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Neuadd y Sir
Y Rhadyr
Brynbuga
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County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Tuesday, 30 June 2026

Dear Councillor

CABINET

You are requested to attend a **Cabinet** meeting to be held at **Steve Greenslade Room, County Hall, Usk** on **Wednesday, 8th July, 2026,** at **4.30 pm.**

AGENDA

5. Financial Update Report 57 - 134

Division/Wards Affected: All

Purpose: To provide Cabinet with information on the Authority's final financial results for the 2025/26 financial year in respect of the revenue budget, capital programme, and associated reserves position.

To update Cabinet on the early indicative progress against the 2026/27 revenue budget.

Author: Jonathan Davies, Head of Finance (Deputy Section S151 officer)

Contact Details: jonathandavies2@monmouthshire.gov.uk

6. Adoption of the Charter for the Rights of the Rivers 135 - 156

Division/Wards Affected: All

Purpose: To seek Cabinet approval for the adoption of the Charter for the Rights of Rivers in Monmouthshire, following the motion agreed by Council on 25 June 2026.

The decision is intended to recognise the intrinsic value of all rivers and watercourses in Monmouthshire and to provide a clear set of principles to inform future Council policy, strategy, operational practice, partnership work and decision-making. The charter provides a clear public statement of intent and leadership on river protection and recovery.

Author: Chief Officer – Place and Community Well-being Craig O'Connor, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment Catrin Maby

Contact Details: craigoconnor@monmouthshire.gov.uk

7. Disposal of Land Adjacent to 40 Leechpool Holdings 157 - 176

Division/Wards Affected: Portskewett

Purpose: To seek approval for the disposal of land adjacent to number 40 Leechpool Holdings, Portskewett.

Author: Ben Thorpe – Development Surveyor

Contact Details: benthorpe@monmouthshire.gov.uk

8. Development of a Supported Accommodation Provision 177 - 224

Division/Wards Affected: Monmouth

Purpose: To provide details and seek approval for the acquisition and refurbishment of a property in Monmouth for the purpose of developing a supported accommodation provision for care experienced young people (aged 16 plus), using existing borrowing headroom.

Approval is sought based on a Business Case that is attached as Appendix 1.

Author: Jane Rodgers, Strategic Director Social Care, Safeguarding & Health

Contact Details: janerodgers@monmouthshire.gov.uk

9. Acquisition of plots of land for the Undy to Rogiet Severn Tunnel Junction (STJ) Links Active Travel Route — 225 - 296

Division/Wards Affected: Magor with Undy, Rogiet

Purpose: To seek authorisation to proceed with the purchase of land required to provide an active travel (walking, wheeling and cycling) path alongside the B4245 between Undy and Rogiet.

Author: Madeleine Boase, Active Travel Officer

Contact Details: madeleineboase@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,

Paul Matthews
Chief Executive

CABINET PORTFOLIOS

County Councillor	Area of Responsibility	Ward
Mary Ann Brocklesby	**Leader** Lead Officers – Paul Matthews, Matthew Gatehouse, Peter Davies, Will Mclean Whole Authority Strategy and Direction Whole authority performance review and evaluation, including DDAT Relationships with Welsh Government, UK Government and local government associations Regional Relationships including CJCs. PSBs and cross boarder Emergency Planning	Llanelly
Paul Griffiths	**Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development Deputy Leader** Lead Officers – Will McLean, Craig O'Connor Economic Strategy Skills and Employment Replacement Local Development Plan Placemaking and the development of market and affordable housing Placemaking and Transforming Towns Car parking and civil parking enforcement Development Management Building Control	Chepstow Castle & Larkfield
Ben Callard	**Cabinet Member for Resources** Lead Officers – Peter Davies, Matt Gatehouse Finance including MTFP and annual budget cycle Revenue and Benefits Human resources, payroll, health and safety Land and buildings Property maintenance and management Strategic procurement	Llanfoist & Govilon
Laura Wright	**Cabinet Member for Education** Lead Officers – Will McLean, Deb Hill-Howells Early Years Education All age statutory education Additional learning needs/inclusion Post 16 and adult education School standards and improvement	Grofield

	Community learning Sustainable communities for learning Programme Youth service School transport	
Ian Chandler	**Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services** Lead Officer – Jane Rodgers Children's services Fostering & adoption Youth Offending service Adult services Whole authority safeguarding (children and adults) Disabilities Mental health Wellbeing Relationships with health providers and access to health provision	Llantilio Crossenny
Catrin Maby	**Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment** Lead Officers – Debra Hill-Howells, Craig O'Connor, Decarbonisation Transport Planning Highways and MCC Fleet Waste management, street care, litter, public spaces and parks Pavements and Back lanes Flood Alleviation Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and River health	Drybridge
Angela Sandles	**Cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement** Lead Officers – Matthew Gatehouse, Paul Matthews, Jane Rodgers, James Williams Community development, inequality and poverty (health, income, nutrition, disadvantage, discrimination, isolation and cost of living crisis) Citizen engagement and democracy promotion including working with voluntary organisations Citizen experience - community hubs, contact centre, and customer service and registrars, communications, public relations and marketing Leisure centres, play and sport Public conveniences Electoral Services and constitution review Ethics and standards Welsh Language Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Public Protection, and Licencing	Magor East with Undy

Sara Burch	**Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs, Housing & Tourism** Lead Officers – Craig O'Connor, Jane Rodgers Local Food production and consumption, including agroforestry and local horticulture Homelessness, Temporary accommodation, private sector housing, (empty homes leasing schemes, home improvement loans, disabled facilities grants and adaptive technology), Allocation of social housing Broadband connectivity Active Travel Countryside Access and Rights of Way Tourism Development and Cultural Services	Cantref

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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.

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Monmouthshire Scrutiny

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee ~ Feedback to Cabinet of Meeting held on 30th June 2026

Report Item 5: Draft Self-Assessment of performance of the Council's Community and Corporate Plan Objectives 2025/26

Key Issues raised by the Committee:

- The Community and Corporate Plan involve a significant amount of work. To what extent does the plan shape the Council's activities and priorities, rather than simply describing what is already happening?

  Response: Matt Gatehouse (Chief Officer for People, Performance and Partnerships) advised that the Community and Corporate Plan, approved at the start of the Council term, translates the administration's ambitions into organisational priorities and actions. It guides service delivery but remains flexible, with emerging risks, opportunities, funding and changing priorities reflected through later Council, Cabinet or Single Member decisions.

- Residents tend to judge the Council by visible services such as roads, refuse collection, schools and responsiveness to reported issues. The report uses terms such as "on track" and "good progress", but what objective evidence demonstrates improvements that residents would actually recognise?

  Response: Richard Jones (Performance and Data Insight Manager) explained that the assessment uses resident surveys, service-user feedback, scrutiny, inspections, performance data and business plans to balance measurable outcomes with residents' experiences. Matt added that future assessments will focus more on impact, case studies and resident perspectives.

- How does the assessment account for situations where residents may feel services are deteriorating despite the Council assessing performance as good or improving?

  Response: Officers advised that performance varies by service and community, with inspection findings, resident surveys and service feedback used to challenge internal views and identify where improvement is needed.

- Which objective has performed least well this year, and what lessons have been learned?

  Response: Richard advised that no single objective stood out as the poorest performer, and none had declined since the previous year. Community resilience and capacity were identified as areas for development, with the focus on continued improvement across all objectives.

- Is the self-assessment process genuinely valuable, and how can it be improved to achieve better outcomes?

  Response: Richard advised that the self-assessment's value lies in evidence gathering, challenge and reflection, helping services identify improvements and inform business planning. Future work will strengthen outcome measures, resident feedback, accessibility, case studies and lived experience evidence.

- There appears to be a risk that a gap develops between how residents see the Council and how the Council sees itself. The self-assessment rates performance as good or very good, while residents often raise concerns. How is that gap addressed? Councillors often hear when services go wrong, so the Council must test whether its self-assessment matches residents' experiences.

  Response: Richard confirmed that resident feedback and independent evidence are used to challenge internal views and provide a balanced assessment of achievements and improvement areas.

- The assessment highlights Flying Start as an important contributor to creating a fairer place to live. However, eligibility is largely determined by geography, meaning some families with significant need may not qualify while others with less need do. What can be done to encourage Welsh Government to make Flying Start more flexible and expand provision?

  Response: Will McLean (Chief Officer for Children and Young People) advised that Flying Start remains important for supporting families and early years development. As a grant-funded programme, the Council must work within Welsh Government requirements but will continue to advocate for greater reach, recognising its wider benefits for family support and early intervention. Future childcare reforms will remain an area for discussion.

- Warm spaces have been an important initiative during colder periods. Given recent extreme weather, should similar attention be given to "cool spaces" and what opportunities are there to influence Welsh Government policy in this area?

  Response: Matt advised that evidence and local data will support discussions with Welsh Government, helping make the case for changes, support programmes and future policy or funding priorities.

- The Food and Farming Strategy promotes use of local food in schools. Can the Council also strengthen links between children and food production, for example through farm visits and greater understanding of local agriculture?

Response: Craig O'Connor (Chief Officer for Place and Community Well-being) confirmed that a Food Strategy update will be considered shortly. Schools are already involved in initiatives linking pupils with local food production, supported by grant funding and ongoing work with procurement teams and partners to strengthen local food supply chains and education.

- If Welsh Government support becomes available for initiatives that connect schools and farming, how can the Council help promote and make best use of it?

  Response: Craig confirmed that officers are continuing to work through the Food Strategy programme and associated partnerships. Future updates will be provided to members through the appropriate member forums. He advised that ongoing work is focused on maximising opportunities created by new grant funding and partnership arrangements.

- The report shows that take-up of Universal Free School Meals has declined from around 75% to 68.6%, against a target of 77%. Why are fewer pupils taking up Universal Free School Meals? This reduction in take-up is quite significant and merits attention. R

  Response: Deb Hill-Howells (Chief Officer for Infrastructure) advised that the figure is an average, with take-up varying significantly between schools. Officers are focusing on the lowest-uptake schools and have gathered pupil and parent feedback. Take-up fell after summer-term menu changes, some required to meet Welsh Government healthy eating standards. Feedback has highlighted portion sizes, menu preferences and food waste. A parent survey is underway, and officers are working with catering staff to improve menus while remaining compliant.

- Why has the Council decided not to have a separate Poverty and Inequality Action Plan? How can the Council be confident that all areas identified in the Equality Impact Assessment—including care-experienced people, veterans and other protected groups—are being properly addressed?

  Response: Matt clarified that not having a separate poverty and inequality strategy does not reduce the Council's commitment. The Council works through its separately monitored Strategic Equality Plan and mainstreams poverty and inequality considerations across services, including Food and Fun, prevention work and targeted support for disadvantaged communities. He acknowledged veterans were not explicitly referenced but confirmed support remains important, noting the Council's Armed Forces Covenant commitments and Gold Award status.

- The report shows a reduction in free or subsidised play provision. What has caused this reduction and what impact is it having?

Response: Will advised that the measure relates mainly to the Food and Fun summer provision. As places are free to book, some families reserve but do not attend, making participation appear lower than expected. The programme remains available and continues to provide high-quality activities and meals during school holidays. The issue is attendance and utilisation, not reduced provision.

- The report refers to Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA), ELSA support and other interventions. Are we concentrating too much on reacting to problems rather than helping children develop resilience and coping skills before problems emerge?

  Response: Will responded that schools develop resilience, emotional wellbeing and life skills daily through the curriculum and pastoral support. ELSA and EBSA are highlighted because demand for specialist support has increased, but they sit alongside wider preventative work already embedded in mainstream teaching and wellbeing provision.

- Why is the performance measure relating to young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) highlighted as an area of concern when performance has improved?

  Response: Will confirmed that the proportion of young people who are NEET has improved since last year, but remains below target. The issue is a significant national challenge and not unique to Monmouthshire. Funding has been secured to continue targeted support, with the Inspire programme now in the core budget so support workers can work directly with young people in schools. The aim is to keep improving outcomes and reduce the number becoming NEET.

- The report presents the NEET measure as a percentage, whereas actual numbers would provide a clearer picture of the scale of the issue. Another example is the measure for care-experienced young people, which shows a target of 60% remaining in education, employment or training. What does that percentage actually represent and is that a high enough target?

  Response: Richard agreed that future reports should include actual numbers alongside percentages, noting that the 2.5% NEET rate represented around 20 young people. Jane Rodgers (Chief Officer for Social Care and Safeguarding) explained that small care-experienced cohorts mean individual changes can affect percentages significantly. The Council remains ambitious for education, employment and training outcomes, with pathway planning and personal adviser support provided to each young person.

- Are schools providing enough time and focus to resilience, mindfulness and coping skills given the pressures faced by young people today?

Response: Will advised that resilience, wellbeing and life skills are embedded across the Curriculum for Wales and daily school life. ELSA, EBSA and other interventions reflect rising demand for specialist support, alongside universal preventative work. Most pupils receive resilience and emotional support through mainstream teaching, with additional interventions available where needed.

- How can the Council gather more low-cost resident feedback, including through contact centre interactions, reporting systems and routine exchanges, to ensure self-assessment reflects public experience?

  Response: Matt agreed there are opportunities to make better use of resident feedback. The Council already uses Let's Talk Monmouthshire, the Resident Survey, service-specific feedback, social care and library surveys, and Youth Service engagement. Contact centre and customer systems could provide further insight. The key is ensuring feedback is analysed and used to improve services, inform self-assessment and keep the Council connected to residents' experiences.

- Can the Council make better use of evidence from the Climate Innovation Camp and similar engagement activities to understand young people's priorities and views?

  Response: Matt confirmed that engagement across the Council and with partners provides valuable evidence, including young people's voices, service-user feedback, resident surveys and community input. The challenge is capturing these lessons and using them more effectively in service planning and future self-assessments.

- There is some criticism of self-assessment centres on perceptions that the Council is "marking its own homework". Would increasing resident and service-user evidence help demonstrate that assessments are grounded in external experiences rather than solely internal judgement?

  Response: Matt acknowledged the importance of external challenge. Resident and service-user feedback, inspections, Panel Performance Assessments and scrutiny help test the Council's conclusions and reduce reliance on internal views.

Chair's Conclusion:

The Chair welcomed the increasing use of resident feedback and independent evidence, emphasising the need to ensure the Council's assessment of its own performance reflects residents' lived experience of services. Resident input, external assessment and scrutiny were recognised as essential to maintaining credibility. The Committee concluded that the self-assessment process should continue to develop so it is more evidence-based, transparent and reflective of residents' experiences before the report proceeds to Governance and Audit Committee and Full Council.

Points requiring a further response by the Cabinet Member:

None required.

Monmouthshire Scrutiny

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee ~ Feedback to Cabinet of Meeting held on 9th June 2026

Report Item 5: 2025-2026 Financial Outturn Report

Key Issues raised by the Committee:

- Why are some primary schools with significant deficit balances not reducing those deficits despite recovery plans, while other schools hold healthy surpluses? Does this raise concerns about the effectiveness of the recovery plans?

  Response: Councillor Callard (Cabinet Member for Resources) advised that school deficits have been a recognised risk for several years, largely due to staffing costs. Schools with fewer pupils receive less funding but may still need similar staffing levels. Recovery plans are long-term, but it is concerning that some deficits continue to grow. Schools, governors, education and finance teams must ensure prudent spending and delivery of recovery plans.

  Will McLean (Chief Officer for Children and Young People) advised that deficits may rise short term before recovery measures take effect. ALN pressures, support costs beyond central funding, staffing volatility and exceptional long-term absences are all contributing to ongoing financial pressures in some schools.

- What are the current council tax and business rates collection rates compared with last year, and what is the outlook for next year?

  Response: Jonathan Davies (Head of Finance) advised that council tax collection remains a live financial risk in 2026–27 due to collection performance, affordability pressures, rising discounts and exemptions, and growing arrears. In 2025–26, collection performance created a pressure of about £345,000, offset by favourable movements elsewhere. Small collection rate changes can significantly affect Council finances, so recovery will be balanced with residents' cost-of-living pressures and closely monitored.

- Are any financial pressures or services currently being masked by one-off grants, reserves or other temporary funding that could create problems next year?

  Response: Councillor Callard responded that social care remains one of the Council's largest financial risks. Demand in social care can fluctuate significantly, and even small increases in high-needs cases can create substantial financial pressures. The position will continue to be monitored through in-year budget monitoring reports. This remains one of the most volatile areas of Council spending.

- Are there any emerging financial risks not fully reflected in the report that officers are concerned about?

  Response: Councillor Callard advised that social care demand remains a key emerging risk because of the potential for rapid changes in costs and demand. Jonathan added that Council tax collection remains a significant ongoing risk and is included within the live risk log.

- Given the growing demand and rising costs of the Pupil Referral Service (PRS), how much of the increase is due to worsening pupil needs versus mainstream schools being unable to cope? What is the average length of time pupils spend in the PRS before returning to mainstream education, and what are the future capacity risks?

  Response: Will advised that PRS demand has risen since the pandemic due to exclusion risks, failed specialist placements and increased anxiety, mental health and wellbeing needs. The service offers bespoke support and has improved returns to mainstream education, though some pupils stay for several years. Work continues on a sustainable financial model, with average stay data to follow.

- Is society facing a wider problem, with growing anxiety and mental health challenges among young people creating long-term risks for future generations?

  Response: Will replied that schools are investing in support such as nurture provision and ELSAs, while mainstream schools work to become more inclusive. Transitions, especially from primary to secondary, remain challenging, and anxiety and wellbeing issues affect many learners, not only those with ALN. Inclusive mainstream provision is key, but adds financial pressure.

- The report shows a £2.668 million surplus associated with the Welsh Medium School and Nursery. Is this money still available for development of the school or a future site?

  Response: Will advised that the funding was allocated to development work at Overmonnow and Usk, but site issues mean the original programme will not proceed as planned. Discussions with Welsh Government's Welsh-medium division are ongoing, and any future development would require a further capital funding bid.

- Does funding follow a pupil when they are permanently excluded and move into the Pupil Referral Service (PRS)?

  Response: Will confirmed that a proportion of the school's funding follows the pupil. The remaining Average Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) allocation for the year is transferred. However, the funding received is often much lower than the actual cost of supporting a pupil with complex needs in the PRS.

- To what extent does the favourable financial outturn depend on one-off grants, treasury gains, capital receipts and other non-recurring funding streams?

  Response: Jonathan advised that the Council still faces significant underlying pressures. One-off and unbudgeted grants, particularly from Welsh Government, helped support services and offset costs that would otherwise fall on core budgets. A precise figure is difficult to calculate because funding was spread across services, schools and corporate budgets. Continued Welsh Government engagement remains important.

- The committee needs a clearer understanding of how dependent the Council is on these non-recurring sources of funding. Can officers provide further information?

  Response: Jonathan agreed to provide further information. He confirmed the 2026–27 budget does not assume unknown future grants. Planned capital receipts are built into the medium-term financial strategy and are being reduced over time. Some grants are stable, while annual allocations create uncertainty, particularly in social care.

- The report shows an overspend on fleet maintenance and breakdown costs, while there is also underspend in the capital programme for vehicle replacement. How is this being reconciled and how will the Council break the cycle of maintaining an ageing fleet rather than replacing it?

  Response: Deb Hill-Howells (Chief Officer for Infrastructure) advised that vehicles are being replaced, with some refuse vehicles leased due to Welsh Government's 2030 ultra-low-emission expectation. Current electric refuse vehicles cannot yet meet Monmouthshire's operational needs, and low-emission options are significantly more costly. Extra costs also arise from breakdowns, accident-related hire and temporary replacements. A Fleet Management Board is reviewing costs, utilisation, fleet size and driver behaviour to improve efficiency and reduce spending.

- Is the issue with ultra-low-emission vehicles a supply problem or a capability problem?

  Response: Deb confirmed this is a capability issue, as current electric refuse vehicles lack the range needed for Monmouthshire's geography. The Council is working with Cenex to review routes and operating models for a future transition to ultra-low-emission vehicles.

- Has the Council received any indication of additional funding from the Welsh Government supplementary budget announced recently?

  Response: Councillor Callard advised that initial indications suggest that additional education maintenance funding will be available to local authorities. At the time of the meeting this appeared to be the only confirmed additional funding stream. Members would be updated if further information became available.

- Capital slippage (£45 million) appears high relative to the £32 million capital programme spend. What does capital slippage mean, why does it occur, and should the committee be concerned that projects are not being delivered as planned?

- Response: Jonathan advised that most slippage reflects rephasing of approved multi-year projects, not cancellation or lost funding. Delays arise from grant conditions, approvals, design, procurement, contractor availability and internal capacity. Funding is generally carried forward, while some schemes require further affordability and deliverability review. The 2026–27 focus will be improving delivery and profiling of major schemes.

- Why is the Council using £3.55 million of capital receipts to support revenue expenditure, and what is the rationale behind this approach?

  Response: Jonathan confirmed the funding is being used under approved capitalisation flexibility arrangements to support organisational change, service redesign and transformation. This avoids using revenue reserves, though reliance on capital receipts is being reduced as future receipts are limited. Officers view it as an important tool for delivering efficiencies while protecting reserves.

- Has the Council done enough to strengthen project management capacity to improve delivery of major capital schemes?

  Response: Jonathan advised that project delivery capacity remains an important factor in capital programme performance. The organisation is continuing to focus on strengthening delivery, improving profiling and ensuring schemes can be completed within available resources. There is a need to match ambition with realistic delivery capacity.

- Has the Council acted on previous concerns that major capital projects were not receiving sufficient dedicated project management, and could this be contributing to delays and slippage?

  Response: Deb advised that infrastructure projects, especially bridges and structures, will remain a major capital pressure. Three dedicated project managers are being recruited and are expected in post by September to oversee schemes such as Llanfoist Bridge, Old Wye Bridge and other major projects. This should reduce reliance on consultants and improve delivery, accountability, communication and reporting, with a further scrutiny update expected later in the year.

- Earlier you mentioned that reliance on capital receipts is becoming restricted in future years. What does this mean?

  Response: Jonathan advised that capital receipts are finite and forecast to reduce significantly over the medium term. As a result, support for organisational change through capitalisation is being reduced, leaving less flexibility to fund transformation and revenue-funded change. Future financial planning must reflect this reduced support.

Chair's Conclusion:

The Chair concluded that the committee had robustly scrutinised the report, welcomed the positive year-end position while focusing on school deficits, one-off funding, capital slippage, use of capital receipts and future resilience. Members were particularly concerned that school deficits had risen from around £4 million to £6.9 million and sought clarity on how far the favourable outturn relied on grants, treasury gains and capital receipts. Previous Full Council concerns about major capital project delivery and dedicated project management were noted. The Chair welcomed recruitment of dedicated project managers and stressed the need for better delivery and clearer communication with residents and businesses, acknowledging that Monmouthshire's bridges and structures will continue to pressure capital resources and project management capacity.

Points requiring a further response by the Cabinet Member:

- Requested further information on the Council's dependency on these non-recurring funding sources, noting that understanding the scale of this support is important given the uncertainty of future grant funding.
- Sought clarification on the high level of capital slippage (£45 million) compared with annual capital expenditure (£32 million), asking whether this reflected delivery issues or normal reprofiling of projects.
- Queried the rationale for using £3.55 million of capital receipts to support revenue-funded transformation and organisational change activities.
- Sought clarification on comments about the Council's diminishing pool of capital receipts and the implications for future financial resilience and transformation programmes.

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SUBJECT:	**Social Partnership Duty Report**
MEETING:	**Cabinet**
DATE:	**8 July 2026**
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All	

1 PURPOSE:

1.1 To seek approval of the Social Partnership Duty Report 2026, setting out how the Council will build on existing practice, and work collaboratively with trade unions, to ensure compliance with the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 To approve the Social Partnership Duty Report 2026, to enable the report to be published, under the statutory duty.

3 KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Social partnership is a collaborative approach where government bodies, employers, and trade unions work together to address economic, social, and workplace issues. It works on the principle that more can be achieved by employers and workers, predominantly through their trade unions, working together in a spirit of co-operation and collaboration. Since devolution, the Welsh Government has suggested social partnership as a potential approach to addressing challenges in Wales. In 2021 the Welsh Government made a commitment to establish a statutory basis for social partnership in Wales, culminating in the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023.

3.2 To ensure compliance with the Under Sections 15, 16 and 18 of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023, Monmouthshire County Council must meet four statutory requirements, which will integrate social partnership principles into our activities and ensure that trade unions are actively engaged in decision-making processes, particularly in areas impacting the workforce. One of these statutory requirements is that the Council must prepare and publish an annual report detailing compliance with the Social Partnership Duty. This report also details the other three statutory requirements. The report must either have the agreement of recognised trade unions or explain why an agreement could not be reached.

3.3 Developing and agreeing a social partnership framework that encompasses guiding principles like cooperation, trust, and mutual gains will establish a consistent approach to fulfilling statutory duties under the Act. Monmouthshire County Council’s Annual Report (2026) includes information on current partnership working arrangements, a review of the 2025-26 action plan and proposed developments in partnership working arrangements, including an action plan for 2026-27.

3.4 Trade union commitment to working in a different way continues to be important for implementation. Under the social partnership principles, early dialogue at a formation stage is required. Being part of the solution to proposing strategic plans will take time, given the long-standing arrangement whereby managers propose change to the trade unions, and they respond through acceptance or rejection of such change.

3.5 Failure to progress our evolving model of involvement, as opposed to one of consultation, will lead to difficulty in fulfilling our statutory duty to report on progress.

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

4.1 Councils must engage with recognised trade unions when setting wellbeing objectives, in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This includes enhanced involvement and collaboration, when making significant strategic decisions, particularly those that impact employees or relate to sustainable development.

4.2 Embedding the duty within the identified areas of the Council’s work created the opportunity to improve decision-making and ensure a focus on the long-term. Enhanced involvement will benefit all employees, including those who have a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. No implications for safeguarding or corporate parenting have been identified at this stage of implementation.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL:

5.1 The production of the report is a statutory requirement.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA:

6.1 The Council must provide an annual report on how social partnership is being embedded in the organisation. These reports are to be submitted to Welsh Government’s Social Partnership Council, who have a responsibility to write guidance which public bodies must have regard to. The content of the submitted reports will likely lead to amended guidance with additional requirements if the pace of change is not sufficient. Monmouthshire County Council’s Annual Report (2026) has been shared with the recognised trade unions, will be discussed at the Joint Advisory Group (JAG) meeting on Monday 6th July 2026 and is available for scrutiny by the authority’s committees.

7. REASONS:

7.1 To optimise collaborative working with trade unions, to ensure compliance with the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 The duty places additional responsibilities on officers, including additional reporting requirements. Most of the activity can be delivered through existing mechanisms, such as regular Joint Advisory Group (JAG) and informal meetings held between the trade unions and the authority. It has been evidenced and it is therefore anticipated that the duty can continue to be delivered within existing resources. It will be necessary to continue the current review of the arrangements, to ensure the present arrangements for trade union facilities time allow enough time for colleagues on the trade union side to fulfil the expectations placed on them.

9. CONSULTEES:

Cabinet
Strategic Leadership Team
Trade Unions

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

11. AUTHOR:

Philippa Green, Head of HR

12. CONTACT DETAILS:

Email: philippagreen@monmouthshire.gov.uk

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Social Partnership Duty Report 2026

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Social partnership is a collaborative approach, designed to pursue mutual gains within the context of policy development and implementation, or operational change. It works on the basic principle that more can be achieved by employers and workers, predominantly through their trade unions, by working together in a spirit of co-operation and collaboration, to address economic, social, and workplace issues. Since devolution, the Welsh Government has suggested social partnership as a potential approach to addressing challenges in Wales.

There are many social partnership arrangements within and between individual organisations, sector-wide representative groups, and recognised trade unions, some with a long history. In the absence of any statutory underpinning, those existing partnership structures have developed voluntarily and organically over time, taking a variety of different approaches to partnership working. In 2021 the Welsh Government made a commitment to establish a statutory basis for social partnership in Wales, culminating in the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023. Under Sections 15, 16 and 18 of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023, on 1 April 2024, the new Social Partnership Duty ("the Duty") on public bodies came into force in Wales.

As set out in the Explanatory Memorandum to the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023, the intended effect of the legislation is to improve the economic, social, cultural, and environmental wellbeing of people in Wales by strengthening the role of social partnership within strategic decision making. Involving both employers and workers in key discussions regarding improvements to wellbeing recognises and values the unique contribution and expertise brought by those directly engaged in public service delivery when addressing shared challenges and seeking innovative solutions. The intended effect of these provisions is to promote cooperation, strengthen policy and improve outcomes, through dialogue between social partners, achieved in social partnership.

The devolved public sector is a significant employer in Wales. It directly shapes the experience of work for those who work within it, and it can also have an indirect influence throughout the public sector and wider economy through leading by example on progressive approaches to workforce matters. The ability of the devolved public bodies to perform that direct and indirect role will be strengthened by the Duty.

2. WHAT IS REQUIRED BY THE DUTY?

The Social Partnership Duty applies to the forty-eight public bodies listed in section 6(1) of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, of which Monmouthshire County Council is one. Therefore, Monmouthshire County Council must meet four statutory requirements which will integrate social partnership principles into our activities and ensure that trade unions are actively engaged in decision-making processes, particularly in areas impacting the workforce.

Requirement 1: Social Partnership Duty

Councils must engage in social partnership with recognised trade unions when setting wellbeing objectives (in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015) and making significant strategic decisions, particularly those that impact employees or relate to sustainable development. This engagement requires efforts to seek consensus or compromise with trade unions, specifically at the formative stages of policy development or decision making. Councils must provide trade unions with sufficient information and adequate time to consider and respond to proposals.

Requirement 2: Reporting Obligations

Councils must prepare an annual report detailing compliance with the Social Partnership Duty. This report should include actions taken to engage trade unions in relevant decision-making processes. The report must either have the agreement of recognised trade unions or explain why an agreement could not be reached. Councils are required to publish this report and submit it to the Social Partnership Council, as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of the financial year, which may issue further guidance based on their content.

Requirement 3: Public Procurement Duty

Councils are expected to ensure their procurement processes align with social partnership and fair work principles, which include engaging trade unions where procurement decisions affect labour standards. This duty includes ensuring that suppliers adhere to fair work practices, thereby promoting ethical standards and fair working conditions in contracts involving public funds.

Requirement 4: Adherence to Social Partnership Council Guidance

Welsh Ministers, through the Social Partnership Council, can publish guidance on social partnership practices, which councils must give regard to.

Seeking Consensus or Compromise

Section 16(2) of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023, sets out several specific requirements relating to the Duty, which the Council must comply with when ‘seeking consensus or compromise’. The requirements are intended to ensure that trade unions are fully and properly involved when the Council sets its wellbeing objectives, or when making strategic decisions about the reasonable steps the Council is taking to meet those objectives.

The Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 states that ‘*in order to seek consensus or compromise, a public body must include its recognised trade unions or other representatives of its staff in the process of setting objectives or making decisions, by (in particular):*

> *(a) consulting them at a formative stage of the process, and*
> *(b) otherwise involving them throughout the process by*
>
> > *(i) providing sufficient information to enable them to properly consider what is proposed, and*
> > *(ii) providing sufficient time to enable them to adequately consider what is proposed and respond.’*

3. CURRENT PARTNERSHIP WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

The current partnership working arrangements in Monmouthshire County Council are mainly through workforce matters. There is already an approach to partnership working which provides more collaborative opportunities than the traditional consultation model. The current level of discussion is wide reaching and includes regular trade union meetings and interaction with elected members.

The Head of HR and Strategic Director, Social Care and Health, for Monmouthshire County Council attended the Welsh Government Social Partnership event in July 2024, which provided helpful information regarding the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 and reassurance that Monmouthshire County Council can already evidence a strong approach to partnership working.

The arrangements the Council already has in place, which contribute to the four statutory requirements, are set out below. These support how social partnership principles are integrated into Council activities.

Requirement 1: Social Partnership Duty

The range of activities already taking place, in which trade unions are actively involved and engaged, includes:

- Quarterly Joint Advisory Group Meetings (consisting of elected members, officers, including members of the Strategic Leadership Team, and trade union representatives):
    - Items brought to the Joint Advisory Group are determined by consensus and agreement from both the trade union and employer side.
    - Terms of reference for the Joint Advisory Group also include a commitment to gain consensus and agreement on all HR policies, which is not limited to contractual policies.
    - The Joint Advisory Group are involved in the statutory annual review of Monmouthshire County Council's Community and Corporate Plan and Wellbeing Objectives.

- Monthly informal meetings between officer and trade union officials:
    - Held for both corporate and education trade unions, to raise organisational wide issues, ensure employee voice is represented and heard, and to consult on topics from both the trade union and employer side.

- Formal consultation arrangements with trade unions exist for budget setting processes, workforce planning and restructuring processes.

- Formal invite for trade unions to attend the weekly Job Evaluation Panel.
- Regular informal dialogue with the Leader/Cabinet Member and trade unions.
- Informal meetings between HR, Workforce Development and trade unions on new ways of working/improving processes for colleagues and managers.

Requirement 2: Reporting Obligations

This Council has produced this annual report, the second under these requirements, detailing the current arrangements which are in place to comply with the Social Partnership Duty and reviewing the proposed developments detailed in the previous annual report. The report also sets out future proposed developments in partnership working arrangements, as agreed in consultation with trade union representatives, aimed at strengthening how the Council involves and engages trade unions on a broader scope of decision-making activity.

Requirement 3: Public Procurement Duty

The Council has an established Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy. The strategy includes the objective to Improve Fair Work, Equity and Safeguarding practices adopted by suppliers. This aims to facilitate the Council to deliver against the Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act and the principles of the Code of Practice: Ethical Employment in Supply Chain. An annual evaluation of the performance of the aims of the strategy is produced. An assessment of the effectiveness of the Council procurement arrangements is also incorporated in the Council's statutory annual self-assessment report, which trade unions are actively involved and engaged in through the Joint Advisory Group.

Requirement 4: Adherence to Social Partnership Council Guidance

This annual report provides a mechanism for the Council to review and assess its arrangements in accordance with the requirements in the Social Partnership Duty. Including, adherence to any future Social Partnership Council Guidance published. The annual report will also be incorporated in the Council's statutory annual self-assessment of its wellbeing objectives in the Community and Corporate Plan.

4. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS IN PARTNERSHIP WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Under the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023, the Council is obligated to involve and engage trade unions on a broader scope of decision-making activity beyond that already underway. Specifically, as a minimum, consensus and agreement on setting wellbeing objectives should be gained, and trade union representative should have greater involvement in strategic decisions that have workforce or sustainable development implications.

Proposed developments in partnership working arrangements, for 2026-27, as agreed in consultation with trade union representatives, include:

- Trade union representatives being involved to a greater extent in the statutory annual review of Monmouthshire County Council's Community and Corporate Plan and Wellbeing Objectives, with the option of including a statement in the final self-assessment report to Council.

- Developing the annual briefings delivered by the Section 151 Officer, for all parties, on the public finance outlook, Medium Term Financial Plan assumptions and continuing to invite all parties to put forward future saving proposals for consideration.

- Trade union representatives continuing to be involved/engaged at an early stage:

    - in any savings proposals that have workforce implications.
    - in the development and review of the Strategic Equality Plan.
    - in the development of colleague survey questions and actions to respond to findings.
    - in the changes to/development of corporate colleague induction arrangements.
    - in procurement developments, in accordance with the Ardal partnership arrangements.
    - in implementing the review of the Facilities Time Agreement.

- Trade union representatives being invited to attend an annual meeting to discuss social partnership arrangements.

- Proactive trade union representative participation in actions relating to Monmouthshire County Council's Workforce Plan 2026-27 and the Employment Rights Act 2025.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The Welsh Government has suggested social partnership as a potential approach to addressing challenges in Wales. Monmouthshire County Council already has an approach to partnership working which provides more collaborative opportunities than the traditional consultation model.

In order to involve and engage trade unions on a broader scope of decision-making activity beyond than that which is already underway, Monmouthshire County Council developed, agreed and has reviewed a Social Partnership Action Plan 2025-26 (see Appendix 1) and has developed and agreed a Social Partnership Action Plan 2026-27 (see Appendix 2) , that encompasses the guiding principles of cooperation, respect, trust, voice and participation, and mutual gains, which has established and will continue to support a consistent and monitored approach to fulfilling statutory duties under the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023.

The Council is confident that, through building upon actions in the 2025-26 action plan and delivering the 2026-27 action plan, the benefits of social partnership working will be realised to an even greater extent than they are currently, and the organisation's values of openness, fairness, flexibility, teamwork and kindness will be strengthened.

This report has the agreement of recognised trade unions in Monmouthshire County Council.

APPENDIX 1: SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP ACTION PLAN 2025-26 (REVIEW)

Number	Action	Accountable Officer(s)	Review Comments
1	Trade union representatives being involved to a greater extent in the statutory annual review of Monmouthshire County Council's Community and Corporate Plan and Wellbeing Objectives, with the option of including a statement in the final self-assessment report to Council.	Chief Officer: People, Performance and Partnerships Trade Union Officers	Meetings were held with trade union representatives and officers, as part of the statutory annual review of Monmouthshire County Council's Community and Corporate Plan and Wellbeing Objectives, and a statement was included in the final self-assessment report to Council: County Council: Thursday 18th September 2025.
2	Holding annual briefings by the Section 151 Officer, for all parties, on the public finance outlook, Medium Term Financial Plan assumptions and inviting all parties to put forward future saving proposals for consideration.	Chief Officers Section 151 Officer Trade Union Officers	The annual briefing was held in January 2026.
3	Trade union representatives being involved/engaged at an early stage: a) of any savings proposals that have workforce implications. b) in the development and review of the Strategic Equality Plan.	Chief Officer: People, Performance and Partnerships Section 151 Officer Trade Union Officers	Trade union representatives were involved and engaged at an early stage, through current partnership working arrangements (please see Section 3 of this report), in relation to savings proposals which had workforce

Page 26

	c) in the development of staff survey questions and actions to respond to findings. d) in the changes to/development of corporate staff induction arrangements. e) in procurement developments, in accordance with the Ardal partnership arrangements. f) in a review of the Facilities Time Agreement. g) in leading the roll-out of the 'Social Partnership the Welsh Way' training module on Thinqi (online training platform), across the organisation.		implications, the development and review of the Strategic Equality Plan, the development of staff survey questions and actions to respond to findings, the changes to/development of corporate staff induction arrangements, procurement developments, the review of the Facilities Time Agreement and leading the roll-out of the 'Social Partnership the Welsh Way' training module across the organisation.
4	Trade union representatives being invited to attend an annual meeting to discuss social partnership arrangements.	Chief Officer: People, Performance and Partnerships Trade Union Officers	The annual meeting was arranged, for April 2026, in addition to regular formal and informal discussions, facilitated through current partnership working arrangements (please see Section 3 of this report), around social partnership arrangements.

APPENDIX 2: SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP ACTION PLAN 2026-27

Number	Action	Accountable Officer(s)
1	Trade union representatives being involved to a greater extent in the statutory annual review of Monmouthshire County Council’s Community and Corporate Plan and Wellbeing Objectives, with the option of including a statement in the final self-assessment report to Council.	Chief Officer: People, Performance and Partnerships Trade Union Officers
2	Developing the annual briefings delivered by the Section 151 Officer, for all parties, on the public finance outlook, Medium Term Financial Plan assumptions and continuing to invite all parties to put forward future saving proposals for consideration.	Chief Officers Section 151 Officer Trade Union Officers
3	Trade union representatives continuing to be involved/engaged at an early stage: a) in any savings proposals that have workforce implications. b) in the development and review of the Strategic Equality Plan. c) in the development of colleague survey questions and actions to respond to findings. d) in the changes to/development of corporate colleague induction arrangements. e) in procurement developments, in accordance with the Ardal partnership arrangements. f) in implementing the review of the Facilities Time Agreement.	Chief Officer: People, Performance and Partnerships Section 151 Officer Trade Union Officers
4	Trade union representatives being invited to attend an annual meeting to discuss social partnership arrangements.	Chief Officer: People, Performance and Partnerships Trade Union Officers
5	Proactive trade union representative participation in actions relating to Monmouthshire County Council’s Workforce Plan 2026-27 and the Employment Rights Act 2025.	Chief Officer: People, Performance and Partnerships Trade Union Officers

SUBJECT:	**OUTCOME OF THE STATUTORY OBJECTION PERIOD ON PROPOSALS CONCERNING THE NURSERY AT DURAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**
MEETING:	**CABINET**
DATE:	**8TH JULY 2026**

1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of the report is to provide Cabinet with the outcome of the statutory objection period concerning the proposals to discontinue the local authority maintained nursery at Durand Primary School. This report concludes the statutory process.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that Members:

2.1 agree to proceed to implement proposals as consulted upon, namely, to amend the age range of Durand Primary School from 3-11 to 4-11, reflecting the closure of the local authority maintained nursery

2.2 agree that the above proposals will be implemented with effect from 1st September 2026.

2.3 note that funded early years education will instead be provided to families by an approved non maintained setting on the site of Durand Primary School.

3. KEY ISSUES:

<u>Consultation stage</u>

3.1 The School Organisation Code (2018) places responsibility on local authorities in Wales for ensuring that there are sufficient and suitable school places across the County to educate its children and young people. The duty to ensure appropriate provision of school places is not limited to statutory school places.

3.2 The Council has a duty under the Childcare Act 2006 to ensure that families can access their entitlement to a minimum of 10 hours a week of early education from the term following their child's 3rd birthday until they are offered a full-time school place.

3.3 The Childcare Offer for Wales was first introduced in Monmouthshire in 2019 and was fully rolled out in September 2020; through this scheme working parents can access up to 30 hours a week of funded early education and childcare. As a result, we have seen a shift to parents choosing an approved non-maintained setting that is able to offer the full 30 hours a week, in preference to school nurseries that are only able to offer 12.5 hours a week.

3.4 Numbers attending Durand Nursery have reduced significantly since the introduction of the Childcare Offer. The school has a capacity of 60 part time places (30 morning and 30 afternoon), but they haven't been close to being full since 2018-19, and some years they have only required a morning session.

3.5 The Council has a responsibility under the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2018 to consult with appropriate stakeholders when considering any significant school reorganisation proposals.

3.6 At the Cabinet meeting on 21st January 2026, Cabinet gave their approval to engage with key stakeholders on proposals to change the age range of Durand Primary School from 3-11 to 4-11. This proposal would mean that the current Local Authority maintained school nursery would close, and funded early education will be provided by an approved non-maintained setting operating from the school site.

3.7 The statutory processes concerning these proposals commenced on 29th January 2026, and ran for a period of 6 weeks (including 20 school days) concluding on 13th March 2026.

3.8 At their meeting on 15th April 2026, Members received a copy of the consultation report which represented the Council's responsibilities (in line with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2018) to produce a report informing interested parties of the outcome to the consultation by means of:

- Summarising each of the issues raised by consultees.
- Responding to these by means of clarification, amendment to the proposal, or rejection to the concerns with supporting reasons.
- Setting out Estyn's view (as provided in its consultation response) of the overall merits of the proposal

3.9 The consultation report that that the Council had received 14 formal responses to the proposals, with an additional two responses coming from ESTYN and the Local Authority School Improvement Service (LASIS)

3.10 Of the 14 formal responses, 11 (79%) were fully supportive of proposals put forward, with a further 2 responses (14%) supporting aspects of the proposals. The Council received just 1 response (7%) from a parent that was not supportive of the proposals

3.11 In light of the above information, Cabinet agreed at their meeting on 15th April 2026 to proceed with the next stages of this statutory process, which was to publish the necessary statutory notices and enter into the statutory objection period. A copy of the statutory notice can be found under appendix 1.

Statutory Objection period

3.12 The Council entered into the statutory objection period (a period whereby consultees can submit statutory objections against the proposals) through publication of the attached statutory notices. The statutory notices were published through the following means:

- On the council website
- On or near the main entrance of Durand Primary School
- By electronic distribution to all statutory consultees

3.13 The Objection Period formally opened on 23rd April and concluded on 22nd May 2026, allowing for a 28 day objection period as per the requirements of the School Organisation Code (Wales) (2018)

3.14 Consultees and interested parties were advised that, should they wish to submit a statutory objection against the proposals they must do so in writing or by email within the 28 day statutory objection period, which concluded on 22nd May 2026.

3.15 The School Organisation Code (Wales) (2018) requires proposers to produce and publish an Objection report that summarises the statutory objections received during the statutory window and provide responses to these objections received. It is important for Members to note that no statutory objections were received within the Objection Period window, therefore, no objection report has been produced.

3.16 In light that there have been no statutory objections received by the Council, and that feedback received during the consultation window was positive, it is recommended that Members conclude this statutory process and proceed to implement proposals to close the local authority maintained nursery at Durand Primary School with effect from 1st September 2026.

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

An integrated impact assessment associated with the proposals has been completed and can be found under appendix 2. This assessment was reviewed and updated to incorporate the feedback received during the consultation period. Additional information was provided in the Welsh language section to include more detail regarding the potential impact of the proposal on the Welsh language and mitigating actions that could be taken to better contribute to positive impacts.

The key points from the Integrated Impact Assessment are:

- The existing provision at Durand Nursery is limited to 2 ½ hours a day, which makes it difficult for the main carer to access work or training opportunities. A non-maintained setting would be able to offer up to 6 hours a day, providing more opportunity for parents/carers to return to work or training.
- There is currently Welsh medium early education available in Caldicot at Ysgol Y Ffin and there are currently spaces available. There is also a non-maintained setting on site, Cylch Meithrin Cil Y Coed, that offers childcare places for two year olds (including Flying Start childcare) and wrap around childcare for 3 and 4 year olds that attend the school Meithrin. Therefore, they will still be able to offer a greater range of childcare and early education than is being proposed at Durand Primary School, so there is no significant impact on the opportunities to use and promote the Welsh language
- The proposal provides an opportunity to support the growth and sustainability of a small business within the community.
- There are currently limited childcare options available in this community. Replacing the school nursery with a non-maintained

setting would increase the services available to the community and make it more attractive to working families.

- Families requiring childcare will be able to access it within their locality, so they will be able to walk rather than needing to travel. by car; hence, this will reduce their carbon footprint.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

5.1 The School Organisation Code Wales sets out the following requirement:

‘Following the consultation period, when the proposer is reviewing the proposal prior to publication the proposer is required to carry out a further assessment for the proposal and each of the alternatives that were set out in the proposal paper. This involves the same matters that the proposer was required to assess in formulating the proposal:

(a) the likely impact on quality and standards in education,
(b) the likely impact on the community and
(c) the likely effect of different travelling arrangements.

The purpose of this further assessment is to take account of any further information that has come forward through the consultation or otherwise.’
In its consultation report, the proposer is required to explain its assessment of the proposal and the reasonable alternatives identified, how this assessment differs from their earlier assessment (if at all) and its assessment of any further reasonable alternatives. Finally, the proposer is required to confirm whether it considers the implementation of the proposal, (wholly or partly) to be the most appropriate response to the reasons it identified for the proposal and give reasons for its conclusion.’

A further assessment of the alternative options that were considered prior to the consultation period has been undertaken and is provided below:

Option 1 – Do nothing and maintain the status quo. This would mean that Durand Primary School would continue with its current age range of 3-11 years offering 30 part time nursery places (mornings only) and a non-maintained setting would offer wrap around childcare in the afternoons.

Option 2 – Change the age range of Durand Primary School from 3-11 years to 4-11 years and replace the school nursery with a non-maintained setting approved to provide funded early education and wrap around childcare.

Option 3 – End the lease agreement with Little Gems to enable Durand Nursery to offer 60 part time places (morning and afternoon sessions), with no wrap around childcare available on site.

Whilst continuing with existing arrangements is considered to be an option, the large majority of respondents (79%) have voted in favour of proposals to close Durand nursery and extend the provision of the non maintained setting currently providing wrap around childcare. The staff and governing body of Durand Primary School are also supportive of proposals, and feedback received from ESTYN is also favourable.

In light of the above, our preferred option was presented as option 2 above. The feedback received during the consultation stage recognises the benefits of this proposal, and there have been no statutory objections received during the objection window. It continues to be the view that this option is not only the most financially viable, but it also delivers excellent teaching and learning facilities, whilst offering greater flexibility for parents.

6. REASONS:

6.1 The Council has a statutory duty as part of the School Organisation Code 2018 to follow this statutory process should it wish to make any significant school reorganisation proposals.

6.2 The proposed change will help to address the Council's commitment to provide children with the best possible start in life and to be ready for school.

6.3 The proposed change will offer more flexibility to families and enable parents/carers to remain in work or return to work or training.

6.4 The proposal is felt to be the most financially viable, delivers excellent teaching and learning facilities, whilst offering greater flexibility for parents.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

7.1 The proposal would have no specific resource implications for the Council.

7.2 Offering nursery provision with significant surplus places has placed a strain on the budget of Durand Primary School; therefore, the proposal to change the age range of Durand Primary School from 3-11 years to 4-11 years and replace the school nursery with a non-maintained setting approved to provide funded early education and wrap around childcare would have a positive financial impact for the school.

7.3 The non-maintained setting is privately owned, so they manage their own finances. The early education would be funded through the non-maintained element of the Local Authority Education Grant and eligible parents would be able to access funding for the wrap around childcare directly from the Welsh Government through the Childcare Offer Scheme.

8. CONSULTEES:

Children, Learning, Skills & Economy (CLSE) DMT
Cllr Laura Wright, Cabinet Member for Education

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Welsh Government School Organisation Code 2018

Childcare Act 2006

10. AUTHOR:

Sue Hall, Early Years Manager

11. CONTACT DETAILS:

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MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY HALL, RHADYR, USK, MONMOUTHSHIRE NP15 1GA

SCHOOL STANDARDS AND ORGANISATION (WALES) ACT 2013

NOTICE IS GIVEN in accordance with Section 41 of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and the School Organisation Code 2018 that Monmouthshire County Council, having consulted such persons as required, propose to implement the following:

1) To cease to maintain the local authority maintained nursery at Durand Primary School, meaning that the age range of Durand Primary School will change from 3-11 to 4-11

As a result of the above proposal, the provision of funded early years education and childcare will be delivered by an approved non maintained setting operating from the school site.

Monmouthshire County Council will implement the above changes with effect from 1st September 2026.

Monmouthshire County Council undertook a period of consultation before deciding to publish this proposal. A consultation report containing a summary of the issues raised by consultees, the proposer's responses and Estyn's full response has been published to all statutory consultees and is available via https://www.letstalkmonmouthshire.co.uk/early-years-provision-at-durand-primary-school

Durand Primary School will continue to be a community English medium primary school serving children from ages 4-11, and Monmouthshire County Council will continue to be the admission authority. Applications for places at the school will be managed and determined in line with the Council's agreed School Admissions Policy. Applications for Early years places will be managed directly by the approved non maintained setting.

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The admission number for pupils aged 4-11 at Durand Primary School will continue to be 30 with the overall pupil capacity for 210 places for this age range.

Durand Primary School will no longer be responsible for providing nursery provision to those children below statutory school age. This responsibility will be transferred to the approved non-maintained setting to ensure that early year provision continues to be available for the community.

It is the intention of the Council that transport shall be provided free of charge for pupils of statutory school age who attend Durand Primary School in accordance with the Council agreed policy at that time. The current policy is that pupils are eligible for free home to school transport if they meet the following criteria:

a) They attend their nearest or catchment area Welsh medium school and
b) They live more than two miles from the school for primary or
c) They live more than three miles from the school for secondary.
d) The route between home and the nearest or catchment school is deemed to be unsafe for walking.

Within a period of 28 days of the date on which the proposal was published, that is to say by **22nd May 2026**, any person may object to the proposals outlined within this notice.

Objections should be sent to the School & Student Access Unit, Monmouthshire County Council, County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA or email to strategicreview@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Signed Paul Matthews Date: ***23rd April 2026***

Paul Matthews
Chief Executive
For Monmouthshire County Council

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This explanatory note does not form part of the notice but is offered by way of explanation)

Durand Primary School is located at Alianore Road, Caldicot, NP26 5DF and currently provides 210 school places for children in Reception to Year 6. There is also a local authority nursery on site providing 30 part time places for three and four year olds who are not yet of statutory school age.

As a result of these proposals, the age range for the school will change from 3-11 to 4-11, reflecting that the local authority will cease to maintain the school nursery. The provision of funded early years education and child care will instead be delivered on the site of Durand Primary School by an approved non maintained setting, offering improved flexibility for parents / carers within excellent teaching and learning facilities.

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

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Name of the Officer Sue Hall **Phone no:** 01633 644461 **E-mail:** susanhall@monmouthshire.gov.uk	**Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal** To consult on the proposal to change the age range of Durand Primary School from 3-11 years to 4-11 years and replace the school nursery with a non-maintained setting approved to provide early education.
Name of Service area Early Years Section, CLSE Directorate	**Date** December 2025

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.*	Currently there are only 30 nursery / early education places available at Durand Primary School for 3 and 4 year olds; hence, there are insufficient places to accommodate rising 3s. This proposal would increase the number of early education places to 56.	Nursery aged children wouldn't be included on the school roll, instead they wouldn't be admitted until the term following children's 4th birthday.	Approved non-maintained settings have more flexibility than school nurseries as they can cater for a larger age range and offer longer hours.

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 non-maintained setting would be based on the school site in the existing nursery building, which meets current guidelines around disabled access.	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.
Gender reassignment *Consider the provision of inclusive services for transgender people and groups. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.*	No impact identified at this stage.	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.
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.*	No impact identified at this stage.	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.

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.*	No impact identified at this stage.	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.
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.*	No impact identified at this stage.	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.
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.*	No impact identified at this stage.	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.

[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.*	Changing from a maintained nursery to a non-maintained setting will offer more flexiblity to families and will enable parents/carers to return to work or training.	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.
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.*	No impact identified at this stage.	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.

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 favorable 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 existing provision at Durand Nursery is limited to 2 ½ hours a day, which makes it difficult for the main carer to access work or training opportunities. A non-maintained setting would be able to offer up to 6 hours a day, providing more opportunity for parents/carers to return to work or training.	School nurseries usually offer 12 hours a week, whereas early education funding is only available for 10 hours a week.	Working families are eligible for the Childcare Offer, which provides funding for wrap around childcare, so eligible families can access a total of up to 30 hours a week of funded early education and childcare.

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 existing provision at Durand primary school is English medium and we are proposing to replace it with a non-maintained setting that is English medium with some bilingual elements. The setting don't initially intend to offer places for two year olds and they aren't currently approved for Flying Start childcare. There is currently Welsh medium early education available in Caldicot at Ysgol Y Ffin and there are currently spaces available. There is also a non-maintained setting on site, Cylch Meithrin Cil Y Coed, that offers childcare places for two year olds (including Flying Start childcare) and wrap around childcare for 3 and 4 year olds that attend the school Meithrin. Therefore, they will still be able to offer a greater range of childcare and early education than is being proposed at Durand Primary School.	There is a possibility that some families will opt for the provision at Durand Primary School rather than Ysgol Y Ffin, as they are able to access early education and wrap around childcare with one provider, so there will be less transitions for the children.	Support will be provided to Cylch Meithrin Cil Y Coed to improve their transition arrangements to ensure this is a smooth process for children. Ysgol Y Ffin currently offers a morning Meithrin session only. If numbers continue to grow and there is a need for more places, there is the option to increase the offer to 60 places and offer morning and afternoon places. Capital funding was awarded to Cylch Meithrin Cil Y Coed in 2025/26 to enable them to make improvements to their outdoor area. There is a further pot of funding available for small capital grants in 2026/27, which Cylch Meithrin Cil Y Coed will be encouraged to apply for to enhance their existing provision and make it more appealing to families who are considering their options.

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 Welsh language essential. 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.*	N/A	As the proposal is to replace an LA nursery with a non-maintained provision, this will be a private provider, so the local authority will have no influence over recruitment and whether vacant posts require Welsh language skills as desirable or essential.	The provider will be reminded of the requirement for them to work towards the Welsh Promise and for the Welsh language to be an integral part of their curriculum. They will be offered training opportunities and support in relation to the Welsh language and Welsh culture.
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 phone, email, twitter, Facebook, letters, forms, website transactions etc.*	All consultation documents and social media posts will be available in Welsh and English. Consultees can choose to respond in Welsh or English. The admissions portal promotes the options for Welsh medium education.	N/A	We will continue to promote the options for Welsh medium education and the benefits of being bilingual. A video has recently been produced to promote Welsh language immersion classes in our Welsh medium primary schools, including Ysgol Y Ffin that is located close to Durand Primary School. This video will be added to the MCC website and promoted through social media. Residents will be actively encouraged to consider the option of Welsh medium education.

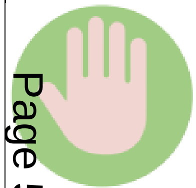
4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

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 proposal will increase the length of sessions families can access, hence enabling parents to return to work or training. It also provides an opportunity to support the growth and sustainability of a small business within the community.	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.
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).*	No impact identified at this stage.	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.
A healthier Wales *People's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.*	No impact identified at this stage.	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.
A Wales of cohesive communities *Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected*	There are currently limited childcare options available in this community. Replacing the school nursery with a non-maintained setting would increase the services available to the community and make it more attractive to working families.	There are less options within the community for those families that are specifically looking for a LA maintained school nursery	Information can be provided to parents to explain that approved non-maintained providers are required to follow the Curriculum for Wales in the same way as school nurseries.
A globally responsible Wales *Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing*	Families requiring childcare will be able to access it within their locality, so they will be able to walk rather than needing to travel.	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.

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?**
	by car; hence, this will reduce their carbon footprint.		
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*	No impact identified at this stage.	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.
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)*	Providing wrap around childcare will enable parents/carers to return to work, hence giving them the opportunity to become more financially secure and prevent them from living in poverty	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.

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?
Long Term 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)*	We have seen an upward trend towards parents choosing non-maintained settings over school nurseries to access their early education. The demand for childcare from a younger age is also increasing and a non-maintained setting is more flexible and is able to provide for a wider age range.	None identified at this time.
Collaboration Working together with other partners to deliver objectives	The success of this proposal is dependent on a strong collaboration between the Local Authority, the school and the non-maintained setting. There is already an established relationship in place, and all parties are committed to working together to achieve a positive outcome for the children and their families.	Non-maintained setting will be invited to school events and will be seen as an extension to the school community.

[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?**
 Involvement 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?*	The school governing body are aware of this proposal and have had an opportunity to ask questions and they are in support.	Other stakeholders include parents/carers, school staff, other schools and non-maintained settings. They will all be informed of the consultation process and will have an opportunity to respond with their views.
 Prevention Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse	Estyn have recently inspected Durand Primary School and praised the quality of teaching and learning in most classes, however they did report that the classes for their youngest learners was an area for development. The non-maintained setting would receive specialist Early Years support from the EAS.	None identified at this time.
 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*	There is a possibility that this may have a negative impact on schools in the nearby area that don't have wrap around provision on site. It could also impact other childcare providers in the area.	We will continue to work with schools and providers to develop wrap around provision on site or to arrange with nearby settings or childminders to collect from the school.

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.*	The non-maintained setting is required to comply with the MCC Safeguarding Policy. All staff have received safeguarding training at a level that is relevant to their role and they have a named Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and Deputy DSO.	The setting is based on the school site and will operate during school hours, so this could impact on existing safeguarding arrangements.	The Headteacher has had sight of DBS checks for staff in the non-maintained setting and they have arrangements in place to safeguard both pupils in the school and children in the setting. The Headteacher will have regular meetings with the setting to discuss any concerns or issues. The setting will also receive monitoring visits from Local Authority Officers and safeguarding will be discussed as part of these visits. They will also be required to complete a safeguarding audit (SAFE) every two years.

[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.*	No impact identified at this stage.	No impact identified at this stage.	None identified at this time.

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.

The development of this proposal has been based mainly on parental demand, which is measured through data around take up of places and enquiries received. It incorporates the council's core values, particularly in relation to flexibility and elements of the Community and Corporate Plan in terms of Monmouthshire being a Learning Place and a Thriving and Ambitious Place to live and work.

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 main positive impacts of this proposal is that families will be able to access early education and wrap around childcare in one setting. This will enable parents/carers to return to work or training, whilst providing continuity of care for the children, giving them the best possible start in life. **There are very few negative impacts of this proposal and mitigating actions have been put in place for any that have been identified.**

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	*Cabinet*	21.01.2026	Additional information added around the impact on the Welsh language.
2	Consultation	25.03.2026	The Welsh language section has been expanded to provide more detail on potential impact and mitigating actions have been included.

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monmouthshire
sir fynwy

SUBJECT:	**FINANCIAL UPDATE REPORT**
MEETING:	**CABINET**
DATE:	**8th July 2026**
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL	

1. PURPOSE:

1.1 To provide Cabinet with information on the Authority's final financial results for the 2025/26 financial year in respect of the revenue budget, capital programme, and associated reserves position.

1.2 To update Cabinet on the early indicative progress against the 2026/27 revenue budget.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet ***recognises:***

2.1 A final net revenue budget surplus of £1.068 million after transfers to earmarked reserves, which will be added to the Council Fund to ensure it is maintained at 5% of the Council's net expenditure budget. This represents a modest net surplus position after the majority of the gross in-year underspend has been applied to strengthen reserves and manage future financial risks.

2.2 As part of final outturn, £3.020 million of the gross revenue underspend will be transferred to earmarked reserves to strengthen the Council's financial resilience, improve capacity to manage future risks and volatility, and support planned investment in digital priorities, transformation activity and wider risk mitigation. This provides additional flexibility to support the Council's medium-term financial position and planned change priorities.

2.3 School reserve deficits increased by £2.788 million during the year, resulting in a cumulative year-end deficit of £6.880 million. This reduces the overall benefit of the positive year-end outturn and will continue to require close monitoring as part of the Council's wider financial resilience arrangements. Nineteen schools were in deficit at year-end, and all continue to operate with recovery plans agreed with the Local Authority.

2.4 The final outturn improved by £2.942 million since Financial Update 3, driven by late grant funding, stronger service outturns in some areas, and favourable treasury, financing and corporate movements.

2.5 While the year-end position is favourable, it was supported in part by one-off funding and corporate movements. Significant underlying pressure remains in demand-led and income-sensitive services, including children's social care, housing and homelessness, passenger transport, fleet, planning and building control, and Additional Learning Needs, which remain key risks for 2026/27.

2.6 Total capital expenditure for the year was £32.515 million, with a net underspend of £1.23 million, mainly reflecting lower vehicle replacement spend than budgeted, small timing differences on new grant-funded schemes, and additional grant funding reducing the call on core budgets.

2.7 Capital slippage requests total £45.22 million, including £1.88 million that will be re-purposed to create a capital contingency budget for 2026/27 to mitigate scheme risks or address emerging capital priorities.

2.8 There are early indications of cost pressures against the 2026/27 revenue budget, particularly within council tax collection, property, fleet and commercial property investment budgets. These will require close monitoring and prompt mitigation by services to help maintain a balanced outturn position during the year.

2.9 That Cabinet ***approves:***

- The strategy to replenish reserves as outlined in Section 7, including the allocation of £3.020m to Earmarked reserves, and £1.068m to the Council Fund.

- The use of £3.55 million in capital receipts to fund eligible revenue expenditure under the Welsh Government's "flexible use of capital receipts" direction ***(Appendix 4).***

- The capital slippage requests of £45.22 million (***Appendix 2 - Section 4***), acknowledging the factors that delayed project delivery.

- The capital budget revisions detailed in ***Appendix 7***, reflecting finalised external funding awards for the year.

KEY ISSUES

2025/26 revenue outturn headline position
The Council closed 2025/26 with a prudent and controlled outturn, delivering a modest net surplus after strengthening reserves: • **£4.1 million gross revenue position** before transfers to earmarked reserves, supported in part by one-off grant funding, favourable treasury movements and corporate factors • **£3.0 million transferred to earmarked reserves** to strengthen resilience, manage future risks and support planned change • **£1.0 million net surplus** transferred to the Council Fund to maintain 5% reserve cover
• **The in-year improvement has enabled targeted reserve replenishment to support financial resilience and planned change.** The Council continues to manage service pressures in children's social care, housing and homelessness, passenger transport, fleet, planning, building control and Additional Learning Needs.
Resilience strengthened, but key risks remain
• The outturn enables the replenishment of key reserves, including **Information and Communications Technology**, **Programme of Change** and **Risk Mitigation**, increasing resilience against future shocks and supporting planned investment in priority transformation and digital activity.
• **School balances continue to require close monitoring**, with deficits worsening by **£2.8 million** in-year to a cumulative year-end deficit of **£6.9 million**, reducing the overall benefit of the positive outturn.

Capital programme and delivery

- **Capital expenditure totalled £32.5 million**, with a modest net underspend driven mainly by vehicle replacement timing, grant timing differences and additional external funding reducing the call on core budgets

- **£45.2 million of capital slippage** is requested into 2026/27, reflecting the rephasing of a large multi-year programme rather than a loss of funding, alongside the creation of a **£1.9 million capital contingency** to manage emerging risks and priorities

Looking ahead to 2026/27

- Early 2026/27 pressures are indicated in **council tax collection**, **property services**, **fleet** and **commercial investment properties**. **School balances** also remain a key area for close monitoring, with recovery plans expected to take time to translate into an improved overall deficit position, while the wider economic and public spending outlook remains challenging.

Overall message

- The 2025/26 outturn is a **positive but prudent year-end position**: one-off improvement has been used to strengthen reserves and financial resilience, but it does **not remove the underlying structural pressures** or the need for continued close financial management through 2026/27 and beyond.

3 Context

3.1 The 2025/26 budget round reflected the sustained period of increased levels and complexity of demand within School ALN provision, and Adults and Children's social care, which were addressed through significant base budget increases.

3.2 The budget set by Council in March also had to take account of a number of wider pressures that continued to affect the Council's operating environment:

- The wider socio-economic landscape and cost of living challenges that continue to have an impact on our communities, with a consequential increase in demand for Council services, and impact upon income generating services.
- The wider public sector challenges which impact upon Council services, notably within Health where efforts to improve patient pathways impact upon the level and complexity of demand for Social care.
- Headline inflation rates remaining above UK Government targets, with some discrete areas of Council services continuing to experience cost pressures on supplies and services.
- In continuing efforts to combat inflation, interest rates have remained higher for longer and above previous UK Government forecasts.

3.3 These factors increase demand for supportive Council services, place pressure on income-generating services, heighten risks around debt recovery, and contribute to a higher-cost operating environment.

4 Revenue budget outturn position

4.1 Full Council approved a total revenue expenditure budget of £236,778,000 for the 2025/26 financial year. This is inclusive of £28,352,000 of precepts or levies for Police, Fire, and Community Council services that are paid directly to these organisations. The Council's net controllable revenue budget spent on delivering Council services is therefore £208,426,000.

4.2 The final revenue budget outturn shows continued improvement against the revenue budget from earlier forecasts:

Financial Update	Over / (Under) Spend
1	£533,000
2	(£29,000)
3	(£1,146,000)
Final	(£4,088,000)

4.3 At outturn, a gross underspend of £4.088 million is reported before transfers to reserves, representing a 1.7% favourable variance against the total revenue budget. An improvement of £2.942 million since Financial Update 3.

Directorate	Budget £000's	Outturn £000's	Forecast Overspend / (Underspend) £000's	% Variance to budget
Social Care, Health & Safeguarding	78,198	76,073	**(2,125)**	-2.7%
Learning, Skills & Economy	72,698	73,070	**372**	0.5%
Infrastructure	21,251	20,956	**(295)**	-1.4%
Place & Community Wellbeing	5,638	5,030	**(608)**	-10.8%
People, Performance & Partnerships	6,324	6,242	**(82)**	-1.3%
Legal & Governance	3,088	3,143	**55**	1.8%
Resources	8,452	8,690	**239**	2.8%
Debt financing, reserves, precepts & levies, insurances	41,545	40,134	**(1,411)**	-3.4%
Expenditure to be financed	**237,193**	**233,339**	**(3,855)**	-1.6%
Financing	(237,193)	(237,427)	(233)	0.1%
Total	**0**	**(4,088)**	**(4,088)**	-1.7%

4.4 The majority of directorates improved by year-end, reflecting additional grant funding, active in-year budget management, service mitigations, favourable income performance in some areas, and lower costs in selected corporate budgets.

4.5 However, the improved overall position continues to mask significant underlying pressure in demand-led services, particularly children's social care, housing and homelessness, passenger transport, fleet, planning and building control, and Additional Learning Needs. It is also important to recognise that the final outturn was supported by a range of one-off factors, including unbudgeted grant funding and favourable corporate movements, which do not remove the ongoing financial risks for 2026/27.

4.6 The principal areas of variance across service budgets are summarised below. This section is intended to highlight the main drivers of the outturn position, with full service-level detail provided in ***Appendix 2***.

4.7 **Adult Social Care** closed the year with a significant underspend, largely due to the full utilisation of additional external funding, including Pathways of Care Transformation funding, Social Care Workforce Sustainability funding and further late-year regional funding. This was alongside in-year management action and service mitigations. While the outturn is favourable, underlying demand, care market pressures and rising unsecured client debt remain important financial risks into 2026/27.

4.8 **Children's Social Care** remained under pressure during the year, although the service closed broadly within budget. Placement costs were mitigated through fostering and kinship arrangements, grant support for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, and the continued delivery of planned savings. However, significant pressure remains from external legal costs and reduced grant support for family services, and the service remains exposed to any new high-cost demand entering the system.

4.9 **Housing Services** continued to report an overspend, reflecting the cost and complexity of providing temporary accommodation and the delayed opening of Severn View. Whilst bed and breakfast usage remains low, the service continues to face pressure from voids, repairs and maintenance, private leasing costs, reduced rental income and wider homelessness demand. A more detailed review of the budget position and mitigating action is being taken forward in 2026/27.

4.10 Within **Learning, Skills and Economy**, the main pressure related to Additional Learning Needs, particularly the Local Authority Individual Development Plan budget and the contingency budget, where demand for support has continued to increase. This was partly offset by lower spend on independent placements and some lower bespoke support costs later in the year. School reserve deficits also worsened during the year, underlining the continuing budget challenge within the school's sector.

4.11 Within both **Infrastructure, and Place & Community Wellbeing**, the overall position was mixed. Pressures remained in fleet maintenance, passenger transport, planning, building control and some homelessness-related budgets, reflecting demand growth, income shortfalls, reactive maintenance and operational disruption. These were more than offset by favourable positions in waste, highways, schools catering, decarbonisation, leisure, parking income and other income-generating services, resulting in underspends at overall directorate level.

4.12 Within **Resources**, the overall outturn reflected generally strong budget control across the directorate, with vacancy savings and restraint on non-essential expenditure helping to support the wider corporate recovery position. However, this was partly offset by a prudent year-end provision in relation to the Council's commercial investment portfolio, particularly Castlegate Business Park, together with a corresponding transfer to reserves to provide cover for future risks and pressures associated with commercial property investment.

4.13 A number of services reported favourable positions by year-end, notably within **Leisure and Wellbeing**, **Schools Catering**, **Decarbonisation**, parts of **Highways**, and several corporate budgets. These improvements were generally driven by stronger income performance, staffing savings, grant income and lower than anticipated costs, and they helped offset pressures elsewhere in the revenue budget.

4.14 A specific cost pressure during the year related to the increase in employers' National Insurance contributions. Although funding support was subsequently confirmed, this did not fully meet the additional cost in 2025/26 and therefore added to the financial challenge considered through the budget process.

4.15 Pay award pressures were also managed during the year. Whilst both NJC and teaching pay awards were above budget assumptions, the additional in-year financial support received meant that these pressures could be accommodated without further material deterioration in the outturn position.

4.16 Debt financing costs moved favourably during the year, reflecting higher average investment balances, stronger investment returns and lower than anticipated borrowing requirements for much of the year. However, this was partly offset by a weaker council tax income position than budgeted, due to increased discounts and exemptions, although the overall financing position still closed favourably because of the lower call on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme budget.

4.17 Eligible revenue expenditure of £3.55 million was supported through capital receipts under capitalisation direction. This continues to provide important short-term support to the revenue budget, although medium-term financial planning assumes a tapering down of this support over time.

4.18 As part of the approved revenue budget, services were required to bring forward and deliver savings totalling £10,701,000. At outturn 92.6% (£9,908,000) of these were achieved. Full details of progress against individual savings targets can be found at ***Appendix 3*** to this report.

4.19 **Storm Claudia** created additional in-year revenue costs of £543k across a range of services, reflecting the Council's response, recovery and reinstatement activity. These costs are included within the directorate positions reported in this section. The cost of repairing the damage sustained at the Council's owned assets at Osbaston Primary, Overmonnow family learning centre and Drybridge House will be fully covered by insurance.

4.20 A claim was submitted to Welsh Government under the Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme, and grant support of £88k has now been received. This funding is reflected within the corporate outturn position.

4.21 Separate support payments totalling £288k were made to households and businesses affected by the storm. These were fully funded by Welsh Government grant and therefore did not add pressure to the Council's revenue outturn.

4.22 The longer-term capital impact of Storm Claudia remains uncertain. However, £4.142m of Welsh Government flood recovery funding has been secured to support the repair of major landslip events caused by the storm, including sites at Llanthoney Valley, Forest Coal Pit and Cwmyoy. The full extent of longer-term damage across the Council's infrastructure assets will take time to assess, and this continuing uncertainty will need to be managed carefully within the wider capital programme.

4.23 **Robustness of budget forecasting during the year:**

Table 3: Budget forecasting at formal reporting periods

2025/26 Budget forecast in £000's	Total Over / (Under) Spend	Social care & Health	Learning, Skills & Economy	Infrastructure	Place & Community Wellbeing	Resources	People, Performance & Partnerships	Law & Governance	Other
Update 1	533	1,074	40	(61)	141	(95)	99	64	(729)
Update 2	(29)	149	169	(314)	(21)	(145)	48	69	16
Update 3	(1,146)	(477)	462	(473)	(83)	(151)	6	76	(506)
Final	(4,088)	(2,125)	372	(295)	(608)	239	(82)	55	(1,604)

4.24 The most significant movements in forecasting during the year were within Social Care and Health, where the position improved from a £1.074 million overspend at Update 1 to a £2.125 million underspend at outturn, and within the 'Other' category, which contains corporate, treasury and financing budgets. Other directorates were comparatively more stable, although there were still notable changes within Learning, Skills and Economy, Place and Community Wellbeing, and Resources between reporting periods.

4.25 Forecasting remained challenging during the year because a number of the largest budget areas were affected by factors that were difficult to predict with precision and which changed late in the financial year. These included late notification and maximisation of grant funding, particularly within adult social care and corporate budgets; volatile demand-led pressures in services such as ALN, children's social care, housing and passenger transport; uncertainty around income levels in planning, building control, leisure and council tax; and the year-end effect of corporate adjustments and reserve movements.

5 School Balances

5.1 School balances deteriorated further during 2025/26. Collective school balances stood at a deficit of £4.092 million at the start of the year, and schools drew down a further £2.788 million by outturn, resulting in a cumulative deficit balance of £6.880 million being carried forward into 2026/27. While this is a worsening position, it is not unexpected in all cases, as some schools are implementing planned structural changes, particularly to staffing, that can take time to deliver and may initially deepen deficits before recovery is achieved.

5.2 The number of schools in deficit increased from 15 at the start of the year to 19 at outturn. This position worsened through the year, with 18 schools forecast to be in deficit at each of Updates 1 to 3 before a further school moved into deficit at year end. The year-end movement therefore reflects both continuing underlying financial pressure and the fact that some recovery strategies require changes that do not generate an immediate in-year benefit.

5.3 The overall deficit position remains concentrated in a relatively small number of settings, with the largest pressures sitting within secondary-age provision and the pupil referral service. Year-end balances also show that deficits are not confined to one part of the sector, with a mixed position across school phases and a number of primary schools also carrying deficit balances. All schools in deficit have agreed recovery plans with the Local Authority, and those plans continue to be subject to regular monitoring, support and challenge. For 2026/27, schools have been asked to set budgets that reflect a realistic path to recovery over time, recognising that this will not be achievable in a single year in all cases.

5.4 Underlying pressures continue to reflect the lasting impact of the pandemic on attendance, behaviour and increased Additional Learning Needs, alongside wider pay and cost pressures. These factors have increased the staffing and specialist support required within schools and continue to place strain on budget recovery. This is not unique to Monmouthshire and reflects a broader challenge facing school funding and financial resilience across Wales. The Authority will continue to work closely with schools to support sustainable medium-term recovery plans and to engage constructively at a national level on the longer-term funding issues affecting the sector.

Table 4: Movement in Schools balances

School balances by setting Deficit / (Surplus)	1st April 2025	Draw upon reserves	31st March 2026
	£000's	£000's	£000's
Comprehensive schools	1,366	305	1,671
3-19 / Middle	1,386	855	2,241
Primary schools	(306)	461	155
Pupil Referral Service	1,645	1,167	2,813
Total	**4,092**	**2,788**	**6,880**

5.5 ***Appendix 2*** provides the detailed explanation of the reasons for service variances to budget, the full movement in school balances, and details of progress against the Authority's capital programme during the year.

6 Reserves

6.1 The level of the Council Fund reserve stood at £10.89 million at the start of 2025/26, excluding delegated school balances. This represented 5% cover as a proportion of the Council's 2025/26 net revenue budget and was in line with the approved Medium Term Financial Strategy. Following the 2025/26 outturn, £1.068 million of the remaining net surplus will be transferred to the Council Fund so that this core reserve is maintained at 5% of the Council's net revenue budget for 2026/27.

6.2 Alongside the transfer to the Council Fund, the outturn position also enables the replenishment of key earmarked reserves. As set out in paragraph 6.3, this includes proposed transfers of £267,000 to the Information and Communications Technology Reserve, £253,000 to the Programme of Change Reserve and £2.5 million to the Risk Mitigation Reserve. These transfers strengthen the Council's overall resilience against future financial risks and volatility, while also increasing capacity to invest strategically in priority service areas through digital investment, transformation activity and other planned change programmes.

6.3 **Proposed reserves rationalisation and replenishment:**

		£000's	

Gross revenue budget surplus		-4,088	
Transfer to ICT Reserve		267	To replenish the reserve to support essential technology investment, and other priority digital investment.
Transfer to Programme of Change Reserve		253	To increase capacity within the reserve to support planned transformation activity and invest-to-save work.
Transfer to Risk mitigation reserve		2,500	To strengthen the Council's resilience against future financial risks, volatility and unforeseen pressures.
Net revenue budget surplus		-1,068	
Transfer to Council fund		1,068	To maintain 5% cover of 2026/27 revenue budget
Final balance		**0**	

6.4 Based upon the above reserve movements and when taking into account the most up to date financial modelling, the forward projection of reserve balances is shown below:

Table 6: Reserves projection based on 2025/26 outturn and the latest financial modelling

31st March	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Council Fund	10,885	11,953	12,849	13,813	14,849	15,963
School Balances	-4,092	-6,880	-6,880	-6,880	-6,880	-6,880
Earmarked Investment Reserves	3,048	3,450	1,976	1,707	1,536	1,433
Earmarked Risk Reserves	2,640	5,207	5,119	5,031	4,943	4,854
Earmarked Partnership Reserves	1,912	1,564	1,414	1,289	1,339	1,389
Service Reserves	2,191	5,288	5,320	5,778	6,263	6,776
Total useable revenue reserves	16,584	20,581	19,798	20,738	22,050	23,536

6.5 A detailed breakdown of useable revenue reserves is shown at ***Appendix 6***.

7 Capital budget

7.1 Capital expenditure totalled £32.515 million for the year, with a net under spend of £1.23 million reported.

7.2 This mainly reflects lower vehicle replacement spend than budgeted, a small underspend on new grant-funded schemes where funding could not be fully applied within the year, additional grant funding reducing the call on core budgets, and smaller underspends within the infrastructure and property maintenance programmes.

7.3 After allowing for capital financing adjustments, £1.867 million of budget is available to be repurposed to create a capital contingency budget for 2026/27 to mitigate scheme risks or address emerging capital priorities.

7.4 **Capital slippage – *Appendix 2 (Section 4)*** details capital schemes requiring slippage into next financial year.

7.5 By their nature, capital schemes are often delivered over more than one financial year, and some reprofiling is expected as project timelines respond to changes in scope, procurement, delivery sequencing and external dependencies. In total, 79 schemes are requesting slippage into 2026/27, amounting to £45.21 million. This represents just over half of the total capital budget for the year.

7.6 A high-level summary of the principal reasons for slippage is set out below by scheme classification.

Scheme name	Slippage £000's	Comment
Infrastructure schemes	4,821	Slippage mainly reflects the rephasing of larger highways, bridge, public rights of way and wider infrastructure works into 2026/27 and beyond, where delivery timescales have moved because of ongoing design and investigation work, grant timing, supply chain and resource constraints, weather-related disruption, and the need to align works with wider programme activity and procurement sequencing.
Development schemes	8,213	Slippage mainly reflects the rephasing of larger multi-year development schemes where delivery has moved because of revised regional programme timescales, dependency on external approvals, site and property identification issues, feasibility and design work taking longer than planned, and capacity constraints affecting project mobilisation.
Schools & Education	5,269	Slippage mainly reflects the profiling of major school projects across multiple years, with some schemes still progressing through final delivery stages, summer completion programmes, grant timing differences and the need to align spend with construction and implementation milestones.

Insurance schemes	4,987	Slippage reflects the timing of major insured reinstatement works, where claims are underway but the main contract works are scheduled into 2026/27 in line with insurers' programme and delivery timescales.
ICT Schemes	274	Slippage mainly reflects rephasing of technology replacement and system projects where delivery is dependent on external partners, decommissioning or final development work, and where some budgets are being carried forward to support the next phase of implementation.
Budget contingency	1,867	This budget reflects released capital resources that are proposed to be carried forward into 2026/27 as a contingency to help manage emerging scheme pressures, delivery risks and new priorities arising during the year.
Property Maintenance	1,353	Slippage mainly reflects the timing of planned maintenance works across the property estate, with some schemes carried forward to meet the forward programme of works and to align delivery with operational access, contractor availability and wider property priorities.
Renovation Grants	601	Slippage mainly reflects lower than planned take-up and delivery of grant-funded works within the year, driven by contractor capacity, staffing support constraints and late funding timing, with budgets carried forward to meet committed demand in 2026/27.
Section 106	1,322	Slippage reflects the need to carry forward unspent developer contributions where approved schemes were not fully delivered within the year, so that committed works can be completed in 2026/27 in line with the relevant funding conditions.
Specific Grant Funded	16,275	Slippage mainly reflects grant-funded schemes where expenditure has moved into 2026/27 because of delivery rephasing, scheme timing changes, dependency on external approvals or commissioning, and the need to match spend to grant conditions and implementation milestones.
Capitalisation Directive	223	Final qualifying revenue expenditure was slightly lower than budget and will be carried forward to support the 2026/27 programme.

Total	**45,218**	

7.7 The capital programme continued to be affected by both internal and external delivery constraints during 2025/26. These included limited internal capacity, challenges in securing external professional support, some supply chain disruption, and the practical difficulties of managing in-year grant allocations that carry specific conditions around eligible expenditure and compressed delivery timescales. Over time, such factors may give rise to additional financial consequences, particularly through inflationary pressures and the implications for capital financing.

7.8 **Capital budget revisions –** During the financial year, the Council received a number of new grants and external contributions to support capital investment that were not included in the original approved capital budget. In addition, a number of existing grant-funded budgets have required adjustment as final allocations and delivery timescales have been confirmed. ***Appendix 7*** sets out the proposed revisions requiring Cabinet approval in accordance with the Council's financial procedures.

7.9 **Capital receipts –** The table below sets out the capital receipts available to support future capital commitments. The current balance of banked capital receipts is fully committed, leaving limited flexibility to support additional capital investment. This also means that the use of capital receipts to support the revenue budget through the capitalisation direction is expected to taper to zero over the medium term.

7.10 A significant capital receipt of £2.5 million was received in December 2025 in relation to the sale of the site of the former Mounton House School, Pwllmeryric, Chepstow.

Table 5: Capital receipts balances

Capital receipt balances	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**
	£000's	**£000's**	**£000's**	**£000's**	**£000's**
Balance as at 1st April	6,083	4,540	3,291	2,336	1,680
Capital receipts used for financing	(606)	(595)	(50)	(50)	(50)
Capital receipts used to support capitalisation direction	(3,547)	(2,931)	(1,708)	(708)	0
Capital receipts to meet redundancy costs	0	0	0	0	0
Capital receipts Received	2,610	0	0	0	0

Capital receipts Forecast	0	2,278	803	103	103
Forecast Balance as at 31st March	**4,540**	**3,291**	**2,336**	**1,680**	**1,733**

8 2026/27 revenue budget – early update

8.1 **Budget Context**

8.2 The Council entered 2026/27 facing a continued challenging financial environment. The cost of delivering services remained under pressure from inflation, pay growth, higher interest rates, supply chain issues, and continued volatility in service demand, particularly within social care, education and housing. Wider cost of living pressures also continue to affect residents and, in turn, demand for Council services and the performance of some income-generating budgets. More broadly, the wider economic backdrop remains uncertain, with global instability and domestic economic pressures continuing to influence inflation, interest rates and the outlook for public finances. Against that backdrop, constructive engagement on the future local government funding position will remain important to help ensure that future settlements properly reflect the level of demand and cost pressures facing councils.

8.3 Cabinet's draft budget proposals for 2026/27 were built around estimated cost increases of £16.8 million, equivalent to around 8% of the Council's budget. These proposals prioritised the protection of frontline services and targeted additional investment in key areas, including social care, education, Additional Learning Needs, preventative services, highways resilience and support for vulnerable residents.

8.4 The final 2026/27 budget was balanced through a combination of increased Welsh Government funding, Council Tax, service efficiencies, reform and income measures. The final Welsh Government settlement provided an increase of 4.4% for Monmouthshire, equivalent to around £6.15 million, with only a minor technical adjustment at final stage. Alongside this, the final budget includes £3.5 million of service efficiencies and reforms, a 5.95% increase in County Council Tax, and continuation of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme to protect those on lower incomes.

8.5 The approved budget for 2026/27 continues to prioritise investment in frontline services. This includes further investment in school budgets, preventative children's services, social care, Additional Learning Needs, Welsh-medium education, infrastructure maintenance, and services that support community wellbeing and resilience. Core resident services such as waste collections, leisure centres, recycling centres, libraries and community hubs have been maintained. Following consultation feedback, the final budget also included additional capital investment, phased over three years, to further address potholes and improve the condition of the County's road network.

8.6 While the 2026/27 budget has been set on a balanced basis, the medium-term outlook remains very challenging. Significant financial risks remain around service demand, pay awards, specific grant funding, school reserve deficits, income collection, debt recovery and wider economic conditions. The national fiscal outlook also points to a tightening in public spending over the following two years, which is likely to make future funding settlements more difficult across local government. The Council therefore enters 2026/27 with a balanced budget, but one that still requires continued close financial management, delivery of approved savings and reform plans, and ongoing monitoring of the wider operating environment.

8.7 **Early indications**

8.8 The main early variances identified by services relate to a small number of areas. These include pressure on **council tax collection**, reflecting the same issues seen in 2025/26 around higher levels of discounts and exemptions; pressure within **property services**, due to increased maintenance costs and business rates within office accommodation together with a shortfall in external fee income, albeit partly offset at this stage by vacancies that are expected to be filled; pressure within **fleet**, driven by increased costs of vehicle hire, maintenance, and fuel; and pressure within **commercial investment properties**, where vacant units are resulting in the Council having to meet utilities and other holding costs.

8.9 **School balances** remain a significant near-term risk. Although recovery plans are in place, there is a realistic prospect that the overall deficit position could deteriorate further before it begins to improve. This reflects the timing lag in delivering staffing and structural changes, continuing pressures from pupil numbers, attendance, behaviour and Additional Learning Needs, and the fact that some schools will need to invest management capacity and take difficult decisions before savings are fully realised. The key financial objective is therefore not simply immediate deficit reduction, but to ensure that recovery plans are credible, actively monitored and capable of moving schools onto a sustainable path over the medium term.

8.10 Close monitoring and prompt mitigation will be essential to maintain financial stability throughout the remainder of the year.

8.11 **Remaining budgetary risks for 2026/27**

8.12 Alongside the above early indications, there remain key specific budgetary risks that have the ability to further impact upon the revenue budget during 2026/27. These sit within a broader backdrop of economic uncertainty, continued volatility in inflation and interest rates, and a more constrained outlook for public spending over the medium term, all of which may influence the level of future funding available to local government.

Increasing service demand	Volatile demand in social care, education and housing could create material in-year pressure.
Funding	Late or adverse grant decisions could leave unfunded cost pressure.
Annually allocated grant funding	Unconfirmed annual grants create service, staffing and delivery risk.
Service reforms	Savings and reform delivery must land early to secure full-year benefit.
Pay awards	National pay settlements remain uncertain and could exceed budget assumptions.
School reserve deficits	School deficits remain a resilience risk and recovery will take time.
Income and Debt recovery	Income collection remains exposed to household affordability and weaker recovery rates.
Economic factors	Inflation, interest rates and wider economic shocks could increase costs quickly.
Labour market	Workforce shortages may increase staffing and commissioning costs.

9 **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

9.1 The report sets out the resource implications arising from revenue and capital budget activity during the year. There are no additional resource implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

10 **EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**

10.1 This report provides Members with information on the Authority's revenue and capital outturn position and does not, in itself, give rise to any direct equality or future generations implications.

CONSULTEES:

Senior Leadership Team
Performance & Overview Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Members

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Appendix 1 – Summary revenue budget service variances
Appendix 2 – Revenue and capital outturn report including school budgets
Appendix 3 – Performance against budgeted savings
Appendix 4 – Capitalisation directive schedule
Appendix 5 – Movement in individual school balances
Appendix 6 – Projected useable revenue reserves
Appendix 7 – Capital budget revisions requiring Cabinet approval

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Appendix 1 – Summary of service variances

Directorate	Over / (Under) Spend (£,000s)	% Variance to budget	Over spend	Under spend
Social Care, Health & Safeguarding	**(2,125)**	-2.7%	**Children's services** £148k – external legal costs, reduced family support grant and continuing demand pressures.	**Adult services** £2,617k – additional external funding, including Pathways of Care Transformation, Social Care Workforce Sustainability and late-year regional funding, alongside management action.
			Housing & Homelessness £465k – temporary accommodation, voids, repairs and maintenance, private leasing costs, delayed opening of Severn View and reduced rental income.	**Support / Public Protection** £122k – staffing savings, grant offset and small favourable service variances.
Learning, Skills & Economy	372	0.5%	**Standards / ALN** £307k – pressure on LA IDP and Contingency Pot 2 budgets, plus pressures in Early Years, Breakfast Clubs and staffing.	**Economy, Employment & Skills** £129k – additional income.
			School support / central budgets £216k – Increased business rates, lower photovoltaic recharge income, teacher pension costs and smaller staffing pressures.	**Individual Schools Budget** £23k – lower centrally held rates costs partly offset by additional year-end pressures.
Infrastructure	**(295)**	-1.4%	**Facilities & Fleet** £411k – fleet maintenance pressures from hire, repairs, fuel and software; passenger transport pressures from demand and contract costs.	**Neighbourhood Services** £281k – favourable positions in waste, highways and related services.
				Catering & Decarbonisation £426k – schools catering, decarbonisation and other favourable service variances.
Place & Community Wellbeing	**(608)**	-10.8%	**Planning / car parks** £252k – income shortfalls and related pressures.	**Leisure & Wellbeing** £715k – improved income and favourable leisure activity.
				Countryside / other services £145k – staffing savings and grant-supported income.
People, Performance and Partnerships	**(82)**	-1.3%	**Chief Executive's Office** £25k – staffing and income pressures in communications, procurement and programme assurance.	**People / Policy / Customer** £107k – staffing savings and lower non-pay costs.
Law & Governance	**55**	1.8%	**Democratic Services** £32k – staffing and election/by-election related costs.	**None of note**
Resources	**239**	2.8%	**Commercial, Corporate & Landlord Services** £361k – commercial property and landlord service pressures, including vacant unit costs.	**Finance** £90k – staffing savings, grant income and systems-related underspends.

Directorate	Over / (Under) Spend (£,000s)	% Variance to budget	Over spend	Under spend
				ICT / Corporate H&S £32k – vacancy savings and reduced supplies and services.
Corporate costs & levies	**(793)**	-2.7%	**Coroner service / non-distributed costs** £57k – levy increase and minor corporate cost pressure.	**Strategic initiatives / corporate** £850k – late Welsh Government support, corporate adjustments and lower than expected levies.
Debt financing, Council tax, reserves, insurances	**(852)**	-0.4%	**Council tax** £345k – higher discounts and exemptions than budgeted.	**Treasury / financing / CTRS** £1,197k – stronger investment returns, lower borrowing requirement and lower call on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.
Year-end surplus	**(4,088)**	-1.7%		

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Section 1 - Overall Revenue Position

Table 1: 2025/26 Revenue budget outturn summary statement

Service Area	Original Budget 2025/26	Budget Adjustments	Revised Annual Budget	Actual Outturn	Actual (Under) / Over Spend @ Outturn	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend @ Update 3	Variance
	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's	'000's
Social Care & Health	77,916	282	78,198	76,073	**(2,125)**	(477)	(1,648)
Learning, Skills & Economy	73,030	(333)	72,698	73,070	**372**	462	(90)
Infrastructure & Place	21,442	(192)	21,250	20,955	**(295)**	(473)	178
Place & Community Wellbeing	6,009	(371)	5,638	5,030	**(608)**	(83)	(525)
People, Performance & Partnership	6,317	8	6,324	6,242	**(82)**	6	(88)
Law & Governance	3,050	38	3,088	3,143	**55**	76	(21)
Resources	9,083	(631)	8,452	8,690	**239**	(151)	390
Corporate Costs & Levies	29,147	195	29,342	28,550	**(793)**	516	(1,309)
Net Cost of Services	**225,994**	**(1,004)**	**224,991**	**221,754**	**(3,236)**	**(123)**	**(3,114)**
Appropriations	10,784	1,419	12,203	11,584	**(619)**	(43)	(575)
Expenditure to be Financed	**236,779**	**415**	**237,193**	**233,338**	**(3,855)**	**(166)**	**(3,689)**

Financing	(236,778)	(415)	(237,193)	(237,427)	**(233)**	(980)	747
Net General Fund (Surplus) / Deficit	**0**	**0**	**(0)**	**(4,088)**	**(4,088)**	**(1,146)**	**(2,942)**

Table 2: 2025/26 Revenue budget outturn detailed statement

Service Area	**Original Budget 2025/26**	**Budget Adjust-ments**	**Revised Annual Budget**	**Actual Outturn**	**Actual (Under) / Over Spend @ Outturn**	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend @ Update 3	Variance
	'000's	**'000's**	**'000's**	**'000's**	**'000's**	'000's	'000's
Adult Services	47,536	285	47,821	45,205	**(2,617)**	(861)	(1,755)
Children Services	24,105	202	24,307	24,455	**148**	2	146
Housing & Homelessness	2,512	208	2,720	3,185	**465**	502	(37)
Public Protection	1,886	45	1,932	1,898	**(34)**	2	(36)
SCH Support	1,877	(459)	1,418	1,330	**(88)**	(121)	33
Social Care & Health	**77,916**	**282**	**78,198**	**76,073**	**(2,125)**	**(477)**	**(1,648)**
Economy, Employment & Skills	853	(48)	805	676	**(129)**	7	(136)
Emergency Planning	178	6	184	201	**17**	17	1
Individual Schools Budget	58,790	6	58,796	58,885	**89**	(126)	215
Resources	1,217	1	1,218	1,305	**87**	113	(25)
Standards	11,992	(297)	11,695	12,002	**307**	451	(144)
Learning, Skills & Economy	**73,030**	**(333)**	**72,698**	**73,070**	**372**	**462**	**(90)**
Infrastructure Management	559	(213)	345	344	**(2)**	(13)	11

Facilities & Fleet Management	11,739	558	12,297	12,709	**412**		158	254
Neighbourhood Services	8,668	(641)	8,027	7,746	**(281)**		(107)	(175)
Catering & Decarbonisation	476	105	581	157	**(424)**		(511)	87
Infrastructure & Place	**21,442**	**(192)**	**21,250**	**20,955**	**(295)**		**(473)**	**178**
Culture and Community Learning	943	(95)	849	849	**1**		18	(17)
Countryside, Destination and Environment	1,149	(60)	1,088	1,070	**(18)**		(61)	43
Leisure and Wellbeing	1,764	(144)	1,619	904	**(715)**		(200)	(515)
Performance, Finance and Resources	1,639	169	1,808	1,681	**(127)**		(174)	46
Placemaking and Car Parking	515	(241)	274	526	**252**		333	(81)
Place and Community Wellbeing	**6,009**	**(371)**	**5,638**	**5,030**	**(608)**		**(83)**	**(525)**
Chief Executives Office	2,917	(68)	2,850	2,874	**25**		35	(10)
People	1,934	(10)	1,924	1,876	**(48)**		(30)	(18)
Policy, Scrutiny & Customer Service	1,466	85	1,551	1,492	**(59)**		1	(60)
People, Performance & Partnership	**6,317**	**8**	**6,324**	**6,242**	**(82)**		**6**	**(88)**
Democratic Services	1,957	38	1,995	2,026	**32**		28	3
Legal and Land Charges	1,093	0	1,093	1,117	**23**		48	(25)
Law & Governance	**3,050**	**38**	**3,088**	**3,143**	**55**		**76**	**(21)**
Commercial, Corporate & landlord Services	2,133	(461)	1,672	2,033	**361**		(118)	479
Corporate Health & Safety	163	0	163	160	**(3)**		0	(3)
Finance	3,791	(243)	3,547	3,457	**(90)**		(11)	(79)

Information Communication Technology	2,996	73	3,069	3,040	**(29)**	(21)	(7)
Resources	**9,083**	**(631)**	**8,452**	**8,690**	**239**	**(151)**	**390**
Precepts & Levies	28,699	0	28,699	28,666	**(33)**	(33)	(1)
Coroner's	278	0	278	318	**40**	40	0
Archives	228	0	228	228	**0**	0	0
Corporate Management	452	0	452	247	**(205)**	(62)	(143)
Non Distributed Costs (NDC)	387	(88)	299	316	**17**	0	17
Strategic Initiatives	(2,820)	351	(2,470)	(3,081)	**(611)**	571	(1,182)
Insurance	1,923	(67)	1,856	1,856	**(0)**	0	(0)
Corporate Costs & Levies	**29,147**	**195**	**29,342**	**28,550**	**(792)**	**516**	**(1,309)**
Net Cost of Services	**225,994**	**(1,004)**	**224,990**	**221,754**	**(3,236)**	**(123)**	**(3,114)**
Interest & Investment Income	(788)	0	(788)	(1,326)	**(538)**	(410)	(128)
Interest Payable & Similar Charges	7,624	0	7,624	7,778	**155**	135	19
Charges Required under Regulation	6,158	0	6,158	6,016	**(143)**	(144)	2
Other Investment Income	0	0	0	(5)	**(5)**	(2)	(3)
Attributable Costs - Fixed Asset Disposal	0	0	0	15	**15**	0	15
Borrowing Cost Recoupment	(3,918)	0	(3,918)	(4,020)	**(102)**	(102)	(0)
Capital Expenditure Financing	0	326	326	326	**0**	0	0

Contributions to/from Reserves	1,708	1,093	2,801	2,801	**0**		480	(480)
Appropriations	**10,784**	**1,419**	**12,203**	**11,584**	**(619)**		**(43)**	**(575)**
Expenditure to be Financed	**236,779**	**415**	**237,193**	**233,338**	**(3,855)**		**(166)**	**(3,689)**
General Government Grants	(100,637)	0	(100,637)	(100,637)	**0**		0	0
Non Domestic Rates	(34,612)	0	(34,612)	(34,612)	**0**		0	0
Council tax	(110,596)	(415)	(111,011)	(110,666)	**345**		(480)	825
Council Tax Benefit Support	9,066	0	9,066	8,488	**(578)**		(500)	(78)
Financing	**(236,778)**	**(415)**	**(237,193)**	**(237,427)**	**(233)**		**(980)**	**747**
Net General Fund (Surplus) / Deficit	**0**	**0**	**0**	**(4,088)**	**(4,088)**		**(1,146)**	**(2,942)**

Section 2 - Directorate – Service Variance Comments

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & SAFEGUARDING DIRECTORATE	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	**1,074**	**149**	**(477)**	**(2,125)**

CHIEF OFFICER COMMENTARY

The directorate is reporting an underspend of £2.125M showing an improvement of £1.648M since the last reported forecast.

The main area of fluctuation has been in Adult services. The main theme has been the provision and maximisation of external/grant funding to offset either core costs or alleviate demand increase in care provision.

A large contribution has been the full utilisation of the £914K Pathways of Care Transformation grant (hospital discharge) which has helped support the costs of care and service provision within adult services. The service also largely benefits from the continuation of the £1.1M Social Care Workforce Sustainability grant, for which we were also provided with an additional £52K in March.

During the latter part of the year, we were also refunded for our element of the Regional Integration Fund that was removed at the beginning of the year, plus an additional allocation for our share of the regional underspend. Maximising this opportunity also further benefitted the outturn position within adults.

In terms of the directorate savings target when this year's budget was set, if Housing is excluded, this has been met in full and has been exceeded slightly by £65K due to adult review savings pushing past its target. Once Housing's savings are considered, the directorate fell short of its savings target as Housing did not meet its target by £135K due to the delayed opening of Severn View .

Debt, due to clients not paying their adult assessed care charges, increased during the last quarter by £400K closing at £2.8M. This is due to the need to fund placements where clients have lost capacity to manage their finances, but a deputy is not yet appointed. Because of the risks this represents the cost is added to unsecured debt. Once a deputy has been appointed, the finances can be means tested and any associated charges can be reviewed, and eligibility to funding can be determined.

Housing is a new addition into this directorate and shows a £465K overspend at outturn. As we move into 2026/27, we will further gain insight into the causing effects and what can be introduced to tackle this position.

Children's, and other remaining divisions, have seen their outturn positions broadly remain within that reported at update 3, which is pleasing to note.

ADULT SERVICES				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn

Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	201	(326)	(861)	(2,617)

This division closed the year with a £2.6M underspend. It is a complicated picture across the service with a number of over and underspends against different service areas, reflecting both changing patterns of demand, the allocation of grants part way through the year, and the on-going impact of service re-organisation.

The main contributing factor to the improved underspend has been the maximisation of external/grant funding afforded to adults, such as the allocation of £914K via the Pathways of Care Transformation Grant, and through ensuring full spend against the Regional Integration Fund revenue grant. The pathways of care transformation grant were allocated part way through the year. Recruitment against the grant is on-going and is now fully committed against spend into the next financial year. We also benefit from the continuation of the £1.1M Social Care Workforce Sustainability grant, which we had an additional £52K awarded in the last month of the financial year.

Savings are also being made against the internal care at home staffing salary with increasing amounts of care being commissioned through external providers. Although there are challenges in recruiting to in-house carers, the service is seeking to increase the number of carers employed into our in-house reablement services. This is in line with our service transformation plan to expand reablement so that more people have the opportunity to maximise their independence. This represents cost avoidance for the Local Authority as we continue to reduce the number of people who do not need care and support at the end of a period of reablement.

The main pressure includes the full year effect of care provision and adult placements made at the end of the previous financial year and the ongoing rise in residential placements. There have been an additional 10 external residential placements during the year [this does not include our own in house provision of Severn View Park]. At the end of the year there are a total of 369 residential placements demonstrating the on-going increased demand throughout the year. This is in keeping with the aging demographic of the county together with the complexity of needs experienced by our older residents. Residential placements for people living with later stage dementia are generating a particular budgetary pressure.

During the year the service has continued to achieve its target of reviewing cases and has validated the outcomes from the reviews that have already taken place, yielded savings of £315K meaning that the service has exceeded its saving target by £65K.

We are still experiencing difficulties in progressing CHC cases for younger people with mental health and learning disabilities that is impacting on our ability to move eligible adults into health service budgets. This is an issue for all Welsh Local Authorities

Opportunities taken to adopt cost avoidance approaches to care have also, even though early stages, contributed to the positive outturn. Our information advice and assistance service (IAA) is now in the initial stages of implementation with 5 new IAA workers now operational. This allows us to develop our preventative offer and will feed our new intake model where reablement is the first consideration to mitigate or prevent care.

Debt due to unpaid Adult social care charges remains a challenge, increasing in the last quarter to its closing position of £2.8M. We are continuing to take actions both preventatively and in ensuring appropriate recovery actions are taken, with the introduction of a Senior Debt Review panel.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	598	83	2	148

At the start of the year there were 190 children looked after including 15 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, increasing to 192 (with 16 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children) at the end of the year. Even though the actual children entering and leaving care change over the year, it is promising that overall numbers remain stable and has helped to contribute towards this division broadly remaining within its allocated budget.

Cost pressure of additional children has been mitigated through placing children within fostering and kinship placements (in line with our placement strategy). Cost pressures associated with placement costs have also been mitigated through grant funding for UASC and through a slight delay in our in-house residential provision becoming fully operational.

There continues to be a significant pressure related to the use of external counsel / barrister costs for children who are in a public law process in the family courts, which overspent by £342K. The service only refers children to the family court if it is the only way to secure a child's safety and long-term stability / welfare. The costs associated with a court process are high, and the use of barristers is often unavoidable. Court costs were inflated this year because of 2 specific complex cases. In terms of corrective action, the service will continue to liaise with the legal team to explore any potential to reduce the costs associated with court.

Another area of reported overspend relates to pressure that has arisen through a reduction in the Welsh Government grant that supports our Family Support services, which amounted to £317K. Family support is critical to supporting children to remain safely at home wherever possible and helps both to safely reduce the numbers of children who need to come into care and safely return children to their families and communities at the earliest opportunity. Although it represents a cost pressure, the service has maintained family support despite the significant reduction in the WG grant. Family support is fundamental to cost avoidance (particularly given the cost of placements) and helps us to secure best outcomes for children and families. Most children open to children's services (normally around 550 at any one time) will be receiving family support of some description, with many others receiving services through early help and community-based support. If these services were disrupted or reduced more children would need to come into care. Maintaining family support services at their current level has been put forward as a proposal in the 2026/27 budget.

Another positive note is the service achieved 100% of its £1.9M savings related to practice change in care planning for children and placement development.

HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS

Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	238	366	502	465

The service reported an overspend of £465k at outturn, which was broadly in line with the £502k forecast at Update 3. The main salient causes of the overspend remain as:

- the delayed opening of Severn View leading to additional costs within Bed and Breakfast provision plus the need for extra costs once occupied,
- several voids within existing provision,
- costs associated with the maintenance and repair of existing provision,
- making-good following hand-back of Bed and Breakfast provision,
- costs within private leasing arrangements driven by increased repair, maintenance, and cleaning costs,
- reduced income due to rent arrears and bad debt and,
- staffing costs.

These issues are indicative of providing emergency and temporary housing for people who have high support needs. The bottom-line position within housing has benefitted from £59K due to the Housing benefit clawback reduction; however, this has not been sufficient to offset the current costs.

Moving forward into 2026/27, as this is a new service addition into the directorate, a deep dive into the budget and what potential mitigating actions will be reviewed, along with how the full year effect of new services such as the temporary accommodation service in Severn View settles can be measured.

On a closing positive note, the usage of B&B accommodation continues at the lowest level for many years and stood at just 6 on the last date of the year.

PUBLIC PROTECTION

Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(5)	0	2	(34)

The service closed the year with a small underspend of £34k. Forecasts remained close to break-even throughout the year, with the final position improving slightly from the £2k overspend reported at Update 3 due to additional income generation.

SCH SUPPORT				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	42	26	(121)	(88)

The underspend was largely forecast at update 3 and was as a result of delayed recruitment to the Head of Housing and Public Protection, coupled at year end with an opportunity to divert some core staff costs to grant funding.

LEARNING, SKILLS & ECONOMY DIRECTORATE	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	**40**	**169**	**462**	**372**

CHIEF OFFICER COMMENTARY:

The Directorate's outturn position is an overspend of £372k. This is largely due to an increase in ALN pupils needing support within our schools, which is funded by the LA IDP Budget or Contingency Pot 2. These contingency budgets are overspent by £542k in 25/26, but we have been able to partly offset this overspend with an underspend on Independent placements of -£258k. In addition, the position has worsened by £112k due to a higher business rates bill for King Henry school, which sits within the Individual Schools Budget line. The contingency budgets have been able to increase for 26/27, as we are expecting a further decrease in spend on Independent Placements, as well as reduced spend on pupils receiving ALN bespoke packages, due to plans to open an SEMH (Social, Emotional & Mental Health) Provision in 26/27, which will be able to support those pupils and reduce our costs and reliance on third party providers.

School balances have deteriorated by £2,788,224 during the year, with a carry forward deficit balance of £6,879,539 into 26/27 and 19 schools in a deficit. All schools that are in a deficit have a recovery plan in place and where they are not meeting their recovery plan, further challenge is being provided by the Local Authority to understand the reasons and to look at mitigating actions that can be taken to ensure recovery plans are met.

Economy, Employment & Skills				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'s	0	12	7	(129)

The service reported an underspend of £129k at outturn, due to unbudgeted income received during the year.

Emergency Planning				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'s	0	16	16	17

Emergency Planning reported a £17k overspend at outturn, largely due to budgeted employee-related savings not being fully achieved.

Individual Schools Budget				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	6	6	(126)	89

The service reported a final overspend of £89k. The position worsened late in the year due to a £112k increase in the business rates bill for King Henry school, which sits within this budget line, offsetting the underspend previously reported. This was alongside a number of additional costs arising later in the year.

- £44k of energy costs were incurred at the Deri View School site while refurbishment works were underway ahead of Ysgol Y Fenni moving to the site from September 2026.
- £16k of costs related to Mounton House while the site was unoccupied prior to the PRS moving in.
- £19k of additional funding was provided to Ysgol y Trefynwy because nursery pupils attend full time rather than half days.
- £32k of costs related to Storm Claudia, including staff overtime and mileage, together with support for Osbaston School to replace damaged furniture, play equipment and resources and to meet cover costs.

Resources				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn

Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	31	59	112	87

The service reported a final overspend of £87k. This was mainly due to lower than anticipated photovoltaic recharge income and increased teacher pension costs, together with smaller staffing pressures across support services, School and Student Access, and the Financial Management Services Team.

- The largest pressure related to a shortfall in photovoltaic recharge income, as income from school solar panels was lower than expected.
- There was also an increase in teacher pension costs, along with smaller staffing pressures across support services, School and Student Access, and the Financial Management Services Team.
- These pressures were partly offset by grant funding used to support staffing costs and by Premature Retirement Compensation costs being lower than originally estimated.

Standards

Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	3	77	451	307

The service reported a final overspend of £307k. This was mainly driven by continuing pressures within ALN, particularly the cost of supporting a growing number of pupils through the LA IDP and Contingency Pot 2 budgets, alongside pressures in Early Years, Breakfast Clubs and MoST staffing. These were partly offset by savings on out of county placements, ALN transport and Early Years staffing, together with additional grant income and lower than anticipated costs in some ALN bespoke support packages.

- Main overspending pressures arose from ALN demand-led budgets, especially the LA IDP and Contingency Pot 2 budgets, as well as pressures in Expansion of Early Years, Breakfast Clubs and MoST staffing.
- There were also smaller overspends across ALN management, administration, equipment and psychology services.
- These pressures were partly offset by lower costs on out of county placements, reduced ALN transport costs, grant-funded Early Years staffing and additional grant income.
- The final position also benefited from ALN bespoke support costs being lower than forecast later in the year.

INFRASTRUCTURE DIRECTORATE	**Update 1**	**Update 2**	**Update 3**	**Outturn**

Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	**(61)**	**(315)**	**(473)**	**(295)**

CHIEF OFFICER COMMENTARY

The Directorate has returned a £295k underspend following active in-year management to mitigate a range of operational pressures and utilise underspends across services.

Key challenges were experienced within Facilities & Fleet, particularly around fleet maintenance where increased breakdowns, reactive repairs and reliance on hired vehicles drove significant cost pressures during the year. Passenger Transport also faced demand-led pressures and increasing supply chain costs.

Elsewhere, Operations, Neighbourhood Services and Catering generated underspends, supported by higher income, vacancy savings, efficiencies in waste and highways, and income from renewable energy generation. While some of these underspends were offset by storm-related costs (Storm Claudia), they have been able to mitigate wider Directorate pressures.

Overall, the outturn reflects effective financial management, with services responding proactively to emerging risks, maximising income opportunities, and controlling expenditure. Whilst some underlying demand and cost pressures remain. particularly in fleet and transport - actions are being taken to mitigate these going forward into 2026/27.

Infrastructure Management				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	2	5	(13)	(2)

The Infrastructure management team has underspent by £2k due to a managed underspend in supplies & services and a part-year staff vacancy.

Facilities & Fleet Management				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	563	385	157	412

Facilities and Fleet have over spent by £412k, due to:

- **Fleet Maintenance -** £325k overspent – There is a significant overspend within fleet maintenance budgets, primarily driven by increased costs associated with vehicle hire, maintenance, fuel, Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) maintenance, and software. During the last quarter, there has been a notable rise in vehicle breakdowns across Passenger Transport, Winter Maintenance, and Waste fleets. This has led to higher repair costs and increased reliance on hired vehicles, either through taking on additional hires or extending existing agreements while vehicles remain off the road. These pressures have resulted in a £300k deterioration in the forecast position since Update 3. The financial impact is being driven primarily by reactive maintenance and unplanned hire requirements and is largely outside of direct service control but officers will be reviewing fleet utilisation going forward to mitigate any potential pressure impacting 26-27.

- **Passenger Transpor**t – net £96k overspent – As reported previously the overspend is mainly due to a shortfall against the distance-eligibility saving that was included in the 2025/26 budget. The full saving was not achieved as updated pupil numbers differed from original projections and some routes were subsequently assessed as unsafe, requiring transport to continue. On top of this the service has seen a growth in PRS contracts, increased costs of pupil season tickets purchased from external operators, and unbudgeted expenditure on external safer walking route assessments. Internal operations have overspent by £105k driven by income losses following the return of several contracts due to high sickness levels. These pressures are partially offset by a £54k staff saving within the regional transport team through capitalising core staff costs, £110k of transport administration grant income, and a £47k increase in Public Transport Subsidy Grant.

Neighbourhood Services				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(381)	(460)	(106)	(281)

Neighbourhood services has under spent by £281k, due to:

- **Waste Services** – £10k overspent – Efficiencies totalling £299k have been achieved during the year through savings on disposal and recycling contracts, increased income, employee underspends arising from vacant posts, and a one-off gain-share receipt from the waste-to-energy partnership. As reported at Update 3, these savings were reallocated to help offset other pressures within the directorate. The remaining net overspend of £10k primarily relates to costs incurred in responding to Storm Claudia.

- **Grounds Maintenance** – £48k over spent – Mainly due to additional staffing, plant, and material costs incurred in response to Storm Claudia.

- **Highways Operations & External Clients** – £12k underspent - mainly due to additional income from external client works within Swtra.

- **Streetlighting** – On Budget

- **Highways Design, Flooding & Road Safety** – £327k net underspent – the service is reporting a net £327k underspend, primarily driven by improved income, staff vacancy savings and reduced expenditure on supplies and services. The improved position reflects higher than anticipated road closure income and SABS income, which were not included in the Update 3 forecast. In addition, grant funding has been used to offset the majority of revenue costs incurred in responding to Storm Claudia.

Catering & Decarbonisation				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(245)	(245)	(511)	(424)

Operations has under spent by £424k, due to:

- **Schools Catering** - £229k underspent – This position is primarily driven by part-year staffing savings, increased Universal Free School Meals (UFSM) income—reflecting a £0.20 per meal uplift to £3.40 from September—and reduced supplies and services expenditure partly due to a higher take up of pupils choosing the light bite option over the main meal. The service produced 780,584 pupil meals in 2025/26, with average take-up of approximately 73%, compared with 58% prior to the introduction of UFSM.

- **Decarbonisation** - £150k underspent – driven by increased income from the Council's solar farm and wider renewables portfolio. This reflects higher ROC rates, favourable weather conditions, and improved inverter performance. Additional savings arose from a part-year staffing vacancy within the team. These underspends were partly offset by a £102k pressure relating to a prior-year corporate mileage saving that was not achieved, as the corporate pool car scheme did not commence operation until April, resulting in no savings being realised in 2025/26.

- **Corporate Energy Saving** - £45k underspent – final consumption figures for the authority have now been collated and costs have come in £45k below budget.

PLACE & COMMUNITY WELLBEING DIRECTORATE	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn

Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	**142**	**(21)**	**(83)**	**(608)**

CHIEF OFFICER COMMENTARY

The Place and Community Wellbeing Directorate has underspend of £608,000. This favourable variance is primarily attributable to increased income generation within Leisure and Wellbeing services, alongside higher-than-anticipated car park income, particularly from parking penalty charges. This uplift is directly linked to the appointment of additional parking enforcement officers.

The position is further supported by reduced expenditure within the Performance, Finance and Resources division. These savings are largely due to staffing underspends arising from the delayed implementation of the central services restructure, which is now scheduled for delivery in 2026/27.

These favourable variances have mitigated in-year budget pressures resulting from the under-recovery of planning and building control fee income.

The Directorate's outturn position reflects that income performance across a number of service areas has strengthened during 2025/26. The Directorate will seek to sustain this improved income position into 2026/27, as this would provide greater financial resilience and support the implementation of the restructures previously delayed but required across the Directorate. In turn, helping to ensure that the Directorate has the capacity to continue delivering front line services in line with the Council's wider objectives of healthier communities, improved wellbeing, sustainable services and fit-for-purpose community infrastructure.

Culture and Community Learning				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	38	18	18	1

The Culture and Community Learning division has overspent by £1k, the improvement for update 3 to outturn relates to additional grants.

Countryside, Destination and Environment				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(14)	(36)	(61)	(18)

Countryside, Destination and Environment underspent by £18k, primarily as a result of income exceeding budget following the receipt of additional grant funding. The adverse variance between Update 2 and Update 3 reflects income levels being lower than previously forecast.

Leisure and Wellbeing

Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	(2)	(200)	(715)

The Leisure and Wellbeing division underspent by £715k, primarily due to income exceeding budget, particularly as a result of the annual January campaign. This improved income performance more than offset the £89k loss of income arising from the closure of Abergavenny Leisure Centre and reduced service level agreement income. The annual membership campaign again performed strongly during the year, contributing to an increase in forecast income, including an additional £100k from direct debit memberships. Outdoor Adventure, Sports Development and Play also reported an improved income position, contributing to the overall favourable movement between Update 3 and outturn.

Performance, Finance and Resources

Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(5)	(80)	(174)	(127)

The Performance, Finance and Resources division underspent by £127k, primarily as a result of staff vacancies. The variance between Update 3 and outturn relates to an invoice being funded centrally rather than directly through Sports Development, as previously forecast.

Placemaking and car parking

Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	123	78	333	252

The Placemaking, Highways and Flooding division has overspent by £252k due to:

- **Development Management and Building Control** – The section has overspent of £127k, relating to under-recovery of building control fees and increased software costs. Along with lower than anticipated planning fees in particular the delay in one substantial planning application (£65k) until 26-27 has seen an adverse impact on previously forecast income.

- **Highways Development and Car Parks –** The section has over spent by £206k. This is due to the under recovery of fixed penalty charges, filling of previously vacant posts, higher than anticipated publication costs associated with the implementation of the new fees and charges.

PEOPLE, PERFORMANCE & PARTNERSHIPS DIRECTORATE	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit /(Surplus) £'000s	**99**	**48**	**6**	**(82)**

CHIEF OFFICER COMMENTARY

People, Performance & Partnerships and the Chief Executives Office have a combined overspend by £82k.

Within the CEO's Office, the overall forecast reflects a mixed financial position. Overspends are primarily driven by staffing pressures and reduction in income. Whilst some overspends are offset by other service area underspends, pressures persist and officers will continue to seek mitigation strategies as the year progresses.

Chief Executives Office				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit /(Surplus) £'000s	117	48	35	25

The Chief Executives Office is currently has overspent by £25k. The principal factors contributing to this position are as follows:

- **Communications and Community Development - £25k overspend** – The overspend is primarily attributable to a budget pressure of arising from the creation of the Head of Communications and Active Travel post, coupled with a reduction in active travel income of £25k. These pressures have been partially offset by a contribution from Welsh Government relating to the secondment of the Head of Communications.

- **Contact Centre - £84k underspend** – An underspend has been achieved due to system and licence spend coming in below budgeted levels.
- **Strategic Change & Programme Assurance - £57k overspend** – The underspend is due to the capitalisation of the change management program.
- **Libraries, Hubs, and Community Learning** – This area is forecast to **underspend by £20k,** with no significant variances expected.
- **Procurement - £47k overspend** – The overspend is due to higher than anticipated contract costs.

People				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(14)	(14)	(30)	(48)

The People sections has underspent by 48k for the financial year. The principal factors contributing to this position area as follows:

- **Organisational Development & Training- £8k underspend** – The overspend is attributable to staff costs exceeding budget, primarily due to the inability to achieve vacancy factor savings offset by a small saving withing the training budget.
- **Payroll & System Support - £123k underspend** – An underspend has been achieved as a result of a reduction in system and supplies & services expenditure of £44k alongside net staff saving of £78k arising from changes in hours and a payroll technician post being held vacant.
- **People Management - £41k overspend** – Additional costs have been incurred due to unachievable staff vacancy factor and extra staff resource being put in place to bolster team capacity.
- **Occupational Health - £42k Overspend** – due to increased demand

Policy, Scrutiny & Customer Service				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(4)	14	1	(59)

Policy, Scrutiny & Customer Services has underspent by £59k, broken down as follows:

- **Corporate - £15k overspend** – mainly due to the inability to achieve staff vacancy factor savings, SLT Pay award and an increase in subscription costs.
- **Scrutiny and Customer Complaints - £13k overspend** – unable to achieve staff vacancy savings.
- **GIS - £24k underspend** – saving in system and supplies & services spend.

- **Levies & Subscriptions - £36k overspend** – corporate subscription costs (WLGA, LGA) have exceeded available budget, in addition the authority has made the decision to renew the membership of New Local causing a further pressure as this budget was removed as part of 25/26 budget savings.
- **Performance & Data - £42k underspend** – due to staff savings from part year vacant posts.
- **Equalities & Welsh Language - £9k overspend** – the authority is due to enter a new translation SLA with Torfaen, discussions are ongoing around implementation timescales.
- **Partnership management - £39k Underspend**
- **Community Safety – Net £28k Underspend**– due to staff savings from part year vacant posts.

LAW & GOVERNANCE DIRECTORATE	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit /(Surplus) £'000s	**64**	**69**	**76**	**55**

CHIEF OFFICER COMMENTARY

Law & Governance has overspent by £55k at outturn. The overspend is primarily due to staffing pressures, by-election costs and income shortfalls across service areas; although income improved in the final quarter and is the reason for the £21k improvement from Update 3.

Democratic Services				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	39	27	28	32

Democratic services has over spent by £32k, this is due to:

- **Members** - £41k overspent – due to staff increases where there is an overspend against superannuation contributions plus an inability to achieve vacancy factor savings.
- **Committee & Election services** - £9k under spent – primarily due to staff savings from part year vacancies and grant support for an apprentice post in Elections, being partially offset by an overspend in by-election costs.

Legal and Land Charges				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'s	25	42	48	23

Legal & Land Charges has over spent by £23k, due to:

- **Legal** - £30k overspent – primarily due to a reduction in fee income and the inability to achieve staff vacancy factor savings.
- **Land Charges** - £7k under spent – due to savings from a vacant part-time post.

RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	**Update 1**	**Update 2**	**Update 3**	**Outturn**
Deficit /(Surplus) £'000s	**(95)**	**(145)**	**(151)**	**239**

CHIEF OFFICER COMMENTARY

At outturn, the Resources Directorate reports a £239k overspend, reflecting an adverse movement from the last reported forecast. This is driven primarily by Commercial, Corporate & Landlord Services (£361k overspend), largely from shortfalls against budget at Castlegate Business Park and Newport Leisure Park due to vacant units, and a planned transfer to reserves in lieu of an overall combined surplus on the wider investment portfolio. These pressures are partially offset by underspends across Finance (£90k), ICT (£29k) and Corporate Health & Safety.

Overall, the position highlights ongoing volatility in income-generating assets and the impact of in-year strategic decisions as risk mitigation measures going into 2026-27. Tighter cost control and vacancy management has however delivered mitigating savings across the directorate portfolio.

Commercial, Corporate & landlord Services				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(27)	(151)	(118)	361

Commercial, Corporate and Landlord services has over spent by £361k, due to:

- **Investment Properties** - £225k overspend, due to:
  - **Newport Leisure Park** - £53k overspent – NLP made a £265k surplus in 25/26, however this is £53k below budget due to unbudgeted costs (such as electricity and rates) associated with vacant units, the remaining vacant unit is now under offer.
  - **Castlegate Business Park** - £171k over spent – primarily due to increased operating costs associated with vacant units that fall to the authority to manage, including higher-than-expected rates, electricity charges, and one-off fees. Efforts continue to be made to

work closely with existing tenants to secure the expansion and development of established businesses, whilst also providing incubator spaces for the growth of new ventures. Opportunities to diversify and attract sectoral partners continue to be explored and constructive recent dialogue with Cardiff Capital Region has contributed to a number of promising recent enquiries.

- **Landlord Services** – £191k overspent – our remaining investment portfolio (including County Farms & industrial units) returned a combined surplus of £530k. The opportunity was taken to move £391k of this to reserve and is the main reason for the over spend and adverse swing from Update 3.

- **Building Cleaning & Public Conveniences -** £54k under spent – driven by staffing vacancies, along with savings on maintenance and business rates for public conveniences.
- **Property Services –** On Budget –Property Services has returned a net break-even position. During the year, the service has experienced pressures within accommodation budgets, driven by increased maintenance and rates costs across the office estate (£129k), alongside a reduction in Police fee income (£198k) due to a downturn in the Police works programme. These pressures were identified early in the financial year and have been mitigated through an underspend on employee costs, primarily resulting from the management of staff vacancies.

Corporate Health & Safety				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	0	(3)

Corporate Health & Safety – £3k underspent – all costs incurred in response to directorate H&S matters has been accommodated from within services during the year and reported as part of their outturn position. The underspend within the service is as a result of reduced spend on supplies & services.

Finance				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(58)	24	(11)	(90)

The Finance division under spent by £90k, this is mainly due to:

- **Revenues, Systems & Exchequer** - £41k net underspend:

  - **Benefits** – £36k underspent - This position reflects £31k of additional grant income and a £23k reduction in non-pay costs, partially offset by an £18k increase in bad debt provision. Compared to the £53k overspend reported at Update 3, this represents an £89k improvement. The majority of this favourable movement is driven by changes in Housing Benefit Subsidy, reflecting the latest caseload profiles.

  - **Council Tax** - £68k overspent – overspend is primarily due to summons income received was £40k less than budget, as fewer debtors were taken to court last year. £27k additional service running costs, which are largely attributable to extra printing and postage costs. A £11k overspend relating to a residual budget pressure from the Finance restructure left against this cost centre and £2k unmet vacancy factor savings. These pressures were offset by one off Welsh Government grant income of £12k for the administration of this years Retail Rate Relief scheme.
  - **Charity Relief** - £4k underspent – due to a combination of awards for discretionary rate relief being lower than the budget set. Plus some returned Cost of Living Grant payments and one off grant funding for administering the LIDBRSS on behalf of Welsh Government.
  - **Debtors** - £2k overspent - Unmet vacancy factor savings, additional National Insurance costs over the budget set and extra postage costs make up this over spend. The improvement since update 3 is largely the result of adjusted payroll costs for maternity leave.
  - **Cashiers** - £17k underspent – Card payment fees were £24k over budget, as more payments were made by card. However, these additional costs were offset by reduced security carrier costs, holding off system developments and holding open, for a time, a cashier vacancy to generate an overall saving of £17k against this cost centre. The saving has increased since update 3 as some planned system development work has been deferred to next year.
  - **Revenues System Administration** - £9k overspent - The annual contract costs for the Northgate system are £12k more than budget. These were however offset by some one-off grant income from Welsh Government in respect of rate account administration.
  - **Financial Systems Support & Vat** - £63k underspent – £31k saving resulting from vacant posts plus a £16k saving against the non pay budget and £16k additional recharge income. The underspend has increased by £17k since update 3 due to an additional vacancy and lower than initially anticipated consultancy costs for the Business World System upgrade.

Finance - £49k under spent - due to part year staff vacancies and the apportionment of officers time to the administration of council tax premiums.

Information, Communication & Technology

Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(10)	(18)	(21)	(29)

The ICT division underspent by £29k, this is due to:

- **SRS & Digital Programme Office** – £10k underspent – Final contribution figures from SRS were £1,000 below budget, reflecting late-year software savings which partially offset increased costs relating to O365 licences and PSBA line rentals. In addition, further efficiencies have been achieved through a managed underspend on supplies and equipment. This has resulted in a net underspend of £10,000 within the section.
- **Digital, Design & Innovation** – On budget – As previously reported, the team transitioned to the Shared Resource Service (SRS) in August 2025 following the Cabinet-approved Digital, Data and Technology agreement. The resulting increase in collaboration costs of £73,000 will be funded from the IT reserve, in line with Cabinet's decision. This ensures there is no adverse impact on the Directorate's overall financial position in 2025–26. Ongoing funding requirements have been incorporated into the 2026–27 budget proposals.
- **Cyber Security Partnership -** £13k underspent – no change from update 3 - Cyber Security has underspent by £13k as our partnership contribution was lower than expected due to staff vacancy savings.
- **Telephony -** £6k underspent – saving due to a reduction in annual call charges.

CORPORATE COSTS & LEVIES DIRECTORATE	**Update 1**	**Update 2**	**Update 3**	**Outturn**
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	**(27)**	**680**	**516**	**(788)**

Precepts & Levies				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(33)	(33)	(33)	(33)

Saving due to the South Wales Fire Service precept being lower than originally anticipated for the financial year.

Coroners Services				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	18	18	40	40

Final levy is higher than budgeted due to additional requirements of the services following Chief Coroner review.

Archives (Gwent Joint Records)				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	0	0
No variance forecast				
Corporate Management				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(13)	(67)	(62)	(201)
Unbudgeted income that cannot be attributed to services				
Non-Distributed Costs				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	0	17
A small over spend was reported at outturn following late adjustments to pension strain costs.				
Strategic Initiatives				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	761	571	(611)
Funding shortfall in relation to increased employer's national insurance contributions. The final funding allocation received from Welsh Government was considerably short of the increased costs incurred.				
Insurance				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	0	0
No variance				
TREASURY & RESERVES	**Update 1**	**Update 2**	**Update 3**	**Outturn**
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	**486**	**541**	**(43)**	**(619)**
Interest & Investment Income				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(257)	(257)	(410)	(538)

Lower-than-anticipated expenditure resulted in higher average investment balances over the year, leading to returns exceeding the income budget. Performance was further supported by continued strong yields from pooled fund investments.

In addition, investment balances were temporarily increased in the final quarter due to additional borrowing, further enhancing overall returns

Interest Payable & Similar Charges				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	423	429	135	155

The Authority's borrowing requirement for the year was lower than initially forecast, which has reduced financing costs and mitigated the anticipated overspend.

Borrowing costs increased marginally during the final quarter as additional borrowing was secured to provide greater cost certainty. This was undertaken during a temporary reduction in rates, against a backdrop of market volatility linked to the Iran conflict.

Charges Required Under Regulation				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(215)	(215)	(144)	(143)

Capital slippage funded from borrowing was higher than anticipated at the end of the previous year which has resulted in lower than anticipated charges. Underspend has decreased due to disposal of vehicles in year resulting in additional MRP charges being made. The adverse movement is matched by an increase in underspend against borrowing recoupment.

Other Investment Income				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(1)	(1)	(2)	(5)

Minor income received. Slightly increased from Update 3.

Borrowing Cost Recoupment				
Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	8	(102)	(102)

The underspend is due to several vehicles being disposed of in year and all remaining borrowing charges being made in year. This underspend is offset by an increase in charges required under regulation.

Attributable Costs - Fixed Asset Disposal

Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	0	15

Minor variance as revenue budget was used to supplement capital disposal budget which would have been overspent.

Contributions to/from Earmarked reserves

Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	535	576	480	0

Earmarked reserves were adjusted for any changes in reserve utilisation so that service revenue budgets could reflect their amended positions.

The movement from month 6 is due to the previously unbudgeted contribution to Council Tax Premium reserve being recognised with a year end budget adjustment. The movement was mirrored by a corresponding adverse movement within Council tax.

FINANCING	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(1,185)	(1,205)	(980)	(233)

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(400)	(420)	(500)	(578)

Caseloads for the year were lower than the budget set, a trend that continued through to year end.

Council Tax

Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn
Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	(785)	(785)	(480)	345

The tax base for the year has been met and continues to increase. However, there has been a significant upward shift in the number of properties awarded an exemption or discount, which continued through to year end. This is partly because of the November floods which rendered some properties uninhabitable and requiring significant remedial works. As a result there was a shortfall in council tax income compared to the budget set for the year. The Council Tax Premium collection rate was 70% by the end of March 2026 which is higher than anticipated when the budget was set. A decision has therefore been made to top up the Council Tax Premium Reserve, which is the main reason for the movement between update 3 and 4.

General Government Grants

Outturn Forecast	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Outturn

Deficit / (Surplus) £'000s	0	0	0	0
Income received to budget.				

3. School Balances

3.1. A Board of Governors who are responsible for managing the school's finances, directly governs each of the Authority's Schools. However, the Authority also holds a key responsibility for monitoring the overall financial performance of schools. Below is a table showing the Schools' balances position, for each Educational Cluster.

School Reserves in £000's	(A) 2025/26 Opening Reserves (Surplus) / Deficit	(B) Draw / (Contribution) @ Update 1	(C) Draw / (Contribution) @ Update 2	(D) Draw / (Contribution) @ Update 3	(E) Draw/ (Contribution) @ Outturn	(A+E) 2025/26 Year-end Deficit
Cluster						
Abergavenny	**1,351**	635	817	1,025	1,043	**2,393**
Caldicot	**(37)**	641	826	866	684	**647**
Chepstow	**989**	26	(27)	139	(231)	**757**
Monmouth	**144**	407	392	433	125	**270**
Pupil Referral Service	**1,645**	1,126	961	963	1,167	**2,813**
Total	**4,092**	**2,835**	**2,970**	**3,426**	**2,788**	**6,880**

3.2. The movement of individual schools in deficit at the end of the year is shown below:

Start of year	Update 1	Update 2	Update 3	Update 4
Total: 15	**Total: 18**	**Total: 18**	**Total: 18**	**Total: 19**
King Henry VIII 3-19	King Henry VIII 3-19	King Henry VIII 3-19	King Henry VIII 3-19	King Henry VIII 3-19
Gilwern	Gilwern	Gilwern	Gilwern	Gilwern
Our Lady & St Michael's	Our Lady & St Michael's	Our Lady & St Michael's	Our Lady & St Michael's	Our Lady & St Michael's
Ysgol y Fenni	Ysgol y Fenni	Ysgol y Fenni	Ysgol y Fenni	Ysgol y Fenni
Caldicot School	Caldicot School	Caldicot School	Caldicot School	Caldicot School
Rogiet	Rogiet	Rogiet	Rogiet	Rogiet

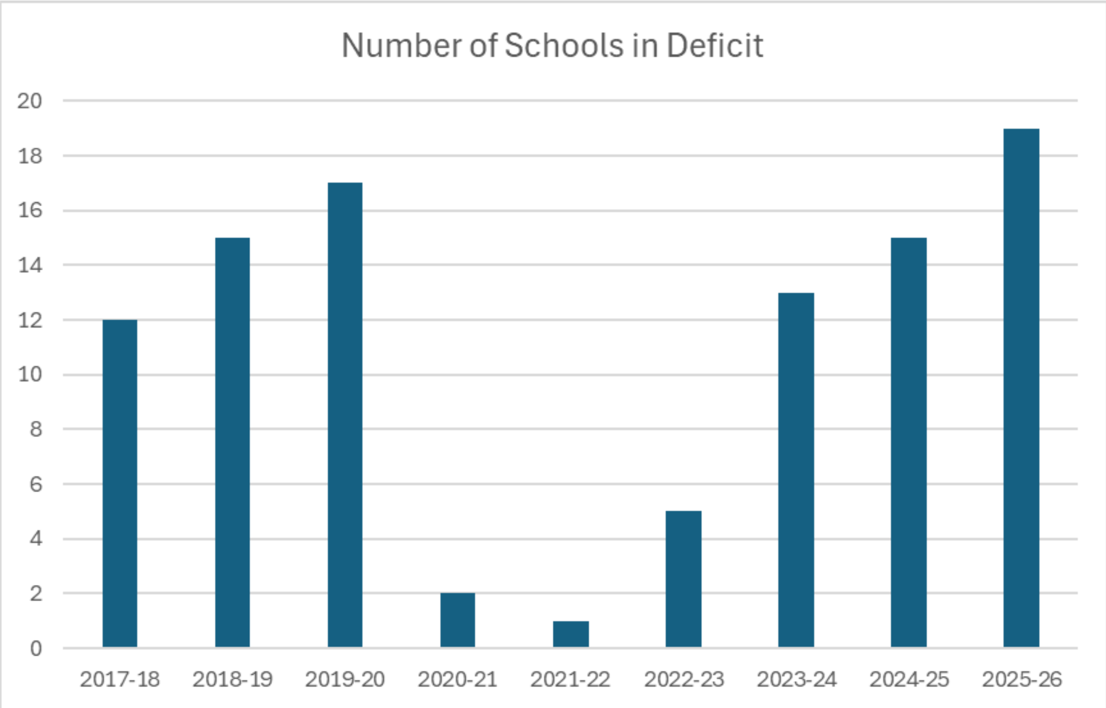
Ysgol y Ffin	Ysgol y Ffin	Ysgol y Ffin	Ysgol y Ffin	Ysgol y Ffin
Chepstow School	Chepstow School	Chepstow School	Chepstow School	Chepstow School
The Dell	The Dell	The Dell	The Dell	The Dell
Thornwell	Thornwell	Thornwell	Thornwell	Thornwell
Kymin View		Kymin View	Kymin View	Kymin View
Osbaston	Osbaston	Osbaston	Osbaston	Osbaston
Overmonnow	Overmonnow	Overmonnow	Overmonnow	Overmonnow
Ysgol y Trefynwy	Ysgol y Trefynwy	Ysgol y Trefynwy	Ysgol y Trefynwy	Ysgol y Trefynwy
PRS	PRS	PRS	PRS	PRS
	Castle Park	Castle Park	Castle Park	Castle Park
	Monmouth Comprehensive	Monmouth Comprehensive	Monmouth Comprehensive	Monmouth Comprehensive
	Cross Ash	Cross Ash	Cross Ash	Cross Ash
	Llandogo			
				Llantilio Pertholey

3.3. The legacy impact of the pandemic continues within the school environment, particularly in respect of attendance, behaviours and increased additional learning needs. This has required increased staff and specialist resources to tackle the issues presenting and increased overall costs of provision.

3.4. All schools with a deficit budget must agree a recovery plan with the Local Authority; this plan will set out clear actions that the school and Governing Body must take to see the school return to a surplus. These plans are monitored on a frequent basis and where schools do not meet their recovery plans, further challenge is provided by the Local Authority to understand the reasons and to look at mitigating actions to bring the plans back on track. The majority of the deficit (86%) relates to three schools; King Henry VIII 3-19 School, Chepstow School and the Pupil Referral Service. All three of these schools are a focus of support and challenge from the Local Authority, to ensure budgets return to a surplus within the agreed recovery plan timeframe.

Financial Year-end	Net level of School Balances (Surplus) / Deficit in £000's
2015-16	(1,156)
2016-17	(269)
2017-18	(175)
2018-19	232
2019-20	435
2020-21	(3,418)
2021-22	(6,956)
2022-23	(4,257)
2023-24	904
2024-25	4,092
2025-26	6,880

3.5. The decrease in school balances has resulted in an increase in the number of schools in deficit, as illustrated in the following table:



4. **Capital budget Outturn**

4.1. The summary Capital outturn position is as follows:

	Slippage B/F	Original Budget	Budget Adjustments	Slippage to 2026/27	Revised Budget 2025/26	Actual Outturn	Variance to budget at Outturn
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Expenditure							
Capitalisation Directive	63	3,708	0	(223)	3,547	3,547	0
Development Schemes Over £250k	9,083	730	(1,110)	(6,928)	1,774	1,811	37
Development Schemes Under £250k	1,955	90	259	(1,284)	1,020	1,018	(2)
Schools & Education	33	12,282	277	(5,269)	7,323	7,323	0
Infrastructure	3,958	6,076	723	(4,821)	5,936	5,498	(438)
Insurance Schemes	0	0	5,000	(4,987)	13	13	(0)
ICT Schemes	272	463	35	(274)	495	502	7
Budget contingency	1,300	0	0	(1,867)	(567)	0	567
Property Maintenance	716	2,659	1,639	(1,353)	3,661	3,601	(60)
Renovation Grants	192	900	494	(601)	985	981	(4)
Section 106	1,454	288	(11)	(1,335)	394	407	13
Specific Grant Funded	6,009	500	17,103	(16,275)	7,337	6,986	(352)
Vehicle Leasing	0	1,500	0	0	1,500	504	(996)
Fixed Assets Purchased from Revenue	0	0	326	0	326	326	0
Total Expenditure	**25,033**	**29,195**	**24,734**	**(45,218)**	**33,744**	**32,515**	**(1,229)**
Financing							
Supported Borrowing	0	(2,432)	0	0	(2,432)	(2,432)	0
General Capital Grant	0	(3,046)	0	0	(3,046)	(4,416)	(1,370)
Grants and Contributions	(8,860)	0	(19,649)	15,349	(13,160)	(12,946)	215
S106 Contributions	(1,621)	(288)	11	1,468	(430)	(440)	(11)
Unsupported Borrowing	(13,661)	(18,068)	205	22,398	(9,126)	(8,238)	888
Earmarked Reserve & Revenue Funding	(272)	(103)	(5,301)	5,235	(441)	(442)	(1)
Capital Receipts	(619)	(3,758)	0	768	(3,609)	(3,602)	7
Leasing	0	(1,500)	0	0	(1,500)	0	1,500
Total Financing	**(25,033)**	**(29,195)**	**(24,734)**	**45,218**	**(33,744)**	**(32,515)**	**1,229**

4.2. The capital expenditure at outturn showed a net under spend of £1.229 million. This was primarily due to the following schemes:

Scheme	Budget	Over / (Under) spend	Comments
Infrastructure	10,757	(438)	Given that the 2026/27 Infrastructure programme is fully funded, the £438k underspend on the 2025/26 programme can be released and carried forward to provide budget contingency in 2026/27.
Property Maintenance	5,014	(60)	Minor individual under spends within the programme that can be released as budget contingency for 2026/27.
Vehicles	1,500	(996)	Vehicle purchases are made in line with the operational requirements of individual services as identified throughout the financial year. During 2025/26, £504k of vehicle purchases were required.
Grant funded schemes	23,612	(352)	A number of new grant awards were made during 2025/26, requiring new schemes to be delivered quickly or eligible existing capital expenditure to be identified and charged to the grants. Where this was not possible in full within the year, a small underspend against the overall grant funding resulted.
Capital budget contingency	1,300	567	In total, £1.867m of capital budget contingency can be carried forward to 2026/27 following receipt of additional in-year funding from Welsh Government of £1.37m and the under spends within the wider programme as identified above.

4.3. **Capital Slippage**

4.4. Capital slippage for the year was £45.218 million. Schemes reporting slippage are:

Scheme category	Scheme	Slippage £000's	Comment

Development Schemes	South East Wales CJC Capital contribution	2,678	The South East Wales CJC capital delivery programme has been delayed and, as a result, local authority contributions will need to be reprofiled. The requested slippage will therefore be phased across future financial years in line with the latest delivery programme.
Development Schemes	Property Acquisition for Children and Young People with Complex Needs	1,831	This is a multi-year scheme that is dependent on identifying suitable properties to meet assessed demand.
Development Schemes	Asset Investment Fund	1,781	There was no call on this budget during the year. The funding will therefore be carried forward to support any future capital expenditure required at the Council's existing commercial investment sites.
Development Schemes	Housing Provision Borrowing Headroom	802	Funding is to be carried forward to enable continued investment in alternative temporary accommodation and to support delivery of the rapid rehousing policy as opportunities arise.
Development Schemes	RE:FIT Programme	250	Slippage is requested to meet outstanding Phase 1 costs, including retention, verification and capitalised monitoring costs, and to retain contingency funding for Phase 2 pending Cabinet/Council approval of the business case.
Development Schemes	Trellech Primary Nursery Childcare Scheme	191	The scheme was completed in early 2025, due to the timing of the Welsh Government grant the budget will be slipped to enable the final part of the grant to be claimed in 2026-27.
Development Schemes	Shire Hall/Monmouth Museum Move	183	Slippage required – this is a multi-year scheme. The works are fully committed; however, the scheme will not be finalised and full expenditure will not be realised until February 2027.
Development Schemes	Solar Farm Development Cost	150	Slippage is requested due to limited progress in 2025/26 arising from uncertainty over grid capacity, energy use, the delivery model and delays to the replacement Local Development Plan. Work is expected to progress in 2026/27 alongside the RLDP.

Development Schemes	Depots – Feasibility works: Transport Depot South of County	148	Slippage is requested as feasibility and design work has been delayed by the revised RLDP timetable, urgent health and safety works at existing depots and wider capacity pressures. The replacement depot remains a key requirement for fleet transition and service consolidation.
Development Schemes	Mounton House Refurbishment	104	Slippage arising from the timing of Property Services works which are due to be fully completed in 2026/27.
Development Schemes	Decarbonisation Investment	93	Slippage is requested due to capacity constraints arising from delays in recruiting decarbonisation posts, which has slowed delivery of investment projects. Staff are now in place and will begin reviewing and implementing measures in 2026/27, building on the surveys that have now been completed.
Disabled Facility Grants	Disabled Facilities Grants	601	Slippage is requested due to an underspend arising from limited contractor availability and the late receipt of HCF funding. Additional contractors have now been secured for 2026/27, together with part-time surveyor capacity to support delivery.
ICT Schemes	SRS Data Hall Migration	149	Slippage is requested as decommissioning work remains on hold. The project is being led by Torfaen and progress is therefore dependent on their programme. Funding will be required in 2026/27 once the project is completed.
ICT Schemes	Social Care Case Management System Replacement	98	The budget will be carried forward to support any final development work required.
ICT Schemes	ICT Desktop replacement budget	27	Slippage is requested as the in-year underspend on laptop replacements will be repurposed to support the 2026/27 programme. The remaining underspend of £2.4k offsets scheme 96069.
Infrastructure	Wye Bridge Monmouth works	2,166	Slippage is required as the original budget profiling assumed the construction phase would commence earlier than is now expected. Survey, investigation and design work may begin in 2026/27; however, current indications from Highways officers are that construction is unlikely to start before 2027/28.

Infrastructure	Reconstruction of Bridges & Retaining Walls	1,153	Slippage is requested across a number of bridge and retaining wall schemes that have been delayed or now span financial years. This includes Redbrook Rail Bridge, Chainbridge Refurbishment, Wye Bridge Monmouth scour works, Penrhos embankment repairs, landslip works supported by late Welsh Government grant funding, and Bethel Lane. Funding is therefore required to be carried forward into 2026/27 to complete outstanding design, investigation and construction activity.
Infrastructure	Carriageway Resurfacing - Various	450	Slippage is requested for Llanfoist Bridge surfacing, which has moved into 2026/27 and forms part of the wider active travel programme.
Infrastructure	Carriageway improvements - additional	363	Slippage is requested as the works are being delivered over a three-year period, as agreed with the Cabinet Member, to support more effective planning of maintenance projects. Funding has already been incorporated within the 2026/27 budget setting process.
Infrastructure	Highways (LGBI) Maintenance	190	Slippage is requested as delivery has been delayed by weather, ecological constraints and design issues. Welsh Government has extended the grant completion date to October 2027, allowing the remaining works to continue in 2026/27.
Infrastructure	Structural Repairs - PROW	185	Slippage required – Bridge replacements and repairs have been commissioned and ordered. However, due to supply chain constraints and limited resources, the works had commenced but were not completed by 31 March. Slippage is therefore required to fund the remaining balance in 2026/27.
Infrastructure	Wye Bridge Chepstow works	171	Slippage is requested following delays caused by the bridge closure. Funding will be carried forward to support further investigation, design and scour works in 2026/27.
Infrastructure	PROW - Survey's and Closures	73	Staff vacancies have resulted in lower than anticipated staffing costs associated with surveys and closures, with these costs being met through revenue funding. The staffing portfolio is now fully resourced and future use of this funding will be required to ensure that the surveys are completed, and the repairs and replacement capital project is delivered.

Infrastructure	Street Lighting Defective Column Programme	71	Slippage is requested as the Chepstow Wye Bridge traffic light scheme was placed on hold following closure of the bridge, resulting in an underspend. The unspent budget is requested to be carried forward to support the next tranche of light replacements, alongside the wider column and lamp replacement programme, including the Wye Bridge scheme should it recommence.
Insurance Schemes	Drybridge House Flood Insurance Claim	4,987	Works underway, however the main contract of works will take place during 2026/27 to align with Insurers programme of works
Other	Capital budget contingency	1,867	Released budget of £1.867 million will be carried forward into 2026/27 as a contingency to mitigate capital programme risks, including cost pressures on existing schemes and new risks emerging during the year.
Other	Capitalisation Directive	223	Final qualifying revenue expenditure was slightly lower than budget and will be carried forward to support the 2026/27 programme.
Property Maintenance	Property Maintenance schemes	1,353	Slippage mainly reflects the timing of planned maintenance works across the property estate, with some schemes carried forward to meet the forward programme of works and to align delivery with operational access, contractor availability and wider property priorities.
Schools & Education	King Henry VIII - Future Schools Tranche B	5,269	The final stages of the works will be completed during 2026/27.
Section 106 Schemes	Section 106 Schemes	1,322	Slippage reflects the need to carry forward unspent developer contributions where approved schemes were not fully delivered within the year, so that committed works can be completed in 2026/27 in line with the relevant funding conditions.
Specific Grant Funded	ATF Core Llanfoist Bridge & Meadow Links	9,595	Slippage is required as this is a multi-year scheme and dependent upon final profile of agreed contractor works.
Specific Grant Funded	Chepstow Transport Hub & Connectivity Improvements	5,180	Grant funding received in year is available to be carried forward into 2026/27 to complete final works.

Specific Grant Funded	Grant – Match Funding Support Allocation	611	No call on the match funding budget during the year and budget will be carried forward to support any qualifying schemes in 2026/27.
Specific Grant Funded	Placemaking Grant programme	347	Match funding will be required in 2026/27 to complete final works.
Specific Grant Funded	UKSPF – Gwent Green Grid	186	Slippage is required to support delivery of this multi-year project.
Specific Grant Funded	WG – Flood Recovery Grant	133	Grant funding received in year is available to be carried forward into 2026/27 to complete final works.
Specific Grant Funded	Woodside Usk Flood Alleviation Scheme Grant	107	Grant funding received in year is available to be carried forward into 2026/27 to complete final works.
Specific Grant Funded	Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant	86	Grant funding received in year is available to be carried forward into 2026/27 to complete final works.
Specific Grant Funded	TT Caldicot Placemaking 2025-26	30	Grant funding received in year is available to be carried forward into 2026/27 to complete final works.

4.5. **Useable Capital Receipts Available**

4.6. **Capital receipts –** The table below sets out the capital receipts available to support future capital commitments. The current balance of banked capital receipts is fully committed, leaving limited flexibility to support additional capital investment. This also means that the use of capital receipts to support the revenue budget through the capitalisation direction is expected to taper to zero over the medium term.

4.7. A significant capital receipt of £2.5 million was received in December 2025 in relation to the sale of the site of the former Mounton House School, Pwllmeryric, Chepstow.

Capital receipt balances	**2025/26**	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**
	£000's	**£000's**	**£000's**	**£000's**	**£000's**
Balance as at 1st April	6,083	4,540	3,291	2,336	1,680
Capital receipts used for financing	(606)	(595)	(50)	(50)	(50)
Capital receipts used to support capitalisation direction	(3,547)	(2,931)	(1,708)	(708)	0
Capital receipts to meet redundancy costs	0	0	0	0	0
Capital receipts Received	2,610	0	0	0	0
Capital receipts Forecast	0	2,278	803	103	103
Forecast Balance as at 31st March	**4,540**	**3,291**	**2,336**	**1,680**	**1,733**

Appendix 3 - Performance against budgeted service savings

	Savings proposals by Directorate 2025/26	Budgeted Saving	Realised Savings	Variance	% Met	
		£000	£000	£000		
	Social Care, Health & Safeguarding	(2,950)	(2,845)	105	96.4%	
	Learning, Skills and Economy	(745)	(745)	0	100.0%	
	Infrastructure	(5,679)	(5,127)	552	90.3%	
	Place & Community Wellbeing	(606)	(531)	75	87.6%	
	People, Performance and Partnerships	(165)	(104)	61	63.0%	
	Legal & Governance	(1)	(1)	0	100.0%	
	Resources	(555)	(555)	0	100.0%	
	Totals	**(10,701)**	**(9,908)**	**793**	**92.6%**	

Ref	Social Care, Health & Safeguarding	Budgeted Saving	Realised Savings	Variance		Comment
		£000	£000	£000		
SCH S2	Community Meals - cost neutral or cease	(15)	(15)	0		
SCH S3	Adults Practice Change	(250)	(315)	(65)		
SCH S4	Fees and Charges	(336)	(336)	0		
SCH S5	Public protection Workforce reduction	(100)	(100)	0		
SCH S6	Wedding fees (registrars)	(30)	(30)	0		
SCH S7	Childens Practice Change	(1,887)	(1,887)	0		
SCH S10	Adults workforce review	(125)	(125)	0		

C&P S20	Savings driven from the reduction of B&B usage and full year effect of Severn View	(207)	(37)	170		Saving assumed Severn View would be open from 1st April, but due to building delays - tenants did not move in fully until early August - this meant we had to incur 4 months of additional of B&B costs that were not budgeted. This has been mitigated in part by the overall use of B&B reducing over and above the target set.
Total	**Social Care, Health & Safeguarding**	**(2,950)**	**(2,845)**	**105**		

Ref	**Learning, Skills and Economy**	**Budgeted Saving**	**Realised Savings**	**Variance**		**Comment**
		£000	**£000**	**£000**		
CYP S1	Reduce 0.6 FTE Most (Monmouthshire Specialist Teachers) team	(40)	(40)	0		
CYP S3	Grant funding increase to meet costs of EWS post	(51)	(51)	0		EWS has not been reduced by 1 FTE, a grant funding increase was able to meet the costs of the EWS post
CYP S4	Bring ALN MCC pupils from OOC back to MCC	(100)	(100)	0		
CYP S5	KH8 Maintenance costs	(40)	(40)	0		
C&P S21	Youth Service - Passport more core service costs to grant funding.	(45)	(45)	0		
C&P S14	Reduction in utility costs for education estate	(429)	(429)	0		
ML S4	Reduction in Youth Service Provision (delete 1 FTE post)	(40)	(40)	0		
Total	**Learning, Skills and Economy**	**(745)**	**(745)**	**0**		

Ref	Infrastructure	Budgeted Saving	Realised Savings	Variance		Comment
		£000	£000	£000		
C&P S4	Passenger Transport Commissioning - We revert to the statutory distances of 2 miles for primary and 3 miles for secondary - Subject to political approval - will commence from 01/09/2025	(447)	(55)	392		Numbers have changed since original projections were prepared and some routes have been deemed unsafe meaning transport still has to be provided to pupils impacting on the amount of saving achievable.
C&P S7	Savings in C&P senior Mgt costs as a result of SLT restructure	(170)	(170)	0		
C&P S8	Grass routes - Introduce an annual £10 membership charge for users	(3)	(3)	0		
C&P S9	Reduce gritter fleet by extending the working hours of each vehicle	(20)	(20)	0		
C&P S10	Reduction in utility prices for the corporate estate	(136)	(136)	0		
C&P S11	Undertake energy audit of invoices to identify discrepancies and potential savings	(20)	(20)	0		
C&P S22	PTU Increase the cost of concessionary season tickets by 10%	(6)	(6)	0		
C&P S23	Increase in Highways fee income to external clients to reflect recovery of pay award and inflation.	(52)	(52)	0		
C&P S24	Indicative EPR funding	(4,825)	(4,665)	160		Final award was confirmed to be £160k under original figure - this has been managed by other savings within the service.
Total	**Infrastructure**	**(5,679)**	**(5,127)**	**552**		

Ref	Place & Community Wellbeing	Budgeted Saving	Realised Savings	Variance		Comment
		£000	£000	£000		
ML S1	Borough Theatre - Reduced production days (3 days a week)	(50)	(50)	0		
ML S5	Increase Income across the four Leisure Centres	(150)	(150)	0		
ML S7	Lease Old Station Tintern	(30)	(30)	0		
ML S9	Externalise Markets Waste Collection	(20)	(20)	0		
ML S13	S106 - Increase office time recharge	(24)	(24)	0		
ML S14	Rights of way - Charge officer time to capital	(20)	(20)	0		
C&P S2	Request to WG to increase statutory planning application fees by 25% - Consultation Autumn - potential uplift for 1st April or 1st October	(100)	(25)	75		Fees uplifited from 1st December 2025
C&P S3	Increase car park fees by 10%	(180)	(180)	0		Carparking fees have been increased and delivering the saving the income pressure declared
C&P S15	Increase Building Control Fees	(32)	(32)	0		Fees have been uplifted.
Total	**Place & Community Wellbeing**	**(606)**	**(531)**	**75**		

Ref	People, Performance and Partnerships	Budgeted Saving	Realised Savings	Variance		Comment
		£000	£000	£000		

CEO S2	Welsh Language translation	(82)	(82)	0		Entered SLA with Torfaen in October - current forecasts project that this saving will be achieved.
CEO S4	New staffing model in Systems and Payroll	(22)	(22)	0		Achieved
CEO S5	Implement Apprentice First approach	(8)	0	8		Not achieved in 2025/26
CEO S8	End membership of New Local from June 2025	(15)	0	15		Not achieved - decision made by senior leadership to continue with membership
ML S12	Phase 2 - Restructure	(38)	0	38		Not Achievable
Total	**People, Performance and Partnerships**	**(165)**	**(104)**	**61**		

Ref	Legal & Governance	Budgeted Saving	Realised Savings	Variance		Comment
		£000	£000	£000		
LG S1	Cancellation of LLG Training	(1)	(1)	0		Achieved
Total	**Legal & Governance**	**(1)**	**(1)**	**0**		

Ref	Resources	Budgeted Saving	Realised Savings	Variance		Comment
		£000	£000	£000		
RES S1	Cease our Cyber Security Insurance provision	(98)	(98)	0		Achieved - insurance cover has ceased.
C&P S13	Building Cleaning - Release of recurrent service saving	(20)	(20)	0		Achieved
RES S3	Freeze/Remove Head of Digital, Design & Innovation Post (Net of cover/honoraria arrangements)	(64)	(64)	0		Achieved - Post deleted

RES S5	Finance - HB penalty will reduce as Severn view comes online and temporary accommodation reduces	(250)	(250)	0		Reduction in B&B usage (currently 2) has had a beneficial impact on reducing the HB subsidy penalty. Saving made in full.
RES S6	Finance - HB penalty reduction as a result of a further reduction in the remaining B&B portfolio.	(100)	(100)	0		
RES S7	Reduction in Chief officer admin Support (0.6 FTE)	(23)	(23)	0		Achieved - Post deleted
Total	**Resources**	**(555)**	**(555)**	**0**		

Appendix 4 - Capitalisation directive 2025/26

Directorate	Expenditure	Justification to capitalise	Amount £000s
Infrastructure	PTU Software - Route / pupil optimisation.	Driving a digital approach	22
Learning, Skills & Economy	System software implementation	Driving a digital approach	50
Resources	Implementing digital design & innovation	Driving a digital approach	536
	Sub-Total Driving a digital approach		**608**
All	Capitalisation of redundancy costs - non-schools	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	137
All	Capitalisation of Pension Strain linked to redundancies	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	432
Infrastructure	Investment in Decarbonisation team	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	106
Learning, Skills & Economy	Capitalisation of redundancy costs - schools	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	304
Infrastructure	Transport - Move to electric/Hydrogen fleet	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	141
Resources	Waste - Service Transformation costs	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	195
Infrastructure	Homelessness Prevention Project	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	200
Social Care & Health	Supported Living project	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	90
Learning, Skills & Economy	Investment in SRB placements to provide more in-county provision.	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	300
People, Perf, and Part / Law & Gov	Improvement, Transformational change & organisational development team	Funding the cost of service reconfiguration	434
	Sub-Total Funding the cost of service reconfiguration		**2,338**
Social Care & Health	Joint Local authority working (GWICES, Sc. 33, Frailty, regional safeguarding board, Gwent foster fee harmonisation and care home pooling)	Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies	143

Infrastructure	Passenger Transport - Sharing Senior Management with Newport CC	Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies	42
Social Care & Health	Deprivation of liberty safeguards	Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies	133
	Sub-Total Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies		**318**
Infrastructure	Procurement SLA with Cardiff	Sharing back-office and administrative services	283
	Sub-Total Sharing back-office and administrative services		**283**
	Total		**3,547**

Appendix 5 - Movement in school balances			
School (Surplus) / Deficit	**Opening Balance**	**Movement**	**Closing Balance**
Caldicot Comprehensive	267,256	478,145	**745,401**
Chepstow Comprehensive	1,130,575	-242,537	**888,038**
Monmouth Comprehensive	-31,922	69,213	**37,291**
King Henry 3-19 School (Middle)	1,386,169	855,265	**2,241,434**
Mounton House Special School	0	153	**153**
Cross Ash Primary School	-14,677	59,568	**44,891**
Durand Primary School	-93,396	-15,971	**-109,367**
Gilwern Primary School	15,717	53,268	**68,985**
Goytre Fawr Primary School	-43,645	38,438	**-5,207**
Llandogo Primary School	-7,412	-15,789	**-23,201**
Llantilio Pertholey CiW Primary School (VC)	-74,764	84,480	**9,716**
Llanvihangel Crucorney Primary School	-83,609	22,352	**-61,257**
Magor CiW Primary School (VA)	-206,124	15,521	**-190,603**
Overmonnow Primary School	255,229	97,681	**352,910**
Raglan CiW Primary School (VC)	-161,289	52,623	**-108,666**
Rogiet Primary School	169,213	74,546	**243,759**
Shirenewton Primary School	-130,917	-31,758	**-162,675**
St Mary’s RC Primary School (VA)	-70,363	26,269	**-44,094**
The Dell Primary School	158,181	19,118	**177,299**
Thornwell Primary School	168,782	28,604	**197,386**
Trellech Primary School	-92,530	-20,008	**-112,538**
Undy Primary School	-142,211	86,896	**-55,315**
Usk CiW Primary School (VC)	-19,112	10,785	**-8,327**
Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	286,080	-46,460	**239,620**
Archbishop Rowan Williams CiW Primary School (	-82,144	-10,668	**-92,812**
Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin	75,216	116,563	**191,779**
Ysgol Gymraeg y Trefynwy	88,855	-73,555	**15,300**
Deri View Primary School	0	0	**0**
Cantref Primary School	-101,495	-50,893	**-152,388**
Osbaston CiW Primary School (VC)	63,807	-14,277	**49,530**
Dewstow Primary School	-6,305	-97,491	**-103,796**
Our Lady & St Michael's (OLSM) RC Primary Schoo	53,889	19,015	**72,904**
Pembroke Primary School	-268,044	-30,730	**-298,774**
Kymin View Primary School	63,486	-41,025	**22,461**
Llanfoist Fawr Primary School	-87,620	67,157	**-20,463**
Castle Park Primary School	-18,741	36,655	**17,914**
Pupil Referral Unit	1,645,178	1,167,499	**2,812,677**
Total	**4,091,313**	**2,788,651**	**6,879,964**

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Appendix 6 - Projected revenue reserves	31 March 2025	31 March 2026	31 March 2027	31 March 2028	31 March 2029	31 March 2030
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Council Fund	10,885	11,953	12,849	13,813	14,849	15,963
School Balances	-4,092	-6,880	-6,880	-6,880	-6,880	-6,880
Total General Fund	6,794	5,073	5,969	6,933	7,969	9,082
Invest to Redesign Reserve	1,236	1,236	521	355	287	287
IT Reserve	807	956	709	606	503	400
Priority Investment Reserve	405	405	0	0	0	0
Programme of Change	350	603	496	496	496	496
Capital Support Reserve	250	250	250	250	250	250
Earmarked Investment Reserves	3,048	3,450	1,976	1,707	1,536	1,433
Insurance & Risk Management Reserve	925	992	992	992	992	992
Fixed Assets Disposal Costs Reserve	314	314	314	314	314	314
Treasury Equalistation Reserve	590	590	590	590	590	590
Redundancy & Pensions	681	681	593	505	417	329
Pay Inflation Award	130	130	130	130	130	130
Risk mitigation reserve	0	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Earmarked Risk Reserves	2,640	5,207	5,119	5,031	4,943	4,854
Elections Reserve	261	261	311	186	236	286
Youth Offending Team	150	150	150	150	150	150
Building Control trading reserve	-12	0	0	0	0	0
CYP maternity	324	215	215	215	215	215
Local Resilience Forum Reserve (Gwent PCC Tfr)	117	111	111	111	111	111
Ukrainian Support Reserve	1,072	826	626	626	626	626
Sub-Total Partnership Reserves	1,912	1,564	1,414	1,289	1,339	1,389
Museums Acquisitions Reserve	36	36	36	36	36	36
Grass Routes Buses Reserve	181	186	191	196	201	206
Plant & Equipment reserve (Highways)	203	353	353	353	353	353
Solar Farm Maintenance & Community Fund	204	227	100	123	146	169
Waste risk management reserve	0	1,667	1,667	1,667	1,667	1,667
Commercial investment reserve	85	476	476	476	476	476
Energy Efficiency Development Reserve	310	376	376	376	376	376
Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children Reserve	351	351	351	351	351	351
Sustainability - PV Invertor Replacement	12	29	29	29	29	29
Council tax premium	809	1,587	1,741	2,171	2,628	3,113
Sub-Total Other Service Reserves	2,191	5,288	5,320	5,778	6,263	6,776
Total useable revenue reserves	16,584	20,581	19,798	20,738	22,050	23,536

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Appendix 7

Capital Budget Revisions – Grants and contributions

The Council has received a number of new capital grants and external contributions that weren't included in the original capital budget approved at the start of the year.

According to the Council's financial procedures, any changes to the capital budget that are fully funded by grants or outside contributions must be approved by Cabinet.

Whilst some of the more significant capital grant funding programmes, such as the Shared Prosperity Fund, would have been subject to a standalone Cabinet report to endorse them, for completeness this schedule includes all grant related changes to the capital programme for the whole year.

These changes are either:

- New grants or contributions that have been received, or
- Adjustments to existing grants or contributions that were already part of the budget. This could be due to final grant allocations being lower/higher than indicative values, or if the timing of expenditure differs to the grant timings.

Scheme Category and Scheme	Budget revision
Asset Management Schemes	
Abergavenny Community Hub Development	2,420.00
Abergavenny Borough Theatre Works	26,314.00
Property Acquisition for Children and Young People with Complex Needs	543,077.76
School Refurbishment Grant	1,053,498.88
Schools Repair & Maintenance Grant	250,000.00
Caldicot LC 3G Pitch Replacement	341,390.75
	2,216,701.39
School Development Schemes	
King Henry VIII - Future Schools Tranche B	1,256,628.72
Projects to Safely and Effectively Open Schools to the Community Outside Traditional Hours	174,005.00
Archbishop Rowan Williams Primary School Nursery	-4,269.51
Welsh Medium School and Nursery	-2,668,002.59
Capital Support for Learners with ALN	482,429.00
Early Years – Childcare Capital Funding	382,884.15

	-376,325.23
Inclusion	
Shire Hall/Monmouth Museum Move	236,479.69
Disabled Facilities Grants (Private)	3,805.00
Enable – Support for Independent Living WG grant	224,377.00
Direct Food Support Grant	10,100.78
Housing with Care Fund	266,200.00
	740,962.47
Infrastructure & Transport	
Road Safety Capital Grant	462,574.74
20 MPH Capital Grant	26,434.50
RRF - A4136 Staunton Road Stabilisation	450,396.00
Local Transport Fund	700,000.00
Clydach Gateway Reinstatement and Devil's Bridge Associated Works A465	-106,126.92
Woodside Usk Flood Alleviation Scheme Grant	368,000.00
	1,901,278.32
Regeneration	
Brilliant Basics Fund – WG- Tintern Welcome	-24,000.00
Local Places for Nature	106,082.12
NHLF Woodland Investment Grant	-137,774.98
NHLF TWIG Coed 6 – Goytre Hall Wood	116,368.00
Flood Recovery Funding - WG	428,000.00
	488,675.14
Other Schemes	
ATF Core Llanfoist Bridge & Meadow Links	6,000,000.00
ATF Core Consultation	137,095.96
ATF - Monmouth Wye AT Crossing	140,000.00
ATF - Monmouth Kingswood Gate AFL	350,407.33
Castle Dell Play Area Chepstow Upgrade - NLCF - Match	54,800.00
Housing Provision Borrowing Headroom	22,408.00

ATF – Multi User Route	210,000.00
ATF – Improved Cycling/Wheeling Access	60,000.00
ATF – ATNM Dropped Kerbs and Quick Wins	60,000.00
Placemaking Grant programme	1,222,412.82
UKSPF -Monmouthshire Circular Economy	20,600.00
ATF – Core Counters	30,000.00
Monmouth Sportsground Sport Courts Installation - SW	-6,404.97
Coal Tip Safety Grant - WG	10,867.50
NLCF RUR2 Llanelly Hill Hub Project	-15,912.61
UKSPF – Todays Heritage Tomorrow	26,500.00
UKSPF – Gwent Green Grid	200,000.00
UKSPF – Creative Futures	11,212.42
Granicus UKSPF	10,000.00
UKSPF – Destination For All	54,000.00
UKSPF – Abergavenny LC AEFCC	79,815.81
UKSPF – Destination Policy Impact Assessment	55,000.00
UKSPF - Town Centre Placemaking 2025-26	100,000.00
UKSPF – Monmouth Museum	63,000.00
UKSPF – Communities Budget	11,314.00
TT Caldicot Placemaking 2025-26	30,000.00
EVCI & ZEV Grant	47,180.61
Chepstow Railway Station - Refurbishment of Existing Grade 2 Listed Toilet Block	5,227,320.00
Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant	235,000.00
Chepstow Play Parks - (WG Funded)	137,497.28
Optimised Retro Funding Housing Grant	35,000.00
Social Care Case Management System Replacement	59,097.91
	14,678,212.06
	19,649,504.15

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monmouthshire
sir fynwy

SUBJECT:	**Adoption of the Charter for the Rights of the Rivers**
MEETING:	**Cabinet**
DATE:	**8th July 2026**
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All wards	

1. PURPOSE:

1.1 To seek Cabinet approval for the adoption of the Charter for the Rights of Rivers in Monmouthshire, following the motion agreed by Council on 25 June 2026.

1.2 The decision is intended to recognise the intrinsic value of all rivers and watercourses in Monmouthshire and to provide a clear set of principles to inform future Council policy, strategy, operational practice, partnership work and decision-making. The charter provides a clear public statement of intent and leadership on river protection and recovery.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 To approve and adopt a Charter for the Rights of Rivers in Monmouthshire as set out below, applying to all rivers and its tributaries within Monmouthshire.

<u>Rights of Our Rivers</u>

The Right to Flow and Perform Natural Functions
To maintain its natural course and seasonal rhythms without obstructions or extractions that detrimentally affect ecological function of any part of the river system.
The Right to Biodiversity
To good biological health through the existence of balanced, diverse, and viable populations of native species and habitats specific to Monmouthshire's rivers, streams, tributaries and wider catchments.
The Right to Be Free From Pollution
To exist in a state of ecological health and not be subject to detrimental levels of known and emerging pollutants that adversely affect the life of the river.

The Right to Be Supported by a Healthy Catchment
To flow through environments which support the river as a balanced, sustainable, and resilient aquatic ecosystem.
The Right to Regenerate
To recover to full ecological function through natural processes and for this to be supported by intervention, where necessary, to halt the decline in biodiversity and abundance and to increase both over time.
The Right to Representation
To be represented and have these intrinsic rights recognised in the determination of matters that directly affect the river's health now and in the future.

2.2 The principles of the Charter should be considered wherever relevant in Council decision-making, policy development, strategy review and service planning, where matters may affect the health, resilience, ecological function, flow, catchment condition or pollution status of any river or water course in Monmouthshire.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 The concept of granting rights to rivers originates from the wider international Rights of Nature movement, which seeks to recognise ecosystems not simply as resources to be managed, but as entities with intrinsic rights to exist, flourish and regenerate. The modern legal foundation for this approach can be traced to environmental legal scholarship in the 1970s, and it gained global prominence when Ecuador became the first country in 2008 to enshrine the Rights of Nature in its constitution, recognising ecosystems as rights-bearing entities. This approach has since influenced legal and governance developments internationally, including recognition of river rights in a number of jurisdictions.

3.2 In the UK context, the concept has been adapted through non-statutory charters, most notably the Charter for the Rights of the River Wye, which was developed in 2025 through collaboration between community representatives, environmental organisations, councillors and cross-border partnerships. The Charter was formally launched in May 2026 as part of a growing movement to recognise rivers as living ecosystems with intrinsic rights, providing a shared framework to guide decision-making and long-term environmental recovery.

3.3 The Charter for the Rights of the River Wye has been progressively adopted across the catchment since 2025. Herefordshire Council approved a supporting motion at Full Council on 5 December 2025, followed by a Cabinet Member executive decision on 6 March 2026 to integrate the Charter into policy and decision-making. Forest of Dean District Council passed a similar river rights-based charter motion in January 2026. Powys County Council formally adopted the Charter at Cabinet on 19 May 2026. The Charter was publicly launched on 24 May 2026 with endorsement from a wide coalition of local authorities and partner organisations, including Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority and the Wye Valley National Landscape. Council requested to Cabinet on 25 June 2026 that it adopt a River Charter to ensure the long-term protection and restoration of all rivers and watercourses within the county.

3.4 A river charter is a way of expressing the intrinsic and inalienable rights of a river. The Charter for the Rights of Rivers identifies six rights: the right to flow and perform natural functions; the right to biodiversity; the right to be free from pollution; the right to be supported by a healthy catchment; the right to regenerate; and the right to representation. The Charter provides a shared ethical and strategic framework. It supports a nature-centred approach to relevant decision-making and partnership working, while remaining aligned with existing law and regulation.

3.5 The Charter is a non-statutory statement of principles. The adoption of the Charter does not create new statutory powers, legal personhood or directly enforceable legal rights, and does not override existing planning, regulatory, environmental or constitutional decision-making requirements. However, it provides a common set of principles that can be taken into account alongside existing policies, plans and statutory requirements, helping to ensure that river health, biodiversity, pollution prevention and catchment resilience are consistently considered where relevant. Importantly, it helps to embed the intrinsic value of rivers into policy and governance, improve transparency and accountability in decision-making, and provide a clear public statement of intent and leadership on river protection and recovery, without altering existing legal frameworks.

3.6 Adoption of a Charter for the Rights of Rivers would directly support the Council’s Community and Corporate Plan objective of creating a “Green Place” by reinforcing the Council’s commitment to addressing the climate and nature emergency through environmental stewardship and sustainable decision-making. The Charter provides a framework that aligns with, and strengthens, existing priorities and it complements the Council’s Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy by embedding the principles of river health, biodiversity protection, pollution reduction and ecosystem resilience across all relevant workstreams, particularly the Rivers and Ocean Strategy. It helps ensure that climate adaptation, ecological restoration and water quality improvement are consistently considered in decision-making, supports a more integrated and preventative approach to environmental management, and reinforces partnership working across catchments, thereby advancing the Council’s long-term objectives for a resilient environment, healthier communities and sustainable places.

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

4.1 The decision has a positive long-term focus. It supports the protection and restoration of the rivers within Monmouthshire that contributes to biodiversity, health and well-being, climate resilience, recreation and the identity of the County.

4.2 The decision supports the sustainable development principle by taking a long-term, preventative, integrated and collaborative approach to river health. It aligns particularly with the well-being goals of a Resilient Wales, Healthier Wales and a Globally Responsible Wales.

4.3 There is a need for equitable access to healthy natural environments. Environmental degradation can affect communities unequally; river restoration and pollution prevention contribute to environmental well-being for current and future generations.

4.4 No direct negative equality, safeguarding or corporate parenting impacts have been identified from adopting the Charter as a non-statutory statement of principles. Any future projects or policy changes arising from Charter-related work will require their own equality and future generations consideration.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Options	Benefits	Risks	Comments
Adopt a charter for the Right of Rivers	Provides a clear public statement of the Council's commitment to river protection, biodiversity, pollution prevention, and environmental restoration, supported by a defined set of guiding principles that can be considered with work programmes that relate to river and associated watercourses. Supports delivery of the Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy, particularly the Rivers and Ocean workstream, by reinforcing the importance of river health, biodiversity, catchment resilience and pollution reduction. Aligns with the Community and Corporate Plan objective of making Monmouthshire a "Green Place".	There is a risk that the Charter could raise public expectations about the Council's ability to directly resolve river pollution or catchment issues, some of which sit outside the Council's statutory powers and are dependent on regulators, land managers, water companies and government. This report makes it clear that no new legal rights are intended to be created by the adoption of this charter. However, the public may seek to challenge any future decision of the authority that is viewed as contrary to the Charter. The risk of such a legal challenge being successful is small. However, in accordance with principles of good governance, the	Preferred option

	Responds to the motion agreed by Council on 25th June 2026 requesting that Cabinet adopts the Charter for the Rights of Rivers.	authority should ensure that where a decision contrary to the Charter is to be made, its reasons for doing so are clear, reasonable and proportionate.	
Do not adopt the Rights of the River Charter	No additional commitment to restore river and watercourse beyond existing statutory duties, strategies and work programmes.	Would not demonstrate the Councils leadership on river protection, biodiversity, pollution prevention and catchment resilience. Does not provide a set of principles to support existing work on river health, green infrastructure, nature recovery, flood resilience, planning policy and the Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy.	Not recommended

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

6.1 The decision to adopt the principles outlined within the Charter should be reviewed through existing Climate and Nature Emergency, Rivers and Ocean, Green Infrastructure, biodiversity and performance reporting arrangements rather than through a separate reporting structure.

7. REASONS:

7.1 The decision is required to enable Monmouthshire County Council to formally confirm its support for the Charter through the appropriate executive decision-making route.

7.2 The decision supports partnership working across Monmouthshire's river catchments and aligns with the Council's existing commitments on climate, nature recovery, river health, biodiversity, planning and sustainable development.

7.3 Adoption gives a clear public statement of intent while retaining existing legal statutory decision-making frameworks and safeguards.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 Adoption of the Charter is not expected to create immediate additional financial, staffing, IT or asset requirements. Initial implementation will be through existing strategies, policy review cycles, decision-making processes and partnership arrangements.

8.2 Any future activity that requires additional resources, new staffing, capital works, enhanced monitoring, new project delivery, external funding or new legal commitments will be subject to separate business case development, costings, risk assessment and approval in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

9. CONSULTEES:

Council 25th June 2026

Cabinet

Strategic Leadership Team

Neighbouring Authorities

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Charter for the Rights of Rivers in Monmouthshire

Council Agenda, 25 June 2026 – Motion 12.1: Charter for the Rights of Rivers

Monmouthshire County Council Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy, May 2024.

11. AUTHOR: Chief Officer – Place and Community Well-being Craig O'Connor, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment Catrin Maby

Craig O'Connor
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E-mail: craigoconnor@monmouthshire.gov.uk

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

monmouthshire sir fynwy

Name of the Officer Craig O'Connor **Phone no:** **E-mail:craigoconnor@monmouthshire.gov.uk**	**Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal** **Adoption of the Charter for the Rights of the Rivers in Monmouthshire**
Name of Service area Place and Community Well Being	**Date 29th June 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.*	Cleaner, healthier and more resilient rivers can benefit all age groups through improved access to nature, recreation, education, well-being and climate resilience.	No direct negative impact identified at this stage	

[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.*	Positive indirect impact where improved river environments and better consideration of access to nature supports well-being for disabled people and people with long-term health conditions.	No negative impact identified at this stage.	
Gender reassignment *Consider the provision of inclusive services for transgender people and groups. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.*	*N/A*	No negative impact identified at this stage.	
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.*	N/A	No negative impact identified at this stage.	

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.*	Positive indirect impact through potential improvements to public realm, environmental quality and access to nature, which can support well-being for pregnant people, parents and carers with young children.	No negative impact identified at this stage.	
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.*	N/A	N/A	
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 proposal applies equally to people of all religions and beliefs. River health may also support cultural, spiritual and community connections to nature.	No negative impact.	

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.*	*N/A*	No negative impact	
Sexual Orientation *Consider the provision of inclusive services for e.g. older and younger people from the Lesbian, Gay and Bi-sexual communities. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.*	N/A	No negative impact	

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 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?	Positive indirect impact. The Charter supports a preventative and long-term approach to river health, biodiversity, pollution reduction and catchment resilience. These themes can contribute to reduced environmental inequality, improved access to nature, community well-being and climate resilience, particularly where communities are more exposed to flood risk, pollution or poor-quality local environments.	No direct negative impact identified at this stage because the Charter is non-statutory and does not change eligibility for services, funding or statutory decision-making requirements	

3. Policy making and the Welsh language

How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
Policy Making: *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.*	Positive impact. The charter can reinforce equal treatment of Welsh and English by ensuring Charter-related reports, public information and engagement are available bilingually where required. It also provides opportunities to use Welsh place names and promote Welsh cultural connections to rivers, landscapes and communities	No negative impact 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 Welsh language essential. 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.*	No direct staffing change is proposed. Existing Welsh language standards and workforce arrangements will continue to apply.	No negative impact identified at this stage.	
Service Delivery:	Positive impact where bilingual communication enables Welsh	No negative impact identified at this stage.	

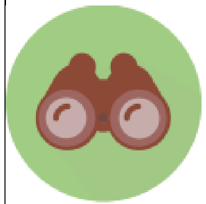
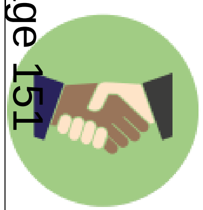
Use of Welsh language in service delivery *When advertising our services you must promote the fact that people can deal with the council in Welsh by phone, email, twitter, Facebook, letters, forms, website transactions etc.*	speakers to engage with river-related information and opportunities.		

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.*	Positive indirect impact through supporting sustainable resource use, climate adaptation, pollution reduction, nature recovery and long-term environmental resilience, all of which underpin sustainable places and a resilient local economy.	No negative impact identified at this stage.	
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).*	Strong positive alignment. The Charter directly supports biodiverse natural environments, healthy functioning ecosystems, river health, catchment resilience and adaptation to climate change.	No negative impact identified at this stage.	

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 healthier Wales *People's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.*	Positive indirect impact. Healthy rivers and access to green/blue spaces can support physical and mental well-being, recreation, education and community connection.	No negative impact identified at this stage.	
A Wales of cohesive communities *Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected*	Positive impact by supporting local action on biodiversity loss, pollution, climate adaptation and ecosystem resilience in line with wider environmental responsibilities.	No negative impact identified at this stage.	
A globally responsible Wales *Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing*	Positive impact by supporting local action on biodiversity loss, pollution, climate adaptation and ecosystem resilience in line with wider environmental responsibilities.	No negative impact identified at this stage.	
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*	Positive indirect impact. Rivers are part of the county's heritage, landscape and community identity. Bilingual communication can support Welsh language visibility and participation.	No negative impact identified at this stage.	
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)*	Positive indirect impact by supporting inclusive access to healthy environments and considering how river health and climate impacts affect different communities.	No negative impact identified at this stage.	

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?**
 Long Term 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)*	Yes. The Charter is explicitly long-term and preventative. It seeks to guide decisions affecting river health, biodiversity, catchment resilience and pollution prevention now and in the future.	
 Collaboration Working together with other partners to deliver objectives	Yes. The Charter supports partnership working with catchment partnerships, neighbouring authorities, statutory agencies, land managers, town and community councils and environmental organisations.	

[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?
Involvement 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?*	The proposal follows the Council motion agreed on 25 June 2026 and draws on the wider River Rights movement and partnership work. Future delivery should involve communities and stakeholders more directly.	
Prevention Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse	The Charter supports early consideration of river health, pollution prevention, biodiversity, catchment resilience and climate adaptation before problems worsen.	
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 Charter integrates climate, nature, planning, flood resilience, public health, community well-being, Welsh language, partnership working and long-term environmental stewardship.	

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.*	No direct safeguarding impact.	No direct negative impact identified at this stage	

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.*	Positive indirect impact through long-term environmental stewardship and access to healthy natural spaces for all children and young people, including care experienced children and young people.	No direct negative impact identified at this stage.	

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

Council motion agreed on 25 June 2026 requesting Cabinet adoption of a Charter for the Rights of Rivers. Monmouthshire Community and Corporate Plan objective for a Green Place to live and work, including making a positive contribution to addressing the climate and nature emergency. Monmouthshire Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy, particularly the Nature Recovery and Rivers and Ocean workstreams. Existing Council work on Green Infrastructure, biodiversity, catchment management, planning policy, flood resilience and river health.

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 main positive impact of adopting the Charter is that it provides a clear, public and values-led framework for considering the health of rivers and watercourses across Monmouthshire. It supports the Council's Community and Corporate Plan, the Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy, nature recovery, Rivers and Ocean activity, planning policy, Green Infrastructure, biodiversity duties and partnership working.

The assessment has identified positive indirect impacts across well-being, socio-economic disadvantage, health, biodiversity, climate resilience, community cohesion and environmental stewardship. The principal risks are that the Charter could be misunderstood as creating new legal duties or raising expectations beyond the Council's direct powers. This has informed the proposal by making clear that the Charter is non-statutory, does not create legal personhood or directly enforceable rights, and should be considered proportionately alongside existing statutory duties and professional advice.

No direct negative impacts on protected characteristics, Welsh language, safeguarding or corporate parenting have been identified at this stage. Future projects, policies or funded interventions arising from the Charter will require their own detailed assessment where relevant.

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	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
	Cabinet	**08/07/2026**	

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SUBJECT:	**Disposal of Land Adjacent to 40 Leechpool Holdings**
MEETING:	**Cabinet**
DATE:	**July 2026**
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: Portskewett	

NON-PUBLICATION

1. PURPOSE:

To seek approval for the disposal of land adjacent to number 40 Leechpool Holdings, Portskewett.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That land forming part of Land Registry title number WA655395 (outlined red on attached plan) be disposed of subject to contract as use as garden land to the adjacent property owner as special purchasers.

2.2 To delegate responsibility to the Head of Landlord Services and the Chief Officer for Resources, to finalise the terms of the disposal.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 The land measures approximately 0.17 acres or 700 m² in size and forms part of a larger field parcel measuring approximately 9.0 acres.

3.2 The land is currently subject to a farm business tenancy (FBT). The land is however not farmed by the tenant given the land forms part of the existing garden/property curtilage due to the position of a historic fence boundary.

3.3 The tenant has agreed to surrender the land from their tenancy agreement. The retained land is not compromised in any way and will continue to be farmed.

3.4 The purchaser is considered a 'Special Purchaser,' defined by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors as 'a particular buyer for whom a particular asset has a special value because of advantages arising from its ownership that would not be available to other buyers in a market.'

3.5 Section 123 (General Power of Disposal) of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to dispose of land held by it provided that best consideration is achieved. The price takes into account the use of the land as garden land forming part of the property's residential curtilage and reflects best consideration via a sale to a special purchaser.

3.6 The disposal will be subject to an appropriate covenant and restriction as well as an overage/clawback to ensure the land is used as garden land only. The overage will seek 50% of the uplift in value for a period of 25 years and will be triggered in the event of planning permission approval for other uses.

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

The land disposal incurs little or no impact on the Equality and Future Generations Evaluation. An Integrated Impact Assessment accompanies this report.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

5.1 An options appraisal has been undertaken in the table below and can be summarised as followed:

Option	Positives	Negatives	Recommended?
Dispose of the land 1. Proceed with disposal	Potential to enhance the biodiverse natural environment. The grass and plants within a garden will provide a healthy functioning ecosystem to support ecological resilience by attracting an array of wildlife. Relieve the possible claim of adverse possession and associated legal involvement. The Council will receive best consideration for the land via a 'special purchaser'. The Council will be relieved of any maintenance liabilities associated with maintaining and securing the land.	Loss of a very small area of farmland, although not currently farmed due to the position of an historic fence.	Yes
Retain the land. 2. Request the fence be taken down and repositioned in its correct position in line with ownership.	Forms a 'buffer' zone between the garden and land that is farmed. Can be held for long term development subject to change in current planning policy, offering the	Possible land dispute due to historic position of fencing. Requires new stock proof fence to be erected to define ownership boundaries.	No

Include the land within any future FBT.	potential for increased value.		

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 6-month review – has the transaction completed and records been updated.
- 12-month review – Is the land being used as intended and is stock proof fencing in good state of repair.

7. REASONS:

7.1 The Council will receive a capital receipt reflective of best consideration via a sale to a special purchaser.

7.2 To prevent the need for treating as an encroachment, saving time and money in dealing with a potential legal boundary dispute.

7.3 To relieve the Council of maintenance liabilities.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 A capital receipt will be generated, reflective of best consideration.

8.2 The Council's associated legal and surveyor fees will be covered by the purchaser, totalling £1,500.

9. CONSULTEES:

Ward Members – Cllr Lisa Dymock (Ward Member for Portskewett)
Cabinet Member for Resources – Cllr Ben Callard
Legal Services – Joanne Chase, Solicitor & Head of Commercial Law
Legal Services – John Rogers & Paige Moseley
Head of Landlord Services – Nicholas Keyse
Chief Officer Resources – Peter Davies

No objections were received.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

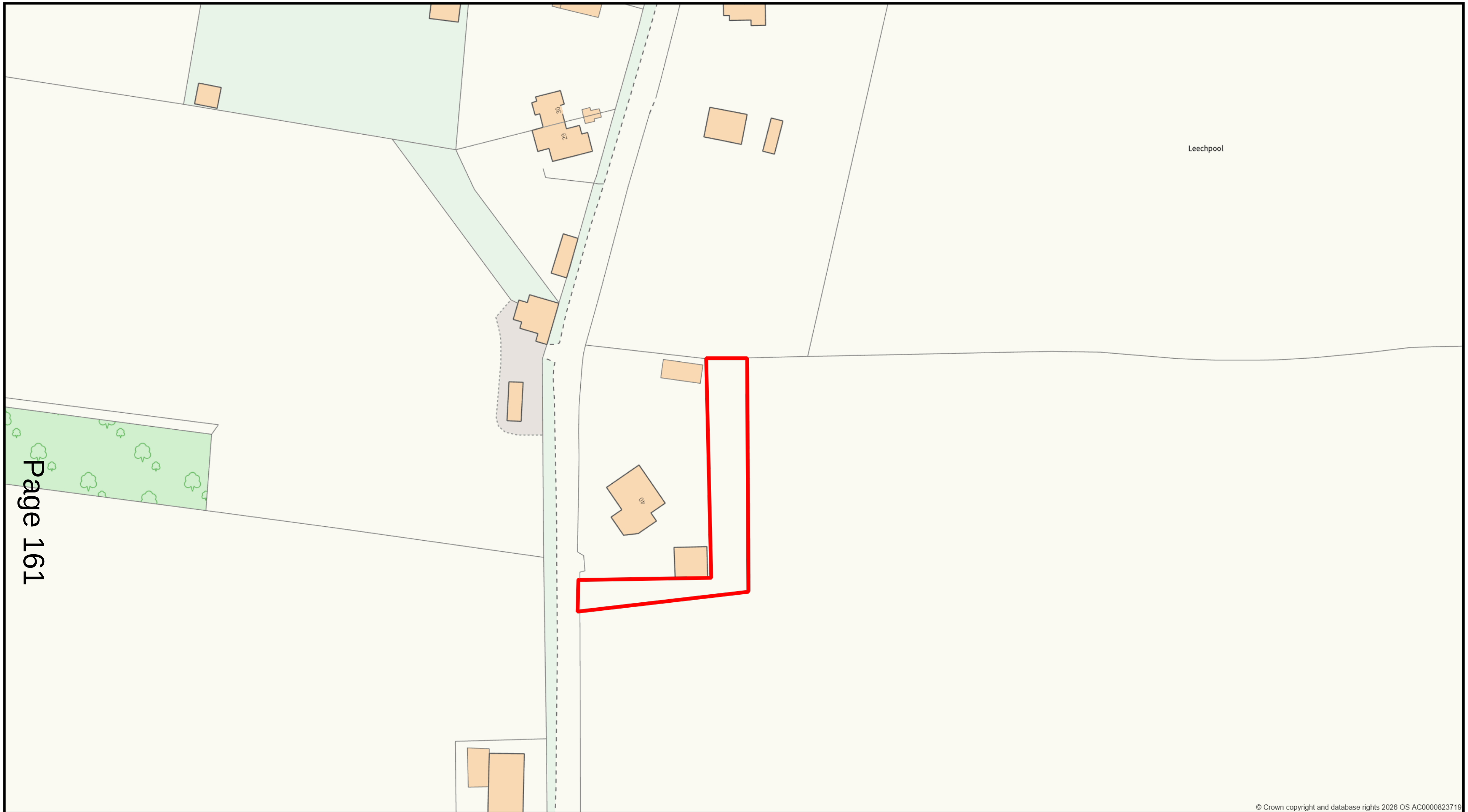
Location plan – attached to report.

11. AUTHOR:

Ben Thorpe – Development Surveyor

12. CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel: 01633 644964
E-mail: benthorpe@monmouthshire.gov.uk



Land adjacent to Coltshay Cottage, 40 Leechpool Holdings

Proposed land disposal measuring approximately 700 sqm

Monmouthshire County Council, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk. NP15 1GA

Scale:1:1250	Printed on:2026-02-06 12:21:54 by BenThorpe@monmouthshire.gov.uk	Grid Ref:350429,189431

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

monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Name of the Officer Ben Thorpe **Phone no:** 01633 644964 **E-mail:** benthorpe@monmouthshire.gov.uk	**Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal** **Land Disposal –** Land adjacent to 40 Leechpool Holdings, Portskewett, NP26 5UA
Name of Service area Estates Development	**Date** July 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.*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.

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.*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.
Gender reassignment *Consider the provision of inclusive services for transgender people and groups. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.
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.*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.

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.*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.
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.*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.
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.*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.

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.*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.
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.*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.

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 favorable 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?	NA	NA	NA

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.*	NA	NA	NA
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 Welsh language essential. 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.*	NA	NA	NA
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*	NA	NA	NA

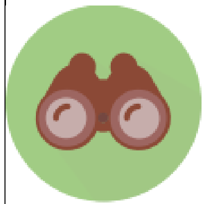
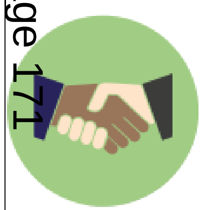
phone, email, twitter, Facebook, letters, forms, website transactions etc.			

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.*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.
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).*	The proposal to dispose of a small amount of agricultural land for use as garden land to serve the adjacent property will provide an enhanced biodiverse natural environment. The grass and plants within the garden will provide a healthy functioning ecosystem to support ecological resilience by attracting an array of wildlife.	The loss of a small amount of agricultural land. This impact is considered minimal given the land has not been farmed for quite some time and effectively already forms part of the garden space.	
A healthier Wales *People's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.

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?
benefit future health are understood.			
A Wales of cohesive communities *Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.
A globally responsible Wales *Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.
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*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.
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)*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.

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?
 Long Term 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)*	None identified.	None identified.
 Collaboration Working together with other partners to deliver objectives	None identified.	None identified.

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?
Involvement 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?*	The proposed disposal has been subject to Internal MCC Officer and Local/Cabinet Member consultation with no objections received. The tenant of the land was also consulted and is in support of the disposal and has approved the land's removal from the tenancy agreement.	None identified at this time.
Prevention Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse	None identified.	None identified.
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*	None identified.	None identified.

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.*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.

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.*	No impact identified.	No impact identified.	None identified.

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.

Section 123 (General Power of Disposal) of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to dispose of land held by it provided that best consideration is achieved. The land has been incorporated within the curtilage of the property boundary for some time and used as garden whilst in the ownership of MCC due to the position of historic fencing.

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 main positive impacts of this proposal is the capital receipt and preventing any potential land ownership dispute. There are no negative impacts of this proposal.

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?
Check that the land is being used as intended/purchased i.e. garden land.	12+ months	MCC Estates

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	Consultation	March-June 2026	Confirmed extent of land disposal following request by property owner to purchase a greater amount of land.
2	Cabinet	July 2026	None

monmouthshire
sir fynwy

SUBJECT:	**Development of a Supported Accommodation Provision**
MEETING:	**Cabinet**
DATE:	**8th July 2026**
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: Monmouth	

1. PURPOSE:

To provide details and seek approval for the acquisition and refurbishment of a property in Monmouth for the purpose of developing a supported accommodation provision for care experienced young people (aged 16 plus), using existing borrowing headroom.

Approval is sought based on a Business Case that is attached as Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- To acquire and refurbish a property in Monmouth for the purposes of developing a supported accommodation provision for care experienced young people.
- To utilise a Housing with Care Fund grant for the entirety of the capital expenditure associated with the acquisition and subsequent redevelopment of the property (subject to ministerial approval).
- To the extent that Housing with Care Fund grant is not secured for the full amount requested, that any sum remaining to be funded is met from the £2m borrowing headroom agreed at Full Council meeting 18th April 2024 under a 10-year term.
- To enter into a contract with a suitable external provider to provide the housing-based support for young people residing at the property.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Children's Services has identified a property in Monmouth which is suitable to be developed into a supported accommodation provision for up to 3 care experienced young people aged between 16 – 21 years of age.

3.2 In order to meet the needs of the young people and the identified objectives of the service the property will require refurbishing.

3.3 The provision will provide a homely setting for 3 care experienced young people, where 24-hour support will be available to assist the young people to develop their independent living skills. During their stay in the provision the goal is to equip the young people to progress onwards to accommodation with a lower intensity of support or into independent accommodation. In this sense the provision will form the first step in a young person's pathway to independence.

3.4 Alongside of refurbishing the property the intention is to seek to commission and enter into a contract with a suitable external provider that has experience of providing accommodation based support to young people. A robust evaluation process and on-going contract monitoring will be put in place to ensure that quality standards are maintained and that young people are provided with the individualised support they require.

3.5 The business case is set out in the context of the decisions made at full Council on 18th April 2024 which set out proposals for the overall development of children's residential and 16 plus supported accommodation placements and increased the available borrowing headroom to £3M for that purpose.

3.6 The Local Authority has a legal duty to provide sufficient and appropriate placements for children who are looked after which includes a range of supported accommodation options for young people who have left, or who are preparing to leave care. At present, the Local Authority has insufficient suitable supported accommodation placements and limited options for young people who have medium to high support needs.

3.7 Insufficiency of placements creates a number of pressures and issues for the service including:

- Financial pressure because of the cost of spot-purchased placements.
- Young people being placed away from their communities and support networks, creating barriers to independence and unnecessary change for young people.
- Variable quality in terms of achieving good outcomes for young people in respect of ensuring that they have been afforded opportunities for skill development.
- Risks of not being able to find a placement for a child / young person resulting in the need to enter into placement arrangements that our outside Welsh Regulations (OWRs).
- Risk of a young person being placed somewhere that is beyond their capabilities.
- Workforce pressure and increased travel costs because of children / young people being placed in numerous different locations;
- Resource pressure because of the time it takes to source external placements and the psychological impact of working in a context where placement insufficiency is a day-to-day risk factor.

3.8 The current ambition, as set out in the report presented to Council on 18th April 2024, is to significantly increase the number of all in-house placement types including fostering, residential and supported accommodation placements over the next 1 – 3 years. This will ensure that the needs of Monmouthshire's Looked After Children and those young people who are leaving care are consistently met with increased opportunity to be placed closer to their homes and communities. Increasing the number of placements that are within the control of the Local Authority will also enable increased stability and certainty in our wider care planning for children and young people.

3.9 To meet the assessed needs of our looked after children and young people our current commissioning data confirms that to help achieve sufficiency in terms of placement numbers and options we currently need a further medium to high supported accommodation provision. This takes into account the current 5-bed supported accommodation provision that opened in

November 2024 and the 5-bed provision that is scheduled to become operational during the next financial year.

3.10 In summary, the primary objective of the Business Case is for up to 3 young people to be suitably matched and to be enabled to live comfortably and well in the property in keeping with their individual pathway planning needs.

3.11 The business case aims to achieve the following service improvements:

- To increase the number of young people who are placed closer to their homes and communities and in a way that meets their personal outcomes and care planning needs.
- To improve services for care experienced young people through ensuring that there are appropriate placements available to them which enable them to develop their independent living skills in a safe and supportive environment.
- To allow the Council increased autonomy in care planning and matching decisions for all children who are looked after.
- To secure better value for money and the potential to reduce revenue costs associated with the current arrangements.
- To improve welfare considerations and efficiencies for the children's services workforce due to reduced travel time.
- To support the Council to meet legal and regulatory requirements under SSWBA regulations.

3.12 In January 2026, Children's Services presented a report to Cabinet seeking approval to acquire a four-bedroom property in Monmouth (property A), to provide a three-bedded supported accommodation service for the 16+ cohort of young people. While progress was being made toward securing the acquisition, legal searches identified the presence of a restrictive covenant affecting both the property itself and the wider housing estate in which it was located. As a result of this significant constraint, it was agreed that the Council would withdraw from the purchase and recommence searches for a suitable alternative property.

3.13 The current property is identified as a suitable alternative. However, as part of the legal due diligence and property searches undertaken, it has been identified that the property is also subject to a restrictive covenant which affects both the property itself and five neighbouring houses. The covenant specifies not to use any building or any part thereof "for any purpose other than that of a private or professional residence".

3.14 MCC's Legal Department, has undertaken a detailed assessment of the covenant and its potential implications. The advice indicates that, while restrictive, this covenant differs in scope and impact from the one identified at property A, as it applies only to a small cluster of properties rather than the entirety of a larger housing development. This, as well as the fact that the property is within an older, more established group of properties, potentially reduces the likelihood of being challenged and the prospect of enforcement. Despite this, it was agreed that further expert legal opinion should be obtained, and instructions were therefore issued to seek King's Counsel (KC) advice. The KC opinion has now been received and confirms that, should the matter be legally challenged, there is a credible risk that the proposed use could be deemed a breach of the covenant, albeit that the Council has a reasonable argument to the contrary.

3.15 In summary, legal advice indicates that there is a material risk that the proposed supported accommodation model could be interpreted as being in breach if challenged, although case law on this is not definitive. Essentially, the risk is not easily quantifiable.

3.16 Options to mitigate this risk have been explored, including the procurement of indemnity insurance. This has been positively assessed, with confirmation that an appropriate policy could be put in place to cover legal costs in the event of any future challenge or enforcement action. While this does not remove the legal risk entirely, it provides a level of financial protection and risk management.

3.17 As part of the wider property search process, it has also been identified that a significant proportion of potential properties within the local area are subject to some level of restrictive covenant. These vary in scope but commonly include limitations relating to private residential use only, which can impact the suitability of properties for supported accommodation. This highlights that such restrictions are relatively common across the local housing market and present an ongoing challenge in identifying properties that are entirely free from constraint. As a result, each potential option requires careful legal consideration to understand the risk, likelihood of enforcement, and any appropriate mitigation measures before progressing.

3.18 In light of the above, Children's Services undertook a specific risk assessment and options appraisal which took into account the needs of the young people who would benefit from the property; risks and mitigations; potential issues if a challenge arose; and opportunity loss if we did not proceed. The overall conclusion of the assessment was a recommendation to proceed with the intended property purchase.

3.19 Aside from the property related risks, implementation risks to the Local Authority in running a supported accommodation provision are set out in the table below.

Risk	**Mitigation**
Unable to secure a service provider	The Council will be using an Open Procurement Route via Sell2Wales. Previous similar procurement processes were successful.
Delays / inability to identify and match suitable young people who need the supported accommodation provision	The service has an in-depth knowledge of individual young people and how they might match. Work is currently taking place to consider the whole cohort of children / young people who are looked after to consider potential candidates for the home.
Refurbishing costs exceed what is currently provided for.	There is a contingency for unexpected works in the costs and a process for additional grant funding application via the Notification of Event (NoE) process.
Unsuccessful grant application leading to MCC meeting cost of refurbishment.	The grant application has been approved and is at final stage (ministerial approval). The costs of drawing down on borrowing have been factored into the business case.
Delays in approving the property acquisition will result in identified property being acquired by other buyers.	Maintain strong communication with agents and vendors.

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

4.1 The business case seeks to increase the sufficiency of appropriate placements closer to home for care experienced children and supports the repatriation of Monmouthshire children back into the county. The provision will enable care experienced young people to develop their life skills and support their pathway to independence so that their future life chances and economic mobility are improved. The provision is designed for care experienced young people who have medium to high support needs, where this is currently a gap in provision. This additional stepping stone approach will help vulnerable young people sustain future stable accommodation and tenancies.

4.2 The money currently being spent on this cohort of children includes residential and independent foster care placements, some of which are located out of county. The project will allow the development of provision in county. This will support young people's sense of identity, belonging and connectivity with support networks, as well as providing the opportunity for new jobs and training / career opportunities for the wider social care workforce.

4.3 Planning is required in order to ensure the Welsh language is encouraged within the scheme and community engagement will need to be at the forefront of the development moving forward.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

5.1 An options appraisal is set out in the business case. In summary the council could chose to do nothing and refrain from moving ahead with the scheme. This would avoid any of the implementation or wider risks identified at 3.13. This option is not recommended in that i) it would not fill the gap in existing provision and continue to mean that children preparing to leave care are not provided with the right level of support in keeping with their needs and ii) that the council would lose the potential to generate any savings against the current approximate annual spend of £446,000 .

5.2 Two minimal options are identified the first being to withdraw from the current property and wait for an alternative property to become available that costs less or requires less refurbishment. This would avoid any property risks specific to this purchase but is discounted on the basis that i) further delay would compromise the Council's ability to secure a capital grant for the acquisition and refurbishment and because ii) this is a suitable and desirable property that is well located and requires minimal refurbishment. Suitable properties such as this do not come onto the market frequently.

5.3 The second minimal option is to proceed with the repurposing of the property and seek to develop the support element in-house. This option is discounted because i) it is felt that there is strong experience and expertise within the sector providing accommodation-based support and ii) that children's services does not currently have the resources or capacity to undertake the support element and iii) it is likely that a procurement route will be quicker.

5.4 The option as set out within the business case, for the Council to acquire and refurbish the property and seek to enter into a contract with a suitable organisation to provide the support, is the preferred option. Although there are risks associated with the restrictive covenant, the nature of the covenant itself, and the mitigating actions that can be implemented, will ensure that any impact is expected to be manageable and should not undermine the overall deliverability of the scheme.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Success criteria for the business case have been identified as follows:

- Completion of the purchase and refurbishment works prior to 31st March 2027.
- The property is acquired and refurbished to a high standard.
- A capital grant is received to reduce any borrowing strain on the Council.
- A service provider is successfully appointed and a contract and monitoring arrangements are in place.
- The first cohort of young peoples are successfully matched and in-situ.
- Young people achieve good outcomes through their placement in the new scheme.
- Young people are supported to move on to living independently.

7. REASONS:

7.1 In summary, the business case represents an important next step in the Council's ambition to increase the overall number of in-house placements for children including supported living accommodation. This will increase the service's ability to appropriately plan and control care pathways for children and young people in keeping with their needs and reduce the Council's dependency on an uncertain provider market.

7.2 The proposed development of the property will meet the wellbeing and safeguarding needs of care experienced young people and provide an affordable means by which the Council can provide good quality support. The business case supports the Council to fulfil its statutory duty to provide sufficient and suitable for children who are looked after and is in keeping with national and local policy direction.

7.3 The business case represents a service development opportunity, to improve outcomes for children, generate savings for the council and maximise potential grant funding.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

<u>Capital Costs of Acquisition and Refurbishment</u>

8.1 Due to issues identified with the original property, a request was made to the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) and Welsh Government (WG) to transfer the approved Part 1 grant funding into the 2026/27 financial year to support the acquisition of an alternative property. The original grant application, totalling £675,450, was submitted to fund both the acquisition and refurbishment of the initial property, with Part 1 funding allocated for the purchase. Following the decision not to proceed, £517,950 was approved to be rolled over and this request was supported.

There remains a partial funding gap between the approved grant and the cost of the new property; however, initial discussions have taken place regarding the potential use of Part 2 of the grant funding, originally intended for refurbishment works, to offset this shortfall. A further application would then be submitted to secure the necessary funding required to complete the refurbishment works.h The risk of the grant application not being approved is low because of the purchase being achievable before year end and because the project represents good return on investment in line with Welsh Government programmes.

8.2 We require access to the capital borrowing headroom pending the HCF grant application being approved and available; or in the unlikely event that it is not approved.

8.3 In light of the above we have modelled both scenarios i) that the capital scheme is fully funded via a grant and ii) that the capital element is met through prudential borrowing.

8.4 The revenue costs of prudential borrowing are already factored into the Council's medium term treasury budgets and therefore there are no consequential borrowing cost implications on the Children's services budget. However, for transparency and to aid in a meaningful like-for-like comparison between the existing model of service delivery and this proposal, an indicative annual borrowing cost has been included within the business case calculation.

Annual Revenue Costs

8.5 To develop a prospective business case we have used a mid-point unit cost of children who are currently placed in external residential or foster placements. For 3 children this represents £446,000 per annum spend against the placement budget.

8.6 Whilst we have a cohort of children who would potentially benefit from a move to the provision, the dynamic nature of our detailed care-planning makes it unfeasible to accurately pin-down the exact 3 young people identified until nearer completion. Using the mid-point average cost of placements associated with these children currently provides a reasonably accurate illustration of the cost envelope.

8.7 The cost of commissioning the support element of the scheme has been calculated based on an equivalent service model in our Caldicot property (i.e. Local Authority owned property with a 3rd party contract to provide the care).

8.8 Taking into account the varying cost impact of the 2 potential borrowing scenarios as above, we have modelled the revenue costs against a 100% occupancy rate and an 80% occupancy rate. These tables are illustrative because the identified savings / or the impact on savings arising from a void cannot be easily identified due to the variability of existing package of care. Equally, there may be situations where placements result in cost avoidance. This potential saving will contribute to the overall £1m Children's Services practice change mandate for 2026/27. As the project is scheduled to come online until part way through the 2026/27 year, the full annual savings potential will not be realised until 2027/28.

8.9 80% occupancy is a cautious approach which we have adopted given the importance of matching children and allowing appropriate time for transitions particularly during the early period of the provision.

8.10 Based on 100% occupancy

Annual Revenue Costs	**Based on successful HCF application** **£**	**Based on borrowing to complete the development** **£**
Service Provider Contract	257,799.36	257,799.36
General Maintenance	10,000.00	10,000.00
Annual repayment costs (over a 10 year period) set at rates on 29/01/26	0	82,288.00
TOTAL ANNUAL REVENUE COSTS	267,799.36	350,087.36
ANNUAL REVENUE PACKAGES TO FUND COSTS	£446,000	£446,000
Based on 100% occupancy POTENTIAL ANNUAL REVENUE SAVINGS	178,201	95,913

8.11 Based on 80% occupancy

Annual Revenue Costs	**Based on successful HCF application** **£**	**Based on borrowing to complete the development** **£**
Service Provider Contract	257,799.36	257,799.36
General Maintenance	10,000.00	10,000.00
Annual repayment costs (over a 10 year period) set at rates on 29/01/26	0	82,288.00
TOTAL ANNUAL REVENUE COSTS	267,799.36	350,087.36
ANNUAL REVENUE PACKAGES TO FUND COSTS	446,000	446,000
Based on 80% occupancy POTENTIAL ANNUAL REVENUE SAVINGS	142,561	76,731

8.12 If voids arise, and there are no young people identified within Monmouthshire who would need the placement in the foreseeable future, there is potential to offer the placement to another Local Authority with a slight mark-up to the weekly cost.

9. CONSULTEES:

- Councillor Ian Chandler, Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services
- Nicholas Keyes, Estates Development Manger
- Ben Thorpe, Estates Development Surveyor
- Tyrone Stokes, Finance Manager
- Diane Corrister, Head of Children's Services
- Scott Hereford, Residential and Resource Service Manager
- Kevin Fortey, Housing with Care Fund Project Manager, Regional Partnership Board

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Council Report 18th April 2024 - Developing children's residential and 16+ supported accommodation placements

11. AUTHOR:

Jane Rodgers, Strategic Director Social Care, Safeguarding & Health

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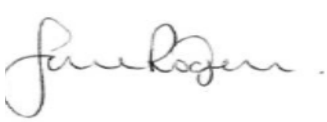
ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY IN MONMOUTH TO PROVIDE A REGISTERED SUPPORTED LIVING ACCOMODATION

SINGLE-STAGE BUSINESS CASE - MEDIUM VALUE AND RISK - (£250K TO £2 MILLION VALUE OF PROCUREMENT)

Author:
Jane Rodgers
Chief Officer, Social Care and Health



Date (18.06.26)

Consultees:

- Councillor Ian Chandler, Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services (TBC)
- Nicholas Keyes, Head of Landlord Services.
- Ben Thorpe, Estates Development Surveyor
- Tyrone Stokes, Finance Manager
- Diane Corrister, Head of Children's Services
- Scott Hereford, Residential and Resource Service Manager
- Kevin Fortey, Housing with Care Fund Project Manager, Regional Partnership Board

1 INTRODUCTION and UPDATE

Children's Services seek approval to acquire a property in Monmouth, to provide a supported lodgings (accommodation) provision for three Monmouthshire care-experienced young people aged 16–24. This provision will be available to support all 16+ Looked After children and, in the future, will complement the existing children's Residential Home in Monmouth. The provision will create a structured step-down pathway to independence and ensure that young people can move from residential care to semi-independent living within the same local area, maintaining friendships, support networks, and community connections. Additionally, the resource will support the Council's commitment to work towards the eradication of profit from the care of Children Looked After, in accordance with the Health and Social Care (Wales) Act.

Monmouthshire currently has two Local Authority owned supported accommodation properties and requires one further facility to provide suitable placements for young people and reduce our reliance on third party providers.

The subject property has sufficient space for 3 bedrooms together with adequate provision for sleeping-in arrangements for support staff. There is sufficient space for communal areas for recreational activity and there is accessible outdoor space with a large rear garden for the young people to utilize.

The proposed use of the property would be to accommodate 3 young people aged between 16-24 for a transitional period to assist in their step-down from care and support. The provision will provide a medium-to-high level of support, in a homely setting, to assist and equip the young people with the skills required to live more independently. In this sense the provision will support a young person's pathway to independence.

This approach ensures that the individual needs of children are consistently and appropriately met, while providing greater opportunities for placements closer to their homes and communities. Expanding the number of placements managed by the Local Authority will promote stability and certainty in broader care planning for children and young people. It will also strengthen integrated working practices and enhance the quality oversight of the care provided.

This business case therefore seeks approval:

- To acquire and refurbish the property for the purposes of developing a supported accommodation provision for care experienced young people.
- To utilise a Housing with Care Fund grant for the entirety of the capital expenditure associated with the acquisition and subsequent refurbishment of the property. [Welsh Government approved the grant application on 21st January 2026, confirming Part 1 of the funding to cover 100% of the capital required for the acquisition of the property, subject to final ministerial

sign-off. Part 2 of the grant application, which will relate to the refurbishment and redevelopment works, will be prepared and submitted once final approval for the acquisition has been granted.]

- To the extent that Housing with Care Fund grant is not secured for the full amount requested that any sum remaining to be funded is met from the £2m borrowing headroom agreed at Full Council meeting 18th April 2024 under a 10-year term.

- To enter into a contract with a suitable external provider to provide the housing-based support for young people residing at the property.

Developing a council owned supported accommodation provision managed by a 3rd party provider is in keeping with the Welsh Government legislation aimed at removing profit from children's care and is an important next step in MCC's ambition to increase overall sufficiency of placements for children.

This business case is set out within the context of the decisions made at full Council 18th April 2024 regarding proposals for the overall development of children's residential and 16+ supported accommodation placements, subject to appropriate business cases and cabinet approval.

Update

In January 2026, Children's Services presented a report to Cabinet seeking approval to acquire a four-bedroom property in Monmouth (property A), to provide a three-bedded supported accommodation service for the 16+ cohort of young people. The proposed acquisition was to be funded through an approved Housing Capital Funding (HCF) Welsh Government (WG) grant application, which had been confirmed in the sum of £517,950, covering the purchase price, legal fees, and Land Transaction Tax. While progress was being made toward securing the acquisition, legal searches identified the presence of a restrictive covenant affecting both the property itself and the wider housing estate in which it was located. As a result of this significant constraint, it was agreed that the Council would withdraw from the purchase and recommence searches for a suitable alternative property. Subsequently, approval was sought and obtained from the Regional Partnership Board to carry forward the grant funding into the 2026/27 financial year, ensuring that the approved funds could still be utilised for the acquisition of an appropriate replacement property to meet service needs.

The current property has now been identified. It is similarly suitable to meets the needs of the service and is located in Monmouth in an area considered appropriate and supportive for young people, with good access to local amenities, transport links, and community resources. This property presents a viable opportunity to deliver the intended three-bedded supported accommodation model for the 16+ cohort, aligning with service objectives and placement sufficiency requirements. However, as part of the legal due diligence and property searches undertaken, it has been identified that the property is also subject to a restrictive covenant which affects both the property itself and five neighbouring houses. The covenant specifies not to use any building or any part thereof "for any purpose other than that of a private or professional residence".

MCC's Legal Department has undertaken a detailed assessment of the covenant and its potential implications. The advice indicates that, while restrictive, this covenant differs in scope and impact from the one identified at property A, as it applies only to a small cluster of properties rather than the entirety of a larger housing development. This, as well as the fact that the property is within an older, more established group of properties, potentially reduces the likelihood of being challenged and the prospect of enforcement. Despite this, it was agreed that further expert legal opinion should be obtained, and instructions were therefore issued to seek King's Counsel (KC) advice. The KC opinion has now been received and confirms that, should the matter be legally challenged, there is a credible risk that the proposed use could be deemed a breach of the covenant, albeit that the Council has a reasonable argument to the contrary.

In summary, legal advice indicates that there is a material risk that the proposed supported accommodation model could be interpreted as being in breach if challenged, although case law on this is not definitive. Essentially, the risk is not easily quantifiable.

Options to mitigate the risk have been explored, including the procurement of indemnity insurance. This has been positively assessed, with confirmation that an appropriate policy could be put in place to cover legal costs in the event of any future challenge or enforcement action. While this does not remove the legal risk entirely, it provides a level of financial protection and risk management.

As part of the wider property search process, it has also been identified that a significant proportion of potential properties within the local area are subject to some level of restrictive covenant. These vary in scope but commonly include limitations relating to private residential use only, which can impact the suitability of properties for supported accommodation. This highlights that such restrictions are relatively common across the local housing market and present an ongoing challenge in identifying properties that are entirely free from constraint. As a result, each potential option requires careful legal consideration to understand the risk, likelihood of enforcement, and any appropriate mitigation measures before progressing.

In light of the above, Children's Services undertook a specific risk assessment and options appraisal which took into account the needs of the young people who would benefit from the property; risks and mitigations; potential issues if a challenge arose; and opportunity loss if we did not proceed. The overall conclusion of the assessment was a recommendation to proceed with the intended property purchase.

2 STRATEGIC CASE

2.1 Context

Aligned to its Corporate Parenting responsibilities, under Section 75 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 the Local Authority has a legal duty to ensure that there are sufficient and appropriate placements for children who are Looked After. Under Part 6 of the Act the Local Authority has a duty “where reasonably practical” to provide Children Looked After/Care Experienced Children with accommodation which is (a) within the authority’s area, and (b) meets the needs of those children.

There is a national shortage of residential placements for young people aged 16 and over. This issue has worsened due to instability in the private care market following Welsh Government’s policy to remove profit from children’s care.

Within Monmouthshire, this lack of available placements applies also to supported accommodation provision which is used to support care experienced young people aged 16 plus who are on their pathway to increased independence.

Such provision that is available, is quicky saturated because of difficulties in securing move-on accommodation. A lack of throughput across the system can mean that young people remain in foster care or residential settings for longer than is in-keeping with their need for increased independence; and simultaneously blocks placements for other children.

This creates a number of challenges and risks for the service including:

- Financial pressure because of the cost of spot-purchased placements.
- Young people being placed away from their communities and support networks, creating barriers to independence and unnecessary change for young people.
- Variable quality in terms of achieving good outcomes for young people in respect of ensuring that they have been afforded opportunities for skill development.
- Risks of not being able to find a placement for a child / young person resulting in the need to enter into placement arrangements that our outside Welsh Regulations (OWRs).
- Risk of a young person being placed somewhere that is beyond their capabilities.
- Workforce pressure and increased travel costs because of children / young people being placed in numerous different locations;
- Resource pressure because of the time it takes to source external placements and the psychological impact of working in a context where placement insufficiency is a day-to-day risk factor.

Children’s Services have been working to expand the provision of supported accommodation and have been actively searching the market for a third property. This process has been challenging, as we require a home that is welcoming, located close to Monmouth town, and near our existing residential home. When looking to source a new property we have worked closely with our Estates Team to ensure value for money that meets the needs and specifications of both Estates and Children’s Services.

2.2 Current Progress

The current ambition, as set out in the report presented to Council on 18th April 2024 is to significantly increase the number of all in-house placement types in various parts of the County over the next 1 – 3 years.

Our progress to date since April 2024

Provision (type/beds)	**Where are we / progress**	**Cost / Financed**
Monmouth Residential (4 bed)	Following a significant refurbishment, the home opened and gained CIW Registration in July 2025. There are 4 young people living at the home. Early indication is that the children's wellbeing has improved since returning home to Monmouthshire. This has been achieved by a dedicated well-trained in-house staffing team.	HCF approved grant
Caldicot Residential (4 bed)	The refurbishments to the property are well underway with a scheduled handover date of mid-September 26. The home will provide care and support for up to 4 young people.	The property is owned by Codi. They have submitted an IRCF grant application to the regional partnership board for the refurbishment costs
Caldicot Supported Accommodation (5 bed)	Service opened in November 2024 (see below)	MCC owned asset. Refurbishment works were covered by an approved HCF grant application.
Abergavenny Supported Accommodation (5 bed)	The refurbishment works are in progress with a completion date of early October 26. A non-for-profit 3rd provider has been appointed to run the service.	IRCF approved grant
Abergavenny Bespoke Residential (2 bed)	Care is currently being provided by an external provider. Exploratory works are currently being undertaken to consider the option of bringing the care and support element in house.	
Magor Bespoke Residential (2 bed)	Following a programme of refurbishment works, the home is now registered with CIW and operates with an in-	MCC owned property supported by an HCF grant to refurbish for a 2 bed provision.

	house MCC-appointed staff team.	

Since opening our first supported accommodation provision in Caldicot, the service has provided structured, practical support to five young people, enabling them to develop essential life skills in preparation for adulthood. Young people have made strong progress in key areas including risk management, budgeting and financial awareness, menu planning and cooking, maintaining a clean-living environment, and independent travel. They have also been encouraged to take part in sports clubs and community activities, helping to build confidence, social connections, and healthy routines.

Each young person has followed an individualised support plan tailored to their needs, strengths, and goals. Staff have helped them to practice real-life tasks, develop problem-solving skills, and build confidence in managing day-to-day responsibilities with increasing independence.

The service has successfully supported one young person to transition into further independent living, demonstrating clear progression and the effectiveness of the support model. The remaining young people continue to make steady and positive progress toward full independence.

To meet the assessed needs of our looked after children and young people our current commissioning data confirms that to help achieve sufficiency in terms of placement numbers and options we currently need a further medium to high supported accommodation provision. This takes into account the current 4-bed supported accommodation provision as above, that opened in November 2024 and the 5-bed provision that is scheduled to become operational during the next financial year.

2.3 Case for Change

2.3.1 Spending and service objectives

The Monmouth property development is designed to provide supported accommodation for care-experienced young people aged 16–24. This initiative aligns with the Council's commitment to offer placements closer to home and supports the Welsh Government's goal of eliminating profit from children's social care. It addresses a critical gap in current provision by offering a safe, structured environment for young people with medium to high support needs as they transition to independence.

Young people leaving care often face significant challenges, including trauma, attachment difficulties, limited support networks, and risks such as exploitation or poor mental health. Without appropriate transitional support, these individuals are at risk of homelessness, tenancy breakdown, and poor life outcomes. This development provides a "stepping stone" for those who are not ready for full independence but have outgrown traditional care placements.

The primary goal of the service is to reduce young people's support needs and prepare them for greater independence. It will provide medium to high levels of support, with staff available on-site 24/7. Many of these young people require enhanced, accommodation-based transitional support. The approach will be person-centred and outcome-focused, helping individuals develop the skills needed for independent living by age 18, or at least before 21. Support will include building resilience, problem-solving, practical life skills, budgeting, decision-making, pursuing education or employment, and strengthening social networks. It is not anticipated that young people with significant emotional dysregulation will be considered suitable for the provision.

2.3.2 Project Outcomes

Successful delivery will:

- Offer a smaller homely provision for care-experienced young people aged 16–21 with medium to high support needs.
- Support those stepping down from residential or foster care who may otherwise be at risk of eviction or homelessness due to insufficient support.
- Increase the likelihood of successful tenancy and independence before age 18, or at least before 21.
- Enable smoother movement through the care system, freeing up placements for others who need them.

2.3.3 Service Model

Accommodation-based support for young people over 16 does not fall under RISCA regulations and therefore does not require Care Inspectorate Wales registration. The support will be provided by a 3rd party provider via a thorough and robust tendering process.

2.3.4 Property Details

Refurbishment of the property is required in order to provide safe and appropriate accommodation in accordance with statutory frameworks. Following refurbishment the property will have:

- 3 individual bedrooms for young people
- Communal areas to support social engagement and positive peer relationships including a large kitchen-diner and outdoor space.
- A staff bedroom/office for on-site support

The property is a 4 bed detached house in Monmouth and stands in a fifth of an acre plot, in a desirable location which is easy walking distance of the historic town of Monmouth with all its amenities. It is very close to major transport links for commuting to South Wales & the Midlands/North and within walking distance of excellent school choices, ensuring strong family and community connections.

The period property has a gross internal area (including the garage) of 175 m^2 or 1884 ft^2 and boasts four spacious bedrooms (three double and master with ensuite) and an abundance of living Space, including three reception rooms, a large kitchen/diner/study and utility room and downstairs cloakroom. There's also extensive parking space, a garage and large shed, making it an ideal home for families.

The large rear garden is enclosed and relatively private and is well stocked with established trees & borders, a greenhouse & veg patch and ideal for outdoor living with patio and graveled areas. There is also a large shed with electricity for additional storage. There is a single, lean-to garage which is currently used as storage and provides access to the rear garden from the front of the property. It should be noted that there is no external access to the rear garden other than through the property itself.

The property has reasonable energy efficiency which will help lower running costs, with an EPC rating of 74 C and potential for 82 B and above with improvements such as roof solar PV and an air source heat pump which also meets WG requirements.

The property requires some refurbishment works to meet the relevant care standards such as a sprinkler system and additional fire measures such as improved detection. The property would also benefit from some general modernisation. It is proposed that the refurbishment works will be overseen by MCC Property Services.

2.3.5 Placement Approach

Each placement will be carefully planned and matched to ensure compatibility between the young people. Whilst the aim is to create stability, the nature of the project is that young people will move on at different times and that the make-up of the household will change over time.

2.3.6 Business Case Objectives

In summary, the primary objective of the Business Case is for up to 3 young people to be suitably matched and to be enabled to live comfortably and well in the property for as long as it meets their individual pathway planning needs.

The business case aims to achieve the following service improvements:

- Increase placements closer to home, meeting personal outcomes and care planning needs.
- Improve services for care-experienced young people by providing safe, supportive environments for skill development.
- To allow the Council increased autonomy in care planning and matching decisions for all children who are looked after.
- Achieve better value for money and reduce revenue costs.

- Improve workforce efficiency and welfare through reduced travel.
- Ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act.

2.3.7 Existing Arrangements

All looked-after children have an allocated social worker and a care plan that outlines their individual outcomes. This includes:

- The reasons for entering care
- The primary purpose and objectives during their time in care
- Plans for maintaining and developing family and community relationships
- Educational arrangements
- A pathway plan for leaving care

Pathway planning begins at age 14 and sets out the support a young person will receive post-16 to prepare for independence. This process considers the skills needed for self-care, agreed personal outcomes, and goals related to accommodation, family connections, education, employment, and support levels. From age 15½, a Personal Advisor works alongside the social worker to support this planning. In some cases, pathway planning explores whether a return to family is safe and possible. Some young people aged 16 – 18 remain within a care environment either foster care or residential. However, for young people leaving a care setting the accommodation and support models available include:

<u>Current Options for Care-Experienced Young People (16–21 years)</u>

- **When I Am Ready Placements:** Allows a young person to remain in their foster placement beyond age 18, providing continuity. The foster carer becomes the landlord and receives payment from the Local Authority. Uptake is limited as it restricts carers' ability to foster others.
- **Independent Living:** Young people take on their own tenancy, which may include local authority or housing association properties, private rentals, college/university accommodation, or shared housing.
- **Low-Level Supported Accommodation:** Currently, two provisions serve Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children aged 16+. These offer floating support Monday–Friday and access to an off-site house manager outside these hours. Locations include a 5-bed property in Newport and a 4-bed property in Cardiff.
- **Semi-Independent/Transitional Accommodation:** Supported hostels provide self-contained units with low to medium support for young people aged 16–24, including care leavers and those who are homeless. Three such provisions are available in Monmouthshire.
- **Supported Accommodation:** The Council currently operates one facility in Caldicot for five young people, offering 24-hour support in a homely setting. The aim is to help residents develop independent living skills and progress to lower-support or independent accommodation. If a

young person is assessed as requiring supported accommodation, we are not able to place in-house, placements are spot purchased from the independent sector.

As at 27.06.2026 the authority had 73 children/ young people who are currently being accommodated in residential care homes or with foster carers who are 14 + (i.e. those who are already 16+ or who will be turning 16 in the next 2 years). Based on an understanding of their current care and support needs, many of these young people will require a step-down provision with medium to high support (such as the current project) to support them with their transition out of a care environment.

This table shows the placement types for the current 14 plus cohort of young people.

Placement Type	**Children and Young People Placed in County**	**Children and Young People Placed Out of County**	**Total Number of Children and Young People**
Monmouthshire Foster Carer	5	4	9
Independent Foster Carer	1	11	12
Monmouthshire Kinship Carer	15 (Includes PWP)	6 (Includes PWP)	21
Residential Care	6	4	10
Semi-independent/Transitional Accommodation (all 3rd party)	4	15	19
Total	31	40	71

Out of the above numbers 43 young people are already aged 16 or over.

These young people are currently being accommodated in various placements type.

- 11 young people in UASC accommodation provisions
- 9 young people in supported type accommodation provisions
- 5 young people in residential accommodation
- 2 young people accommodated by an IFA.
- 5 young people are with LA foster carers.
- 3 young people are living connected carers
- 7 placed with own parents
- 1 is living independently

2.3.8 Business Needs

Where we are now	ESSENTIAL Objectives of Business Case
Monmouthshire currently has one medium to high supported accommodation placements and one in development.	To develop a further medium to high supported lodgings provision for up to 3 young people
Provider fees for young people in residential or IFA provisions are negotiated on an annual basis	To reduce dependency on external provision and external fee-setting [in the context where a national lack of placement sufficiency is driving costs]
Young people do not always have the opportunity to fully develop independent living skills in an appropriately supportive environment	To offer a stable, consistent environment, so that the young people can be encouraged to build their independent skills
Children are not placed near to their home and communities [being placed away from Monmouthshire leads to disrupted support and family relationships]	To increase opportunities to place children closer to their homes and communities allowing them to develop consistency and stability.
The Council is reliant on external placements to agree matching for children and there is little opportunity for forward care planning across the cohort of children who are looked after	To increase the ability to forward plan and have greater control on matching, placement decisions and oversight on support.
Social care workers and personal assistants are required to travel to different parts of the country to visit individual children	To reduce the amount of travel time for the social care workforce
Children are placed in a range of different organisations which do not support fully integrated working.	To increase opportunities for integrated working to ensure good outcomes for children

2.3.9 Additional Benefits

This business case presents an opportunity for the Council to acquire and redevelop a three -bedroom supported living accommodation utilising full grant funding. This will allow for sustainable improvements to be made to the property and its outside space, including energy efficiency. As part of the refurbishment, we will be exploring how to increase the energy efficiency of the property with the aspirational A rating in mind. We will be considering installing solar panels to the roof and an upgrade to the current central heating system to air source heat pumps.

The business case is in-keeping with the objectives of the Welsh Government and the Housing with Care Fund Capital programme. The grant application for the purchase of the property was approved by Welsh Government on the 21st January 26.

The risks for this proposal fall into two main areas – property related risks and implementation risks.

2.4.1 Property Related Risks

Risk	Mitigation
Potential legal challenge relating to breach of restrictive covenant. Risk of court action impacting use of property as supported accommodation.	Legal advice obtained, including KC opinion, to understand risk exposure. Indemnity insurance in place to cover legal costs in the event of a challenge. Careful matching and selection of young people and ensuring a well-managed scheme resulting in minimal neighbourhood impact.
Possible disruption to young people if accommodation use must cease.	Careful assessment of likelihood of enforcement based on covenant scope. Contingency planning for placements.
Financial risk associated with legal proceedings or property changes.	Option to resell the property and reinvest funds into an alternative provision if required.
Unknown/excessive project costs.	Property Services to survey as a condition of sale to identify any issues/concerns with the property and will provide ballpark costs to address. Purchase price can be reviewed subject to survey findings as offer will be subject to a conditional survey. Competitive quotes will be sought for any necessary work. Considered medium risk due to the age of the property.
Availability and capacity of suitable building contractor.	The relatively scale of the proposed works should enable us to procure a contractor with the capacity to carry out the work within the required timescale.

Time delays in project completion due to unforeseen circumstances, project scheduling, changes in scope, or external factors beyond the project team's control.	We will develop a partnership approach and undertake project monitoring through each stage from inception and planning to completion of works.
Property Title is assumed clean, free of any restrictions or encumbrances. Assumed property is registered with H M Land Registry as freehold with title absolute. Condition of Property not fully known. Services - Detailed investigations of the property's services have not been carried out/not known. Planning – Existing use is C3 dwelling houses. Contamination and Hazardous Substances (i.e. Asbestos) Building Regulations risks	Legal due diligence to be carried out as condition of purchase. The property is believed to have been built in the 1930's and has been subject to alterations and improvements over the years. Property Services to inspect the property to assess its general and structural condition, as a condition of purchase. The property is connected to mains services including electricity, gas, water, and drainage. There is no change proposed to the existing services. The need for any survey work to be assessed by Property Services and carried out accordingly by a reputable contractor. It is assumed that all services and associated controls are in working order and free from defect. A Certificate of Lawful Use is to be obtained confirming proposed use is permitted development with change to C3(b). Condition of purchase. A full R&D survey will be carried out prior to any refurb works commencing. Due to the age of the property the presence of asbestos is possible in some form. Any works carried out by the vendors to the property that may be subject to Building Regulations will be checked/requested prior to purchase and as per normal conveyancing practice.

Market Acquisition – Risk of paying more than market value.	Condition of grant funding is the approval of an RICS Red Book Market Valuation to ensure the acquisition price is not inflated. This is also a condition of purchase. Any offer made over the market value is a consideration for MCC as any additional cost will fall to Children's Services.

2.4.2 Implementation Risks

Risk	**Mitigation**
Unable to secure a service provider	The Council will be using an Open Procurement Route via Sell2Wales. Previous similar procurement processes were successful.
Delays / inability to identify and match suitable young people who need the supported accommodation provision	The service has an in-depth knowledge of individual young people and how they might match. Work is currently taking place to consider the whole cohort of children / young people who are looked after to consider potential candidates for the home.
Refurbishing costs exceed what is currently provided for.	There is a contingency for unexpected works in the costs and a process for additional grant funding application via the Notification of Event (NoE) process.
Unsuccessful grant application leading to MCC meeting cost of refurbishment.	The grant application has been approved and is at final stage (ministerial approval). The costs of drawing down on borrowing have been factored into the business case.

Delays in approving the property acquisition will result in identified property being acquired by other buyers.	Maintain strong communication with agents and vendors.

2.4.2 Constraints

There will be a ten-year restriction on title in favour of Welsh Government as per the conditions on the grant funding. In addition, the property is utilised for the use stipulated in the application for a period of ten years. Following this period, the property can be repurposed if required, in line with strategic priorities at that time. Failure to meet grant funding conditions can result in claw back of funds.

2.4.5 Dependencies

Operational delivery is dependent on approval of a suitable provider via the authority's procurement framework.

3. OPTIONS ANALYSIS

3.1 Critical Success Factors

- Completion of the purchase and refurbishments works prior to 31st March 2027.
- The property is acquired and refurbished to a high standard.
- A capital grant is received to reduce any borrowing strain on the Council.
- A service provider is successfully appointed and a contract and monitoring arrangements are in place.
- The first cohort of young peoples are successfully matched and in-situ.
- Young people achieve good outcomes through their placement in the new scheme.
- Young people are supported to move on to living independently.

OPTION 1	**Do Nothing**
Description	The Local Authority does not develop any further in-house supported accommodation placements and continues to spot-purchase from the external market
Net Costs	£0 however, the council would lose the potential to generate any savings against a current spend of £446,000 per annum based on an illustrative cohort of children currently in spot-purchased provision.
Advantages	The Council will avoid any of the implementation or wider risks identified above.

Disadvantages	Leaves the Council dependent on the external market to provide supported accommodation placements for young people. Council would lose the potential to benefit from a capital grant funding.
Conclusion	Not recommended
OPTION 2	**Do Not Proceed with This Property**
Description	Do not proceed with the identified property and continue searching for an alternative property without restrictive covenants or at a lower cost.
Net Costs	£0 immediate cost; however, ongoing annual placement costs remain high.
Advantages	Avoids covenant-related legal risk Potential to identify a property with lower cost or fewer constraints No immediate funding gap
Disadvantages	Significant delays in delivering required provision Risk of losing the identified property and similar opportunities in a constrained market Evidence demonstrates many properties locally are subject to some form of restrictive covenant Risk of losing grant funding ,utilisation timelines, despite rollover agreement Continued reliance on external placements
Conclusion	Not Recommended
OPTION 3	**Purchase and redevelopment of the property with 3rd party service delivery**
Description	Proceed with the acquisition of the identified Monmouth property, acknowledging the presence of a restrictive covenant, and commission a third-party provider to deliver supported accommodation services. The Local Authority proceeds with the commissioning of a suitable partner to provide the support
Net Costs	Capital partially funded through WG HCF grant (£517,643 rolled over)

	Funding gap due to higher purchase price to be addressed through potential utilisation of originally proposed refurbishment funding Submission of revised Part 2 grant application Revenue costs as outlined in financial model Based on similar models, the weekly anticipated cost for an external provider would be £1,652.56 per week per bed, equating to an annual revenue cost of £257,799.36. Based on a 100% occupancy for a full year, this represents a potential saving of £178,201 per annum taking into account property maintenance costs (without any capital repayments).
Advantages	This option would involve collaborating with an experienced organisation in delivering post-16 housing-based support, allowing both delivery and implementation risks to be shared. It would also help ensure children are appropriately matched based on their specific support needs. Additionally, this option would support the progression of the sufficiency strategy, reduce reliance on out-of-county placements, and maintain eligibility for Welsh Government grant funding, which is currently rolled over and ringfenced. Positive engagement with the Welsh Government and the Regional Partnership Board supports moving forward with this approach and addressing any funding gaps. Legal risks would be minimised through professional legal advice, including King's Counsel (KC) opinion, along with indemnity insurance to cover potential legal costs. This option also helps maintain project momentum and prevents delays in entering the market.
Disadvantages	There is a risk of a legal challenge related to the restrictive covenant (although mitigations are in place to address this.) The property cost is higher than the original grant allocation, resulting in a funding shortfall (although mitigations are in place to address this). Entering into a partnership arrangement would reduce the council’s level of control over care planning and placement matching decisions.
Conclusion	**Recommended**

OPTION 4	**Purchase and Re-develop the property and provide the support in-house**
Description	Proceed with the acquisition and refurbishment and look to provide the support element in-house
Net Costs	As per Option 3
Advantages	Children's services would retain full autonomy and decisions about the provision would be made entirely by the service. There would be no requirement to procure a service or for contract monitoring. The service would be required to build an inhouse workforce which could be scaled up if required. This fully supports the wider strategic aims of the council in terms of developing in-house / regional sufficiency.
Disadvantages	This would not support our strategy to maintain a mixed service delivery model in order to build-in resilience and choice. There is strong experience and expertise within the sector providing accommodation-based support. Given this, we have prioritised recruitment for our residential children's home provision as it is less likely that we could successfully procure a residential workforce via a not-for-profit organisation.
Conclusion	Not recommended

4. PROCUREMENT ROUTE

Acquisition of property will be through the open market with a private buyer.

Works for the refurbishment will be procured through normal council arrangements utilising framework contractors.

A robust and thorough procurement process will be carried out for the commissioning of the support provider, in partnership with our internal commissioning team.

5. FUNDING AND AFFORDABILITY

Capital Costs of Acquisition and Refurbishment

The Local Authority previously applied to Welsh Government (WG) for a Housing Capital Funding (HCF) grant of £675,000 to support the acquisition and redevelopment of a suitable property. Following consideration, WG awarded £517,643 to fund the purchase of the property A, inclusive of legal fees and Land Transaction Tax. However, following the identification of restrictive covenants and the subsequent decision to withdraw from the acquisition of property A, consultation has been undertaken with WG and the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) to provide an update on the position. Agreement has been reached for the awarded funding to be rolled over into the 2026/27 financial year and ringfenced specifically for the purpose of purchasing an alternative property. It should be noted that the newly identified property is being marketed at a higher value than property A and therefore exceeds the original grant allocation. Ongoing discussions have taken place with WG and the RPB regarding this funding gap, and initial feedback has been positive, with advice being to proceed with the purchase to secure the opportunity. It has also been indicated that consideration will be given to utilising the originally proposed refurbishment funding to partially bridge the gap in purchase costs, with a revised and amended Part 2 grant application to be submitted thereafter to secure funding for the required refurbishment works to bring the property into operational use as supported accommodation.

We require access to the capital borrowing headroom pending the HCF grant application being approved to avoid any delays in the purchase (bearing in mind that the conditions of the grant are that the acquisition is made before the end of this financial year); or in the unlikely event that the grant is not approved.

In light of the above we have modelled both scenarios i) that the capital scheme is fully funded via a grant and ii) that the capital element is met through prudential borrowing.

The revenue costs of prudential borrowing are already factored into the Council's medium term treasury budgets and therefore there are no consequential borrowing cost implications on the Children's services budget. However, for transparency and to aid in a meaningful like-for-like comparison between the existing model of service delivery and this proposal, an indicative annual borrowing cost has been included within the business case calculation.

<u>Annual Revenue Costs</u>

To develop a prospective business case we have used a mid-point unit cost of children who are currently placed in external residential or foster placements. For 3 children this represents £446,000 per annum spend against the placement budget.

Whilst we have a cohort of children who would potentially benefit from a move to the provision, the dynamic nature of our detailed care-planning makes it unfeasible to accurately pin-down the exact 3 young people identified until nearer completion. Using the mid-point average cost of placements associated with these children currently provides a reasonably accurate illustration of the cost envelope.

<u>Provider costs</u>
Based on similar models, the weekly anticipated cost for an external provider would be £1,652.56 per week per bed, equating to an annual revenue cost of £257,799.36.

The cost of commissioning the support element of the scheme has been calculated based on an equivalent service model in our Caldicot property (i.e. Local Authority owned property with a 3rd party contract to provide the care).

Taking into account the varying cost impact of the 2 potential borrowing scenarios as above, we have modelled the revenue costs against a 100% occupancy rate and an 80% occupancy rate. These tables are illustrative because the identified savings / or the impact on savings arising from a void cannot be easily identified due to the variability of existing package of care. Equally, there may be situations where placements result in cost avoidance. This potential saving will contribute to the overall £1m Children's Services practice change mandate for 2026/27. As the project is scheduled to come online until part way through the 2026/27 year, the full annual savings potential will be realised during 2027/28.

80% occupancy is a cautious approach which we have adopted given the importance of matching children and allowing appropriate time for transitions particularly during the early period of the provision.

Based on 100% occupancy

Annual Revenue Costs	**Based on successful HCF application** **£**	**Based on borrowing to complete the development** **£**
Service Provider Contract	257,799.36	257,799.36
General Maintenance	10,000.00	10,000.00
Annual repayment costs (over a 10 year period) set at rates on 29/01/26	0	82,288.00
TOTAL ANNUAL REVENUE COSTS	267,799.36	350,087.36
ANNUAL REVENUE PACKAGES TO FUND COSTS	£446,000	£446,000
Based on 100% occupancy POTENTIAL ANNUAL REVENUE SAVINGS	178,201	95,913

Based on 80% occupancy

Annual Revenue Costs	Based on successful HCF application £	Based on borrowing to complete the development £
Service Provider Contract	257,799.36	257,799.36
General Maintenance	10,000.00	10,000.00
Annual repayment costs (over a 10 year period) set at rates on 29/01/26	0	82,288.00
TOTAL ANNUAL REVENUE COSTS	267,799.36	350,087.36
ANNUAL REVENUE PACKAGES TO FUND COSTS	446,000	446,000
Based on 80% occupancy POTENTIAL ANNUAL REVENUE SAVINGS	142,561	76,731

Management of voids
If voids arise, and there are no young people identified within Monmouthshire who would need the placement in the foreseeable future, there is potential to offer the placement to another Local Authority with a slight mark-up to the weekly cost.

6. DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS

Key Milestones and Indicative Timelines

These timelines are based on WG requirement to acquire and commence refurbishment works before 31 March 2027. These timescales are approximate and represent a very tight turnaround of design works and should be treated as best case scenario but subject to review/change.

- Complete property purchase by 30 September 2026
- Framework Contractors Mini Tender January 2027
- Appoint Contractor February 2027
- Commencement of Works March 2027
- Completion of Works August 2027
- Provision becomes operational September/October 2027

Task	Persons Responsible	Time frame	Reports to
Purchase of Monmouth Property	Nicholas Keyse	As above TBC	Peter Davies
Project management for refurbishment and improvement	Property services Nicholas Perry	As above TBC	Nicholas Keyse
Service specification and procurement process with Service Provider	Scott Hereford Craig Williams		Diane Corrister
Appoint Service provider	Craig Williams		Jane Rodgers Diane Corrister
Care planning and transition arrangements for young people who are identified as suitable to be placed in the new provision	Lupupa Nshimbi Scott Hereford		Diane Corrister
On-going contract monitoring	Craig Williams	Quarterly from Service Commencement	Jane Rodges Diane Corrister
Oversight of Children placed in Property	Scott Hereford	Quarterly from Service Commencement	Diane Corrister

<u>Contingency Plan</u>

The need for a contingency might arise if it becomes clear that the redevelopment of the property won't be achieved, a suitable provider cannot be commissioned, no suitable young people are identified to move in, or there is a successful challenge brought regarding the restrictive covenant.

In this case contingency options will be considered follows:

- The council will review the specification and re-tender for either the works or the support
- element.
- The council will look at the option of developing the support element in-house
- The council will seek to sell individual residential placements to neighbouring Local Authorities.
- The council will liaise with the regional partnership board to seek a change of use for the property in keeping with the objectives of the council and the overall objectives of the capital programme (to avoid claw back).

- The property could be re-purposed for several different uses; a business case and options appraisal would be undertaken.
- The property will have indemnity insurance cover for legal costs associated with the covenant.
- The property could be sold and contingency arrangements made for the young people.

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

Name of the Officer Jane Rodgers Chief Officer, Social Care, Safeguarding & Health **Phone no:** **E-mail:janerodgers@monmouthshire.gov.uk**	**Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal** This impact assessment will look at the impact of the redevelopment of a 3-bedroom supported accommodation provision in Monmouth.
Name of Service area Social Care and Health Directorate, Children's Services	**Date** **18/06/2026**

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	This development will positively impact our young people, specifically those who are looked after, by ensuring that they have increased opportunities to get the support they need closer to their homes and communities.	None identified at this point	None identified at this point
Disability	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Gender reassignment	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic
Marriage or civil partnership	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic
Pregnancy or maternity	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic
Race	.There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic
Religion or Belief	.There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic
Sex	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Sexual Orientation	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will positively or negatively impact on people who share the protected characteristic

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

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

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

Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice	The business case seeks to increase the sufficiency of appropriate placements closer to home for care experienced children and supports the repatriation of Monmouthshire children back into the county. The provision will enable care experienced young people to develop their life skills and support their pathway to independence so that their future life chances and economic mobility are improved. The provision is designed for care experienced young people who have medium to high support needs, which is currently a gap in provision. This additional stepping stone approach will help vulnerable young people sustain future stable accommodation and tenancies. Bringing young people closer to their families and support networks will ensure there are reduced socio-economic barriers for parents and guardians to engage with their children. The development of accommodation close to community resources will reduce the economic impact on the young people when accessing EET, with transport infrastructure becoming more accessible.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have a negative impact on people who are socio-economically disadvantaged.	Placement of young people closer to home and communities to improve social and economic mobility where appropriate. Ensuring the project is close to schools, employment opportunities, youth and health services to enhance the opportunities for supporting our young people to achieve their personal wellbeing outcomes and become more independent.

Policy making and the Welsh language.

How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council’s Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
Policy Making Effects on the use of the Welsh language, Promoting Welsh language Treating the Welsh language no less favorably	The proposals will be neutral in relation to opportunities to use the Welsh language and will not treat the Welsh language less favorably than the English language. The proposal will ensure young people remain in Wales and enable them to maintain connections to the Welsh language.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have a negative impact on the Welsh language.	All supporting documents, information and surveys are available in Welsh upon request
Operational Recruitment & Training of workforce	All adverts and tender specifications will be available in Welsh and will be advertised via the Sell2Wales procurement website. We are not currently implementing an authority led operational delivery team, therefore there will be no formal recruitment linked to this project.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have a negative impact on the Welsh language.	Any future recruitment will be undertaken through the medium of English and Welsh and all documents displayed bilingually on the council website and social media channels. Applicants will be invited to apply in Welsh if that is their preference.
Service delivery Use of Welsh language in service delivery Promoting use of the language	Welsh language and reference to Welsh culture will be actively encouraged in the home, this will be stipulated with the service provider at award of contract. Non-Welsh speakers will be encouraged to use incidental Welsh in everyday communications.	There is no evidence to suggest that the proposal will have a negative impact on the Welsh language.	Development of bilingual policies and procedures to be available on request.

	All policies and procedures implemented within the home will be available in Welsh on request.		

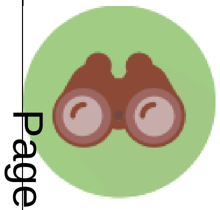
4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!

Well-Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs	Utilising local property related services and local contractors in the refurbishment of the home boosting local economy. This proposal will also provide new jobs for supported accommodation staff.	None identified at this point
A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and land, river and coastal ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)	We aim to increase the properties EPC rating to A, reducing carbon emissions and ensuring sustainability is at the heart of the development. Examples include the installation of an air source heat pump and solar panels. Close proximity to public transport links will reduce the reliance on private transport, reducing the carbon footprint. We intend to install planting areas in the garden to encourage sustainability and support biodiversity. Young	Using framework contractors who are compliant with environmental legislation in relation to materials and the disposal of waste

Well-Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	people will be encouraged to develop their environmental awareness.	
A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized, and health impacts are understood	Children and young people will be living in their communities and close to support networks, thus improving their sense of identity and general wellbeing. The support provider will ensure the mental and physical health of the young people is monitored and supported where necessary, encouraging them to be active and eat well will be at the heart of this. Young people will be supported to engage with activities which increase self-esteem and confidence, leading to better mental health and sense of purpose.	The proposal will contribute to the improved emotional wellbeing of young people, who have access to local services and maintaining links to their family and community. Bringing our children looked after back to Monmouthshire will mean we can work more closely with our local partner's where good relationships have already been built to ensure that the young person has the best access to services and their physical, emotional and mental needs are being met.
A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	Our young people will be able to connect with their local community and benefit from the excellent community support on offer. They will be supported to positively engage in their community and contribute where they can, to promote cohesive community links. This can be achieved by engaging with education, employment and training, joining community clubs and groups and taking pride in where they live.	Bringing our young people closer to home to maintain connections with families, communities, and school placements. As they grow and develop into adulthood, there is a greater possibility that they will remain in Monmouthshire as adults. Close collaboration with neighbourhood groups, police and community groups will ensure we maintain cohesive and positive relationships and address any concerns in a proactive and empathetic manner.
A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local	Living inside of Monmouthshire and Wales will enable our young people to take ownership for their future and contribute to the development of Wales.	This proposal will keep young people in county and in country. It will promote links to families and communities.

Well-Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
social, economic and environmental wellbeing	By purchasing a modern nearly new property ensures we are minimising the requirement for new materials and reducing the carbon footprint associated with their production and transportation	
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	Children and young people are enabled to live and grow in communities which represent their own language and culture. Use of the Welsh language and reference to Welsh culture will be encouraged by the service provider.	Welsh language and reference to Welsh culture will be actively encouraged in the home. Non-Welsh speakers will be encouraged to use incidental Welsh in everyday communications.
A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	The creation of this provision will provide the young people with a supportive environment which will provide the young people the skills that are required to step down into supported accommodation with a lower intensity of support and ultimately into independent accommodation provision. This provision will provide stability and structure for the children and ensure their life experiences do not inhibit their development and progression.	Regular reviewing of progress linked to mutually agreed targets with the young people. These will relate to developing their skills, knowledge and qualities with the intention of becoming self-sufficient and responsible adults.

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

Sustainable Development Principle		Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future	Significant emphasis has and will continue to be placed on the long-term care and pathway planning and reviewing arrangements for these children and young people. Utilising the momentum of the Welsh Government manifesto pledge to 'eliminate' profit from children's social care.	None identified
	Working together with other partners to deliver objectives	During the redevelopment process we have and will continue to engage with a number of local contractors to deliver the desired objectives. Collaboration with the service provider will be fundamental to the success of the home. This will be an on-going and tightly monitored relationship. In addition, collaboration with the Gwent regional partnership board will be a key collaboration in coordinating the HCF funding grant/application.	None identified

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Involvement Involving those with an interest and seeking their views	The transitional arrangements for these young people will be managed in detail. Key internal stakeholders have been engaged in the design and inception of the provision including property and planning colleagues. All council governance has been adhered to, to ensure all members are briefed on proposals. Specific Ward Members will be consulted further and kept abreast of all developments. *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?*	Continued dialogue with children, home visits, managed transitions into education, training and employment Public engagement events with neighbours and community groups to ensure a harmonious and positive inception to the project and continued local support.
Prevention Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse	Children Services works to the earliest possible intervention, preventing problems occurring or getting worse. The proposal helps prepare young people to enter into permanent housing solutions. Where appropriate in-house placement can act as a stepping stone to support a child or young-person to leave care in a planned way. A 24 hour support provision will provide the daily support for the young people. Ensuring their needs are met on a proactive basis, identifying any issues as they arise, preventing escalation and incident.	None identified at this point
Integration Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies	The proposal allows children and young people to become integrated into the local community, they will be encouraged to engage in community activities such as Mon life and Mon Sport. They will have access to local education, employment and training as well as statutory healthcare facilities. These measure will ensure they are integrated into the community.	None identified at this point

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

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	Safeguarding will be at the heart of developing this provision for our young people. The home will be quality assured via the service provider's governance arrangements, will be subject to review and scrutiny from Childrens Services and will have detailed safeguarding arrangements in place.	The proposal will not bring a negative impact to safeguarding.	None identified at this point
Corporate Parenting	By developing this supported accommodation provision we are enhancing the council's corporate parenting role by providing a local authority scheme specifically for our young people. This will enable improved care experiences for young people and will allow good oversight of the individualised support that is provided.	The proposal will not bring a negative impact on corporate parenting.	None identified at this point

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

Commissioning Data

As at 17.06.2026 the authority had 71 children/ young people who are currently being accommodated in residential care homes or with foster carers who are 14 + (i.e. those who are already 16+ or who will be turning 16 in the next 2 years). Based on an understanding of their current care and support needs, many of these young people will require a step-down provision with medium to high support (such as the current project) to support them with their transition out of a care environment.

This table shows the placement types for the current 14 plus cohort of young people.

Placement Type	Children and Young People Placed in County	Children and Young People Placed Out of County	Total Number of Children and Young People
Monmouthshire Foster Carer	5	4	9
Independent Foster Carer	1	11	12
Monmouthshire Kinship Carer	15 (Includes PWP)	6 (Includes PWP)	21
Residential Care	6	4	10
Semi-independent/Transitional Accommodation (all 3rd party)	4	15	19
Total	31	40	71

Out of the above numbers 43 young people are already aged 16 or over.

These young people are currently being accommodated in various placements type.

- 11 young people in UASC accommodation provisions
- 9 young people in supported type accommodation provisions
- 5 young people in residential accommodation
- 2 young people accommodated by an IFA.
- 5 young people are with LA foster carers.
- 3 young people are living connected carers
- 7 placed with own parents
- 1 is living independently

Financial Data - including the costs associated with a representative group of young people; revenue costs of running the scheme and borrowing costs to undertake the proposed renovations to the property. This has allowed us to undertake financial modelling on both 100% and 80% occupancy levels.

6. 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

Positives

Our project proposes to repatriate Monmouthshire children. Bringing our children back into our communities where they can access local education, employment opportunities and youth services that will support their social development and increase their social and economic mobility.

The ability to create a bespoke provision that meets the needs of the young people, moving them forward in their development in a supportive environment, until they are ready to transition into more independent accommodation.

Safeguarding for our young people will be improved with increased oversight of the support being delivered. MCC will have the opportunity to have full design of the support delivery specification.

Bringing young people closer to their families and support networks will see reduced socio-economic barriers.

This proposal will represent a financial saving, with the redistribution of revenue currently being spent in the private sector and out of county being redirected to our service. This proposal will also provide new jobs in the community with the procurement of a service provider to manage the home.

The proposal will contribute to the improved emotional wellbeing of young people, having greater access to local services and maintaining links to their family and community.

Negatives

Preparation is required in order to ensure the Welsh language is present and encouraged within the home. Welsh language and culture development may be needed for both young people and staff.

Community engagement will need to be at the forefront of the development moving forward as this may represent a barrier if not managed correctly and communities are not well informed.

7. 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
Present the business case at Cabinet	11th Feb 2026	Jane Rodgers
Engage with ward member and local community	Feb 2026	Jane Rodgers

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

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	Cabinet	Feb 2026	
2	Cabinet	8th July 2026	Update following potential alternative acquisition

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SUBJECT: ACQUISITION OF PLOTS OF LAND FOR THE UNDY TO ROGIET SEVERN TUNNEL JUNCTION (STJ) LINKS ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTE

MEETING: CABINET

DATE: 8th JULY 2026

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: MAGOR WITH UNDY, ROGIET

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To seek authorisation to proceed with the purchase of land required to provide an active travel (walking, wheeling and cycling) path alongside the B4245 between Undy and Rogiet.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet

- Agrees the acquisition of the land necessary to secure an active travel route between Undy and Rogiet and improvement of sustainable travel options for residents in Severnside.

- Agrees to delegate the land acquisition to the Chief Officer for Infrastructure in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs, Housing and Tourism.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Currently, the B4245 between Undy and Rogiet has no provision for walking and cycling, meaning the short distance between Magor/Undy and Rogiet has to be made by vehicle (though some walk or cycle on or alongside the road, at great risk). This affects the equity and safety of trips between Undy and Rogiet, and onwards to the main services and shops in Caldicot, as well access to Severn Tunnel Junction railway station.

3.2 Route options for providing a walking and cycling link between Rogiet and Undy have been examined and a proposed primary route consisting of a shared use active travel path adjacent to the southern side of the B4245 has been assessed to provide the shortest, most direct active travel route between Rogiet and Undy. Access for people living in Magor and Undy to Severn Tunnel Junction, and local services such as the secondary school, leisure centre, and Caldicot town centre is restricted by the lack of options for those who cannot drive. This leads to inequitable access and creates trips by car that could be made by other means if the option were available. This situation has wider economic and educational access, air quality, quality of environment and social impacts.

3.3 Rogiet and Undy are just over a mile apart, a distance that could be covered using a mobility scooter in half an hour or cycled in less than ten minutes. An active travel route along this section of the B4245 will allow residents of both villages to benefit from the facilities and opportunities offered by their neighbouring villages, without needing access to a car. It is known that people cycle and walk on the edge or the verge on this heavily trafficked B-road (10,000 vehicles per day).

3.4 Development of this route has been identified as a priority for the Council through several county-wide and local consultations. A consultation specifically on this route in 2023 found that 96% of people consulted were 'very-'or 'quite supportive' of the proposed Rogiet to Undy active travel path, which is as expected given that there is currently no direct, accessible link for active travel. Most respondents said the proposed improvements would influence their modal choice for local trips.

3.5 Comments from the 2023 consultation focused on the potential for the proposed active travel path to be a safe, accessible, practical, sustainable, healthy, and affordable option. It is seen as a much-needed link 'for all' between communities. There was concern from some about the proximity of the path to the B4245, the potential for conflict between path users, the path's impact on local biodiversity and the possibility of traffic congestion or loss of road width. The design for the path, which includes a 3m-wide shared use path segregated from the road by a vegetated buffer, reflects the consultation response and rationalizes the land requirement.

3.6 MCC Active Travel team appointed consultants WSP to provide a land acquisition strategy and, integrated water management works. They produced an assessment of the land value and expected overall cost including mitigation and legal costs. This was discussed with the Councils Landlord Services and Legal teams, and WSP were given approval to progress based on the estimate letter.

3.7 The land required to construct the route is in the ownership of:

Private landowners: - Five plots belong to private landowners. Negotiations have been undertaken with the respective landowners and are at various stages.

Welsh Ministers: – One plot is in the estate of Welsh Ministers, which was acquired to facilitate the M4 Relief Road. It is proposed that this land be acquired and dedicated as Highway.

3.8 The Council has been awarded £480,000 Safe Routes in Communities (SRiC) funding by the Cardiff Capital Region Transport Delivery Plan to deliver this route. This funding has to be spent within the current financial year.

The intention is that land Parcel 1 is bought with the SRiC funding, as part of the construction and to allow us to get the most use from the construction planned this year.

All parcels are addressed as part of the same acquisition strategy, which is why the report was prepared to cover all parcels.

3.9 Further information on the funding of the purchase of land parcels is in section 7.

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

4.1 The Integrated Well-being Appraisal in Appendix 2, evaluates the impacts for equality and future generations and details the following positive impacts which include:

- Instating a shared use path along the B4245 between Undy and Rogiet to provide a sustainable and active travel option.
- Provides an alternative to car travel and mitigate the air quality and climate change impact of transport.

- Improve inclusive and accessible access to affordable, healthy and at-will travel.
- Reduce the incidence of people walking or cycling along the heavily trafficked carriageway of the B4245.

4.2 Negative impacts of the scheme have been addressed through mitigations.

Cost of land acquisition and scheme construction

Mitigations:

- Negotiation of land in consultation with the Councils Legal and Landlord Services teams.
- Use of grant and section 106 funding*

Ecology – removal and re-installation of hedgerow.

Mitigations:

- The scheme will include biodiversity net-benefit
- Obtain and adhere to required ecological permissions.

Flood and water-management – additional non-permeable surfacing laid alongside the B4245

Mitigations:

- Inclusion of swale
- Consultation with MCC SAB
- SAB approval for scheme
- Seek additional water management opportunities as part of the design

There are no un-mitigated negative impacts associated with this proposal.

*Please see sections 7.3-4

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

5.1 Do nothing – This would be contrary to the Councils duty to promote active travel and contrary to the adopted Local Transport Strategy.

5.2 Acquire the land to enable the construction of the proposed active travel route. An appraisal of the various land acquisition options has been undertaken. Acquiring the land through Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) has been investigated and dismissed due to the extended timescales and cost implications. This, however, will be reviewed if private treaty negotiations fail. Any acquisition by private treaty will be conducted in line with Council policies and will be undertaken with the oversight of the Councils Landlord Services and Legal teams.

6. REASONS:

6.1 Agreement to delegate the land acquisition decisions will enable the Council to progress at pace and meet the grant funding terms of the Regional Transport Fund.

6.2 The proposed active travel route has been a long-held aspiration of the local communities. Grant funding has been secured to enable the project to proceed which will improve walking and cycling links between the communities of Magor with Undy and Rogiet and Severn Tunnel Junction.

6.3 This route is phase one of a broader scheme that seeks to provide an accessible walking and wheeling route between the Severnside communities. The successful completion of this scheme will enable us to apply for further funding to develop the remaining phases of the broader scheme.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Council has been awarded £480,000 Safe Routes in Communities (SRiC) funding by the Cardiff Capital Region Transport Delivery Plan to deliver this route. This funding has to be spent within the current financial year.

To progress the full 'STJ Links phase 1' scheme (Church Road Undy to Station Road Rogiet), the scheme has been split into the Undy SRiC scheme (Church Road Undy to east Undy boundary) – now funded for construction this year, and the Undy-Rogiet AT route (east Undy boundary to Station Road Rogiet) – for which design and permissions need to be finalised, and funding for construction/further land purchase is yet to be secured.

As part of the AT core from the CCR RTF monies, we have also allocated £120k for the development of these further phases on the Undy to STJ to Caldicot route.

The intention is that land Parcel 1 is bought with the SRiC funding, as part of the construction and to allow us to get the most use from the construction planned this year.

All parcels are addressed as part of the same acquisition strategy, which is why the report was prepared to cover all parcels.

Unlike the Monmouth Wye Bridge Project, this scheme has been allowed development funding as it can be phased into smaller (~£1m) sections in subsequent years which fit within the possibility of the RTF grant through the CCR, which the Monmouth scheme would not be able to achieve.

7.2 S106 funding of £70,000 has been allocated to this scheme via the Rockfield Farm development. The Vinegar Hill development has allocated £288k of S106 funding for sustainable transport/ Green travel projects.

7.3 The project is not seeking any MCC capital funding commitment to facilitate the delivery of this scheme as the costs of acquiring of the land can be funded from the identified grant and S106 funding.

7.4 Any use of section 106 funding would be subject to a separate report.

8. CONSULTEES

Cabinet; Senior Leadership Team; Landlord Services (Estates and Property Services)

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Appendix 1 – Integrated Impact Assessment *MCC IIA - STJ Links Phase 1*

Appendix 2 – IWBA *Draft_Integrated Well-being Appraisal_Severn Tunnel Junction Links Phase 1_WelTAG Stage Three_v2.0*

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Monmouthshire County Council

INTEGRATED WELL-BEING APPRAISAL

Severn Tunnel Junction Links - Phase 1 (Undy to Rogiet)

RTU-WSP-00-XX-RP-Z-0006
DECEMBER 2024

CONFIDENTIAL

Monmouthshire County Council

INTEGRATED WELL-BEING APPRAISAL

Severn Tunnel Junction Links - Phase 1 (Undy to Rogiet)

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CONTENTS

TABLES

FIGURES

APPENDICES

APPENDIX H

DETAILED DESIGN OUTLINE PROGRAMME

APPENDIX I

MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 STUDY CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) have commissioned WSP to develop a WelTAG Stage Three (Full Business Case) study of a shared-use active travel route along the B4245 between Undy and Rogiet. It is the next stage to a previous combined WelTAG Stage One & Two study that appraised options for an active travel route extending between Undy and Rogiet in line with the latest WelTAG guidance at the time of writing.

The Stage One & Two study concluded that out of a short-list of options, a route running parallel to the B4245 between Undy and Rogiet (Option 1) should be taken forward to the detailed design stage for a full business case appraisal. Before being finalised, the WelTAG Stage One & Two report was reviewed by a Review Group on 19th December 2022. The Review Group concluded in support of the recommendations made within the WelTAG Stage One and Two Report.

The aim of the Stage Three study is to make a full and detailed assessment of the preferred option identified and to consider any new contextual information since the production of the Stage One and Two report. The study area and route option that has been considered as part of this WelTAG Stage Three is illustrated in **Figure 1-1**.

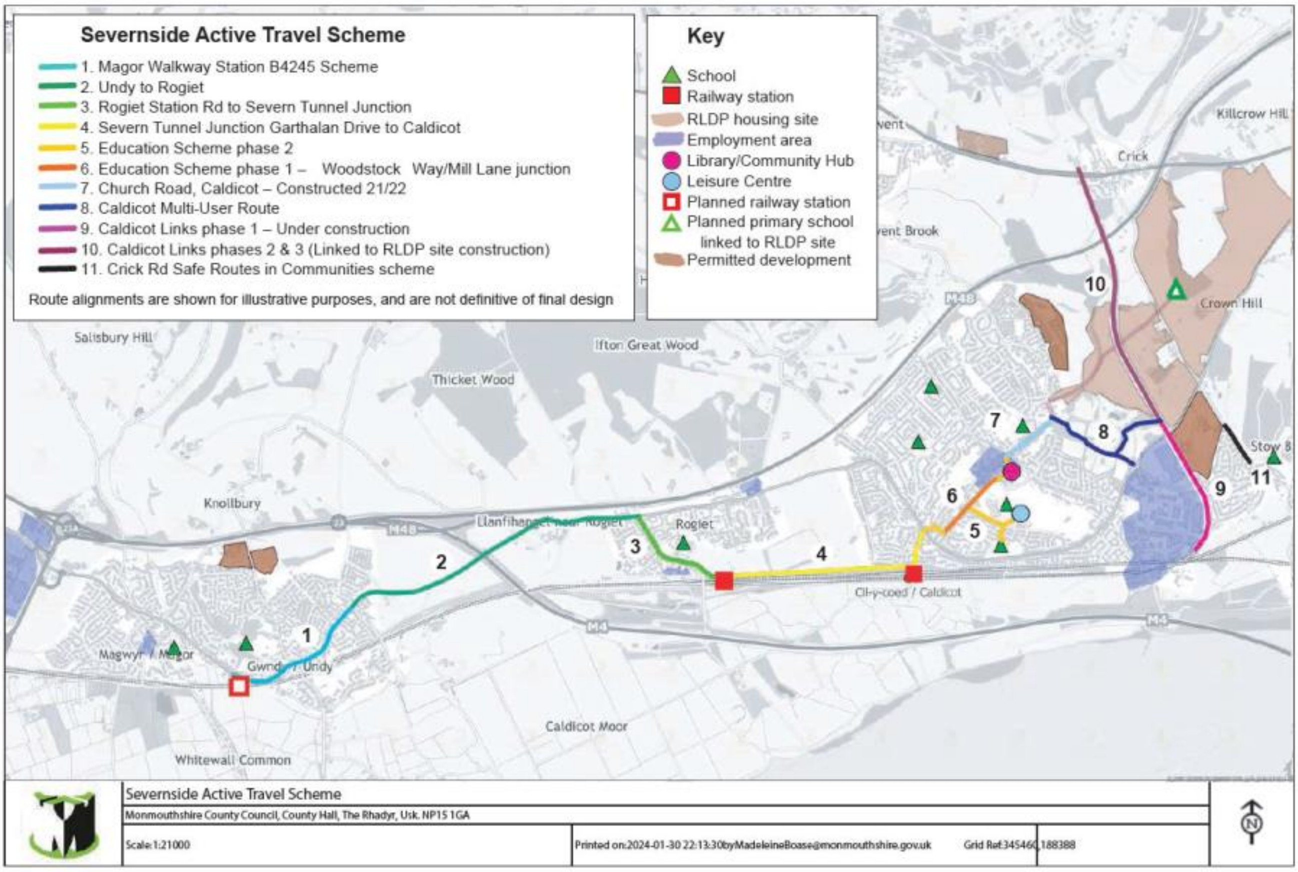
Figure 1-1 Severn Tunnel Junction Links – Phase 1 Route

This active travel route forms part of the aspirational Severnside active travel route, which is intended to both improve access to Severn Tunnel Junction and provide a direct, safe, and attractive active travel route to Caldicot from areas to the west, including Undy, Magor, and Rogiet.

Phase 1 of the route, which is considered as part of this study, extends from the B4245/Church Road junction (Undy) to the B4245/Station Road junction (Rogiet), with **Phases 2 and 3** covering the sections of the route between Rogiet and Caldicot, incorporating access to Severn Tunnel Junction. It should be noted that a separate WelTAG Lite is being undertaken to develop the Phases 2 and 3 sections of the route.

The aspirational Severnside active travel route is illustrated in **Figure 1-2**. The Severn Tunnel Junction Links Phase 1 scheme is coloured in dark green (2).

Figure 1-2 Severnside Active Travel Scheme



1.2 STUDY AREA

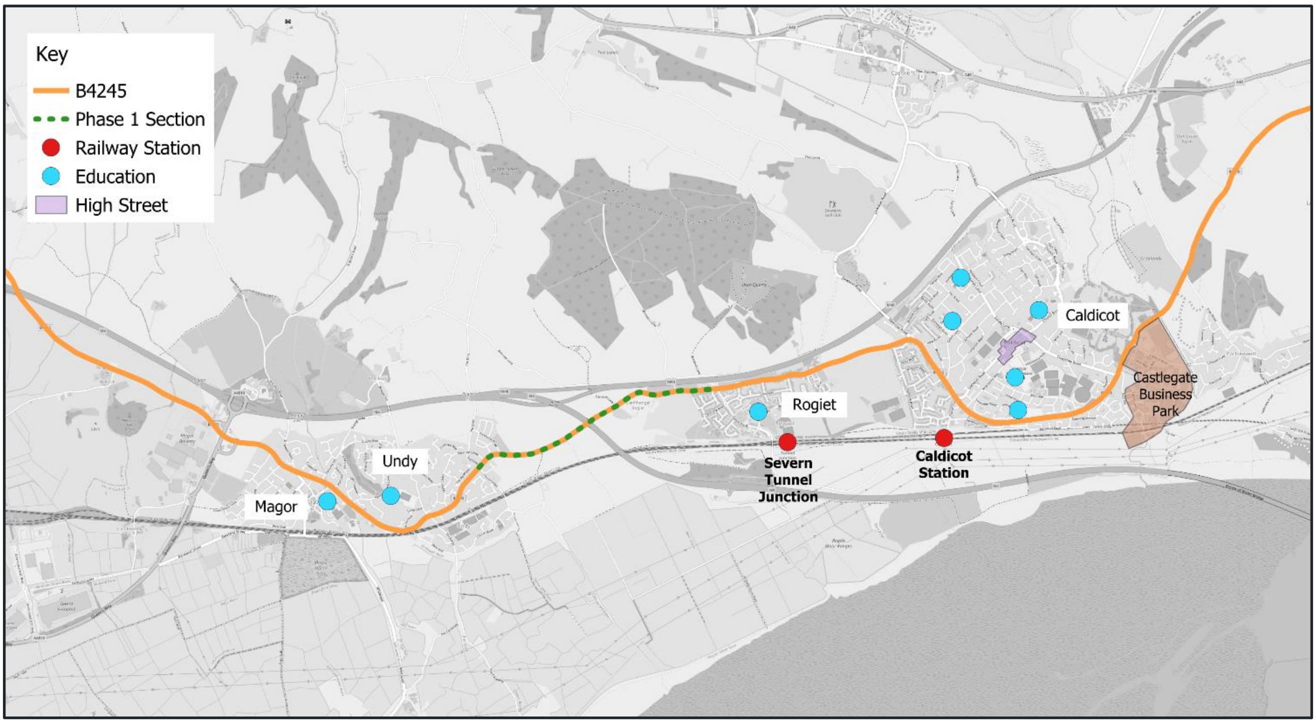
The B4245 is the primary road connecting Rogiet and Undy. Beyond the two villages, the B4245 extends to the A48 Chepstow Road to the west and the A48 at the Parkwall Roundabout in Crick to the east.

The B4245 serves an important purpose for the study area by providing access to a range of services and amenities in nearby areas, such as education, , employment, and businesses, as well as the local high streets of Caldicot. It also provides access to residential areas and other important transport links such as Severn Tunnel Junction and bus services that link settlements along the route to more populous areas such as Chepstow, Newport, and Bristol.

The focus of this study is on the section of B4245 between Undy and Rogiet, from the Church Road junction (Undy) to the Station Road junction (Rogiet). Along this section, the B4245 is subject to a 40mph speed limit, with no footway provided for a 1.21km section of the route, including at the M4 underbridge.

The study area in the context of the wider B4245 is shown in **Figure 1-3**.

Figure 1-3 Strategic Context – Severn Tunnel Junction Links Phase 1



1.3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The development of this WelTAG Stage Three has been informed by engagement undertaken with key stakeholders and the local community. The engagement undertaken was centred around two stakeholder workshops and one public consultation:

- **Internal officer design review** – details of the background to the project and current detailed design proposals of the proposed option were presented to stakeholders within MCC and discussed;
- **Severnside Area Committee Forum** – WSP were invited to attend a Committee Forum meeting, where details of the proposed design and progress of the WelTAG were discussed, to gather the views of key stakeholders in the local community; and
- **Public consultation –** the public were invited to provide feedback on the detailed design of the proposed route, which took place at an in-person event and over an online consultation period. Feedback was obtained through a questionnaire.

Additional feedback by key stakeholders has also been provided outside of the consultation events, through written feedback from Rogiet Community council and Magor with Undy Town Council.

The full findings of the stakeholder engagement activities, including how stakeholder feedback has been utilised within this study, is outlined in an Engagement Summary Report (RTU-WSP-00-XX-RP-Z-0001) provided in **Appendix A**.

1.4 PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is the Integrated Well-being Appraisal (IBWA) for Stage Three of the WelTAG study, setting out the work undertaken to appraise the final route option in its detailed design stage.

This IWBA is in support of an accompanying WelTAG Stage Three Report (RTU-WSP-00-XX-RP-Z-0007).

2 CASE FOR CHANGE & STUDY OBJECTIVES

2.1 CASE FOR CHANGE

A Case for Change for the Undy to Rogiet study area has already been identified within the previous WelTAG Stage One and Two study, alongside a wider reaching Case for Change produced for the aspirational Severnside Active Travel scheme.

The information that was detailed within the WelTAG Stage One and Two Case for Change has been updated to reflect changes to the WelTAG 2024 guidance, and the evidence base has been expanded to reflect the current situation and most recent available data.

Both the Case for Change for the Undy to Riget study area and the Severnside Active Travel scheme supported in the development of specific study objectives to inform this Severn Tunnel Junction Links WelTAG Stage Three study. It is also intended that these study objectives are utilised to inform the development of Phases 2 and 3 of the proposed active travel route, which are the subject of a separate WelTAG Lite study.

2.1.1 UNDY TO ROGIET

A Case for Change Summary Report (**Appendix B** - RTU-WSP-00-XX-RP-Z-0005) has been completed for the proposed active travel route, addressing the need for intervention and the clear rationale for the study.

The main issue affecting the Phase 1 study area is the lack of existing active travel infrastructure, resulting in safety concerns and severance between Undy and Rogiet. This means that people are unable to walk or cycle safely between Undy and Rogiet, which means access to opportunities are restricted for those who do not own a private car, whilst also embedding the use of private vehicles for travel in the local area.

There are also Strategic Growth Areas located on the outskirts of Caldicot and Rogiet which will significantly increase the demand for local journeys. It is considered that the proposed scheme is a key first phase in enabling access from the villages of Magor and Undy to these Strategic Growth Areas, as well as to Caldicot itself.

Based on the Case for Change for the Undy to Rogiet study area, the following transport problems, opportunities, and constraints have been identified.

Transport Problems

1. Severance;
2. Access to services;
3. Safety;
4. Reliance on the private car;
5. Uninviting walking and cycling environment; and
6. Low uptake of sustainable travel.

Opportunities

1. Strategic Growth Areas;
2. Active Travel;
3. Safety Improvements; and
4. Active Travel Network.

Constraints

1. M4 underpass;
2. Ecological sites in close proximity; and.
3. Grade II listed building.

2.1.2 SEVERNSIDE ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTE

MCC have produced a WelTAG Stage 0 Case for Change for the aspirational Severnside Active Travel scheme, which extends between Magor and Caldicot, as illustrated in **Figure 1-2**. The Case for Change identified key issues in the Severnside region and barriers to modal shift, which has been summarised as follows:

- **Poor active travel provision and connectivity** between Caldicot and the areas to the west, including to education, employment, health, leisure and other key services. The B4245 carries relatively fast vehicles, and the accompanying active travel route does not offer meaningful connections into Caldicot. The National Cycle Network Route 4 parallel to the railway is also isolated and unattractive;
- **Reliance on driving for short journeys** increases traffic volumes and discourages active travel uptake. However, the demand for short journeys offers opportunities for improved active travel provision to have meaningful impacts; and
- **Significant population growth** in Severnside and a large proportion of working age residents, increasing traffic and uptake of driving as a mode of transport for commuting journeys.

The wider aspiration for the Severnside area is to link and upgrade active travel routes.

It is considered that an active travel route between Undy and Rogiet is a fundamental stage of developing safe and attractive access to Caldicot from areas to the west of the town.

The full detailed Case for Change for the Severnside Active Travel Scheme is included in **Appendix C**.

2.2 STUDY OBJECTIVES

The previous WelTAG Stage One and Two study for the Undy to Rogiet Phase 1 active travel route produced six study objectives in late 2022. Due to the timescales between the production of the Stage One and Two WelTAG and the current WelTAG Stage Three, as well as the publication of updated WelTAG 2024 guidance, an exercise has been undertaken to review the objectives, to ensure that they:

- Link to wider strategic objectives and targets;
- Reflect the current needs of the study area;
- Are in line with the new WelTAG 2024 guidance;
- Are SMART; and
- Are consistent with the wider aspirations for the Severnside active travel route.

The revised Severn Tunnel Junction Links Phase 1 WelTAG Stage Three study are:

1. Provide a direct, coherent, and attractive active travel route between Undy, Rogiet, and Caldicot;
2. Improve provision and perceived safety for active travel;
3. Increase the number of active travel journeys being undertaken between Undy, Rogiet, and Caldicot;
4. Improve access to public transport by active modes, including Severn Tunnel Junction and Caldicot Station; and
5. Improve access by active modes to Rogiet Primary School and Caldicot School.

To ensure the study objectives are relevant to the area and support the delivery of wider policy objectives, they have been assessed in the context of:

- The transport problems identified within the study area at WelTAG Stages One & Two;
- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015;
- Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021; and
- MCC Community and Corporate Plan 2022-2028.

The assessment of the study objectives is included in **Appendix D** (RTU-WSP-00-XX-RP-Z-0002).

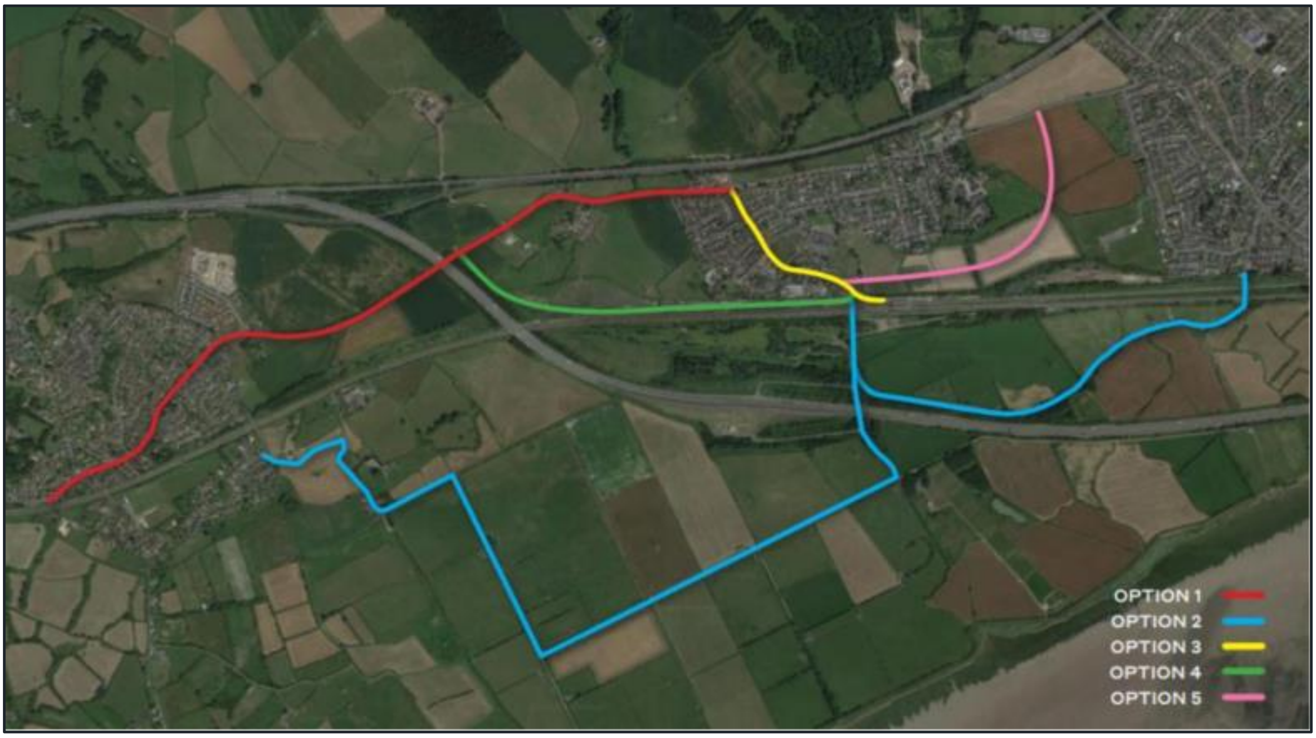
3 PROPOSED SCHEME

3.1 BACKGROUND

In line with the WelTAG guidance available at the time of writing, the previous WelTAG Stage One & Two report developed and appraised a long-list of options in terms of their contribution to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Wales Transport Strategy 2021 priorities and ambitions, previous study objectives, and MCC well-being objectives. Stakeholder and public consultation activities also contributed to the assessment of the options.

The long-list of options that was considered in the WelTAG Stage One & Two is presented in **Figure 3-1**.

Figure 3-1 WelTAG Stage One & Two Long-list of Options



3.2 PREFERRED OPTION

It was identified as part of the WelTAG Stage One and Two study that **Option 1 (red line)** should be progressed for further design development and appraisal at WelTAG Stage Three. The intention is that this first phase of the longer-distance Severnside active travel route will tie-in with subsequent stages of the route at Station Road.

It should be noted that Phase 2 of the Severn Tunnel Links project involves further development of **Option 3 (yellow line)** as part of a separate WelTAG Lite study.

3.3 DESCRIPTION OF SCHEME

Drawings for the proposed scheme are provided in **Appendix E**.

Option 1, the final preferred option to be appraised within this WelTAG Stage Three is described as a 3m shared-use Active Travel path on the southern road verge of the B4245 extending from the Church Road/B4245 junction in Undy to the Station Road/B4245 junction in Rogiet.

The route will be designed to current Active Travel Act Guidance[1] standards, which includes the required kerbing/buffer zone with the carriageway, based on the road speed.

Key design features of the route include:

- Raised crossings at side road junctions and field accesses (in line with detail DE604 of the Active Travel Act Guidance);
- Dropped-kerbing and tactile paving to standard throughout the scheme;
- A toucan crossing installed at the western end of the scheme between Rockfield Grove and Pankhurst Drive; and
- Continued provision at bus stops along the route, such as a width of 3m, to reduce conflict with other users (in line with detail DE504 of the Active Travel Act Guidance). For one of the bus stops, alternative design details have been agreed with TfW, due to the lack of available width.

[1] Active Travel Act guidance

4 APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

4.1 OVERVIEW

The proposed scheme has been appraised in terms of its:

- Strategic Fit in the context of key transport policies and programmes (detailed in **Chapter 5**);
- Impact on well-being in the context of the four well-being ambitions set out in Llwybr Newydd (detailed in **Chapter 6**);
- Affordability (detailed in **Chapter 7**);
- Deliverability (detailed in **Chapter 8**); and
- Management (detailed in **Chapter 9**).

The Strategic Fit and Well-being appraisals have been undertaken utilising a seven-point scale ranging from large potential beneficial impact / alignment with policy (+++) through to large potential adverse impact / non-alignment with policy (- - -).

The appraisals have been informed by a combination of qualitative methods, environmental assessments, and an Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit (AMAT) assessment, which are detailed further below. This has enabled this WelTAG Stage Three study to assess the suitability of the proposed scheme and set out the potential benefits that could be realised.

4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

Alongside this WelTAG study, the following environmental assessments have been undertaken:

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (GC4312-WSP-74-XX-RP-0003);
- Ground Level Tree Assessment (GC4312-WSP-74-XX-RP-0002); and
- Dormouse Survey Report (GC4312-WSP-74-XX-RP-0005).

Where required, qualitative analysis has been undertaken to supplement the environmental assessments for the purpose of this WelTAG study.

4.3 ACTIVE MODE APPRAISAL TOOLKIT (AMAT)

In line with TAG Unit 5-1, the DfT's Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit (AMAT) (May 2024) has been used to assess the potential benefits of the proposed active travel scheme. This has been used to support both the Strategic Fit and Well-being appraisals, quantitative assessment using the Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit (AMAT) has been undertaken.

The AMAT estimates the potential quantified benefits of active travel infrastructure on elements such as the environment (air quality, noise, and greenhouse gases), health, journey ambience, and decongestion associated with modal shift.

A Technical Note summarising the AMAT assessment and the inputs and outputs in further detail is provided in **Appendix F** (RTU-WSP-00-XX-RP-Z-0004).

4.3.1 DEMAND

Baseline

To get an overview of current pedestrian and cycle demands within the study area, a review of Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT) data was undertaken. This dataset estimates the number of one-way commuting trips by foot or by bicycle based on the 2011 Census.

In order to determine the total number of trips for all purposes, including return trips, this data was converted to total number of trips where outbound and inbound journeys are counted as separate trips. This was done through applying the following factors:

- 2x the walking and cycling number from PCT, to reflect the likelihood of return trips; and
- Based on the National Transport Survey (NTS), 16x the number of walking trips and 3x the number of cycling trips, to convert from commuting to journeys of all purposes.

Future Scenarios

TAG Unit A5.1 Active Mode Appraisal sets out that it is important to forecast walking and cycling demand as accurately as possible to produce a successful appraisal. On this basis, walking and cycling flows for two future scenarios have been estimated, to present a range of the potential benefits of the scheme.

These scenarios are as follows:

- **Low Growth –** based on a more modest modal shift and usage of the proposed scheme; and
- **High Growth –** based on a large modal shift and significant usage of the proposed scheme.

Future Pedestrian Demand

Future pedestrian demand for the proposed scheme has been estimated using the DfT's Uplifts Tool (2023).

This estimates the number of additional trips on-foot that may be made following implementation of active travel infrastructure, based on the potential scheme costs and consideration of similar schemes. As the tool only covers England, the County of Herefordshire has been utilised as an effective comparison to Monmouthshire.

The outputs from the tool estimates the number of journeys for 'low', 'middle', and 'high' categories. The estimated demand from the 'low' category has been applied to the **Low Growth** scenario, with the 'high' category applied to the **High Growth** scenario.

Future Cycling Demand

Future cycling demand for the proposed scheme has been estimated using the PCT.

The following scenarios have been considered:

- **Low Growth –** Government Target (Equality); and
- **High Growth –** Go Dutch.

Estimated Demand

The estimated demand utilised within the AMAT assessment is summarised in **Table 4-1**.

Table 4-1 Estimated Daily Demand – AMAT

Scenario		Pedestrians	Cyclists
Baseline		96	12
Future	Low Growth	172	43
	High Growth	285	187

4.3.2 ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions have been applied within the AMAT assessment:

- 2025 scheme opening year;
- 40-year appraisal period, based on Manual for Streets and Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 guidance for high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure;
- Route length of 2.08km;
- No current infrastructure provided along the route; and
- Proposed infrastructure will be an ‘Off-Road Segregated Cycle Track’.

4.3.3 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The estimated quantified benefits for the proposed scheme, based on a 2010 price base, over a 40-year appraisal period, are presented in **Table 4-2**.

Table 4-2 Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit Results (40-year Appraisal)

Category	Phase 1	
	Low Growth	High Growth
Congestion benefit	£9,520	£43,630
Infrastructure Maintenance	£250	£1,140
Accident	£1,960	£9,000
Local Air Quality	£90	£410
Noise	£110	£480
Greenhouse Gases	£3,290	£15,060
Indirect Taxation	£300	£1,360
Absenteeism	£140,820	£526,690
Reduced risk of premature death	£593,690	£2,415,660
Journey Ambience	£162,120	£510,820
Present Value of Benefits (PVB)[2]	**£911,890**	**£3,523,100**

[2] The Present Value of Benefits (PVB) does not include ‘Infrastructure Maintenance’.

5 STRATEGIC FIT

5.1 OVERVIEW

This Chapter outlines the potential Strategic Fit of the proposed scheme, in order to demonstrate how the proposals could deliver benefits in accordance with key policy and programmes.

5.2 STUDY OBJECTIVES

A summary of the appraisal of the route in the context of the study objectives is provided in **Table 5-1**.

Table 5-1 Summary of Appraisal – Study Objectives[3]

Objectives		Assessment	Score
SO1	**Provide a direct, coherent, and attractive active travel route between Undy, Rogiet, and Caldicot**	The scheme will provide a direct 2.5 – 3m wide shared-use route between Rogiet and Undy (Phase 1). It will also connect to the wider Active Travel network, including proposals for Phases 2 and 3 of the route, to create a coherent route from Undy to Caldicot and across wider Severnside area. As this study only refers to Phase 1 of the route, the beneficial score is only considered as moderate.	+ +
SO2	**Improve provision and perceived safety for active travel**	Phase 1 of the proposed improvements will ensure that pedestrians and cyclists are segregated from the busy B4245 carriageway, reducing the actual and perceived risk of collision. The route will also be lit to Active Travel Act standards, ensuring users of the route feel safer and more confident when walking or cycling between Rogiet and Undy particularly during darker hours. The scheme is estimated to slightly reduce the likelihood of collisions along the B4245, providing between a £1,960 and £9,000 monetary benefit to collisions over the 40-year appraisal period.	+ +
SO3	**Increase the number of active travel journeys being undertaken between Undy, Rogiet, and Caldicot**	The shared-use path will encourage more people to walk and cycle along the route to access services and amenities in Rogiet and Undy, by making walking and cycling a safe, attractive and affordable option. The Phase 1 route will also form part of a wider network of routes which, once implemented, will offer walking and cycling connections to Caldicot and the wider Severnside area. It has been estimated that the number of people travelling along this section of the B4245 on-foot or by cycle could increase by between 99% and 337%, depending on the potential background modal shift.	+ +

[3] All monetary values are presented in 2010 values.

Objectives		Assessment	Score
SO4	**Improve access to public transport by active modes, including Severn Tunnel Junction and Caldicot Station**	Phase 1 of the route will help to improve access to Severn Tunnel Junction and Caldicot Station by improving the B4245 for active modes. The B4245 will form part of the trip to Severn Tunnel Junction, in particular, for many journeys through removing the severance issue on the B4245 between Rogiet and Undy. The scheme will also provide new bus stop provision in three locations, improving bus stop facilities within the study area.	+ +
SO5	**Improve access by active modes to Rogiet Primary School and Caldicot School**	Phase 1 of the route will help to improve active travel access to Rogiet Primary School and Caldicot School for some journeys by removing the severance issue of the B4245 between Rogiet and Undy. It is however noted that the catchment of Rogiet Primary School means that only a small number of journeys by school-aged children would be expected within the study area, although there could be some minor benefit.	+

5.3 TRANSPORT POLICIES & PROGRAMMES

A summary of the appraisal undertaken in the context of key transport priorities set out in national, regional and local policy and programmes, is provided in Error! Reference source not found..

Table 5-2 Summary of Appraisal – Strategic Fit[4]

Policy	Objectives / Ambitions	Assessment	Score
Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy	**Priority 1 - Bring services to people in order to reduce the need to travel.**	The proposal is unlikely to impact on the need for people to travel.	0
	Priority 2 - Allow people and goods to move easily from door to door by accessible, sustainable and efficient transport services and infrastructure.	The route will remove a significant severance issue with the B4245 between Rogiet and Undy, enabling people to walk and cycle between the settlements and beyond to Caldicot, when following phases are implemented. It is estimated that the number of people walking daily along the route could increase to between 172 and 285 people, and the number of people cycling to between 43 and 187, depending on the background modal shift assumptions, compared with 96 and 12 at present, respectively. It is considered that this will be further increased with the completion of Phases 2 and 3 of the Severn Tunnel Junction Links scheme.	+ + +
	Priority 3 - Encourage people to make the change to more sustainable transport.	The provision of high-quality active travel infrastructure could encourage some people to make the change to more sustainable transport, although it is acknowledged that the primary purpose of this scheme is to enable journeys, as opposed to encourage them, on-foot or by cycle.	+
Net Zero Wales – Carbon Budget 2 2021-2025[5]	**Policy 31 – Increase trip mode share of active travel from a current estimated proportion of 27% to 33% by 2030 and at least 35% by 2040.**	It is estimated that the number of people walking daily along the route could increase to between 172 and 285 people, and the number of people cycling to between 43 and 187, depending on the background modal shift assumptions, compared with 96 and 12 at present, respectively. It is considered that this will be further increased with the completion of Phases 2 and 3 of the Severn Tunnel Junction Links scheme.	+ +
	Policy 32 – Increase trip mode share of public transport from a current estimated proportion of 5%56 to 7% by 2030 and 13% by 2040.	The introduction of new bus infrastructure could encourage more people to travel by bus for journeys to/from Caldicot, Newport, and the wider area. The route will also improve access to Severn Tunnel Junction for active travel users, enabling more people to travel by rail for longer-distance journeys in the area.	+
Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 A Wales where people live…	**… and work in connected, inclusive and healthy places.**	The route will help to create connected, inclusive and healthy places by providing a direct link between the villages of Undy and Rogiet which previously experienced severance along the B4245.	+ +
	… in vibrant rural places with access to homes, jobs and services.	The route will improve connectivity between Undy and Rogiet, and help to make the predominantly rural study area a more attractive place to live and work.	+
	… in distinctive regions that tackle health and socio-economic inequality through sustainable growth.	The proposals will help to tackle socio-economic inequality by providing a sustainable and accessible link between communities. This will increase opportunities for those without access to a private car in the local area. According to the AMAT assessment, this could lead to between £734k and £2.9m monetised benefits over a 40-year appraisal period to health in the area, through a reduced risk of premature death and absenteeism.	+ +
	… in places with a thriving Welsh language.	The route improves local connections allowing deepened connection to place, community, language and local history. Welsh language learning is growing in popularity in Severnside, and this route can support Welsh Language learners' access to meet-ups and classes.	+

Page 247

[4] All monetary values are presented in 2010 values.
[5] It is considered that the impact on all other transport policies within Net Zero Wales will be neutral.

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 **A Wales where people live…**	**… and work in towns and cities which are a focus and springboard for sustainable growth.**	The route will improve connectivity between Rogiet and Undy, which is Phase 1 of the longer-distance Severnside Active Travel route, which will improve access to Caldicot for those living to the west of the town. This will improve opportunity for those without access to a private car.	+
	… in places where prosperity, innovation and culture are promoted.	The route is unlikely to promote prosperity, innovation, or culture.	0
	… in places where travel is sustainable.	The route will encourage more people to travel by sustainable modes between Undy and Rogiet. It is estimated that the number of people walking daily along the route could increase to between 172 and 285 people, and the number of people cycling to between 43 and 187, depending on the background modal shift assumptions, compared with 96 and 12 at present, respectively. It is considered that this will be further increased with the completion of Phases 2 and 3 of the Severn Tunnel Junction Links scheme.	+ + +
	… in places with world class digital infrastructure.	The route is unlikely to impact on digital infrastructure.	0
	… in places that sustainably manage their natural resources and reduce pollution.	The route will increase the number of people walking and cycling in the local area, reducing pollution from the transport system. According to the AMAT assessment, this could lead to a monetary benefit of between £3.5k and £16k over a 40-year appraisal period in relation to air quality, noise, and greenhouse gases, depending on the background modal shift assumptions, which is considered to be a slight beneficial impact.	+
	… in places with biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems.	It is proposed to engage further with MCC as part of the detailed design stage to ensure that a net gain is achieved in terms of biodiversity. The proposed route is unlikely to have an adverse impact on any sites of interest.	+
	… in places which are decarbonised and climate resilient.	The route will encourage walking and cycling which are low-carbon modes of transport. According to the AMAT assessment, this could lead to a monetary benefit of between £3.3k and £15k over a 40-year appraisal period in relation to greenhouse gases, depending on the background modal shift assumptions, which is considered to be a slight beneficial impact.	+
Programme for Government (2021 – 2026)	**Provide effective, high quality and sustainable healthcare.**	Although the route is unlikely to impact on the provision of healthcare, the AMAT assessment estimates a potential of between £734k and £2.9m monetised benefits over a 40-year appraisal period to health in the area, through a reduced risk of premature death and absenteeism. This could therefore reduce the cost of the transport network to the National Health Service, improving its sustainability.	+
	Protect, re-build and develop our services for vulnerable people.	The proposals will provide a route that is accessible for all users, including vulnerable groups, and improve access to services in Rogiet and Undy. Accessible infrastructure along the route includes dropped kerbs and tactile paving at each crossing point and raised crossings at each side road junction, in line with the Active Travel Act Guidance.	+
	Build an economy based on the principles of fair work, sustainability and the industries and services of the future.	The route will help to improve economic prospects in the Severnside area by providing a sustainable transport links between communities and their services. This will improve opportunities for those without access to a private car.	+
	Build a stronger, greener economy as we make maximum progress towards decarbonisation.	The route will encourage people to travel on-foot, by cycle, or by public transport, all of which are low-carbon modes of transport. This will contribute significantly towards decarbonisation of the transport system.	+ + +
	Embed our response to the climate and nature emergency in everything we do.	The route embeds the climate and nature emergency by encouraging low-carbon, sustainable modes of transport to encourage modal shift.	+ +
	Continue our long-term programme of education reform, and ensure educational inequalities narrow and standards rise.	The route will improve access on-foot and by cycle to nearby education sites, ensuring that those who are unable to afford to own a car or travel by bus are able to access education.	+

Programme for Government (2021 – 2026)	**Celebrate diversity and move to eliminate inequality in all of its forms.**	The proposals will provide a route that is accessible for all users and improve access to services in Rogiet and Undy. Accessible infrastructure along the route includes dropped kerbs and tactile paving at each crossing point and raised crossings at each side road junction, in line with the Active Travel Act Guidance.	+
	Push towards a million Welsh speakers, and enable our tourism, sports and arts industries to thrive.	The route improves local and tourist connections allowing deepened connection to place, community, language and local history. Welsh language learning is growing in popularity in Severnside, and this route can support Welsh Language learners' access to meet-ups and classes.	+
	Make our cities, towns and villages even better places in which to live and work.	The route will make Rogiet and Undy better places to live and work by improving access to facilities between the two villages and making it safer for pedestrians and cyclists. The route also forms part of a wider network of current and future routes which will improve connectivity further afield.	+ +
	Lead Wales in a national civic conversation about our constitutional future, and give our country the strongest possible presence on the world stage.	The route is unlikely to impact on Wales' constitutional future.	0
MCC Community and Corporate Plan 2022-2027	**A Fair Place to Live.**	The route will provide more opportunities for people to travel and access services between Rogiet and Undy on-foot and by cycle through removing a severance issue between the villages. The route will also improve accessibility and inclusivity, through providing a 3m wide path, dropped kerbs, tactile paving and raised crossings, all of which will enable vulnerable people to travel safely between the villages.	+ +
	A Green Place to Live.	The route will encourage a modal shift to walking, cycling, and public transport which will reduce the impact of the transport system on the environment. According to the AMAT assessment, this could lead to a monetary benefit of between £3.5k and £16k over a 40-year appraisal period in relation to air quality, noise, and greenhouse gases, depending on the background modal shift assumptions, which is considered to be a slight beneficial impact.	+
	A Thriving and Ambitious Place.	The route will provide more opportunities for people to travel and access services between Rogiet and Undy on-foot and by cycle through removing a severance issue between the villages. This will enable people to access more opportunities, bringing further economic benefits to the area.	+
	A Safe Place to Live.	The proposal will provide a shared-use path between Rogiet and Undy where there is currently no walking or cycling infrastructure. This will remove a significant safety risk on the local highway network, improve both perceived and actual safety. Notwithstanding this, according to the AMAT assessment, the scheme is estimated to slightly reduce the likelihood of collisions along the B4245, providing between a £1,960 and £9,000 monetary benefit to collisions over the 40-year appraisal period.	+ +
	A Connected Place where People Care.	The route will improve local connections between Rogiet and Undy for those who do not have access to the private car. This will increase the safety and confidence of pedestrians and cyclists, with a potential monetary benefit of between £162k and £511k from journey ambience estimated by the AMAT assessment for a 40-year appraisal period.	+
MCC Local Transport Plan 2024 – 2029	**To create safe, healthy and equal communities in Monmouthshire ensuring residents and visitors have access to active travel, public transport, and**	The route will improve access to active travel by providing a shared-use route to improve connections between Rogiet and Undy. When implemented, the following phases of the Severnside active travel route will also improve access to Severn Tunnel Junction and therefore significantly enhance access by rail.	+ +

	zero emissions vehicles with respect to the transport hierarchy.	According to the AMAT assessment, there could be a potential of between £734k and £2.9m monetised benefits to health over a 40-year appraisal period, through a reduced risk of premature death and absenteeism.	
	A transport system that delivers a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and improves awareness of the consequences of travel choices in Monmouthshire on climate change, biodiversity, air quality and health.	The route will encourage walking and cycling which are low-carbon modes of transport. According to the AMAT assessment, this could lead to a monetary benefit of between £3.3k and £15k over a 40-year appraisal period in relation to greenhouse gases, depending on the background modal shift assumptions, which is considered to be a slight beneficial impact	+
	A transport system that supports the Welsh language, enables more people to use sustainable transport to get to arts, sport and cultural activities, and protects and enhances the historic environment.	The route will improve connections in the local area by active modes through removing a severance issue along the B4245 between Rogiet and Undy.	+
	A transport system that contributes to Monmouthshire's economic ambitions, supports local communities, and improves sustainable connections to key market towns and key external destinations.	The proposal will improve sustainable connections to the villages of Rogiet and Undy, enabling people without access to a private car to travel safely between the villages. In addition to this, when completed, the Severnside active travel route will extent to Caldicot, providing a safe and direct active travel connection to this key market town in the region from the west.	+

Page 250

6 WELL-BEING

6.1 OVERVIEW

This Chapter identifies the potential impacts of the proposed scheme on well-being, in order to demonstrate how the proposals can deliver well-being benefits in accordance with Llwybr Newydd and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

6.2 WELL-BEING AMBITIONS

A summary of the impact of the proposed route in the context of the well-being ambitions, set out by Llwybr Newydd, is provided in **Table 6-1**.

Table 6-1 Well-being Appraisal[6]

Well-being Criteria		Assessment	Score
People and Communities	Equality	The route aims to improve accessible access within the study area by removing physical barriers to active travel between Rogiet and Undy. This route will be accessible for all and include dropped kerbing and signalised crossings where possible, to enable safe access for all users. An Equality Impact Assessment Screening Report (**Appendix G**) has also been undertaken, which has identified that the scheme is likely to have no adverse impacts on protected groups, and therefore a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required.	+ + +
	Air Quality and Noise	A potential modal shift in the area is forecast to potentially slightly reduce traffic demand along the B4245, with the AMAT assessment estimating a minor monetary benefit of between £200 and £1k over a 40-year appraisal period in relation to air quality and noise, depending on the background modal shift assumptions.	+
	Activity Levels	The route has the potential to improve the health of residents by increasing activity levels through encouraging more people to walk and cycle for local journeys. It is estimated that the number of people walking daily along the route could increase to between 172 and 285 people, and the number of people cycling to between 43 and 187, depending on the background modal shift assumptions, compared with 96 and 12 at present, respectively. It is considered that this will be further increased with the completion of Phases 2 and 3 of the Severn Tunnel Junction Links scheme. In addition, the AMAT assessment estimates a potential of between £734k and £2.9m monetised benefits over a 40-year appraisal period to health in the area, through a reduced risk of premature death and absenteeism.	+ + +
	Safety and Confidence	The implementation of a shared-use path will active users from the busy B4245 carriageway, where there is currently no footway provision. This will improve safety and confidence for people to travel between Rogiet and Undy on-foot or by cycle, with the AMAT assessment estimating the following monetary benefits to safety and confidence, based on a 40-year appraisal period: ▪ Collisions – between £2k and £9k, depending on background modal shift assumptions; and ▪ Journey Ambience (Confidence) – between £162k and £511k, depending on background modal shift assumptions.	+ + +
Environment	Carbon Emissions	The route will enable more people to travel on-foot and by cycle for short journeys in the local area through providing a shared-use path between Rogiet and Undy, where there is currently a severance issue. An increase in sustainable journeys will lead to a decrease in car journeys in the local area which will subsequently contribute to a decrease in greenhouse gas emissions from transport. The AMAT assessment estimates that this this could lead to a monetary benefit of between £3.3k and £15k over a 40-year appraisal period in relation to greenhouse gases, depending on the background modal shift assumptions.	+
	Biodiversity	A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) identified that some habitats are at potential risk of disturbance from the associated works. The report provided recommendations to mitigate these impacts which will be considered in the detailed design of the scheme, including: ▪ Consultation and consent from MCC Planning Department for any works impacting Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs); ▪ Any hedgerows impacted by works should be translocated to help maintain foraging/commuting habitat for bats; ▪ Mitigation will be required for lighting to ensure bats are not adversely impacted in areas that are currently dark; and ▪ Vegetation clearance works should be undertaken under a Method Statement covering dormice, hedgehogs/small mammals, amphibians and reptiles. This should be implemented under ecological supervision. It is intended to investigate and develop proposals to ensure a biodiversity net gain at detailed design stage, which will lead to a slight beneficial impact from the proposed scheme on biodiversity. A Ground Tree Level and Potential Roost Assessment (2023) and a Dormouse Survey Report (2023) were also undertaken, but it was concluded in both reports that the proposed works are unlikely to have adverse impacts.	+
	Soils and Water	The drainage of the proposed scheme has been designed in collaboration with SAB requirements set by MCC. It is therefore considered that the impact on soils and water will be neutral.	0
	Waste	The scheme will upgrade existing footway provision wherever possible and seek to utilise the local supply chain to reduce the waste associated with transport.	+

[6] All monetary values are presented in 2010 values.

Well-being Criteria		Assessment	Score
Economy and Places	Cohesive Communities	The route will form part of the wider Severnside Active Travel scheme which will become a cohesive network of active travel routes across the Severnside area and connect several villages to the west of Caldicot to the town. Implementing an active travel link that provides a direct, sustainable connection between the communities will help to integrate the area villages and increase social and economic opportunities through greater access to facilities. The proposal will also provide new walking and cycling facilities along the B4245, improving the public realm which is currently made-up of verge-side shrubbery.	+ +
	Innovation	The route will not impact on innovation.	0
	Distribution of Goods	The route will not impact on the distribution of goods, although it is noted that the provision of a walking and cycling route could improve access for e-cargo cycle users.	0
	Affordability	The route will not impact on the affordability of sustainable transport options.	0
Culture and Welsh Language	Welsh Language	The route improves local connections allowing deepened connection to place, community, language and local history. Welsh language learning is growing in popularity in Severnside, and this route can support Welsh Language learners' access to meet-ups and classes.	+
	Arts, Sports and Culture	The scheme will enable walking and cycling journeys to be undertaken between Rogiet and Undy, as well as to Severn Tunnel Junction from Undy. Through enabling access to Severn Tunnel Junction on-foot and by cycle, access to arts, sports, and cultural sites across the region can be undertaken fully by sustainable modes from both Undy and Magor.	+ +
	Historic Environment	A Grade II listed building (Greenhouse Farm) is located directly south of the B4245. The scheme will not alter the layout of the building and will not impact upon its setting. However, providing an active travel route as an alternative to driving promotes community contact with local places and their history.	+

6.3 MONMOUTHSHIRE PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD WELL-BEING PLAN

The scheme has also been appraised against its impacts on the objectives of the Monmouthshire Public Services Board Well-being Plan. This document includes specific well-being goals for the Monmouthshire area, which is of relevance to this proposed scheme.

The appraisal is provided in **Table 6-2**.

Table 6-2 Monmouthshire Public Services Board Well-being Appraisal [7]

Well-being Goals	Assessment	Score
People / Citizens - Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.	The proposals will provide a shared-use active travel route which will enable children and young people to be more active, leading to a healthy start in life. When developed, the Severnside active travel route will also provide access to Rogiet Primary School and Caldicot School from the west.	+
People / Citizens - Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.	This route responds to the challenges associated with demographic change by providing a sustainable option for local travel in an area where the population is increasing. The 2021 Census indicated that Magor and Rogiet has a high proportion (63.7%) of working-age residents who are likely to travel regularly to commute and therefore could directly benefit from active travel access to Caldicot and Severn Tunnel Junction Railway Station.	+
Place / Communities - Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.	The route will enable more travel by sustainable modes of transport, which could reduce the impact of the transport network on climate change. According to the AMAT assessment, this could lead to a monetary benefit of between £3.5k and £16k over a 40-year appraisal period in relation to air quality, noise, and greenhouse gases, depending on the background modal shift assumptions, which is considered to be a slight beneficial impact.	+
Place / Communities – Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.	The route will connect the communities of Rogiet and Undy through removing a significant severance issue. This will enable people without access to a private car to access further opportunities, bringing further economic benefits to the area.	+ +

6.4 WALES TRANSPORT STRATEGY MONITORING FRAMEWORK

The well-being appraisal has also considered the potential impacts of the proposed scheme on the Wales Transport Strategy Monitoring Framework measures, in line with WelTAG 2024 guidance.

[7] All monetary values are presented in 2010 values.

The Monitoring Framework measures potentially impacted by the proposed scheme, as well as the estimated impacts, are set out in **Table 6-3**.

Table 6-3 Wales Transport Strategy Monitoring Framework – Potential Impacts

Measures	Potential Impacts
M1 – Percentage of journeys by walking, cycling and public transport	The analysis undertaken as part of the AMAT assessment has forecast a potential daily increase of between 215 and 340 in the number of people walking and cycling between Undy and Rogiet.
M3 - Total vehicle kilometres travelled	It is expected that the scheme will enable a modal shift in the local area, which will reduce the total vehicle kilometres travelled.
M6 – Greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector	The AMAT assessment has forecast potential monetary benefits to greenhouse gas emissions of between £3.3k and £15k, due to a reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases.
S2 – Percentage of people satisfied with their ability to access services in their local area	The route will improve the availability and accessibility of sustainable transport infrastructure, enabling more people to access more local services.
S4 – Percentage of people who walk or cycle at least once a week as a means of transport	The route will improve access to services including Severn Tunnel Junction and education, thereby encouraging uptake of walking and cycling for local journeys. The analysis undertaken as part of the AMAT assessment has forecast a potential daily increase of between 215 and 340 in the number of people walking and cycling between Undy and Rogiet.
S5 – Percentage of journeys to a rail station by walking, cycling or bus	The scheme will remove a severance issue between Rogiet and Undy and therefore enable journeys by active travel to Severn Tunnel Junction, which is a key rail station in the local area.
S6 – Percentage of trips to visitor attractions by sustainable modes of transport	The scheme will remove a severance issue between Rogiet and Undy and therefore improve access to Severn Tunnel Junction, which can be utilised to access a large number of visitor attractions across the region by sustainable transport.
S19 – Number of people killed or seriously injured on the transport network	The AMAT assessment has forecast potential benefits to safety of between £2k and £9k, due to reduced road traffic collisions.
S20 – Percentage of people who feel safe and welcome when travelling	The AMAT assessment has forecast potential benefits to journey ambience of between £162k and £511k, due to perceptions of improved safety and environmental conditions.
S21 – Percentage of transport infrastructure in good condition	There is currently no footway provision between Rogiet and Undy, and therefore this scheme will significantly improve the condition of transport infrastructure in the local area.
S24 – Percentage of people regularly bothered by noise from outside the home caused by transport	The AMAT assessment has forecast potential benefits to noise of between £110 and £480, due to modal shift to active modes.

7 AFFORDABILITY

7.1 OVERVIEW

The Affordability dimension considers the affordability of the options in the short and long-term, as well as potential funding sources. This Chapter sets out the estimated cost for the scheme in both the short and long-term, as well as the proposed source of funding.

7.2 COST ESTIMATE

[AWAITING FINAL DETAILS]

7.3 FUNDING

It is intended to fund the construction of the proposed scheme through Cardiff Capital Region's Regional Transport Fund (CCR RTF) in 2026-28. This will be either through allocation of the proposals as a 'Main Scheme' for application by MCC, or through utilising part of MCC's Core Allocation.

It is also noted that there could be an opportunity to fund the construction of the scheme through the Burns Delivery Unit, which aims to provide alternatives to journeys on the M4 and encourage the use of public transport and active travel in the region. It is understood that there is no funding available for delivery of this scheme through this source at present; however, MCC will continue to monitor this and engage with TfW to obtain any funding should it become available.

There will be some implications to MCC in relation to the additional maintenance costs for the proposed scheme. It is however currently planned that this will be absorbed within the overall budget for road and footway maintenance, with the proposed scheme adjoining an established highway.

A summary of the proposed funding arrangements is provided in **Table 7-1**.

Table 7-1 Proposed Funding – Severn Tunnel Junction Links Phase 1

Construction	Revenue/Maintenance
▪ *Cardiff Capital Region's Regional Transport Fund (CCR RTF)*; or ▪ Burns Delivery Unit funding.	▪ Absorbed within current road maintenance budget, due to proposal being adjacent to an existing highway.

8 DELIVERABILITY

8.1 OVERVIEW

The Deliverability dimension sets out how the option will be procured and delivered, considers the requirement for statutory consents and permissions, and sets out key risks, their allocation, and mitigation applied.

8.2 PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

As the organisation with sole responsibility for delivery of the proposed scheme, MCC will be the procuring authority.

MCC has robust and detailed procurement policies in place, which will guide the procurement of the project. The key to the procurement strategy will be to achieve the optimum balance of risk, control, and cost certainty for the project. The realisation of social value ambitions are embedded within these policies and will ensure that any wider well-being benefits are secured and captured.

The works will also be procured in line with the MCCs financial regulations and standing orders for contracts to ensure best value.

The full procurement strategy will be set out by MCC within any applications for funding to develop the proposed scheme. This will also set out the chosen sourcing option, contract length, and allocation of risk during the construction phase. It is understood that the current proposal is to appoint a contract through the South-East and Mid Wales Collaborative Civil Engineering and Highways Construction Framework (SEWH).

8.3 STATUTORY CONSENTS AND PERMISSIONS

Consideration has been given to the potential statutory requirements that may need to be undertaken prior to delivery of any of the options.

A summary of the potential statutory consents and permissions, as well as the likely requirements, are set out in **Table 8-1**.

Table 8-1 Statutory Requirements – Severn Tunnel Junction Links Phase 1

Statutory Consents and Permissions	Summary of Requirements
Planning Approval	It is understood that the proposed scheme falls under permitted development rights of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, meaning that planning approval is not required. This is due to the proposed scheme forming the introduction of a shared-use path adjacent to an existing road.
Environment and Ecology	The environmental assessments undertaken have not identified the requirement for statutory consents required in relation to the environment or ecology.
Drainage / SAB Requirements	As the statutory Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) approving body, MCC have been engaged as part of the design process. The drainage for the proposed scheme has subsequently been designed in collaboration with SAB requirements and will be agreed as part of the detailed design process.
Statutory Undertakers	Utility companies have been engaged with and potential impacts on utilities is set out within the proposed scheme drawings.
Land Ownership	Non-highway land is required in some locations along the proposed route. Landowners will be approached directly for purchase of the required land. If an agreement cannot be reached for the purchase of land, MCC will consider expressing its right to undertake Compulsory Purchase Orders for the required land.
Public Rights of Way	No impacts expected to existing Public Rights of Way.
Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs)	No TROs are expected to be required as part of the proposed scheme, although temporary TROs may be required a part of any temporary changes made to the highway as part of the construction phase. If TROs are required for the operational phase, these will be made to MCC, as the Local Highway Authority.

8.4 KEY RISKS AND MITIGATION

The most significant risks to the project, and subsequent actions, are set out in **Table 8-2**. As the scheme owner, all risks are considered to be allocated to MCC and should be managed as the scheme proceeds through to construction.

Table 8-2 Project Risks – Severn Tunnel Junction Links Phase 1

Risk	Potential Impact	Likelihood	Impact	Response	Mitigation
Funding	Not obtaining funding for delivery of the scheme could mean it does not proceed.	Moderate	Large	Reduce	This WelTAG study has been compiled in line with the requirements of the Active Travel Fund, to enable a bid for funding to be made by MCC. MCC have also engaged TfW in the project so that they are aware of the proposal; however, the risk cannot be fully mitigated at this stage.
Phases 2 and 3	If Phases 2 and 3 of the Severnside active travel scheme are not progressed, this scheme would end at Station Road and therefore not extend through to Caldicot. It is however noted that there are existing linkages to Caldicot, although they are not to active travel standards.	Low	Moderate	Acceptance	MCC have aspirations to develop the Severnside active travel scheme and are hoping to obtain funding to further develop Phase 2 and 3 during the 2025/26 financial year.
Land (1)	If third-party land is not purchased, the proposed scheme would not be deliverable in its current form. This would mean additional departures from standards are required and amendments to the drawings, which could impact on the programme and project costs.	Low	Large	Reduce	Third-party landowners will be engaged as part of the detailed design process.
Land (2)	If landowners do not agree to sell their land, Compulsory Purchase Orders would be required, which could impact on the programme and increase project costs.	Moderate	Large	Reduce	Third-party landowners will be engaged as part of the detailed design process.
Planning Approval	The requirement for planning approval could impact on the programme and increase project costs.	Low	Large	Reduce	MCC Planning have been engaged and advised that the proposals fall under Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 and therefore planning approval is not required.

Risk	Potential Impact	Likelihood	Impact	Response	Mitigation
Construction	A lack of interest and tenders to deliver the project could result in the scheme not being deliverable and well-being benefits unable to be embedded as part of the construction phase.	Low	Large	Reduce	MCC will utilise the SEWH framework and will advertise the scheme through this.
Local Objection	People in the local community may object to the proposal and potentially impact the programme through doing this.	Moderate	Low	Reduce	A Stakeholder Management Plan will be fully developed in advance of construction, enabling local people to contact the project team with any queries/objections, minimising any risk to the programme.
Equality	Any changes to the transport network has the potential to impact on groups covered by the Equality Act 2010.	Low	Moderate	Prevent	An Equality Impact Assessment Screening Report (**Appendix G**) has been completed which identified that the proposed scheme will not have any adverse impacts on protected groups.
Drainage	Potential comments from MCC Highways could change the drainage requirements agreed with the SAB team, which could impact on programme and project costs.	Low	Moderate	Reduce	Drainage proposals have been discussed with the MCC SAB team and will be formally agreed as part of the detailed design process in advance of commencing construction.
Departures from Standards	There is a departure from active travel standards required as the B4245 passes under the M4, which could present a slight safety risk.	High	Low	Transfer	Additional measures will be investigated as part of detailed design to ensure that any departures from active travel standards do not impact on the safety of the route. An agreed alteration to the route in this location has been made with TfW at this stage.
Ecology and the Environment	There are some ecology and environmental sites of interest in the local area, primarily located to the north of the B4245. This could require additional permissions and consent, which would impact on programme and project cost.	Low	Moderate	Reduce	The route has been proposed to the south of the B4245 to reduce any potential impacts on these sites of interest.

Risk	Potential Impact	Likelihood	Impact	Response	Mitigation
Contaminated Land	Ground investigation undertaken has shown an indication that there could be some land contamination, which would mean additional construction disposal requirements and considerations.	Moderate	Low	Transfer	The results of the ground investigations will be shared with the appointed contractor who will be required to test arisings prior to disposal and implement mitigation measures where relevant.
Utilities	Investigations have identified that one duct carries fibre optic from a separate company and there is subsequently some uncertainty on the utilities in this location. If the utilities are impacted, this could adversely impact on services in the local area and require result in a financial penalty for MCC.	Moderate	Low	Reduce	Further investigation of the utilities will be undertaken as part of the detailed design stage through a trial hole and subsequent actions put in place to reduce any potential risks.

9 MANAGEMENT

9.1 OVERVIEW

The Management dimension considers how the route will be overseen and managed, including details of the project governance, programme, stakeholder management, and plans for monitoring and evaluation.

9.2 PROJECT GOVERNANCE

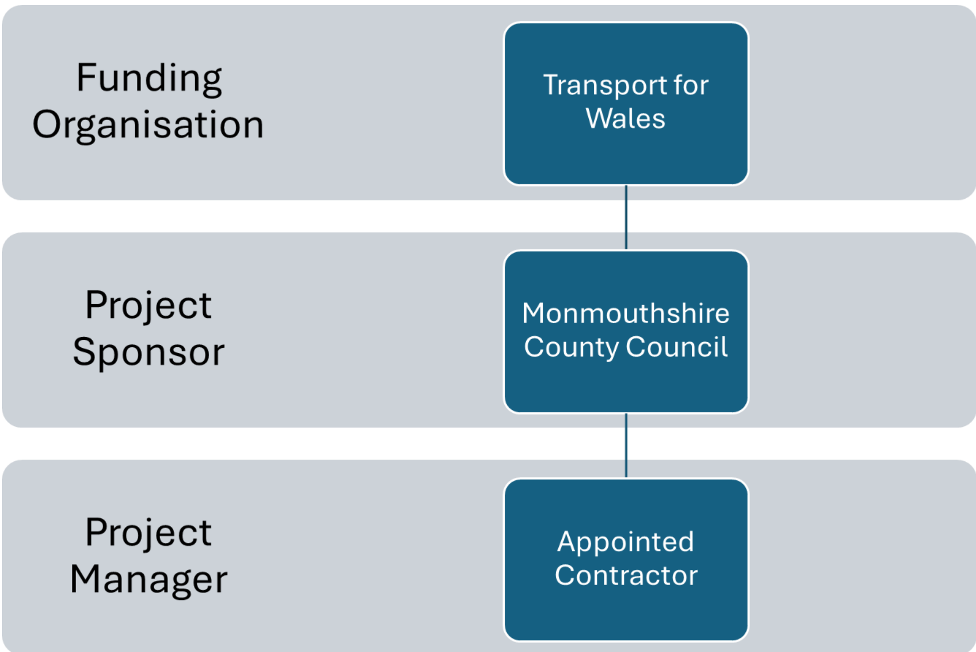
As this WelTAG Stage Three study has been delivered utilising Welsh Government Active Travel Funding, quarterly updates have been provided to TfW in relation to progress. This has ensured that TfW are aware of the project and have been able to shape the progress of the proposed scheme.

In addition to this, in line with WelTAG, a Review Group meeting was held at the end of WelTAG Stages One & Two to agree on the proposed approach to WelTAG Stage Three. A Review Group meeting will be held at the end of the WelTAG Stage Three study to discuss the findings of the report and to sign-off on the project. The scheme forms part of the Active Travel programme for MCC and as such governance is administered through the Active Travel Officer and Active Travel team.

As part of this, Review Group meeting, the governance structure for delivery of the scheme will be discussed and taken forward by MCC. This will likely consist of MCC as Project Sponsors, inputting into TfW as the managers of the Active Travel Fund, working alongside an appointed contractor as Project Managers.

The outline potential governance structure for delivery is set out in **Figure 9-1**.

Figure 9-1 Potential Project Governance – Delivery



9.3 PROGRAMME

The overall project programme and the timing of construction is dependent on securing grant funding approval and appointed a contractor, which will enable the project to progress.

This being said, an outline programme for the detailed design stage is provided in **Appendix H**, and summarised as follows:

- Design stage – weeks 1-12;
- Road Safety Audit and updates – weeks 13-14; and
- Update estimate and produce contract documents for construction – weeks 15-16.

A detailed construction programme will be developed by the appointed contractor for the works.

It is currently planned that the detailed design stage of the project is completed during the 2025/26 financial year, enabling a funding application for construction of the scheme during the 2026/27 financial year.

9.4 STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT

Stakeholder engagement has been undertaken as part of this study, with the findings of the engagement set out within the Engagement Summary Report (RTU-WSP-00-XX-RP-Z-0001). The engagement activities undertaken at this stage consisted of:

- **Internal officer design review** – details of the background to the project and current detailed design proposals of the proposed option were presented to stakeholders within MCC and discussed;
- **Severnside Area Committee Forum** – WSP were invited to attend a Committee Forum meeting, where details of the proposed design and progress of the WelTAG were discussed, to gather views of key stakeholders in the local community; and
- **Public consultation** – the public were invited to provide feedback on the detailed design of the proposed route, which took place at an in-person event and over an online consultation period. Feedback was obtained through a questionnaire.

Ad-hoc engagement will be undertaken with required organisations – such as statutory undertakers, MCC's drainage team, MCC Planning, and MCC Highways – as part of the detailed design stage.

Additional stakeholder engagement will be required during the construction phase, with the appointed contractor expected to produce a Stakeholder Management Plan.

It is expected that updates will also be available to stakeholders through the dedicated 'B4245 Rogiet to Undy active travel scheme' webpage[9].

9.5 RISK MANAGEMENT

The key component of the risk management strategy is the Project Risk Register (**Table 8-2**). All risks identified have been mitigated, in collaboration with MCC, wherever possible at this stage.

[9] https://www.monlife.co.uk/b4245-rogiet-to-undy-active-travel-scheme-faq/

A Risk Management Strategy will need to be developed by the appointed contractor, setting out how risks will be managed and how issues can be escalated if identified. The Risk Register will also remain as a live document, which will be reviewed and taken forward by the contractor for the scheme, upon appointment.

9.6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Guidance for the 2025/26 Active Travel Fund sets out that all Main Scheme applications must include a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and provide evidence of captured baseline information[10]. With this in mind, a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan has been produced, as provided in **Appendix I**.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan has been designed to consider the success of the proposed scheme in achieving the five study objectives. It is proposed that a subsequent Monitoring Report is produced **three years** following construction of the scheme, in order to report on the success of the scheme for a three-year period post-completion, as set out within the Active Travel Fund guidance (paragraph 51).

In order to compare to a baseline, it is recommended that the following is undertaken in advance of beginning any works on-site:

- Pedestrian, wheeling, and cycling count on the B4245 between Rogiet and Undy.

It is considered that the remainder of the Monitoring and Evaluation actions can be undertaken post-construction.

[10] https://tfw.wales/sites/default/files/2024-10/ATF-2025-26-Programme-Guidance_ENG.pdf

Appendix A

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT

Appendix B

CASE FOR CHANGE SUMMARY REPORT

Appendix C

SEVERNSIDE ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME CASE FOR CHANGE

Appendix D

STUDY OBJECTIVES NOTE

Appendix E

PHASE 1 DRAWINGS

Appendix F

AMAT TECHNICAL NOTE

Appendix G

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING REPORT

Appendix H

DETAILED DESIGN OUTLINE PROGRAMME

Appendix I

MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

1 Capital Quarter
Tyndall Street
Cardiff
CF10 4BZ

wsp.com

Integrated Impact Assessment Template

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

Name of the Officer completing the evaluation Madeleine Boase – Active Travel Officer **Phone no:** **E-mail:** madeleineboase@monmouthshire.gov.uk	**Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal** STJ Links Phases 1a and 1 - a shared-use active travel route between Undy and Rogiet
Name of Service area Infrastructure / Active Travel	**Date** 26-05-2026

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.*	Enable all people, regardless of age, better access to trip attractors in Rogiet, rail and bus stops and a route between Undyand Rogiet. This is particularly relevant to those excluded by age from other modes, including driving, and improving access to services particular to young and old people.	Older people: Where Shared Use Paths are used, the presence of cyclists affects some older people's safety and/or feeling of safety on routes. Young people may not want to/be permitted to cycle on-road.	Promotion that represents age diversity in active travel/ route use. Separate mode where possible, Where using Shared Use Paths, refer to Active Travel Act Guidance (ATAG) Figure G.1: Decision tree demonstrating suitability of shared use facilities within wider design context, Consult with stakeholders and note trip attractors which are particular to age. ATAG 4.2.9 As a general principle, the network should cater for children to travel independently, as a walker, wheeler or cyclist, from the age at which they start secondary school. Where using the carriageway for cycling, consider safety and comfort of route for old and young cyclists. ATAG 9.9.1 Designs should meet the needs of everyone who cycles at any age or physical condition. Cycle routes should cater for a wide spectrum of people with different levels of confidence and experience, and those who use adapted cycles or cycles with trailers

[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.*	Improve access for disabled people to trip attractors in Rogiet, rail and bus stops and a route between Undy and Rogiet. This is particularly relevant to those excluded by disability from other modes, including driving, and improving access to services particular to their disability. ATAG 4.2.10 The active travel network is important to the many disabled people who cannot otherwise travel independently.	None N/A	Promotion that represents disability in active travel/ route use. ATAG 9.9.1 Designs should meet the needs of everyone who cycles at any age or physical condition. Cycle routes should cater for a wide spectrum of people with different levels of confidence and experience, and those who use adapted cycles or cycles with trailers
Gender reassignment *Consider the provision of inclusive services for transgender people and groups. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.*	Inclusiveness: Enable all people better access to train station and between Undy and Rogiet by active travel.	N/A	N/A
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.*	Inclusiveness: Enable all people better access to train station and between Undy and Rogiet by active travel.	N/A	N/A

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
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.*	Inclusiveness: Enable all people better access to train station and between Undy and Rogiet by active travel.	N/A	Promotion that represents pregnancy/maternity in active travel/ as route users.
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.*	Inclusiveness: Enable all people better access to train station and between Undy and Rogiet by active travel.	It is recognized that race is a factor in propensity to use active travel, with people from racial minorities disproportionately in the minority in active travel. This can be a vicious cycle.	Consultation of local people, particularly racial minority groups. Promotion that represents racial diversity in active travel/as route users.
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.*	Inclusiveness: Enable all people better access to train station and between Undy and Rogiet by active travel.	N/A	N/A

[Protected Characteristics]()	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
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.*	Create better places for everyone to walk, wheel and/or cycle. Women can particularly benefit from improved active travel options, because of care and trip-chaining responsibilities which women have to carry out more than men, in combination with access to vehicle, loss of time spent parking, need to travel with others/with baggage (including babies/toddlers/elderly/disabled /carrying shopping)	It is recognized that sex is a factor in propensity to use active travel, with women in the minority in active travel. This can be a vicious cycle.	Promotion that represents women in active travel/ as route users. Consult with stakeholders and note trip attractors which are particular to women. Design with consideration for factors that affect women's access – surveillance, lighting, convenience and effort., need to travel with passengers, sightlines and remoteness.. - See ATAG 5.3.20, 8.6.2, 9.3.9-10, 9.9.8, 12.9.3 and 15.5.4,
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.*	Inclusiveness: Enable all people better access to train station and between Undy and Rogiet by active travel.	Remote and dark routes can be exclusive of/off-putting to LGBTQ+ people where they may feel unsafe.	Promotion that represents LGBTQ+ people in active travel/ as route users. Design with consideration for factors that affect LGBTQ+ access – surveillance, lighting, sightlines and remoteness.. - See ATAG 15.5.4, Some groups of people (such as women and girls, and LGBTQ+, for example) are more likely to feel unsafe in a dark space, especially if there is no passive surveillance.

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 favorable 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?	Active travel is low-cost and does not require access to a car. It can therefore improve equity of access to destinations for those excluded from other options by age, ability, economic and access factors. It will make connections better for anyone walking wheeling or cycling and improve access to the train station, educational institutions, affordable services and employment. The benefits of improving the travel options available to people include access to those destinations and what they offer (employment, education, social connection, shops services and onwards travel connections) and also active travel has benefits in itself to individuals and communities terms of wellbeing, fitness, connection to nature, place, heritage and language, social connection and natural surveillance.	N/A	N/A

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.*	Signage will be bilingual promoting the welsh language Welcome and support all people to undertake active journeys, including: use of inclusive language and imagery	n/a	Local connections allowing deepened connection to place, community, language and local history. Improved options for local trips can support Welsh Language learners' access to meet-ups and classes. Bi-lingual signage would be used along the route, increasing the presence of the Welsh Language in a largely English-speaking area.
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 Welsh language essential. 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.*	Equitable access to a wider area and wider education and employment offers.	n/a	n/a
Service Delivery: **Use of Welsh language in service delivery**	Following current guidance from MCC all material is bilingual	n/a	n/a

When advertising our services you must promote the fact that people can deal with the council in Welsh by 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!

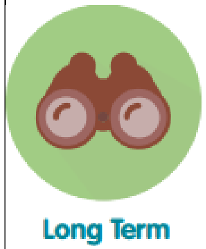
Well Being Goals	Describe the positive impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.	Describe the negative impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A prosperous Wales *An innovative, 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.*	Improved equitable access to education and employment opportunities. Levels of active travel are lower in Rogiet and Undy compared to Monmouthshire as a whole. At the same time, the proportion of residents in the local area who drive a car or van is higher than Monmouthshire as a whole (Census 2021). The 2021 Census also indicated that Magor and Rogiet has a high proportion (63.7%) of working-age residents who are likely to travel regularly to commute and therefore would directly benefit from improved access to Caldicot and		Wayfinding and promotion, highlight the route to people who need it to get to work in a healthier/more practical/more affordable way, and to expand access to local employment.

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?
	Severn Tunnel Junction Railway Station.		
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).*	Improved sustainable transport offer to reduce the impact of transport on the environment.		As part of the project biodiversity improvements will be explored, with the aim of biodiversity net gain.
A healthier Wales *People's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.*	Encourage people to be more active, allowing people to get the physical and mental health benefits of active lifestyles without needing to reserve extra time for exercise.		Potential for play on the way/ adult fitness facilities on the route.
A Wales of cohesive communities *Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected*	It will improve connections between the two settlements and railway station. The existing options for active travel are limited and inaccessible to various users, due to high traffic speeds and volume, and a lack of barrier-free and safe paths, meaning that nearby communities are separated and car-reliant.		Promote inclusiveness in route wayfinding and advertising.

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 globally responsible Wales *Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing*	It will improve local wellbeing, contributing to global well being. Improved sustainable transport offer to reduce the impact of transport on the environment – these impacts contribute to global warming which disproportionately affects already disadvantaged people across the world.		Highlight environmental benefit of sustainable travel to support globally responsible choices.
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*	Welsh Language The route improves local connections allowing deepened connection to place, community, language and local history.		Promote improved options for local trips can support Welsh Language learners' access to meet-ups and classes. Bi-lingual signage would be used along the route, increasing the presence of the Welsh Language in a largely English-speaking area. As part of the project we will explore if artwork or local references can be included to promote and protect welsh culture

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 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)*	This route will improve access for all and give new options to people on how to travel between the two locations, mitigating factors such as access to a car, poverty, disability, sex and race that can affect access to travel and transport.		Promote inclusiveness in route wayfinding and advertising.

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 proposed route can cut impacts, inequities and costs associated with travel and provide benefits to people and communities. The area needs better connections between homes and sustainable travel options, to reduce the negative impacts of the transport system and increase connectivity. The population is growing in the Cardiff/Bristol corridor, and the needs of this population should be met through sustainable systems. With planned improvements to the rail network and improved / extra services as well as Magor getting funding for a walkway train station, as well as the increase in housing provision in the south of the county and neighboring authorities everything we can do to reduce on our road network and promote active travel and better access to public transport will provide long term benefits going forwards.	Plan for ongoing promotion and maintenance This route should be adopted and maintained as part of the Highway.
 Working together with other partners to deliver objectives	Yes Working with internal partners, elected members, stakeholders and Transport for Wales to help design the route	

[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?
Involvement 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?*	*Several rounds of consultation have been held. We continue to consult.* Community engagement is planned	
Prevention Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse	The traffic is problem in the south of the county and whilst one project won’t solve it overnight multiple small Interventions will help reduce demand on the road network.	
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*	This proposal seeks to improve local active travel provision in a way that supports healthy, connected and resilient communities while mitigating the impact of construction.	Ongoing consultation and engagement are needed to ensure the best possible inclusiveness, and negative impact mitigation in design. Promotion and wayfinding are needed to promote the wider impact and continue to highlight the option of active travel and the particular routes.

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.*	N/A		

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.*	N/A		

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.

Following on from public consultation and the WelTAG Studies there is a local demand for this route which will have a positive effect on the local community

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

From completing this form, the negative impacts are:

Cost:

Up-front financial outlay. That would be funded through Grant and section 106 funding where possible.

Maintenance: The Council would have to maintain the route.

Mitigation: Find grant funding where possible. The impact of active travel on infrastructure is lighter than vehicle use, and the conversion of some trips from driving to active travel will further reduce wear on the network.

Inclusiveness:

Route being Shared Use may put off some users:

Mitigation: Signage, promotion and engagement. Explore additional offer if needed once constructed.

There is the need to balance affordability/achievability with user needs.

Overall impact will be positive for equity and inclusion, and will be an essential element in the sustainable transport infrastructure of the area.

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?
Review this document as the scheme progresses	Annual	MB

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**