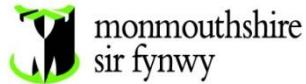


Public Document Pack



County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Wednesday, 10 June 2026

Notice of meeting:

Special Meeting People Scrutiny Committee

**Thursday, 18th June, 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 the committee.

Members of the Performance & Overview Scrutiny Committee are invited to attend the meeting

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	Apologies for Absence.	
2.	Declarations of Interest.	
3.	Public Open Forum. Our Scrutiny Committee meetings are live streamed and a link to the live stream will be available on the meeting page of the Monmouthshire County Council website If you would like to speak under the Public Open Forum at an upcoming meeting you will need to give three working days' notice in advance of the meeting by contacting Scrutiny@monmouthshire.gov.uk The amount of time afforded to each member of the public to speak is at the Chair's discretion, but to enable us to accommodate multiple speakers we ask that contributions be no longer than 3 minutes. Alternatively, if you would like to submit a written, audio or video representation, please contact the team via the same email address to arrange this. The deadline for submitting representations to the Council is 5pm three clear working days in advance of the meeting. If combined	

representations received exceed 30 minutes, a selection of these based on theme will be shared at the meeting. All representations received will be made available to councillors prior to the meeting.

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

4.	WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan) - To scrutinise performance against the plans.	1 - 50
5.	Welsh Language - To scrutinise the Council's progress in delivery of the Welsh Language objectives 2025-2026.	51 - 96
6.	Strategic Equality Plan 2025-26 - To scrutinise the council's progress in delivering the Strategic Equality Objectives for the year 2025-2026.	97 - 168
7.	People Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme and Action List.	169 - 174
8.	Council and Cabinet Forward Work Planner.	175 - 184
9.	To approve the minutes of the previous meeting.	185 - 194
10.	Next Meeting: 14th July 2026 at 10.00am.	

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

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

Public Information

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

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

Access to paper copies of agendas and reports

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

Welsh Language

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

Public Open Forum

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Our purpose

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

Objectives we are working towards

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

Our Values

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

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

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

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

Monmouthshire Scrutiny Question Guide

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

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

General Questions:

Empowering Communities

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

Service Demands

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

Financial Planning

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

Making savings and generating income

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

actual versus desired workforce?

Questions to ask within a year of the decision:

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

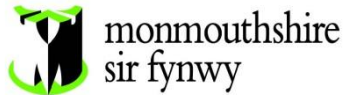
Questions for the Committee to conclude...

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

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

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

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SUBJECT: WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE 24/25

MEETING: PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

DATE: 18th June 2026

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

To update members on the progress against our targets in the Monmouthshire Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2024/25

2. BACKGROUND:

2.1 The WESP is our long-term language planning tool which sets the strategic direction for the planning, delivery, and growth of Welsh medium education in Monmouthshire over the next ten years. The WESP must contain:

The local authority's proposals on how it will carry out its education functions to:

1. Improve the planning of the provision of education through the medium of Welsh ("Welsh-medium education") in its area.
2. Improve the standards of Welsh-medium education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area.
3. The local authority's targets for improving the planning of the provision of Welsh medium education in its area and for improving the standards of that education and of the teaching of Welsh in its area.

2.2 The local authority must produce a WESP five-year action plan setting out the actions it plans to take to meet the targets in the WESP. The local authority has a statutory duty to submit an Annual WESP Review Report to Welsh Ministers on 31st July each year.

2.3 The Monmouthshire Annual Review Report Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2023/24 (Appendix 1) outlines the progress made against Monmouthshire's five-year action plan. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the start date for WESPs moved from 1st September 2021 to 1st September 2022. As a result, this is the third annual review, covering the period from 1st August 2024 to 31st July 2025.

2.4 The report details the progress made in all seven outcomes as set in the WESP.

Outcome 1: More nursery children/ three-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Outcome 2: More reception class children/ five-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

Outcome 3: More children continue to improve their Welsh language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

Outcome 4: More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

Outcome 5: More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

Outcome 6: An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

Outcome 7: Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh

2.5 Welsh Ministers provide feedback to local authorities on their Annual Review Report. However, at the time this report is presented to Members the local authority has not received feedback for the current plan.

3. PROGRESS SUMMARY 2023/24:

3.1 Over the last three years, there has been steady growth in the uptake of Welsh-medium reception places across our Welsh-medium provision. This year, 9.7% of the total cohort of reception pupils attended a Welsh medium school, which is 67% of our 120 Reception learner target for 2030. However, this remains below our in year target of 79.4% because of a decline in applications to Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni.

3.2 We continue to work with our schools, promotion sub-group, and supporting partners to promote the benefits of a Welsh medium education and support for parents through a range of social media campaigns, website updates and engagement with school leaders. Officers and WEF members ensure that Welsh-medium education has a high profile at community events throughout the county such as, the Usk Show and Miri Mynwy. The LA takes every opportunity to engage with parents and carers about the benefits of a Welsh language education, and the Family Information Service regularly signposts

Welsh-medium groups and activities through its social media feed. This approach is having a positive impact on the take up of places at all our Welsh-medium LA nurseries. As a result, the number of children accessing childcare at Welsh-medium Cylch Meithrin settings is increasing. In January PLASC 2025, 77 children attended a Welsh-medium non-maintained setting compared to 63 in the previous year.

- 3.3 As a result of the actions taken, it is pleasing to note that the percentage of the school cohort of learners being taught through the medium of Welsh continues to grow with 58 Reception aged learners registered in one of our three Welsh-medium schools in 2024/25, and based on our projections, we expect to maintain this growth into the next academic year, 2025/26. To maintain this momentum, we will continue to increase capacity through the relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni to a significantly larger site in Abergavenny, support Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin to maintain its growth throughout the school and at the same time continue, to grow Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy so that it achieves its planned capacity of 210 pupils.
- 3.4 Late immersion provision is well-established in Ysgol Y Ffin, in the south of the county. Most pupils who have benefitted from attending the immersion class have made good progress in developing their Welsh language skills, and most make a successful transition into mainstream Welsh-medium provision. This provision continues to have a positive impact on the number of parents choosing Welsh-medium education. For example, numbers in the Cylch Meithrin show an increasing trend and this year there are 29 pupils in reception, which is the highest since the school opened. A second late immersion class is due to open in Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni in September to support an increase in demand for places as the school increases its capacity.
- 3.5 GCSE Welsh second language is offered in all four of Monmouthshire's secondary schools, with nearly all pupils being assessed in the subject with many achieving a GCSE. Pupils within Pupil Referral Services such as the Pupil Referral Unit and EOTAS, and those following a range of alternative provisions are generally not entered for this examination.
- 3.6 The overall percentage of pupils transferring from a Welsh-medium primary school in Monmouthshire to a Welsh-medium secondary school increased to 62% in 24/25. Most year 6 pupils in Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin transfer to Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed. The school has close links with the cluster, which support transition well. A range of targeted events for learners in year 5 ensure there are consistent messages to support progression into secondary Welsh-medium school. Nearly all year 6 pupils school engage positively a well-established six-week transition programme led by our youth service, which ensures a successful transition for many pupils. However, a minority of pupils transferred from Ysgol Gymraeg Fenni to Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw where transition arrangements are less well developed.

- 3.7 The LA regularly works with the Principal School Improvement Partner (PSIP) for Welsh medium schools, to support quality assurance of provision and learner progress of Monmouthshire learners across the 3 -19 age range. All schools have a School Improvement Partner (SIP) and in Welsh medium schools, support is provided through the medium of Welsh. The SIP work programme includes termly supported self-evaluation (SSE) activity focused on the quality of teaching and leadership, and its impact on the progress of all pupils. During 2024/25 one Welsh-medium school in Monmouthshire was inspected by Estyn. Strengths in the wide range of beneficial learning methods and experiences used by the promote oracy well and most pupils use the Welsh language confidently and with increasing accuracy.
- 3.8 The school improvement service provides an extensive professional learning offer for English-medium schools to support headteachers raise the profile of Welsh in their schools, set high expectations and lead the strategic development of Welsh language and culture. Of the three English-medium primary and two secondary schools inspected by Estyn in 2024/25. No schools had a recommendation to improve Welsh language skills or pupils; understanding of Welsh culture. However, on secondary school had a spotlight on the promotion and celebration of the Welsh language and culture.
- 3.9 GCSE Welsh second language is offered in all four of Monmouthshire's secondary schools, with most pupils being registered for, and assessed in, the subject. In 2024/25, 87.4% of the Year 11 cohort gained a Welsh Second Language GCSE, this is an improvement on the previous year when 86.6% gained the qualification.
- 3.10 Expertise in the teaching of Welsh Second Language at A level has been further developed through the collaborative delivery of the A Level across the county. Expertise in the teaching of Welsh Second Language at A level is being further developed through the collaborative delivery of the AS and A Level across the county and an E-sgol supported professional learning group. A Level Second Language Welsh is at the core of the Monmouthshire universal-sgol offer with three of the four schools having learners in the first cohort who will progress into Year 13. Currently, twenty-five learners have expressed an interest in studying for this qualification on September 2025.
- 3.11 Officers have engaged with directorates across Monmouthshire County Council, our schools, and further stakeholders, to develop post 16 'Pathways to Employment' programmes in sport, leisure, play and childcare. These innovative courses, based both in schools and in the workplace, will be offered as part of the sixth form curriculum for 2025-26m including a childcare course based in King Henry VIII 3-19 School. Students following this childcare programme have the opportunity to be

placed in Welsh speaking settings as part of their course, a few learners have expressed an interest intaking up these placements.

- 3.12 Nearly all schools are engaged with Siarter Iaith and Cymraeg Campus initiatives. Leaders have access to a range of networking opportunities to support implementation and development of practice, as well as dedicated network sessions for both English-medium and Welsh-medium schools, which include opportunities to receive information from partners such as the Urdd. During 2024-2025, 1244 contacts with young people were made through provision provided by the Urdd (commissioned through Monmouthshire Youth Service) which includes two Welsh speaking Youth Clubs (one for Year 6 pupils, and one for Year 7+) in Caldicot, one lunchtime club and the delivery of the year 6 Transition project in Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin. Overall, these programmes and events provide beneficial opportunities for children and young people to practice and improve their Welsh-language skills in authentic contexts.
- 3.13 A senior officer for ALN and a Welsh speaking specialist teacher are active members of Monmouthshire's Welsh in Education Forum (WEF). Progress towards outcome 6, is monitored through termly meetings which feed into the WEF. Most children with ALN in Monmouthshire are educated in mainstream provision, this includes within our three Welsh medium primary schools. The expectation is that schools appropriately identify any barriers to learning and ALN, providing an appropriate graduated response and additional learning provision through the medium of Welsh. A Welsh speaking specialist teacher delivers literacy interventions to learners and support staff and professional learning to these schools. On-going collaborative work with all three Welsh-medium primary schools is in place to allow for the sharing of best practice around developing effective provision and ensuring progress for children and young people with ALN.
- 3.14 The commitment to support learners and their families through the medium of the Welsh is illustrated well through the Monmouthshire Autism in Schools and Settings programme, developed in partnership with the Autism Education Trust and the National Autistic Society. This pioneering partnership work into Wales has meant that Monmouthshire were central to the development of this extensive programme in both languages.
- 3.15 Partnership working provides professional learning opportunities to develop Welsh-medium leaders at all levels. Monmouthshire schools have access to Welsh-medium professional learning for TAs/HLTAs, middle leaders, senior leaders, preparing for headship, new and acting headteacher programme. Schools have access to a range of professional learning opportunities for the teaching of Welsh and through the medium of Welsh. 85 Monmouthshire school-based staff engaged with the professional learning offer for Welsh during 24-25. The LA and school improvement service continues to promote and recruit to the sabbatical scheme, targeting schools and clusters to build capacity, and signs-off applications on behalf of the local authority through the National Centre portal. It also provides follow-up support and opportunities for

practitioners in schools post sabbatical, so that the impact of this professional learning is maximised for the benefit of learners. Since the start of the scheme, a total of forty-one practitioners have accessed sabbatical provision. This is beginning to have a positive impact on standards of Welsh language in our English-medium schools.

3.16 Overall, progress towards our five-year plan is on track in most areas and in the few areas where it is not, firm plans are in place to accelerate progress in the following areas:

1. Secure Cylch Meithrin provision in Monmouth to support growth in Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy.
2. Secure a permanent location to meet the demand for a Welsh-medium education in Monmouth.
3. Continue to embed late immersion provision in Monmouthshire
4. Improved rates of transition from a Welsh-medium primary school to a Welsh-medium secondary school.
5. Continue to improve pupils' Welsh language skills they can confidently apply in a wide range of situations and contexts. t

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

4.1 The on-going cost of staffing and resources in the new school is an additional revenue pressure for the local authority. This is expected to remain a pressure in Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy until pupil numbers increase to reflect school budget formula funding.

4.2 The on-going cost of staffing for immersion provision to support latecomers to Welsh is included in the Local Government Education Grant from September 2024. Currently, the grant is sufficient to meet the costs for two immersion classes. However, as the grant is a fixed amount, increased staffing costs may mean that the costs will become an additional revenue pressure for the local authority in future years.

5. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)

5.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires public bodies to work towards seven well-being goals, one of which is 'A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language'. The Local Authority has a duty to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh and work towards the well-being goals. Education, through the WESP, has a significant role in supporting the development of Welsh language and culture.

6. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 Safeguarding arrangements and access to support from Local Authority services apply equally to children and pupils in Welsh medium settings and schools.
- 6.2 Officers from Education, Inclusion and Children's services work in close partnership with all schools and settings, to ensure that learners are kept safe.

7. CONSULTEES:

- RhAg
- Urdd
- Coleg Gwent
- Menter Iaith
- Mudiad Meithrin
- Education Achievement Service
- DMT

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Prosperity for All: the national strategy
- Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers 2017
- Education in Wales: Our National Mission, Action Plan 2017-21
- The Welsh in Education, Action Plan 2017- 21
- Taking Wales Forward 2016-2021
- Guidance on Welsh in Education Strategic Plans
- Monmouthshire Welsh Language Strategy 2017 -2022
- Welsh-medium Education Strategy: next steps

9. AUTHOR:

Sharon Randall-Smith

Head of Service Children and Young People Directorate

10. CONTACT DETAILS:

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WELSH IN EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN ANNUAL REVIEW REPORT

2024/25

Name of Local Authority

Monmouthshire

Author:	Sharon Randall-Smith
Approver:	
Date:	31 st July 2025

Introduction to Annual Review Report for the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan

What is the purpose of this report?

It is a **statutory requirement** for you to submit your report to the Welsh Government by 31 July 2025.

The aim of this template is to **provide guidance** and prompts that suggest **what information should be included** to ensure that you satisfy these statutory requirements. If you feel that **other information** is relevant to your narrative and context, you are welcome to include it.

We have reviewed the form and content of this template in response to plans, programmes, and policy developments within the Welsh Government since the last reporting period, and to highlight the connection between the **data and the analytical narrative**. We have also considered feedback provided by you following the second reporting year. This will lead to **consistency of data and information** across Wales.

This annual report is now the **principal means of reporting** on many elements of the Local Authority Education Grant – Cymraeg 2050, and this is why we have asked you to report specifically in this report on information regarding some elements such as the late immersion grant.

The feedback process

We will consider your progress towards your targets and commitments within your WESP and five-year action plan, as well as your future plans. Following consultation with specialist policy departments within the Welsh Government, we will provide you with **written feedback according to each outcome** during the autumn term.

Following this we will **arrange meetings** to discuss your achievements and feedback.

Use of Data

We request that you use local data (qualitative and quantitative) to report on your progress. We are aware that PLASC data will not be published in time to be used in this report. You will however have access to the core data (submitted to the Welsh Government for validation in January) and you should use these data for comparison with data provided in your 2023–24 report.

Information on provision in your maintained secondary schools

We use data on subjects offered and assessed through the medium of Welsh to cross-reference against stated school language categories in your area and to monitor progress against your 10-year WESP. We ask that you submit this information using the data tables under outcome 4 in this template. Historically these data were collected on the local curricular offer spreadsheet; we hope that this new method is simpler and less time-consuming to you.

Forward look, and The Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill

The Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill was passed by Senedd Cymru on 13 May. It will become law when it receives Royal Assent.

The Bill's objective is to move toward the Cymraeg 2050 target of a million speakers by strengthening the role of Welsh in education, with the general aim of ensuring that all pupils in maintained schools in Wales can use Welsh independently when they leave school.

We will use opportunities over this next period to engage with you; to share and discuss the Act's implications for you over time. Much of what is encompassed in the Bill is in progress, including the WESP, late immersion provision, school categorisation according to Welsh-language provision and work to raise awareness and encourage behavioural change. We look forward therefore to supporting, reinforcing, and building on the immense work that you have already accomplished in this field.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

Provide up to 7 main achievements and highlights for 2024–2025.

- The number of children accessing Welsh medium early education and childcare provision has noticeably increased in 2024-2025.
- Work to establish a Year 12 childcare course in one of our secondary schools has been successful in attracting some Welsh speakers. In time, this will increase the number of Welsh speaking staff in Monmouthshire with relevant childcare qualifications and support the growth of early years provision.
- Ysgol Gynradd Trefynwy opened in September 2024 with 16 pupils and has continued to thrive during the year and will expand its provision to two classes in September 2025. Our work with regional and wider partners continues to be a strength in supporting us to establish our third Welsh-medium school.
- The expansion of late immersion provision to Ysgol Fenni pupils from September 2025 is a positive step and will support the growth of the school when it moves to its new site.
- Expertise in the teaching of Welsh second language at A level is being further developed through the collaborative delivery of the AS and A level across Monmouthshire and an E-sgol supported professional learning group. It is a core part of the Monmouthshire universal E-sgol offer with three of the four schools having learners in this first year. These learners will continue into Year 13, and twenty-five learners have expressed an interest in studying Welsh second language in September 2025.
- Good autism practice Training, which has been developed in collaboration with the Autism Education Trust and National Autism Society will be available in Welsh from September 2025.
- We have made good progress in meeting our target for proficient Welsh speakers in schools, and in ensuring that almost half of our staff have at least entry level Welsh language skills.

RISKS AND MITIGATIONS

Risks: What are the specific local authority-level risks that affect or could affect progress across all outcomes? Give details of individual risks.

- There is a risk that we will be unable to find a venue or identify suitably qualified Welsh speaking staff to open additional cylch meithrin settings.
- Immersion provision may not be sustainable in all three Welsh medium schools if grant funding remains at the current level and uptake is lower than expected across the three schools.
- More pupils with ALN may transfer into an English-medium school.

Mitigations: What steps are you taking to mitigate the above risks?

- The need for a cylch meithrin setting in Monmouth is included in the considerations for a permanent location for Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy and we are trying to recruit Welsh speakers into childcare. We will work with Y Gwynllyw to strengthen our childcare training offer so that we have enough suitable qualified staff to grow Welsh medium provision in the early years.
- Continue to promote the opportunities and benefits of immersion provision in supporting learners to encourage more parents and pupils to choose Welsh medium education at any age.
- A member of the Inclusion team will meet with colleagues in transition schools to understand the provision they offer and organise early and enhanced transition activities so that parents and pupils have a high level of confidence in the provision.

GENERAL

Welsh in Education Forum

How does your Welsh in Education planning Forum (where applicable) drive the strategic direction of your WESP and support activities in relation to the outcomes?

How does the Forum monitor your progress towards achieving the targets and outcomes of your WESP?

What sub-groups have you established and how do they support WESP activities?

Our WEF meets termly to review progress against our action plan. Through this process, the group identify the priorities for the next year, which are reflected in our work plans.

Our Promotion sub-group is effective in raising awareness of the benefits of a Welsh medium education throughout the year and especially at the times when parents are making choices and applying for school places. They are proactive in organising events, including Ti-y-Fi and identifying opportunities to promote the Welsh language and culture. Members of this group also work with schools and the community to facilitate events where learners can use and develop their Welsh language skills successfully in authentic contexts.

Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008

How do you work with other local authorities, schools, and further education institutions (as appropriate) to promote access to education and training through the medium of the Welsh language in accordance with the duty set out under section 10 of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008? Give details on your progress and the main challenges in relation to this issue.

The local authority provides free home to school transport for Welsh medium learners where they meet the eligibility criteria within our Home to School Transport Policy.

Transporting primary age pupils has been challenging due to the proximity of our primary Welsh medium schools, and the distances that some children are required to travel. However, the challenges have been significantly reduced since the opening of Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy, providing provision more locally in Monmouth, rather than transporting young children to Abergavenny.

The challenge remains regarding our Welsh medium provision for Secondary aged learners. As provision for these learners is outside of the county, some children are travelling long distances to school which can bring challenges in meeting the timings that learners spend travelling to school.

While we comply fully with our legal requirements in not funding Post 16 travel costs for any pupil. However, we understand this is a concern for those attending Welsh medium schools and will work with all parties to understand this position.

OVERALL SELF ASSESSMENT

Give a self-assessed RAG rating (red/amber/green) for your overall progress against the Plan during 2024—2025.

Amber

Outcome 1

More nursery children/ three-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

KEY DATA AND OUTCOME SUMMARY

Provide the following data to report on your progress against your ten-year target and any other target noted in your Plan:

Number and percentage of 3-year-olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh (PLASC data)

Year	Number	Percentage
2023-24	74	6.45%
2024-25	97	8.58%

Data for Cylchoedd Meithrin

Year	Number of settings	Number of children	Number transferring to school	Number transferring to Welsh-medium school	Percentage transferring to Welsh-medium school
2022-23	2	63	28	23	82.1%
2023-24	2	77	47	41	87.2%

Welsh-medium Flying Start data

Year	Number of settings	Number of places	Number of children
2023-24	2	47	21
2024-25	2	47	28

Other Welsh-medium provision

Type of provision	Number of settings	Number of children
Childminder	1	10

PROGRESS UPDATE

Give a brief update on your progress against the agreed target for this outcome.

We have made positive steps to increase the number of children accessing Welsh medium early education. A third Welsh medium school opened in September 2024 offering 30 nursery places and take up has been better than expected. Take up of places has also increased at our other two Welsh medium LA nurseries.

Give a summary of your progress in expanding Welsh-medium early years provision, including Flying Start, under the headings below.

What are you doing to increase the number of Welsh-medium childcare places available as well as uptake of these places?

- Unfortunately, it has not been possible to establish a third cylch meithrin setting in Monmouth, as planned, due to a lack of a suitable venue. Instead, we have offered full time early education places at the seedling Welsh school to ensure that the lack of wrap around childcare is not a barrier to parents choosing Welsh medium education.
- We need to consider how we can provide Welsh medium Flying Start places in Monmouth, as this is not currently available. Two of our childminders that are approved for Flying Start childcare attend Cylch Ti a Fi Trefynwy and use some Welsh language within their setting. We have not had any requests for this currently, as much of Monmouth and the surrounding areas are not currently eligible for Flying Start. However, we will continue to review our provision for Flying Start in this area.
- Take up at our existing two cylch meithrin settings has increased and most children attending these settings move on to a Welsh medium school to access their early education.
- One of these cylch meithrin settings will be relocating to a new site in September 2025 along with the Welsh school. We have secured a larger space for them, to enable them to extend their age range and increase their number of registered places.
- Both cylch meithrin settings offer Flying Start childcare places and take up of these places has increased.
- We have recruited a new Welsh speaking childminder who is offering Welsh medium childcare and is currently full.
- We fund a Ti a Fi Officer through Mudiad Meithrin to raise the profile of the Welsh Language with families and encourage them to consider Welsh medium education and childcare. Cylch Ti a Fi Trefynwy has been well attended in 2024-25 and this has impacted positively on the number of families applying for a nursery place at Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy from September 2025. Cylch Ti a Fi Y Fenni is temporarily closed due to the move to the new site, but we will support them to reopen as soon as possible.
- The Promotion Subgroup and the Family Information Service actively promotes Welsh-medium childcare provision.

How do you use the analysis of your Childcare Sufficiency Assessment to identify areas for development?

- The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) published in 2022 identified a gap in relation to Welsh medium childcare, as this was only available in two areas of Monmouthshire and was limited in relation to age range and opening hours.
- The CSA action plan includes a target to develop a cylch meithrin in each of the five towns of Monmouthshire
- The CSA 2022-27 and subsequent annual progress reports were used to inform WESP targets for outcome 1 and to identify future actions.

Give details on your process of developing provision (tendering processes), including the types and number of provision settings being planned for year 4.

- We are in the process of carrying out a tender exercise for both early education and Flying Start childcare. We are hoping to increase the number of non-maintained providers offering these services and all Welsh medium settings will be encouraged and supported to apply.
- The approved list will be in place for a period of 12 months, in the first instance. We are hoping to replace this with a more flexible process in the future such as a Dynamic Purchasing System.

State the collaboration with organisations in the early years sector to strengthen and expand Welsh-medium childcare provision in your area (e.g. Cwlwm partner organisations). Give details on the nature of this collaboration.

- Mudiad Meithrin and the other Cwlwm partner organisations are members of our Early Years Development and Childcare (EYDCP) Partnership. We meet with them at least termly to discuss plans to develop new childcare provision and to support existing settings to expand their provision.
- We fund a Ti a Fi Officer through Mudiad Meithrin to promote Welsh medium education. We also fund an advice line through Pacey to support prospective childminders through the registration process.
- Basic Welsh language training for childminders took place in July 2023 and childcare practitioners are actively encouraged to take up Welsh language training provided by Cwlwm partners.

How do you share information about the availability of early years education and other Welsh-medium provision with parents/carers? Give details on how you work with the Family Information Service, your admissions teams, and external agencies to ensure that information is shared effectively.

- Representatives from MCC Early Years, Admissions and Communications teams sit on the Promotion Subgroup alongside external partners. We are creating a calendar of activities to promote the Welsh language.
- There is a section on the MCC website that promotes Welsh medium education and childcare and the benefits of being bilingual.

- Our Family Information Service regularly promotes Welsh medium groups and activities through social media. We have attended events such as the Usk Show and Miri Mynwy to promote Welsh medium education and childcare.

Any further information that may be relevant to this outcome.

- We are offering Level 2 Childcare as part of our post 16 curriculum from September 2025. We have identified a cohort of between 8 and 12 students and one of these is Welsh speaking. We are hoping to use one of our Welsh medium settings for work placements. We will follow up with Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw to see if we can link up with their pupils that are completing or considering the childcare course.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Give a self-assessed RAG rating (red/amber/green) for your progress in this outcome for 2024—2025.

Amber

Outcome 2

More reception class children/ five-year-olds receive their education through the medium of Welsh

KEY DATA AND OUTCOME SUMMARY

Target

Note the target approved in your 10-year WESP for the percentage of year 1 children educated through the medium of Welsh.

Target (%)	120
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Reception and Year 1 Learners

Number and percentage of learners in Reception Class and Year 1 who are taught through the medium of Welsh, using local PLASC data.

	2023		2024	
Reception class learners	Number:	50/814 (PLASC 24)	Number:	58/818 (PLASC 25)
	Percentage:	6.1%	Percentage:	7%
Year 1 learners	Number:	51/855 (PLASC 24)	Number:	54/829 (PLASC 25)
	Percentage:	5.9%	Percentage:	6.5%

Give any details, reasons and context that are key to understanding the increase or decrease in numbers and percentages of learners in Reception Class and Year 1 educated through the medium of Welsh:

- The academic year 2023/24 saw us fall below our target of 69 Reception aged learners, largely due to a reduction in the intake numbers at Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni.
- Overall, this means that we are currently at 65.55% of our target for 2030 (Reception number 2024 v Reception places 2030). Whilst this is an increase of 10.35pp from 2022, it is below our target of 79.35% which is due to a decline in applications to Y Fenni this year.
- In recognition of this decline, we have worked hard with our schools, promotion subgroup, and supporting partners to promote the benefits of Welsh medium education through our social media campaigns, website updates and attendance at Welsh medium community events. We have also continued to invest heavily in our late immersion provision and are exploring opportunities to extend this offer to other areas of the County.
- It is pleasing to note that the percentage of learners being taught through the medium of Welsh has increased for both Reception and year 1 aged learners. 58 Reception aged learners were registered at Welsh medium

Schools in 2024/25, and we expect this growth to continue into the 2025/26 academic year, with 80 Reception aged learners projected to be on roll in Welsh medium schools. This equates to 9.7% of the reception cohort taking us to 67% of our 120 Reception learner target for 2030.

- To maintain this upward trend, we will continue to focus on promoting the benefits of a Welsh education and our immersion provision as widely as possible. At the same time, we will ensure that our new school, Y Trefynwy, and the relocation of Y Fenni to a larger site and the expansion of immersion provision will be a central to our promotion strategy and a regular feature from our central communications team.

Surplus places

Surplus places data in Welsh-medium schools from the PLASC 2024 collection

Name of school	Capacity	Numbers on Roll	Number of surplus places	Percentage of surplus places %
Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni	317	236	81	25.6%
Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin	210	113	97	46.1%

Outline your plans to address surplus places in schools:

- The PS has worked closely with partners to identify key priorities and provide ownership to group members. The MCC website has been updated to include videos that promote WM education, all existing promotional material has been updated, and the group are working on creating new. The group continue to work closely with MCC communications team to create a timetable for social media posts.
- The PS have reviewed the MCC website and up-dated the Welsh-medium Education pages. A new page for Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy has been created, and a marketing campaign will continue to inform parents about the new provision.
- The promotion of the childcare facilities within our WM schools is also a key priority for the Promotion subgroup.
- The statutory processes concerning the relocation and increase in capacity of Ysgol Y Fenni is now complete with the school moving to its new site in September 2025. This proposal allows the school to move to a two-form entry allowing 60 children per year group. Whilst this is likely to increase surplus places in the short term, it will provide improved facilities for our WM learners and support the growth in Welsh-medium education.
- Surplus places in our Welsh medium primary schools in 2024 were reported as 33.7%. For 2025, this has reduced to 31.4%. Whilst this is higher than we would like, it is indicative of our investment to build capacity within our Welsh medium sector. The Council continue to work with the promotion subgroup to promote the benefits of Welsh medium education, and the expansion in immersion provision which we hope that this will lead to an increase in the numbers applying for places. It is hoped that the confirmed relocation of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni away

from their current location with temporary accommodation into a building with excellent teaching and learning facilities will impact positively on the number of children applying for places at the school.

Black, Asian and minority ethnic learners

Number and percentage of Black, Asian and minority ethnic learners (PLASC 2024)

	In Welsh-medium schools		In English-medium schools	
	Number	%	Number	%
PLASC 2023	15	4.2%	591	9.5%
PLASC 2024	16	4.6%	594	10.3%

Outline the actions taken by you in collaboration with your local equality networks and partners to engage with parents/carers about opportunities to access Welsh-medium education among families from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups and communities.

We continue to promote our Welsh medium primary schools to all eligible pupils, and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic pupils for part of this cohort. We have not yet completed any direct marketing with these groups. However, we plan to discuss good practice strategies with our neighbouring authorities to take forward next year.

Late immersion provision

Numbers that have attended late immersion centres/units, or that have received late immersion support between 1 Sept 2024 and 31 July 2025.	Number of learners
Primary	
Number of learners who have received late immersion provision	7
Number of the above who are Black, Asian or minority ethnic learners	2
Number of learners who have received follow-up provision	7
Number of learners who have received language proficiency provision (Gloywi Iaith)	N/A
Secondary	
Number of learners who have received late immersion provision	N/A
Number of the above who are Black, Asian or minority ethnic learners	N/A
Number of learners who have received follow-up provision	N/A
Number of learners who have received language proficiency provision (Gloywi Iaith)	N/A

Give an update on your local provision for latecomers to support the data in the table above.

Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni have been receiving support with the set-up of immersion through Partnership collaboration. Leaders at the school have been supported to consider linguistic planning, have been provided guidance on potential resourcing, with teaching and learning resources also shared.

The school have been directed to schools across the Partnership and invited to attend the regional summer term immersion practice sharing network session and a recent L2 pedagogy professional learning session to prepare for the teaching of latecomers.

A lead for late immersion in Y Fenni has been appointed and discussions have also been had regarding the delivery of further professional learning for all staff within the school at an appropriate point so that they also consider the language acquisition and immersion process and how they will support pupils as they re-integrate into mainstream as part of the late immersion offer. Both immersion centres have access to a regional immersion network.

The leads from both Y Fenni and Y Ffin have been supported to consider developing shared approaches to ensure all pupils who attend immersion classes benefit from similar experiences.

Capital projects

List your projects that are funded through the Welsh-medium capital investment programme.

No projects have been funded through the Welsh-medium capital investment programme in academic year 24/25. However, we have invested £470,222 from revenue funding to refurbish a section of a school to house the seedling school in Monmouth.

Welsh-medium capital project: description	Project value	Update/timetable (e.g. 'business case received')
Not applicable	£	

Welsh-medium rolling programme project: description	Project value	Update/timetable (e.g. 'business case received')
Not applicable	£	

Note any proposed plans for Welsh-medium capital investment for the future.

- Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni will relocate to their new building in September 2025 which will increase their capacity to 420. The building is currently being refurbished to address the backlog maintenance which will bring the school up to standard, in addition to this there will be new classroom wet areas, new signage, redecoration and new flooring throughout.

- Our 9-year Strategic Outline Programme includes determining provision for Welsh medium secondary pupils from north Monmouthshire. Discussions are on-going with Blaenau Gwent Council to determine a collaborative approach to delivering a Welsh medium secondary school. Pupils from north Monmouthshire currently travel to Ysgol Gyfyn Gwynllyw in Torfaen. The distance pupils travel to access WM secondary education means that for some pupils their journey can be over an hour long each way. For this reason, we are seeing an increase in pupils not transferring to secondary education.

Increasing Welsh-medium provision

Outline your plans to increase Welsh-medium provision in your schools that are not Welsh-medium schools.

- We do not have any immediate plans to increase Welsh-medium provision in our schools that are not Welsh-medium during the next academic year. This is because our current priority is to promote and grow the provision that we have established within our 3 Welsh medium Primary Schools. However, we have approached all Monmouthshire schools to consider and indicate if they are considering increasing Welsh-medium provision and/or looking to transition to a different category within the next two years. No schools have approached us to date.
- Given the current level of surplus places we have in our schools, there is no immediate pressure on Welsh-medium places. However, this will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure we plan effectively to manage an increased demand for places.
- A total of 21 practitioners from across Monmouthshire schools have engaged with sabbatical training at all levels over the last 4 years. As a result, most English-medium schools across Monmouthshire are developing their use of Welsh incidentally and across the wider curriculum areas. Estyn has identified the approaches being taken by St Mary's RC, Chepstow, and Undy Primary School to build capacity and raise the profile of spoken Welsh within the school are being shared widely.
- Three of the four EAS strategic cluster leads for Welsh are past sabbatical graduates. They promote professional learning, including the Sabbatical Scheme and have a role in providing basic training to the education workforce, which includes TAs. As a result of the above, Welsh-language in English-medium schools is improving appropriately in Monmouthshire schools.

State how you ensure that information about the availability of Welsh-medium education is shared with parents/carers.

- The availability of Welsh medium education features prominently within our annual admissions prospectus, made available to all parents who are following the school application process.
- The application portal also asks specific questions to all applicants on whether they have considered Welsh medium education for their child and provides links to where they can obtain further information on the benefits.
- Throughout the admission round application process, we have run separate social media campaigns promoting Welsh medium education and the offer that is available within Monmouthshire
- For our new seedling school, Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy, we undertook an exercise to target families within Monmouth with children eligible to start Reception to ensure that they were aware of the new Welsh medium provision in the area.

Any further information that may be relevant to this outcome.

No

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Give a self-assessed RAG rating (red/amber/green) for your progress in this outcome for 2024-2025.

Amber

Outcome 3

More children continue to improve their Welsh-language skills when transferring from one stage of their statutory education to another

KEY DATA AND OUTCOME SUMMARY

Number and percentage of learners transferring from yr 6 Welsh-medium education to yr 7 Welsh-medium education (PLASC data and locally available data)

2024			2025		
Yr 6 2023 numbers	Yr 7 2024 numbers	% transferring	Yr 6 2024 numbers	Yr 7 2025 numbers	% transferring
44	21	50	29	18	62

Monitoring

How do you monitor linguistic progression from primary to secondary (or at any other point), including your transitioning arrangements?

Each school (English and Welsh medium) has a dedicated School Improvement Partner that considers, with schools, learner progression, including progress in Welsh language and literacy skills and transition arrangements. Joint self-evaluation activities with the School Improvement Partner across all schools evaluate their commitment in ensuring that all learners experience a progressive journey in developing their Welsh language skills. A consistent approach ensures that we can identify best practice and address any areas for development, brokering support from Partner Schools or specialist Welsh medium Curriculum Partners where necessary. Supporting cluster work and initiatives through professional learning opportunities ensures continuity in expectations. The Local Authority constantly works with the partnership Principal School Improvement Partner for Welsh medium schools, who works across the Partnership's local authorities, to quality assure provision and learner progress of Monmouthshire learners across the age range.

Collaboration

If your transfer data shows a reduction or gives cause for concern, state how you have worked with Welsh-medium schools (and English-medium where relevant) and other partners more widely to understand the reasons, and note any actions being implemented.

To address transfer data concerns from YG Y Fenni, the Local Authority has worked with the school and the designated secondary school in Torfaen to contribute to the development of a cluster video, promoting the benefits of Welsh medium education and of continued Welsh language learning at Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw. A detailed cluster transition plan is also being implemented. Ysgol Gwynllyw have started transition with Year 5 pupils this year to further increase transition rates by September 2026. The Youth Service will continue to offer a six-week transition programme to support transition into Ysgol Gwynllyw and Ysgol Is Coed.

<p>Is there work underway to identify or support schools that have a high percentage of surplus places to improve their transfer rates.? Provide information about patterns in schools, school clusters or specific year groups within schools.</p>
<p>The local authority has worked with YG Y Fenni to increase participation in the well-established transition programme with YG Gwynllyw, delivered by our Youth Service. In addition, where there is additional staff capacity in late immersion classes, schools are encouraged to use this resource to support learners in Years 5 and 6 to develop their skills in the Welsh language so that they will feel more confident to continue their education through the medium of Welsh.</p>
<p>Where relevant, give an update on collaboration with other local authorities to ensure continuity of arrangements for learners who receive Welsh-medium education outside the area.</p>
<p>The Local Authority regularly works with the partnership Principal School Improvement Partner for Welsh medium schools, who works across the Partnership's local authorities, to support quality assurance of provision and learner progress of Monmouthshire learners across the age range.</p>
<p>Language skills</p> <p>Set out how your schools ensure that all learners make suitable and challenging progress in their skills along the Welsh-language continuum by increasing the amount of Welsh-medium education provided to them.</p>
<p>The EAS has a Welsh spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and syntax continua to support schools to evaluate pupil progress in Welsh language skills (Welsh medium). There is also an EAS language continuum for Foundation Learning, Primary and Secondary English medium schools that supports schools to plan and evaluate progressive Welsh language skills across the curriculum. This supports schools to increase Welsh provision across Areas of Learning and experience and make meaningful use of language in both formal and informal situations. The implementation of the Siarter Iaith/Cymraeg Campus frameworks also support the increase of Welsh language experiences for pupils.</p> <p>It is an expectation that all HTs will attend professional learning for the development and evaluation of Welsh in English medium schools in the autumn term. This will support leaders to consider their provision, expectations, and learner progress. This will be followed by EAS/Local Authority thematic supported self-evaluation activity across schools later in the autumn term to enable the LA to consider how well schools ensure learner progress, challenge and expectation and plan next steps. Targeted and bespoke support brokered through partnership working will be provided to schools as a follow-up to this activity.</p>
<p>Any further information that may be relevant to this outcome</p>
<p>No</p>
<p>SELF-ASSESSMENT</p>

Give a self-assessed RAG rating (red/amber/green) for your progress in this outcome for 2024—2025.

Amber

Outcome 4

More learners study for assessed qualifications in Welsh (as a subject) and subjects through the medium of Welsh

KEY DATA AND OUTCOME SUMMARY

Provision in maintained secondary schools (Category 2, 3 and transitional)

Welsh courses and qualifications

- There are no Welsh-medium secondary schools in Monmouthshire. This means that all courses in secondary schools are delivered in English except for Welsh as a second language. During transition into KS4 and Sixth Form learners are initially offered a 'free choice' of courses and qualifications. There are currently no cohorts enquiring about the availability to study further qualifications through the medium of Welsh.

Give data listing which subjects are offered and taught through the medium of Welsh in years 10, 11, 12 and 13 in the local authority's category 2, 3 and transitional schools.

GCSE (reproduce table for each school)

Name of school and language category:					
Subject	Welsh	Bilingual	English	Offered?	Numbers taking up offer
	✓/✗	✓/✗	✓/✗	Yes/No	
Not applicable					

AS/A Level (reproduce table for each school)

Name of school and language category:					
Subject	Welsh	Bilingual	English	Offered?	Numbers taking up offer
	✓/✗	✓/✗	✓/✗	Yes/No	
Not applicable					

Vocational (reproduce table for each school)

Name of school and language category:					
Subject	Welsh	Bilingual	English	Offered?	Numbers taking up offer
	✓/✗	✓/✗	✓/✗	Yes/No	
Not applicable					

Describe how you support schools to increase the number of qualifications that learners can study through the medium of Welsh and how you monitor provision.

Not applicable

State how the local authority assists with the continuation of the Welsh-medium education provided for persons in year 10 and above by collaborating with other schools and other FEIs.

Not applicable

Welsh as a subject

Number and percentage of learners registered and assessed for GCSE First Language, GCSE Second Language

GCSE										
School	Numbers on roll		Welsh First Language				Welsh Second Language			
	Yr 10	Yr 11	Yr10	%	Yr11	%	Yr10	%	Yr11	%
Not applicable										

The data reflects a proportion of pupils who find accessing Welsh at GCSE level a challenge e.g. pupils attending PRS. The LA will work with the EAS to ensure all pupils have access to a meaningful qualification pathway and consider approaches taken e.g. in PRU in neighbouring LAs, as a potential way forward.

Number and percentage of learners registered and assessed for A Level Welsh First Language and Second Language

AS/A Level										
School	Numbers on roll		Welsh First Language				Welsh Second Language			
	Yr 12	Yr 13	Yr12	%	Yr13	%	Yr12	%	Yr13	%
Not applicable										

State how the local authority is working with its schools and FEIs to co-ordinate the provision of Welsh as a subject (GCSE First Language, GCSE Second Language, and A Level) to persons in year 10 and above in its maintained secondary schools.

Collaboration with schools for external examinations

- GCSE Welsh second language is offered in all four of Monmouthshire's secondary schools, with most pupils being registered for and assessed in the subject. 685 or 84% of the Year 11 cohort were registered for and assessed in GCSE Welsh Second Language in 2023/24. 24/25? In addition, five pupils in Year 9 were registered for and assessed in the same qualification. Pupils within Pupil Referral Services such as the Pupil Referral Unit and EOTAS, and those following a range of alternative provisions within schools are generally not entered for this examination.
- Expertise in the teaching of Welsh Second Language at A level is being further developed through the collaborative delivery of the AS and A Level across the county and an E-sgol supported professional learning group.
- The EAS facilitated an A level workshop for Monmouthshire pupils at Monmouth comprehensive during December 2024, making links with HEIs through collaboration with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. The EAS has also worked with schools to provide opportunities for AS/A level pupils to practice their speaking skills with the Welsh Curriculum Partner in advance of external oral examinations.

State how you have supported schools to ensure that smaller classes remain viable, and any occasions where it has not been possible to organise the provision of Welsh as a subject, giving numbers.

See E-sgol provision below

E-sgol

E-sgol Yr 12

School	Subject	Welsh	Bilingual	English	Number of learners
Monmouth	Welsh Second Language			Y	5
	Spanish			Y	1
	Computer Science			Y	1
Caldicot	Spanish			Y	2
	Computer Science			Y	2
	Welsh Second Language			Y	2
King Henry VIII 3-19	Welsh Second Language			Y	2
	Computer Science			Y	4
Chepstow	Economics			Y	12
	Computer Science			Y	3

e-sgol Yr 13

School	Subject	Welsh	Bilingual	English	Number of learners
n/a					
n/a					

If you currently offer e-sgol provision, do you have plans to expand the provision in future?

- All four secondary schools are core stakeholders in the Monmouthshire E-sgol Network that commenced delivery of learning in September 2024. In preparation for the launch, all schools attended the E-sgol annual learning conference and several professional learning and planning sessions. A Level Second Language Welsh is at the core of the Monmouthshire universal E-sgol offer, with three of our four schools having learners in this first Year 12 cohort. These learners will progress into Year 13 for the 2025/26 academic year. Currently twenty-five

<p>learners have expressed an interest in studying Welsh Second Language A Level in September 2025.</p>	
<p>Promotion and engagement</p> <p>List your activities to engage with all parents/carers about opportunities for access to Welsh-medium secondary education and your work to promote the advantages of Welsh-medium secondary education.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The promotion group has identified capacity to support schools to promote the benefits of a bilingual education in future careers during the time when learners are making choices about options, A levels and further education pathways. 	
<p>Describe how you have worked with schools to promote the advantages of studying Welsh as a subject at GCSE and A Level among learners and parents/carers</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All schools have a comprehensive strategy to ensure learners appreciate the value of Welsh in future careers. For example, through social media and by supporting school careers events. All schools have included the benefits of studying Welsh language in their KS4 and Sixth Form prospectus, 'Next Step' assemblies, parents' meetings, sample lessons, careers events and open evenings. Partnership collaboration and funding ensured delivery a Pam Cymraeg? event for Yr 10/11 learners at Monmouth Comprehensive during December 2024 to promote the Welsh language and the careers available through the medium of Welsh. Also, 'A level' Welsh day was held at Monmouth Comprehensive during December 2024. Both opportunities were supported by the Coleg Cymraeg. 	
<p>Any further information that may be relevant to this outcome.</p>	
<p><u>Post 16 Work Based Learning</u></p> <p>We have engaged with directorates across Monmouthshire County Council, our schools, and further stakeholders, to develop post 16 Pathways to Employment programmes in Sport, Leisure, Play and Childcare. These innovative courses, based both in schools and in the workplace, have been offered as part of the sixth form curriculum for 2025-26. A Childcare course will be in place in the north of the county for the 2025/26 academic year, based in King Henry VIII 3-19 School. Students following the Childcare programme will have the opportunity to be placed in Welsh speaking settings as part of their course. Several learners have expressed an interest in taking up placements in Welsh speaking settings.</p>	
<p>SELF-ASSESSMENT</p>	
<p>Give a self-assessed RAG rating (red/amber/green) for your progress in this outcome for 2024–2025.</p>	<p>Green</p>

Outcome 5

More opportunities for learners to use Welsh in different contexts in school

KEY DATA AND OUTCOME SUMMARY

Give the following information regarding the number of schools operating the Siarter Iaith and Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus.

	Number of schools	Percentage of schools	Current award Status (Number of schools)
Siarter Iaith primary schools	3	67%	Gold 2
Siarter Iaith secondary schools	0	NA	NA
Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus primary schools	28 (Including Deri View/King Henry Primary Site)	100%	Silver 4 Bronze 24
Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus secondary schools	4	50%	Bronze 2
PRU and Special Schools	1	0%	0

Give an update on any activities/provision for school-age children to use their Welsh-language skills outside the classroom and the school by working in partnership with your youth services and organisations such as Urdd Gobaith Cymru and Mentrau Iaith. Provide up to 4 examples.

- The EAS has promoted the Gŵyl Plant Gwent (Summer 2025) opportunity.
- The EAS is promoting the Urdd's Wales Euro Jambori virtual event on 02.07.25.
- The EAS is working with the Urdd to promote engagement with the 2027 Eisteddfod yr Urdd at Tredegar Park.

Any other activities to support learners to make continuous progress in learning Welsh (to include schools from all language categories).

- A Pam Cymraeg? event was held for Yr 10/11 learners at Monmouth Comprehensive during December 2024
- An 'A level' Welsh day was held at Monmouth Comprehensive during December 2024
- A workshop for Language Immersion Centres is to be facilitated by EAS in June 2025

How do you promote local successes and share best practice among schools and beyond?

- Practice sharing is facilitated via the designated Siarter Iaith termly networks for Welsh medium primary and secondary schools
- For English medium schools, practice sharing is facilitated through the network for Welsh language leads in primary schools, HoD network in secondary schools and the Welsh cluster leads' network.
- Practice-sharing is also facilitated through the dedicated EAS Siarter Iaith 'Dewch i weld / Come and see' events in schools across the region.

For Welsh Medium Schools:

- Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Allta (Caerffili) 14.03.25

For English Medium Schools:

- Beaufort Hill Primary (Blaenau Gwent) 10.06.25
- Ebbw Fawr Learning Community (Blaenau Gwent) 04.07.25
- Cwmfelinfach Primary (Caerphilly) 06.05.25
- Glyn Gaer (Caerphilly) 12.02.25
- Llancaeath Jr (Caerphilly) 19.03.25
- St Mary's RC (Monmouthshire) 11.06.25
- Undy Primary (Monmouthshire) 11.06.25
- Gaer Primary (Newport) 20.02.25
- Langstone Primary (Newport) 05.02.25 and 21.05.25
- Marshfield Primary (Newport) 05.06.25

Siarter Iaith

- The EAS currently uses the X platform (@EAS_Cymraeg) to congratulate schools who have received a Siarter Iaith award, tagging the Local Authority into relevant news items, for re-sharing.
- The platform is also used to re-share news from schools tagging the @EAS_Cymraeg handle when undertaking Siarter Iaith/Cymraeg Campus activity.
- The EAS actively engages schools with the celebration of designated Welsh language / cultural celebration days through the provision of resources, the sharing of ideas for such dates, and live sharing of school activity on designated days via the relevant network spaces, meeting opportunities and the X handle. Events include e.g. Chain of greetings on Shwmae, S'umae Day (15.10.24), Dydd Miwsig Cymru playlists (07.02.25) and a Diwrnod Seren a Sbarc quiz (16.05.25).
- Close collaboration between regional leaders of Siarter Iaith and Cymraeg Campus resulted in the development of ideas for Dydd Miwsig Cymru, appropriate for sharing with all schools, regardless of language medium. It also resulted in the development of ideas to strengthen Welsh connections in the community which are now being trialled by schools.

Note any training provided to school workforces to assist with the operation of the Siarter Iaith.

The EAS Welsh in Education Partners conduct, lead, and support:

- Termly communications with Welsh medium headteachers via their MS Team / network meeting to inform them of the latest developments
- Termly visits to each Welsh medium school
- Termly network meetings for both Welsh and English medium schools
- Termly Welsh Strategic Cluster Leads meetings for Welsh leads of English medium clusters
- Dedicated ‘Dewch i weld’ events for both Welsh and English medium schools.
- Cymraeg Campus drop-in clinics for English medium schools e.g. silver award drop-in clinic 29.11.25 and 28.03.25
- Professional learning sessions for Headteachers: Strategic planning and self-evaluation of Welsh in English Medium Schools
- Briefing for School Improvement Partners in English medium schools

Note any support for schools in the form of visits, and validation.

The EAS ensures:

- Termly support visits to each Welsh medium school
- Support visits by request or brokerage to English medium schools
- The availability of a cycle of verification bi-annually, or as schools become ready for their next award and request verification.
- During 2024-25 (to date), 7 schools have received a verification visit and awarded a new award (Bronze: Durand, Llandogo, Raglan; Silver: Goytre Fawr, St Mary’s RC; Gold: Y Fenni, Y Ffin.
- Chepstow Comprehensive and Osbaston Primary have confirmed readiness to be verified for the silver award and dates are currently being arranged/discussed.

Any evaluation of the Siarter Iaith’s impact (including Cymraeg Campus).

All schools have a dedicated School Improvement Partner. Progress towards the Charter is captured via each school’s School on a Page (SoaP) profile and School Support Overview (SSO). All in-school activity related to the Siarter Iaith /Cymraeg Campus is evaluated via the SSO mechanism and via Notes of Activity (NOA) (including termly review against SDP priorities and NOA review of short/long term impact). The SSO also includes all Supported Self Evaluation (SSE) activity. All schools receiving a verification visit receive an in-depth SSE report on their progress towards the Siarter Iaith / Cymraeg Campus award demonstrating the impact on the school.

Where schools engage well with Siarter Iaith provision and support, the impact on schools’ vision and ethos is strong, resulting in the positive development of pupils’ Welsh language skills in informal situations.

Progress from Bronze to Silver is relatively slow paced in some areas.

Any further information that may be relevant to this outcome

Coleg Gwent feeds into several outcome areas, all in-house. Coleg Gwent works with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (which are funded to support post-16 learners in FE and

work-based learning) and Welsh Ambassadors. Each campus has a Welsh club which is supported by the Welsh Ambassadors, who promote and facilitate the club with support from staff. In addition, there is a full calendar of events throughout the academic year which includes national celebrations e.g. St Davids Day, Shwmae Day, Dydd Miwsig Cymru etc. which can be up to two days a month. During these days there are a variety of activities depending on what is being celebrating. The events tend to take place in the foyers or atriums and hundreds of young people (Welsh speakers and non-Welsh speakers) attend and engage with Welsh music, activities, food. In terms of Welsh speakers there are targeted activities for them to use their skills such as a visit to St Fagans for fluent Welsh speakers, where the learners spoke Welsh all day, where young people are encouraged to engage in enrichment activities to inspire confidence in using the language, which in turn has a positive impact on Outcome 3. Coleg Gwent works with Menter Iaith and with The Urdd on some of their enrichment activities.

Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni and Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin competed in The Urdd Eisteddfod. English-medium primary schools Goytre Fawr, Magor and Cross Ash took part in the Urdd Eisteddfod singing competition and Rogiet took part in the arts and crafts competition. Cross Ash came third across all of Wales in the national Eisteddfod in Margam Park. Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni and Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin have competed in The Urdd's sports tournaments. The following primary schools made visits to Urdd Residential Centres: Undy, Shirenewton, The Dell, Cross Ash, Archbishop Rowan Williams. The following secondary schools made visits to Urdd Residential Centres: Monmouth, Caldicot and King Henry VIII. Over 200 children and young people took part in the Urdd Jambori for learners in October including Osbaston, ARW, Kymin View, Llandogo, Trellech and Cross Ash primary schools. 1 X Hwyl yn y Gymraeg (Fun through Welsh) session was delivered in ARW School. 1 young person from Monmouthshire registered to be part of the Urdd Youth Theatr.

In 2024-2025 1244 contacts were made through provision provided by The Urdd (commissioned through Monmouthshire Youth Service) which included two Welsh speaking Youth Clubs (one for Year 6 pupils, and one for Year 7+) in Caldicot, one lunchtime club and the delivery of the Year 6 Transition project in Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin. Trips and visits included a Welsh Language Gig at Gwynllyw, an end of term trip for the Youth Clubs, Summer Activities including trips to Thorpe Park, Alton Towers and 25 young people from Monmouthshire attended an Urdd residential.

From April 2025, Monmouthshire Youth Service re-commissioned The Urdd through the Welsh Government's Youth Support Grant to work in collaboration to offer:

- Two Welsh speaking Youth Clubs at The Zone Youth Centre in Caldicot, every Wednesday. First session is for Year 6 (which links to Outcome 3), with the Year 7+ session following on afterwards.
- A new Welsh Language Youth Club at Abergavenny Youth & Community Centre on a Monday evening, focusing initially on Year 6s with a view to be for Year 7+ from September 2025.
- A weekly drop-in Welsh language lunchtime club at Caldicot School.
- A six-week transition programme to Year 6 classes at both Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni and Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin, again linking to Outcome 3.

- Additional activities and trips for young people attending our Welsh language provisions.

Menter Iaith are hold Welsh-language swimming lessons including water safety in Caldicot Leisure Centre for 8+ (every Monday for 5 weeks over the summer) for up to 15 children. At the same time, looking to run a second session for parents and babies following a request from parents. In the summer there will be a session held in Chepstow Leisure Centre for families, and parents and child for Martyn Geraint (Welsh entertainer). Mother and toddler sessions currently happening in Monmouth (Rockfield Community Centre), with a scheduled messy play session as well as a Party in the Park event planned for July. The mother and toddler sessions are bilingual and advertised through local mother and toddlers' groups. The children are feeders for the new school.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Give a self-assessed RAG rating (red/amber/green) for your progress in this outcome for 2024—2025.

Green

Outcome 6

An increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) in accordance with the duties imposed by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

KEY DATA AND OUTCOME SUMMARY

ALN Learners

Number and percentage of ALN/SEN learners by school language medium in Welsh and English, based on PLASC data.

	Welsh medium		English medium	
	Primary	Number	11	Number
	Percentage	3.5%	Percentage	5.6%
Secondary	Number	N/A	Number	258
	Percentage	N/A	Percentage	6.2%

(You are expected to report on workforce needs under outcome 7)

Number of additional Welsh-language and bilingual provision where the authority plans to locate learners

	Type of provision (eg neurodiversity/ language and communication)	Welsh medium/bilingual	English medium
Primary	Complex Learning & ND needs	nil	64
Secondary	Complex Learning & ND needs	nil	165

Specialist staff – language medium

Field of work, e.g. educational psychology, teacher specialising in visual impairment or hearing impairment, teacher specialising in autism	Total number of authority staff	Total number of staff able to work through medium of Welsh
Specialist Teacher Team (Literacy & Numeracy)	3	1
Educational Psychology Service	8	0 (2 learners)
Education Support Team	4	0

ALN learners' choice of language medium

Describe how you use data or information to identify reasons for ALN learners' choice of instruction language medium, noting whether there are apparent patterns of choosing (or moving to) English-medium education due to lack of Welsh-medium provision or resources.

- Most children with ALN in Monmouthshire are educated in mainstream provision. Monmouthshire's Early Years Team, comprising of Advisory Teachers and Educational Psychologists, would identify children with ALN and support their transition into school. Where highly complex ALN has been identified, parents may consider English medium specialist provision, however if parental choice is to remain in mainstream Welsh medium provision, this would be supported by the local authority and school.
- There is a pattern emerging regarding transition of pupils with ALN from Welsh medium primary education to secondary education, which appears to favour English medium secondary education over Welsh medium secondary education.
- Between 2022- 2024 five pupils with Statements of SEN or IDPs have transferred from Welsh medium primary schools to English medium secondary schools. In 2024 one pupil with an IDP transferred from a Welsh medium primary school to a Welsh medium secondary school. In September 2025, there are no children with IDPs transferring from Welsh medium primary schools to secondary education.

Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

State the progress made against your duty under section 63 of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 to keep Welsh-medium ALN provision under review during this reporting year.

- A review of Welsh-medium ALN provision took place over the spring and summer term 2024. A report was written, which included a gap analysis of the existing resources and where there are 'insufficiencies' in Monmouthshire Welsh medium primary schools. The report described how coordinated meetings were arranged with the Additional Learning Needs Coordinators (ALNCOs) and Head Teachers at Ysgol Y Fenni and Ysgol Y Ffin. During these meetings, school staff audited their existing Welsh language resources and the impact these resources / interventions have on children to meet their identified ALN. Subsequently, recommendations were provided to address the insufficiencies in Welsh resources for pupils with ALN, focusing on literacy, numeracy, and wellbeing.
- The next review is scheduled for the spring and summer term 2026, with the inclusion of Ysgol Trefynwy.
- As a result of the ALN / ALP review, a gap in Welsh language resources specifically tailored for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) was identified.
- Recommendations contained in the report included investment in additional Welsh language ALN resources to ensure comprehensive support for ALN pupils in

<p>Monmouthshire and release time for collaboration between the two Welsh medium primary schools and the new 'seedling' Welsh medium setting, Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy. The report recognised the importance of collaboration, including the allocation of release time for educators facilitating effective teamwork and resource sharing.</p>
<p>Note the main findings and actions taken following the review to improve Welsh-medium provision for learners with ALN, and any challenges.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In April 2025, resources were made available to purchase identified learning resources and these are in the process of being secured. • The Monmouthshire Autism in Schools and Settings has ensured all training materials and the standards and competencies frameworks are available in Welsh; schools are focusing on embedding good autism practice. • The ongoing collaborative work of the three schools is supporting the monitoring of implementation of the agreed actions from the initial ALP review, identification and sharing of best practice. This is supported by an officer from the Inclusion Service working with the Welsh language implementation lead on the development and identification of Welsh medium resources.
<p>Collaboration</p> <p>Outline the developments and progress that have occurred through collaboration with other local authorities to share resources and expertise. Include any progress in the context of mapping specific learning resources and research needs.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCC Officer responsible for undertaking the ALP review is continuing to work with colleagues across Wales and the ALN National Implementation Lead (Welsh Language) to share expertise and develop Welsh language provision and resources. A MCC Officer participated in a national WESP Support Network WM for ALN meeting to discuss the WESP Outcome 6 plans and considerations on a Wales-wide scale. • The MCC Officer and staff from Monmouthshire's Welsh Medium Primary Schools (Ysgol Fenni and Ysgol Ffin) attended the Welsh Medium ALN Effective Practice Event. School representatives expressed enthusiasm for collaborating on future projects, sharing resources, and promoting good practice. • Making Sense of Autism Training (part of the suite of Welsh language Autism resources developed by Monmouthshire) has been delivered to a Welsh medium school in Port Talbot and further requests from other Welsh medium schools /settings are being considered.
<p>Any further information that may be relevant to this outcome</p>
<p>Good Autism Practice Training, which is being developed in collaboration with the Autism Education Trust and National Autism Society will also be available in Welsh, from the autumn term 2025.</p>
<p>SELF-ASSESSMENT</p>

Give a self-assessed RAG rating (red/amber/green) for your progress in this outcome for 2024—2025.	Amber
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Outcome 7							
Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach Welsh (as a subject) and teach through the medium of Welsh							
KEY DATA AND OUTCOME SUMMARY							
Include data that shows your progress against your ten-year target and any other relevant target in your Plan e.g. PLASC data and/or School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC) data, including ALN workforce and specialist ALN workforce).							
Target	WESP target 4.2% proficient Welsh speakers (school based) Current proficient Welsh speakers 5.7% (60 school based) Current entry level Welsh speakers 48.1% (517 school based)						
Based on our current position we have set the following targets at each phase in terms of the Welsh language skills within the workforce based on what we feel is challenging but achievable.							
The main focus is to reduce the number of staff with no Welsh language skills and support their progression along the Welsh language continuum, while recognising that progress becomes more challenging at the higher levels of proficiency. (25/26 targets in purple)							
Number of teachers and support staff recorded in accordance with Language Competency Framework							
Primary	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7

	No skills	Entry	Foundation	Intermediate	Higher	Proficient	No information
Teachers	1 (0)	68 (10)	134 (180)	32 (39)	109 (130)	29 (32)	-
Support staff	112 (67)	238 (215)	60 (120)	13 (16)	5 (7)	13 (16)	-

Secondary	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7
	No skills	Entry	Foundation	Intermediate	Higher	Proficient	No information
Teachers	82 (41)	97 (111)	17 (37)	10 (13)	0 (2)	13 (15)	-
Support staff	119 (83)	45 (52)	3 (23)	0 (5)	0 (3)	1 (2)	-

All-through school	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7
	No skills	Entry	Foundation	Intermediate	Higher	Proficient	No information
Teachers	29 (14)	33 (33)	8 (18)	6 (9)	5 (6)	3(4)	-
Support staff	32 (16)	36 (44)	5(10)	5 (6)	0 (1)	0 (1)	-

Number of ALN support staff recorded in accordance with Language Competency Framework

	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7
	No skills	Entry	Foundation	Intermediate	Higher	Proficient	No information
Primary	12 (2)	22 (27)	6 (8)	0 (1)	0 (1)	1 (2)	-
Secondary	5 (2)	16 (14)	0 (2)	0 (1)	0 (1)	0 (1)	-
All-through school	3 (1)	4 (2)	1 (2)	0 (1)	0 (1)	0 (1)	-

Numbers following a sabbatical course or any Welsh course tailored for educators and offered through the National Centre for Learning Welsh (Data from National Centre for Learning Welsh Dashboard)

Course name and level	Number of staff 2024-25	
	Teachers	Support staff
2 Term Sabbatical Course	4	0
1 Term Foundation Level Sabbatical Course	1	0

What progress have you made to identify how many headteachers, teachers, additional learning support staff (primary, secondary and ALN) you will need (as noted in your WESP/5-year action plan)?

We have reviewed staffing across our two existing schools and Y Trefynwy. During this current WESP/5-year work plan, we anticipate we will need the following based on the current growth profile in all three schools, current staffing levels and the projected reduction in the birth rate across the county.

Y Fenni

The school has sufficient staff capacity to manage current pupil numbers and to manage an increase of up to 80 pupils based on current staffing levels and class sizes. It is unlikely that the school will increase its pupil numbers significantly until after it moves onto the new site, which is anticipated to be towards the end of 2025 and near to the end of our WESP/5-year plan.

Y Ffin

The school population is growing and whilst staffing is sufficient at present, we are likely to need another teacher and teaching assistant within the next two years.

Y Trefynwy

We have sufficient staffing for the first two years. However, we will need to appoint a substantive Headteacher, and it is likely that we will need to appoint another teacher and a teaching assistant within this current WESP/5-year plan.

Late Immersion

We will need to appoint an additional Teacher and Teaching assistant to lead the second immersion class.

Overall, this means that we will need to recruit the following additional staff:

Headteacher	1
Teacher	3
Teaching Assistant	3

What action has been taken during this reporting period to address those needs?

Partnership working enables professional learning opportunities to develop Welsh medium leaders at all levels. Monmouthshire schools have access to Welsh medium professional learning for TAs/HLTAs, Middle leaders, Senior leaders, Preparing for Headship, New and Acting Headteacher Programme.

Dedicated School Improvement Partners support schools to identify professional learning needs and practitioners that would benefit from professional learning to develop their leadership skills so that capacity is built over time. School Improvement Partners report to the Welsh Medium Principal School Improvement Partner who is in regular dialogue with the authority on workforce development and need.

Note any collaboration with Initial Teacher Education providers, the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, or the National Centre for Learning Welsh.

Initial Teacher Education

Partnership working ensures regular collaboration with Initial Teacher Education providers, predominantly the University of South Wales and Cardiff Metropolitan University, to supporting the shaping of ITE programmes prior to accreditation, facilitating partnership working with schools, support the quality assurance of school-based partnerships, and shape aspects of programme delivery. This includes activity in support of the development of the Welsh medium workforce and the development of workforce skills to teach Welsh.

The EAS also supports interview and appointment of potential Welsh medium ITT candidates to courses e.g. Cardiff Met 2024-25.

For USW, during 2024-25 the regional partnership's Welsh literacy Curriculum Partner has held Welsh medium sessions for BA students in Year 1 a 2 in support of developing pupils' literacy skills (oracy) in Welsh medium schools.

Also, for USW, the communities of learning (English medium schools) provision for Welsh has been strengthened through partnership Welsh Curriculum Partner collaboration with school-based mentors. The delivery of three dedicated sessions has upskilled mentors in expectations for Welsh and will ensure more robust school-based mentoring and quality assurance of student progress in their ability to teach Welsh. Regional resources to support delivery have been shared to enable the development of Welsh across the curriculum. Collaboration with communities of learning have also resulted in the development of further resources to support mentors, students, and learners.

A session has also been held with Year 1 and 2 BA students with a focus on developing methodology to develop speaking skills based on the regional Welsh language continuum for English medium schools.

Professional learning sessions are in the planning for both Welsh and English medium PGCE students with a focus on developing speaking skills.

The National Centre for Learning Welsh:

The EAS continues to promote and recruit to the sabbatical scheme, and signs-off applications on behalf of the local authority via the National Centre portal. It also provides follow-up support to practitioners in schools post sabbatical so that skills are maximised.

The LA have identified a lead who will work with the local National Centre Education Workforce Tutor to plan for future professional learning (language). Initial meetings are in progress. Taster sessions were made available to Monmouthshire schools in July 2025. A language development offer, based on SWAC data, has been developed for schools in conjunction with the tutor for Autumn 2025. An offer for clusters will be available following a Welsh leadership professional learning session for Monmouthshire Headteachers in October 2025.

Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

Partnership working has ensured that Dysgu'r Dyfodol opportunities have been disseminated with schools.

State how you will identify any gaps that prevent continuity for learners, in accordance with Outcomes 3 and 4, noting any investment by schools to address this.

Each school (English and Welsh medium) has a dedicated School Improvement Partner that considers, with schools, their curriculum and workforce capacity. The Local Authority regularly works with the partnership Principal School Improvement Partner for Welsh medium schools, who works across the Partnership's local authorities, to consider gaps preventing continuity in learning Welsh and through the medium of Welsh for Monmouthshire learners across the age range. Joint self-evaluation activities with the School Improvement Partner across all schools evaluate their commitment in ensuring that all learners experience a progressive journey in developing their Welsh language skills and accessing education through the medium of Welsh. A consistent approach ensures that we can identify inconsistencies in provision across all age groups and supporting cluster work and initiatives through professional learning opportunities ensures continuity in expectations. Bespoke support can be tailored where gaps in provision are identified.

Secondary collaboration across the partnership's Welsh medium schools supports the joint teaching of courses where possible. For example, Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed and Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw collaborate to ensure a pathway to A Level Welsh for learners at both schools.

Gwent Is Coed (Newport), has recently secured Welsh Government capacity building funding to bolster the development of expertise for the teaching of Welsh in the secondary phase, following a period of recruitment challenges to the Welsh department.

Partnership support for the cross-regional Gyda'n Gilydd network, supports secondary schools to collaborate on upskilling the Welsh medium workforce on the delivery of marginal courses through the medium of Welsh.

Partnership working will support delivery of dedicated professional learning for Monmouthshire headteachers of English medium schools in the autumn term. This will support leaders to more robustly evaluate Welsh language provision to minimise teaching inconsistency across year-groups so that learners are able make ongoing progress across the age range based on prior knowledge. Follow up supported self-evaluation activity in schools will identify gaps in provision in English medium schools. The LA will receive an impact report from the EAS to support planning of next steps

Where applicable, outline developments and progress made through working with other local authorities and any relevant organisations to identify how many headteachers will be needed over the next 5 years.

Through the Cymraeg i Bawb Partnership, Monmouthshire has actively collaborated with other local authorities and regional stakeholders to strengthen Welsh-medium education planning. The partnership's regional structure has enabled consistent dialogue and coordination across councils, Menterau Iaith, Cymraeg i Blant, RhAG, and the Welsh Government in the South-East Wales area. This has been supported through regular engagement in events such as the Cymraeg i Bawb Conference and Regional Partnership Meetings, which have provided valuable platforms for shared planning and strategic alignment.

How have you helped all school workforce, including headteachers, teachers and learning support workers, to improve their Welsh-language skills?

Opportunities available from the National Centre for Learning Welsh are regularly communicated with the education workforce via the regional weekly bulletin for headteachers, Welsh professional learning sessions, including headteacher professional learning sessions for the development of Welsh, the Welsh medium headteachers network, the networks for Welsh language coordinators and the network for Welsh cluster leads. Information is also shared via more general networks for NQTs and HLTAs.

During 2024-25 professional learning delivered through the Partnership has also included opportunities for Welsh language training for the education workforce. These develop staff confidence in using the basics well and open minds to further development of personal Welsh language skills:

- Barod 1, Barod 2, Barod 3 sessions to prepare staff with limited Welsh to develop and apply basic skills.
- Ymlaen a Ni 1,2 and 3 sessions support staff to expand their Welsh language repertoire, following on from the Barod Courses.

All sessions promote continued language learning via the National Centre for Learning Welsh.

Welsh in a Year /Two Term Sabbatical graduates in Monmouthshire are also encouraged to support language development within their schools and clusters. Two Monmouthshire cluster leads are from the sabbatical community and coordinate cluster development, including some basic Welsh language delivery. The cluster approach to Welsh language development is outlined below.

How do you analyse your SWAC school workforce data, and measure the progress of workforce skills in response to these data?

We continue to work on the validity of the data with schools (as described below).

However, current data on education workforce skills in Monmouthshire suggests that few staff have skills above foundation level with many having no skills, entry, or foundation level skills.

In order to respond to the need for higher level Welsh language skills (intermediate plus), the EAS, over time, has strategically promoted the Welsh in a Year/Two Term sabbatical as a means of developing higher skills in each cluster. Each cluster in Monmouthshire has Welsh in a Year/Two Term sabbatical graduates. Where the cluster mechanism is most successful, two of these staff leads as a strategic Welsh cluster lead, an EAS initiative to support sharing practice, share approaches to planning and resources, lead collaborative activity, and deliver some professional learning to support to staff across the cluster. A 'heat map,' capturing the development of higher skills in schools and clusters over time is available to demonstrate progress. This can also support the further targeting of professional learning at a higher level through the sabbatical scheme and other professional language learning available from the National Centre.

Currently:

- All clusters have at least three highly skilled Welsh in a Year / Two Term sabbatical graduates. The cluster model/strategic cluster lead for Welsh supports the sharing of practice across schools.
- 12 of 28 primary schools have at least one Welsh in a Year / Two Term sabbatical graduates
- 17 primary schools have engaged with the sabbatical scheme.
- Total current staff trained via Welsh in a Year/two term sabbatical courses: 15
- Total current staff trained via Foundation Level sabbatical:11

How do you ensure that the data provide an accurate reflection of staff skills?

The EAS works with school leaders; cluster leads for Welsh and Welsh language leads to secure understanding of the purpose of the SWAC and the importance of establishing an accurate picture for planning and monitoring purposes.

Accurate SWAC assessment features as part of regional universal professional learning for leaders who wish to develop understanding of strategic planning and evaluation of Welsh. Guidance developed to support leaders references this and a video is available to schools to remind them of messaging at appropriate points. Where clusters have a representative strategic cluster lead attend the dedicated termly network, cluster leads are tasked with the role of disseminating messaging around accurate SWAC assessment during the autumn term. This includes dissemination of the regional video. Guidance materials and messaging is also shared with Welsh language leads.

In autumn 2025, a dedicated professional learning session will be delivered to headteachers in Monmouthshire to support planning for growth in Welsh language skills. This will include a discussion on SWAC and planning for the professional development of

the workforce and their language skills, referencing the offer from the National Centre for Learning Welsh and the work of the local Welsh in Education Workforce Tutor.	
Any further information that may be relevant to this outcome	
SELF-ASSESSMENT	
Give a self-assessed RAG rating (red/amber/green) for your progress in this outcome for 2024—2025.	Green

FORWARD LOOK

State your plans and main priorities for Year 4 by outcome.

Outcome 1

- To develop a Cylch Meithrin in Monmouth that will provide wrap around for the school meithrin and offer Flying Start childcare places,

Outcome 2

- Promotion and expansion of immersion provision
- Continue work to allow further growth in capacity for Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy
- Support the transition of Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni to its new site.
- Continue to promote the benefits of Welsh medium education and the good news stories as our provision develops.
- We will continue to review the model for late immersion provision to ensure the model is sustainable and is open to all Welsh-medium schools in Monmouthshire.

Outcome 3

- Continue to work closely with schools and partners to address the transition rates between KS2 and KS3 in the north of the county.

Outcome 4

- Continue to promote the value of Welsh in future careers with learners and parents.
- Work with all parties to understand our position on funding for Post 16 travel.

Outcome 5

- Continue to support the delivery of the Siarter Iaith and Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus across schools, supporting Welsh medium schools to maintain Gold Status and progress Cymraeg Campus Silver awards in Monmouthshire schools.

Outcome 6

- The Welsh medium ALP review (round 2) will take place during the spring and summer term 2026, with the inclusion of Ysgol Trefynwy.
- To Ensure that learners with ALN /IDPs in MCC Welsh medium primary provision are fully supported to transition to Welsh medium secondary provision the ALN Statutory Team will meet with staff supporting ALN learners in Welsh medium secondary schools in the region during the autumn term 2025. This will enable the MCC ALN team to gain a full understanding of ALN provision in those settings and effectively support transition of ALN learners in Welsh medium primary schools, to these settings.

Outcome 7

- Through Partnership working, continue to deliver professional learning for the development of leadership at all levels and support for the planning, teaching, and learning of Welsh language and literacy across the language continuum.
- Through collaboration with the National Centre for Learning Welsh, develop the Welsh language skills of the workforce in response to SWAC data.

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SUBJECT:	Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report 2025/26
MEETING:	People Scrutiny Committee
DATE:	18th June 2026
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To present the Council's Welsh Language Standards Annual Monitoring Report for 2025/26 and provide an update on progress against the Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee reviews and scrutinises the Council's performance during 2025/2026 in relation to the Welsh Language Standards.
- 2.2 That the Committee notes the progress made against the objectives set out in the Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 The Welsh language is an important part of the culture and heritage of our place. Increasing the number of people who speak and learn Welsh is a commitment within the Community and Corporate Plan. Dovetailing with this, the Council's Welsh Language Strategy sets our commitment to ensure that Monmouthshire is having a positive impact on achieving the Welsh Government's ambitious strategy of having a million Welsh speakers by 2050.
- 3.2 Alongside our strategy sit the Welsh Language Standards which promote the language and ensure that it is treated no less favourably than English. The standards applying to each public body can differ and there are 176 applying to our council. It is a requirement of standards 158, 164 and 170 that we produce an annual report which deals with the way in which we have complied with the standards during the year and publish this on our website. This is referred to as Monmouthshire's Welsh Language Standard's Annual Monitoring Report. Whilst this is a statutory duty, it is equally important that the Welsh language continues to thrive and grow within the county.
- 3.3 This report therefore combines:

- The Annual Monitoring Report for 2025/2026, outlining the Welsh Language Standards; and
- An update on progress against the Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027, including key developments and outcomes during the reporting period.

3.4 The annual report demonstrates how we have complied with the Welsh language standards, these include:

- Making available Welsh language courses at all learning levels to members of staff. These courses are facilitated through the National Centre of Learning Welsh and delivered by Coleg Gwent. Courses are fully funded and can be undertaken during work hours or in the evenings if staff prefer. In 2025/26 42 staff members completed a course, representing a decrease from 53 in the previous year. However, this remains a significant overall increase since the introduction of the Welsh Language Strategy, when 19 staff completed courses in 2021/2022.
- Efforts were made to increase the number of Welsh-speaking applicants for new posts. Welsh language essential posts as well as some select Welsh language desirable posts were advertised on Welsh language recruitment sites which saw success in attracting applicants with Welsh language skills.
- A 'Welsh Tip' continues to be utilised in the staff's fortnightly newsletter which helps promote the Welsh language standards, distribute guidance for best practice and provides Welsh language support to staff.
- Dydd Miwsig Cymru and St David's Day were celebrated through a programme of internal promotions and events, including sharing Welsh-language music and resources via staff channels, alongside a well-attended St David's Day event at County Hall, featuring performances, contributions from local schools, and recognition of staff learning Welsh.
- We continued to utilise the Cymraeg Teams Channel which is a dedicated bilingual space on Microsoft Teams that supports Welsh-speaking and Welsh-learning staff. The channel is used to share resources, promote training opportunities, and foster a supportive community that encourages everyday use of Welsh across the organisation

3.5 During the year there have been some challenges. These included:

- Work to review the Council's translation delivery model is ongoing in response to increasing demand and budget pressures, with a more cost-effective and sustainable approach being developed. Improvements to current processes have also been introduced to encourage earlier engagement and more efficient use of translation services.
- A new telephony system was introduced within the Contact Centre, enabling Welsh language calls to be routed directly to Welsh-speaking advisors. However, system limitations meant that detailed data on the nature of calls and associated service areas

could not be captured. Manual recording has since been introduced to support improved data collection and future reporting.

3.6 During the year, steps have been taken to improve our processes and strengthen our compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. These include:

- The Welsh Language Officer and Equalities and Welsh Language Manager contribute to the corporate induction programme, ensuring all new staff are familiar with the Council's Welsh Language Standards and their responsibilities. The induction process has been enhanced this year and is now delivered in two parts: a video, providing an overview of the Welsh Language Standards and organisational obligations, followed by an in-person session where staff receive further guidance, ask questions, and access support.
- A range of Welsh language training has been developed and enhanced during the year, including Welsh language awareness training on Thinqi, a guidance video on completing Welsh Language Impact Assessments as part of the Managers' Pathway, and targeted training for staff managing social media accounts. Further training and supporting resources continue to be developed to enhance staff confidence and support compliance with the Welsh Language Standards.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

There are no additional resource implications as a result of this report. However, there may be resource implications in undertaking further actions identified in this annual report. These would be subject to the usual council decision-making processes.

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Monmouthshire Compliance Notice – Welsh Language Standards
Monmouthshire's Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027

6. AUTHOR:

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Pennie Walker, Equalities and Welsh Language Manager

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monmouthshire sir fynwy

Monmouthshire County Council's
Welsh Language Standards
Annual Monitoring Report
1st April 2025 - 31st March 2026



Overview

This is Monmouthshire County Council's annual report on the Welsh language standards. Its purpose is to evaluate our compliance with the standards, and the ways in which we have promoted and facilitated opportunities to use Welsh and ensured that the language was treated no less favourably than English during the year. It was produced in accordance with Schedule 4 of the Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015, to meet the requirements of standards 158, 164 and 170.

Further Information

This report can be found on the Monmouthshire County Council website: www.monmouthshire.gov.uk. If you have any questions regarding the contents of this report, please contact us on the details below.

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We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh, contacting us in Welsh will not lead to a delay in response.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.



Related Documents

[Monmouthshire County Council 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy 2022-2027](#)

The cabinet member with responsibility for the Welsh language during 2025/26 was Cllr. Angela Sandles.

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1. Background

Monmouthshire County Council recognises the importance of the Welsh Language as an integral part of our cultural identity, heritage and community cohesion. Throughout the year 2025/2026 the council has been dedicated to fostering an environment where the Welsh language can thrive, and Welsh speakers are able to use the language in their everyday lives.

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 established a legal framework that imposed a duty on Monmouthshire County Council, alongside other public organisations, to comply with standards relating to the Welsh language. The key principles of these standards are that:

- the Welsh language should not be treated any less favourably than the English language.
- we should promote and facilitate the use of the language

In 2015, Monmouthshire Council received a compliance notice from the Welsh Language Commissioner. This document outlines the standards that the council must comply with. In total, there are 176 Welsh Language standards that apply to Monmouthshire Council. These standards are grouped into 5 categories, which are:

- Service Delivery
- Policy Making
- Operational
- Promotion
- Record Keeping

The Welsh Language Standards require us to:

- Produce and publish on our website a 5-year strategy that sets out how we propose to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in our area. (Standards 145,146)
- Produce an annual report, in relation to each financial year, which deals with how we have complied with the standards and published on our website. (Standards 158, 164, 170)

The council's [compliance notice](#) can be found on our bilingual website.

2. Compliance

Service Delivery Standards

Standards Group	Actions Taken During 2025/2026	Actions to be Taken 2026/2027
Standards 1 - 7 Correspondence sent and received.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff reminded of requirements to the Welsh language in our correspondence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor compliance across the authority.
Standards 8 - 22 Telephone calls made and received.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telephone calls made to the Council in Welsh are dealt with by Welsh-speaking staff at the Contact Centre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the nature of calls to the Council, including the departments concerned, is recorded manually by Contact Centre staff. Ensure that all staff are aware of the processes when receiving Welsh language phone calls.
Standards 24 – 36 Meetings with the Public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simultaneous translation provided in public meetings where required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor to ensure that the offer of simultaneous translation continues to be actively and consistently made.
Standards 37 - 51, 69 - 70 Other bilingual documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff issued reminders of the need to state that documents are also available in Welsh. Compliance monitored through website checks and translation requests made through the Cymraeg translation service. All forms for public use are created bilingually. All official notices are produced and displayed bilingually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise 'Welsh Tip' within the Compass Staff Newsletter to remind staff of requirements. Continue to monitor compliance closely.
Standards 52 – 60 Websites, Social Media, Apps, and Self-service Machines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Websites and social media accounts monitored closely to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor and log compliance.

	<p>ensure compliance by the Website Officer and Welsh Language Officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Welsh Language Officer has developed training on Welsh Language Standards requirements relating to social media accounts. • The number of hits on Welsh and English pages are as follows: <p>Recycling and Waste: English: 125,192 Welsh: 186</p> <p>Council Tax: English: 42,720 Welsh: 62</p> <p>Early Years, Childcare and Schools Education: English: 2,414 Welsh: 52</p> <p>Welsh Medium Education: English: 479 Welsh: 33</p> <p>Community Hubs and Libraries: English: 26,021 Welsh: 214</p> <p>Cost of Living English: 2,620 Welsh: 74</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate mandatory training for website authors on the use of the Welsh language across digital platforms. • Create a log of any issues identified and any actions taken to resolve them.
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<p>Standards 61 – 63 Signs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new street signs are either bilingual or monolingual Welsh. Names are carefully chosen to reflect the history and heritage of the area. The Welsh Language Officer works closely with the Street Naming Officer to help with this process. • To ensure accurate translations, all street naming translations are sent to an individual translator who is knowledgeable and experienced in translating street names. • Examples of the new Welsh-only street names introduced this year include 'Cwrt Cip y Cadno' and 'Gwêl y Wennol'. • The Street Naming Officer has produced information sheets for residents of new Welsh-only street names, explaining why the names were chosen, how they are pronounced, and their significance. • Work is currently underway by the Street Naming and Numbering Officer, Welsh Language Officer and GIS team to develop webpages providing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh Language Officer to continue to work closely with the Street Naming Officer on the naming of new streets. • Publish webpages on the Welsh language and street naming.
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	information on Welsh street names, including pronunciation guides.	
Standards 64 – 68 Reception Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receptions across the authority are monitored to ensure 'Cymraeg' posters are displayed indicating that Welsh can be used. • Welsh language skills assessed during interview for reception roles. • Internal Audit conducted a review of receptions' Welsh language compliance. The findings highlighted inconsistencies in Welsh language skills across reception services, with a full Welsh language service not always available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop targeted Welsh language training for reception staff to enhance existing skills and build confidence in delivering bilingual services. • Collaborate with reception service managers to establish clear plans for meeting public demand for Welsh language reception services. • Ensure all new reception posts are advertised as Welsh language essential to support consistent service provision. • Continue to monitor reception services across the authority.
Standards 71 – 75 Awarding Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council has a policy for 'Awarding Grants and the Welsh Language'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor to ensure compliance.
Standards 76 – 80 Awarding Contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council has a Welsh Language Requirements - Procurement checklist. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor to ensure compliance.
Standards 81 – 82 Promoting Welsh Language Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh language services are actively promoted on the council's website and social media pages. • Social media posts created for important dates in the Welsh language calendar to promote the Welsh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor social media to ensure that Welsh language services continue to be actively promoted. • Schedule promotions for key events / dates.

	language.	
Standard 83 Corporate Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff issued with bilingual e-mail addresses. • Ensure that all aspects of corporate identity are bilingual and that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that bilingual e-mail addresses are used across our website, documents and forms.
Standards 84 & 86 Educational Courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational courses are assessed to determine the need to be delivered in Welsh. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to assess and monitor the need to deliver educational courses in Welsh.
Standard 87 Public Address Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All public address systems are bilingual. • Monitoring compliance through visits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue reminders to staff of requirements. • Monitor for compliance.

Policy Making Standards

Standards Group	Actions Taken During 2025/2026	Actions to be Taken 2026/2027
<p>Standards 88 - 93 Policy Making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on Welsh Language Impact Assessments is available to staff via the Democratic Services Section of the Hub. • Welsh language impact assessments are undertaken for all policy decisions. • Quality assurance meetings for Impact Assessments and feedback provided to report authors - Policy Team. • Integrated Impact Assessment template and guidance has been reviewed and updated. • Videos have been launched as part of the Managers' Pathway on Thinqi, providing officers with guidance on how to complete the Welsh Language Impact Assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality assurance meetings to continue and monitor effectiveness on outcomes. • Monitor compliance of standards and issue further training to staff where issues are identified.

Operational Standards

Standards Group	Actions Taken During 2025/2026	Actions to be Taken in 2026/2027
Standards 99 – 104 Employment Documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are regularly reminded of their right to receive employment-related documents in Welsh through updates shared in the Cymraeg Teams channel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to issue regular reminders to staff about their right to receive employment-related documents in Welsh.
Standards 105 – 111 Human Resources Policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All HR policies and guidance documents are currently being reviewed and made available in Welsh. A small number of policies remain under review and are expected to be available bilingually by October 2026. Work is underway to develop a Welsh version of the PageTiger directory which will be accessible via the staff Hub, with additional access provided through a QR code, enabling staff to view documents on any device. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that bilingual versions of HR policies are made available to staff.
Standards 112 – 119 Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are made aware of their right to complete the complaints / disciplinary process in Welsh. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to ensure this is actively offered. Utilise the Cymraeg Teams Channel to ensure reminders are issued to staff.
Standards 120 – 126 Staff Intranet and IT Resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cysgliad is available on every computer, providing Welsh language spelling and grammar checking, as well as an English - Welsh dictionary. To Bach Software is provided on every computer to assist staff in typing more easily in Welsh. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to offer support to staff on using 'Cysgliad' Collaborate with the Hub officer to improve the layout and usability of the Welsh language section on the staff intranet, and broaden the range of support documents available to better assist staff in

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance is provided on how to use Cysgliad / To Bach on Cymraeg Teams Channel. • A dedicated Welsh language page is available on the staff intranet, offering key documents and support. 	using Welsh confidently in their roles
Standard 127 Staff Language Skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on staff language skills is collected during the application process for new posts. • Welsh Language Officer receives information from HR about new starters and leavers and their recorded Welsh language skills. The list of Welsh speakers is updated on a regular basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an authority-wide Welsh language skills audit to ensure that staff data is accurate and up to date.
Standards 128 – 133 Staff Training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Welsh Language Officer, alongside the Equalities and Welsh Language Manager, delivers Welsh language awareness training to new staff as part of the corporate induction programme. This is delivered in two parts: a video covering the Welsh Language Standards and key awareness messages, which staff can revisit at any time, followed by an in-person session for further guidance and questions. The induction covers the history and importance of the Welsh language, the Council's responsibilities under the Standards, and the role employees play in supporting and promoting the language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Welsh Language team will continue to participate in the corporate induction process. • Continue to promote and advertise Welsh language training opportunities to staff. • Launch training for officers and councillors on the use of Welsh in meetings. • Continue to promote Welsh language awareness training to staff to maximise participation and completion rates.

	<p>Staff are also signposted to support resources, including opportunities to learn Welsh and practical tools to support its use in the workplace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh language courses at all levels are available to all staff members. • 42 staff members completed a Welsh course in 25/26. • The Council took part in a pilot of the ARFer app, a behaviour-change initiative developed by Bangor University to support increased use of Welsh in the workplace. The app encourages staff to complete small, practical tasks during their working day to build confidence and embed the use of Welsh in everyday interactions. The trial involved a team with a mix of Welsh language abilities and provided an opportunity for staff to practise their skills in a supportive, real-life context. • Work is underway to develop resource materials for staff and councillors, including useful Welsh phrases for meetings, supported by audio clips to aid pronunciation. • Welsh Language Awareness training is available to staff via the Thingi learning platform. 	
<p>Standards 134 & 135 Wording and Logo for Staff Email Signatures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff have access to the translation service to ensure their email signatures are bilingual. • The 'Work Welsh' logo is available on the staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to utilise the Cymraeg Teams channel to share information and resources with Welsh-speaking staff.

	<p>intranet and the Cymraeg Teams channel for staff to include in their email signatures, indicating whether they are Welsh speakers or learners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the “Welsh Tip” section in the staff newsletter to remind staff of the requirement for bilingual email signatures and provide guidance on how to request translations.
<p>Standards 136 - 140 Recruitment Process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please see the ‘Recruitment’ section. The Council classifies each new vacancy as either Welsh language essential or Welsh language desirable. All vacant posts are advertised bilingually; they include the Welsh language skills framework and Welsh language assessment. The Welsh Language Officer monitors new job adverts to ensure compliance. All roles that are assessed as being Welsh Language Essential and some select Welsh Language Desirable roles are advertised on Welsh language recruitment sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to make use of Welsh language recruitment sites. Welsh Language Officer to monitor the outcomes of these adverts. Provide additional information for Welsh language essential posts to specify what kinds of skills will be needed for the role. Create training for managers on Welsh language recruitment.
<p>Standards 141 – 143 Internal Signage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance provided to staff for internal signage. Signs monitored for compliance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor for compliance.
<p>Standard 144 Workplace Announcements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All announcements are recorded bilingually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor for compliance.

3. Complaints

Complaints from the Public

Catffrwd / Catbrook Signage - During the reporting year, a complaint was received from a resident, alongside correspondence from the Welsh Language Commissioner, regarding the signage for the village of Catbrook, which displayed the place name in English only. The complaint highlighted that the Welsh form of the name, “Catffrwd”, had not been included.

Following investigation, it was established that the signage had been installed as part of a joint project involving Monmouthshire County Council, the Wye Valley National Landscape, and local Community Councils. At the time of installation, the Welsh form “Catffrwd” was not included on the Welsh Language Commissioner’s Standardised Welsh Place Names List, and therefore the signage was erected using the English name “Catbrook” only.

Subsequent correspondence confirmed that “Catffrwd” has since been adopted as the recommended Welsh form. As a result, the Council has committed to amending the signage by applying a bilingual overlay to include both the Welsh and English names.

Welsh Language Translation at Meetings - During the reporting year, a complaint was received regarding the lack of Welsh language provision at a meeting held in relation to Estyn. The complaint highlighted that no simultaneous translation service was made available during the meeting, despite the discussion involving Welsh-medium education and stakeholder contributions being made largely through the medium of Welsh.

The absence of translation provision was recognised as a shortcoming and did not reflect the Council’s usual practice. A formal response was issued acknowledging that the lack of translation at such an important meeting was unacceptable and did not meet expected standards of accessibility or the Council’s commitment to the Welsh Language Standards.

In response, assurances have been provided that greater consideration will be given to the linguistic requirements of future meetings, including the purpose of the meeting and the needs of attendees, to ensure that appropriate translation services are provided where required.

This complaint has highlighted the importance of consistent application of the Welsh Language Standards in all stakeholder engagement activities and has informed improvements to planning processes to prevent similar issues arising in the future.

Complaints from the Welsh Language Commissioner

We have not received any complaints from the Welsh Language Commissioner during this reporting year.

4. Welsh Language Skills

The following tables present data on staff who have recorded some level of Welsh language skills.

Staff Welsh Language Skill Levels

Welsh Language Skill Level	Number of Staff (excluding schools)	Percentage %
Fluent	50	13.1%
Advanced	9	2.4%
Intermediate	54	14.1%
Foundation	34	8.9%
Beginner	235	61.5%
Total	382	-

Welsh Language Skills by Directorate

Directorate	Number of Welsh Speakers (excluding schools)	Percentage %
Learning, Skills & Economy	47	12.3%
Place and Community Wellbeing	105	27.5%
Law and Governance	8	2.1%
Resources	42	11.0%
Social Care and Safeguarding	124	32.5%
People, Performance and Partnerships	16	4.2%
Infrastructure	40	10.5%
Total	382	-

Fluent Welsh Speakers by Directorate

Directorate	Number of Fluent Welsh Speakers (excluding schools)	Percentage %
Learning, Skills & Economy	2	4.0%
Place and Community Wellbeing	16	32.0%
Law and Governance	6	12.0%
Resources	6	12.0%
Social Care and Safeguarding	15	30.0%
People, Performance and Partnerships	4	8.0%
Infrastructure	1	2.0%
Total	50	-

5. Welsh Language Courses

The Council offers a wide range of Welsh language courses for staff at all levels, aimed at increasing the number of Welsh-speaking staff and building confidence in using the language in the workplace. Supporting staff to learn Welsh is essential to ensuring the authority can deliver equitable Welsh language services to residents and meet its obligations under the Welsh Language Standards.

Courses are delivered through the National Centre for Learning Welsh, via Coleg Gwent, and are funded by the Welsh Language Department. Staff are supported to undertake this learning during working hours.

In 2025/2026, the number of staff who attended Welsh language courses at each level is as follows:

Language Level of Course	Number of Staff Completing a Course 2024/2025	Number of Staff Completing a Course 2025/2026
Mynediad 1 / Entry 1	26	10
Mynediad 2 / Entry 2	10	16
Sylfaen 1 / Foundation 1	9	4
Sylfaen 2 / Foundation 2	3	6
Canolradd 1 / Intermediate 1	0	1
Canolradd 2 / Intermediate 2	3	1
Uwch 1 / Advanced 1	0	2
Uwch 3 / Advanced 3	2	2
Hyfedredd / Proficiency	0	0
Total	53	42

Staff completing Welsh courses per directorate 2025/2026

Directorate	Number of Staff	Percentage %
Place and Community Wellbeing	4	9.5%
Infrastructure	5	11.9%
Resources	7	16.7%
Learning, Skills and Economy	13	31.0%
Social Care and Safeguarding	9	21.4%
People, Performance and Partnerships	3	7.1%
Law and Governance	1	2.4%
Total	42	-

Standard 128, requires the Council to provide training in Welsh for staff in the following areas, if they are provided in English:

- Recruitment and interviewing;
- Performance management;
- Complaints and disciplinary procedures;
- Induction;
- Dealing with the public; and
- Health and safety.

Staff are asked whether they would like to receive these training sessions in Welsh.

We utilise our Welsh Language Teams Group to actively remind staff that they are able to access the above training though the medium of Welsh.

6. Recruitment

Posts Advertised During 2025–2026

	2024-2025 Number	2024-2025 %	2025-2026 Number	2025-2026 %
Vacant/new posts advertised	384	-	717	-
Vacant/new vacant posts advertised that had 'Welsh language skills essential'	9	2.3%	28	3.9%
Vacant/new vacant posts advertised that had 'Welsh language skills desirable'	375	97.7%	689	96.1%
Vacant/new posts advertised specified as posts where it is 'necessary to learn Welsh-language skills when someone is appointed to the post'	0	0	0	0
The number of vacant/new posts advertised that 'did not require Welsh language skills'	0	0	0	0
The number that did not include an assessment	0	0	0	0
The number not stated	0	0	0	0

School Posts Advertised During 2025–2026

	2024-2025 Number	2024-2025 %	2025-2026 Number	2025-2026 %
Schools vacant/new posts advertised	299	-	202	-
Schools vacant/new vacant posts advertised that had 'Welsh language skills essential';	15	5.0%	22	10.9%
Schools vacant/new vacant posts advertised that had 'Welsh language skills desirable'	284	95.0%	180	89.1%
Schools vacant/new posts advertised specified as posts where it is 'necessary to learn Welsh language skills when someone is appointed to the post'	0	0	0	0

The number of schools vacant/new posts advertised that 'did not require Welsh language skills'	0	0	0	0
The number that did not include an assessment	0	0	0	0
The number not stated	0	0	0	0

The job application process is fully accessible in Welsh, in line with the Welsh Language Standards, and all vacancies are advertised bilingually. In accordance with Standard 136, each post is assessed to determine the level of Welsh language skills required, with all roles classified as at least Welsh language desirable.

Roles involving significant public interaction, or where there is limited Welsh language capacity within the service, are designated as Welsh language essential. For these posts, managers are encouraged to clearly specify the Welsh language skills required, helping to support applications from learners who may otherwise lack confidence in applying.

All job advertisements include the Welsh language skills framework, and Welsh language recruitment platforms are used to promote both essential and selected desirable posts, improving visibility among Welsh speakers.

The Welsh Language Officer regularly reviews job advertisements to ensure compliance with Welsh language requirements throughout the recruitment process.

7. Customer Service

Welsh Language Phone Calls

During the reporting year, Welsh language telephone calls were managed through the Contact Centre. Following the introduction of a new telephony system in March 2025, Welsh calls are now directed to a Welsh-speaking advisor within the Contact Centre. Where a Welsh-speaking advisor is not immediately available, the system reverts to the previous 'hunt group' arrangement, routing calls to Welsh-speaking staff across the authority to ensure a timely response.

Data from the telephony system indicates that a total of 189 calls were received via the Welsh language line during the reporting period, with a monthly breakdown provided below:

Month	Number of Welsh Calls Recorded by the Telephony System
April 25	36
May 25	20
June 25	15
July 25	18
August 25	14
September 25	13
October 25	13
November 25	17
December 25	10
January 26	9
February 26	14
March 26	10
Total	189

Manual monitoring indicates that 57 calls were received where customers requested to have their queries handled in Welsh. This is broadly consistent with previous years, with 51 calls recorded in 2022/23, 56 in 2023/24, and 69 in 2024/25. The higher figure recorded by the telephony system reflects its current limitation in identifying the language in which the interaction was conducted, whereas manual records more accurately capture the language of service delivery.

Due to the transition to the new telephony system, detailed information on the nature of calls and the service areas involved was not consistently recorded during the reporting year. However, feedback from the Contact Centre suggests that a significant proportion of Welsh language calls related to Recycling and Waste services.

Processes have since been strengthened to ensure that the nature of Welsh language calls and the relevant service areas are recorded consistently moving forward. This will support improved monitoring and provide a clearer understanding of demand for Welsh language services in future reports.

In addition to telephone services, the Council continues to provide a fully bilingual digital offer through the My Monmouthshire app, enabling customers to make payments, report issues, and request services in Welsh.

8. Promotion

Welsh Tip

The Council has continued to utilise the “Welsh Tip” feature within the Compass staff newsletter to promote the Welsh language and support compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. These bilingual tips provide practical guidance on specific standards, helping staff understand their responsibilities and how to apply them in their day-to-day work.

In addition to raising awareness of requirements, the Welsh Tips also signpost staff to available support, including Welsh language learning opportunities and resources such as Iaith Gwaith. The newsletter has also been used to promote wider Welsh language campaigns, further reinforcing key messages.

This approach provides a consistent and accessible method of communication, helping to embed good practice, increase confidence, and encourage the use of Welsh across the organisation.

Cymraeg Teams Channel

The Cymraeg Teams channel continues to play a key role in promoting the Welsh language across the organisation. Open to all staff, regardless of language ability, the channel provides a supportive and inclusive space for both Welsh speakers and learners to engage with the language. Content shared on the channel is bilingual, encouraging participation and ensuring accessibility. The platform is used to share resources, promote training opportunities, and provide updates on Welsh language initiatives, as well as to foster a sense of community among staff. By creating regular opportunities for informal interaction and practice, the channel supports increased confidence in using Welsh and helps to embed the language in everyday working life.

Dydd Miwsig Cymru

The Council marked Dydd Miwsig Cymru through a programme of internal staff promotions aimed at raising awareness of Welsh-language music and encouraging engagement with Welsh culture. Promotional content was shared across internal communication channels, including the staff newsletter and Teams, highlighting Welsh artists and providing links to curated playlists and resources. A short video was also produced to give staff a taste of the range of Welsh-language music available.

These activities supported the visibility of the Welsh language within the workplace and encouraged staff to engage with the language in an informal and accessible way. By linking cultural promotion with everyday communication channels, the initiative contributed to normalising the use of Welsh and reinforcing its presence across the organisation.

St David's Day Event

The Council marked St David's Day with a well-attended event at County Hall, celebrating Welsh language and culture. The community was invited to join the celebrations, which also provided an opportunity to recognise the commitment and achievements of staff who have been learning Welsh over the past two years, with certificates presented in acknowledgement of their efforts. The event featured musical performances, contributions from local Welsh-medium schools, and addresses from senior leaders. Refreshments and informal activities encouraged attendees to practise their Welsh in a relaxed environment, helping to build confidence and promote everyday use of the language in the workplace. The event was supported through Community Cohesion grant funding, alongside contributions from the Social Care team to further promote the Welsh language within their services.

9. Conclusion

Welsh Language Courses

In the 2025/26 reporting year, a total of 42 staff members completed a Welsh language course. This represents a decrease from 2024/25, when 53 staff completed a course, but remains slightly higher than 2023/24, when 40 staff participated. While this reduction is noted, participation levels remain strong and continue to demonstrate sustained engagement with Welsh language learning across the authority.

Overall, this reflects a significant increase compared to the early stages of the current Welsh Language Strategy (2022–2027), when 19 staff completed a course in 2021/22. Although the reasons for the decrease are not fully clear, a contributing factor may have been the later promotion of courses this year, resulting in reduced time for staff to register before places were filled.

Welsh language courses are promoted to staff throughout the year, with a targeted campaign typically commencing in June to support enrolment for courses beginning in September. These courses involve approximately two hours of learning per week and run over a 32-week period during term time. Staff are able to contact the Welsh Language Officer at any point to discuss their learning, provide feedback, or raise any concerns, enabling ongoing engagement and close liaison with Dysgu Cymraeg Gwent.

Staff were also invited to attend the Council's St David's Day event, where those who had been learning Welsh over the past two years were recognised and presented with certificates in acknowledgement of their commitment. Initiatives of this nature play an important role in celebrating staff achievements, reinforcing the value of Welsh language learning, and encouraging continued participation.

Welsh Language Training

During the year we have developed a range of training for our staff alongside the usual Welsh language courses. Welsh language awareness training is available to all staff on the Council's e-learning platform Thingi. Alongside this the Welsh Language Officer and Equalities and Welsh Language Manager participates in the corporate induction process. New videos were created this year to improve the corporate induction process where an introduction to the Welsh language and the Welsh Language Standards are provided in an accessible way that staff can easily revisit if they need a refresher in the future. The second part of the induction involves an in person day where the team provides further information about the Welsh language and where staff can access support along with an opportunity to take any questions.

Additionally, videos have been created and launched as part of the managers pathway on Thingi which provides guidance on how to complete an effective Welsh Language Impact Assessment for policy decisions and why this is a requirement to consider potential impacts our policy decisions will

have on the Welsh language. This is additional to the training which is already available on the democratic services area of the hub on completing an effective impact assessment.

We have also been developing training for staff on using the Welsh language on social media accounts. The training is designed for all staff who have access and responsibility for MCC owned social media accounts. The training covers things like the Welsh Language Standards requirements relating to social media use, best practices and useful tips. The goal is to make it a requirement to complete this training where staff have access to updating social media accounts. We hope to launch this soon.

Work is currently underway to develop resources for officers and councillors to support increased use of the Welsh language in meetings across the authority. These will include audio recordings of simple words and phrases to aid pronunciation and practical use. It is anticipated that these resources will be made available in the coming weeks.

ARFer App

The Council has been actively exploring ways to increase the use of Welsh across the authority and to build staff confidence in using their existing language skills. As part of this, we engaged with Bangor University to pilot the ARFer app, a behaviour-change initiative designed to support increased use of Welsh in the workplace. It is important to note that ARFer is not a language learning tool; rather, it focuses on encouraging practical use of Welsh in day-to-day work.

The app prompts staff to complete small, manageable tasks as part of their daily routines, helping to build confidence and embed the use of Welsh in everyday interactions. The trial involved a team with a range of Welsh language abilities, including fluent speakers, learners, and those with little or no prior experience. This created a supportive environment in which staff could learn from one another and gradually increase their use of Welsh in a meaningful and practical way.

Initiatives such as this play an important role in normalising the use of Welsh in the workplace and support the Council's wider aim of creating a more bilingual working environment.

Welsh Language Translations

During the reporting year, significant work has been undertaken to review and strengthen the Council's translation processes, with a clear focus on improving efficiency, consistency, and cost-effectiveness. This has been driven by the need to better manage increasing demand for translations and address ongoing budget pressures.

A key area of focus has been the exploration of alternative delivery models, including greater collaboration with neighbouring authorities and a move away from the long-standing use of multiple external translators. This includes consideration of a shared service model, offering opportunities for cost savings through reduced per-word rates and more streamlined request processes.

Alongside this, there has been an increased emphasis on promoting more effective and considered use of translation services. The Cymraeg mailbox, through which translation requests are submitted, has been closely monitored by the Welsh Language Officer, enabling the identification and resolution of issues such as duplicate or inefficient requests. Departments have also been encouraged to

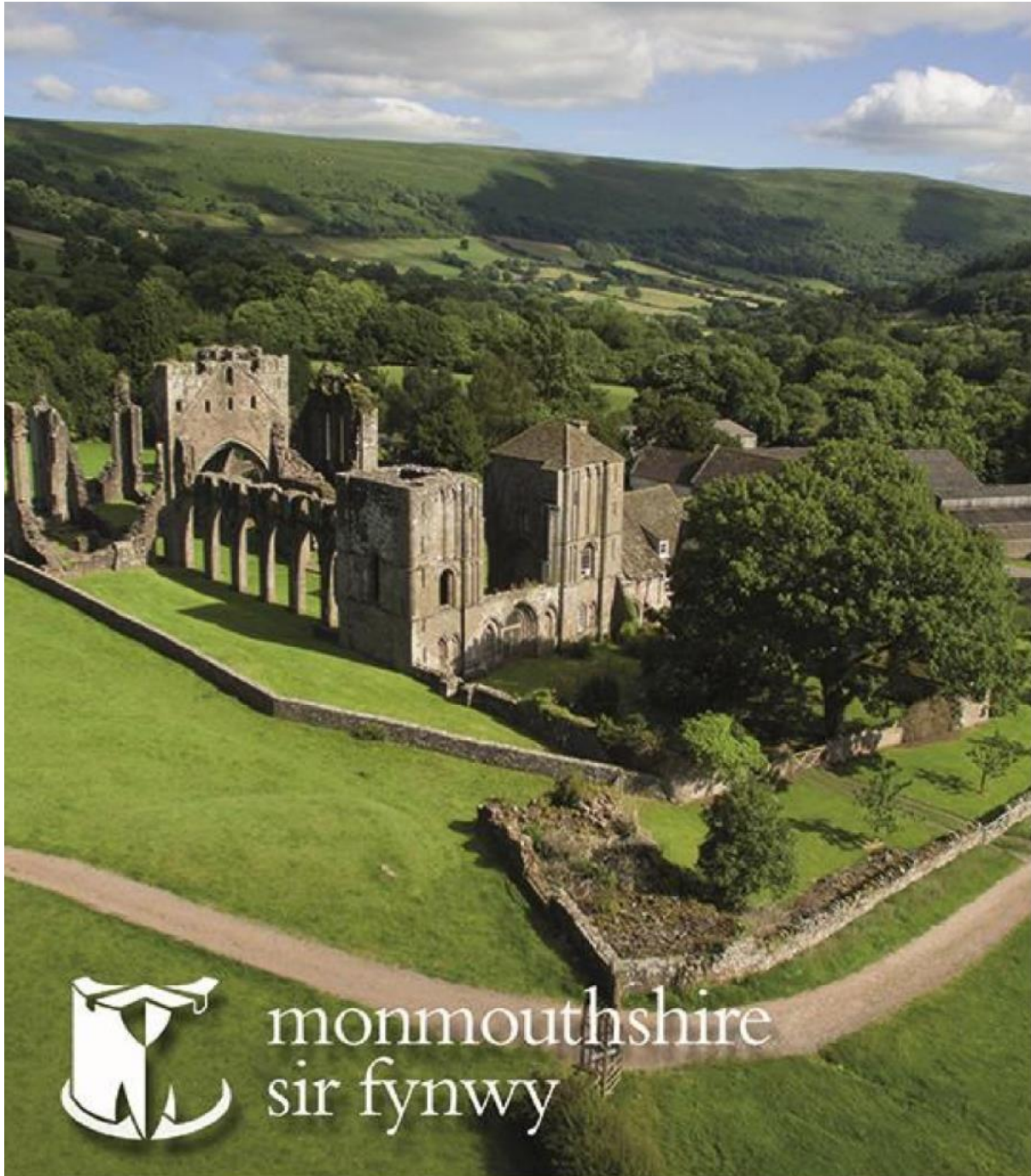
engage at an early stage when planning larger pieces of work, allowing sufficient time to manage demand, agree timescales, and ensure value for money.

As part of these improvements, there is a renewed focus on developing more structured processes for submitting, tracking, and analysing translation requests. This will support improved planning, stronger budget management, and the identification of further efficiencies across the organisation.

The Council will continue to refine its approach to translation provision to ensure it remains sustainable, cost-effective, and fully compliant with the Welsh Language Standards, while maintaining high-quality bilingual services. A revised translation process is expected to be implemented in the coming months, informed by a Welsh Language Impact Assessment.

Overall, the Council continues to make steady progress in strengthening its Welsh language provision, with ongoing work focused on increasing capacity, improving consistency, and embedding the language across all areas of service delivery.

Monmouthshire County Council Welsh Language Strategy Report 2026



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Policy Context

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 established a legal framework to place a duty on public bodies to comply with standards in relation to the Welsh language. March 2016 saw the introduction of new Welsh language standards. There are 176 standards applying to Monmouthshire County Council and these can be found in the [compliance notice](#) published on our bilingual website. The Standards aim to ensure that:

- the people of Wales have a legal right to use the Welsh language.
- the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language.
- the use of the language is promoted and facilitated in all aspects of the Council's work and service delivery.

Two of these standards specify the requirement to produce and monitor a 5-Year Welsh Language Strategy.

Standard 145 requires us to produce a 5-Year strategy which shows how we will promote, facilitate and grow the use of Welsh in the County including a target for the number of Welsh speakers and a statement about how we intend to reach that target.

Standard 146 requires us to produce a monitoring report at the end the strategy period showing the progress that we have made.

In addition to this requirement there are other pieces of legislation and policies that guide our work:

- The Well-being of Future Generations Act has a clear goal for public bodies to work towards a Wales of thriving culture and vibrant Welsh language and culture.
- Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers by 2050 articulates the ambition of Welsh Government to see an increase in numbers of Welsh speakers to safeguard our language and make Wales a truly bilingual country.
- The Mwy Na Geiriau/ More than Words Strategy promotes the "active offer" of language choice in the social care sector.
- Our Corporate Plan describes the aspirations for our county and our core purpose of building sustainable and resilient communities which recognises the important role the Welsh language plays.
- The Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) is prepared under Section 84 of The School Standard and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and complies with the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (Wales) Regulations 2019. The Council is currently preparing a revised 10-year WESP for 2022-2032 and this plays a very important part in this 5 -Year Strategy.

Local Profile of the Language

At the time of developing the Strategy information from the Census in 2011 showed that 9.9% of people in Monmouthshire spoke Welsh with the latest data from the Welsh Population Survey, at that time, showing a rise to 16.4% or 14,800 of the population.

The data from the Census in 2021 shows that 8.7% of Monmouthshire's residents age 3+ reported they can speak Welsh, the national average was 17.8%.

Number of Welsh speakers in Monmouthshire

Monmouthshire population (aged 3 and over):	90,690
Number of people who speak Welsh (aged 3 and over):	7,866
Percentage of people who speak Welsh (aged 3 and over):	8.7%

(Source: Census 2021)

Age profile of speakers

3 to 15 years of age	4.1%	3,757
16 to 64 years of age	3.8%	3,411
65 + years of age	0.8%	698

(Source: Census 2021)

However, the Census 2021 also shows us that people who reported some Welsh skills in Monmouthshire were 11,545 or 12.7%.

A comparison of the most recent Annual Population Survey data reveals the following increases over the period of the strategy so far:

Measure	31/12/2020		31/12/2025		Change	
	number	percentage	number	percentage	percentage	number
Speak Welsh	14,300	15.9%	17,900	19.7%	+ 3,600	+ 3.80%
Read Welsh	13,600	15.1%	16,400	18.1%	+ 2,800	+ 3.00%
Write Welsh	11,900	13.2%	14,100	15.6%	+ 2,200	+ 2.40%
Understand Welsh	16,500	18.3%	20,300	22.3%	+ 3,800	+ 4.00%

[Census: Welsh Language - Data Cymru](#)

[Annual Population Survey - Ability to read, write and understand spoken Welsh by local authority and year | StatsWales](#)

What We Wanted to Achieve: Our Objectives 2022-27

We aimed to achieve an increase in the number of Welsh speakers in Monmouthshire from 14,800 to 16,130 (9%) by the end of the 5-Year Strategy. The latest Annual Population Survey (December 2025) reports 17,900 (19.7%) of people can speak Welsh in Monmouthshire. This is an increase of 20.1% and over double the target.

Below are the 4 Objectives we wanted to achieve within the Strategy, together with related actions and their updates for this report.

Objective 1: Increase the number of children who are educated through the medium of Welsh	
Action	Update
Increase the number of nursery children who are educated through the medium of Welsh	The number and percentage of 3-year-olds receiving their education through the medium of Welsh (PLASC data) is 97 (8.58%). This is an increase of 31% from 2024 which was 74 (6.45%). We have made positive steps to increase the number of children accessing Welsh-medium early education. A third Welsh-medium school opened in September 2024 offering 30 nursery places and take-up has exceeded expectations. Take up of places has also increased at our other two Welsh-medium LA nurseries.
Increase the number of teaching staff able to teach through the medium of Welsh	Our target for proficient Welsh speakers is 4.2%. (44 school based) Current proficient Welsh speakers is 5.7% (60 school based) Current entry level Welsh speakers is 48.1% (517 school based)
Ensure that more learners study for assessed qualifications through the medium of Welsh	There are no Welsh-medium secondary schools within Monmouthshire. However, learners from the county do access Welsh-medium secondary education at Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw and Ysgol Gwent Is-Coed. As a result, all subjects within Monmouthshire secondary schools are delivered through the medium of English,

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg / This document is also available in Welsh

	<p>with the exception of Welsh as a second language. During transition into Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form, learners are offered a free choice of courses and qualifications.</p> <p>At present, there have been no enquiries from cohorts regarding the availability of studying further qualifications through the medium of Welsh.</p>
<p>Increase in the provision of Welsh-medium education for pupils with additional learning needs</p>	<p>We currently have 11 primary learners with ALN (3.5% of all learners) who are educated in Welsh-medium schools, compared with 280 learners (5.6%) in English-medium primary provision. At secondary level, there is currently no Welsh-medium ALN provision, while 258 ALN learners (6.2%) are educated in English-medium settings.</p> <p>A review of Welsh-medium ALN provision was undertaken during the 2024. This review identified gaps in the availability of Welsh-language ALN resources. It involved Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni and Ysgol Gymraeg y Ffin and led to recommendations for additional investment in Welsh-language resources and enhanced collaboration with Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy. ALN Capital Grant funding was allocated to ensure all Monmouthshire Welsh-medium schools are in receipt of suitable literacy, numeracy and wellbeing resources to support intervention for children with barriers to their learning and progress. The current review of impact demonstrates an improved offer around literacy intervention, including suitable assessment processes to identify specific skill deficit areas and targeted support strategies.</p> <p>In April 2025, funding was made available to secure identified resources, and autism training materials, together with standards and competency frameworks, available in Welsh. Ongoing collaboration between the three Welsh-medium schools is also supporting the implementation of agreed</p>

	<p>actions and the sharing of effective practice.</p> <p>We are continuing to work collaboratively with colleagues across Wales and the ALN National Implementation Lead (Welsh language) to share expertise and develop Welsh-medium ALN provision and resources. Staff from Monmouthshire’s Welsh-medium primary schools attended a Welsh-medium ALN Effective Practice Event, and Welsh-language autism resources developed locally are already being shared more widely.</p> <p>A second Welsh-medium ALN review is planned for spring/summer 2026 and will include Ysgol Gymraeg Trefynwy.</p>
<p>Explore the feasibility of appointing a Welsh Medium Education Promotion Officer in partnership with others</p>	<p>During the Strategy period, the Council has actively participated in a regional project to promote Welsh-medium education across South East Wales, led by the South East Wales Welsh-medium Education Promotion Partnership. This partnership brings together local authorities, Mentrau Iaith, Cymraeg i Blant, RhAG and the Welsh Government.</p> <p>The partnership was established through Grŵp Deddf (South East Wales Welsh Language Officers) in recognition of the benefits of a more coordinated, collaborative approach to promoting Welsh-medium education.</p> <p>As part of this work, a regional Welsh-medium Education Promotion Officer was appointed through the Cymraeg i Bawb partnership to support promotion across the region. The partnership has delivered a range of promotional initiatives, including the development of bilingual promotional videos, including those focused on Welsh-medium education and additional learning needs, one of which featured a family from Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni. A series of “Welsh-medium education for all” videos were also produced to support wider awareness. In addition, promotional banners were</p>

	<p>provided to all Welsh-medium schools across the region, and a training package was developed for school admissions staff and those working with families and children.</p> <p>Following the success of this collaborative approach, the Cymraeg i Bawb project has since been expanded across Wales.</p> <p>Locally, the Welsh Education Forum (WEF) meets termly to monitor progress against the WESP action plan. Through this process, the groups identify the priorities for the next year, which are reflected in work plans.</p> <p>The Promotion sub-group continues to play a key role in raising awareness of the benefits of Welsh-medium education throughout the year, particularly during key admissions periods. The group proactively organises events, and works closely with schools and communities to create opportunities for learners to use and develop their Welsh language skills in meaningful, real-life contexts.</p>
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Objective 2: Provide more opportunities for adults to learn and use the Welsh language	
Run a marketing campaign to increase take up of Welsh adult learner classes	<p>We have recently re-engaged with the 'Welsh for Adults' provision delivered by Coleg Gwent to expand opportunities for adults to learn Welsh through a partnership approach, whereby the Council provides the venue and Coleg Gwent provides the tutor.</p> <p>Classes are starting again in our Hubs from September 2026, supported by a programme of promotion in advance to raise awareness and encourage participation. Provisionally there will be a minimum of 1 class per hub and we will grow according to demand.</p>
Increase the awareness of Welsh	Welsh for Adults classes are hosted from the hubs. The courses provided

<p>language courses and material for parents who send their children to Welsh-medium schools</p>	<p>are Welsh for Adults by Coleg Gwent (as above).</p> <p>This year we have two classes at the Abergavenny Community Hub on a Friday am and pm. We do have additional classes being offered from September 2026 as follows:</p> <p>Caldicot Hub - Tues AM Chepstow Hub - Friday PM Monmouth Hub - Tues PM</p> <p>Menter Iaith hold Welsh language swimming lessons including water safety in Caldicot Leisure Centre for 8+ (every Monday for 5 weeks over the summer). At the same time, we are looking to run a second session for parents and babies. Mother and toddler sessions currently run in Monmouth (Rockfield Community Centre), with a scheduled messy play session as well as a Party in the Park event planned for July. The mother and toddler sessions are bilingual and advertised through local mother and toddlers' groups. The children are feeders for the new school – Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni.</p>
<p>Promote the use of apps and other online resources as a way to learn Welsh</p>	<p>Within MCC we have piloted the use of ARFer. This is an app for the mobile phone that has been developed by Bangor University to give learners of Welsh more opportunity to use it within the workplace. It focuses on the practical use of Welsh in day-to-day work. We also promote the use of DuoLingo app for colleagues who are learning Welsh.</p> <p>Monmouthshire and its near neighbours have a number of Welsh clubs and societies at which the language can be spoken and practiced. These can be accessed through our website: Monmouthshire and the Welsh Language - Monmouthshire</p> <p>Say Something in Welsh have a number of clubs throughout Monmouthshire as well as online and the app is available to download onto a mobile phone.</p>

	<p>We have also produced an online booklet for those thinking about sending their child to a Welsh-medium school. BecomingBilingualBooklet_2022.pdf</p>
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<p>Objective 3: Increase the number of opportunities for the public to interact with public services delivered through the medium of Welsh</p>	
<p>Increase the number of staff who are learning Welsh in the workplace</p>	<p>In 2021/22, 19 members of staff were learning Welsh. By 2025/2026, this has increased to 42, representing a 121% increase over the course of the strategy to date.</p> <p>A wide range of fully funded Welsh language courses is available to staff at all levels, delivered by Dysgu Cymraeg Gwent. These courses are promoted regularly throughout the year, supported by targeted communications to encourage uptake and engagement from both staff and managers.</p> <p>In addition to formal learning opportunities, staff are signposted to a range of self-directed learning resources, including those available through the National Centre for Learning Welsh. Targeted support is also provided through initiatives such as the Camau Scheme for social care staff, where learning is tailored to support the practical use of Welsh within their roles.</p> <p>Staff are further supported through a range of initiatives aimed at encouraging ongoing engagement and the practical use of Welsh in the workplace. These include participation in behaviour-change pilots such as the ARFer app, Welsh language awareness training delivered via the Council's e-learning platform, and the development of resources to support the use of Welsh in everyday workplace settings.</p>
<p>Increase the number of Welsh</p>	<p>There are currently 50 members of staff (13.1%) who report that they are fluent</p>

<p>speaking staff in the council from 44 – 66 (an increase of 50%)</p>	<p>in Welsh. This represents an increase of 13.6% since 2022.</p> <p>In total, 382 members of staff have some level of Welsh language ability ranging from beginner to fluent.</p> <p>During 2025/26, 689 posts (96.1%) were advertised as ‘Welsh language skills desirable’, with 28 posts (3.9%) advertised as ‘Welsh language skills essential’. The council does not advertise any vacancies as ‘Welsh language skills are not required’.</p> <p>While progress has been made, further work is required to meet the target of 66 fluent Welsh speakers.</p> <p>Ongoing actions to support this aim include promoting Welsh language learning, supporting staff to progress to higher proficiency levels, and strengthening Welsh language requirements within recruitment processes.</p>
<p>Improve recruitment processes to increase the number of Welsh speakers applying for public sector jobs</p>	<p>The job application process is fully accessible in Welsh through our new Talentlink system, and all job vacancies are advertised bilingually. As part of the recruitment process, every vacant post must be assessed for the necessity of Welsh language skills. We classify each new vacant post as Welsh language desirable at a minimum.</p> <p>For positions that involve a high degree of interaction with the public or where there is a lack of current Welsh language skills in the service area, these roles are assessed as Welsh language essential. For these essential posts, we encourage managers to specify in the job description the types of Welsh skills required. This approach aims to encourage applications from individuals who have learnt the language, as learners often lack the confidence to apply for Welsh language essential roles due to uncertainty about the tasks they will need to perform in Welsh.</p>

	<p>Additionally, we include the Welsh language skills framework in every job advert. We also utilise Welsh language recruitment sites to advertise posts that are assessed as Welsh language essential, as well as some Welsh language desirable posts. By advertising roles on these dedicated recruitment sites, we make it easier for Welsh speakers to find our vacant posts. This approach has supported the successful appointment of Welsh speaking candidates.</p>
<p>Ensure that Artificial Intelligence generated responses on the Council's digital channels is of equal quality in Welsh and English</p>	<p>The Monty chatbot has been removed from both the Council's website and Facebook Messenger. As a result, AI-generated Welsh responses are no longer in use, as the chatbot functionality is no longer available. If people message through Facebook messenger, they are then greeted with a holding message in either English or Welsh.</p>

<p>Objective 4: Work with partners to create of more social opportunities for people to use the language in everyday life.</p>	
<p>Create more social opportunities for people to engage with and use language in community hubs and libraries</p>	<p>The following groups and sessions are held in our hubs or libraries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welsh University of 3rd Age (U3A) groups in Caldicot and Monmouth • Welsh conversation groups in Abergavenny, Monmouth and Usk • Welsh language Book Club in Usk • Cymraeg i Blant sessions in Abergavenny, Caldicot and Usk • Town Council organised 2 sessions in Monmouth so that people could learn the Welsh National Anthem

	<p>All libraries hosted Mali a'r Môr / Mali & the Sea bilingual performances Mali a'r Môr / Mali & the Sea home</p> <p>Siôn Tomos Owen did a bilingual session in Caldicot (for Ysgol Y Ffin) and in Monmouth for a Welsh learner's class from Monmouth School.</p> <p>Say Something in Welsh run by Menter Iaith run 3 weekly events in Monmouthshire: Monmouth Coffee Morning (Bore Coffi Trefynwy) - Every Monday 10-11:30am Chepstow Coffee Morning (Bore Coffi Casgwent) Every Wednesday 10-11am Abergavenny Welsh Group (Siawns am Sgwrs Y Fenni) Every Thursday 1:30-2:30</p>
<p>Increase the stock of Welsh language books in local libraries</p>	<p>The number of Welsh language book stock increases annually in line with budget allocation and reader demand.</p> <p>We held 2 sessions in Caldicot with students studying Welsh from Caldicot School, showing them what the library has to offer and asking their opinions on our Welsh language stock.</p> <p>For adult Welsh language Reading Groups, we purchased an additional 7 sets of Welsh language titles (70 books).</p> <p>For a project starting this year (On the Same Page) encouraging Reading Groups in Years 7 & 8, last year we purchased 5 Welsh language titles for pupils (50 books).</p> <p>We offer free access to Welsh language eBooks and eAudio books through Borrowbox. This includes books for learners. You can also access Welsh language magazines through the same service.</p> <p>As part of an all-Wales Service Level Agreement with the North Wales Society for the Blind, supporting the production and distribution of Welsh-language audiobooks through BorrowBox, each participating local authority contributes £500 per year towards the provision of physical copies. Under the</p>

	<p>terms of the SLA, each authority receives one physical copy of each of the 24 Welsh-language audiobook titles produced annually — 12 for adults and 12 for children.</p>
<p>Make available grant funding for community groups to hold events which support and promote use of the language</p>	<p>During the Strategy period, the Council has provided funding to organisations such as Menter Iaith BGTm to support events including 'Miri Mynwy', and the Urdd for initiatives such as the 'Chwarae yn Gymraeg' project, all of which promote and encourage the use of Welsh language within communities.</p> <p>We are currently reviewing our translation processes, which is expected to release additional resources that can be redirected to support organisations and community groups in delivering Welsh language events. This work will be finalised within the next 3 months.</p>
<p>Develop a monthly newsletter featuring Welsh language job, volunteering and training opportunities</p>	<p>The fortnightly staff newsletter, Compass, is regularly used to include a 'Welsh Tip' feature, which promotes the Welsh language and supports compliance with the Welsh Language Standards. These bilingual tips provide practical guidance on specific requirements, helping staff understand their responsibilities and apply them in their day-to-day work.</p> <p>In addition to raising awareness, the Welsh Tips signpost staff to available support, including Welsh language learning opportunities and resources such as Iaith Gwaith. The newsletter is also used to promote wider Welsh language campaigns, reinforcing key messages and encouraging engagement. This provides a consistent and accessible method of communication, supporting the embedding of good practice and increasing confidence in the use of Welsh across the organisation.</p> <p>The Cymraeg Teams channel further complements this approach by providing a safe and inclusive space for staff, regardless of language ability, to engage with Welsh. Content shared is bilingual to ensure accessibility and encourage participation. The channel is used to share resources,</p>

	<p>promote training opportunities, and provide updates on Welsh language initiatives, while also fostering a sense of community. By enabling regular informal interaction and practice, it supports increased confidence and helps embed the use of Welsh in everyday working life.</p>
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SUBJECT: STRATEGIC EQUALITY PLAN ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 25-26

MEETING: PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 18 JUNE 2026

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide the committee with an opportunity to examine progress against the commitments made in the Strategic Equality Plan 24-28 during the period March 2025 to March 2026.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That members use the report to scrutinise delivery of the commitments made in the Council's Strategic Equality Plan.

2. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Tackling inequality is one of the Council's biggest priorities. If we are to achieve our ambition, it is important that we value and make the most of the abilities and contributions of everyone in our communities, irrespective of age, gender, race, sexual orientation or any of the other characteristics that make us who we are.
- 3.2 The Equality Act 2010 was introduced in April 2011. Within its specific duties is the requirement to publish an annual report on the council's performance against the commitments made in its Strategic Equality Plan.
- 3.3 The Council approved the Strategic Equality Plan and objectives in March 2024, covering the period April 2024 to March 2028. This is the first progress report against those objectives and covers the period from April 2025 to March 2026.
- 3.4 The objectives are:
- Objective 1: Give every child the best start in life.
 - Objective 2: Support the creation of fair employment and good work for everyone.
 - Objective 3: Work with partners and residents to build inclusive and cohesive communities.
 - Objective 4: Expand our provision of community-based services that extend people's healthy life expectancy.
 - Objective 5: Ensure our services are accessible to the public.
 - Objective 6: Ensure we have a diverse workforce and a fully inclusive workplace.
 - Objective 7: Reduce the gender pay gap

- 3.5 The full monitoring report is included as an appendix. Overall, good progress has been made. Some highlights are:
- The development of our Inclusion Strategy, Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Policy and resources is complete. The local authority Estyn inspection report (January 2026) highlighted that we have a clear strategic vision for inclusion and improved the provision for pupils with ALN.
 - We continue to deliver a variety of employability programmes. We are currently delivering (and have been since April 2025) Future Focus 10-week employability programme to the 18-24 cohort in partnership with the DWP. Since inception, the programme has supported approximately 60 18-24 year olds with 27 achieving employment. A number of this cohort are neurodivergent.
 - We have held several events throughout the year: These included an Interfaith Event at County Hall where faith leaders from the Muslim, Christian, Bahá'í, Buddhist, and other faiths helped attendees gain a deeper understanding of different faith communities. In addition, by opening up access to the local authority we are improving access to and engagement with local democracy. We hosted Wales' National Armed Forces Day event at Caldicot Castle which drew thousands as the community showed its appreciation, including serving personnel, veterans, reservists, cadets, and their families.
 - We have focused on supporting communities and partners to bring about social change and improve quality of life across Monmouthshire. We have:
 - Supported over 170 community organisations during the year, helping to strengthen local activity and resilience
 - Engaged over 1,200 people through events and activities across the county
 - Enabled 260 volunteering opportunities and supported over 70 community activities
 - Delivered training and support that reached around 500 people and 120+ organisations through the Be Community programme alone
 - We launched Let's Talk Monmouthshire in January 2025. This provides residents with a single place to visit for all consultations and digital engagement opportunities across the organisation to improve resident engagement. Since Let's Talk Monmouthshire launched, we have seen over 47,000 visits and 14,165 contributions, giving our residents the chance to positively influence projects and policies across the organisation.
 - We provided face-to-face training on the Social Model of Disability, delivered by the Disabled People's Employment Champion at DWP, to all HR and Workforce Development colleagues. This training is also available online to all colleagues. Regular sessions are advertised in our training newsletter.
- 3.6 Tackling inequality runs through everything we do as a council. All policy decisions taken are accompanied by an integrated impact assessment which highlights the potential impact on groups with protected characteristics and encourages those developing proposals to identify how they could be improved to have a more positive impact.

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

- 4.1 The actions within the Monitoring Report are presented in a way that enables the reader to understand the impacts of actions taken within the year to March 26. The Strategic Equality Plan is by its very nature a plan that is looking to address, mitigate and positively address identified issues in Monmouthshire that have an adverse impact upon people or groups of people with protected characteristics.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 5.1 We are required to publish the Strategic Equality Plan Annual Monitoring Report.

6 EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 6.1 The annual monitoring report is the way in which the committee is able to evaluate progress against the delivery of the objectives approved by Council in the Strategic Equality Plan

7 REASONS:

- 7.1 To ensure that the authority is able to comply with the legislative requirements of the Equalities Act to produce an annual monitoring report and to ensure that we can be held to account for the delivery of the commitments made in the strategy.

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 There are no resource implications associated with the production of the monitoring report.

9 CONSULTEES:

The production of the annual monitoring report has been informed by dialogue with a wide-range of people, groups and organisations who have contributed to this work over the past twelve months.

10 BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28

11 AUTHOR:

Pennie Walker – Equality and Welsh Language Manager

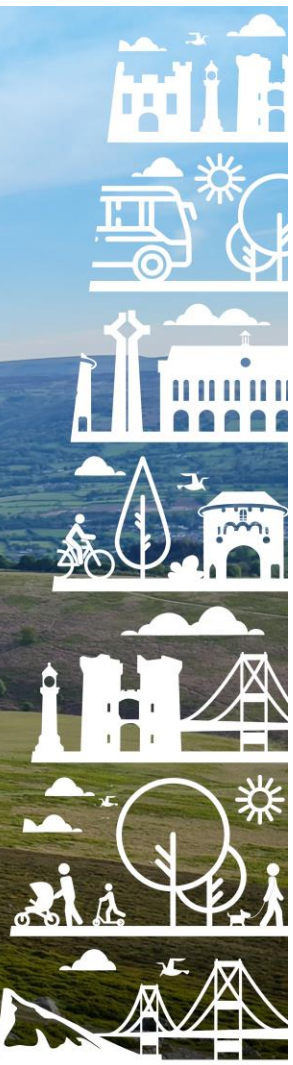
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Strategic Equality Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2025 - 2026



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Introduction and Policy Context

This annual monitoring report covers progress during the year ending March 2026. It reports on the Strategic Equality Plan, which Council approved on 20 February 2024. The latest plan is available at: <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/equality-and-diversity/>

Links to strategies

This is not a standalone plan. It links closely to key council, partnership and national strategies, plans and policies. Some focus specifically on equality, while others include equality as a key theme. Examples include:

- Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28
- Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- Cymraeg 2050 (1 million Welsh speakers by 2050)
- Strategaeth Mwy na geiriau/More than words strategy
- Monmouthshire Replacement Local Development Plan
- Strategy for Older People Wales
- Well-Being of Future Generations Act
- Social Care and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan
- LGBTQ+ Action Plan
- Action on Disability Plan
- Advancing Gender Equality Plan

The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council to meet the general and specific duties set out below. It also provides an opportunity for the Council to show its commitment to equality, which has long been part of its work.

Legislative Context

The General Duty of the Equality Act 2010

In exercising its functions, the Council must have due regard to:

1. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;
2. advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
3. foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Specific Duties in Wales

The specific duties help public bodies, including the Council, meet the general duty and improve transparency. In Wales, the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 set out these duties.

The following are the specific duties:

- Setting equality objectives and publishing strategic equality plans
- Engagement
- Assessment of impact
- Equality information
- Employment information, pay differences and staff training
- Procurement
- Reporting and publishing

Our Foundation: Purpose and Values

Our Purpose

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

This purpose is at the heart of everything we do to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Monmouthshire.

Our Values

Our values matter. They set out what we expect of ourselves, each other and the organisations we work with on your behalf. Our values are:

Teamwork

Collaboration is at the heart of everything we do. We will work with you and our partners to support and inspire everyone to get involved. We will make the best of the ideas, and resources available to make sure we do the things that most positively impact our people and places.

Openness

We are open and honest. People have the chance to be involved and tell us what matters.

Flexibility

We are flexible, enabling delivery of the most effective and efficient services. This means a genuine commitment to working with everyone to embrace new ways of working.

Fairness

We provide opportunities for all people and communities to thrive. We will always try to treat everyone fairly and consistently, recognising that we will sometimes need to take positive action to overcome some of the challenges faced by people with different protected characteristics.

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

Monmouthshire's strategic equality objectives 2024-2028

The objectives that have been agreed in the Strategic Equality Plan are:

- **Objective 1:** Give every child the best start in life.
- **Objective 2:** Support the creation of fair employment and good work for everyone.
- **Objective 3:** Work with partners and residents to build inclusive and cohesive communities.
- **Objective 4:** Expand our provision of community-based services that extend people's healthy life expectancy.
- **Objective 5:** Ensure our services are accessible to the public.
- **Objective 6:** Ensure we have a diverse workforce and a fully inclusive workplace.
- **Objective 7:** Reduce the gender pay gap.
-

This report provides an update on progress against these objectives.

1. Give every child the best start in life

This objective is related to:

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment		Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership		Welsh Language	x
Pregnancy or maternity		Poverty	x
Race	x		

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Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
Work with partners across the Gwent Public Services Board, including Public Health and the NHS to embed actions to reduce health inequalities in early years services.	Children, young people and families are supported to improve their health and well-being.	Strategic Partnerships Manager	<p>The Gwent Public Services Board (PSB) has continued to progress its 'Best Start in Life' priority, focusing on tackling inequality at the earliest stage and improving outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>The PSB has committed to embedding the Marmot principles within its delivery approach. The regional 'Best Start in Life' leadership group is progressing this work, with Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) continuing to play an active role. The group is working across Gwent, including Monmouthshire, to identify and address the key drivers of inequality.</p> <p>At a local level, the Monmouthshire Local Delivery Group (a locality subgroup of the PSB) will play a key role in shaping and overseeing delivery. This group will support the implementation of local actions</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
			aligned to PSB priorities, ensuring that regional objectives translate into meaningful outcomes for local communities and contribute to improving the lives of children, young people and families across the county.
Increase the take up of free school meals focusing on those schools where the need is greatest.	No child goes hungry in school.	Chief Officer – Place and Community Wellbeing	<p>Universal Primary Free School Meals are available to all primary pupils in Monmouthshire, with average uptake of 75% across the county. A Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2025 and Entitlement to Free School Meals (eFSM) uptake analysis has identified priority schools where deprivation is highest and uptake lowest, supported by a newly established School Meals Working Group to deliver targeted interventions in 2026/27.</p> <p>Chwedlau Bwyd Food Stories was delivered across ten schools between 2024–2026, with a toolkit in development for wider rollout from September 2026. Chefs in Schools training has been delivered across 25 of 31 schools since 2025, with further rollout planned. Both programmes have focused on priority schools, working with staff, parents and pupils to understand barriers to uptake, build food confidence, and increase school meal engagement.</p>
Poverty proof our schools to reduce the cost of the school day, recognising that every pound matters to many families.	Children, young people and families are supported to improve their health and well-being.	Chief Officer – Children and Young People	<p>Training for Family Engagement Officers and Family Liaison Officers has helped these key staff support vulnerable young people, particularly with attendance. Their work also supports families who may be experiencing wider challenges.</p> <p>Work to teach cooking skills and increase uptake of free school meals has continued. A toolkit is being developed so all schools can use the project resources after the project ends. Families can also use the resources at home to build confidence in cooking with fresh ingredients, which can cost less than ready-made meals.</p> <p>Welsh Government allocated just over £450,000 to Monmouthshire</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
			schools to help them become more community focused. Three project ideas were put forward. These included support for families with the cost of living, such as creating a community kitchen, building a multi-use games area for community use at a minimal fee, and renovating a secondary school classroom for community groups and organisations that support families with cost-of-living advice, benefits information and wellbeing support.
Ensure that every Monmouthshire school identifies a senior leader responsible for tackling poverty and raising the achievement of vulnerable learners.	Children, young people and vulnerable learners are supported to achieve their full potential.	Chief Officer – Children and Young People	All schools outline their support for Vulnerable Groups, defined as those who may be more likely to experience emotional, social and developmental barriers and hold data as part of their School Improvement Plan. These may include financial and social hardships within pupils' families including pupils eligible for free school meals (eFSM) and pupils from low-income families.
Develop a new Additional Learning Needs Strategy and related toolkits and resources, focusing on positive behavioural support.	Vulnerable learners are supported to achieve their full potential.	Head of Inclusion	We have completed the Inclusion Strategy, additional learning needs (ALN) policy and supporting resources. The local authority Estyn inspection report (January 2026) highlighted our clear strategic vision for inclusion and improved provision for pupils with ALN. Reshaped systems and stronger collaboration have increased confidence and competence in meeting a wide range of pupil needs.
Continue taking a preventative approach to reducing school	Children, young people and families are supported to achieve their full	Head of Inclusion	We continue to offer a strong programme of Professional Learning, combining whole-school preventative approaches with targeted interventions. This includes refreshed EBSA resources, a multi-agency EBSA Forum and an MCC EBSA Working Group, alongside multi-tiered

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
absences through developing Emotionally Based School Avoidance and Trauma Informed approach in schools.	potential.		<p>trauma-informed practice training and supervision. Guidance for schools and settings is being finalised.</p> <p>Attendance has continued to improve. Primary attendance rose from 93.6% in 2023/24 to 93.8% in 2024/25, reaching 94.4% by the end of Spring 2025/26. Secondary attendance increased from 89.0% to 89.5%, reaching 90.7% by Spring 2025/26. Overall attendance for compulsory school-age pupils was 92.4% at the end of Spring 2025/26, the highest in Wales.</p> <p>Attendance for pupils eligible for free school meals remains lower but has also improved. By the end of Spring 2025/26, primary eFSM attendance had risen to 89.6% and secondary eFSM attendance to 80.4%, up from 89.1% and 79.0% respectively in 2024/25.</p>
Improve access to, and use of, data gathered by schools concerning bullying, harassment and discrimination, and provide support.	Better data to provide support for children and young people to feel safe in their school environment.	Head of Inclusion	<p>We have reviewed and simplified the Rights, Respect and Equality template with school colleagues. Schools use this template each term to report bullying and discriminatory incidents to the local authority. This supports the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Equality Act 2010 and the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan. We have developed an electronic system for secondary schools to collect consistent information and streamline reporting. The system is being rolled out in stages, and all four secondary schools will use it from autumn term 2026. The quality of reported data has improved, but further work is needed.</p> <p>Two of the four school clusters have participated in anti-racism leadership courses. Curriculum resources have been shared with those schools to support their anti-racism and diversity curriculum development.</p> <p>MCC Challenging Bullying Guidance for Schools and example policies have been shared. All schools have an anti-bullying policy in place that has been quality assured.</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
Provide an LGBTQ+ inclusive education through the Relationships and Sexuality Education section of the Curriculum for Wales.	Children, young people and vulnerable learners are inclusively supported.	Head of Inclusion	<p>We continue to provide regular LGBTQ+ lunch-time groups in schools:</p> <p>At King Henry VIII School (Abergavenny), the Youth Service delivers a protected LGBTQ+ lunch club providing a safe, youth-led space. This delivered 30 LGBTQ+ provisions with 267 school-based contacts, exceeding the annual target. Sessions focus on peer support, identity, wellbeing, relationships, and practical issues such as <i>coming out</i>, with informal activities (games, crafts, quizzes) supporting engagement.</p> <p>We established a new LGBTQIA+ lunchtime provision in Caldicot School, following discussions with school leadership, responding directly to learner need. This had an average attendance of around 14 young people per session, with consistent weekly engagement. Activities are young-person-led, including LGBTQ+ history and flag quizzes, badge/sticker making, music and discussion-based sessions.</p> <p>LGBTQ+ young people are supported to access inclusive open-access youth centres (The Cabin, The Zone), ensuring continuity between school and community provision. Targeted trips (e.g. Cardiff Escape Rooms) and Pride engagement (e.g. Caldicot Pride, with over 220 contacts) broaden social networks and visibility.</p> <p>LGBTQ+ young people benefit from wider targeted support such as the Shift mental health project and peer-based wellbeing work, which has delivered high perceived wellbeing improvement overall.</p>
Work with others to increase childcare provision and quality in areas of higher deprivation with the aim of reducing	Children, young people and families are supported to improve their wellbeing.	Head of Achievement and Extended	<p>We started the 2025-26 financial year with 94 childcare providers, including day nurseries, sessional care settings, childminders and out-of-school clubs. During the year, two new day nurseries opened, one in Monmouth and one in Caldicot. One sessional provider changed its registration to day care to meet parents' requests for longer hours. One after-school club added wraparound childcare for pre-school children, and another after-school club opened in Caldicot. We will continue to</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
inequalities.			<p>monitor childcare supply and demand and develop provision to address any gaps.</p> <p>Between April 2025 and March 2026, childcare practitioners accessed 64 training opportunities across 23 courses. These included statutory courses, such as Paediatric First Aid and Safeguarding, and best practice courses, such as Trauma Informed Practice and Non-Racist to Anti-Racist Practice. This has helped to maintain and improve the high-quality provision in our childcare settings.</p>

2. Support the creation of fair employment and good work for everyone

This objective is related to:

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership	x	Welsh Language	x
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	x
Race	x		

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Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
Encourage local firms to become accredited disability confident employers.	Disabled people have better access to employment. More local firms with disability confidence status	Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships	<p>During the last year, the number of local firms registered as Disability Confident Committed (Level 1) fell from 39 to 27. Some of the businesses that were previously committed have ceased trading. As of 31 March 2026, six local firms are Disability Confident Employers (Level 2), a slight reduction from seven in March 2025.</p> <p>From May 2026, we are working with DWP on an authority-wide engagement programme with SMEs that have premises in Monmouthshire. This work will promote the Disability Confident pledge and inclusive work practices. We hope it will increase the number of Monmouthshire businesses that become Disability Confident.</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
<p>Tender documentation complies with the relevant Procurement and Equality legislation and encourages and promotes diversity amongst our suppliers and contractors.</p>	<p>Tenders / Contracts are compliant with legislation and diversity is supported within the workplace</p>	<p>Equality and Welsh Language Manager / Procurement Lead</p>	<p>We are using tendering to promote diversity in the supply chain.</p> <p>We use criteria to identify if potential suppliers have been involved in Employment Tribunals; have ongoing investigations or charges, in relation to human rights/modern slavery.</p> <p>We also ask that suppliers have a clear and up to date equality, diversity and inclusion policy to evidence their obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 and they ensure all employees receive equalities training and that Welsh language requirements are adhered to.</p> <p>For some higher-value tenders, we ask bidders to include community wellbeing commitments in their contracts. These may include actions to tackle homelessness, reduce inequalities and improve employability for disadvantaged people and young people. MCC's Community Delivery Team supports this work.</p> <p>There are also opportunities to include further information within specifications on each individual project meaning the client teams can promote deliverables specific to their projects.</p>
<p>Deliver employability programmes and build partnerships with employers and local businesses.</p>	<p>Diversity is supported within the workplace and with partners</p>	<p>Head of Economy, Employment and Skills</p>	<p>We continue to deliver a range of employability programmes. Since April 2025, we have delivered the 10-week Future Focus employability programme for 18 to 24-year-olds in partnership with DWP. Since it began, the programme has supported about 60 young people, with 27 moving into employment. A number of participants are neurodivergent.</p> <p>We have also started running sector-based Pathway Programmes. These four-day programmes include accredited qualifications, employer engagement and employability skills. We have completed two hospitality pathways, one with Kahva Café in Abergavenny and one with Marmalade Tea Rooms in Chepstow. The next two pathways will focus on support work in collaboration with Taff Housing.</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
Maintain a sustainable and accessible public bus network (including community transport) that serves our town centres.	Accessibility to town centres is maintained.	Head of Transport	<p>We have applied our Local Transport strategy, adopted in May 2024, working with the Cardiff Capital Region to develop and adopt a Regional Transport Plan and Regional Transport Delivery Plan, which will form the framework of Transport grant funding for the next 5 years.</p> <p>Additionally, we have engaged with TfW and WG around the upcoming Bus reform Bill and the impacts franchising will have on Monmouthshire, maximising the benefits for the County. All the additional bus services added to the network in 2024/25 were continued, with additional late departures on the 60 service.</p> <p>Improvements have been made to the Grass Routes bus service, to ensure it is accessible to the most in need.</p>
Offer networking, signposting and, where appropriate, grant funding opportunities to support diversification of rural businesses.	Diversity is supported within the workplace and with partners.	Head of Economy, Employment and Skills	<p>Business Monmouth and MCC's Sustainable Food Team have offered networking, support, signposting and some grant funding opportunities to support diversification of rural businesses during 2025/26.</p> <p>Five businesses were supported during 2025/26.</p>
Provide support for the creation of up to 6,240 sustainable job opportunities.	More people have access to employment opportunities.	Head of Placemaking, Regeneration, Highways and Flooding	<p>We have developed a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). This was endorsed by Council in October 2025 before being submitted to Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW) for examination in early November 2025. The RLDP will be subject to an independent examination in June and July 2026.</p> <p>We continue to provide support to anyone interested in starting their own business via the Business Monmouthshire project (funded by Shared Prosperity Fund). We assisted 43 businesses in 2025/26 against a target of 50.</p>

3. Work with partners and residents to build inclusive and cohesive communities

This objective is related to:

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership	x	Welsh Language	x
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	x
Race	x		

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Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
Celebrate diversity and hold awareness raising events, including key dates in the calendar such as Black History Month and Ramadan	Increased awareness of diversity within the community	Equality and Welsh Language Manager	<p>We held several events during the year. These included an interfaith event at County Hall, where faith leaders from Muslim, Christian, Bahá'í, Buddhist and other faith communities helped attendees develop a deeper understanding of different faiths.</p> <p>Wales' National Armed Forces Day event at Caldicot Castle which drew thousands as the community showed its appreciation, including serving personnel, veterans, reservists, cadets, and their families.</p> <p>Women In Business - Taking the Leap event aimed to empower, inspire and support female entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Changing Faces of Chepstow in a new gallery, which was funded by the Welsh Government as part of their Anti-Racist Wales programme for Culture, Heritage</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
			<p>and Sport.</p> <p>Other events included: The Monmouthshire Ukrainian Group (MUGiC) event in Chepstow (MUGiC), the county's biggest ever Fairtrade Coffee Morning during this year's Fairtrade Fortnight, celebration of International Day of Older People, Holocaust Memorial Day event, Age Friendly Community Events, Welsh Music Day, St David's Day.</p> <p>We also raised awareness of Mental Health Awareness week, Pride month, Armed Forces week, Black History month, LGBTQ+ History month and Neurodiversity week.</p>
<p>Support and enable the creation of community groups to ensure everyone has a voice and can participate and help shape the future of our county.</p>	<p>Increased diversity in consultation</p>	<p>Equality and Welsh Language Manager</p> <p>Community Development and Delivery Manager</p>	<p>We have focused on supporting and enabling community-led activity, helping both new and existing groups to grow and take an active role in their communities.</p> <p>This has included providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical support such as advice on setting up groups, governance and funding • Access to training, mentoring and development opportunities • Opportunities for groups to connect, collaborate and learn from one another <p>Through this approach, we have supported over 170 community organisations, alongside volunteers and residents, helping to build confidence, capacity and leadership at a local level.</p> <p>We have also created space for people to come together and influence what matters to them. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community events and engagement activities have brought together over 1,200 residents to share information, ideas and local priorities • Initiatives such as the Community's Budget have enabled residents to

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
			<p>have a direct say in funding decisions affecting their area</p> <p>Alongside this, our work has helped to increase opportunities for participation, including supporting over 260 volunteering opportunities and strengthening the role of community groups in delivering local activity.</p> <p>Overall, this has helped ensure that more people feel able to get involved, have a voice, and contribute to shaping the future of their communities.</p> <p>Our role has been to enable and support, rather than lead, creating the conditions for community groups and residents to take ownership and drive change locally.</p>
Become an age friendly county and seek accreditation from the World Health Organisation.	<p>Older people are supported in maintaining their health and well-being.</p> <p>Accreditation from World Health Organisation</p>	Partnerships Officer (Age Friendly Communities)	Monmouthshire was officially welcomed into the WHO (World Health Organisation) Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in summer 2025. Alongside this, Monmouthshire County Council signed the Centre for Ageing Better's Age-Friendly Employer Pledge. Work is now underway to convene the Age-Friendly Partnership, with the aim of developing a coordinated action plan and driving forward delivery to support older people to live and age well across Monmouthshire.
Support the development of a forum for disabled people.	Disabled people have a forum to inform policy making and service delivery.	<p>Equality and Welsh Language Manager</p> <p>Community Development and Delivery Manager</p>	<p>We have held three forum meetings online attended by disabled groups to engage and build capacity and to understand their needs.</p> <p>We are currently discussing the development of a face-to-face forum and whether this is needed. The forum meets six-weekly online at present.</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
Work with partners to tackle violence against women and girls and domestic and sexual violence.	Women feel safer within their environment.	Strategic Partnership Manager	<p>We are working with regional partners and Public Health Wales (PHW) to develop a VAWDASV (Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence) needs assessment. This will support the Regional VAWDASV Board in strengthening monitoring, outcomes and commissioning arrangements.</p> <p>It is anticipated that this work will improve the flow of information to Monmouthshire's Community Safety Partnership (CSP), enabling partners to take a more intelligence-led approach and strengthen prevention, early intervention and outcomes for victims and survivors of VAWDASV across the county.</p>
Ensure that we have a clear pathway for those with no recourse to public funds.	Assistance and advice is available to those with no recourse to public funds.	Strategic Partnership Manager	We have developed guidance on a no recourse to public funds pathway and distributed it to all front-line colleagues. This should minimise the risk that the most vulnerable in our communities do not fall through any gaps in the systems of support.
Improve our use of data analysis and CCTV to prevent crimes and provide evidence to the police when they do take place.	People feel safer within their environments.	Strategic Partnership Manager	<p>We continue to utilise CCTV across the county, primarily focused on the main town centres, to deter and detect anti-social behaviour (ASB) and wider crime and disorder. A review of town centre CCTV provision has been undertaken, which identified that, due to the age of the system, limitations in effectiveness, and issues with reliability, there is a need to upgrade the network infrastructure, which is now being undertaken. This will ensure the system is robust, fit for purpose, and capable of effectively supporting the prevention, disruption and detection of crime.</p> <p>Work is also underway to develop a comprehensive strategic needs assessment for crime and ASB within the county. This will draw on a range of regional needs assessments, including those relating to perpetrators of VAWDASV, the Serious Violence Duty, and a Domestic Abuse needs assessment currently being finalised. The needs assessment will establish a clear evidence base to inform priorities for the Community Safety Partnership, with the aim of</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
			strengthening an intelligence-led approach to tackling crime and disorder.
Improve housing support for refugees and asylum seekers and other marginalised groups.	Marginalised communities receive housing support.	Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships Housing and Communities Manager	Our proposal to join a rural consortium with a neighbouring authority to provide temporary accommodation for asylum seekers under the All-Wales Dispersal programme did not progress as expected with the Home Office. The Council is now working with the Strategic Migration Partnership, the Ministry of Defence and the Home Office on the Afghan Resettlement Programme and the regional allocation for Wales. The Council has agreed to develop a local authority-led pilot to provide transitional accommodation for up to nine months. Under the pilot, the Council would manage the process from arrival and support households on their journey to resettlement in other local authority areas. The Council will help the UK Government test whether direct management by the Council can simplify casework and speed up the move to settled housing.
Become an accredited county of sanctuary and a place of sanctuary for LGBTQ+ migrants.	Monmouthshire is an accredited county of sanctuary.	Strategic Partnership Manager	Monmouthshire was formally awarded County of Sanctuary status on 20th March 2026, with work now continuing to sustain and further develop this approach. Monmouthshire County Council has continued to progress its commitment to being a County of Sanctuary, building on its long-standing support for people seeking sanctuary and strong partnership working with community and regional organisations. This work is embedded across council services and frameworks, with a focus on inclusion and community cohesion. We also have the Pride in Veterans Standard.

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
Address period poverty and promote period dignity.	People have access to affordable period products.	Community Development Lead- Tackling Poverty & Inequality	<p>All primary and secondary schools in Monmouthshire received free period products to distribute to pupils, parents and others who need them. We secured additional funding to provide a free pair of period pants to learners in years 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 across the county. We extended our Menstrual Ambassador programme, delivered with Womb Wisdom, to all four secondary schools following a successful pilot at Monmouth Comprehensive School. The programme is improving menstrual education and period dignity. A full report will be available in August 2026.</p> <p>We are encouraging all organisations and community groups to have a stock of free period products to distribute. We link with community venues to ensure stock and supply levels are met. 43 community-based organisations have received products as a result of the Period Dignity Grant. Of these organisations, 84% of the organisations said they have reached young people through the period dignity project, whilst 52% have reached low income households. 84% of the organisations said access to free period products has changed how their organisation thinks about supporting menstrual health and tackling period poverty. 92% of organisations feel there is a demand for free period products in the community. 88% of organisations said the period dignity project has increased access to products. 80% of organisations said the period dignity project has reduced financial pressure.</p> <p>We have installed period product dispensers in our leisure centres and hubs to increase access to products.</p> <p>In total, we distributed; 30,644 sanitary pads, 23,860 tampons and 4,761 period pants over the financial year. With the support of 140 external staff or volunteers involved in the project.</p> <p>We have secured Welsh Government funding for the next financial year to continue the project.</p>

4. Expand our provision of community-based services that extend people's healthy life expectancy

This objective is related to:

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership	x	Welsh Language	
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	x
Race	x		

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Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
Ensure new walking and cycling infrastructure reaches areas with the lowest rates of physical activity.	People are supported in their physical activity.	Head of Transport	<p>We work to support the development of sustainable transport infrastructure with reference to the WIMD and a focus on inclusive benefit for the greatest number of people.</p> <p>We use grant funding to develop active travel routes that encourage people to walk and cycle to towns, schools and local key destinations. This includes route large construction schemes in 25-26 in Monmouth, Gilwern and Caldicot, providing coherent direct links which were previously missing from the network, and smaller enhancement schemes on the existing network, with improvements to dropped kerbs, crossings and footways.</p> <p>Promoting walking and cycling is also critical. It provides an alternative to</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
			<p>driving and improves access to affordable, sustainable and healthy travel options. We continue to deliver promotion and behaviour change work, including launch events, consultation on the Active Travel Network Map, road safety work in schools, bike maintenance courses and support for repair cafés.</p> <p>We also work with planning colleagues to make sure new developments are well connected from the start. This helps residents adopt healthier travel habits when they move in.</p>
Continue to provide a broad range of opportunities for people to be healthy and active including the National Exercise Referral Scheme.	People are supported in their physical activity.	Chief Officer – Customer, Culture and Wellbeing	<p>Our NERS completions rose to 522 (71%) in 2025/26, up from 456 in 2024/25. Participants reported improved wellbeing, happiness and energy.</p> <p>Our Passport to Leisure membership reached 460 by year-end. A clearer and more accessible offer helped reduce cost barriers, improve awareness and increase participation.</p> <p>Our Food & Fun supported 798 children, delivered 6,377 attendances, 452 hours of summer provision and 194 additional attendances, including 483 children eligible for free school meals.</p> <p>Our school sport festivals increased participation, enjoyment and physical literacy. Overall, 2,217 children accessed free or subsidised play provision through programmes including Food & Fun, Active Play, Positive Futures, the Monmouthshire Games, Junior Passport to Leisure and Free Swim.</p> <p>Active 60 had a 100% completion rate at week 8, helping participants maintain mobility, independence and social connection. The Free Swim Initiative supported 480 under-16s and 496 over-60s, and included holiday swim safety sessions with Swim Wales.</p> <p>Gilwern Outdoor Adventure supported 4,517 users, including 172 with additional learning needs, 62 with accessibility requirements and 407 eligible</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
			<p>for free school meals. Twenty pupils also took part in bespoke Duke of Edinburgh expeditions.</p> <p>Nature Networks 2 invested over £143,000 in 45 organisations, delivering 68 projects or events, engaging 1,183 participants and improving 121.9 hectares of land. Ten Nature and Wellbeing Hubs were created to improve access to nature, wellbeing and local skills.</p>
Support community groups in raising awareness of health inequalities and access to information in the most deprived areas.	A reduction in health inequalities through access to information	<p>Head of Leisure and Wellbeing</p> <p>Community Partnerships and Wellbeing Lead</p> <p>Equality and Welsh Language Manager</p>	<p>We have focused on supporting communities and partners to bring about social change and improve quality of life across Monmouthshire.</p> <p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported over 170 community organisations during the year, helping to strengthen local activity and resilience • Engaged over 1,200 people through events and activities across the county • Enabled 260 volunteering opportunities and supported over 70 community activities • Delivered training and support that reached around 500 people and 120+ organisations through the Be Community programme alone <p>Alongside this, specific programmes have delivered significant impact, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31 warm spaces operating across the county, with over 1,200 attendees and 10,000+ meals or refreshments provided • A distributed network of 43 community organisations and all schools providing free period products <p>Through this work, we have strengthened more inclusive, connected and resilient communities, helped people access support earlier, and contributed</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
			<p>to preventing and reducing the impact of poverty.</p> <p>Much of this work has been targeted in communities experiencing higher levels of deprivation, with a focus on reducing health inequalities by improving access to information, advice and support. This has included cost of living initiatives, warm spaces, health and wellbeing events, and strengthened links into services.</p> <p>Our approach has been to work with communities, not deliver to them. We build on local strengths, assets and partnerships to achieve shared outcomes.</p>
Support community groups to tackle isolation and loneliness with a focus on rural communities.	A reduction in the effects of isolation and loneliness	<p>Community Development and Delivery Manager</p> <p>Equality and Welsh Language Manager</p>	<p>We secured further funding from Cadw to enable the weekly Creative Conversations programme to continue at Caerwent through the year.</p> <p>We confirmed a fully functional Natural Resources Wales (NRW) agreement for volunteers to operate in NRW sites (We are the only LA in Wales to achieve this).</p> <p>We have increased the number of Countryside volunteer hours from 1,226.5 hours to 3,742.25. The work they have achieved has led to more maintenance issues being resolved, particularly for surface clearance, signage and gates. New groups continue to express interest, and more are being developed.</p>

5. Ensure our services are accessible to the public

This objective is related to:

Age	x	Religion or belief	
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	
Marriage or civil partnership		Welsh Language	x
Pregnancy or maternity		Poverty	x
Race	x		

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Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
Continue to ensure our public buildings are appropriately accessible to all service users.	Buildings are fully accessible to all people.	Head of Landlord Services	The UK SPF Destination for All project awarded £62,621.67 in accessibility grants to Monmouthshire organisations, businesses and events. We exceeded our target for the number of organisations, enterprises and events supported. We have also added the first of what we hope will be a collection of Accessible Virtual Tours of our sites to our Caldicot Castle & Country Park web page. This tour represents a new standard for digital accessibility, helping ensure that our virtual spaces are fully accessible and open to everyone:

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
			<p><u>Caldicot Castle & Country Park – Monlife</u></p> <p>Development work has taken place throughout 2025/26 on the Shire Hall Museum project which will provide a new cultural offer in Monmouth, incorporating Monmouth Museum within Shire Hall. This project aims to improve accessibility and has been engaging and consulting with relevant groups within the community as part of the planning and design stages.</p> <p>2025/26 also saw the development of plans for a Dementia-friendly gallery at Chepstow Museum, working in partnership with MENCAP Chepstow. We conducted consultation sessions with the community and have secured funding from Welsh Government.</p> <p>The outdoor facilities at Abergavenny Leisure Centre are being developed to be fully accessible and are due to open in September 2026.</p>
Work with partners to ensure the provision of accessible toilets in our town centres.	Town centre toilets are accessible to all people.	Head of Landlord Services	<p>In accordance with the Council’s Local Toilet Strategy, we continue to give consideration to investment in MCC owned town centre toilets. A number of toilets continue to be managed and maintained via partnership arrangements with town and community councils, or via third party lease with adjacent operators.</p> <p>The Local Toilet Strategy is under review, which will be completed in 2027. We are currently updating some of the facilities for the Stoma Friendly/Bins for Boys initiatives - to provide sanitary bins, shelves, mirrors and hooks in male toilets.</p>
Ensure that all communications are accessible, including recognising the	All people can access communications.	Head of Customer, Communication and Engagement	We are developing on-going improvements to our website to ensure it remains accessible for all users in accordance with national guidelines known as WCAG2.2 specifications. We now track the progress of this project monthly and have seen continued progress. Our continued updates to the site see us improving month by month. We are collaborating with stakeholders to

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
needs of neurodiverse people.			<p>improve accessibility including enhanced screen reader performance. Early engagement with SRS is currently taking place around the future platform that our website (Monmouthshire.gov) is built on which could further enhance accessibility if the project progresses.</p> <p>We launched Let's Talk Monmouthshire in January 2025. This provides residents with a single place to visit for all consultations and digital engagement opportunities across the organisation to improve resident engagement. Since Let's Talk Monmouthshire launched we have seen over 47,000 visits and 14,165 contributions, giving our residents the chance to positively influence projects and policies across the organisation.</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
Ensure we use the social model of disability when developing new services and reconfiguring existing ones.	Barriers for disabled people are removed. Social Model of Disability is embedded across the organisation	Equality and Welsh Language Manager Head of Social Care, Safeguarding and Health	<p>We continue to embed the social model of disability by focusing on removing barriers. This helps children and young people with disabilities to develop independence, make choices and have their voices heard. Practice and service development increasingly focus on empowering young people to take control of their lives and take part in decisions that affect them. Direct Payments, Short Breaks services and the commissioned Disability Support service help meet individual needs and preferences. They also support parent carers, reduce pressure on families, and build confidence, resilience and skills in young people and their families.</p> <p>The Monmouthshire Autism in Schools and Settings programme is now governed by a partnership board. It continues to build capacity in schools and settings by promoting autism as a difference, not a deficit, and by developing enabling environments where autistic children and young people can make progress. The programme was highlighted as a spotlight of good practice in the local authority's recent Estyn report. All schools and most early years settings have received the initial whole-school or setting training, Making Sense of Autism. The rollout of Good Autism Practice training is now underway. All schools and settings have a named Autism Champion.</p> <p>We provided F2F training on the Social Model of Disability, delivered by the Disabled People's Employment Champion at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP,) to all HR and Workforce Development colleagues. This training is also available online to all colleagues. Regular sessions are advertised in our training newsletter.</p>
Promote courses to raise digital skills and literacy amongst all groups through community	Accessibility is improved through digital skills.	Community Hubs, Community Education & Libraries Manager	We offer Entry Level 1 and 2 Digital Literacy learning opportunities as part of the 2025-26 curriculum. We deliver these accredited courses in partnership with Coleg Gwent, and Agored Cymru awards them. Courses are available at Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow and Monmouth Hubs. They provide a flexible, supportive and welcoming environment where residents can re-engage with learning, overcome barriers and build confidence in digital skills.

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
education courses and our community hubs.			
Increase the number of Welsh speakers employed by the council to improve access.	Welsh speakers can fully access services in their own language.	Equality and Welsh Language Manager	<p>From April 25 to March 26, we published 717 job adverts. 689 (96.1%) of these were Welsh Language Desirable and 28 (3.9%) of these were Welsh Language Essential.</p> <p>We include the Welsh language skills framework in every job advert. We also use Welsh language recruitment sites to advertise posts that are assessed as Welsh language essential, as well as some Welsh language desirable posts. By advertising roles on these dedicated recruitment sites, we make it easier for Welsh speakers to find our vacant posts, and we have successfully appointed Welsh speakers as a result.</p> <p>40 colleagues are currently completing a Welsh course. Classes started in September 25.</p>
Promote the active offer of language choice in social care.	People can access services in their language of choice.	Equality and Welsh Language Manager	<p>We use the Wales Interpretation and Translation Service (WITS) to provide translation. This year 146 requests have been made to the service through social care. Vietnamese was the language most often requested.</p> <p>Our More Than Words Active Offer for Social Care included 2238 assessments where there was evidence of the active offer of Welsh and 14 where the active offer of Welsh was accepted. For children, there were 701 assessments where there was evidence of the active offer of Welsh and 9 active offers of Welsh were accepted.</p>
Ensure that training on equalities is available to all staff and councillors to improve inclusive	Inclusive decision making is improved.	Equality and Welsh Language Manager	<p>Mandatory Equality Training for our new Leaders/Managers Development Pathway is available through Thingi. This includes Protected Characteristics, Intersectionality, Inclusion and Belonging, Inclusive Language and Unconscious Bias.</p> <p>A separate equality training course is also available through Thingi as part of</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
decision-making.			the Essential Training for all of the workforce. A Reasonable Adjustment presentation is available for all colleagues as well as other training such as Cultural Awareness, Neurodiversity and Understanding Autism.
Review Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process	The Integrated Impact Assessment process is fit for purpose and embedded.	Equality and Welsh Language Manager Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships	We have revised and updated the Integrated Impact Assessment template and guidance. This has been published on Sharepoint for all colleagues to access. Directorate Management Teams have been informed, and it was also advertised in Compass, our internal newsletter. A guidance film has been made which will be available to all managers via Thingi and the Leader/Managers Development Pathway. The new Health Impact Assessment (due April 2027) will be integrated into this process.

6. Ensure we have a diverse workforce and a fully inclusive workplace

This objective is related to:

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership		Welsh Language	x
Pregnancy or maternity		Poverty	
Race	x		

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Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
Ensure that we attain disability confident level 2 status within the first year of this plan and then work towards levels 3.	Disability Confident Level 2 is attained.	Equality and Welsh Language Manager	<p>We attained Level 2 Disability Confident Employer in May 2024. We are continuing to work on the three-year action plan which is monitored and updated quarterly by the Accessibility Inclusion Group. We are working in partnership with the Department of Work and Pensions and Welsh Government to ensure our progress and share information.</p> <p>We are intending to attain Disability Confident Leader within the next three months.</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
Put in place measures to support and accommodate the needs of neurodiverse colleagues.	Neurodiverse colleagues are supported within the workplace.	Equality and Welsh Language Manager	<p>We have developed a Neurodivergent/Disability Colleague Network, which currently has 14 members. The network has met three times and will continue to meet every 6 weeks. It provides a safe space to discuss experiences, network with peers and build a workplace community based on shared identity. It also provides a source of support by giving easy access to colleagues who can empathise, share their own experiences, and offer practical advice.</p> <p>Some of the subjects we have covered are reasonable adjustments, both physical and digital, as well as the creation of a 'colleague toolkit'.</p>
Actively target recruitment opportunities towards groups who are under-represented in our workforce.	Under-represented groups have more representation with the workforce.	Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships	<p>Our jobs website actively promotes our desire to receive applications and enquiries from all members of the community. We have a proactive offer to those who are disabled, have a sight or hearing loss, have a learning difficulty, or are neurodiverse to get in touch to find out more about employment opportunities.</p> <p>We have a guaranteed interview scheme for disabled people as well as armed forces veterans and care leavers.</p> <p>87.1% of colleagues reported that they felt MCC promoted an inclusive working environment. This is an increase from 86.8% last year.</p> <p>We have developed work experience opportunities for young people aged 14 to 18 through our local secondary schools. This helps us engage people at the start of their working lives and increase representation of 18 to 24-year-olds in our workforce, where they are currently under-represented.</p>
Address the data gaps that exist across all protected characteristics	Data gaps are reduced to better inform decision making.	Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships	<p>We are working to gather data to identify where there are gaps. Our gender pay gap report is published annually by 31st March each year. We will start reporting on ethnicity and disability pay gaps from 2026/27.</p> <p>Additional data fields have been added to our reporting systems, to broaden the</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
(particularly ethnicity and disability) and disaggregate data by across policy areas.			<p>scope of data we are able to collect.</p> <p>Prompts have been shared through colleague communication channels, to support the updating and sharing of information, via a self-service system.</p> <p>Our new recruitment system and induction materials will support the collection of data from colleagues who move posts internally and new starters to the organisation.</p>
Provide access to inclusion training for all staff to ensure awareness of inclusivity and diversity within the workplace	Diversity within the workforce is celebrated.	<p>Equality and Welsh Language Manager</p> <p>Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships</p>	<p>The Leadership and Manager Development Pathway is a mandatory module on Thingi, our e-learning platform. It covers protected characteristics, intersectionality, inclusion and belonging, inclusive language and unconscious bias.</p> <p>Equality training is also a mandated module available on Thingi.</p> <p>Reasonable Adjustment in the Workplace, Cultural Awareness, Neurodiversity, Understanding ADHD, Understanding Tourette's, Understanding Autism, LGBTQ+ Awareness, Anti-Racist Modules and Hate Crime module are also available on Thingi.</p> <p>F2F training on the Social Model of Disability has been delivered and various online dates were added throughout the year, open to all colleagues.</p>
Develop staff networks to raise awareness of under-represented groups within the workforce	Staff networks developed.	<p>Equality and Welsh Language Manager</p>	<p>We have developed a Disability/Neurodivergent Colleague Network and a BAME Colleague Network, who meet 6 weekly online. These have been well attended and are a safe space for colleagues to share experiences, network and build a community.</p> <p>We are currently developing a Network page on the intranet to raise awareness of all Colleague Networks and share information.</p> <p>We continue to survey, on a regular basis, whether there is interest in an LGBTQ+ Network.</p> <p>We also hold a Menopause Café last Wednesday of every month (online).</p>

7. Reduce the gender pay gap

This objective is related to:

Age		Religion or belief	
Disability		Sex	x
Gender reassignment		Sexual orientation	
Marriage or civil partnership		Welsh Language	
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	x
Race			

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Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
Ensure that career pathways do not limit the ability of part-time staff to progress into senior roles.	Part time staff are not limited in progressing into senior roles.	Head of HR	Our Flexible Working Policy supports colleagues' entitlement to request part-time working. Our Recruitment and Selection Policy and Protection of Employment Policy also support colleagues, including those working part time, to move into new and senior roles. Our People Strategy and newly developed Workforce Plan aim to strengthen strategic workforce planning across the organisation. This will include developing more career pathways, supported by policy reviews, to help part-time staff

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
			<p>progress into senior roles.</p> <p>Our developing strategic workforce planning approach, Developing a Future Focused Workforce, will support both traditional and non-traditional career pathways. It will focus on colleagues and help all those who wish to progress into senior roles.</p>
Continue to operate a transparent job evaluation scheme to ensure equitable pay rates.	Equitable pay rates are ensured.	Head of HR	<p>Monmouthshire County Council uses the GLPC (Greater London Provincial Council) Scheme for all National Joint Council (NJC) roles. It is implementing the Local Government Association (LGA) Scheme for all Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) Chief Officer posts. Revised governance arrangements for using the GLPC Scheme were introduced in October 2024, and the LGA Scheme will follow the same arrangements. Revised policy and guidance documents were approved in May 2026 to ensure equitable pay rates for officers whose posts are subject to NJC and JNC terms and conditions.</p>
Publish information on the gender pay gap annually, evaluate the reasons for the difference in pay and explore appropriate actions to address them.	Annual publication of gender pay gap information and actions to address this are explored.	Head of HR	<p>Our Gender Pay Gap Report was published in March 2026, relating to data as of 31st March 2025. This report outlined a reduction in both the mean and median gender pay gap, in Monmouthshire County Council, when compared to 31st March 2024 and over the past three years.</p> <p><i>'The Council has seen a reduction in both the mean and median gender pay gaps in the past three years; the mean gender pay gap has shown a reduction from 5.8% in 2021/22 to 4.29% in 2024/25 and the median gender pay gap has shown a reduction from 7.6% in 2021/22 to 3.22% in 2024/25.'</i></p> <p>The report explores and evaluates the reasons for gender pay differences and considers appropriate actions to address them. A full copy of the report can be found here: Gender-Pay-Gap-Report-2026.pdf. Monmouthshire County Council officers' attendance and participation at the Convention on the Elimination of All</p>

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Progress
			Forms of Discrimination Against Women in March 2026 will also support the development and implementation of actions to address gender-related pay differences.



Strategic Equality Plan 2024 – 28



Version Control

Title	Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028
Purpose	To meet the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010
Owner	Equality and Welsh Language Officer
Approved by	Council
Date	20/2/2024
Version Number	1.0
Status	Approved
Review Frequency	Annual
Next review date	July 2025
Consultation	Public consultation via the council's website ran in January and February 2024. People Scrutiny Committee also undertook policy development scrutiny as part of this.

Our Foundation: Purpose and Values

Our Purpose

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

This purpose is at the heart of everything we do to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Monmouthshire.

Our Values

Values matter to us. They set out our expectations for ourselves, each other and the way we conduct business with organisations that we work with on your behalf.

Our values are:

Teamwork

Collaboration is at the heart of everything we do. We will work with you and our partners to support and inspire everyone to get involved. We will make the best of the ideas, and resources available to make sure we do the things that most positively impact our people and places.

Openness

We are open and honest. People have the chance to be involved and tell us what matters.

Flexibility

We are flexible, enabling delivery of the most effective and efficient services. This means a genuine commitment to working with everyone to embrace new ways of working.

Fairness

We provide opportunities for all people and communities to thrive. We will always try to treat everyone fairly and consistently, recognising that we will sometimes need to take positive action to overcome some of the challenges faced by people with different protected characteristics.

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.

Our Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28

Monmouthshire County Council's Community and Corporate Plan sets out the things we will be working on in the medium term. The Strategic Equality Plan is aligned to the direction set in this plan.

Our Objectives:

Monmouthshire will be:

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

We shape our activity in the community and corporate plan in line with the goals and ambitions of our partners who are part of the Gwent Public Service Board (PSB). These include the Well Being Plan Objectives and the Marmot Principles.

Well-being Objectives:

- We want to create a fairer, more equitable and inclusive Gwent for all.
- We want a climate-ready Gwent, where our environment is valued and protected, benefitting our well-being now and for future generations.

Eight Marmot Principles:

- Give every child the best start in life.
- Enable all children, young people, and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives.
- Create fair employment and good work for all.
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all.
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities.
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention.
- Tackle racism, discrimination, and their outcomes.
- Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together.

The Legal Context

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from unlawful discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It covers 9 protected characteristics: Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Religion or belief, Sex and Sexual orientation.

It also requires us to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between disabled people and people who are not disabled the need to take steps to take account of disabled persons' requirements.

It also created the Public Sector Equality Duty requiring public bodies to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from other people.
- encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Act also sets out a number of Specific Duties that public bodies are required to comply with:

- publish sufficient information to demonstrate its compliance with the general duty across its functions.
- prepare and publish Equality Objectives and detail the engagement that has been undertaken in developing them.
- publish a Strategic Equality Plan.
- set out how progress will be measured.

The Socio-economic Duty

The Socio-economic Duty seeks to improve the strategic decision-making of public bodies to better support those who are socio-economically disadvantaged in terms of income and/or status. It puts tackling inequality at the heart of decision-making and builds on the good work public bodies are already doing.

The duty refers to aspects of life 'socio' (your life chances and where you live) and 'economic' (how much money you have for essential and non-essential items).

Inequality can compound negative socio-economic factors. Our Strategic Equality Plan will set out objectives and actions which will help to improve socio-economic outcomes as well as focusing on group with protected characteristics.

National Policy Context

Since our last Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24, the Welsh Government has introduced further commitments that the plan will contribute to. These are the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan, the LGBTQ+ Action Plan, the Action on Disability Plan and the Advancing Gender Equality Plan.

Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan

To achieve an anti-racist public sector in Wales, Welsh Government have identified a clear set of goals and actions that they will undertake to achieve anti-racism and it is their expectation for all public sector organisations to do the same. The different areas will aim to:

Demonstrate visible commitment to anti-racism:

- behaviour change and values.
- use of positive action.
- recruitment.
- progression.
- senior leadership.
- board representation.

Embed ways of working to tackle racism:

- use of all levers to tackle racism.
- use of data and evidence.
- policymaking.
- use of funding and grants.

Engage and deliver anti-racist services:

- cultural awareness and competency in our communications.
- language and interpretation services.
- advocacy services.

Embed accountability and demonstrate progress:

- governance and accountability arrangements.

LGBTQ+ Action Plan

The key actions for local authorities within the LGBTQ+ Action Plan are:

- involve LGBTQ+ communities in designing public service.
- homelessness services are inclusive of the specific needs of LGBTQ+ people.
- ensure Wales a Nation of Sanctuary remains inclusive of LGBTQ+ people.

- ensure that LGBTQ+ Welsh speakers have access to Welsh medium support services.
- provide equalities training that includes the needs of LGBTQ+ people to all public sector organisations.

Action on Disability Plan

In 2023 the Welsh Government set up The Disability Rights Taskforce, whose aims are to remove inequalities experienced by disabled people in society. They are developing solutions to challenge the structural, physical, and attitudinal barriers that disabled people face, which will form the new Disability Rights Action Plan for Wales, expected to be published in 2024.

Priority areas of work are:

- embedding and understanding of the Social Model of Disability (across Wales).
- access to services (including communications and technology).
- independent living: social care.
- independent living: health.
- travel.
- employment and income.
- affordable and accessible housing.
- children and young people.
- access to justice.
- wellbeing (as a workshop).

Advancing Gender Equality Plan

In March 2019 Welsh Government signed up to a vision and principles for gender equality in Wales: A gender equal Wales means an equal sharing of power, resources and influence for all women, men and non-binary people. This is a vision where the government aims to create the conditions for equality of outcome for all.

- all women can have economic independence and paid, and unpaid work is valued.
- diverse women are fairly represented in positions of influence and empowered to play a meaningful role in society.
- all women are free from discrimination and free to live their lives as they choose.
- violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence stops.
- existing power structures that disadvantage women are challenged.
- all women, men and non-binary people enjoy equal rights and protections and equality of outcome.

Evidence of Inequality

Monmouthshire is geographically large compared to many local authorities in Wales. It is semi-rural in nature, with just over half of the population living in urban areas. The county is often perceived as affluent. However, headline statistics can fail to shine a light on the diversity that exists within our borders.

There are many existing sources of evidence produced in recent years that have been used to inform the development of this plan:

- The Well-being Assessment produced by the Gwent Public Services Board as part of its responsibilities under the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- Building a Fairer Gwent: improving health equity and the social determinants of Health – produced by the Institute of Health Equity.
- The Population Needs Assessment - produced under the Social Services and Well-being Act.
- Is Wales Fairer 2023 – a document prepared by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.
- The National Survey for Wales.

We've also examined a number of national action plans and strategies (as mentioned above) which look to advance the equalities agenda including:

- The Anti-Racist Wales Action Planⁱ
- LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Walesⁱⁱ
- Advancing Gender Equality in Wales Action Planⁱⁱⁱ
- Action on Disability action plan^{iv}

We understand that the issues highlighted in the above documents are symptoms of complex problems, often at a societal level. They cannot be solved by one organisation alone. Public, third and private sector must work together. Most importantly, we must work with and alongside communities to co-produce sustainable solutions.

We also recognise the importance of intersectionality. Many people possess more than one protected characteristic and systems of inequality based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, class and other forms of discrimination intersect.

When you read this document you'll come across evidence that relates to multiple groups but is only shown in one section. We've done this to keep it as concise as possible, but we do recognise the overlapping issues and have taken them into account when proposing actions.

Strategic Equality Objectives

Monmouthshire County Council is committed to tackling inequality and working hard to decarbonise our county. We will work with and alongside our communities to achieve this^y.

It is vital that we value and make the most of the abilities and contributions of everyone in our communities, irrespective of age, sex, race, sexual orientation or any of the other characteristics that make us who we are.

These objectives and the actions outlined on the following pages are the things that we are committed to delivering over the next four years to ensure that everyone in our county is able to achieve their full potential.

- **Objective 1:** Give every child the best start in life.
- **Objective 2:** Support the creation of fair employment and good work for everyone.
- **Objective 3:** Work with partners and residents to build inclusive and cohesive communities.
- **Objective 4:** Expand our provision of community-based services that extend people's healthy life expectancy.
- **Objective 5:** Ensure our services are accessible to the public.
- **Objective 6:** Ensure we have a diverse workforce and a fully inclusive workplace.
- **Objective 7:** Reduce the gender pay gap.

For each objective we set out the actions we will take and the outcome we are seeking to achieve. Progress will be measured using a range of outcome and output measures. A full performance framework will be developed, and progress will be reported annually to the council's Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee in an annual monitoring report.

1. Give every child the best start in life

Why This Matters

The experiences we have in our childhoods have a huge impact on how we grow and develop, our physical and mental health, and our thoughts, feelings and behaviour. Research shows that it is associated with performance at school, future work outcomes and leads to higher income, better lifelong health and longer life expectancy.

Evidence

- Research shows that the first thousand days from pregnancy to age two offer a crucial window of opportunity to affect the future outcomes for children.
- Low birth weight is a predictor of a number of negative outcomes including lower life expectancy and educational attainment. Monmouthshire has the smallest percentage of low birthweight babies in Wales, 4.9% compared to a Wales average of 6.1%.
- There are issues with limited availability of early years providers across Gwent. Since 2020 Monmouthshire has lost 305 childcare spaces, 9% of its total.
- 27% of children in Monmouthshire live in poverty. This is the same as the UK average but below the Wales average of 34%.
- In Wales there are a range of disparities between the attainment of different ethnic groups at the foundation phase of primary education.
- Children who identify as neither a boy nor a girl are more likely to be bullied than those who identify as either a boy or a girl.
- Referrals to child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) in Monmouthshire grew by 89% between 2020-21 and 2021-22. This is higher than the 39% rise across Wales. Wales also has the highest rate of any of the UK nations.
- Secondary school attendance has declined since the pandemic, we have also seen a rise in the number of exclusions from school.
- Children who are eligible for free school meals have lower levels of attainment than those who are not eligible.

This objective is related to:

Age	x	Religion or belief	
Disability	x	Sex	
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership		Welsh Language	x
Pregnancy or maternity		Poverty	x
Race	x		

Actions

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
Work with partners across the Gwent Public Services Board, including Public Health and the NHS to embed actions to reduce health inequalities in early years services.	Children, young people and families are supported to improve their health and well-being.	Strategic Partnerships Manager	March 2028
Increase the take up of free school meals focusing on those schools where the need is greatest.	No child goes hungry in school.	Chief Officer – Children and Young People	December 2024
Poverty proof our schools to reduce the cost of the school day, recognising that every pound matters to many families.	Children, young people and families are supported to improve their health and well-being.	Chief Officer – Children and Young People	March 2025
Ensure that every Monmouthshire school identifies a senior leader responsible for tackling poverty and raising the achievement of vulnerable learners.	Children, young people and vulnerable learners are supported to achieve their full potential.	Chief Officer – Children and Young People	December 2024
Develop a new Additional Learning Needs Strategy and related toolkits and	Vulnerable learners are supported to achieve their full potential.	Head of Inclusion	March 2025

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
resources, focusing on positive behavioural support.			
Continue taking a preventative approach to reducing school absences through developing Emotionally Based School Avoidance and Trauma Informed approach in schools.	Children, young people and families are supported to achieve their full potential.	Head of Inclusion	Ongoing
Improve access to, and use of, data gathered by schools concerning bullying, harassment and discrimination, and provide support.	Better data to provide support for children and young people to feel safe in their school environment.	Head of Inclusion	December 2025
Provide an LGBTQ+ inclusive education through the Relationships and Sexuality Education section of the Curriculum for Wales.	Children, young people and vulnerable learners are inclusively supported.	Head of Inclusion	Ongoing
Work with others to increase childcare provision and quality in areas of higher deprivation with aim of reducing inequalities.	Children, young people and families are supported to improve their well-being.	Head of Achievement and Extended	March 2026

2. Support the creation of fair employment and good work for everyone

Why This Matters

Most people spend a substantial part of their time at work and this is a significant part of their life. The job people do, and how valued they feel, is a powerful determinant of their quality of life. As well as the obvious financial effects, being unemployed can have long-lasting negative effects on health and wellbeing. It increases mortality and is a significant driver of inequalities in physical and mental health.

Evidence

- Between September 2022 and January 2023, 92% of people in Wales said their cost of living had increased in the past year.
- Disabled people are consistently much less likely to be employed than non-disabled people. The employment rate of disabled people in Monmouthshire fell from 60% in 2014 to 51% in 2023.
- Across Wales, disabled workers' median hourly earnings have stagnated while non-disabled workers' earnings have grown.
- Disabled people are more likely to be living in poverty and severe material deprivation. However, there has been a significant decrease in the proportion of disabled people living in severe material deprivation, from 40.5% in 2015/16 to 24.3% in 2019/20
- In Wales, ethnic minority workers are more likely to be in insecure employment (8.0%) than White British workers (14.2%). However, this gap in insecure employment has narrowed over time.
- Gay and lesbian adults are more likely to be employed (67%) than adults who identify as heterosexual (55%), bisexual (52%) or any other sexual orientation.
- The 2021 census found employment rates in Wales are higher among individuals whose gender identity was the same as their sex registered at birth (54.5%) than among those whose gender identity was different from their sex registered at birth.
- At 39% the proportion of women working part-time in Wales is far higher the proportion of men which is 12%.
- Women have been disproportionately affected by the raising of the state pension age meaning they will have to spend longer in the workforce without having had sufficient opportunity to plan their retirement.
- Rural communities can be more prone to poverty than urban areas with fuel poverty and access to services a particular problem.

This objective is related to:

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership	x	Welsh Language	x
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	x
Race	x		

Actions

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
Encourage local firms to become accredited disability confident employers.	Disabled people have better access to employment. More local firms with disability confidence status	Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships	March 2028
Ensure our tender documentation encourages and promotes diversity amongst our suppliers and contractors.	Diversity is supported within the workplace	Equality and Welsh Language Manager	March 2025
Deliver employability programmes and build partnerships with employers and local businesses.	Diversity is supported within the workplace and with partners	Head of Economy, Employment and Skills	March 2026
Maintain a sustainable and accessible public bus network (including	Accessibility to town centres is maintained.	Head of Decarbonisation, Transport and Support Services	Ongoing

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
community transport) that serves our town centres.			
Offer networking, signposting and, where appropriate, grant funding opportunities to support diversification of rural businesses.	Diversity is supported within the workplace and with partners.	Head of Economy, Employment and Skills	March 2028
Provide support for the creation of 6,240 sustainable job opportunities.	More people have access to employment opportunities.	Head of Placemaking, Regeneration, Highways and Flooding	December 2033

3. Work with partners and residents to build inclusive and cohesive communities

Why This Matters

Community cohesion can be undermined if some groups have different experiences or outcomes to others. This is especially true when it's as a result of a group's protected characteristics. The issues that undermine cohesion can be deep-rooted. We want to create and maintain the conditions in which local communities can flourish.

Evidence

- 73% of people who identified as heterosexual or straight felt they belong to their local area, compared with 63% who did not identify as heterosexual or straight.
- 83% of men felt safe when: at home, walking, on public transport, and in their car all, compared with 58% of women.
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people have the worst outcomes of any ethnic group in Wales across a range of areas including education, health, employment, criminal justice and hate crime.
- In 2021/22, police forces in Wales recorded 6,295 hate crimes, an increase from 4,654 in 2020/21.
- The proportion of Monmouthshire residents identifying as from an Asian ethnic group is 1.3%, from a Black ethnic group was 0.2% from a mixed or multiple ethnic group was 1.2%; from a white group it was 96.7% with other groups making up 0.3%^{vi}.
- The proportion of disabled people reporting experiencing domestic abuse in the past 12 months is around three times greater than that reported by non-disabled people;
- Research indicates that childcare remains a particular and unchanging barrier to accessing English classes for speakers of other languages (ESOL), particularly for female asylum seekers and refugees in Wales.
- Between 2011 and 2021, the average (median) age of Monmouthshire's increased by four years, from 45 to 49 years of age.
- Monmouthshire's population aged 65 and over is projected to increase by 41% and, more significantly, those aged 85 and over by 96% by 2043.

This objective is related to:

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x

Marriage or civil partnership	x	Welsh Language	x
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	x
Race	x		

Actions

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
Celebrate diversity and hold awareness raising events; including key dates in the calendar such as Black History Month and Ramadan	Increased awareness of diversity within the community	Equality and Welsh Language Manager	Annually
Support and enable the creation of community groups to ensure everyone has a voice and can participate and help shape the future of our county.	Increased diversity in consultation	Equality and Welsh Language Manager Community Development and Delivery Manager	Ongoing
Become an age friendly county and seek accreditation from the World Health Organisation.	Older people are supported in maintaining their health and well-being. Accreditation from World Health Organisation	Partnerships Officer (Age Friendly Communities)	March 2025
Support the development of a forum for disabled people.	Disabled people have a forum to inform policy making and service delivery.	Equality and Welsh Language Manager Community Development and Delivery Manager	March 2026

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
Work with partners to tackle violence against women and girls and domestic and sexual violence.	Women feel safer within their environment.	Strategic Partnership Manager	Ongoing
Ensure that we have a clear pathway for those with no recourse to public funds.	Assistance and advice is available to those with no recourse to public funds.	Strategic Partnership Manager	March 2026
Improve our use of data analysis and CCTV to prevent crimes and provide evidence to the police when they do take place.	People feel safer within their environments.	Strategic Partnership Manager	March 2025
Improve housing support for refugees and asylum seekers and other marginalised groups.	Marginalised communities receive housing support.	Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships Housing and Communities Manager	March 2025
Become an accredited county of sanctuary and a place of sanctuary for LGBTQ+ migrants.	Monmouthshire is an accredited county of sanctuary.	Strategic Partnership Manager	June 2024
Address period poverty and promote period dignity.	People have access to affordable period products.	Community Wellbeing Development Lead	Ongoing

4. Expand our provision of community-based services that extend people’s healthy life expectancy

Why This Matters

Health inequalities often result from social inequalities. There are huge differences in healthy life expectancy between people living in different communities and clear socio-economic inequalities in behaviours such as eating, exercising and drinking. Alongside this, rising fuel and housing costs are further reducing the available funds for a healthy diet.

Evidence

- Healthy life expectancy for males is 69.8 years, which is the highest in Wales, and 70.7 years for females.
- Those living in the least deprived areas of Monmouthshire expected to live longer than those in the most deprived, by on average 6.3 years for males and 3.6 years for females. Similarly, those in the least deprived parts of Monmouthshire are likely to live in good health for longer, by an average of 10.1 years for males and 11.1 years for females.
- Families with the lowest 10% of household income would have to spend nearly three-quarters of their entire income (after housing costs) to afford the recommended healthy NHS Eatwell plate.
- In 2021/22, 42% of adults with a longstanding illness, disability or infirmity participated in at least one sport or physical activity compared with 68% who did not have a longstanding illness, disability or infirmity.

This objective is related to:

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership	x	Welsh Language	
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	x
Race	x		

Actions

Action	Outcome/Measurable	Responsibility	Timescale
Ensure new walking and cycling infrastructure reaches areas with the lowest rates of physical activity.	People are supported in their physical activity.	Active Travel, Communications and Engagement Manager	March 2027
Continue to provide a broad range of opportunities for people to be healthy and active including the National Exercise Referral Scheme.	People are supported in their physical activity.	Chief Officer – Customer, Culture and Wellbeing	Ongoing
Support community groups in raising awareness of health inequalities and access to information in the most deprived areas.	A reduction in health inequalities through access to information	Chief Officer – Customer, Culture and Wellbeing Equality and Welsh Language Manager	Ongoing
Support community groups to tackle isolation and loneliness with a focus on rural communities.	A reduction in the effects of isolation and loneliness	Community Development and Delivery Manager Equality and Welsh Language Manager	Ongoing

5. Ensure our services are accessible to the public

Why This Matters

Public services play a vital role in the lives of tens of thousands of people very day. Many people face barriers accessing the things they need. This can be physical, like buildings not having accessible toilets, they can be caused by how we present information so not everyone can process it, or it may be people's attitudes to difference.

Evidence

- Only 24% of those aged over 70 are likely to use digital technology to support their health compared to 87% of people aged 16–19.
- Public and private return travel times to services such as doctors' surgeries, libraries or leisure centres in Monmouthshire are higher than the Wales average in every category except one^{vii}.
- 7.3% of Monmouthshire residents were identified as being disabled and limited a lot^{viii}.
- Young Carers are more likely than others of their age to live in deprived areas and experience disruption to their education^{ix}.

This objective is related to:

Age	x	Religion or belief	
Disability	x	Sex	
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	
Marriage or civil partnership		Welsh Language	x
Pregnancy or maternity		Poverty	x
Race	x		

Actions

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
Continue to ensure our public buildings are appropriately	Buildings are fully accessible to all people.	Head of Landlord Services	Ongoing

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
accessible to all service users.			
Work with partners to ensure the provision of accessible toilets in our town centres.	Town centre toilets are accessible to all people.	Head of Landlord Services	March 2028
Ensure that all communications are accessible, including recognising the needs of neurodiverse people.	All people can access communications.	Active Travel, Communications and Engagement Manager	Ongoing
Ensure we use the social model of disability when developing new services and reconfiguring existing ones.	Barriers for disabled people are removed. Social Model of Disability is embedded across the organisation	Equality and Welsh Language Manager Head of Social Care, Safeguarding and Health	March 2025
Promote courses to raise digital skills and literacy amongst all groups through community education courses and our community hubs.	Accessibility is improved through digital skills.	Head of Digital Design and Innovation	March 2028
Increase the number of Welsh speakers employed by the council to improve access.	Welsh speakers can fully access services in their own language.	Equality and Welsh Language Manager	March 2028
Promote the active offer of language	People can access services in their language of choice.	Equality and Welsh Language Manager	March 2025

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
choice in social care.			
Ensure that training on equalities is available to all staff and councillors to improve inclusive decision-making.	Inclusive decision making is improved.	Equality and Welsh Language Manager	March 2025
Review Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process	The Integrated Impact Assessment process is fit for purpose and embedded.	Equality and Welsh Language Manager Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships	December 2024

6. Ensure we have a diverse workforce and a fully inclusive workplace

Why This Matters

When employees trust that they will be treated regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation or age, they are more likely to be happy and productive in their roles. Having an inclusive and accessible workplace helps attract a diverse pool of talent and ensures the organisation can retain the diverse talent we already have.

Evidence

- 73% of the council employees are female.
- 2% of the workforce have indicated that they have a disability.

This objective is related to:

Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Disability	x	Sex	x
Gender reassignment	x	Sexual orientation	x
Marriage or civil partnership		Welsh Language	x
Pregnancy or maternity		Poverty	
Race	x		

Actions

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
Ensure that we attain disability confident level 2 status within the first year of this plan and then work towards levels 3.	Disability Confident Level 2 is attained.	Equality and Welsh Language Manager	June 2024
Put in place measures to support	Neurodiverse colleagues are supported within the workplace.	Equality and Welsh	Ongoing

Action	Outcome	Responsibility	Timescale
and accommodate the needs of neurodiverse colleagues.		Language Manager	
Actively target recruitment opportunities towards groups who are under-represented in our workforce.	Under-represented groups have more representation with the workforce.	Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships	March 2025
Address the data gaps that exist across all protected characteristics (particularly ethnicity and disability) and disaggregate data by across policy areas.	Data gaps are reduced to better inform decision making.	Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships	March 2025
Provide access to inclusion training for all staff to ensure awareness of inclusivity and diversity within the workplace	Diversity within the workforce is celebrated.	Equality and Welsh Language Manager Chief Officer – People, Performance and Partnerships	December 2024
Develop staff networks to raise awareness of under-represented groups within the workforce	Staff networks developed.	Equality and Welsh Language Manager	March 2025

7. Reduce the gender pay gap

Why This Matters

The gender pay gap has wide implications for society. It affects women's pension contributions and results in a higher incidence of poverty and social exclusion in later life.

Evidence

- 89.1% of single-parent households in Wales are headed by women and are the most likely to be living in poverty.^x
- The proportion of women working part-time in Wales remains far higher (39.0% in 2022) than the proportion of men (12.1%).
- The pay gap between men and women persists, as women are on average paid 14.1% less than men in Wales. However, this gap has narrowed slightly between 2010 and 2019.
- Average female weekly pay in the county of Monmouthshire is £559 compared to £633 for males.
- Research by the Equality and Human Rights Commission highlighted that childcare needs and caring responsibilities continue to be a significant barrier to gender equality in employment and education.

This is related to:

Age		Religion or belief	
Disability		Sex	x
Gender reassignment		Sexual orientation	
Marriage or civil partnership		Welsh Language	
Pregnancy or maternity	x	Poverty	x
Race			

Actions

Action	Outcome/Measurable	Responsibility	Timescale
Ensure that career pathways do not limit the ability of part-time staff to progress into senior roles.	Part time staff are not limited in progressing into senior roles.	Head of HR	March 2028
Continue to operate a transparent job evaluation scheme to ensure equitable pay rates.	Equitable pay rates are ensured.	Head of HR	Ongoing
Publish information on the gender pay gap annually, evaluate the reasons for the difference in pay and explore appropriate actions to address them.	Annual publication of gender pay gap information and actions to address this are explored.	Head of HR	Annually

Appendix 1: Consultation

The evidence, proposed objectives and actions have been subject to a four-week consultation period that took place between January and February 2024. As well as a website survey, the consultation was sent to local groups with members possessing protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010.

The level of responses was relatively low, those who did respond were largely supportive of the objectives and actions proposed. There were some views expressed that articulated clear views on gender identity.

We also drew on evidence from other consultations including work done to develop a well-being assessment for the Gwent Public Services Board and the development of an age friendly Monmouthshire. There was a high response level to the consultation on the latter subject. Key issues emerging included: access to public transport, parking in town centres, accessible facilities, better housing for the needs of older people, access to and understanding of digital technology and the discrepancy in health care, depending on where you live.

The draft strategic equality plan benefitted from consideration by the council's People Scrutiny Committee which has helped shape the final version. Feedback included the need to ensure the plan fully reflected the socio-economic challenges faced by rural communities and the challenges faced by women affected by increases changes in the state pension age, often referred to as the WASPI group. Views were also stressed about the importance of differentiating between sex and gender.

These have used to inform the final plan. The plan may continue to evolve as further work is done with community groups to understand the issues they face.

Appendix 2: References

- ⁱ <https://www.gov.wales/anti-racist-wales-action-plan>
- ⁱⁱ <https://www.gov.wales/lgbtq-action-plan-wales>
- ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.gov.wales/advancing-gender-equality-action-plan>
- ^{iv} <https://www.gov.wales/action-disability-right-independent-living-framework-and-action-plan>
- ^v Monmouthshire County Council, Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28.
- ^{vi} Office for National Statistics, Census 2021, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/W06000021/>
- ^{vii} Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/welsh-indexmultiple-deprivation/?lang=en>
- ^{viii} Office for National Statistics, Census 2021, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/W06000021/>
- ^{ix} Equality and Human Rights Monitor 2023: Is Wales Fairer? (ibid)
- ^x Equality and Human Rights Monitor 2023: Is Wales Fairer? <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/our-work/equality-and-human-rights-monitor/equality-and-human-rights-monitor-2023-wales-fairer>

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2025-26

People Scrutiny Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
Special Meeting 18th June 2026 Invite P&O Members	WESP (Welsh in Education Strategic Plan)	To scrutinise performance against the plans.	Sharon Randall Smith Will McLean Cllr Wright	Performance Monitoring
	Strategic Equality Plan 2025-26	To scrutinise the council's progress in delivering the Strategic Equality Objectives for the year 2025-2026.	Pennie Walker	Performance Monitoring
	Welsh Language	To scrutinise the Council's progress in delivery of the Welsh Language objectives 2025-2026.	Pennie Walker	Performance Monitoring
14th July 2026	New Homelessness Legislation	To provide an understanding of the new legislation.	Ian Bakewell Rebecca Cresswell	Policy Development
	Homelessness Update	To scrutinise a progress update.	Ian Bakewell Rebecca Cresswell	Policy Development
22nd September 2026	Youth Service	To conduct pre-decision scrutiny on the 5-year for strategic plan for Youth Work the service.	Josh Klein	Service Review
	Possible Assistive Technology Update	To be confirmed.		

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2025-26

People Scrutiny Committee				
Meeting Date	Subject	Purpose of Scrutiny	Responsibility	Type of Scrutiny
17 th November 2026				
To be confirmed	WHO Age Friendly Communities update	To be confirmed	Councillor Angela Sandles Councillor Ian Chandler	Update Requested
To be confirmed	Poverty and Inequality	To be confirmed	Lucinda Boyland	
9 th February 2027	Homelessness and Housing Support Strategy	To conduct Pre-decision Scrutiny.	Rebecca Cresswell Ian Bakewell	Pre-decision Scrutiny
	Welsh Language Strategy	To scrutinise the Welsh Language Strategy 2027-32 in line with the Welsh Language Standards.	Nia Roberts Pennie Walker Cllr Sandles	Pre-decision Scrutiny
Corporate and Community Plan Items for the Committee's consideration for inclusion into the People Scrutiny Forward Plan:				
Participatory Budgeting Programme				
Race equality action plan for Wales				

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2025-26

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

Monmouthshire's Scrutiny Forward Work Programme 2025-26

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

Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee

Action List

28th May 2026

Minute Item:	Subject	Officer / Member	Outcome
7	To chase a response from the Cabinet Member from the previous meeting, in particular in relation to whether the queries will result in items being added to the work programme	Scrutiny team, Cabinet Member	
7	To feed issued raised through the Corporate Parenting Panel into the work programme	Scrutiny team	
7	To chase up sending a letter to the Health Board regarding assistive technology, as was previously agreed	Scrutiny team	
7	To invite representatives from the Health Board to attend a future meeting to explain their role in relation to assistive technology and provide further clarification to the committee	Scrutiny team	

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Committee / Decision Maker	Meeting date / Decision due	Report Title	Cabinet member	Purpose	Author	Date item added to the planner
Cabinet	Deferred	Pavement Café Policy	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To adopt the pavement café policy as the basis for making decisions on applications for licences	Carl Touhig	4-Oct-22
Cabinet	07-Mar-28	Strategic Equality Plan	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To To seek Council approval of the Strategic Equality Plan 2028-2033 in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty	Pennie Walker	
Council	31-Mar-27	Welsh Language Strategy	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To approve the publication of the Welsh Language Strategy 2027 - 2032 in line with the Welsh Language Standards.	Pennie Walker	19-Feb-26
Council	04-Mar-27	Adoption of Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP)2018-2033	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To consider adoption of RLDP following the public examination by PEDW	Craig O Connor	19-Feb-26
Cabinet	20-Jan-27	Caldicot Placemaking Plan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To consider adoption of the Caldicot Place making Plan	Craig O Connor	19-Feb-26
Cabinet	09-Dec-26	Strategic Risk Assessment	Ben Callard - Resources	To provide Cabinet with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority.	Hannah Carter	19-Feb-26
Cabinet	09-Dec-26	Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) Annual letter	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To fulfil the expectation of the PSOW that their report is brought to the attention of Cabinet.	Annette Evans	2-Mar-26
Council	12-Nov-26	Annual Director's Report for Social Care	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	Present the annual report to Council	Jane Rodgers	3-Mar-26
Council	12-Nov-26	Safeguarding Annual Evaluation Report	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	Present the annual evaluation of safeguarding across Council services	Jane Rodgers	3-Mar-26
Council	24-Sep-26	Self-Assessment Report 2025/26	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To seek Council approval of the self-assessment report 2025/26 to ensure that members have a clear and transparent assessment of the authority's performance during the year ending 31 March 2026 in line with requirements outlined in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.	Hannah Carter	10-Feb-26
Cabinet	16-Sep-26	Monmouth Wye AT Bridge Land	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek Cabinet permission to purchase land for the proposed Monmouth Wye Active Travel Bridge.	Nick Tulp	3-Jun-26
Cabinet	16-Sep-26	Local Flood Risk Management Strategy '	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	To seek Cabinet approval of the new Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.'	Ross Price	2-Jun-26
Cabinet	08-Jul-26	Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023: Monmouthshire County Council's Annual Report	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek approval of the Social Partnership Duty Report 2026, setting out how the authority will build on existing practice and work collaboratively with trade unions to ensure compliance with the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023.	Philippa Green	9-Feb-26
Cabinet	08-Jul-26	Statutory consultation regarding Durand Nursery	Laura Wright - Education	Following the Statutory Objection Period, this report seeks to provide Cabinet with final feedback on the Statutory consultation process concerning the nursery at Durand Primary School, and asks Cabinet Members for a decision on whether proposals should proceed to implementation	Matthew Jones	5-May-26

ICMD	07-Jul-26	Chief Officer decision for acquisition of plots of land for the Undy to Rogiet Severn Tunnel Junction (STJ) Links active travel route'	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek authorisation to proceed with the purchase of a defined number of parcels of land for provision for an active travel (walking, wheeling and cycling) path alongside the B4245 between Undy and Rogiet, and to request authority to agree terms to be delegated to the Chief Officer for Infrastructure and the Cabinet Member for Resources, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs, Housing and Tourism. '	Madeleine Boase	
Council	25-Jun-26	Chepstow Transport Update		Cllr Pavia submitted a motion to Council requesting: 1. An update on the current status of previous commitments made by the Council in the Chepstow Transport Study 2. Available options for progressing WeITAG Stage 3 3. A clear timetable for engagement and decision-making with Gloucestershire County Council, Welsh Government and UK Government Partners. This report seeks to respond to the motion by providing the requested information.	Deb Hill Howells	5-Jun-26
Council	25-Jun-26	Code of Corporate Governance	Ben Callard - Resources	For Full Council to approve the revised Code of Corporate Governance and it's inclusion into the Councils Constitution following it's endorsement by the Governance & Audit Committee on 16/04/26.	Jan Furtek	7-May-26
Council	25-Jun-26	Re:fit Phase 2	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	To seek approval to submit a Salix loan application to enable MCC to progress with the next programme of energy efficiency works.	Deb Hill Howells	9-Apr-26
Council	25-Jun-26	Panel Performance Assessment	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To receive the Panel Performance Assessment report and the authority's response to the recommendations.	Matt Gatehouse	17-Mar-26
Cabinet	10-Jun-26	Investment Package for Caldicot Leisure Centre	Angela Sandles - Engagement	Consideration of proposed investment to improve facilities at Caldicot Leisure Centre	Craig O Connor	19-Feb-26
Cabinet	10-Jun-26	Llanfoist to Abergavenny Active Travel Bridge	Sara Burch - Rural, Tourism & Housing	To update cabinet on the progress of the Llanfoist to Abergavenny active travel bridge project and to seek approval to enter into the stage 2 contract with updated cost figures	Nick Tulp	10-May-26
Cabinet	10-Jun-26	Building the Foundations for Data and AI Enabled Public Services	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To present the business case for foundational investment in data and AI infrastructure necessary to secure programme funding and deliver sustainable service benefits and outcomes.	Peter Davies	27-Apr-26
Cabinet	10-Jun-26	Allocation of Crick Road S106 Offsite Recreation Funding - Portskewett Recreation Hall and Caldicot Skatepark	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To seek Cabinet approval for the allocation of Section 106 offsite recreation funding received from the Crick Road development towards Portskewett Recreation Hall and Caldicot Skatepark	Mike Moran	
Cabinet	10-Jun-26	Strategic Risk Assessment	Ben Callard - Resources	To provide Cabinet with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority.	Hannah Carter	19-Feb-26

Cabinet	20-May-26	Self Assessment	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To enable Cabinet to input to the development of the authority's Self Assessment at an early stage. The assessment will subsequently be considered by scrutiny committees before being subject to a decision of full Council in September	Matt Gatehouse	20-Apr-26
Cabinet	20-May-26	Panel Performance Assessment	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To consider the Panel Performance Assessment report and the council's response to the recommendations	Matt Gatehouse	20-Apr-26
Cabinet	20-May-26	S106 Affordable Housing Contributions	Sara Burch	To recommend options to commit and spend some of the contributions	Louise Corbett	#
ICMD	20-May-26	REVOKING THE USK AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA ORDER 2005	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To request the Cabinet Member (Cllr Angela Sandles) to agree to the revocation of the Usk Air Quality Management Area Order 2005.	Huw Owen	9-Apr-26
Council	14/05/26	Local Resolution Protocol	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To seek Council's approval and adoption of a new Local Resolution Protocol to deal with low level	James Williams	15-Apr-26
Council	14/05/26	Appointments to Outside Bodies	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To appoint representatives to serve on outside bodies.'	John Pearson	15-Apr-26
Council	14/05/26	Appointment of Committees	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To appoint representatives to serve on outside bodies.'	John Pearson	15-Apr-26
Council	14-May-26	Representation of Political Groups	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To review the representation of different political groups on the bodies to which the Council makes appointments pursuant to Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.	James Williams	15-Apr-26
Cabinet	15-Apr-26	Consultation concerning the provision of Early Education at Durand Primary School	Laura Wright - Education	To provide Members with feedback following the statutory consultation process concerning proposals to replace the Local Authority Nursery with a non maintained setting at Durand Primary School	Matthew Jones	4-Mar-26
ICMD	08-Apr-26	Goldwire Lane ICMD - Prohibition of Driving Except for Access, Goldwire Lane, Monmouth	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	To seek Cabinet Member approval to proceed to make permanent the MCC Goldwire Lane prohibition of driving (except for access) traffic order	Graham Kinsella	26-Mar-26
ICMD	08-Apr-26	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	Ben Callard - Resources	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications for the Welsh Church Fund Working Group Meeting 4 held on Thursday 05th March 2026.	Dave Jarrett	6-Mar-26
Cabinet	30-Mar-26	Proposed acquisition of land to construct a road diversion at Llanthony Valley	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	To seek Cabinet approval to the acquisition of land to enable the Highway Authority to construct a road realignment away from the land slip at Llanthony Valley.	Deb Hill Howells	19-Feb-26
Council	05-Mar-26	Corporate Parenting Strategy 2025 - 2028	Ian Chandler - Social Care &	Reason is to endorse a new Corporate Parenting	Jane Rodgers	24-Oct-25
Council	05-Mar-26	2026/27 Capital Strategy and 2026/27 Treasury Management Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources	To approve the Council's 2026/27 Capital and Treasury Management Strategies, including the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy.	Jon Davies	3-Dec-25
Council	05-Mar-26	COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION and REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS FOR 2026/27	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	3-Dec-25
Council	05-Mar-26	PUBLICATION OF PAY POLICY STATEMENT AS REQUIRED BY THE LOCALISM ACT	Ben Callard - Resources	To approve the publication of Monmouthshire County Council's Pay Policy, in compliance with the Localism Act.	Philippa Green	14-Jan-26

Cabinet	04-Mar-26	2026-27 WCF/Mon Farm treasury strategy	Ben Callard - Resources	To present to Cabinet for approval the 2026/27 Investment and Fund strategy for Trust Funds for which the Authority acts as sole or custodian trustee. To approve the 2026/27 grant allocation to Local Authority beneficiaries of the Welsh Church Fund.	Jon Davies	12-Jun-25
Cabinet	04-Mar-26	Revenue and Capital Budget 2026-27 – Final proposals following scrutiny and public consultation	Ben Callard - Resources	To update Cabinet with the consultation responses to the draft budget proposals issued in respect of the Capital and Revenue budgets for 2026/27. To make recommendations to Council on the Capital and Revenue budgets including the level of Council Tax for 2026/27. To receive the statutory report of the Responsible Financial Officer on the budget process and the adequacy of reserves. To receive the Responsible Financial Officer's Prudential Indicator calculations for capital financing.	Jon Davies	3-Dec-25
Cabinet	04-Mar-26	Property Acquisition for use as Temporary Accommodation - withdrawn 11/02/26	Sara Burch	To seek authorisation to proceed with the purchase of a residential 3 bed property and continue to use it as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) to support pressures linked to the availability of temporary accommodation.	Louise Corbett	2-Feb-26
Cabinet	04-Mar-26	To consider the purchase of a Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) property Castlewood	Sara Burch	To consider the purchase of a Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) property Castlewood, Usk following receipt of the owner's intent to sell	Louise Corbett	2-Feb-26
Cabinet	04-Mar-26	Monmouthshire Draft Local Growth Fund Investment Plan	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To present to elected members UK Government's new Local Growth Fund and Monmouthshire Draft Fund Investment Plan.	Hannah Jones	12-Feb-26
Cabinet	04-Mar-26	To agree funding options for additional work at the former Deri View Primary School Site	Ben Callard - Resources	To review and agree funding options for additional work at the former Deri View Primary school site, this needs to be completed prior to the relocation of Ysgol Y Fenni to the site.	Nikki Wellington	16-Feb-26
ICMD	25-Feb-26	Submission of Section 6 Biodiversity duty report to WG	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	To submit report outlining how the Council maintains and enhances biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems	Craig O Connor	7-Jan-26
Cabinet	11-Feb-26	Cultural Strategy	Sara Burch		Tracey Thomas	20-May-25
Cabinet	11-Feb-26	2025/26 Budget - Financial update 3	Ben Callard - Resources	To provide the third update of the financial year of the Councils progress against the 2025/26 revenue and capita budget	Jon Davies	12-Jun-25
Cabinet	11-Feb-26	26/27 Placemaking Delivery	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	To agree funding allocations for Welsh Government Transforming Towns and Pride in Place. Impact Fund.	Craig O Connor	19-Dec-25
Cabinet	11-Feb-26	Development of a Supported Accommodation Provision for Care Experienced Young People	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	To provide details and seek approval for the acquisition and refurbishing of a residential property in Monmouth for the purpose of developing a supported accommodation provision for care experienced children.	Jane Rodgers	16-Jan-26

ICMD	28-Jan-26	Local Government (Wales) Act 1994 The Local Authorities (PRECEPTS)(WALES) Regulations 1995 - Determination of Payment Schedule	Ben Callard - Resources	To determine the schedule of precept payments to precepting authorities for 2026/27 as required by statute and following the results of the consultation process.	Ruth Donovan	28-Jan-26
Council	22-Jan-26	Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026/27	Ben Callard - Resources	The purpose of this report is to: • present arrangements for the implementation of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and to approve it for 2026/27. • agree to adopt the amendments to the Regulations, proposed by Welsh Government, • affirm that annual uprating amendments will be carried out each year without a requirement to adopt the whole Council Tax Reduction Scheme.	Ruth Donovan	28-Nov-25
Cabinet	21-Jan-26	2026/27 Draft Revenue & Capital budget proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	12-Jun-25
Cabinet	21-Jan-26	Agree S106 Funding for Caldicot Multi-User Route that connects the newly constructed Caldicot Links/Greenway Active Travel route with the Country Park	Sara Burch	To agree additional funding for the Caldicot Multi-User Route	Colette Bosley	15-Oct-25
Cabinet	21-Jan-26	Disposal of two farm cottages at Leechpool Holdings	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek approval for the disposal of two vacant farm cottages located in Leechpool Holdings, Portskewett, identified as surplus to requirements following internal review with services that no longer have an identified need.	Nick Keyse	26-Nov-25
Cabinet	21-Jan-26	Review of Nursery provision at Durand Primary School	Laura Wright - Education	To seek permission to enter into statutory consultation processes regarding proposals to replace the Local Authority Nursery at Durand Primary School with a non maintained setting.	Matthew Jones	23/12/25
ICMD	14-Jan-26	Museum Service - Collections Rationalisation	Sara Burch - Rural Affairs, Housing and Tourism	To agree the removal of 2 collections - one of newspapers and one of books from the museum collections, to offer to more appropriate homes. (This is part of a series of similar decisions)	Rachael Rogers	2-Dec-25
ICMD	14-Jan-26	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	Ben Callard - Resources	The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications for the Welsh Church Fund Working Group Meeting 3 held on Thursday 04th December 2025	Dave Jarrett	10-Dec-25
ICMD	14-Jan-26	Revoking the Usk Air Quality Management Area Order 2005	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To inform the Cabinet Member (Cllr Angela Sandles) of the need to revoke the Usk Air Quality Management Area Order 2005 and agree the principal steps for doing so.	Huw Owen	17-Dec-25
ICMD	14-Jan-26	Annual Health and Safety Report 2024/25	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek the cabinet members approval of the 2024/25 Annual Health and Safety Report including priorities for 2025/26	Kate Thompson	19-Dec-25
ICMD	17-Dec-25	Annual Performance Report - Planning	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	Report the Annual Performance Report to Welsh Government	Andrew Jones	15-Oct-25
ICMD	17-Dec-25	Section 6 Report to Welsh Government on Biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Report of Councils actions taken to help maintain and enhance biodiversity	Kate Stinchcombe/Colette Bosley	15-Oct-25

ICMD	17-Dec-25	Various Traffic Regulation Orders - Amendment Order No 18	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	The report seeks Cabinet Member approval to proceed with the making and implementation of the MCC Traffic Regulation, speed limit and parking regulations Consolidation Order 2019 (Amendment Order No.18) 2025	Gareth Freeman	26-Nov-25
ICMD	17-Dec-25	Council TaxBase 2026/27 and associated matters	Ben Callard - Resources	To agree the Council Tax base figure for submission to Welsh Government, together with the collection rate to be applied for 2026/27 and to make other necessary related statutory decisions.	Ruth Donovan	28-Nov-25
Cabinet	10-Dec-25	Socially Responsible Procurement Policy	Ben Callard - Resources	1. To approve the adoption of the Socially Responsible Procurement Policy. 2. To delegate authority to approve any subsequent updates to reflect national Guidance and/ or meet new legislative requirements, to the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer for Resources, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Resources.	Cath Fallon	20-Oct-25
Cabinet	10-Dec-25	Joint Committee of the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding	Joint Committee of the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales - to consider a Deed of Variation to the current Joint Committee	Jane Rogers	24-Oct-25
Cabinet	10-Dec-25	Strategic Risk Assessment	Ben Callard - Resources	To provide Cabinet with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority.	Hannah Carter	29-Oct-25
Cabinet	10-Dec-25	Community and Corporate Plan - Q2 Progress Update	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To provide Cabinet with an update on the progress that has been made to deliver the commitments set out in the Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28.	Hannah Carter	29-Oct-25
Cabinet	10-Dec-25	Approval of Placemaking Plans - Monmouth, Abergavenny, Magor and Undy	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	Approval of Placemaking Plans - Monmouth, Abergavenny, Magor and Undy	Craig O Connor	17-Nov-25
Cabinet	10-Dec-25	Public Services Ombudsman for Wales Annual letter 2024-25	Angela Sandles - Engagement	1) To consider the data in this letter, to understand MCC's performance on complaints, including any patterns or trends and our compliance with recommendations made by the PSOW's office. 2) To inform the PSOW of the outcome of MCC's considerations and any proposed actions on the above matters.	Annette Evans	
Council	04-Dec-25	Annual Safeguarding Report	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Diane Corrister	18-Jul-25
Council	04-Dec-25	Director's Annual Report	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Jane Rogers	18-Jul-25
Council	04-Dec-25	Regional Partnership Board Annual Report 2024/2025	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Natasha Harris (Torfaen)	24-Oct-25
Council	04-Dec-25	Appointment of Paul Matthews to the board of CCR Energy Ltd			James Williams	27-Oct-25
Council	04-Dec-25	Annual Report of the Standards Committee 2024/25	Angela Sandles - Engagement		James Williams	27-Oct-25
ICMD	26-Nov-25	LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES) ACT 1994 THE LOCAL AUTHO	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek Member approval of the proposals for consultation purposes regarding payments to precepting authorities during the 2026/27 financial year as required by statute	Peter Davies	7-Nov-25
Cabinet	19-Nov-25	Destination Management Plan	Sara Burch & Paul Griffiths		Collette Bosley	17-Apr-25
Cabinet	19-Nov-25	2025/26 Revenue & Capital Monitoring Update 2	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	12-Jun-25

Cabinet	19-Nov-25	Panel Performance Assessment	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To provide an update on the proposed approach for the Council's Panel Performance Assessment which is a requirement under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.	Matt Gatehouse	28-Aug-25
Cabinet	19-Nov-25	Car Parking Review	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy	That Cabinet endorses the following recommendations 1.That Cabinet agrees the strategic objectives for the Council's parking strategy 2.That Cabinet agrees the proposed MCC actions in response to the recommendations made in the Monmouthshire car parking review	Craig O Connor	9-Oct-25
Cabinet	19-Nov-25	Inclusion Strategy and Additional Learning Needs Policy	Laura Wright - Education	The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an opportunity to consider the Inclusion Strategy and the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Policy to ensure that they are fit for purpose and meet the local priorities as outlined in the Learning Place section of the Community and Corporate Plan.	Morganna Wagstaff	13-Oct-25
Cabinet	19-Nov-25	Medium Term Financial Plan update - November 2025	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Nov-25
Council	23-Oct-25	RLDP for Adoption	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Rachel Lewis	17-Apr-25
Cabinet	15-Oct-25	A strategy to take forward a whole authority approach to wellbeing and prevention	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Jane Rogers	19-Jun-25
Cabinet	15-Oct-25	Connect to Work and Future Focus programmes	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Hannah Jones / Rory Clifford	21-Jul-25
Cabinet	15-Oct-25	2025/26 Revenue Monitoring Update 1	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	12/7/25
ICMD	08-Oct-25	WELSH CHURCH FUND WORKING GROUP	Ben Callard - Resources	1.1 The purpose of this report is to make recommendations to Cabinet on the Schedule of Applications for the Welsh Church Fund Working Group Meeting 2 held on Thursday 18th September 2025.	Dave Jarrett	
ICMD	24-Sep-25	Health & Safety Annual Report	ben Callard - Resources		Kate Thompson	5-Aug-25
Council	18-Sep-25	Self-assessment 2024/25		To seek Council approval of the self-assessment report 2024/25 in line with requirements outlined in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.	richard Jones	10-Jun-25
Cabinet	17-Sep-25	Review of Housing Support Grant Programme. County of Sanctuary Strategy	Sara Burch Angela Sandles - Engagement		Ian Bakewell	23-May-25
Cabinet	17-Sep-25			To approve a county of sanctuary strategy which establishes clear principles which will run through all council services and which promotes inclusion and welcome across the wider community.	Sharran Lloyd and Jane Harvey	27-May-25
Cabinet	17-Sep-25	Real Living Wage Employer Accreditation	ben Callard - Resources	Further to Cabinet's decision on Wednesday 6th November 2024, and an evaluation of the authority's supply chain, to bring forward a further report detailing the plan to pay the real living wage rate to employees of third parties contracted to work at the authority's sites, and to seek approval to pursue accreditation as a Real Living Wage employer.	Philippa Green	13-Jun-25

Cabinet	17-Sep-25	Proposed endorsement of the Monmouthshire Local Area Energy Plan	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment	Welsh Government commissioned the production of Local Area Energy Plans for Local Authority areas which will be used to develop a regional and national Energy Plan. The Local Area Energy Plan for Monmouthshire provides data on the energy requirements of the county and the transition that will be required to support carbon neutrality of the energy demands. The report seeks Cabinets endorsement of the Local Area Energy Plan to enable the development of the regional Area Energy Plan and a supporting Investment Prospectus.	Deb Hill Howells	28-Jul-25
ICMD	20-Aug-25	Highway Traffic Regulation Amendment Order No 17	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Gareth Freeman	4-Aug-25
ICMD	23-Jul-25	Lloyds tour of Britain Stage 5 Pontypool to Tumble	Angela Sandles - Engagement		Nick John	2-Jul-25
ICMD	23-Jul-25	Welsh Church Fund Working Group	Ben Callard - Resources		Dave Jarrett	2-Jul-25
Council	17-Jul-25	Strategic Director's Report, Children, Learning, Skills and the Economy'	Laura Wright - Education		Will Mclean	18-Jun-25
Council	17-Jul-25	Chepstow Integrated Transport LUF project			Deb Hill Howells	24-Jun-25
Cabinet	16-Jul-25	Shire Hall Delivery Stage - Financial Approval	Ben Callard - Resources		Tracey Thomas	25-Mar-25
Cabinet	16-Jul-25	Play Sufficiency Update	Angela Sandles - Engagement	Play sufficiency assessment update.	Nick John	28-Mar-25
Cabinet	16-Jul-25	ADD AS FIRST ITEM Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023: Monmouthshire County Council's Annual Report 2024/25 Revenue & Capital monitoring Outturn (incl early update on 2025/26)	Ben Callard - Resources	To seek approval of the Social Partnership Duty Report 2025, setting out how the Council will build on existing practice, and work collaboratively with trade unions, to ensure compliance with the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023.	Philippa Green	6-Jun-25
Cabinet	16-Jul-25		Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	12-Jun-25
Cabinet	16-Jul-25		2026/27 Revenue & Capital MTFP update and process		Ben Callard - Resources	Jon Davies
Council	26-Jun-25	Licensing Act Policy 2025	Angela Sandles - Engagement	Policy has to be approved by Full Council and it needs to be in place by 1 st July 2025	Linda O Gorman	10-Jan-25
Council	26-Jun-25	Appointments to Outside Bodies	Angela Sandles - Engagement		John Pearson	23-May-25
Council	26-Jun-25	Separation of Licensing Functions	Angela Sandles - Engagement		Linda O Gorman	28-May-25
Council	26-Jun-25	Strategic OfficerLeadership and Organisation Structure changes	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy		Paul Matthews	5-Jun-25
Cabinet	25-Jun-25	Nature Recovery Action Plan & Green Infrastructure Strategy	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Collette Bosley	17-Apr-25
Cabinet	25-Jun-25	Strategic Risk Assessment	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To provide Cabinet with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority.	richard Jones	10-Jun-25
Cabinet	21-May-25	Y Prentis Update	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Hannah Jones	26-Feb-25

Cabinet	21-May-25	Digital, Data and Technology Collaboration	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy	To develop proposals to build on existing collaborative arrangements in place for the provision of technology services through the Shared Resource Service. Expanding on these to include digital and data services will generate economies of scale enabling the authority to access expertise to accelerate progress against delivery of priorities set in the Community and Corporate Plan.	Peter Davies & Matt Gatehouse & Sian Hayward	14-Mar-25
Cabinet	21-May-25	Active Gwent Sports Partnership	Angela Sandles - Engagement	For Monmouthshire County Council to formally enter into the Active Gwent sport partnership.	Nick John	28-Mar-25
Cabinet	21-May-25	Marches Forward Partnership	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy		Peter Davies / Cath Fallon	1-Apr-25
Cabinet	21-May-25	Placemaking Grant 25/26 & 26/27	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Craig O Connor	29-Apr-25
Council	15-May-25	SAC Membership Report	Martyn Groucutt - Education	To inform Council of SAC recommendations to appoint members of SAC	Sharon Randall-Smith	16-Apr-25
Council	10-Apr-25	Senior Pay Review	Ben Callard - Resources		Julie Anthony	3-Mar-25
Council	10-Apr-25	Constitution Review	Angela Sandles - Engagement		James Williams	25-Mar-25
ICMD	09-Apr-25	PSPO Lane Closure to prevent fly tipping & off roading	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Mark Cleaver	13-Mar-25
ICMD	09-Apr-25	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 4	Ben Callard - Resources			
Cabinet	02-Apr-25	Reponse to Boundary Commission Electoral Review Consultation	Angela Sandles - Engagement		John Pearson	12-Feb-25
Cabinet	02-Apr-25	Marches Forward Partnership	Mary Ann Brocklesby - Whole Authority Strategy		Peter Davies - Lead (Cath Fallon)	3-Mar-25
ICMD	26-Mar-25	Proposal to increase the fee payments to Monmouthshire Foster Carers	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Charlotte Drury	4-Feb-25
ICMD	12-Mar-25	Highway Traffic Regulation Amendment Order No 16	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment			
Council	06-Mar-25	2025/26 Final Budget sign off including CT resolution	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24
Council	06-Mar-25	2025/26 Capital Strategy & Treasury Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24
Council	06-Mar-25	Contract Procedure Rules	Ben Callard - Resources		Scott James	9-Jan-25
Council	06-Mar-25	Publication of the Councils Pay Policy	Ben Callard - Resources	To approve the publication of Monmouthshire County Council's Pay Policy, in compliance with the Localism Act.	Matt Gatehouse / Pip Green	17-Jan-25
Council	06-Mar-25	Appointment of Chief Officer - Head of Transport - Exempt info	Catrin Maby - Climate Change and Environment		Deb Hill Howells	21-Jan-25
Cabinet	05-Mar-25	2025/26 Final Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	05-Mar-25	2025/26 WCF/Mon Farm Strategy	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	05-Mar-25	Approval of a Discretionary Policy for Council Tax Premiums	Ben Callard - Resources		Ruth Donovan	27-Jan-25
ICMD	26-Feb-25	County of Sanctuary: Homes for Ukraine	Angela Sandles - Engagement	To confirm future support arrangements for Ukranian's living in Monmouthshire as part of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme following changes to the national arrangement for both funding & visas	Richard Drinkwater/Matt Gatehouse	7-Feb-25
ICMD	26-Feb-25	Housing Allocations Policy				
Cabinet	19-Feb-25	2024/25 Revenue and Capital Monitoring Month 9	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24

Cabinet	19-Feb-25	UK Shared Prosperity Fund post March 2025 – financial implications and impact	Paul Griffiths - Sustainable Economy		Hannah Jones	10-Jul-24
ICMD	29-Jan-25	2025/26 Community Council and Police Precepts final	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	17-Dec-24
Council	23-Jan-25	Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2025/26	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24
Council	23-Jan-25	Council Diary 2025/26	Angela Sandles - Engagement		John Pearson	
Council	23-Jan-25	GWENT REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BOARD (RPB) AREA PLAN AND RPB ANNUAL REPORT 23/24	Ian Chandler - Social Care & Safeguarding		Natasha Harris (Torfaen)	
Cabinet	22-Jan-25	2025/26 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	4-Jun-24
Cabinet	22-Jan-25	Education Middle Tier	Martyn Groucutt - Education		Will McLean	20-Nov-24
Cabinet	22-Jan-25	Business case for the purchase of a property in Abergavenny to develop supported accommodation for care experienced young people	Ben Callard - Resources		Jane Rogers	7-Jan-25
ICMD	15-Jan-25	Welsh Church Fund Working Group - meeting 3	Ben Callard - Resources		Dave Jarrett	13-Jun-24
ICMD	15-Jan-25	Decision to transfer Dixton Archive from Monmouth Museum to Herefordshire Record Office			Rachael Rogers	9-Dec-24
ICMD	18-Dec-24	2025/26 Community Council and Police Precepts draft	Ben Callard - Resources		Jon Davies	13-Jun-24

Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of People Scrutiny Committee held at The Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 28th May, 2026 at 10.00 am

Councillors Present

County Councillor Jackie Strong (Chair)
County Councillors: Jan Butler,
Christopher Edwards, Penny Jones, Sue Riley,
Maria Stevens, Martyn Groucutt, John Crook and
Angela Sandles

Officers in Attendance

Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Craig O'Connor, Chief Officer, Place and
Community Well-being
Stacey Jones, Performance/Finance and Resources
Manager

APOLOGIES: Councillors Simon Howarth and Maureen Powell

1. Election of Chair

Jackie Strong was proposed by John Crook, seconded by Maria Stevens. There were no other nominations and the vote was carried.

2. Appointment of Vice Chair

John Crook was proposed by Martyn Groucutt, seconded by Maria Stevens. There were no other nominations and the vote was carried. It was clarified that Councillor Crook is now a permanent member of the committee, replacing Councillor Riley.

3. Apologies for Absence

Maureen Powell (recovering from operation). Simon Howarth, Sue Riley as substitute.

4. Declarations of Interest

None.

5. Public Open Forum

None.

6. Investment Package for Caldicot Leisure Centre: Consideration of proposed investment to improve facilities at Caldicot Leisure Centre

Cabinet Member Angela Sandles introduced the report:

The report sets out a proposed investment in Caldicot Leisure Centre to ensure it remains a key strategic leisure asset for the south of the county. The investment aligns with wider council objectives, including healthier communities, improved

wellbeing, sustainable services, and modern community infrastructure. The need for investment has been recognised for some time, with previous attempts to secure Levelling Up Fund support unsuccessful.

The proposal represents a shift in approach: instead of waiting for external funding, the Council is looking to deliver achievable improvements using its own resources. It is presented as a practical and deliverable step forward, ensuring progress is not delayed by lack of grant funding. The investment would complement other recent improvements in Caldicot, supporting a more coordinated approach across the site.

Overall, the proposal aims to modernise facilities, improve customer experience, protect the centre's role within the MonLife portfolio, and support long-term sustainability. The report is framed as an opportunity to move from aspiration to action, delivering realistic and meaningful improvements.

Stacey Jones delivered a presentation, covering the following points:

The purpose of the proposal is to invest in and refurbish the first-floor fitness suite at Caldicot Leisure Centre. The scheme is intended to modernise the existing facility, improve the overall customer experience, increase capacity, and support growth in membership. It is positioned as a necessary intervention to protect the long-term sustainability of the Council's leisure service by ensuring that the offer remains relevant and attractive to users.

The rationale for investment is based on the current condition of the facilities, which are dated and no longer meet modern expectations. The existing fitness equipment is over 18 years old and is no longer considered fit for purpose. Without investment, there is a recognised risk to the sustainability of the service, as customer retention and growth may decline. This presents a direct financial risk, given that fitness memberships represent a significant source of income for the leisure service.

The scope of the scheme includes the refurbishment and reconfiguration of the main gym and first-floor areas, with the creation of a modern 40-station fitness suite. Improvements will also be made to smaller gym areas, studios, multi-purpose spaces, and circulation areas to enhance usability and flow. The project includes a full refurbishment of toilet facilities (male, female, and accessible), as well as upgrades to core infrastructure such as flooring, lighting, power, data, and decoration. In addition, there will be a full replacement of fitness equipment, supported by a significant investment in new, modern equipment.

The funding approach combines capital funding of approximately £300,000 with borrowing of just over £300,000. The borrowing element will be repaid over a 10-year period, with annual repayments of around £40,000. These repayments are expected to be met through increased income generated by additional memberships as a result of the improved facilities.

Income assumptions underlying the proposal indicate that an increase of around 100 additional memberships would generate approximately £41,000 per year, which would be sufficient to cover the borrowing costs. Confidence in these projections is

based on evidence from other sites where similar investment has led to measurable growth in membership.

A number of key risks have been identified. These include cost uncertainty until final design work and surveys are completed, as well as the potential for issues related to asbestos or ageing infrastructure. There is also a risk of service disruption during the works, which are estimated to take between 12 and 15 weeks, with alternative provision to be explored during this period. In addition, there is an income risk if membership growth is slower or lower than anticipated.

In conclusion, the proposal is presented as a targeted and deliverable investment aimed at modernising an under-invested asset, protecting income streams, and supporting healthier communities. It forms part of a wider package of improvements at Caldicot Leisure Centre, contributing to a coordinated and comprehensive enhancement of the site.

Questions

Stacey Jones answered the members' questions with Craig O'Connor:

What evidence is there that there is sufficient demand for the upgraded facilities? Has there been meaningful consultation with users and residents?

There is clear evidence of demand for upgraded facilities, informed by ongoing engagement with the existing customer base and regular monitoring of membership patterns. Membership cancellations are routinely reviewed, and feedback consistently identifies dissatisfaction with the current upstairs fitness offer. Users report that the existing provision is outdated, with ageing and unreliable equipment that is no longer fit for purpose, particularly when compared to other sites where members pay the same fee but receive a more modern experience.

In addition to this ongoing customer feedback, wider engagement with users and the community indicates that demand would increase if the facility were modernised. This engagement demonstrates that the condition and quality of the fitness offer is a key factor affecting both retention and potential growth in membership.

Will the leisure centre be competitive compared to other local facilities?

At present, the leisure centre is not fully competitive with other local facilities, primarily due to the outdated nature of its fitness provision. The ageing equipment and lack of modern facilities place it at a disadvantage compared to alternative providers offering more up-to-date environments for the same or similar cost. Investment in upgraded facilities would address these issues and bring the site in line with current expectations of leisure users. Evidence from comparable sites shows that improvements to facilities typically lead to increased membership levels and higher usage. As such, modernisation is expected to significantly enhance the centre's competitiveness within the local market.

Who will benefit most from the upgraded facilities (e.g. families, schools, older residents, disabled users)?

The upgraded facilities are intended to be inclusive and accessible, benefiting a broad range of user groups across the community. The design and equipment will support school pupils, including through lunchtime and after-school use, as well as families and general community users seeking improved fitness and leisure opportunities. In addition, the upgrades will accommodate users who require accessible facilities, ensuring that the centre can be used by individuals with a wide range of needs. Overall, the improvements are designed to provide a modern, inclusive offer that is usable and beneficial to all sections of the community rather than targeting a single user group.

How will the investment attract new users, and how will it be promoted?

The investment is expected to attract new users by delivering a modernised facility that aligns with current expectations and demand for fitness services. The planned opening date of January 2027 has been deliberately selected to coincide with the peak period for new memberships, when demand for health and fitness services is typically at its highest.

A comprehensive promotional approach will be implemented to maximise engagement. This will include digital promotion and the use of QR codes at sites, alongside direct engagement through schools and communication channels with parents. The council's marketing and leisure teams will play a central role in promoting the upgraded offer, supported by promotion across other council services and venues.

In addition, collaboration with town councils and sports development teams will help extend reach into the wider community. This combined approach brings together existing customer engagement with broader outreach activity, ensuring that awareness of the upgraded facilities reaches both current users and potential new customers.

Is the funding already in place, or will the project be put on hold until funding is guaranteed?

The funding required for the project is already in place, with a capital match funding pot having been earmarked for the Council. This funding is available for the 2026–27 financial year and can be drawn down if the scheme receives approval. As the funding has already been set aside, there is no anticipated delay in accessing it, and the project would not need to be put on hold pending confirmation of funding.

Is the borrowing subject to affordability, and what happens if the refurbishment goes over budget? Is there a contingency?

Borrowing for the project is subject to affordability; however, analysis undertaken to date indicates that the scheme is affordable within current projections. Leisure service income is performing above forecast, which supports confidence in the overall funding model and its sustainability.

In terms of managing financial risk, a 10% contingency has been built into the project costs, providing a buffer against unforeseen expenditure. In addition, further risk allowances—such as approximately £30,000 for potential issues including asbestos or electrical works—have been incorporated. While there is flexibility to review affordability

and borrowing requirements if costs change, the project is currently considered deliverable within the agreed financial envelope.

Is the £300k for equipment a separate amount, or part of the overall cost?

The £300,000 allocated for equipment forms part of the overall project funding envelope and is not an additional or separate amount. The total scheme cost is broadly divided between building and refurbishment works and investment in new equipment, with both elements included within the same overall budget.

How will the scheme ensure accessibility, particularly for an ageing population and people with disabilities?

The scheme will ensure accessibility by incorporating a range of gym equipment designed to be inclusive and suitable for users of all abilities. The internal layout will be reconfigured to improve accessibility, including increased space between equipment to support ease of movement. This will enable better access for wheelchair users and individuals with mobility needs. Overall, the approach is to provide the most flexible and inclusive equipment and layout possible within the constraints of the existing building, ensuring that the facility can accommodate a wide range of users, including an ageing population and those with disabilities.

Will the upgrades to toilets and facilities comply with current legal requirements, including recent guidance on single-sex provision?

All refurbishment works will take account of current legislation and any recent changes in guidance to ensure full compliance. The upgraded toilet and facility provision will meet applicable legal requirements and recognised standards, including those relating to single-sex provision where relevant. Furthermore, the design and delivery of the scheme will remain responsive to any new or emerging legal requirements, ensuring that compliance is maintained throughout the project.

Does the scheme risk focusing too much on accessible toilets rather than ensuring full accessibility of the gym equipment and wider facility?

The scheme does not focus solely on accessible toilets but instead seeks to improve accessibility across the entire fitness provision. The current facility does not adequately meet accessibility expectations, particularly in relation to equipment and layout. In response, the proposed improvements will introduce modern, more user-friendly equipment designed to support a wider range of users. In addition, the layout will be redesigned to provide greater space and flexibility, enabling improved access for wheelchair users and others with mobility needs. The overall intention is to ensure that users are able to actively participate in fitness activities, rather than simply observe, within the constraints of the existing building.

Will there be sufficient staff and support available to ensure accessible use of the facility (e.g. assistance with equipment and considerate use of space)?

There will be trained staff and fitness coaches available to support users in accessing and using the facilities. This includes the provision of dedicated programmes that can be tailored to individual needs, ensuring that users are able to engage effectively with

the equipment. Staff-led support, including referral-based programmes, will help to promote inclusive use of the facility and ensure that individuals who require additional assistance are able to participate fully.

Has there been an assessment of private fitness facilities in the area, and how confident are we that the new development can compete? What is the unique selling point (USP)?

The proposed leisure centre offer is not intended to compete directly on a like-for-like basis with private gyms, as it provides a broader and more integrated range of services. The centre combines gym facilities with a swimming pool, outdoor provision, and wider leisure activities, which private operators do not typically offer. This integrated approach is considered particularly attractive to families and users with varied needs, for example those who may wish to combine swimming lessons with gym use. In addition, the new equipment will be modern, premium-quality equipment comparable to that found in private gyms, ensuring that the fitness offer remains competitive despite the spatial constraints of the existing building.

How confident are we that the investment will improve footfall?

There is a strong level of confidence that the investment will lead to increased footfall, supported by evidence from other sites where similar improvements have been undertaken. For example, recent investment at Chepstow has resulted in significant growth in memberships. It is also recognised that modern, lighter, and more attractive environments encourage higher levels of usage. The proposed improvements extend beyond physical infrastructure to include enhancements in customer experience, digital systems, and overall service delivery, all of which are expected to contribute to increased engagement. On this basis, the target for additional memberships is considered achievable across the wider leisure portfolio.

During the transition period (while works are underway), have arrangements been explored with private providers to support service continuation?

The transcript does not record a direct response to the question of whether private facilities will be utilised during the transition period. However, it is noted elsewhere that alternative provision will be explored to mitigate the impact of temporary disruption to services while works are underway, although no specific reference is made to formal arrangements with private providers.

Will the refurbished facility address the current appearance (e.g. dark and dated interior)?

The refurbishment scheme is intended to deliver a modern, lighter, and more visually appealing environment. Improvements to the layout, interior design, and overall presentation are expected to transform the current appearance of the facility, addressing concerns about its dark and dated character. These changes are also anticipated to enhance the overall customer experience and increase the attractiveness of the centre to both existing and potential users.

Has there been any indication from the new Welsh Government of increased funding for leisure facilities?

It was noted that it was still very early following the recent Senedd election, and as such no clear funding position had yet been established by the new Welsh Government. The Council had begun engaging with newly appointed Cabinet Secretaries to explore potential funding opportunities; however, no confirmed additional funding was currently known. The proposal therefore reflected a decision to proceed without waiting for external funding, recognising the need to act in a timely manner. The investment package was also designed to be flexible, with equipment that could be relocated in the future should further funding or redevelopment opportunities arise.

What lessons have been learned from similar leisure centre improvement projects elsewhere in Monmouthshire?

A number of key lessons had been identified from previous leisure centre improvement projects. These included the importance of ensuring adequate space between equipment, rather than maximising capacity at the expense of usability and user experience. There was also an emphasis on selecting equipment that met user needs, informed by ongoing feedback and input from both fitness managers and users.

In addition, the Council had drawn on wider sector experience through its partners, including organisations such as Alliance Leisure and equipment providers. It was recognised that investment in high-quality equipment is a critical driver of membership growth. However, improvements were not limited to equipment alone; the creation of modern, bright environments and the delivery of a high-quality customer experience were also identified as essential components in achieving successful outcomes.

How often does the Council review underused facilities?

Facilities were monitored on a monthly basis using live data from systems that track membership trends, usage levels, and the capacity of activities and classes. This regular monitoring enabled performance to be reviewed consistently and trends in both use and underuse to be identified.

Where facilities were found to be underused and could not immediately be improved, efforts were made to maximise the use of other areas, for example by expanding swimming provision. In addition, at a management level, there were monthly directorate reviews of assets, which considered factors such as income performance, viability, and resource use and capacity. This approach provided ongoing oversight and the ability to adapt services as required.

How will the scheme avoid excluding people who are unable to use digital systems or apps when accessing leisure services?

The scheme will ensure that access to leisure services is not limited to digital platforms by maintaining a range of non-digital alternatives alongside digital promotion. Information and promotional campaigns will be made available through posters and on-site materials, ensuring that users can access key details without needing to rely on

digital tools. In addition, face-to-face support will be provided by reception staff and other site staff, who will be available to assist users directly.

The approach will also include in-person engagement through sports development teams and wider community outreach activity, allowing information to be shared through established local networks such as schools, clubs, and other community channels. For users who may require additional support with digital systems, staff will be able to assist directly, including through the use of devices such as tablets at reception. Overall, this blended approach is intended to ensure that individuals without access to, or confidence in using, digital systems can still receive information and fully access services.

Will there still be a community suite and viewing area on the first floor after the refurbishment?

The viewing area will be retained as part of the refurbishment and will continue to be available for use following completion of the works. This ensures that users will still be able to access a designated space for viewing activities within the facility.

Will the lift be refurbished or upgraded, given concerns about accessibility?

The lift is not included within the scope of this particular refurbishment package. However, lifts across the authority have been separately identified and surveyed by property services, and there is a dedicated budget in place for lift repairs and replacements. These works are prioritised based on the condition of individual lifts. At present, no specific timetable has been confirmed for works to this lift.

Are there many private gyms in the Severnside area, and how does this affect the need for the facility?

There is limited private gym provision within the Severnside area, resulting in the Council's leisure centre offer being relatively distinctive and important within the local context. This lack of extensive private competition supports the expectation that the facility will continue to be well used by local residents and reinforces the need for a modernised, accessible public leisure offer.

How can rural communities, such as Raglan, access similar funding and support for leisure and community facilities, given the apparent lack of provision and limited investment compared to towns? Funding appears to favour towns over rural areas, despite these issues having been raised over many years. Can there be more immediate and tangible action?

There are a number of potential funding routes available to support rural communities, including the use of Section 106 contributions linked to new developments. The Council is able to work collaboratively with community councils to identify and pursue appropriate funding opportunities. This includes providing support to help identify external funding sources and to develop and submit funding applications. Engagement with the new Welsh Government may present additional funding opportunities in the future, although these are not yet defined.

The overall approach is to work jointly with local communities to explore available options and progress suitable proposals.

Why was an Integrated Impact Assessment not provided with the report?

An Integrated Impact Assessment had been prepared but was not included within the Scrutiny report papers. The assessment would instead be included as part of the Cabinet report and would be shared with Members in advance of Cabinet, providing an opportunity for review and comment. We apologise for the omission of the assessment at the Scrutiny stage. We would emphasise that the scheme is intended to deliver significant improvements in accessibility and inclusivity. This includes the incorporation of a range of accessible equipment and an improved layout, designed to support users of all ages and needs.

A member recalled that previous proposals had been made to relocate or replace the leisure centre, including commitments linked to development of nearby land. She noted that these proposals did not materialise, leaving the community with the existing ageing facility. She highlighted that residents are now looking forward to improvements, even if this is a refurbishment rather than a new build. She reflected a positive but cautious community perspective, recognising past unmet expectations but expressing support for the current proposal.

Chair's Summary:

Thank you for the report – this work is certainly needed. We need to ensure that residents know about how to access facilities if they are moved elsewhere. Members have noted that there is an ongoing pattern about the absence of IIAs, or insufficient ones, so that needs to be addressed going forward. Thank you again to the Cabinet Member and officers.

7. People Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan

A query was raised regarding items that had been agreed by the committee at the last meeting but are not on the forward work programme. It was clarified that these matters had been raised as questions to the Cabinet Member through the Public Open Forum item, rather than as formal additions to the work programme. As such, they remain pending a response from the Cabinet Member, after which it may be appropriate to incorporate specific items into the scrutiny work programme. Officers will chase that response – **ACTION**

There is a duplication error in the forward plan, with the Youth Service item now coming to the September meeting.

It was confirmed that a future item on homelessness legislation, scheduled for the July meeting, would include specific consideration of the impacts on care leavers, particularly those placed out of county. In addition, it was agreed that issues raised through the Corporate Parenting Panel should be fed into the scrutiny work programme to ensure that relevant concerns are properly considered. – **ACTION**

A suggestion was made to incorporate lived experience input into future scrutiny discussions, for example through short contributions from individuals directly affected by homelessness legislation. It was agreed that this approach would add value and should be utilised where appropriate to inform and strengthen scrutiny.

It was noted that a letter to the Health Board regarding assistive technology had previously been discussed, but there remained some uncertainty as to whether this had been progressed. It was agreed that this should be followed up. In addition, a suggestion was made to invite representatives from the Health Board to attend a future meeting to explain their role in relation to assistive technology and provide further clarification to the committee. – **ACTIONS**

The Chair noted that members wish to avoid meetings being scheduled in half term in the future.

8. Council and Cabinet Forward Work Programme

Noted.

9. To approve the following minutes:

People Scrutiny Committee - 24th February 2026

The minutes were confirmed.

Special Meeting of People Scrutiny Committee - 29th April 2026

The minutes were confirmed.

10. Next Meeting

Thursday 18th June 2026 at 10.00am

The meeting ended at 11.09 am.