

Public Document Pack



Neuadd y Sir
Y Rhadyr
Brynbuga
NP15 1GA

County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Wednesday, 11 January 2017

Notice of meeting / Hysbysiad o gyfarfod:

County Council

Thursday, 19th January, 2017 at 2.00 pm,
County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA

AGENDA

Prayers will be said prior to the Council meeting at 1.55pm. All members are welcome to join the Chairman for prayers should they wish to do.

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	Apologies for absence	
2.	Chairman's report and receipt of petitions	1 - 2
3.	Declarations of interest	
4.	Public Open Forum	
5.	To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 1st December 2016	3 - 10
6.	To note the action list of the meeting held on 1st December 2016	11 - 12
7.	To receive the minutes of Audit Committee:	
7.1.	Audit Committee 17th November 2016	13 - 22
7.2.	Audit Committee 15th December 2016	23 - 34
8.	Notices of Motion	
8.1.	Motion from County Councillor R.J.W. Greenland	
	The Announcement from HM Government that tolls for the Severn Bridges will be halved in 2018 is welcomed by this Council. Furthermore we support the removal of all tolls for both bridges with future maintenance costs being met from the general UK roads maintenance budget.	

In 2015, tourism was worth £187 million to the economy of Monmouthshire, day visits generated £53 million. This is expected to increase when tolls are reduced or removed given anecdotal evidence that the tolls discourage tourist coach traffic and day tripper and survey evidence that 22% of south west England's residents said they would expect to make more trips to Wales in the next twelve months if the Severn Tolls were removed.

As day visitors have the potential to support the flourishing independent retail sector in south Monmouthshire, this presents further opportunities for the regeneration of our High Streets, a key strand in our economic development activities. Through our regular contacts with trade and business organisations in the County we will continue to work in partnership to develop sustainable growth in the County.

On the regional front, we will continue to play our part in the development of the Cardiff Capital Region. Economic regeneration is set to take centre stage in Monmouthshire's future, bringing new opportunities for raising prosperity throughout the region particularly in new technology companies of the future.

At the same time we acknowledge that reducing tolls could bring dis-benefits into Monmouthshire. We will continue to monitor all potential issues and act accordingly to ensure the best outcomes for the residents of Monmouthshire.

This Council therefore re-affirms our intention to continue to promote Monmouthshire as the place to build businesses within southern Wales and the west of England whilst also promoting southern Monmouthshire as a quality shopping destination. This promotional activity will be escalated in the coming months as the reducing costs of tolls moves closer.

9. Report of the Head of Democracy, Engagement and Improvement

9.1. Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022 35 - 70

10. Report of the Head of Finance

10.1. Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2017/18 71 - 74

11. Report of the Monitoring Officer

11.1. Standards Committee - Appointment of Independent Members 75 - 76

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive / Prif Weithredwr

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillors:

D. Batrouni
J. Prosser
D. Blakebrough
M. Powell
V. Smith
G. Burrows
R. Chapman
P. Clarke
J. Crook
D. Dovey
G. Down
A. Easson
D. Edwards
R. Edwards
D. Evans
P. Farley
P.A. Fox
J. George
R.J.W. Greenland
L. Guppy
E. Hackett Pain
R. Harris
B. Hayward
M. Hickman
J. Higginson
P.A.D. Hobson
G. Howard
S. Howarth
D. Jones
P. Jones
S. Jones
S.B. Jones
P. Jordan
J. Marshall
P. Murphy
B. Strong
F. Taylor
A. Watts
P. Watts
A. Webb
S. White
K. Williams
A. Wintle

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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.

Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Outcomes we are working towards

Nobody Is Left Behind

- Older people are able to live their good life
- People have access to appropriate and affordable housing
- People have good access and mobility

People Are Confident, Capable and Involved

- People's lives are not affected by alcohol and drug misuse
- Families are supported
- People feel safe

Our County Thrives

- Business and enterprise
- People have access to practical and flexible learning
- People protect and enhance the environment

Our priorities

- Schools
- Protection of vulnerable people
- Supporting Business and Job Creation
- Maintaining locally accessible services

Our Values

- **Openness:** we aspire to be open and honest to develop trusting relationships.
- **Fairness:** we aspire to provide fair choice, opportunities and experiences and become an organisation built on mutual respect.
- **Flexibility:** we aspire to be flexible in our thinking and action to become an effective and efficient organisation.
- **Teamwork:** we aspire to work together to share our successes and failures by building on our strengths and supporting one another to achieve our goals.

Nodau a Gwerthoedd Cyngor Sir Fynwy

Cymunedau Cynaliadwy a Chryf

Canlyniadau y gweithiwn i'w cyflawni

Neb yn cael ei adael ar ôl

- Gall pobl hŷn fyw bywyd da
- Pobl â mynediad i dai addas a fforddiadwy
- Pobl â mynediad a symudedd da

Pobl yn hyderus, galluog ac yn cymryd rhan

- Camddefnyddio alcohol a chyffuriau ddim yn effeithio ar fywydau pobl
- Teuluoedd yn cael eu cefnogi
- Pobl yn teimlo'n ddiogel

Ein sir yn ffynnu

- Busnes a menter
- Pobl â mynediad i ddysgu ymarferol a hyblyg
- Pobl yn diogelu ac yn cyfoethogi'r amgylchedd

Ein blaenoriaethau

- Ysgolion
- Diogelu pobl agored i niwed
- Cefnogi busnes a chreu swyddi
- Cynnal gwasanaethau sy'n hygyrch yn lleol

Ein gwerthoedd

- **Bod yn agored:** anelwn fod yn agored ac onest i ddatblygu perthnasoedd ymddiriedus
- **Tegwch:** anelwn ddarparu dewis teg, cyfleoedd a phrofiadau a dod yn sefydliad a adeiladwyd ar barch un at y llall.
- **Hyblygrwydd:** anelwn fod yn hyblyg yn ein syniadau a'n gweithredoedd i ddod yn sefydliad effeithlon ac effeithiol.
- **Gwaith tîm:** anelwn gydweithio i rannu ein llwyddiannau a'n methiannau drwy adeiladu ar ein cryfderau a chefnogi ein gilydd i gyflawni ein nodau.

Chairman's Report 25th November – 7th January

Friday 25 th November 6 p.m.	Monmouthshire Volunteer Awards Evening Caldicot Choir Hall
Tuesday 29 th November 7 p.m.	Light up a Life Service Abergavenny Methodist Church
Thursday 1 st December 11 a.m.	Citizenship Ceremony Registrar's Office, Usk
Saturday 3 rd December 2.30 p.m.	Order of St John Carol Service St Mary's Priory Church, Abergavenny
Sunday 4 th December 6 p.m.	Rhondda Cynon Taf – Civic Carol Service St Catherine's Church, Pontypridd
Tuesday 6 th December 7.30 a.m.	Royal Mail Festive Visit Caldicot DO
Wednesday 7 th December 6 p.m.	Forest of Dean Carol Concert St Mary's Church, Newent
Thursday 8 th December 6.45 – 7 p.m.	Emergency Services Christmas Carol Service Llandaff Cathedral, Cardiff
Sunday 11 th December 5.30 p.m.	Gwent Music – Newport Christmas Extravaganza Newport Centre
Wednesday 14 th December 7 p.m.	Light up a Life Service Caldicot Methodist Church
Friday 16 th December 2.30 p.m.	BEM Presentation Registrar's Office, Usk
Friday 16 th December 6 p.m.	Vision of Hope – Annual Christmas Carol Concert St Mary's Priory Church, Abergavenny
Monday 19 th December 9.30 a.m.	Tŷ Hafan Pantomine Tŷ Hafan Children's Hospice, Sully
Thursday 5 th January 11 a.m.	Citizenship Ceremony Registrar's Office, Usk
Saturday 7 th January 5 p.m.	Official Opening Ceremony for the new extension at Bethany Baptist Church Building Project

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 5

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held
at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 1st December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT: County Councillor J. Higginson (Chairman)
County Councillor P. Jordan (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: D. Batrouni, J. Prosser, M. Powell, G. Burrows, R. Chapman, P. Clarke, J. Crook, D. Dovey, G. Down, A. Easson, D. Edwards, P. Farley, P.A. Fox, R.J.W. Greenland, L. Guppy, E. Hackett Pain, R. Harris, M. Hickman, P.A.D. Hobson, G. Howard, D. Jones, P. Jones, S. Jones, S.B. Jones, P. Murphy, B. Strong, F. Taylor, A. Watts, P. Watts, A. Webb, K. Williams and A. Wintle

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Kellie Beirne	Chief Officer, Enterprise
Peter Davies	Chief Officer, Resources
Will McLean	Head of Democracy, Engagement and Improvement
Joy Robson	Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer
Robert Tranter	Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer
Nicola Perry	Senior Democracy Officer
Ian Bakewell	Housing & Regeneration Manager

APOLOGIES:

Councillors D. Blakebrough, V. Smith, R. Edwards, D. Evans, J. George, B. Hayward, S. Howarth, J. Marshall and S. White

2. Chairman's report and receipt of petitions

Upon opening the meeting the Chairman requested that Council were upstanding and held a minute silence in memory of former MCC councillor, Pam Birchall, who had recently passed away. Members were keen to express their condolences, and fond memories of Ms. Birchall, who would be sorely missed.

The Chairman congratulated the Leader of the Opposition, County Councillor D. Batrouni, who had recently completed his PhD.

Council received the Chairman's report.

County Councillor G. Howard presented a petition in relation to National Cycle Route 46, at Clydach Gorge, particularly referencing a short section which never opened, requesting that Council uses its powers to enable the opening of this section.

3. Declarations of Interest

Declarations of interest were made as follows:

County Councillors R.J. Higginson, S.B. Jones, J. Crook, R. Harris, P. Clarke, B. Strong, A. Watts declared personal, non-prejudicial interests in relation to agenda item 8.1.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 1st December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

County Councillor S. Jones declared a prejudicial interest in relation to agenda item 8a, as a director of the Welsh Retail Consortium, and a member of the Rate Payers Forum. In doing so, she advised that she would leave the Council Chamber for the duration of the discussion.

County Councillors P. Clarke, A. Wintle and A. Webb declared personal, non-prejudicial interests in relation to agenda item 10.1, as board members of MHA.

County Councillors P. Farley, J. Crook, D. Dovey declared personal, non-prejudicial interests in relation to agenda item 11,1.

4. Public Open Forum

4.1. Question from Mr. J. Thurston to County Councillor P. Fox

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Thurston, who was in attendance to present his question to County Councillor P. Fox.

In response, The Leader thanked Mr. Thurston and recognised that the question related to the petition presented by Councillor Howard. The importance of the issue was acknowledged along with the importance of opening the 700m cycle route in question for safety reasons.

The Leader advised that he would support the completion of the walking and cycling path along in whatever way possible to try to bring this to a satisfactory conclusion. The Leader advised that he would liaise with officers to ensure that every opportunity had been explored before any formal offers were made,

Mr. Thurston expressed thanks to the Leader, and as a supplementary question, asked if the Leader would confirm that no option would be ruled out, including compulsory purchase?

The Leader reiterated that all options would be explored prior to any formal processes.

4.2. Monmouthshire County Citizens Advice Bureau - Annual Report Update

The Chairman welcomed Shirley Lightbound, from the Citizens Advice Bureau, who was in attendance to provide an update on the Monmouthshire County Citizens Advice Bureau (MC CAB) Annual Report 2015-2016.

The following comments were noted:

- Members welcomed the report and expressed thanks for the hard work of the CAB.
- It was recognised that it would be useful to strengthen the links between MCC and MC CAB, particularly in this time of reduced funding and resources, as well as the links with other agencies.
- The Leader stated that the messages were understood and issues would be explored further. He looked forward to attending the upcoming AGM for further discussion.
- Congratulations were expressed on progress, particularly in light of the merge of individual bureaux.
- Councillor Easson noted that, in terms of deprivation there did not seem to be many clients, and asked if Councillors were missing something in that they may not be guiding people to the CAB. In response we heard that the all needs of the the population were not being met, and any assistance would be gratefully received.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 1st December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

- Councillor A. Watts mentioned food banks and we heard that there was a trend that food banks were being more frequently used, for reasons such as the general drop in the economy, and delays in benefit applications.
- When asked if trends could be identified specifically from changes in Council policies Mrs. Lightbound stated that there were no specific indications but she could refer to statistical analysis for further information. Changes to Council Tax, Social Care and benefits impacted the trends.
- Councillor Batrouni referred to 'sofa-surfing' and we were advised that CAB were seeing this issue becoming more of a trend, and one of the biggest problems was dealing with homelessness. Working together and improving links would be useful.

The Chairman thanked Mrs. Lightbound and commended the work of the CAB.

5. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 20th October 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th October 2016, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. To note the action list of the last meeting

Council noted the Action List of the meeting held on 20th October 2016.

County Councillor F. Taylor requested that the when terms surrounding Zero Hour Contracts are discussed at Audit, the outcomes are shared with all Members.

County Councillor Easson advised that further information regarding Flex Contracts had been shared the Interim HR Manager.

7. To receive the minutes of Democratic Services Committee 17th October 2016

County Councillor F. Taylor commended the minutes of the Democratic Services Committee held on 17th October 2016. In doing so she expressed thanks to all Members who had shown commitment to recent Democracy Week events.

It was suggested that recommendations of the Committee be recorded at future meetings and be recorded in the minutes.

8. Notices of Motion

8.1. Motion from County Councillor R.J.W. Greenland

The recent proposed revaluation of non-domestic rates (NNDR – business rates) has thrown up some very alarming increases for businesses in Monmouthshire. 65% of businesses in the County have found their draft rates increase with a number hiked by more than 200%. In practice this means if these proposals are confirmed, some businesses face increases next year running into tens of thousands of pounds. There seems to be a pattern of rural counties facing increases whilst the larger towns and cities are decreasing. As the system is based upon notional rental values, it seems unlikely that the shift in rental values of business premises between 2010 and 2015 reflects the increases in rateable values proposed for some Monmouthshire businesses. If this revaluation is not challenged it may well see some of our leading retailers and hospitality businesses in particular being unable to continue trading.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 1st December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

If businesses are forced to pay huge increases based on these revaluations whilst they await the outcome of appeals, severe cash flow problems may endanger the future for some. At the very least we urge WG not to impose increases until the results of appeals are known.

It is also of concern to this Council that whilst the WG has announced a transitional scheme for small businesses affected by the increase, it has not done the same for the larger businesses which will be harder hit. We call for sympathetic transitional arrangements for all businesses.

The Welsh Government has the power to implement or postpone these proposals. In the light of the concern expressed by this Council and many businesses in Monmouthshire, we urge the WG to postpone these draft proposals to give time for a thorough review of the methodology and results thrown up from this revaluation to be considered.

Prior to the presentation of the motion, Councillor Easson addressed Council and requested clarity surrounding the validity of the motion on the basis that Councillor Easson had himself submitted a motion which had been declined for inclusion at the meeting as it was deemed outside standing order 12.3.. The Monitoring Officer advised that he had made the decision that the motion submitted had not complied with 12.3, whereas the motion being raised by Councillor Greenland refers to specific Monmouthshire businesses. He added that if Council wished, they could amend the wording in the constitution.

During debate we noted the following:

- Members agreed that village halls were at the heart of the community and would also be affected. At present village halls receive 80% discount on business rates as a grant from the Council.
- The Leader of the Council recognised the pressures on businesses and added that we owe it the businesses of Monmouthshire to support this motion. He expressed thanks to Councillor Greenland for the work behind raising the motion, and Members for their support.
- Councillor G. Howard highlighted it was clear that no business rates would be paid by empty shops and hotels, but expressed disappointment in Welsh Government regarding the impact the valuation would have on green shoot businesses aiming to increase footfall.
- The Leader of the Opposition noted that the assessment had been carried out by the independent Valuation Office, and questioned if the Conservative Group were disputing the independence of the Valuation Office. Councillor Batrouni declared that there was no opposition to the motion from the Labour Group, but felt the statement was a political motion regarding Welsh Government.
- Councillor G. Down declared that he supported the motion. He added that village halls would see an increase in business rates, and invited Councillor Murphy to consider whether 80% relief was sufficient. Few businesses could survive a 200% rise in rates, and it was thought some businesses would close as a result. Councillor Down thought National and Welsh Governments should look at the relationship between business non-domestic rates, and council tax in order to find a way to rebalance the contributions for local services. He considered the fault was not with the Valuation office, but lay with Welsh Government.
- Councillor A. Watts highlighted that the number of small businesses paying no business rates had increased, and we should be clear on the conflicting evidence and would like to see further clarity.
- County Councillor Greenland responded that in raising the motion he had not aimed to be political and thought it to be a subject on which all could agree on. He acknowledged

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 1st December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

that the Valuation Office Agency is an independent body, part of HM Customs and Excise, carrying out duties of valuations of business premises in Wales on behalf of Welsh Government. The final decisions are a Welsh Government issue.

The day previously, Councillor Greenland, along with the Chief Executive, The Head of Enterprise and Innovation and David Cummings, a representative of the business community, had met with the Chief Valuer of Wales to discuss issues and gain an understanding of the methodology and process. The meeting had been harmonious and provided information for further discussion going forward.

The motion was duly seconded, and upon being put to the vote the motion was carried.

8.2. Motion from County Councillor A. Easson

My perception is that Monmouthshire is considered to be a Cinderella Authority in relation to plans for the Metro System within the City Region. I therefore move that far greater emphasis is made upon the fact that Monmouthshire exists and is not just a blip on the map of S E Wales. Furthermore that our Leader, and appropriate Cabinet members who are part of the wider Combined Authority give greater voice to strengthen our presence -- which appears to be missing.

Councillor G. Howard questioned if the motion should be on the agenda, or if it should be worded differently. In response the Chairman noted that the motion had been allowed and debate ensued, during which time the following points were noted:

- Councillor J. Prosser stated that he agreed with some of the sentiments of the motion, but took exception with the statement surrounding the Leader, and therefore could not support the motion.
- The Leader of the Council thanked Councillor Prosser for his support and thanked for the opportunity to address the subject raised. He would ask the Select Chairs to host a joint meeting early in 2017 in readiness for a future Council meeting, and to provide Members with deeper understanding of City Deal and Metro.
- The Leader rejected that MCC is a Cinderella Authority within the city Deal, nor would it become one, and pledged he would always ensure the interests of MCC were represented in whichever forum he would be involved with. He declared that he could not support the motion.
- It was questioned what plans were in place to ask what people of Monmouthshire wanted from the City Deal, and if what was required was being taken into consideration.

Upon being put to the vote the motion was defeated.

9. Report of the Head of Finance

9.1. Proposal to revise the policy on Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) in respect of Supported Borrowing for 2016/17 onwards

The Cabinet Member presented a report in order to:

- To reflect the outcome of the review into the Council's annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge related to supported borrowing financing element of capital expenditure;
- To provide Full Council with a proposal to revise the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement for 2016/17 in respect of Supported Borrowing.
- To outline both short to medium term revenue consequences of the proposal as well as introducing a fairer and simpler approach to be adopted for current and future council tax payers

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 1st December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

There were no comments from Members, and upon being put to the vote Council resolved to accept the recommendations in the report:

- A change to the approach concerning the Minimum Revenue Provision calculation on Supported Borrowing (Option 2 approach) moving it from a 4% reducing balance basis to a 2% straight line basis, in common with many Welsh authorities.

10. Report of the Head of Planning, Housing and Place Shaping

10.1. Monmouthshire Housing Association - Request to De-Pool Service Charges

We welcomed Mr Higginson of Monmouthshire Housing Association who presented a report submitted by the Housing and Communities Manager. The purpose of the report was to consider a request for the Council to provide consent to Monmouthshire Housing Association (MHA) to disaggregate service charges from rents paid by social housing tenants. This is known as de-pooling. MHA is seeking the Council to consent to waiving compliance with a part of the Stock Transfer Agreement.

During discussion we noted the following points:

- Councillor A. Watts expressed disappointment that the warden service had been disbanded some time ago. We heard that a recent Housing and Communities Service restructure intended to allow visiting tenants, in their own homes, on a more frequent basis.
- It was clarified that there would be no effect on Housing Benefit
- A full tenant consultation process was to be undertaken, to include events, leaflets and forums, in order to ensure full understanding of what tenants would be paying for. It was anticipated that the start date would be September/October 2017 in order ensure full consultation. Members could be included in the distribution of information.
- In terms of demographics two thirds of tenants were aged 50+, and concerns were expressed that elderly people would be paying more for service charges.
- The Chair of Adults Select, Councillor Farley noted that the report should have been presented to Adult Select Committee for Scrutiny. The Leader explained that Council was the ultimate scrutiny process.
- The Deputy Chief Executive suggested that a further, detailed report be presented to Adults Select Committee.

Council resolved to agree the recommendation in the report:

- To agree to provide consent to Monmouthshire Housing Association to de-pool their service charges, subject to MHA undertaking a programme of resident consultation to ensure all affected tenants are fully aware of the proposals and their affect.

11. Report of the Head of Democracy, Engagement and Improvement

11.1. Children and Young People Chief Officer Annual Report

Council were presented with the Children and Young People Directorate, Chief Officer Annual Report.

Following which we noted the following comments:

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 1st December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

- The Leader of the Opposition acknowledged the successes and tremendous progress made on safeguarding, but noted a continuing gap between key stage 2 and 3, and there seem to be a lack of achievement, considering the demographic, in key stage 4. In response the Head of Democracy, Engagement and Improvement explained that the shift between key stage 3 and 4 was always a challenge, partly due to the move into examination settings. This year's increase in performance levels in key stage 3 should be noted.
- We were advised that further detailed information would be presented to CYP Select Committee, new-year including the measures on key stage 4 and 5.
- In terms of concerns surrounding issues with levels of exclusions at primary school level, officers were working closely with schools.
- Issues regarding schools funding and deficit budgets were highlighted. We were informed that over a third of Council's resources goes towards education, with officers ensuring the best impact and value.
- Councillor Farley commended the presentation and recommended that for future reports reference should be made to address the well-being of the workforce.

County Councillor P. Fox left the meeting at 16:55pm.

- Reference was made to childhood obesity, and the complex challenge surrounding the issue was acknowledged.
- The gender gap at foundation phase remains and different ways were being sought to engage boys in order to stimulate interest.
- In terms of the EAS, there was a high level of assurance on the work being carried out by this highly valued partner.

County Councillors S. Jones, D. Edwards and L. Guppy left the meeting at 17:05pm

- Councillor Easson commended the work of Monmouthshire Flying Start and questioned the capacity to retain the service. The Head of Democracy, Improvement and Engagement echoed the sentiments and explained that Flying Start is a grant funded collaborative programme with ABUHB , and there was a need to maximise the benefits of other programmes, such as Families First, and how they align to the service
- The Chair of CYP Select Committee added that, regarding obesity, the committee had requested that ABUHB attend a meeting to discuss and work together, with progress being scrutinised. All Members were welcome.

The Cabinet Member expressed thanks for the report and suggested a lunch meeting prior to the next Council meeting may be appropriate to continue questions.

12. Members Questions

12.1. From County Councillor A. Easson to County Councillor E. J. Hackett
Two schools in Monmouthshire have signed up to receive Independent HR support. Do you, as Cabinet Member for education, support these actions and do you have an express view about any other schools who may intend to resort to employing outside HR providers?

The Cabinet Member thanked Councillor Easson for the question and advised that this would be an appropriate question for governors of the school. She explained that her role, as executive member, is to hold the schools to account for the outcomes and achievements of the children in our schools.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of County Council held
at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 1st December, 2016 at 2.00 pm**

As a supplementary question Councillor Easson added:

Do you believe that County Council appointees on governing bodies should support these moves into independent HR? For example, should a group of schools come together to take independent HR support, and what would be the consequence on the Authority? If certain schools feel the freedom to take these sort of moves, should we work together with the schools?

In response the Cabinet Member reiterated that HR issues should be addressed by governors.

The meeting ended at 5.20 pm

ACTION LIST
MEETING OF MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
1st December 2016

MINUTE NUMBER AND SUBJECT	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	TO BE ACTIONED BY	PROGRESS
Item 10.1 MHA – request to de-pool service charges	A suggestion was made that a further, detailed report be submitted for scrutiny by Adults Select Committee.	I. Bakewell / H. Ilett	To be added to a future Select Committee agenda.
Item 6 Action List	Following discussion at Audit Committee, the terms surrounding Zero Hour Contracts be shared with all Members	Audit Committee / Democratic Services	Item added to Audit Agenda 15 th December 2016
Item 7 Democratic Services Minutes	Minutes to reflect recommendations from the Committee.	Nicola Perry / Cllr F.Taylor	Will take suggestion to next meeting of Democratic Services on 23 rd January 2017

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 7a

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held
at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 17th November, 2016 at 2.00
pm

PRESENT: County Councillor P White (Chairman)
County Councillor J. Higginson (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: A. Easson, D. Edwards, B. Hayward, B. Strong
and V. Smith

ALSO PRESENT: County Councillor V. Smith

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mark Howcroft	Assistant Head of Finance
Andrew Wathan	Chief Internal Auditor
Annette Evans	Customer Relations Manager
Wendy Barnard	Democratic Services Officer
Richard Jones	Policy and Performance Officer
Sian Hayward	Digital and Technology Manager
Tracey Harry	Head of People and Information Governance

APOLOGIES:

County Councillors P. Clarke, P. Murphy, P. Jordan and J. Prosser

1. Declarations of Interest

County Councillor J. Higginson declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest under the Member's Code of Conduct as a member of the East Wales Valuation Tribunal.

2. Public Open Forum

There were no members of the public present.

3. To confirm minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Audit Committee held on the 15th September 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Urgent Item of Business

The Chairman agreed to accept the following item of business in that it is a standing item that had been omitted from the agenda.

5. To note the Action List from 15th September 2016

We received the Action List from the meeting held on the 15th September 2016. In doing so, the following points were noted:

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 17th November, 2016 at 2.00 pm

- Chepstow School: The Chief Officer for Resources provided a summary of the response circulated to Committee Members regarding the issue raised by a member of the public, and questions raised by Councillor Easson.

The response regarding the first point regarding the reduction of FTE teaching posts at the school was accepted as satisfactory.

Regarding the decision to opt out of the HR services offered by the Authority in favour of engaging the services of Judicium Consulting Limited, a Member queried why two schools had decided on one company. It was added that whilst it was appreciated that Governors have the right to make such a decision, concern was expressed that this was gradual move towards academy status and a gradual erosion of the Authority's HR services which work very well with schools and members. It was suggested that the situation should be monitored.

With regard to the third point, the Member said that he was satisfied that remedial action had been taken and that appropriate advice had been provided for the future.

A Member queried if any savings have been made in the People Services Department given that two of the Authority's secondary schools had opted out of services.

In response to queries, it was explained that the resulting income shortfall is being managed internally adding that there are significant pressures on the People Services Team currently and savings are not being considered at this time. Members were made aware that there is a review of Corporate HR and also a review of the HR school support function. The latter in response to the decision of Chepstow School and Monmouth Comprehensive School to opt out.

Members were reminded that there are only two FTE HR Officers to provide support to the remaining secondary schools and all primary schools. It was explained that the purpose of the review is to explore if the service offered is fit for purpose, if the service is still offered, if schools want the service, and if the use of outside providers should be considered. The options will be considered in consultation with schools and conclusions will be drawn accordingly.

- Redundancy costs: The Chief Officer for Resources agreed to present the requested information at the next meeting, apologising that the report had been delayed due to pressures within the Payroll Team and added that a report will be presented to Cabinet to request investment in the Team.
- Non-domestic rates: The requested analysis was provided to the committee on the 21st September 2016. It was questioned what representations are being made outside the authority regarding the level of non-domestic rates in the County. In response to a query about increasing business rates, it was suggested that it would be appropriate for the Assistant Head of Finance (Revenues) to provide clarification regarding processes to facilitate rate valuations for private businesses separate to this meeting.
- Internal Audit Contract Procedure Rules – Exemptions: It was noted that this item would be considered at the next meeting as part of the regular six monthly review cycle.
- Internal Audit Charter: It was confirmed that the amendment requested at the last meeting, to specify two years as the review period, had been made.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 17th November, 2016 at 2.00 pm

6. Presentation on Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS)

Members received a presentation from Chief Internal Auditor on the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).

The overall purpose of the PSIAS were explained as follow:

To provide assurance that the Chief Internal Auditor and Team are working in a professional, effective, efficient and consistent capacity.

To monitor compliance with standards through annual internal self-assessment together with external assessment every 5 years to ensure full compliance.

To report an audit opinion in an annual report to Audit Committee on the adequacy of the internal control environment, risk management and governance arrangements.

Following the presentation, Members were invited to make comments:

The essential nature of Internal Audit was acknowledged, and the link to the Wales Audit Office (WAO).

A Member thanked the Officer for the presentation, recognised that standards in the Authority are met and thanked staff accordingly.

Recognising the responsibility of Internal Audit to Senior Management and this Committee, it was queried whose responsibility it is to explain accountability to the Public. It was explained that the WAO will provide a view on individual authorities and will be in the public domain. It was explained that the role of Internal Audit is mainly to provide reassurance within the organisation. It was added that Chief Officers have Section 151 responsibilities to ensure good governance and stewardship, and to report any shortfall to the electorate.

It was added that Audit Committee reports are in the public domain including the annual report, unsatisfactory audit opinions and the externally audited accounts.

7. Corporate Assessment Follow-on Review - Information Technology

The Wales Audit Office (WAO) Report 'Information Technology – Corporate Assessment Follow-on Review' was presented. In doing so, it was noted that this report is on the Monmouthshire County Council website and therefore is available for members of the public to read.

It was concluded in the report that the Council has made progress in some areas, but the overall arrangements for managing IT services are disjointed and do not adequately allow the Council to demonstrate good governance, value for money or impact. The conclusions were drawn because:

- the Council has not yet developed a clear enough plan to implement its iCounty Strategy, and oversight arrangements need updating;
- the Council has made significant efforts to ensure that planned changes to IT service providers do not disrupt provision of its IT services, but the arrangement with the SRS is not underpinned by formal agreements;
- due to the lack of a Social Care and Health Directorate risk register, the Council cannot be assured that risks to the Flo system are appropriately escalated; and

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 17th November, 2016 at 2.00 pm

- the Council has a number of initiatives to improve the effectiveness of its IT services, but it is unclear how these will help it measure and demonstrate impact.

In response, the following proposals for improvement were made whilst recognising progress made and also to reflect emerging issues:

- P1 Review and revise the iCounty Business Plan for 2016-2019 by setting out clear and measurable actions to enable senior managers and members to effectively monitor and manage progress of its implementation.
- P2 Review membership of the Digital Board following changes in software provider to ensure no conflicts of interest.
- P3 Negotiate and agree commercial grade Service Level Agreements with SRS in advance of new organisations joining the partnership to support sound governance, and to enable the Council to measure service delivery, and assure itself that its IT needs continue to be met.
- P4 Complete the database of systems used by the Council, identifying information such as contract details, costs, and the comments of the system owners, to support the Council in its strategic management of IT resources.
- P5 Review the Council's risk management arrangements to assure itself it manages risks consistently across directorates and identifies, escalates, and addresses risks in a timely and appropriate way.

The Policy and Performance Officer presented the Management Response referring to the Council's actions to respond to the proposals for improvement and a plan of future actions. It was added that some are in progress and it is considered that arrangements are already in place for P2 and P4.

The Head of Digital summarised that with regards to:

- P1, a review and revision of the iCounty business plan is in progress, as planned, and there is acceptance that there is a need to further develop data and indicators.
- P2, it was confirmed that the County does not have a software provider of choice but has a number of delivery agents. In particular, it was confirmed that CMC² was engaged for one specific project and that was why they were represented on the Digital Board. A review of the overall arrangements for the authority's Programme Boards (People Board, Place Board and Digital Board) is in progress as part of the Future Monmouthshire initiative to ensure that they are fit for purpose. No review of the membership of the Digital Board is considered necessary at this time. Further details of the work of the Programme Boards was provided. It was confirmed that Elected and Cabinet Members sit on each of the Programme Boards.

In response to a question, the difference between the Digital Board and the SRS was explained that the SRS is the technology infrastructure provider. It also is a services provider to other authorities e.g. provides and maintains all equipment/systems. The Digital Board monitors this authority's internal digital strategy and SRS involvement. It

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 17th November, 2016 at 2.00 pm

was confirmed that there are several partners including Monmouthshire County Council, Torfaen County Borough Council, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and Gwent Police. The SRS is owned by all partners. The Officer confirmed that Monmouthshire CC has its own digital direction which feeds into and aligns with overall SRS strategy.

- P3, it was confirmed that there is a working party to assess this aspect and it is accepted that a commercial grade SLA is required. In the interim, performance is measured by a Performance Board attended by all partners. Performance is measured against an agreed set of standards.
- P4, this is not accepted. It was explained that there is already a database of the council's systems, which includes contract details, costs and system owner comments. The database is used to facilitate collaboration with other local authorities on future digital direction, how to combine systems and to maximise economies of scale to inform future decision making. It was explained that other partners are currently completing a similar database.
- P5, it was explained that the Risk Management Policy was last reviewed in March 2015. There is a risk log in place to identify and manage high and medium level strategic risks. Lower level strategic and operational risks are managed by Service Improvement Plans or project specific risk registers to identify and manage risks within existing governance arrangements. Under the provisions of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, it is not just risks to services that are monitored but also risks facing communities, countywide and longer term risks.

In answer to the Management Response to P2, a WAO Officer clarified that the purpose of the review regarding membership of Digital Board was to reflect the change that CMC² is no longer involved.

Regarding P4, it was emphasised that this proposal was based on a snapshot in April 2016. When the database was demonstrated, it was incomplete as FLO (social care app) wasn't included. The recommendation, therefore was to complete the database. This point was accepted as FLO was at project management stage and had only gone live a few weeks previous. This was the only element that was missing from the database.

It was clarified that the SRS was set up under a Memorandum of Understanding Agreement and is non-profit making. It is an amalgamation of all participating local authority ICT departments, noting that Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council have recently joined and Newport City Council are in discussions. The SRS provides the ICT infrastructure including all Wi-Fi enablement, all equipment, staff and services. It was confirmed that MCC pays for the service provided and monitors performance. It was emphasised that the Council's digital strategy is not driven by the SRS. The Council manages its strategy in collaboration with other local authority partners, within the governance arrangements in place. It was added that the SRS is visited by the team on a weekly basis, informal board meetings are held with respective partners and also formal board meetings with Elected Members.

It was queried, if it is a partnership, why MCC is solely implementing iCounty and why the software is not common to all partners. It was explained that each of the local authorities has its own digital direction with different priorities. There is a common infrastructure e.g. same Wi-Fi, some use the same telephony systems and all have Microsoft Enterprise agreements managed by SRS and added that more collaboration is welcomed in the future. It was explained that the SRS assists the establishment of common systems and does not control five sets of completely separate infrastructures.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 17th November, 2016 at 2.00 pm

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the SRS provides the hardware and some common software; each partner also has its own software arrangements. It was emphasised that more collaboration is welcomed to produce efficiencies in the way work is undertaken across the whole partnership. Additionally, each partner will retain its own priorities as well.

In response to a question, a WAO Officer explained that the 2015 Corporate Assessment formally raised the matter of how IT arrangements were progressing within the authority. It was explained that the collaboration to form the SRS was initiated with involvement from Welsh Government; the WAO was therefore interested in progress. It was explained that contractually, SRS is a legal entity with a Memorandum of Understanding. CMC² provided the council with one piece of software (FLO). In the absence of CMC², FLO is now supported and maintained by SRS. It was clarified that SRS is the Council's ICT providers and that CMC² provided software not ICT infrastructure.

In response to an enquiry about the need for more scrutiny by elected members in addition to Cabinet Members, the WAO Officer explained that proposal P2 was made to ensure membership of the Digital Board is appropriate.

The Chair clarified that a request for a further reports must be properly submitted as a motion for a future meeting.

The WAO Officers were thanked for their attendance and responses.

8. Whole Authority Complaints, Comments & Compliments Report

The Customer Relations Manager presented the Whole Authority Report 2015/16 to provide Audit Committee with information on the number and types of complaints, comments and compliments received and dealt with from 1 April 2015 until 31 March 2016. The report also provided a summary of the number of Freedom of Information Act (FOI) requests received by the Council during this period.

Following presentation of the report, Members were invited to comment.

A Member enquired about a concern raised about staff behaviour during refuse collection. It was confirmed that if a member of staff can be identified, the matter would be dealt with accordingly.

A Member asked if political researchers could be charged for Freedom of Information Requests. It was explained that it is possible to charge for any requests that take over 18 hours to prepare an answer, and confirmed that the charge only covers the photocopying costs.

9. Half Yearly Treasury Update

Members received the Half Yearly Treasury Update and were reminded that the Audit Committee has an opportunity annually to inform Treasury strategy prior to recommendation to County Council. It was explained that the report was six month feedback to provide reassurance that nothing of concern has occurred in the first half of the financial year in terms of the tolerances applied to treasury management.

The Committee's attention was drawn to an amendment to the report on p.7 altering £59m to £59,000.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 17th November, 2016 at 2.00 pm

Following presentation of the report, questions were invited.

The report was received with thanks.

10. Internal Audit Progress Report 2016/17 - Quarter 2

The Chief Auditor presented the Internal Audit Progress Report referring in particular to the appendices that detailed the work undertaken and recommendations for improvements.

The Chief Auditor was thanked for his report.

11. Unsatisfactory Audit Opinions

The Chief Auditor presented a six-monthly update to report unsatisfactory audit opinions.

Following presentation of the report, Members were invited to ask questions.

In response to a query about the definition of unsatisfactory, it was confirmed that opinions can be good, reasonable, unsound or unsatisfactory based on the number of strengths and weaknesses identified in the audit review. Any weaknesses identified are further defined according to whether it is a significant or less significant weakness which will distinguish if it is a high, medium or low risk. A point system is then used to calculate a rating number that is assigned to a range of predetermined opinions. If identified as unsatisfactory, the strengths and high/medium or low risk weaknesses are combined to reach an unsatisfactory opinion; generally this indicates that there are more weaknesses than strengths. In borderline cases, the auditor will take a view which will then be reviewed by the manager and agreed through further discussion.

The Chair confirmed that items c-f on p.93 had been discussed previously and that a follow up report was awaited.

It was queried how far school meals had been investigated. It was confirmed that this was the first report and a category of **Limited** opinion was defined as a result of a review of the process for school meals against a comprehensive audit programme. Key issues to be addressed were identified.

It was confirmed that there had been no follow up meeting with Magor Church in Wales VA Primary School, to date but a further audit would be undertaken in 2016/17.

The report was welcomed and duly noted.

12. Review of MRP

A report was presented to review the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) in relation to supported borrowing.

It was explained that this matter is a Council decision. In view of the Audit Committee's role in informing treasury strategy, the report will be amended to reflect its view prior to consideration by Council. It was noted that the report was compiled in conjunction with Arlingclose (Treasury Advisors). WAO has also confirmed that the report is satisfactory and reflects amendments in relation to previous feedback provided.

Following presentation of the report, queries and observations were invited.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 17th November, 2016 at 2.00 pm

A Member expressed concern that the Committee was being asked to endorse the report prior to consideration by Council and commented that the approach proposed is passing on a higher proportion of debt repayment to future generations, who will be paying for, but not benefiting from out of date improvements, and offered the opinion that debts should be repaid in the traditional way.

The Officer agreed to compose an addition to the report to Council to provide both the general audit committee view and the specific comments made.

It was suggested that the Officer should be more explicit why the annuity model was chosen for unsupported borrowing, and a different model proposed for supported borrowing.

13. Quarterly Monitoring of Reserves - Quarter 2

A report was received to appraise Members of the prospective reserve usage in conjunction with highlighting the revised reserves protocol endorsed by Cabinet in July.

It was explained that the purpose of the report is to ensure that Members are better aware of levels of reserves when making financial decisions and will now be a regular Audit Committee agenda item accordingly.

Following receipt of the report, comments were invited.

A Member commented that the lower level of reserves (4.2%) has occurred previously.

A Member disputed the category of 'earmarked reserves' where there was no definite plan for future expenditure, commenting that money was being put aside for unknown spending. It was queried why the general reserve (increased to 7-8%) was not used instead to avoid the element of uncertainty and provide better transparency. It was confirmed that the term 'earmarked reserves' is an accounting term used when it is known that there will be a liability and it is necessary to apportion some reserve funding when future costs aren't known. It was suggested that if amounts are known they should be included under a specific budget investment heading.

It was suggested that reserves should be considered as a combined amount.

The report was accepted and the Outturn Forecast report noted.

14. People Services Annual Report & Workforce Plan

We received the People Services Annual Report for information and questions were invited.

It was queried why the report was presented to this Committee. The Chair commented that it was appropriate for the Audit Committee to consider the report as much of the information provided was in relation to commonly raised questions. It was advised that the report had been considered by Cabinet and Strong Communities Select Committee.

A Member referred to a report due to be presented to Audit Committee regarding part time and zero hours contracts. This was confirmed and reassurance was provided that the Council does not issue zero hour contracts in favour of contracts for casual hours. It was explained that some of the public concern regarding zero hours contracts was to do with circumstances when employers have made it a condition that an employee doesn't work for another organisation. It

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 17th November, 2016 at 2.00 pm

was added that when casual hours are offered by the Council, the offer of work can be turned down or taken up as desired.

A Member queried the total number of employees, the availability of comparison with previous years and if the reduction in employees is causing a problem with particular reference to the high number of days lost to sickness absence. It was confirmed that the number of employees with comparisons to future years will be included in this report going forward. It was also confirmed that wellbeing and management of attendance is a priority. The policy is being revised and will provide a tool kit to support both managers and employees.

The report was welcomed.

15. Forward Work Programme

The Forward Work Programme was received. It was agreed that the following matters should be added:

- Zero hours contracts
- Contract Procedure Rules exemptions
- Deferral of implementations of audit recommendations

The Chair expressed a preference for the Forward Work Programme to plan further ahead than is currently so.

16. To confirm the date and time of the next meeting as 2.00pm on Thursday, 15th December 2016

The date and time of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 15th December 2016 at 2.00pm in County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1 GA.

The meeting ended at 4.30 pm

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 7b

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held
at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 15th December, 2016 at 2.00
pm**

PRESENT: Mr. P White (Chairman)
County Councillor J. Higginson (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: D. Batrouni, A. Easson, D. Edwards, P. Murphy,
P. Jordan, J. Prosser and B. Strong

ALSO PRESENT:

County Councillor V. Smith
Mr. T. Lewis – Wales Audit Office

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs. J. Robson – Head of Finance
Mr. M. Howcroft – Assistant Head of Finance
Mr. A. Wathan – Chief Internal Auditor
Mr. R. Jones - Policy and Performance Officer
Mr. M. Gatehouse – Policy and Performance Manager
Mrs. T. Harry – Head of People and Information Governance
Mr. P. Davies – Chief Officer for Resources
Mrs W. Barnard – Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES:

County Councillors P. Clarke and B. Hayward

1. Declarations of Interest

Declarations of interest were declared as follows:

- County Councillor A. Easson: In relation to Monmouthshire Farm School Trust, a personal, non-prejudicial interest under the Members' Code of Conduct as an Elected Member of the Monmouthshire Farm School Trust as a Trustee.
- County Councillor R. J. Higginson: personal, non-prejudicial interest under the Members' Code of Conduct as MCC Appointee to East Wales Valuation Tribunal – relevant to non-domestic rates.
- County Councillor D. Edwards: In relation to Monmouthshire Farm School Trust, a personal, non-prejudicial interest under the Members' Code of Conduct as an Elected Member of the Monmouthshire Farm School Trust as a Trustee and in relation to Welsh Church Fund as Chair of the Committee.

2. Public Open Forum

There were no members of the public present.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 15th December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

3. To confirm minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Audit Committee held on the 17th November 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. To note the Action List from the 17th November 2016

We received the Action List from the meeting held on the 17th November 2016. In doing so, the following points were noted:

- Redundancy Costs: This matter is included as an item on the agenda.
- Internal Audit Section Contract Procedure Rules and Exemptions: This matter is included as an item on the agenda.
- Non-domestic rates: Clarification from Ruth Donovan has been provided to Committee Members. The Chair invited observations and it was concluded that the information provided satisfied the queries raised and that it was understood that it is a matter for individual businesses to appeal. It was confirmed that the Council has previously made representations to Welsh Government.
- Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP): It was confirmed that the general and specific views of the Committee were added to the report as agreed and was considered and endorsed by Council at its meeting on 1st December 2016.

5. Wales Audit Office Proposals for improvement progress report

The Wales Audit Office (WAO) Proposals for Improvement Progress Report was presented.

It was explained that the report provides a progress update against WAO proposals made to the Council to support its development. The proposals are not statutory. A link was provided to the latest annual improvement report by WAO which consists of an overview of progress in 2015/16 and prospects for improvement in 2016/17. It was reported that "Based on and limited to, the work carried out by the Wales Audit Office and relevant regulators, the Auditor General believes that the council will comply with the requirements of the measure during 2016-17 provided it continues to maintain the current pace of improvement comments will comply with measures if maintains current pace of improvement".

It was explained that each proposal update highlights:

- The specific proposal, or more than one proposal if they are closely linked.
- The progress made up to November 2016 to address the issues identified by the proposal.
- Whether the status of the proposal is to remain "open" or be "closed" if the evidence of progress suggests it has been sufficiently addressed.
- Any further actions that will be taken to address the proposal.

The proposals are grouped as follows:

- Human Resources
- Performance Management
- Partnership & collaboration
- Governance

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 15th December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

- Finance

It was noted that the proposals issued include recommendations made on a national basis that may be relevant to the Council.

6. Overview of Performance Management Arrangements

An update on the effectiveness of the authority's performance management arrangements was presented.

Members were reminded that the Council's Performance Management Framework:

- translates political ambition into a series of Improvement Objectives
- places an expectation on teams to translate these into specific, measurable actions in their service plans
- contains a broad range of data to monitor impact and measure the performance of services
- requires employees to receive regular appraisal to demonstrate how they are contributing to the objectives

The arrangements for self-evaluation and respective scoring were explained.

At this juncture, Members were invited to make observations on agenda items 6 and 7.

A Member commented that there was a lot of work not scheduled for completion until next year and enquired if any planned improvements were not on track. It was responded that many proposals for improvement were issued in the last 12-18 months; some complex, others more straightforward. Most have been categorised as "open" with further work to do; each unique according to individual circumstances. It was confirmed that progress is broadly on track noting that some have longer timescales. It was suggested that the Committee revisits progress in 6-12 months. It was noted that many challenges face the authority and the value of scrutiny undertaken by Audit Committee and Select Committees was a key element to ensure the Council remains on course.

In response to a query it was confirmed that WAO advice was rejected and Cabinet minutes would not be published.

A Member questioned if the objectives were being addressed within an acceptable timeframe as some key issues would not be completed until early next year. It was added that following the election in May, the new councillors may not be as informed on these items, and consequently scrutiny may not be as thorough. It was responded that there were a number of reasons for the differing timescales for completion of objectives such as when the evidence might be available to confirm improvement and where work is ongoing. It was confirmed that there is a regular cycle of progress reports and that new Members elected in May 2017 will be offered briefings on different elements of the council's systems to include familiarisation with performance management reports and processes and an update on historical matters, including links to key documents.

A Member sought clarification regarding how the education objectives to improve attainment at all key stages are to be addressed. It was explained that the measure was in both absolute and relative terms (i.e. where the authority sits in comparison with other similar authorities as defined by eligibility for Free School Meals, and consequently to be within the best two/three

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 15th December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

authorities in Wales). This would require improving upon or, at least, maintaining the previous year's position. It was explained that over the last three years, the rate of improvement is beginning to slow down and this is under analysis currently.

Regarding the staff appraisal system Check in Check Out, a Member noted that progress was "Adequate" only. Concern was expressed that systems were not in place to record when appraisals are completed. It was confirmed that it had been identified that more work was required to further define the process and to provide guidance to managers. Further refinement of the recording system was also required. It was explained that only 54% of staff were recorded as having completed appraisal. It was added that consideration is being given to developing a system that will capture rates of completion plus training analysis and other information to aid planning going forward.

A Member queried the method and frequency of re-evaluation by officers. It was explained that monitoring and evaluation is embedded in the existing performance management arrangements which include Service Improvement Plans and Action Plans for each team which require quarterly updates. Managers hold those responsible for actions to account and reports are brought to Audit Committee periodically to provide an overview of activity. The reports are available at all times on The Hub. The Leader of the Council uses the Service Improvement Plans as the basis of discussions with Cabinet Members regarding their respective portfolios.

A Member queried improvement objectives for the provision for additional learning needs, outcomes in schools and in the authority's youth service (in view of the 25% reduction in funding for youth services across Wales) as commented in Estyn's Monitoring letter in January 2016, and plans in relation to the recent PISA results that indicate that Wales appears well below average.

The global ranking of the PISA results was explained and it was explained that there is no local comparison available within Monmouthshire and that the basis of the tests are different to the national curriculum. The results relate to the performance of schools in Wales and UK.

It was explained that the Service Improvement Plan for the Youth Service has driven improvements in the service area noting that discussions with community councils are in progress to provide support. It was agreed to provide a more detailed response following the meeting.

A Member commented that PISA compares the UK countries with countries that provide schooling for up to 16 hours a day so there was no reasonable comparison, adding that the OFSTED Chief Inspector expressed the view that Welsh schools performed poorly because SATS are discontinued.

The Chair was provided with confirmation that there are specific targets for educational achievement. Results and the Chief Officer's Annual Report are scrutinised by Children and Young People Select Committee.

It was agreed that assurance had been sought on the operation of the authority's performance management arrangements and areas for further information identified as necessary.

7. Audited Welsh Church Fund Trust Fund Accounts 2015/16

The annual audited accounts for the Welsh Church Act Fund for 2015/16 were presented.

The following points were brought to the attention of the Committee:

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 15th December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

- The Fund decreased in 2015/16 by £39,000 due to a paper revaluation of investment assets downward of £133,000.
- Income is mainly from investment income and was broadly comparable to previous years but slightly decreased due to depressed values of investment funds.
- Charitable expenditure was £129,000 broadly comparable to previous years comprising mainly of grant payments to applicants. It was explained that expenditure was less than budget this year due to Caerphilly CBC's approach that most applicants didn't meet the grant paying criteria causing a significant underspend. The other authorities in the region largely spent, or slightly underspent, their budgeted allocations.

Further information was provided that the market plummeted in March 2016 generally and the value of units purchased was less. It was explained that the Schroeder's Income Fund was valued at 2624 in March 2016 but is currently trading at 3065 and was one of the top 5 performers. More work on the UBS Multi Asset Account will be undertaken.

County Councillor D. Edwards made a declaration of interest in relation to a personal, non-prejudicial interest under the Members' Code of Conduct as an elected Member of the Welsh Church Trust Fund Committee. County Councillor B. Strong made a declaration of interest in relation to a personal, non-prejudicial interest under the Members' Code of Conduct as an Elected Member of the Welsh Church Trust Fund Committee and as a trustee of the Roger Edwards Trust.

8. ISA 260 Report - Welsh Church Trust Fund

County Councillor A. Easson declared an interest in relation to a personal, non-prejudicial interest under the Members' Code of Conduct as an Elected Member of the Welsh Church Fund Committee.

The report was presented. It was explained that the Auditor General issues an unqualified opinion on the financial statements of the Welsh Church Trust Fund.

9. Audited Monmouthshire Farm School Trust Fund Accounts 2015/16

County Councillor D. Edwards made a declaration in relation to a personal, non-prejudicial interest under the Members' Code of Conduct as an Elected Member of the Monmouthshire Farm School Trust Committee and also as a Trustee.

The report was presented. In doing so, it was explained the fund performed well and that there was less expenditure than income.

It was reported that income for the year comprised interest on investment stock (£23,000 compared with £5,000 the previous year) mainly due to having a large cash holding at the end of the previous financial year resulting in a larger return. Further investment led to a lower cash balance, but a higher investment return.

It was explained that similar to the Welsh Church Fund, there is an unrealised investment loss of £23,000 which is considered a paper loss which only materialises when sold when market conditions will account for values.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 15th December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

It was explained that there is no ISA 260 for Monmouthshire Farm School Trust because it is an examination not a full investigation. The main issue raised is the Trust processing grants in advance of receiving the money from the Roger Edwards Trust.

10. Independent examination of financial statements report - Monmouthshire Farm School Trust Fund

The external audit report was presented noting that it was an audit examination not a full investigation. An unqualified opinion was issued. The timing element of issuing funds in advance of receipt of monies from the Roger Edwards Trust was raised as an issue.

A Member queried is there was anything that could be done to resolve the timing issue. County Councillor Strong offered to raise the matter with the Roger Edwards Trust.

It was confirmed that the accounts are produced within lawful timescales and properly audited. It was commented that it is usual to have late submission of accounts.

11. Zero Hours Contracts

The Committee was advised that this item had been referred by Council.

The term "Zero Hour Contract" and other similar descriptors were discussed noting that there is some interchangeability in definitions. It was explained that a Zero Hour Contract is a flexible contract where an employer does not guarantee set hours of work for an employee. The employee is contracted to that employer and cannot work for another employer. It was confirmed that Zero Hours Contracts are not used in Monmouthshire County Council.

In Monmouthshire, it was confirmed that specific contracts are used that are either temporary or permanent for a set number of part time or full time hours. If an employee is not employed on that basis, they are issued with a Casual Letter and the employee has no obligation to work. When offered work, the individual can choose whether or not to take up the offer. This arrangement allows the Council flexibility to employ people on a casual basis e.g. Playscheme workers – typically students looking for summertime employment.

It was explained that the aim is that no employees are treated inappropriately. It was clarified that some employees have casual hours' contracts mainly in Leisure Services e.g. Class instructors. It was explained that managers are expected to review such contracts to see if employees working regular hours should be employed on a part time or permanent basis.

A Member asked if the Trade Unions were satisfied with the Council's arrangements. It was confirmed, in respect of non-guaranteed hours, that specific guidance has been provided (appended to report). It was explained that part of the guidance suggests that negotiation is undertaken and no issues have been raised thus far.

A Member queried the position of employees working regular hours and their ability to be issued with a temporary or permanent contract. It was suggested that the information provided in the report was no different to information previously given. More detail from managers was requested to identify which posts are affected e.g. a 600 hour contract.

It was noted that County Councillor F. Taylor had written to the Committee with a list of questions and the Member commented that the information in the report did not fully provide answers. It was explained that, at the time of writing the report, the questions were not

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 15th December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

available. It was clarified that of the two 600 hours post, only one is current. The post is based in Tourism, Leisure and Culture and is casual and there is no obligation for the employee to work. The Member queried if a seasonal, temporary and part time post should be included in this list. The rights of some Teaching Assistants was also queried, raising the question of term time only employees with no pay in school holidays and re-employed for the next term. The details of the enquiry were noted and a response will be provided regarding the employment practices of schools.

The definition of Zero Hours Contracts was further debated, suggesting that the numbers of casual employees had doubled in recent years and querying if the casualization of workers was due to budget constraints and more information on trends was sought and also employee feedback to reassure that those workers concerned genuinely want such arrangements.

With regards to Leisure, a manager has provided information that most casual employees are students who seek part time casual work to fit in with other commitments. Other part time employees have other part time work. If hours become regularised, they are reviewed with the employee to seek their views. In terms of Home Care, the rural nature of the county is a difficulty and effort is made to ensure employees are employed on the best basis, based around the requirements of the service e.g. minimum guaranteed hours are provided to assist employees with mortgage applications etc. and managers work with HR accordingly. It was agreed that the Council is not sighted on external agency providers of staff (e.g. home carers) in terms of zero hours contracts.

A Member reported that a constituent had encountered difficulties arranging swimming lessons for her disabled son as there was no instructor available, yet with the flexible arrangements and thirteen instructor on the list it was not possible to accommodate for some services.

A Member queried the inclusion of a Principal Librarian on the list and it was confirmed that the list is being checked for anomalies. It was commented that the actual figures can vary from day to day e.g. it is sometimes necessary to contact outside contractors to cover absence.

A Member stated that assurance was sought if the Council's approach is right and appropriate, and expressed his satisfaction that the responses given provided reassurance. It was queried if comparisons with other authorities was available. It was confirmed that the other authorities in the region were contacted but only Newport City Council responded.

It was commented that, in order to continue to keep some services operational, casual contracts may be utilised but also reassurance was provided that, where an anomaly is identified, it will be altered e.g. Care workers.

A Member asked a question about supply teachers and if they are directly employed or employed via an agency. In response, it was confirmed that the Council doesn't directly employ supply teachers. It was queried if this could be done "in-house" to avoid wasting money. The need for schools to react, respond and maintain full teaching complements was acknowledged and agreed that this was a topic under consideration nationally.

The Chair drew the attention of the Committee to the working conditions of agency workers noting that this could represent a reputational issue for Council. It was confirmed that agencies operate under a national contractual framework and therefore the terms and conditions should be in line with council policy to adequately meet certain conditions of employment.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 15th December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

It was questioned if a review of contracts was possible and also provision of trends. It was suggested that this would be difficult to commit to due to capacity issues and the amount of time required for such an investigation. It was reported that there had been no complaints received.

Attention was drawn to the protocol for managers as a statement of policy. The view of the Committee was that reassurances had been received, the situation at present is satisfactory and that more information would be received in due course.

It was commented that two Members of the committee attend a national joint employer and trade union seminar twice a year and nothing about Zero Hours Contracts has been raised, similarly nothing has been raised in the Council's quarterly Joint Advisory Group with unions.

A member pointed out that many people on such contracts would not be union members and wouldn't be able to afford the fees, and that unions would not necessarily be sighted on the matter.

It was reiterated that union delegates have opportunity to raise questions and no concerns have been registered to date.

It was agreed that the Committee had looked more closely at these issues and more information had been requested.

12. Early Departures and Redundancy Costs

A report on Early Departures and Redundancy Costs was presented. It was noted that the report provided annual information and analysis as previously requested.

Members' attention was drawn to key points (Para 3.4) that provide reference to the reasons that early departures and redundancies arise in line with the Protection of Employment Policy such as end of grant funding for posts and restructuring and also exceptional circumstances where employment is terminated under a settlement agreement.

It was advised that the Accounts disclosure note is included in Appendix 1 and further analysis is provided in the tables in the report.

It was confirmed that considerable amounts are paid out as redundancy payments reflecting the current pressures in local government, however the actual amounts paid out 2015/16 compared with 14/15 were less. It was confirmed that in July 2016, a review of reserves was undertaken that highlighted the depletion of reserves in recent years. In respect of the Pensions and Redundancy reserve it was highlighted that there was a need for better workforce planning as already identified in the WAO Corporate Assessment, to redeploy where possible and to ensure clear cost savings from the removal of posts.

A Member queried how many Teaching Assistant posts had been lost during the last year noting that 80% of redundancies are women speculating that there could be a trend of lower paid women losing jobs. It was confirmed that information on Teaching Assistants will be provided to Members. With regard to the gender breakdown, it was explained that Appendix 2 confirms that the majority of redundancies are female and on lower grade posts. It was agreed that a high proportion of the workforce, especially lower paid postholders, are female and that a further breakdown of the proportion of redundancies in the workforce and grades would be provided.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 15th December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

A Member queried the trend of redundancy/early departure costs for 16/17 year. The Member also queried the 6 figure salary banded redundancies and asked for further information. It was clarified that these were the actual salaries of those who had been made redundant (not including NI etc.) and did not accord with the payments made. It was added that there are now upper thresholds to payments capped at £95,000 and agreed that there are limited numbers of staff on 6 figure salaries applicable to the Chief Executive and Headteachers of schools.

In response to a Member's query it was confirmed that redundancy payments are subject to enhancement by a multiplier of 1.7 of the statutory amount in line with many other authorities in Wales and the rest of the United Kingdom. This multiplier has been reduced in recent years as a result of the challenging financial climate.

It was asked that the gender balance information requested was breakdown by directorate.

Additional information was provided that the Month 6 monitoring report includes an estimation that redundancy costs for the year will be £690,000 excluding schools based staff. It was also explained that in the statement of accounts the calculation of a redundancy payment includes how long the employee has worked for the organisation plus the multiplier which may produce a payment that exceeds the annual salary.

The Officer was thanked for the report.

13. Exemptions from CPRS

A six monthly update on the Contract Procedures Rules Exemptions was provided.

Key Issues

- To ensure compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules in the way goods, works and services are procured on behalf of the Authority.
- Reassurance that the exemption process from Contract Procedure Rules is operating as intended by managers procuring goods, works or services on behalf of the Authority.
- Some operational managers procuring goods, works and services on behalf of the Authority may not be as familiar with Contract Procedure Rules and the exemption process as they should be.

It was explained that the report referred to processes for the procurement of goods and services. Occasionally, the procedures will not be adhered to and officers have to justify to a Chief Officer when the rules are not applied.

It was noted that there are a range of exemption rules. Below £5,000 one written quote is required and for purchases between £5,000 - £25,000, 3 written quotes are required. For amounts exceeding £25,000 a tendering process must be undertaken.

A list of 13 exemptions for the last six months was provided. Eight have been authorised and returned to Internal Audit and five remain outstanding. An update on the five will be provided at

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 15th December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

the next Audit Committee meeting. It was commented that there were no significant matters to report nor evidence of unsatisfactory trends.

A Member noted that of the thirteen exemptions listed, five were outstanding and it was queried if reasons were being sought why the matters remain outstanding. It was agreed that the five would be followed up and the information provided next time. It discussed that correct procedures should be followed and that the Audit Team should not have to chase information regarding outstanding reports. It was explained that follow up is undertaken for completeness and to ensure the system is not being bypassed. Reassurance was provided that the list of exemptions represents a very low proportion of the amount of procurement undertaken during the last six months.

A Member queried No. 199 and the reason why a member of staff had been commissioned as a specialist provider at a cost of £39,000. It was clarified that this was an agency arrangement rather than direct employment necessitating the use of a specific agency.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that there was no identifiable reason for the low level of application for exemptions and that applications were at an average level but can fluctuate dependent on procurement requirements.

14. Strategic Risk Assessment 2016

The Strategic Risk Assessment for 2016 for Monmouthshire County Council was presented.

Key Issues

1. The risk assessment ensures that:
 - Strategic risks are identified and monitored by the authority.
 - Risk controls are appropriate and proportionate
 - Senior managers and elected members systematically review the strategic risks facing the authority.
2. The existing risks on the Strategic Risk Assessment have been updated based on evidence available in 2016, as presented at Appendix 1. Changes to the council's risk management policy were approved by Cabinet in March 2015 and continue to be applied to the strategic risk register. These are:
 - including pre-mitigation and post-mitigation risk scores, this was also a key recommendation from scrutiny of the 2014 risk assessment
 - ensuring greater clarity to the phrasing of risk so that each statement includes an event, cause and effect as shown below:

Event	Cause	Effect
Risk of...Failure to...Lack of ...Loss of...Uncertainty of ...Inability to...Delay in...	Because of...Due to...As a result of...	Leads to...and/or... result in...

3. The risk assessment only covers high and medium level risks. Lower level operational risks are not registered unless they are projected to escalate within

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 15th December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

the three years covered. These need to be managed and monitored through teams' service plans. The pre and post mitigation risk levels are presented separately. In most cases mitigating actions result in a change to the likelihood of the risk rather than the consequences as our actions are generally aimed at reducing the chance of a negative event occurring rather than lessening its impact. Clearly there will be exceptions.

4. Following presentation to select committees and audit committee, the risk assessment will be presented to Cabinet for sign off. The risk assessment is a living document and will evolve over the course of the year as new information comes to light. An up-to-date risk log is accessible to members on the Council's intranet - The Hub. This will ensure, as well as the ongoing specific scrutiny of the risk assessment annually, that select committees are able to re-visit the information at any point in the year to re-prioritise their work plan as appropriate.

Members' attention was drawn to two risks pertinent to the Committee.

Risk No. 4 refers to the potential risk that the Council does not make sufficient progress in areas of weakness identified by regulators leading to underperformance. It was explained that this risk was discussed earlier in the meeting and is covered in the WAO proposals paper. During discussion answers and assurances were given regarding the detail of the proposals. The risk is therefore recorded with the reason for its inclusion, a score indicating the likelihood of the risk occurring, mitigating and future actions, and a post-mitigation score.

Risk No. 9b refers to a potential risk that the Council did not having appropriate governance mechanisms when establishing new collaborative or alternative delivery models that are often complex and could impact on the shared ability to deliver objectives. This is common to other Councils currently. Whilst this matter has been included in the WAO proposals, members were invited to comment further.

A Member questioned the risk management process (para 2.2) and the assertion of the systematic challenge of Cabinet Members and Officers. It was agreed that this was a valid observation. It was confirmed that such challenge is the remit of Audit committee and also Select committees where it is suggested that the risk assessment is used as a basis for their work plan. Members were informed that the Risk Assessment document is continuously available on the Hub and updated as new information is available. Committees may consider the document or any risk at any point during the year.

A Member commented that the risks identified appear every year. It was confirmed that there is degree of consistency, however mitigating actions can alter the risk score. It was queried if a risk assessment item was lowered if it would it leave the list. It was explained that there is a matrix of high and medium level risks and lower level risks sit within team service plans, and managed at that level accordingly. The attention of Cabinet and Select Committees is drawn to risks pertinent to them, and the status and effect of mitigating actions accordingly.

A Member questioned Risk No. 11 in relation to Britain leaving the European Union and how any disadvantage can be overcome e.g. City Deal. It was commented that the high degree of

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Audit Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 15th December, 2016 at 2.00 pm

risk is linked to uncertainty e.g. Legislation and funding changes and risk associated with unknown changes.

The Member added that current press report claim that Brexit could take 10 years and that this area of Wales can't wait this long for infrastructure changes. It was responded that this matter is under discussion by Strong Communities Select Committee, and as more information becomes available, risk levels will be reviewed.

The recommendations listed below were accepted.

1. That members consider the strategic risks presented for the next three years, in particular those of relevance to the committee and scrutinise the extent to which:
 - all relevant risks facing the authority are appropriately captured,
 - the level of risk applied is appropriate based on the matrix in the council's risk management policy and guidance (appendix 2) and
 - mitigating actions are proportionate and appropriate
2. That members use the risk assessment on an on-going basis to hold the responsibility holders to account to ensure that risk is being appropriately managed.
3. Use the risk assessment to inform the future work programme of the committee.

15. Forward Work Programme

- CPR exemptions will be presented in June 2017 Meeting not February 2017
- Update of the Anti fraud and Corruption and Theft policy will be presented in March 2017
- WAO has invited comment on its forward plan 2017-20 by the end of January 2017. The consultation document will be circulated and comments may be e mailed to Joy Robson to collate and return to the WAO.

16. To confirm the date and time of the next meeting as Thursday 2nd February 2017 at 2.00pm

The date of the next meeting of the Audit Committee was confirmed as Thursday 2nd February 2017 at 2.00pm.

The meeting ended at 4.00 pm

SUBJECT: Welsh Language Strategy 2017- 22
MEETING: Council
DATE: 19th January 2017
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To present the Welsh Language Strategy for 2017 – 2022, which has been produced in line with the requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and specifically Standards 145 and 146

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Council agree this 5 Year Strategy as required by Standard 145 set out in the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 The 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy sets out a vision of how the Welsh Language will look in Monmouthshire in 5 years' time and targets have been set to achieve that vision accordingly.
- 3.2 This strategy is closely linked to our Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) 2017 which has been scrutinised by the Children and Young Peoples Select Committee. In order to ensure a consistency of approach and to ease performance monitoring, some of the performance measures have been shared.
- 3.3 It is also aligned with the Welsh Government's ambitious strategy to have a million Welsh speakers by 2050. These two strategies have given added impetus to the Vision and its targets.
- 3.4 This strategy is challenging but achievable with the appropriate level of planning and support from our partners in the Council's Welsh Language Forum. It is worth noting at this point that the targets that are common to the 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy and the WESP may be subject to change dependent upon whether amendments are made in the light of comments or suggestions made in both consultation processes (Appendix A)

4. REASONS:

Monmouthshire County Council has a statutory responsibility to produce a 5 Year Welsh Language Strategy 2017 - 2022 under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 There are no additional financial or human resource implications arising out of this strategy.

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

There are no significant equality impacts identified in the assessment (Appendix 1).

The actual impacts from this report's recommendations will be reviewed annually.

7. CONSULTEES:

- 7.1 The strategy was subject to formal consultation between the 14th November and the 16th December 2016
Strong Communities Select, Menter Iaith Blaenau Gwent Torfaen Mynwy (MIBGTM), the Urdd, Mudiad Meithrin, Public Consultation Exercise on Council website, Facebook and Twitter, Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni, Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin, Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw and Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed, Rhieni Dros Addysg Gymraeg (RHAG).
- 7.2 As a result of the comments from Response 1 number 2D second paragraph noted in Appendix 1 below it is proposed that Welsh and English pages are developed on the council website that will give the information requested – the local Menter Iaith, Monmouthshire Welsh language clubs/societies, Welsh Medium schools and Welsh classes provided in the County.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Monmouthshire County Council's Welsh Language Standards

9. AUTHOR:

Alan Burkitt Policy Officer Equalities and Welsh Language

10. CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel: 01633 644010

E-mail: alanburkitt@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Appendix A

Response 1

Do you have any further comments regarding the Vision or the Targets?

2C. This target is not ambitious enough and this has already been noted in the response to the draft WESP. The increase is based mainly on the number of children already in the system and there is no specific target to increase numbers substantially (e.g. by providing another school in Raglan/Monmouth, as the KS1 classes in Ysgol y Fenni are oversubscribed). It must also be noted that the question is misleading. What is proposed is an increase of 15% on the present numbers, not an increase to 15% of children educated through the medium of Welsh.

2D. Transport is one major factor that affects decisions by parents to transfer from KS2-KS3. Transport to Gwent Iscoed and Gwynllyw schools should be facilitated and the post-16 charge of £385 abolished (some parents think there is no point in sending children a long distance on the bus, as they will not be able to afford the bus when they reach the 6th form.

Is it possible for space to be allocated on the Monmouthshire website to the language? Giving contact details/websites for Welsh societies, Menter Iaith, schools, lessons etc?

Response 2

Do you have further comments regarding the Vision or the Targets?

The authority should take action to support the work of voluntary societies to normalise the use of the language in the community e.g. meeting, social events and activities through the medium of Welsh.

Response 3

I don't believe that the targets are challenging enough. The number of children who receive their education through the medium of Welsh needs to be higher than less than a hundred. New Welsh schools are required. Also the number of staff who are learning Welsh needs to be increased etc.

Response 4

Our children and young people are the future of the language, therefore it is vital that they are taught the language in our schools. I believe that all primary school children should be bi-lingual by the time they are ready to proceed to secondary schools. This is vital, even if they show no interest in the language, in later years the benefits of planting the seeds of the language will ensure they value it when they are older.

Currently, there are only 2 Welsh primary schools in Monmouthshire. I believe that while all schools by law are supposed to provide some Welsh education, many only apply this casually, and do not emphasise the importance of the Welsh language, and see it as an extra burden on

the curriculum. This may be because there are insufficient staff that are reasonably fluent in the language or for other reasons, such as curriculum timescales etc. However, this situation must improve in all schools if the language is to be sustained and developed in the county.

Another aspect regarding the future vision of the language, is to emphasise its importance of everyday use in all the towns and villages in the county. This means that all places of work, shops and services should welcome the use of the language and be very supportive in terms of their signage and methods of greeting customers in the language. It is not difficult to learn simple greetings and acknowledgements, and this would make all the difference as it would become accepted and used on a day to day basis. Some shops and commercial businesses do this already (e.g: Aldi and the Post Office now make bi-lingual announcements in their Abergavenny stores). However, others ignore the language and refuse to respond. It is the language that makes Wales unique, and in Scotland and Ireland the use of their language has almost died out through lack of use and promotion. The council can encourage shops and businesses by providing basic information about greetings etc., and ensuring that all displays and information are bi-lingual.

Strategaeth yr Iaith Gymraeg 2017-2022



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Paratowyd dan Fesur y Gymraeg (Cymru) 2011



Welsh Language Strategy 2017-2022



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Prepared under the Welsh Language (Wales)
Measure 2011

Cynnwys

Rhagair.....	3
Cyflwyniad a Chyd-testun.....	5
Y Safonau'r Iaith Gymraeg.....	9
Gweledigaeth Sir Fynwy - Sut olwg fydd ar Yr Iaith yn y Sir erbyn 2022.....	11
Sut allwn ni wneud hyn	13
Targedau.....	15
Atodiad 1 - Ystadegau ieithyddol.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 7
Atodiad 2 - Cynllun gweithredu.....	1

Contents

Foreword.....	4
Introduction and context.....	7
The Welsh Language Standards.....	10.
The Monmouthshire Vision - What will the Language look like in the County by 2022.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 2
How can we do this	14
Targets.....	Error! Bookmark not defined. 6
Appendix 1 - Language statistics.....	18
Appendix 2 - Action plan	3

Rhagair

Daw'r strategaeth hon ar adeg bwysig ar gyfer y Gymraeg yn ein sir. Yn 2016 croesawodd Sir Fynwy yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol gyda dros 140,000 o ymwelwyr, y tro cyntaf mewn dros ganrif pan ddychwelodd i'r faes hyfryd yn Nolydd y Castell Y Fenni. Rydym yn falch tu hwnt o frwdfrydedd y sir, ei phobl a busnesau wrth fanteisio ar y cyfle i hyrwyddo a choleddu'r ŵyl unigryw hon.

Bum mlynedd ar hugain yn ôl roedd y gyfran a siaradai Gymraeg y sir yn is nag erioed ac nid oedd fawr ddim i awgrymu y byddai'r iaith yn gweld adfywiad yn yr ardal. Fodd bynnag, yn y blynyddoedd dilynol, bu adfywiad hynod yn yr iaith ac yn y cyfnod hwnnw gwelsom gynnydd bedair gwaith trosodd gyda chyfrifiad 2011 yn dangos bod 8,780 o breswylwyr Sir Fynwy yn rhugl yn y Gymraeg gyda miloedd o eraill â rhyw lefel o allu yn yr iaith.

Daeth Deddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol i rym yn 2016 gyda nod glir i gyrff cyhoeddus weithio tuag at Gymru â diwylliant bywiog lle mae'r Gymraeg yn ffynnu diwylliant yn ffynnu. Mae gennym hefyd Safonau'r Gymraeg a strategaeth Mwy na Geiriau 2012 sy'n hyrwyddo'r defnydd o'r Gymraeg mewn llywodraeth leol a'r sector gofal iechyd.

Credwn y gellir defnyddio'r sylfaen deddfwriaethol hwn a brwdfrydedd pobl Sir Fynwy tuag at yr iaith o ran rhoi gwaddol parhaol i'r sir er budd y preswylwyr ac ymwelwyr y presennol a phreswylwyr ac ymwelwyr y dyfodol i'r gornel arbennig hon o Gymru.

Paul Matthews **Prif Weithredwr,**

Cynghorydd Peter Fox, **Arweinydd y Cyngor**

Cynghorydd Philip Hobson, **Dirprwy Arweinydd a Hyrwyddwr Cydraddoldeb**

Foreword

This strategy comes at an important point for the Welsh language in our county. In 2016 Monmouthshire hosted the National Eisteddfod with its 140,000 visitors for the first time in over 100 years when it returned to the beautiful setting of Castle Meadows Abergavenny. The enthusiasm with which the county, its people and businesses seized the opportunity to promote and embrace this unique festival is something that we take huge pride in.

Twenty five years ago the proportion of people speaking Welsh in the country was at an all-time low and there was precious little to indicate that the fortunes of the language would ever revive in the area. However, in the years following, the language has remarkably revived and in that time we have seen a four-fold increase with the 2011 census showing that 8,780 Monmouthshire residents are fluent Welsh speakers with many thousands of others having some level of language skill.

2016 heralded the introduction of The Well-being of Future Generations Act with a clear goal for public bodies to work towards a Wales of thriving culture and vibrant Welsh language. We also have new Welsh Language Standards and the “More than Words Strategy 2012” which promote the use of the Welsh Language in local government and the social care sector.

We believe that this new legislative basis and the enthusiasm of the people of Monmouthshire towards the language can be harnessed in terms of providing a lasting legacy in the county to benefit current and future residents and visitors to this special corner of Wales.

Paul Matthews, **Chief Executive**

Councillor Peter Fox, **Leader of the Council**

Councillor Phylip Hobson, **Deputy Leader and Equality Champion**

Cyflwyniad a Chyd-destun

Mae'r cyfrifiad wedi cofnodi cynnydd nifer sylweddol yn nifer y siaradwyr Cymraeg sy'n byw yn Sir Fynwy, o 2.3% o'r boblogaeth yn 1991 i 9.9% yn 2001. Mae Deddf yr Iaith Gymraeg 1993, cynllun *Iaith Pawb* Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru ac addysgu gorfodol y Gymraeg mewn ysgolion a darpariaeth wych Cymraeg i Oedolion yn rhai o'r rhesymau allweddol am y cynnydd.

Bu cynnydd mawr mewn addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg ar draws y genedl yn y blynyddoedd diweddar ac yn Sir Fynwy caiff hyn ei ddarparu ar lefel gynradd gan Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni ac Ysgol y Ffin yn Sandy Lane, Cil-y-coed a bu cynnydd sylweddol yn y nifer sy'n mynychu'r ddwy ysgol ers eu sefydlu. Sefydlwyd Ysgol y Fenni ym mis Medi 1994 gyda 27 ar y gofrestr ac Ysgol y Ffin ym mis Medi 2001 gyda 16 ar y gofrestr. Yn 2015-16 roedd 170 o ddisgyblion wedi cofrestru yn Ysgol y Fenni ac 141 yn Ysgol y Ffin. Mae Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni yn disgwyl 227 ym mis Medi 2016. Ar ôl gorffen eu haddysg gynradd, mae disgyblion mewn addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn mynychu Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw yn awdurdod cyfagos Torfaen neu'r ysgol Gymraeg newydd a agorodd yng Nghasnewydd ym mis Medi 2016 - Ysgol Gymraeg Gwent Is-coed.

Y fframwaith statudol ar gyfer y Gymraeg yn Sir Fynwy sy'n rhoi nerth i'r strategaeth hon yw:

- Mesur y Gymraeg (Cymru) 2011
- Deddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol 2011

Mae Deddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol yn rhoi nod llesiant o:

- Cymru â diwylliant bywiog lle mae'r Gymraeg yn ffynnu
- Cymdeithas sy'n hyrwyddo a diogelu diwylliant, treftadaeth a'r Gymraeg

Mae ffactorau eraill sy'n dylanwadu ar y ffordd y bydd y strategaeth yn symud ymlaen â'r strategaeth:

- Strategaeth Mwy Na Geiriau 2012 – defnyddio'r Gymraeg mewn gofal cymdeithasol
- 1 miliwn o siaradwyr gan 2050 - ymrwymiad maniffesto y Blaid Lafur a ddenodd gefnogaeth drawsbleidiol yn y Cynulliad.

Introduction and Context

The census has recorded a significant increase in the number of Welsh speakers residing in Monmouthshire, from 2.3% of the population in 1991 to 9.9% in 2011. The Welsh Language Act 1993, the Welsh Assembly Government's *laith Pawb* initiative, the compulsory teaching of Welsh in schools, and the fantastic Welsh For Adults provision are some of the key reasons behind this increase.

In recent years there has been a resurgence in Welsh medium education across the whole of the nation and in Monmouthshire this is provided at primary level by Ysgol Gymraeg y Fenni in Abergavenny and Ysgol y Ffin in Sandy Lane Caldicot and numbers attending both schools have increased significantly since their establishment. Ysgol y Fenni was established in September 1994 with a pupil roll of 27 and Ysgol y Ffin in September 2001 with a pupil roll of 16. In 2015 -16 there were 170 pupils registered in Ysgol y Fenni and 141 in Ysgol Y Ffin. In September 2016 Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni are expecting 227. Upon the completion of their primary education, pupils in Welsh-medium education attend Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw in the neighbouring authority of Torfaen or the new Welsh School which opened in Newport in September 2017 – Ysgol Gymraeg Gwent Is-Coed.

The statutory framework for the Welsh language in Monmouthshire which gives strength to this strategy is as follows:

- The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011
- The Well Being of Future Generations Act 2011:

The latter sets a clear well-being goal of

- A Wales of a vibrant culture and a thriving Welsh Language.
- A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh Language

There are other factors which influence the way in which the strategy will be take forward:

- The More than Words Strategy/Strategaeth Mwy Na Geiriau 2012 – the use of the Welsh Language in Social Care.
- One million speakers by 2050 – The Labour manifesto commitment that has attracted cross party support in the Senedd.

Y Safonau'r Iaith Gymraeg:

Cyflwynwyd Safonau'r Gymraeg newydd ym mis Mawrth 2016. Mae 176 safon yn gymwys i Gyngor Sir Fynwy. Mae dau yn neilltuol yn gosod y gofynion i gynhyrchu a monitro Strategaeth ar gyfer y Gymraeg. Y rhain yw:

Safon 145

Rhaid ichi lunio, a chyhoeddi ar eich gwefan, strategaeth 5 mlynedd sy'n esbonio sut yr ydych yn bwriadu mynd ati i hybu'r Gymraeg ac i hwyluso defnyddio'r Gymraeg yn ehangach yn eich ardal, a rhaid i'r strategaeth gynnwys (ymysg pethau eraill) -

(a) targed (yn nhermau canran y siaradwyr yn eich ardal) ar gyfer cynyddu neu gynnal nifer y siaradwyr Cymraeg yn eich ardal erbyn diwedd y cyfnod o 5 mlynedd o dan sylw, a

(b) datganiad sy'n esbonio sut yr ydych yn bwriadu cyrraedd y targed hwnnw; a rhaid ichi adolygu'r strategaeth a chyhoeddi fersiwn ddiwygiedig ohoni ar eich gwefan o fewn 5 mlynedd i ddyddiad cyhoeddi'r strategaeth (neu i ddyddiad cyhoeddi fersiwn ddiwygiedig ohoni).

Safon 146

Bum mlynedd ar ôl cyhoeddi strategaeth yn unol â safon 145 rhaid ichi -

(a) asesu i ba raddau yr ydych wedi dilyn y strategaeth honno ac wedi cyrraedd y targed a osodwyd ganddi, a

(b) cyhoeddi'r asesiad ar eich gwefan, gan sicrhau ei fod yn cynnwys yr wybodaeth a ganlyn.

(i) nifer y siaradwyr Cymraeg yn eich ardal ac oedran y siaradwyr hynny;

(ii) rhestr o'r gweithgareddau a drefnwyd gennych neu a ariannwyd gennych yn ystod y 5 mlynedd flaenorol er mwyn hybu defnyddio'r Gymraeg.

Er yn heriol a blaengar, mae'r targedau yn y strategaeth hon yn adlewyrchu'r hyn y mae'r Cyngor yn ei gredu y gellir yn realistig ei gyflawni o fewn ei chwmpas 5 mlynedd; maent yn gymesur i broffil ieithyddol ac yn sir ac yn gydnaws â gofynion blaenoriaethau corfforaethol eraill y Cyngor fel y nodir uchod.

The Welsh Language Standards.

March 2016 saw the introduction of the new Welsh language standards. There are 176 standards applying to Monmouthshire County Council. Two in particular set out the requirement to produce and monitor a Welsh Language Strategy. These are:

Standard 145

You must produce, and publish on your website, a 5-year strategy that sets out how you propose to promote the Welsh language and to facilitate the use of the Welsh language more widely in your area; and the strategy must include (amongst other matters) –

- (a) A target (in terms of the percentage of speakers in your area) for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh speakers in your area by the end of the 5 year period concerned, and
- (b) A statement setting out how you intend to reach that target; and you must review the strategy and publish a revised version on your website within 5 years of publishing a strategy (or of publishing a revised strategy).

Standard 146

Five years after publishing a strategy in accordance with standard 145 you must –

- (a) Assess to what extent you have followed that strategy and have reached the target set by it, and
- (b) Publish that assessment on your website, ensuring that it contains the following information –
 - (i) The number of Welsh speakers in your area, and the age of those speakers;
 - (ii) a list of the activities that you have arranged or funded during the previous 5 years in order to promote the use of the Welsh language.

While challenging and progressive, the targets contained in this strategy reflect what the Council believes to be realistically achievable within its 5 year lifespan; they are proportionate to the linguistic profile of the county, and consistent with the requirements of the councils other corporate priorities as listed above.

Gweledigaeth Sir Fynwy - Sut olwg fydd ar Yr Iaith yn y Sir erbyn 2022

Fel rhan o'r weledigaeth hon mae'n hanfodol ein bod yn hyrwyddo a diogelu diwylliant, treftadaeth a'r iaith Gymraeg gan annog pobl i gymryd rhan lawn yn eu cymunedau.

Y weledigaeth ar gyfer ein sir yw adeiladu cymunedau cynaliadwy a chryf.

Byddwn yn adeiladu ar waddol cynnal yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol yn y sir fel y bydd Sir Fynwy yn 2022 yn fan lle mae:

- Yr iaith Gymraeg yn fyw ac egniol
- Pobl yn gallu rhyngweithio gyda'r Cyngor drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg
- Mwy o gyfleoedd i gymryd rhan mewn gweithgareddau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg
- Mwy o blant yn cael eu haddysgu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg
- Mwy o gyfleoedd i ddysgu'r iaith.

Ar y tudalennau dilynol dangoswn rai o'r camau gweithredu fydd yn rhoi'r weledigaeth hon ar waith:

The Monmouthshire Vision – What will the language look like in the County by 2022

The vision for our county is of building sustainable and resilient communities. As part of this vision it is essential that we promote and protect culture, heritage and the Welsh language encouraging people to participate fully in their communities.

We will build on the legacy of hosting the national Eisteddfod so that by 2022

Monmouthshire is a county where:

- The Welsh Language is live and dynamic.
- People can interact with the Council through the medium of Welsh.
- More opportunities to engage in activities through the medium of Welsh
- More children are educated through the medium of Welsh.
- There are wider opportunities to learn the language.

In the following pages we show some of the actions that we will deliver to turn this vision into a reality.

Sut y gallwn wneud hyn

1. Bydd penodi staff sy'n siarad Cymraeg i swyddi allweddol ar y rheng flaen yn rhoi sylw i'r Cyngor fel cyflogwr Cymraeg o ddewis ac yn rhoi cyfle i bobl a addysgwyd yn lleol ac sy'n siarad Cymraeg i weithio drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Gall hyn hefyd ddenu siaradwyr Cymraeg o Gaerdydd ac ymhellach i'r gorllewin.
2. Rhoi mwy o gyfleoedd i blant i ddysgu'r iaith yn y Sir.
3. Rhoi cyfle i staff fynychu sesiynau ymwybyddiaeth o'r Gymraeg ac wedyn symud ymlaen i ddsbarthiadau Cymraeg i ddysgu'r iaith.
4. Annog staff i ddysgu Cymraeg ar-lein gyda Say Something in Welsh neu Duo Lingo.
5. Gweithio'n agos gyda phartneriaid, y Fenter Iaith, yr Urdd, Comisiynydd y Gymraeg, Llywodraeth Cymru, Coleg Gwent, Y Bwrdd Iechyd Lleol a chynghorau cyfagos i normaleiddio a rhoi cyfleoedd i ddysgu a defnyddio'r iaith yn y gwaith a hefyd yn gymdeithasol.
6. Rhoi mwy o gyfle i'r cyhoedd i gael mynediad i wasanaethau a chyrsgiau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.
7. Agor pob cyfarfod gwleidyddol gyda chyfarfod dwyieithog i normaleiddio'r iaith.
8. Harneisio egni ac ewyllys da pwyllgorau codi arian lleol i gynyddu'r defnydd o'r iaith.
9. Harneisio'r siaradwyr Cymraeg a wirfoddolodd ar gyfer yr Eisteddfod er budd y gymuned Gymraeg.

How can we do this

1. The appointment of Welsh speaking staff to key front posts will highlight the council as a Welsh Language employer of choice and give Welsh speaking, locally educated people the opportunity to work through the medium of Welsh. This may also attract Welsh speakers from Cardiff and further West.
2. Provide greater opportunities for children to learn the language in the county.
3. Provide staff the opportunity to attend Welsh Language awareness sessions and then move on to Welsh classes to learn the language.
4. Actively encourage staff to learn Welsh on-line with either “Say Something in Welsh” or “Duo Lingo”
5. Work closely with partners, Menter Iaith, Urdd, Welsh Language Commissioner, Welsh Government, Coleg Gwent, The local Health Board and neighbouring Councils to normalise and give opportunities to both learn and use the language, both in work and socially.
6. Give the public greater opportunity to access services and courses through the medium of Welsh.
Open all political meetings with a bilingual greeting to normalise the language.
7. Harness the energy and goodwill of the local fundraising committees to raise the use of the language.
8. Welsh speaking volunteers for Eisteddfod harnessed for the Community

Targedau

Rydym wedi gosod nifer o dargedau fydd yn dangos pa mor dda yr ydym yn cyflawni ein camau gweithredu ac yn helpu i ddangos ein cynnydd tuag at nodau'r strategaeth bum mlynedd. Mae hyn yn cynnwys:

- Cynyddu nifer y staff rhugl eu Cymraeg sy'n gweithio i'r Cyngor o 28 i 40 – cynnydd o 53.8%.
- Cynyddu nifer y staff sy'n dysgu Cymraeg o 14 i 28 erbyn diwedd y strategaeth yma – cynnydd o 100%.
- Cynyddu canran plant a phobl ifanc Sir Fynwy a addysgir drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg o 577 neu 5.2% i 663 neu 15% erbyn 2022.
- Cynyddu cyfradd trosglwyddo o Gyfnod Allweddol 2 i 3 i 100% erbyn 2022. (2016-17 Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin 93.3% neu 14 allan o 15 / Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni 78.6% neu 22 allan o 28 / Cyfanswm 83.7% neu 36 allan o 43)
- Cynyddu'r cyfran o bobl ifanc Sir Fynwy sy'n gadael yr ysgol gyda sgiliau dwyieithog (Cymraeg a Saesneg) y gellir eu defnyddio yn y gweithle o 577 neu 5.2% i 1,106 neu 10% erbyn 2022

Targets

We have set a number of targets that will show how well we are delivering our actions and help show the progress we are making towards the aspirations of the five year strategy. These include:

- Increasing the number of fluent Welsh speaking staff in the Council from 28 to 40 - an increase of 53.8%
- Increasing the numbers of staff learning Welsh from 14 to 28 by the end of this strategy – an increase of 100%.
- Increasing the percentage of Monmouthshire children and young people educated through the medium of Welsh from 577 or 5.2% to 663 or 15% by 2022.
- Increasing the rate of transition from Key Stage 2 to 3 to 95% by 2022. (2016 - 2017 Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin 93.3% or 14 out of 15 / Ysgol Gymraeg Y Fenni 78.6% or 22 out of 28 / Total 83.7% or 36 out of 43) .
- Increasing the percentage of young people in Monmouthshire leaving school with bilingual skills (Welsh and English) that can be used in the workplace from 577 or 5.2% to 1,106 or 10% by 2022.

Atodiadau

Atodiad 1-Cyngor Sir Fynwy - canran o'r boblogaeth 3 oed a throsodd a all siarad Cymraeg yn ôl ardal gymunedol Cyfrifiad 2011.

Enw Adran Etholiadol	Preselwyr 3+	Siarad	Siarad	Siarad,darllen + ysgrifennu,	Siarad,darllen + ysgrifennu,
	Rhifau	Rhifau	%	Rhifau	%
Caer-went	1735	151	8.7	114	6.6
Castell Cil-y-coed	1885	221	11.7	166	8.8
Cantref	1994	169	8.5	127	6.4
Castell	1749	173	9.9	127	7.3
Croesonnen	2330	232	10	160	6.9
Crucornau Fawr	2054	216	10.5	158	7.7
Devauden	1448	139	9.6	94	6.5
Llanddewi	1888	172	9.1	120	6.4
Dixton gydag Osbaston	2501	180	7.2	129	5.2
Drybridge	3291	346	10.5	238	7.2
Goetre Fawr	2332	270	11.6	197	8.4
Green Lane	2014	220	10.9	147	7.3
Grofield	1785	185	10.4	128	7.2
Lansdown	2125	202	9.5	129	6.1
Larkfield	1952	151	7.7	108	5.5
Llanbadog	1281	135	10.5	96	7.5
Bryn Llanelli	3818	337	8.8	253	6.6
Llan-ffwyst Fawr	1811	211	11.7	158	8.7
Llangybi Fawr	1820	163	9	132	7.3
Llanofer	2244	173	7.7	128	5.7
Llandeilo Gresynni	1718	164	9.5	118	6.9
Llanwenarth Tu Draw	1406	117	8.3	92	6.5
Y Maerdy	1432	150	10.5	109	7.6
Y Felin	2424	263	10.8	209	8.6
Llanfihangel Troddi	1221	108	8.8	86	7
Overmonnow	2314	196	8.5	146	6.3
Porth y Sgewin	2083	220	10.6	167	8
Y Priordy	2117	219	10.3	166	7.8
Rhaglan	1876	209	11.1	144	7.7
Rogiet	1747	272	15.6	203	11.6
St. Arvans	1569	134	8.5	95	6.1
St. Christopher's	2490	299	12	214	8.6
St. Kingsmark	3032	247	8.1	186	6.1
St. Mary's	1776	120	6.8	82	4.6
Hafren	1630	172	10.6	123	7.5
Drenewydd Gelli-farch	2158	172	8	112	5.2
The Elms	3536	452	12.8	335	9.5
Thornwell	2630	282	10.7	189	7.2
Tryleg Unedig	2694	261	9.7	187	6.9
Brynbuga	2766	271	9.8	195	7
West End	1861	199	10.7	155	8.3
Wyesham	2072	207	10	151	7.3
Total	88609	8780	9.90%	6373	7.20%

Appendices

Appendix 1-Monmouthshire County Council – percentage of the population 3 and over able to speak Welsh by community area Census 2011

	Residents 3+	Speak	Speak	Speak, Read + Write	Speak, Read + Write
Electoral Division Name	Numbers	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
Caerwent	1735	151	8.7	114	6.6
Caldicot Castle	1885	221	11.7	166	8.8
Cantref	1994	169	8.5	127	6.4
Castle	1749	173	9.9	127	7.3
Croesonen	2330	232	10	160	6.9
Crucorney	2054	216	10.5	158	7.7
Devauden	1448	139	9.6	94	6.5
Dewstow	1888	172	9.1	120	6.4
Dixton with Osbaston	2501	180	7.2	129	5.2
Drybridge	3291	346	10.5	238	7.2
Goetre Fawr	2332	270	11.6	197	8.4
Green Lane	2014	220	10.9	147	7.3
Grofield	1785	185	10.4	128	7.2
Lansdown	2125	202	9.5	129	6.1
Larkfield	1952	151	7.7	108	5.5
Llanbadoc	1281	135	10.5	96	7.5
Llanelly Hill	3818	337	8.8	253	6.6
Llanfoist Fawr	1811	211	11.7	158	8.7
Llangybi Fawr	1820	163	9	132	7.3
Llanover	2244	173	7.7	128	5.7
Llantilio Crossenny	1718	164	9.5	118	6.9
Llanwenarth Ultra	1406	117	8.3	92	6.5
Mardy	1432	150	10.5	109	7.6
Mill	2424	263	10.8	209	8.6
Mitchel Troy	1221	108	8.8	86	7
Overmonnow	2314	196	8.5	146	6.3
Portskewett	2083	220	10.6	167	8
Priory	2117	219	10.3	166	7.8
Raglan	1876	209	11.1	144	7.7
Rogiet	1747	272	15.6	203	11.6
St. Arvans	1569	134	8.5	95	6.1
St. Christopher's	2490	299	12	214	8.6
St. Kingsmark	3032	247	8.1	186	6.1
St. Mary's	1776	120	6.8	82	4.6
Severn	1630	172	10.6	123	7.5
Shirenewton	2158	172	8	112	5.2
The Elms	3536	452	12.8	335	9.5
Thornwell	2630	282	10.7	189	7.2
Trellech United	2694	261	9.7	187	6.9
Usk	2766	271	9.8	195	7
West End	1861	199	10.7	155	8.3
Wyesham	2072	207	10	151	7.3
Total	88609	8780	9.90%	6373	7.20%

Atodiad 2 Cynllun Gweithredu 2017 - 2022

	Beth	Sut	Pryd	Gweledigaeth	Pwy
1	Penodi mwy o staff sy'n siarad Cymraeg i swyddi allweddol	Cynllunio gweithlu adrannol Asesu pob swydd wag yn unigol	Parhaus	Gall pobl gysylltu gyda'r Cyngor drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg	Adnoddau Dynol a rheolwyr llinell
2	Rhoi mwy o gyfleoedd i blant ddysgu'r iaith yn y Sir	Hyrwyddo addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg ar oedran ifanc		Mwy o blant yn cael eu haddysg drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg	Rhieni Dros Addysg Gymraeg (RHAG), Menter Iaith, Yr Urdd, Cyfarwyddiaeth Plant a Phobl Ifanc, Twf, Mudiad Meithrin
3	Rhoi cyfle i staff fynychu sesiynau ymwybyddiaeth o'r Gymraeg ac wedyn symud ymlaen i ddsbarthiadau Cymraeg i ddysgu'r iaith	Trefnu rhaglen o ddsbarthiadau ar gyfer dysgwyr		Mwy o gyfleoedd i ddysgu'r iaith	Swyddog y Gymraeg, Addysg Oedolion, Coleg Gwent
4	Annog staff i ddysgu Cymraeg ar-lein gyda Say Something in Welsh neu Duo Lingo	Hysbysebu cyrsiau ar y fewnrwyd a thrwy e-bost Trefnu sesiwn ymwybyddiaeth gyda Say Something in Welsh ar gyfer sesiwn flasu gyda staff	Hydref 2016 Gorffennaf 2017	Mwy o gyfleoedd i ddysgu'r iaith	Swyddog y Gymraeg, Cyfathrebu

5	Gweithio'n agos gyda phartneriaid, i normaleiddio a rhoi cyfleoedd i ddysgu a defnyddio'r iaith yn y gwaith a hefyd y gymdeithasol	Weithio mewn partneriaeth gyda chydweithwyr i wneud yn siŵr fod y cyfle i Gyngor Sir Fynwy bod yn rhan o bob cynllun partneriaeth a drefnir	Parhaus	Mwy o gyfleoedd i gymryd rhan mewn gweithgareddau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg	Swyddog Iaith Gymraeg, Menter Iaith, yr Urdd, Gwasanaethau Hamdden, Gwasanaethau Ieuencid
6	Rhoi mwy o gyfleoedd i'r cyhoedd i gael mynediad i wasanaethau a chyrsgiau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg	Canfod pa gwasanaethau mae'r cyhoedd ei eisiau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Edrych ar benodi siaradwyr Cymraeg neu weithio mewn partneriaeth i ddarparu'r gwasanaeth/gweithgaredd	Parhaus Parhaus ac yn gynyddol aml	Pobl yn gallu rhyngweithio gyda'r Cyngor drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg	Adrannau'r Cyngor Gweithio gyda Menter Iaith, yr Urdd, awdurdodau cyfagos
7	Harneisio egni ac ewyllys da pwyllgorau codi arian lleol i gynyddu defnydd yr iaith	Gweithio gyda'r pwyllgorau codi arian i drafod 'gwaddol' briodol ar gyfer yr Eisteddfod	2017	Y Gymraeg yn "fyw a deinamig"	Swyddog y Gymraeg
8	Harneisio siaradwyr Cymraeg a wirfoddolodd yn yr Eisteddfod er lles y gymuned Cymraeg	Adeiladu bas data o siaradwyr Cymraeg i weithio fel gwirfoddolwyr mewn digwyddiadau y cyngor ac hefyd y gymuned	2017	Y Gymraeg yn "fyw a deinamig"	Swyddog Gwirfoddoli Swyddog y Gymraeg

Appendix 2 – Action plan 2017 - 2022

	What	How	when	Vision	Who
1	Appoint additional Welsh speaking staff to key posts	Departmental workforce planning Assess each vacancy on its merits	Ongoing	People can interact with the Council through the medium of Welsh	Human Resources and Line managers.
2	Provide greater opportunities for children to learn the language in the County.	Promote Welsh Medium education at an early age.		More children are educated through the medium of Welsh.	Rhieni Dros Addysg Gymraeg (RHAG), Menter Iaith, The Urdd, Children and Young People Directorate (CYP), TWF, Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin (MYM)
3	Provide staff the opportunity to attend Welsh Language awareness sessions and then move on to Welsh classes to learn the language.	Arrange a programme of classes for learners.		There are wider opportunities to learn the language	Welsh Language Officer, Adult Education, Coleg Gwent
4	Actively encourage staff to learn Welsh on-line with both “Say Something in Welsh” (SSIW) or “Duo Lingo”	Advertise courses on intranet and e mail. Arrange an awareness session with SSIW for a taster session for staff	Oct 2016 July 2017	There are wider opportunities to learn the language	Welsh Language Officer, Communication

5	Work closely with partners, to normalise and give opportunities to both learn and use the language, both in work and socially.	Work in partnership with colleagues to make sure that Monmouthshire County Council have the opportunity to be involved in every partnership initiative that is organised.	Ongoing	More opportunities to engage in activities through the medium of Welsh	Welsh Language Officer, Menter Iath, Urdd, Leisure Services, Youth Services
6	Give the public greater opportunity to access services and courses through the medium of Welsh	Find out what services the public want through the medium of Welsh. Look to appoint Welsh Speakers or work in partnership to provide the service/activity	Ongoing Ongoing and with increasing frequency	People can interact with the Council through the medium of Welsh	Council departments Work with Menter Iath, Urdd, neighbouring authorities
7	Harness the energy and goodwill of the local fundraising committees to raise the use of the language	Work with the Eisteddfod fundraising committees to develop an appropriate "Legacy" for the Eisteddfod.	2017	The Welsh Language is "Live and Dynamic"	Welsh Language Officer,
8	Harness Welsh speaking volunteers for Eisteddfod for the good of the Welsh speaking community	Build a database of Welsh speakers to act as volunteers at council and community events.	2017	The Welsh Language is "Live and Dynamic"	Volunteering Officer Welsh Language Officer






<p>Name of the Officer completing the evaluation Alan Burkitt</p> <p>Phone no:01633 644010 E-mail:alanburkitt@monmouthshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal</p> <p>As a result of the new Welsh Language Standards we have a legal requirement to produce a 5 year strategy that sets the vision for the Welsh Language in Monmouthshire for the next 5 years.</p>
<p>Name of Service</p> <p>Equality and Welsh Language</p>	<p>Date Future Generations Evaluation form completed</p> <p>14th December 2016</p>

4 **Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below?** Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal.

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>Welsh speakers and learners from both inside and outside of Monmouthshire will be able to apply for posts that enable them to make the most of their language skills and provide a Welsh Language service to the Welsh speaking citizens of Monmouthshire.</p>	
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g. climate change)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood	N/A	
A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected	N/A	
A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing	N/A	
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation	This strategy will give more people the opportunity to learn Welsh and also enable Welsh speakers to have services delivered through the medium of Welsh including recreational opportunities.	
A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	N/A	

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

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? Describe how.	If not, what has been done to better meet this principle?
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning for the future</p>	<p>This is a 5 year strategy but has been developed taking into consideration the 1 million speakers by 2050 commitment of Welsh Govt and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act</p>	
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p>	<p>Other Local Authority colleagues, internal officers, the Menter Iaith and Urdd will be key partners in the delivery of this strategy.</p>	
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>The draft strategy has been the subject of an extensive consultation with interested parties and a number of observations and questions have been raised.</p>	
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>This strategy has the aim of allowing us to comply with a number of the Welsh Language Standards which we have a statutory obligation to adhere to.</p>	
 <p>Integration</p> <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>N/A</p>	

3. **Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics?** Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below. For more detailed information on the protected characteristics, the Equality Act 2010 and the Welsh Language Standards that apply to Monmouthshire Council please follow this link: <http://hub/corporatedocs/Equalities/Forms/AllItems.aspx> or contact Alan Burkitt on 01633 644010 or alanburkitt@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	It is Increasing the opportunities for children to be educated through the medium of Welsh and also can impact on the already vibrant Welsh for Adults provision.		
Disability	The opportunities in the strategy are available to all across the protected characteristics.		
Gender reassignment	The opportunities in the strategy are available to all across the protected characteristics		
Marriage or civil partnership	The opportunities in the strategy are available to all across the protected characteristics		
Pregnancy or maternity	The opportunities in the strategy are available to all across the protected characteristics		
Race	The opportunities in the strategy are available to all across the protected characteristics		

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Religion or Belief	The opportunities in the strategy are available to all across the protected characteristics		
Sex	The opportunities in the strategy are available to all across the protected characteristics		
Sexual Orientation	The opportunities in the strategy are available to all across the protected characteristics		
Welsh Language	This Strategy is specifically designed to promote and enhance the Welsh Language across Monmouthshire		

4. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on important responsibilities of Corporate Parenting and safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect either of these responsibilities? For more information please see the guidance <http://hub/corporatedocs/Democratic%20Services/Safeguarding%20Guidance.docx> and for more on Monmouthshire’s Corporate Parenting Strategy see <http://hub/corporatedocs/SitePages/Corporate%20Parenting%20Strategy.aspx>

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on safeguarding and corporate parenting	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on safeguarding and corporate parenting	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	N/A		
Corporate Parenting	N/A		

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

Census 2011
 Welsh Medium Education data
 Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.
 MCC staff training data 2016-2017
 MCC staff language skills database 2016-2017
 Draft Welsh Education Strategic Plan 2017- 2010

6. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

The Strategy will have a positive effect on the development of the Welsh Language over the next 5 years. This strategy and its accompanying action plan will be reviewed and reported upon to the Welsh Language Commissioner on an annual basis.

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

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible	Progress
N/A			

8. MONITORING: The impacts of this proposal will need to be monitored and reviewed. Please specify the date at which you will evaluate the impact, and where you will report the results of the review.

The impacts of this proposal will be evaluated on:	April 2018 and annually thereafter
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9. VERSION CONTROL: The Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stages of decision making, and then honed and refined throughout the decision making process. It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and built in sustainable development wherever possible.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	This Strategy will be ratified by Council on the 16 th January 2017	16 th Jan 2017	.

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Subject: COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2017/18

Meeting: Council

Date: 19th January 2017

Divisions/Wards Affected: All

1. PURPOSE:

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- present arrangements for the implementation of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and to approve it for 2017/18
- affirm that, in the absence of any revisions or amendments, annual uprating amendments will be carried out each year without a requirement to adopt the whole Council Tax Reduction Scheme

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 To note the making of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations ("the Prescribed Requirements Regulations") 2013 by the Welsh Government on 26 November 2013.

2.2 To adopt the provisions within the Regulations above ("the Prescribed Requirements Regulations") and any 'annual uprating regulations' in respect of its Scheme for the financial year 2017/18 including the discretionary elements previously approved as the Council's local scheme from 1st April 2017.

3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 On 19th January 2016 Council adopted the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2016/17, in accordance with the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013.

3.2 The Regulations approved by the Assembly are available as follows:

The Default Scheme

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2013/3035/contents/made>

The Prescribed Scheme

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2013/3029/contents/made>

The Amendment Regulations were approved by the National Assembly on 17th January 2017 incorporating the uprated benefits from April 2017

<http://www.assembly.wales/en/bus-home/Pages/Plenary.aspx?assembly=5&category=Laid%20Document>.

- 3.3 A failure to adopt a 'local' scheme by 31 January 2017 will result in the Default Scheme being imposed on the Council.
- 3.4 The Welsh Government's regulations for 2017/18 do not contain any significant changes for recipients of Council Tax reduction. Claimants can receive a reduction up to 100% of their Council Tax bill dependent upon their income and household circumstances.
- 3.5 Annual Uprating regulations to increase benefits and personal allowances from April 2017 within the Council Tax Reduction Scheme has been considered by a Plenary session of the Senedd of the National Assembly for Wales on 17th January 2017.

4. Background

- 4.1 It was reported to Council on 28th January 2013 that the Welfare Reform Act 2013 included provisions to abolish Council Tax Benefit on 31 March 2013. From 1 April 2013, the responsibility for arranging support towards paying Council Tax and the associated funding transferred from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to local authorities in England, and to the Scottish and Welsh Governments. The UK Government's policy intention was to reduce expenditure on Council Tax and therefore to implement a 10 per cent funding cut.
- 4.2 The report to Council on 28th January 2013 referred to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme Regulations 2012 and the amending regulations 2013. Those regulations were for implementation during the 2013/14 financial year only and Council resolved to adopt a new scheme for subsequent years in accordance with new regulations approved by the Welsh Government.
- 4.3 The regulations for Council Tax Reduction include provision for support up to 100% of council tax. As noted when presenting this issue in January, the regulations control the implementation of reduction schemes across the whole of Wales and are designed to ensure that each local authority consistently provides support for Welsh taxpayers.

5. The Reduction Scheme and discretionary areas

- 5.1 Although a national scheme has been approved, within the Prescribed Requirements Regulations there is limited discretion given to the Council to apply additional discretionary elements that are more generous than the national scheme and which provide for additional administrative flexibility. Council approved the discretionary areas to be applied (listed in 5.2) following public consultation. It is not proposed to change them in any way therefore no further consultation is required at this stage.
- 5.2 It is recommended to adopt the Scheme in the Prescribed Requirement Regulations (as per paragraph 3.3 the regulations can be accessed via the link: - <http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-business-fourth-assembly-laid-docs.htm?act=dis&id=251458&ds=12/2013>) and to exercise the previously approved discretions as follows:
 - The ability to increase the standard extended reduction period of 4 weeks given to persons after they return to work where they have previously been receiving a council tax reduction that is to end as a result of their return to work - it is not recommended to increase the standard extended reduction period;

- Discretion to increase the amount of War Disablement Pensions and War Widows Pensions which is to be disregarded when calculating income of the claimant - it is recommended to disregard the whole amount of War Disablement Pensions and War Widows Pensions;
- The ability to backdate the application of council tax reduction with regard to late claims prior to the new standard period of three months before the claim - it is not recommended to increase the backdated period;
- To provide above the minimum level of information to customers in order to ensure they are appropriately notified of their award in accordance with legislation - it is recommended that we maintain the current standard provision.

These discretions were approved by Council on 19th January 2016.

- 5.3 There are no additional monies available from the Welsh Government to fund discretionary elements but they are allowed for within our existing budget.
- 5.4 Changes to pensions, benefits and allowances normally take effect every April and sometimes during the year. The scheme has to reflect the changes to benefits in order to adjust calculations of entitlement. This is part of normal Benefits administration. We are advised that the Council need to approve the annual uprating regulations each year without formal adoption of the whole scheme.
- 5.5 As the uprating of benefits is not an area of discretion the Council is not able to consult on it.

6. Resource Implications

- 6.1 From 2014/15 onwards the Council Tax Reduction Scheme was funded through RSG. The Council therefore need to manage the cost of the Scheme within its annual budget.
- 6.2 Any additional costs for growth in caseload and/or increases in entitlement attributable to a rise in the overall level of Council Tax have to be managed and are built into our budget proposals for 2017/18.
- 6.3 This results in a provisional budget allocation, for 2017/18, of £6,135,266 (based on a 3.95% increase in Council Tax).

7. Sustainable Development and Equality Implications

- 7.1 There are no implications for sustainable development.
- 7.2 The scheme to be applied for 2017/18 does not contain any significant changes from the scheme which is currently operational.
- 7.3 The Welsh Government has undertaken a detailed 'regulatory' impact assessment, which includes equality impact assessment, but we understand that the findings reported were in line with their expectations.
- 7.4 Our Sustainability Community Officer has confirmed that under these circumstances there is no requirement to complete a Future Generations Evaluation.

8. Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting Implications

None

9. CONSULTEES:

Strategic Leadership Team
All Cabinet Members
Head of Legal

10. Background Papers:

None

11. Authors:

Joy Robson – Head of Finance

Richard Davies – Head of Benefits (Monmouthshire)

12. CONTACT DETAILS:

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Agenda item

SUBJECT: Standards Committee – Appointment of Independent Members
MEETING: County Council
DATE: 19th January 2017
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

The Appointments Panel for Independent Members of the Standards Committee has met and is recommending appointments to be made by the Council. A serving independent member of the Standards Committee has expressed a wish to serve a second term, as permitted by the regulations.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) To appoint Richard McGonigle and Richard Stow as recommended by the Appointments Panel to fill the vacancies of independent members on the Standards Committee for a period of six years.
- b) To reappoint Trevor Auld for a further 4 years as an independent member on the Standards Committee.

3. KEY ISSUES:

At its meeting on the 20th October last year, the Council established a panel pursuant to the Standards Committees (Wales) Regulations 2001 for the purpose of considering applications for two vacancies for independent members of the Council's Standards Committee.

In response to advertisement in the local press, 10 applications were received and the Panel, including a local community councillor appointed by One Voice Wales and the High Sheriff as lay panel member met on the 25th November and 2nd December 2016 respectively to shortlist and interview the candidates. The Panel applied the criteria for appointment as agreed by the Council and published in the regulations and the persons who, in the opinion of the Panel, should be considered for appointment as independent members are Richard McGonigle and Richard Stow.

Trevor Auld was originally appointed by the Council to the Standards Committee as an independent member in January 2011. He has expressed a wish to serve a second term and the relevant regulations allow an independent member to serve a second term of 4 years.

4. REASONS:

The appointment and reappointment of the independent members completes the establishment on the Council's Standards Committee.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The independent members will receive an allowance up to £198 for official duties (pro rata for half a day).

6. FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION:

No adverse implications identified.

7. CONSULTEES:

Chief Executive
Political Leadership Group

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Council report of 20th October 2016.

9. AUTHOR:

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