracted to specialist contractor over fair-weather period.	Trial of process undertaken by contractor between 27/4/26-8/5/26. Demo for members 29/4/26. Trial cost £21k. Deployed to rural roads where defects of various types, sizes and depth were repaired. Planning required to identify suitable locations.

Bobcat and Planer	Permanent	Permanent repair	Planned	Mobile process patch planing preparation for permanent pothole repair. Plane out defect with reinstatement by hand lay and compaction.	Maintenance activities can be undertaken year-round. High areas of preparation beyond capacity of surfacing crew. Planer attachment to Bobcat skid steer vehicle. Equipment prepares defect for reinstatement only. Small mobile unit transported to site by trailer. Works need to be planned in advance to gain full utility. Requires the arisings to be disposed of and reinstatement to be done by supporting crews. Other attachments available to achieve full utilisation. Not mobile on highway but can be deployed on trailer.	Process delivered in house requiring minimum of driver and three operatives, hot box and flat bed, trailer and small plant. Traffic management where necessary. Likely 6t/day patching by crews.	Trial/Demo unavailable. Process similar to Pothole Pro.
JCB Pothole Pro	Permanent	Repair	Planned	Mobile process patch planing preparation for permanent pothole repair. Plane out defect with reinstatement by hand lay and compaction.	As with other patching. Preparation for reinstatement only. Larger mobile unit on highway but relatively slow speeds. Flexible planing head. Works need to be planned in advance to gain full utility. Requires the arisings to be disposed of and reinstatement to be done by supporting crews. Likely to require additional planning for TM and closures due to the size of vehicle and operation. Not as responsive to reactive or changing priorities due to operational resource required to be mobilised. Higher cost of attachments to gain operational utilisation. Poor cut edge compared to saw cut.	Process delivered in house requiring minimum of driver and four operatives, hot box and flat bed and small plant. Traffic management required. No advantage over Bobcat. Operational output on the scale of the current planer/paver process carried	Demo available through supplier. Two days 10/11th June. Demo with members on 11th June. Planing and patching of various defects, sizes and locations in Goytre. Additional planning and resources needed.

						out by the authority.	
Roadmender	Permanent	Repair	Planned	Application of flexible, flowable material over defect.	Limited prep - clean and dry. Flowable material, in-situ. Can be used on a variety of defects not just potholes. Lower carbon impact replacing bitumen binder with recycled materials. Limited additional material. Required existing defects to be filled prior to application. Good regulated finish giving smoother surface.	Not a pothole repair process but seals joints and regulates. Extends the life of reinstatements	Trial and Demo on 9th June. Pen y Pound, Abergavenny. Various temp repairs and minor surface defects treated with thin overlay. Approximately 55m2 treated. No existing defects addressed.
Preventative Maintenance	Preventative	Arrest Deterioration	Planned	Various solutions available	Numerous methods depending on site specifics. Prevents the formation of defects. Element of advanced planning and preparation is required.		Expansion of existing programme. Alternative sites and methods.

Appendix 4 - Performance Indicators

Purpose

To set out a clear performance framework for highway maintenance, with an initial focus on pothole reporting, repair activity, road condition and planned maintenance. The framework brings together customer reports, inspection reports, repair records, condition survey data, and resurfacing plans to provide a more consistent view of highway maintenance performance.

It identifies measures that can be reported now and how future reporting will be developed as planned systems and data improvements are made. It also identifies how more detail on the list of schemes and network condition information can be shared and reported annually through a proposed Highways Maintenance Report. This will support better performance management, evidence-based decision-making, clearer communication with councillors and residents, and a stronger understanding of the impact of highways maintenance investment.

Performance Indicators

<u>How Much</u>

o Number of pothole reports received

o Number of potholes

o Number of potholes repaired

<u>How Well</u>

o Percentage of potholes repaired in target time

What difference has this made

o Percentage of roads in good, average and poor condition (see network condition report)

<u>Highway Maintenance (see network condition report for more detail)</u>

o Total spend on highways maintenance programme

o The length of road repaired through highways maintenance programme

o The number of potholes repaired through highways maintenance programme

o The number of potholes prevented through highways maintenance programme

Appendix 4.1 provides further detail on indicator definitions, development requirements and reporting frequency.

This reporting will be enabled by improved data capture, data flows, system development and integration, as set out in Appendix 4.2.

Network Condition Report

The Red Amber Green data, as on the GAIST condition data extract below, can be amended on a yearly basis from the original base data to reflect the improvement on the highway network as a result of capital and grant investment on the network.

The list of schemes would be published out circa start of the calendar year; with a caveat that the programme is fluid and subject to change depending on funding and on-going costs impacting the amount of delivery, network management constraints i.e. coordination of works (- ideally we encourage statutory undertakers to undertake their works first - therefore we may not be able to complete our programme and works could potentially slip into future years) and then at the end of the

financial year the list of schemes completed reported back and reflected on the overall graphic - showing the improvement.

However, it must be noted that although we are reporting the network condition improving – the lengths of network where no improvements have been undertaken will not remain static and depending on the age of the material a process of deterioration such as binder oxidisation etc. can take place thus resulting in no strength in the material matrix causing chip loss and the formation of potholes, cracking and other carriageway defects.

Therefore, on an annual basis we can provide network condition indicators which will reflect the % improvements.

Extract of the GAIST Condition Data

We will also reflect the following which aligns with the LGBI reporting we are currently undertaking for schemes funded by this revenue source. (we could look to expand this for all resurfacing regardless of funding stream) – showing by spending £x on the carriageway we repaired X number of potholes and have prevented x number of potholes.

Road Class	Scheme Location	Location of Plant (Post Code)	Inlay/ Overlay	Depth (mm)	Length of Scheme (km)	Area of Scheme (m²)	Are the Work Dates Known? (Yes/No)	Start Date	End Date	Estimated Cost (£)	Potholes Repaired	Potholes Prevented	Is Scheme Finished? (Dropdown)
					6.810	44,216				£1,858,050	49	796	
										Accumulated Spend			
Unclassified	Jct. B4293, Portal Road - R45, Wonastow Road		Inlay	400	1.000	7,500	No	01/05/2026		£500,000			
Principal	Jct. A48(T) - Jct. A466 Monk Street Traffic Lights		Inlay	40	0.900	6,700		05/05/2026	17/05/2026	£380,000			
Classified Numbered	Nolton - County Boundary		N/A		1.819	18,900	Yes	22/06/2026		£172,590	33	525	Yes
Classified Un-Numbered	Deudan Road, St. Arvans		N/A		0.935	5,300	yes	24/06/2026		£85,450	17	271	Yes

From this information we can set a baseline where the authority can specify that we would not want the level of red to exceed x%. This can be on the overall network length or specific to classification.

Use

Specific tailored views of the indicator data will be provided for highways officers, councillors and residents.

Ø For highways officers, data will be reported through the new highways system, including improved mapping and dashboards, to monitor performance, improve decisions and target resources

Ø For councillors, data will be reported through a corporate dashboard providing county and local ward data supporting understanding of local pressures and scrutiny of performance.

Ø For residents, it will be reported through website updates providing county data on service demand and annual highways maintenance network condition reporting. This will also be available to Councillors. Providing updates on performance and action being taken.

Example reporting views are provided in Appendix 4.2 and 4.3

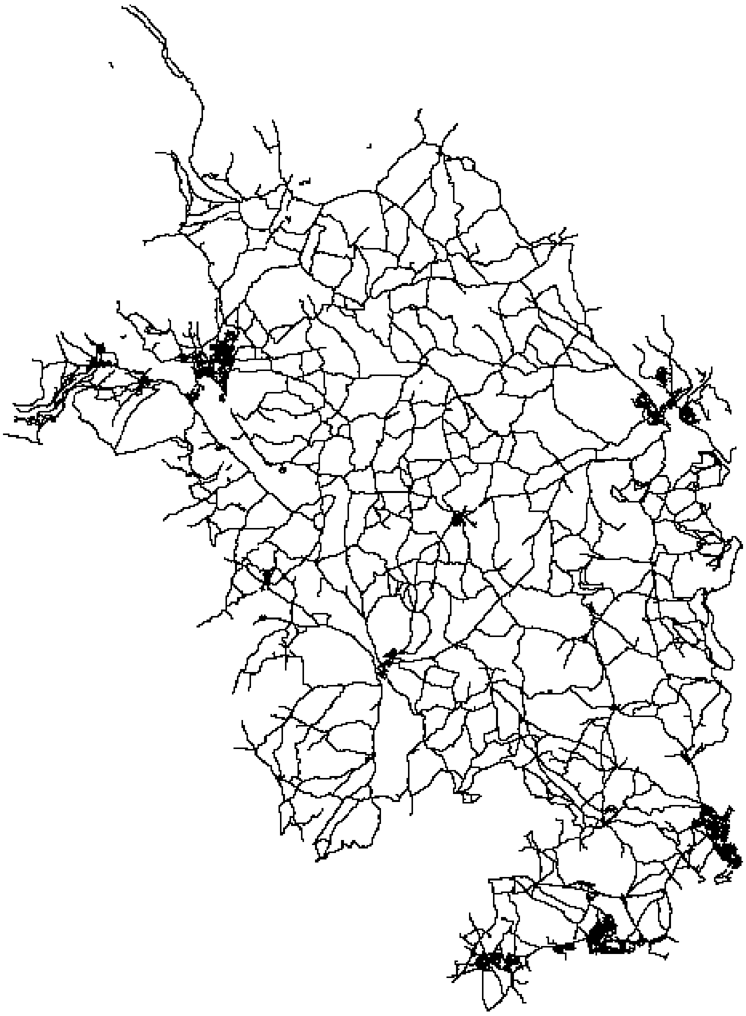
Appendix 4.1 – Performance Indicator explanation

Performance Indicator	Breakdown	Frequency	Available	Explanation	Source
Number of pothole reports received	Road classification By ward	Monthly	Now (New My Mon form) (New process – Approx. April 27)	Reports received through My Monmouthshire. Multiple reports might be received for same pothole	Now - My Council Services April 27 – New system
Number of potholes repaired	Road classification By ward	Monthly	Now (New My Mon form) (New process – Approx. April 27)	Reports completed through My Monmouthshire. Multiple repairs might be completed for same pothole	Now - My Council Services April 27 – New system
Number of potholes	Road classification By ward	Monthly	New process – Approx. April 27	Number of potholes not repaired. New parent and child relationship. Removing multiple reports on same pothole	New system
Percentage of potholes repaired in target time	Prioritisation (Emergency, High, Routine)	Annually or Quarterly	New process – Approx. April 27	Repairs completed within targets times for each prioritisation category. A range of factors can affect when a repair is carried out.	New system
Percentage of roads in good, average and poor condition	Road Classification	Annually	Existing survey – Calculate for 2025/26 in April 2027	Survey classification of Red, Amber, Green. Based on point in time condition surveys.	GAIST survey
Capital highways maintenance programme: - Spend - Length of road repaired - Number of potholes - Number of potholes prevented		Annually	Existing process – Calculate for 2025/26 in April 2027	Capital highways maintenance programme schemes completed in the year. Using existing reporting.	Capital highways maintenance programme (LGBI reporting approach, expanded for all resurfacing)

Appendix 4.2 – Example Highways Maintenance Report

Highways Maintenance Report - 2026

Our Network



- The Road network managed by MONMOUTHSHIRE is currently 1,640.7km (*including the motorway & trunk road network which is manged by SWTRA*)

- The network is made up of

DFT Classification	Urban	Rural	Total
Principal Roads			
Classified Numbered			
Classified unnumbered			
Un classified Roads			

- The M4/ M48/A40/A4024/A465(HOV)/A465T/A48T/A466T/A449 – are all managed by South Wales Trunk Road Agency

- In 26/27 our carriageway surfacing funding sources were as follows:

FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT
LGBI	£
CAPTIAL	£
ANY OTHER FUNDING SOURCE	£

- From the base line GAIST data the following was assessed – with the 2026 investment the improvements have resulted in the following:

Year	% Grade 1	% Grade 2	% Grade 3	% Grade 4	% Grade 5
2025					
2026					

Winter Impact/Flooding

- Highway Operations – potential to enter in information re. your service area and the impact the weather/storms have had on the carriageway.
- With the freeze thaw process on the network and the storms ……have all played their part in accelerating the deterioration of an aging network

Highway Safety Inspections

- We currently have 2 Asset Inspectors
- Routine safety inspections are undertaken on highway maintainable at public expense, with the roads which have a strategic network importance being inspected on a monthly basis recording all defects observed which are likely to have an impact on the highway user.
- The Asset inspectors also inspect on an ad-hoc basis from information provided by My Monmouthshire and as part of on-going investigation works to help provide a S58 defence for the authority.

How to Report A Problem

- Enter in details of how our stakeholders can contact us.

Appendix 4.3 – Data & System developments

Resident (My Monmouthshire) reporting process:

Work to improve accuracy of location reporting in My Monmouthshire allows for greater accuracy for officers, the ability to show location of reports back to residents and provides the data quality needed for data analysis.

New steps have been put in place within the reporting system to reducing duplicate reports.

Residents made aware of existing reports made and their status e.g. with inspector. Resident is given the option to be notified of the progress within an existing report rather than make a new report.

Existing pothole reports & status of reported potholes provided through My Monmouthshire.

New data fields will be captured within the My Monmouthshire form to enhance reporting capabilities. The form has been updated to include additional drop-down options, improving data consistency and usability.

Information is now captured on the ward in which each report is located, enabling ward-based reporting and analysis. Additional highway network information is also collected, including the road classification and route code associated with each pothole report.

This enhancement allows reports to be linked directly to highway maintenance schedules and inspector reports, supporting more effective monitoring, planning, and decision-making.

Highway Operatives:

The digitisation of pothole reporting and repair logging through the use of handheld devices will improve communication with customers by enabling repair updates to be recorded and processed more efficiently.

This will reduce delays in updating customers once a repair has been completed, ensuring more timely and accurate information is provided regarding the status of their reported issue.

This, in turn, will improve the accuracy of performance KPI reporting by reducing delays between repair completion and the updating of records.

System development (In progress):

Replacement highways management system to combine defect (reported by public and inspectors), job and performance data in one place

Development of dashboards within highways asset management system and data feeds to organisation dashboards (to be developed)

Appendix 5 – Integrated Impact Assessment

Integrated Impact Assessment Template

(incorporating Equalities, Socio-economic Duty, Future Generations, Welsh Language Measures, Corporate Parenting)

Name of the Officer completing the evaluation Debra Hill-Howells **Phone no:** 01633 644281 **E-mail:** debrahill-howells@monmouthshire.gov.uk	**Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal** This report provides an update on the work undertaken to address the highways reactive maintenance motion agreed by Council on 5Th March 2026.
Name of Service area Infrastructure	**Date** 8th September 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 *Consider the impact on our community in relation to age, e.g. how do we engage with older and younger people about our services, access issues etc. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.*	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report

[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?
Disability *Consider the impact and what issues there are around each of the disability needs groups e.g. access to buildings/services, how we provide services and the way we do this; producing information in alternative formats, employment issues etc.*	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report
Gender reassignment *Consider the provision of inclusive services for transgender people and groups. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.*	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report
Marriage or civil partnership *Same-sex couples registered as civil partners have the same rights as married couples and must be provided with the same benefits, such as survivor pensions, flexible working, maternity/paternity pay and healthcare insurance. Consider the impact of your proposal on these rights.*	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report

[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 *A woman is protected from discrimination during her pregnancy, maternity leave and 26 weeks from the day she gives birth. Including the provision of services, goods and facilities and recreational or training facilities. Consider the impact of your proposal on these protections.*	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report
Race *What will the proposal do to promote race equality with the aim of eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and promoting good relations between different racial groups. Think about the potential to affect racial groups differently. Possible issues include providing translation/interpreting services, cultural issues and customs, access to services, issues relating to Asylum Seeker, Refugee, Gypsy & Traveler, migrant communities and recording of racist incidents etc.*	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report
Religion or Belief *Consider the impact e.g. dietary issues, religious holidays or days associated with religious observance, cultural issues and customs. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.*	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report

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?
Sex *Consider what issues there are for men and women. Will this impact disproportionately on one group more than another e.g. equal pay, responsibilities for dependents, issues for carers, access to training, employment issues.*	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report
Sexual Orientation *Consider the provision of inclusive services for e.g. older and younger people from the Lesbia, Gay and Bi-sexual communities. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.*	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report

2. The Socio-economic Duty

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.

Socio-economic disadvantage can be defined as living in less favourable social and economic circumstances than others in society. It also includes social justice, which is about reducing inequalities by working towards more equal distribution of wealth and opportunities so everyone can achieve their full potential.

Consider how the proposal could affect the following vulnerable groups:

Armed Forces Community (including veterans)
Single parents
Vulnerable families
Single adult households
Carers
Students
People living in the most deprived areas
Pensioners
Homeless People
People misusing substances
People who have experienced the asylum system
People involved in the criminal justice system

[Socio-economic Duty](#)	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 from socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts in relation to the Socio-economic disadvantage?
Think of what evidence you have about socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in relation to this proposal. Will it impact disproportionately on certain groups? Can the proposals be improved to reduce inequalities of outcome?	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified impacts arising from this report

3. Policy making and the Welsh language

What are the effects that the proposals would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated? Explain how you believe the proposals could be improved so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English 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: *Consider what impact this policy decision will have on the Welsh Language. This includes opportunities for people to use the language, opportunities to promote the language and treating the language no less favourably that the English language. Include any data and evidence e.g. WESP, Census Data, Cymraeg 2050, Welsh Language Strategy.*	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. Reporting can be undertaken in Cymraeg and English.	The report provides the details of the review of highways reactive maintenance. There are no identified negative impacts arising from this report	None identified at this stage
Operational: Recruitment & Training of workforce *Carefully consider whether vacant posts require Welsh language skills as a desirable or essential skill. This is especially pertinent with front-line roles as more than 10 % of the population of Monmouthshire speak Welsh. Also, when assessing the need for Welsh language skills, keep in mind the existing Welsh language skills within the workforce. In service areas where there is a current lack of Welsh language skills, posts should be advertised as essential Welsh language. Additionally, consider where further training may be needed to increase the number of staff who can speak Welsh and to enhance the skills of current Welsh speakers.*	Roles will be advertised as Welsh desirable, and all colleagues will be given the opportunity to attend Cymraeg training.	None identified at this stage.	None identified at this stage.
Service Delivery: Use of Welsh language in service delivery *When advertising our services you must promote the fact that people can deal with the council in Welsh by*	Service requests can be undertaken through the medium of Cymraeg, and all communications are available bi-lingually.	Service requests can be undertaken through the medium of Cymraeg, and all communications are available bi-lingually.	Service requests can be undertaken through the medium of Cymraeg, and all communications are available bi-lingually.

phone, email, twitter, Facebook, letters, forms, website transactions etc.			

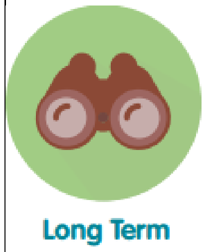
4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

Well, Being Goals	Describe the positive impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.	Describe the negative impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A prosperous Wales *An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises global limits and uses resources efficiently (including acting on climate change); a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides jobs.*	The review has considered the carbon impact of the various technologies trialled and recommends a new operating model which will improve operating efficiencies and the resilience of the repairs undertaken. This should result in the need for repeat visits to re-fill potholes, thereby reducing emissions from both travel and the fill material. The report also recommends the appointment of two additional Inspectors to implement a prioritization process and the digitization of the process to remove paper copies and improve communications.	None identified at this stage	The report recommends a number of improvements to the current operating model.

Well, Being Goals	Describe the positive impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.	Describe the negative impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A resilient Wales *Maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).*	N/A	N/A	N/A
A healthier Wales *People's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.*	N/A	N/A	N/A
A Wales of cohesive communities *Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected*	The proposal will improve the effectiveness of reactive repairs ensuring a safe highways network for all users.	None identified at this stage	None identified at this stage
A globally responsible Wales *Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing*	The proposal seeks to improve the robustness of deployed reactive maintenance methods. This will reduce the demand for materials to re-fill failed interventions, reduce emissions and enable technology to improve the effectiveness of reactive maintenance.	The impact of weather events on local highways infrastructure is increasing the need for reactive interventions. The proposal seeks to mitigate these impacts by proposing alternative cold fill materials which are more resilient than the current method.	The proposals seek to improve reactive maintenance methodologies thereby improving the safety and resilience of the highway. It is recognised that a permanent repair such surface dressing or re-surfacing is the optimum intervention, but these are limited by available resources. The proposed planing method will elongate the residual life of the

[Well, Being Goals]()	**Describe the positive impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.**	**Describe the negative impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.**	**What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?**
			highway enabling resources to be prioritised to greatest need.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language *Promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and participation in the arts, and sports and recreation*	N/A	N/A	N/A
A more equal Wales *People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances. (This includes the protected characteristics listed in Section 1 above. You can add more detail there. Don't forget to think about the impacts on poverty)*	*N/A*	N/A	N/A

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

[Sustainable Development Principles]()	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?
 Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future *We are required to look beyond the usual short term timescales for financial planning and political cycles and instead plan with the longer term in mind (guidance says at least 10 years, but preferably 25)*	The proposal seeks to maximise the effectiveness of reactive maintenance within resource constraints. A comprehensive review has been undertaken which has considered the end-to-end operation, digitization, communications, data and reporting and longevity of the preferred solution. The recommendations are the preferred solution to improve resilience and target resources to the greatest need. A review of the effectiveness of the interventions will take place no later than 2 years after their implementation to ensure that they are still delivering the best outcomes for the service and our communities.	None identified at this time.
 Working together with other partners to deliver objectives	The review has been cross-directorate and led by a Member Reference Group. Feedback has also been sought from other Local Authorities to ascertain the effectiveness of the systems we are proposing to deploy.	None identified at this stage.

[Sustainable Development Principles]()	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?
 Involving those with an interest and seeking their views *Who are the stakeholders who will be affected by your proposal? Have they been involved? Do those people reflect the diversity of the area which is served?*	Improvements to the My Council Services reporting model have been informed by feedback from the Councils Contact Centre, front line and digital colleagues. We will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the reporting once it is deployed. The review has been cross-directorate and led by a Member Reference Group. Feedback has also been sought from other Local Authorities to ascertain the effectiveness of the systems we are proposing to deploy.	None identified at this stage
 Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse	The review has considered how to improve the effectiveness of reactive maintenance methods currently deployed. Where deficiencies have been identified solutions have been proposed which include the appointment of two inspectors to enable all reported pot holes to be assessed and prioritised. It is also recommended that the cold fill material is changed during the winter period to improve the resilience of filling methods.	None identified at this stage

[Sustainable Development Principles]()	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?
Integration Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies *Focus here on how you will better integrate the Wellbeing Goals impacts on people, economy and environment described above and balance any competing impacts. Think about impacts the proposal may have on other organisations*	The review of reactive maintenance has been cross directorate to ensure that the proposals do not have unintended consequences on other service areas or users and that we can maximise the outcomes with the broader expertise and skill sets. We have also undertaken trails of proposed solutions and sought the views of the Member Reference Group. The proposals seek to improve the existing operating model to deliver a better outcome for the service and our communities.	None identified at this stage, but there will be an ongoing review of the effectiveness of the interventions.

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

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	**Describe any negative impacts your proposal has**	**What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?**
Safeguarding *Safeguarding in this context applies to children (not yet reached 18th birthday) and adult at risk (identified as a person over the age of 18 and who (a) is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect, (b) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs), and (c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.) Safeguarding is about ensuring that everything is in place to promote the well-being of children and adults at risk, preventing them from being harmed and protecting those who are at risk of abuse and neglect.*	None	None	

Corporate Parenting, Care Leavers and Care Experienced People *This relates to those children who are 'looked after' by the Local Authority either through voluntary arrangements with their parents or through a Court Order. The Council has a corporate duty to consider 'children who are looked after especially and to promote their welfare (in a way, as though those children were their own). It also relates to care experienced people (people who have spent time in care when they were under 18 years old). The Council must consider how to help overcome the disadvantages and discrimination they experience.*	None	None	

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

This will include your baseline position, measures and studies that have informed your thinking and the recommendation you are making. It should allow you to identify whether any changes resulting from the implementation of the recommendation have had a positive or negative effect. Key strategies and documents that may help you include: Community and Corporate Plan, Asset Management Strategy, Digital and Data Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, People Strategy, Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy: Enabling Strategies See Guidance for more examples.

Trails of the proposed technologies on the Monmouthshire network. Data and evidence from My Council Services, GAIST survey and Highways asset system. Feedback from Member Reference Group, technical experts, other Local Authorities and Contact Centre

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

The proposed recommendations if agreed and implemented will result in changes to the Councils reactive maintenance operating model designed to improve communication, prioritise pothole reports to ensure that resources are deployed more effectively, improve the resilience of repairs which combined should result in a better service and more resilient highways network.

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

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

10. VERSION CONTROL: The Integrated Impact Assessment 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 *e.g. budget mandate, DMT, SLT, Scrutiny, Cabinet etc*	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	Council	24th September 26	