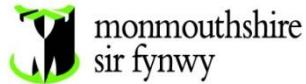


Public Document Pack



County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Tuesday, 21 April 2026

Notice of Meeting:

Special Meeting - People Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 29th April, 2026 at 10.00 am,
Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk

Please note that a pre meeting will be held 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting for members of People Scrutiny Committee.

Members of Place Scrutiny Committee are invited to attend the meeting

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	Apologies for Absence.	
2.	Declarations of Interest.	
3.	To scrutinise the Monmouthshire County Council Public Libraries Strategy 2025-2030 following public consultation.	1 - 34

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

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

Public Information

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

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

Access to paper copies of agendas and reports

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

Welsh Language

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public through the medium of Welsh or English. We respectfully ask that you provide us with adequate notice to accommodate your needs.

Public Open Forum

Our Scrutiny Committee meetings are live streamed and a link to the live stream will be available on the meeting page of the Monmouthshire County Council [website](#)

If you would like to speak under the Public Open Forum at an upcoming meeting you will need to give three working days' notice in advance of the meeting by contacting Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk

The amount of time afforded to each member of the public to speak is at the Chair's discretion, but to enable us to accommodate multiple speakers we ask that contributions be no longer than 3 minutes.

Alternatively, if you would like to submit a written, audio or video representation, please contact the team via the same email address to arrange this. The deadline for submitting representations to the Council is 5pm three clear working days in advance of the meeting. If combined representations received exceed 30 minutes, a selection of these based on theme will be shared at the meeting. All representations received will be made available to councillors prior to the meeting.

If you would like to suggest future topics for scrutiny by one of our Scrutiny Committees, please do so by emailing Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Our purpose

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

Objectives we are working towards

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

Our Values

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

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

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

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

Monmouthshire Scrutiny Question Guide

Role of the Pre-meeting	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why is the Committee scrutinising this? (background, key issues) 2. What is the Committee's role and what outcome do Members want to achieve? 3. Is there sufficient information to achieve this? If not, who could provide this? <p>- Agree the order of questioning and which Members will lead - Agree questions for officers and questions for the Cabinet Member</p>	
Questions for the Meeting	
<p><u>Scrutinising Performance</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does performance compare with previous years? Is it better/worse? Why? 2. How does performance compare with other councils/other service providers? Is it better/worse? Why? 3. How does performance compare with set targets? Is it better/worse? Why? 4. How were performance targets set? Are they challenging enough/realistic? 5. How do service users/the public/partners view the performance of the service? 6. Have there been any recent audit and inspections? What were the findings? 7. How does the service contribute to the achievement of corporate objectives? 8. Is improvement/decline in performance linked to an increase/reduction in resource? What capacity is there to improve? 	<p><u>Scrutinising Policy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who does the policy affect ~ directly and indirectly? Who will benefit most/least? 2. What is the view of service users/stakeholders? What consultation has been undertaken? Did the consultation process comply with the Gunning Principles? Do stakeholders believe it will achieve the desired outcome? 3. What is the view of the community as a whole - the 'taxpayer' perspective? 4. What methods were used to consult with stakeholders? Did the process enable all those with a stake to have their say? 5. What practice and options have been considered in developing/reviewing this policy? What evidence is there to inform what works? Does the policy relate to an area where there is a lack of published research or other evidence? 6. Does the policy relate to an area where there are known inequalities? 7. Does this policy align to our corporate objectives, as defined in our corporate plan? Does it adhere to our Welsh Language Standards? 8. Have all relevant sustainable development, equalities and safeguarding implications

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

General Questions:

Empowering Communities

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

Service Demands

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

Financial Planning

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

Making savings and generating income

- Do we have the right structures in place to ensure that our efficiency, improvement and transformational approaches are working together to maximise savings?
- How are we maximising income?
- Have we compared other council's policies to maximise income and fully considered the implications on service users?
- Do we have a workforce plan that takes into account capacity, costs, and skills of the

actual versus desired workforce?

Questions to ask within a year of the decision:

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

Questions for the Committee to conclude...

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

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

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



**SUBJECT: MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PUBLIC LIBRARIES
STRATEGY 2025–2030**

MEETING: PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 29TH APRIL 2026

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To seek formal approval and endorsement of the Monmouthshire County Council Public Libraries Strategy 2025–2030, recognising public libraries as a statutory service, a cornerstone of democratic access to information, and a vital component of the Council’s Community Hub model, delivering inclusive, sustainable and future- focused services that support wellbeing, literacy, digital inclusion and community resilience across the county.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 To endorse the Monmouthshire County Council Public Libraries Strategy 2025–2030 as the strategic framework for the delivery and development of the Council’s public library service over the next five years.
- 2.2 To acknowledge the findings of Scrutiny and the positive contribution of consultation feedback in strengthening the Strategy’s focus on inclusion, accessibility, partnership working and community benefit.
- 2.3 To support the continued positioning of libraries as integral Community Hubs, aligned with wider Council priorities including prevention, wellbeing, lifelong learning and digital inclusion.
- 2.4 To commit to ongoing performance monitoring and evaluation in line with the Welsh Public Library Standards and the Strategy’s stated outcomes.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Strategic Context and Statutory Responsibility

Public libraries are a statutory service under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 and must be delivered in accordance with the Welsh Public Library Standards (WPLS).

These standards make clear that:

“Public libraries encourage literacy, support lifelong learning, help digital inclusion, connect people and in doing so help to build communities.”

The proposed Strategy responds directly to this statutory framework while recognising the changing role of libraries in modern society. Libraries are no longer solely repositories of books; they are dynamic, trusted and inclusive civic spaces, increasingly central to tackling isolation, inequality and digital exclusion.

The Strategy articulates a clear vision of libraries as:

“Dynamic spaces within our Community Hubs that are places of learning, creativity, and community connection.”

This repositioning firmly aligns the library service with Monmouthshire County Council’s wider ambitions around prevention, resilience and community- based service delivery.

3.2 **The Case for Change and Continuity**

The Strategy is both ambitious and pragmatic. It acknowledges financial and workforce pressures while making a strong case that investment in libraries is preventative investment—reducing demand on other services by supporting literacy, mental wellbeing, employability and digital confidence.

As stated in the Strategy:

“Libraries are a cornerstone of democracy—where information is free and equally available to everyone. People tend to take that for granted, and they don’t understand what’s at stake.”
(Carla Hayden, Librarian of Congress)

At a time of increasing social inequality and digital dependence, withdrawing or diminishing library provision would disproportionately affect the most vulnerable. Conversely, sustaining and evolving libraries ensures equitable access to opportunity for all residents.

3.3 **Alignment with Corporate and National Priorities**

The Strategy strongly aligns with:

- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, particularly the goals of:

- A more equal Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

- MCC priorities relating to:

- Community resilience
- Digital inclusion
- Education and lifelong learning
- Prevention and early intervention

Libraries act as delivery platforms for these priorities, offering safe, accessible spaces where multiple services and partners can collaborate to improve outcomes.

3.4 **Consultation and Scrutiny Engagement**

The Strategy has been strengthened through meaningful consultation and Scrutiny challenge. Engagement included:

- Friends groups from Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow, Chepstow Reading Garden and Monmouth libraries

Feedback consistently highlighted:

- Strong community attachment to libraries
- Support for libraries as inclusive, welcoming spaces
- The importance of protecting local identity while embracing innovation

The process confirmed that the Strategy is credible, aligned to statutory expectations and clearly articulated, with a strong narrative around social value and community impact.

3.5 Measuring Success and Managing Risk

Success will be measured through:

- Compliance with the Welsh Public Library Standards
- Usage data and footfall
- Digital access and engagement indicators
- Qualitative feedback from users and communities
- Contribution to wider Community Hub outcomes

Key risks - such as financial pressures, workforce capacity and changing user needs - are mitigated through:

- Integration within the 2014 Community Hub delivery model
- Partnership working
- Ongoing service review and performance management

4. REASONS:

Approval of the Strategy is required to:

- Discharge the Council's statutory duties
- Provide strategic clarity and direction for the library service
- Enable effective planning, partnership working and investment
- Ensure libraries continue to meet current and future community needs

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The Strategy will be delivered within existing Community Hubs & Libraries budgets, supported by:

- Efficient use of existing assets
- Partnership working and external funding opportunities
- Continuous service review to ensure best value

Future grant opportunities and collaborative funding models will be actively explored to enhance service delivery and resilience.

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

The Strategy has a significant positive impact on equality and future generations by:

- Ensuring universal access to information and learning
- Supporting digitally excluded and vulnerable residents
- Providing safe, inclusive and welcoming spaces
- Promoting literacy, wellbeing and lifelong learning
- Strengthening community cohesion and resilience

While service delivery models continue to evolve, the Strategy's emphasis on inclusion and access ensures that impacts are mitigated, monitored and addressed.

7. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Options considered included:

- Do nothing / maintain status quo without a refreshed Strategy – discounted due to statutory risk and lack of strategic direction.
- Service reduction or withdrawal – discounted due to disproportionate impact on vulnerable communities and conflict with MCC and Welsh Government priorities.

The preferred option—approval of a refreshed, forward- looking Strategy—offers the most sustainable, equitable and future- proof solution.

8. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Strategy will be evaluated through:

- Annual performance reporting against WPLS
- Trends in usage and participation
- Feedback from users and partners
- Contribution to Community Hub outcomes (SBP)

9. CONSULTEES:

- Friends of Libraries Groups
- Internal MCC officers and service leads

Feedback has been incorporated into the final Strategy, strengthening its focus on accessibility, inclusion and community partnership.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- Monmouthshire County Council Public Libraries Strategy 2025–2030
- Welsh Public Library Standards

11. AUTHOR:

Richard Drinkwater

Manager of Community Hubs, Community Education & Public Libraries

12. CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel: 07768055283

E-mail: richarddrinkwater@monmouthshire.gov.uk



Integrated Impact Assessment Template

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

<p>Name of the Officer Richard Drinkwater</p> <p>Phone no: 07974567816</p> <p>E-mail: richarddrinkwater@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Proposal aims to deliver Monmouthshire County Council’s Public Libraries Strategy 2025–2030, setting a five-year framework to deliver inclusive, sustainable, and community-focused library services embedded within community hubs. The strategy seeks to promote literacy, digital inclusion, wellbeing, Welsh language use, and social cohesion while ensuring statutory compliance and long-term financial resilience.</p>
<p>Name of Service area: Community Hubs - Public Library Service</p>	<p>Date 10th April 2026</p>

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.

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	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 <i>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.</i>	Positive impacts across all age groups through early years literacy, youth study space, and older adult social inclusion		Mitigation ensured via targeted programming.
Disability <i>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.</i>	Strong positive impact through accessible buildings, assistive technology, home delivery, and inclusive programming.		
Gender reassignment <i>Consider the provision of inclusive services for transgender people and groups. Also consider what issues there are for employment and training.</i>	Inclusive service design and staff training reduce risk of exclusion; no disproportionate adverse impacts identified.		

<p><u>Protected Characteristics</u></p>	<p>Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</p>	<p>Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic</p>	<p>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</p>
<p>Marriage or civil partnership <i>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.</i></p>			
<p>Pregnancy or maternity <i>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.</i></p>			

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	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?
<p>Race</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	Libraries act as safe, neutral spaces supporting anti-racism initiatives, access to multilingual resources, and community integration.		
<p>Religion or Belief</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>			

<u>Protected Characteristics</u>	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?
<p>Sex <i>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.</i></p>	<p>Inclusive service design and staff training reduce risk of exclusion; no disproportionate adverse impacts identified.</p>		
<p>Sexual Orientation <i>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.</i></p>	<p>Inclusive service design and staff training reduce risk of exclusion; no disproportionate adverse impacts identified.</p>		

2.

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

<u>Socio-economic Duty</u>	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?
<p><i>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?</i></p>	<p>The strategy strongly supports people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage by offering free access to information, digital connectivity, employability support, and warm, safe community spaces.</p>		<p>Libraries mitigate inequalities associated with poverty, unemployment, and social isolation, with minimal negative impacts identified.</p>

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.

<p>How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:</p>	<p>Describe the positive impacts of this proposal</p>	<p>Describe the negative impacts of this proposal</p>	<p>What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts</p>
<p>Policy Making: <i>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 than the English language. Include any data and evidence e.g. WESP, Census Data, Cymraeg 2050, Welsh Language Strategy.</i></p>	<p>The strategy aligns with Cymraeg 2050, promoting bilingual service delivery, Welsh-language collections, events, signage, and workforce skills development.</p>		
<p>Operational: Recruitment & Training of workforce <i>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.</i></p>	<p>Recruitment and training plans aim to increase Welsh-speaking capacity, ensuring compliance with Welsh Language Standards.</p>		

<p>Service Delivery: Use of Welsh language in service delivery <i>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.</i></p>	<p>All posts are advertised as Welsh Desirable.</p>		
--	---	--	--

<p><u>Well Being Goals</u></p>	<p>Describe the positive impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.</p>	<p>Describe the negative impacts the proposal has on the wellbeing goal.</p>	<p>What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</p>
<p>A prosperous Wales <i>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.</i></p>	<p>Our public library service supports skills, learning, and employability.</p>		
<p>A resilient Wales <i>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).</i></p>			

<u>Well Being Goals</u>	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 <i>People's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</i>	Our public library service mental wellbeing and reduce loneliness.		
A Wales of cohesive communities <i>Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</i>	Our public library service act as community anchor.		
A globally responsible Wales <i>Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</i>			
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language <i>Promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and participation in the arts, and sports and recreation</i>	Our public library service has proven and positive strong positive cultural impacts.		
A more equal Wales <i>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)</i>	Our public library service provides Free, universal access to a wide range of services that are deemed essential in modern society (eg computers, printing, scanning, WiFi) and aids in reducing inequality.		

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!

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

<p><u>Sustainable Development Principles</u></p>	<p>Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.</p>	<p>Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</p>
<p>balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future <i>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)</i></p>	<p>Long-term: Five-year strategic horizon with flexible delivery models. Prevention: Early literacy, digital skills, and wellbeing interventions. Integration: Aligns with Community and Corporate Plan and national strategies. Collaboration: Partnership working with schools, health, and third sector. Involvement: Public consultation and ongoing engagement underpin delivery.</p>	

<p><u>Sustainable Development Principles</u></p>	<p>Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.</p>	<p>Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</p>
<p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>Collaboration: Partnership working with schools, health, and third sector.</p>	
<p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views <i>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?</i></p>	<p>Involvement: Public consultation and ongoing engagement underpin delivery. Annual Adult and Junior surveys as part of our commitment to the Welsh Public Library Standards.</p>	
<p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>		

<p><u>Sustainable Development Principles</u></p>	<p>Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.</p>	<p>Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?</p>
<p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p> <p><i>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</i></p>		

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?
<p><u>Safeguarding</u> <i>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.</i></p>	<p>Libraries provide safe, supervised environments for children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Targeted support for care-experienced young people includes study space, access to resources, and informal support networks.</p>		

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.

Libraries provide safe, supervised environments for children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Targeted support for care-experienced young people includes study space, access to resources, and informal support networks.

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.

Informed by:

- Welsh Public Library Standards (Frameworks 6 and 7)
- Well-being of Future Generations Act
- Welsh Language Standards
- Community and Corporate Plan 2022–28
- Usage data
- Community consultation.

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 Integrated Impact Assessment demonstrates that the Public Libraries Strategy delivers significant positive impacts across equality, wellbeing, socio-economic disadvantage, and Welsh language objectives. No significant negative impacts have been identified. We are confident the assessment confirms the strategy's strong alignment with statutory duties and sustainable development principles, supporting its submission to scrutiny and cabinet decision-making.

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?
---------------------------	------------------------------	---------------------

Publish Strategy on MCC website, to align MCC Public Libraries Strategy with the requirements of the Welsh Public Libraries Standards (Framework 6/7)	June 2025	Richard Drinkwater

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.

Page 25

Version No.	Decision making stage <i>e.g. budget mandate, DMT, SLT, Scrutiny, Cabinet etc</i>	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration

LIBRARY STRATEGY 2025- 2030





STRATEGIC CONTEXT AND VISION

PURPOSE

VISION

CONTEXT

Why this Strategy (2025–2030)

Sets a five-year direction for inclusive, innovative and accessible libraries - presented to Scrutiny as the enabling framework for service planning, investment and outcomes.

Vision for Community Hubs

Libraries as dynamic spaces for learning, wellbeing, creativity, digital access and community connection - supporting residents of all ages, backgrounds, languages and abilities.

Strategic & statutory alignment

Grounded in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, and MCC Community & Corporate Plan 2022–28 - supporting standards, compliance and sustainable delivery.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND THEMES

Core Strategic Themes Driving Library Service Delivery

CORE STRATEGIC THEMES



Reading & Literacy

Promotes reading across all ages, supporting attainment, wellbeing, and growth through a Reading Journey from early years to adulthood.



Digital Inclusion

Access to connectivity, devices, and skills support - reducing barriers linked to age, income, disability, or rural isolation.



Community Wellbeing

Safe, welcoming spaces that reduce loneliness, support mental health, and build connection through activities and volunteering.



Cultural & Creative

Venues for cultural events, Welsh language promotion, creative expression, and lifelong learning opportunities.



Partnership & Innovation

Improves sustainability through collaboration with Friends groups, schools, health services, and national bodies.



Strategic Alignment

Converts high-level ambitions into practical, locally responsive priorities aligned with national policy expectations.

WPLS ALIGNMENT

Strategy strengthens compliance with Welsh standards

STRATEGY MEETS WPLS

Assurance of statutory compliance

How the Strategy strengthens WPLS performance

- Directly aligns service priorities to the WPLS quality framework (access, staffing, hours, digital, reading, community).
- Embeds literacy, lifelong learning, digital inclusion, and community connectivity at the core of delivery.
- Supports evidence-based reporting through clear outcomes monitorable via WPLS annual returns (use, participation, access, satisfaction).
- Strengthens resilience by addressing known pressures: changing needs, rising digital demand, and resource constraints.



CONSULTATION AND EVIDENCE BASE

EVIDENCE & ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholder consultation

Friends groups across Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow (including Reading Garden) and Monmouth shaped priorities on accessibility, programming, community space and volunteering.

Local evidence base

Service performance data, user feedback and benchmarking against Welsh Public Library Standards provide a consistent, measurable foundation.

Scrutiny assurance

The five-year Strategy is evidence-led and locally informed, improving credibility, responsiveness and deliverability.



**IMPLEMENTATION
& NEXT STEPS**

KEY OVERSIGHT PRIORITIES

Scrutiny's focus for delivery

- **Strategic fit:** alignment with **WPLS**, statutory duties*, and Council wellbeing/equality objectives
- **Performance & insight:** monitoring via **WPLS reporting**, KPIs, and user/stakeholder feedback
- **Resources:** affordability, partnerships, and external funding in a constrained budget context
- **Assurance:** constructive challenge, endorsement, and ongoing oversight through updates over five years

*Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964

This page is intentionally left blank