

SUBJECT: Developing Participatory Democracy

MEETING: Democratic Services Committee

DATE: 23rd October 2017

DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide the committee with some potential areas that could be used to pilot new approaches to engaging with the community.
- 1.2 To give the committee an overview of the Monmouthshire Made Open platform and an understanding of its potential to play a role in developing a more participatory form of democracy by harnessing the collective knowledge and talents of those in our communities.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The 2016-17 Democratic Services Committee expressed a desire to reinvigorate their agenda through understanding new perspectives and ideas in democratic development. At recent meetings the committee has begun to explore how the authority can engage people more meaningfully in the democratic process, create opportunities for people to engage with the authority in new ways, work collaboratively and involve people in building sustainable and resilient communities.
- 2.2 At their last meeting the committee agreed to identify a single issue, perhaps drawn from a range of evidence including the well-being assessment, surveys and previous engagement work and use this as a pilot to test how we can engage in more effective ways.
- 2.3 Our digital Made Open Platform is about facilitating collaboration and demonstrating the impact of what can be achieved by working together with communities to identify challenges and work together on co-producing the solutions.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Members are invited to consider which issues they wish to take forward and how the platform can contribute to their desire to re-invigorate the local democratic process and whether it can play a role in taking forward a single issue.

4 KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Local government has a key role in helping communities to define the futures to which they aspire and help the public understand how decisions are made and also how they can participate in the democratic process.
- 4.2 Cabinet recently approved a paper agreeing the process to develop a new whole authority strategic plan or corporate plan. This identifies some of the issues of greatest

significance to people and businesses as well as our organisation. This is strongly aligned with the discussion at the previous meeting of this committee. An overview of where these issues emerge from is shown in appendix 1 and will be explored as part of the discussion and presentation at the meeting.

- 4.3 [Monmouthshire Made Open](#) is part of a suite of digital tools that form part of the way in which we can engage with communities. It has been in place in Monmouthshire for a number of years and has now been adopted by a number of councils and community organisations in England and Australia. Made Open enables people to talk about the issues that matter to them and work with others to develop ideas and vote on or 'like' the best solutions. It also enables people and organisations to connect, collaborate and exchange time, money and materials for social good. It can be searched by theme or geographical area and so has the potential to facilitate engagement at a ward as well as a county-wide level.
- 4.4 A demonstration of the platform will be given at the meeting. A short animation giving an overview can be seen [here](#) and a screenshot of the platform is shown as appendix 2 of the report. Members wishing to access the platform can view it using the above link and register or login using an existing social media account such as Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn.

5. REASONS

- 5.1 To create opportunities to work more collaboratively with communities to understand the issues that matter and work in new ways with people to develop solutions and promote engagement in local democratic processes as outlined in the White Paper, *Reforming Local Government: Resilient and Renewed*.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None

7. FUTURE GENERATIONS ASSESSEMENT INCLUDING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

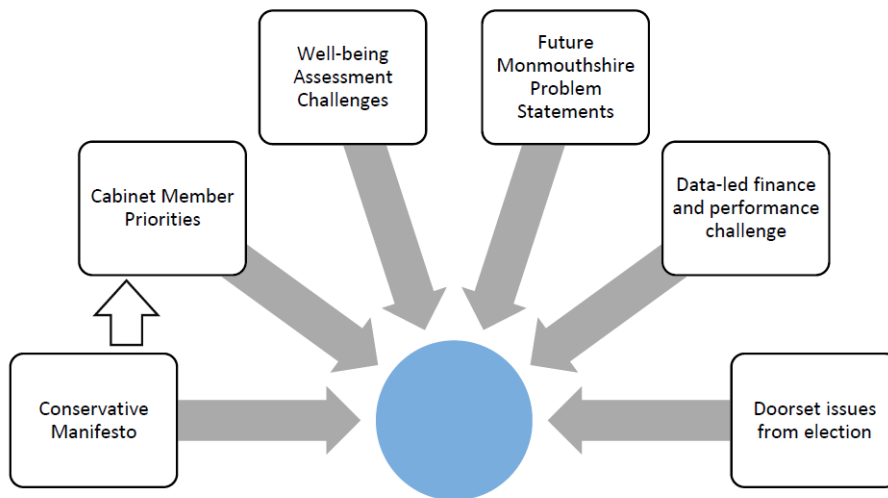
- 7.1 This report does not propose any change in policy or service and so no assessment has been completed.

8. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

None

9. AUTHOR

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Apply tests to prioritise

Including:

Is it aligned with our purpose?

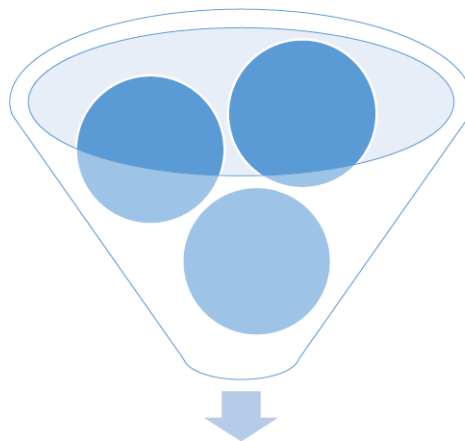
Will benefits exceed costs?

Will it compromise future opportunities?

Are there unintended consequences?

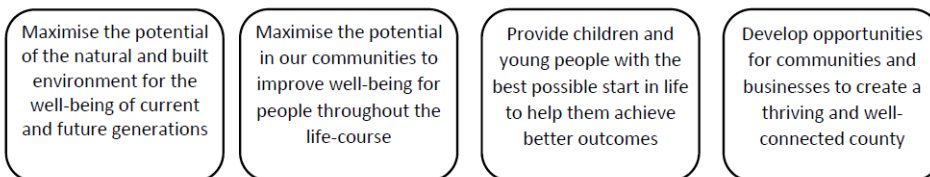
WFG Act 5 ways of working Test – consider: integrated; long-term; collaborative; involve; preventative

Can this be enhanced to maximise impact on national well-being goals?



Align with MCCs Purpose and Well-being Objectives

Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities



The screenshot displays the MADEOPEN Monmouthshire Activity Stream. The interface is divided into three main sections: a left sidebar, a central activity stream, and a right-hand filter panel.

Left Sidebar:

- Logo: MADEOPEN MONMOUTHSHIRE
- User profile: Matthew (with a dropdown arrow)
- Section: Activities (with a menu icon)
- Activity options:
 - Ask the community (lightbulb icon)
 - Start a project (gears icon)
 - Start a poll (checkbox icon)
 - Create an event (calendar icon)
- Text: Support community activities or start your own. [Learn more.](#)
- Section: Community (with a person icon)
- Footer: Help Guides Log out

Central Activity Stream:

- Activity 1:** proffalken, Monmouth NP25. Question: Anyone interested in setting up a sensor network to track air quality etc. in near-realtime? (5 likes, 3 ideas)
- Activity 2:** OurMonmouthshire. Question: What's good about your community? What would make it better? (13 likes, 36 ideas). Includes a map of the region with labels for 'Bryanston' and 'Brynigup Ltd'.
- Activity 3:** RachelJupp, Chippenham Playing Fields. Question: Summer time and the livin' is easy... Anyone fancy a litter-pick on Chippy? Kit provided, Fridays AM (7 likes, 0 ideas)

Right Panel:

- Filter by
- Location (dropdown)
- Theme (dropdown)
- Activity type (dropdown)
- Sort by (dropdown)
- Search button
- Report a bug (bottom right corner)