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| SUBJECT: | Strategic Risk Assessment |
| MEETING: | Governance and Audit Committee |
| DATE: | 8th September 2022 |
| DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED: | All |

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide members with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority.
- 1.2 To fulfil Governance and Audit Committee's role in providing assurance of the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework, as an important part of the council's corporate governance arrangements.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That members use the risk assessment to consider the effectiveness of the authority's risk management arrangements and the extent to which the strategic risks facing the authority are appropriately captured.
- 2.2 That members scrutinise, on an on-going basis, the risk assessment and responsibility holders to ensure that risk is being appropriately managed.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Governance and Audit Committee has a specific role in providing independent assurance of the adequacy of the council's risk management framework. The committee also has a role in assessing the authority's corporate governance arrangements, of which risk management is an important part. An integral part of the risk management arrangements is the Whole Authority Strategic Risk Register. The strategic 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.
- 3.2 The Strategic Risk Assessment, in appendix 1, is continually updated based on the latest evidence. This is in line with the council's strategic risk management policy; a summary of this is provided in Appendix 2. The assessment helps ensure strategic risks are identified and assessed robustly, risk controls are put in place that are appropriate and proportionate, and risks are supported by effective activity to ensure, as far as possible, risk reduction/risk management.
- 3.3 Strategic risks covered by the assessment are those which affect the council as a whole. The assessments focus is typically on key risks which could significantly jeopardise the council's ability to achieve its objectives, statutory plans and/or provide operational services as planned. The risk assessment also only covers high and medium level strategic risks. Lower level or operational risks are not registered unless they are projected to escalate within the three years covered. These are managed and monitored through other arrangements, particularly those identified in point 3.4. The strategic risk assessment should continue to focus on medium term risks to service delivery.
- 3.4 The assessment is one part of the council's risk management arrangements. Risk is managed through a variety of processes, for example, through teams' service plans, through Emergency

Management Plans and business continuity arrangements, specific project and programme management arrangements, health and safety procedures and insurance arrangements.

3.5 The strategic risk assessment is a detailed document. There have been several amendments to ensure it accurately manages the current strategic risks facing the Council. The more significant changes, since the register was last presented to Governance and Audit Committee, are:

- Adjustments to the financial risks facing the council, reflecting wider economic and social factors including increasing inflation and the rising cost of living;
- Updates on the pressure in Children's Social Services and shortage of specialist placements for children with complex needs and the pressures in Adult's Social Services due to the recruitment difficulties being reflected nationally, and the exponential growth in demand and complexity of cases;
- The latest assessment of risk on the implementation of the new education curriculum and learners progress in education;
- The impact of the rising cost of living and the potential impact on public service interventions required;
- Risk of the availability, affordability and suitability of housing and accommodation in the county;
- Removal of the risks on a lack of appropriate and effective governance infrastructure in the Council and progression with new regional and collaborative structures;
- De-escalation of the strategic risk to the council on broadband infrastructure. With recognition this still remains a community-based risk in those areas effected and relevant council service areas will still be managing and working to further mitigate the risk in partnership with communities;
- The ongoing risk on the spread of coronavirus being incorporated into associated risk arrangements for continued monitoring.

3.6 To ensure transparency and accountability, information regarding those risks removed from the register can be seen at the end of appendix 1. Updates have been made, where required, to the existing risks, including to the reason why the risk has been identified, the assessed risk level, mitigating actions being undertaken and the progress on these.

3.7 The council continues to operate in a dynamic environment and has controls in place to manage and mitigate, as far as possible, a variety of risks to service delivery. As the risk assessment is a live document, it will evolve as new information comes to light. Therefore, Governance and Audit Committee should take into account that this is the latest position up to the point the agenda was circulated. The council continues to operate in an uncertain and fast changing environment; the strategic risk register will regularly evolve and adapt to identify, assess, manage and mitigate, as far as possible, a variety of risks to council service delivery. The up-to-date register is accessible on the council's intranet so members are able to utilise it at any point in the year to re-prioritise their work plans as appropriate.

3.8 In line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act, identification and mitigation of longer-term risks that will impact on well-being at a community level but will have a lesser impact on the medium-term delivery of council services, is an area for continued development. Through working with the Public Service Board, we are developing our understanding of future risks and opportunities and how we respond to them in Monmouthshire. The Monmouthshire well-being assessment, which has been updated in 2022, identifies a number of issues that pose a challenge or opportunity for well-being in the county.

3.9 The Strategic Risk Register will also be presented to Performance & Overview Scrutiny Committee in October 2022, who are also arranging a workshop to use the risk register to inform the committees forward work programme.

4. REASONS:

4.1 To provide timely, relevant information on strategic risks as part of the performance management framework for ensuring the authority is well run and able to contribute to achieving the Council's purpose.

5. AUTHOR:

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Appendix 1: Monmouthshire County Council Whole Authority Strategic Risk Assessment – September 2022

| Ref | Potential Risk | Risk Level – Pre mitigation | Risk Level – Post mitigation |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Risks to resources | | | |
| 1 | The authority does not have clearly articulated organisational priorities informing a sustainable delivery model | 2022/23 – Medium 2023/24 – Medium 2024/25 – Medium | 2022/23 – Medium 2023/24 – Low 2024/25 – Low |
| 2 | Some services may become financially unsustainable in the short to medium term due to increasing demand and continuing financial pressures | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High |
| 3 | The authority is unable to deliver its political priorities or maintain key infrastructure and meet other identified pressures due to insufficient capital funding availability | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High | 2022/23 – Medium 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High |
| 4 | Relatively high age profile, a global skills shortage and wage inflation will impact recruitment, retainment and workforce planning and affect the delivery of Council services | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – Medium 2024/25 – Medium |
| 5 | Loss or corruption of data due to cyber-attack or data mismanagement, which will compromise the delivery of essential council services | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High | 2022/23 – Medium 2023/24 – Medium 2024/25 – Medium |
| Risks to service delivery | | | |
| 6 | Significant harm to children or adults may occur due to a failure of safeguarding arrangements | 2022/23 – Medium 2023/24 – Medium 2024/25 – Medium | 2022/23 – Medium 2023/24 – Medium 2024/25 – Medium |
| 7 | Risk of harm if we are unable to enact our corporate parenting responsibilities to some children in our care as result of an increase in demand and complexity of cases | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High |
| 8 | Risk of harm if we are unable to meet the care and support needs of some vulnerable adults due to an increase in demand and complexity of cases | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High |
| 9 | Failure to implement the new national curriculum and other reforms alongside strong delivery of teaching and examinations following disruptions during the pandemic meaning that some children, including vulnerable learners, are unable able to achieve their full potential. | 2022/23 – Medium 2023/24 – Medium 2024/25 – Medium | 2022/23 – Medium 2023/24 – Medium 2024/25 – Low |
| Risks to policy priorities | | | |
| 10 | Delays to the adoption of a replacement LDP inhibits our ability to take forward key policy objectives such as job creation and affordable housing development | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High |
| 11 | The council is unable to deliver its commitment to decarbonise its operations in sufficient time to achieve net zero by 2030 due to the scale and complexity of the challenge | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High |
| 12 | The rising cost of living could tip some families into crisis requiring public service interventions which diverts resources from other policy priorities | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – High | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – Medium |
| 13 | Residents are unable to secure or retain suitable accommodation, leading to rising homelessness and outward migration as a result of failures in the housing market | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – Medium | 2022/23 – High 2023/24 – High 2024/25 – Medium |

Risks to resources

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|---|------------|--|--|--|----------------------------|--------|------------|
| Ref & Status | 1 | Risk | Potential Risk that: The authority does not have clearly articulated organisational priorities informing a sustainable delivery model | | | | |
| Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible | | Paul Matthews & Cllr Mary-Ann Brocklesby | Scrutiny Committee | All | Strategic objective | All | |
| Reason why Identified | | | | | | | |
| <p>The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires us to plan on a decadal and generational basis. The authority is presently updating its medium-term Corporate Plan following the election of a new Council and aligning with the aspirations of the new administration. This will inform the development of a medium-term financial plan. The publication of three-year indicative budget settlements will aide this process but higher levels of inflation and pay awards above present assumptions make planning for the longer term difficult. A replacement Local Development Plan is currently being developed and other medium-term strategies such as the Climate Emergency Strategy will be updated. The global outlook has changed the world considerably since 2020, and we must consider the longer-term impact on future generations, and plan for these accordingly. The council's key strategies to enable the delivery of our Corporate Plan must be updated to reflect new and emerging priorities.</p> <p>The authority is likely to face significant budget pressures as the UK Government begins to repay the debt accrued to meet the costs of the pandemic. Alongside this, it is expected that the NHS will continue to consume an increasing proportion of public sector expenditure. Both adult and children's social care are facing acute pressures with escalating demand, increasing complexity and workforce shortages all contributing. While there is pressure to free-up hospital beds, the care system does not have the capacity to accommodate this, meaning that more resources will be drawn into these acute settings.</p> <p>These issues are compounded by workforce shortages and low levels of pay compared to other sectors. In Monmouthshire, high property prices make it difficult for staff to remain in or relocate to the area.</p> <p>Housing shortages are contributing to increasing levels of homelessness with limited affordable accommodation to meet the 2,400 applicants registered as in need on the Housing Register. This is compounded by the National Development Framework, which will limit the development of housing that is affordable for the key workers of the future. Limited housing growth will also have an impact on future council tax receipts, which the county is dependent on as it receives the lowest settlement of any local authority in Wales meaning that more must come from council tax or commercial income streams. The funding formula does not take adequate account of the relative higher costs of providing services in rural areas where public services cannot be easily centralised to generate economies of scale.</p> <p>An additional challenge that poses a threat to the long-term viability is climate change with increasing frequency of adverse weather events. The county of Monmouthshire has one of the highest carbon footprints in Wales with an older housing stock, which will be costly to decarbonise. The geography also means that decarbonising council operations will be more challenging than in urban areas.</p> | | | | | | | |
| Risk Level (Pre-mitigation) | | | | Risk Level (Post-mitigation) | | | |
| Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level | Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level |
| 2022/23 | Possible | Major | Medium | 2022/23 | Possible | Major | Medium |
| 2023/24 | Possible | Major | Medium | 2023/24 | Unlikely | Major | Low |
| 2024/25 | Possible | Major | Medium | 2024/25 | Unlikely | Major | Low |
| Mitigating Actions | | | | | | | |
| Mitigating Action | | Responsibility Holder | Timescale | Mitigation action progress | | | |
| Develop a new Community and Corporate Plan to reflect a new financial reality and the response needed to changing issues of well-being in the county. | | Strategic Leadership Team | Ongoing | <p>The first council 'self-assessment' under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) 2021 Act is due to be presented at full Council in September. This will be used to help shape the future direction of the new administration, which will be captured in the new Corporate Plan, due later this year. It will have a focus on the difficult financial situation all local authorities will inevitably find themselves in following the pandemic.</p> <p>To provide clarity and ensure accountability through our response to the coronavirus pandemic, a set of strategic aims were set. The most recent strategic aims contained within the 'Looking Ahead, Delivering Now; Our Strategy to Summer 2022' focused on delivering services that addressed the ongoing challenges of Covid-19 and progressing a range of priority areas including decarbonisation, well-being, enterprise and active and healthy lifestyle for our residents and visitors.</p> | | | |
| Engage with communities to understand challenges and opportunities from their perspective including participation of residents and service users | | Strategic Leadership Team | March 2023 | <p>The Council has undertaken a range of assessment and research to understand well-being in the county including the well-being assessment, population needs assessment, and research for the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). These will be uses to inform the new Community and Corporate plan alongside information generated by cross-party working groups held in July and August.</p> | | | |

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| | | | The contemporary policy challenges that we need to meet, working with our communities, are complex and evolving. These include transitioning to net zero, tackling the determinants of health inequality, making sure our children do well, and social care reform. We need to ensure that our understanding of these in the county remains up-to-date and current to inform our priorities. There is a need to develop our thinking and ideas as we plan for the longer term. The involvement and participation of and engagement with Monmouthshire's community groups, public service partners, service users and residents will be strengthened to help further understand experiences in the County, and to ensure programmes are bold and ambitious. |
| Strengthen medium to long term strategic financial planning as part of the Medium-Term Financial Plan and adapt to reflect the global uncertainty on public finances. | Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources | September 2022 | <p>The Council's medium-term financial planning had been severely disrupted by the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on the finances and the prognosis is still of real concern. A well-established budget setting process has enabled Council to agree a budget for 2022/23. Controls are in place to monitor the budget position through the year and take action to produce a balanced budget. For 2021/22, the Council has delivered a positive revenue outturn of £5.62m, which has been brought about significantly by specific Welsh Government grant funding. This in turn has allowed for a transfer to earmarked reserves of £4m that will allow for additional reserve cover to deal with budgetary risks in 2022/23 and beyond.</p> <p>Medium term financial planning is being developed to reflect as far as possible realistic and accurate funding requirements, to allow a structured and planned approach to service delivery in the medium term, in line with corporate priorities. This will need to consider a range of factors including the wider and longer lasting indirect impact of the pandemic on Council services, particularly in the areas of Homelessness, Children's services, Adult social care and Children's additional learning needs, along with wider economic and social factors including increasing inflation and the rising cost of living.</p> |
| Review and update enabling strategies following the adoption of a new Community and Corporate Plan and learning from the pandemic to ensure alignment of resources with the organisations policy priorities. | Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources | April 2023 | There will be a review of enabling strategies to ensure they are fit for purpose and support the new policy aims and objectives set out in the Community and Corporate Plan. |

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| Ref & Status | 2 | Risk | Potential Risk that: Some services may become financially unsustainable in the short to medium term due to increasing demand and continuing financial pressures | | | |
| Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible | Peter Davies and Cllr Rachel Garrick | Scrutiny Committee | All | Strategic objective | All | |
| Reason why Identified | | | | | | |
| <p>After several years of taking significant resource out of the budget, the means of achieving further savings is increasingly more challenging. Pressures on the budget have remained and continue to increase in terms of demographic growth, demand on services and expectations, and pay and pension increases. Specific areas with pressures include children with additional learning needs, children's services and specifically looked after children, adult social care, homelessness passenger transport and MonLife activities.</p> <p>During 2021/22, the council delivered a positive revenue outturn of £5.62m, which has been brought about by specific additional Welsh Government grant funding, a significant element of which was received late in the financial year. This in turn has allowed for a transfer to earmarked reserves of £4m that will allow for additional reserve cover to deal with budgetary risks in 2022/23 and beyond. Whilst the final outturn position is welcomed, there remain areas of significant and growing concern and risk going forward, especially in light of the wider challenging economic climate which is driving inflation and an overarching cost of living crisis. Some services continue to face significant demand led pressures, some continue to operate at below pre-pandemic levels, whilst other services continued to have a level of significant reliance on Welsh Government Hardship funding which has now ended. Whilst ongoing plans are in place to deliver services within budget during 2022/23 it is highly likely that considerable levels of mitigation will be required as the Council progresses through the year. Significant budget recovery action is anticipated and will be signalled by the month 4 budget monitoring to be considered by Cabinet in early October.</p> <p>As well as the direct effects of the covid pandemic the wider and longer lasting impact on services needs to be continually planned for, such as on homelessness, Children's Services and Adult Social Care, along with wider economic and social factors including increasing inflation and the rising cost of living.</p> <p>The pandemic has significantly affected the council's medium-term financial planning. This needs to be developed, reflecting realistic and accurate funding requirements, to allow a structured and planned approach to service delivery in the medium term, in line with corporate priorities. The in-year challenge in 2022/23 will ultimately continue and exacerbate itself without significant corrective action in 2023/24 without notable further increases in Welsh Government funding and which are equally dependent on UK Government spending decisions as part of any future emergency or Autumn budget. The Council has a legal duty to set a balanced budget and therefore any budget shortfalls will need to be met through a combination of pressures being mitigated, additional savings and income or reserve contributions. This will be particularly challenging set against the backdrop of a Corporate and Community Plan being finalised by the new administration.</p> | | | | | | |

There is not a consistent picture of schools' balances. There has been a fluctuating trend with some schools showing a continuing reduction in schools balances, which is of concern, and others a more stable trend. However, grants awarded to schools at 2020/21- and 2021/22-year ends have resulted in a large increase in overall school balances. Schools have developed investment plans and the balances are expected to reduce during 2022-23. The increase in school balances has resulted in a reduction in the number of schools in deficit. Inherent structural budget deficits that led to a situation of 17 schools being in deficit prior to the pandemic may in certain cases still remain, and the Authority will look to work with those schools in particular to look to develop a sustainable medium term budget structure irrespective of the additional Welsh Government funding received.

| Risk Level (Pre-mitigation) | | | | Risk Level (Post-mitigation) | | | |
|--|------------|-------------------------------------|------------|--|------------|--------|------------|
| Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level | Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level |
| 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High | 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2023/24 | Likely | Major | High | 2023/24 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2024/25 | Likely | Major | High | 2024/25 | Likely | Major | High |
| Mitigating Actions | | | | | | | |
| Mitigating Action | | Responsibility Holder | Timescale | Mitigation action progress | | | |
| Ensure that services deliver within budget, deliver savings targets and continue to identify, review and challenge pressures. | | Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources | March 2023 | <p>The overall 2021/22 revenue outturn position, prior to contributions to earmarked reserves, of £5.621m surplus was brought about by numerous factors impacting services and financing budgets during the year in particular Welsh Government Grant funding. This has allowed for a transfer to earmarked reserves of £4m that will allow for additional reserve cover to deal with budgetary risks in 2022/23 and beyond.</p> <p>The overall outturn position was supported by £1.57m of identified eligible expenditure to be funded from capital receipts under the flexible use of capital receipts directive. Reliance on these mitigations is a short-term measure only and is clearly not sustainable over the medium term, though its use will now potentially need to be reconsidered as a result of the financial outlook in year and in 23/24.</p> <p>The continuing level of staff vacancies being carried in the establishment is not considered to be sustainable position in the medium term, and services across the Authority report that active recruitment is ongoing to mitigate the ongoing impact and pressure this is having upon service delivery.</p> <p>The 2021/22 budget was set based on the requirement for £4.7m of mandated savings to be achieved by service areas. Given the challenging operating environment that services have performed under during 2021/22, services still achieved 93% of their budgeted savings.</p> <p>Whilst the final outturn position is welcomed, there remain areas of significant concern and risk going forward, especially in light of the wider challenging economic climate. Some services continue to face significant demand led pressures, some continue to operate at below pre-pandemic levels, whilst other services continued to have a level of significant reliance on Welsh Government Hardship funding which has now ended. Whilst ongoing plans are in place to deliver services within budget during 2022/23 it is highly likely that considerable levels of mitigation will be required as the Council progresses through the year.</p> | | | |
| Develop a set of budget proposals for 2023/24 | | Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources | March 2023 | The 2023/24 provisional settlement will be received in late December. The Corporate and Community Plan will be developed prior to this and consulted upon to determine the direction and priorities of the new administration. Early predicted pressures include non-pay inflation, service demand pressures in social care and homelessness, increasing wage demands and rising energy costs. | | | |
| Strengthen medium to long term strategic financial planning as part of the Medium-term financial plan, that is based on realistic evidence and planned scenarios, to guide our budget setting in line with agreed strategic objectives and responsiveness to challenges, such as the cost-of-living. | | Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources | March 2023 | <p>There remains significant latent and complex demands as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and some of these impacts will take a significant period of time to unwind and the Council will therefore continue to engage in careful discussions with Welsh Government around the management of this in the medium term.</p> <p>Welsh Government has helpfully provided indicative funding settlements on an all-Wales basis of 3.4% and 2.5% respectively for 2023/24 and 2024/25. Whilst this provides a degree of funding certainty over the medium term, when coupled with the impact of the wider economic environment, pandemic recovery and taking into account the current demand led pressures on services, it is clear that future budget rounds will continue be very challenging. Maintaining a sustainable level of reserve cover alongside targeted and effective reserve investment will ensure a degree of ongoing financial resilience to the Council.</p> | | | |

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| | | | The development of the Corporate and Community Plan will inform and influence a full update of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Plan later in 2022 and part of the preparations leading into the 2023/24 budget process. This comprehensive update will include an ongoing assessment of pressures, risks and modelling assumptions. As well as savings proposals and options that together with a robust and updated capital receipts and reserves strategy enables the Council's finances to be put on a sustainable footing. |
| Develop and implement a commercial strategy aligned to the Community and Corporate Plan | Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources | Timescales as per strategy | <p>The Council has developed and is implementing a Commercial Strategy, which has generated income to support services and developed an approach to commercialising assets and creating a commercial culture and ethos. The strategy needs to be reviewed to align with the new Corporate and Community Plan, to assess progress and set the strategic focus.</p> <p>In 2021/22, the investment properties generated an actual outturn of £614,882, which is on target. The council has continually assessed its commercial risk appetite and exposure, and the updates are issued to the Investment Committee on investment performance and mitigating action being taken. We have adjusted our commercial risk appetite to take account of the pandemic and uncertainties in the investment and property markets at this time. Going forward, we will need to focus on a commercial approach being taken to enable the policy aims and ambitions of the Council to be delivered.</p> |
| Progress the Delegation Agreement with Cardiff Council, for the discharge and provision of council strategic and operational procurement services | Head of Enterprise and Community Animation | Timescales as per strategy | The authority has entered into a collaboration with Cardiff Council, for mutual benefit, in the discharge and provision of the council's procurement services. The arrangements provide increased capacity and expertise to strengthen the council's procurement arrangements, such as in the use of data, to lead to better informed business decisions and business alignment. The effectiveness and impact of the arrangements will need to be assessed on an ongoing basis. |
| Continue to work closely with schools to ensure their financial plans are as robust as possible to minimise any impact, whilst continuing to improve standards for our young people. | Finance Manager – Children & Young People | Ongoing | <p>Schools have continued to benefit from Welsh Government hardship funding of £1.047m during the year to compensate for additional general Covid costs incurred (e.g. PPE, staff cover due to self-isolation, enhanced cleaning) and income lost. From a financial perspective, 2021/22 continued to see schools receive several significant Welsh Government grants to support them and their pupils during a period of continued disruption to learning and recovery from the impact of the pandemic on schools. This has resulted in all but one of the schools carrying forward a surplus balance into the 2022/23 financial year and an overall further improvement in Schools reserve balances of £3.5m</p> <p>The Authority continues to require schools carrying significant surplus balances that were above levels guided by Welsh Government (£50k for a Primary, £100k for a Secondary) to provide investment plans setting out how they intend to spend the significant balances being held. These plans are assessed regularly and inform the budget monitoring process.</p> <p>It is clear that the inherent structural budget deficits that led to a situation of 17 schools being in deficit prior to the pandemic may in certain cases still remain, and the Authority will look to work with those schools in particular to look to develop a sustainable medium term budget structure irrespective of the additional Welsh Government funding received. It is expected that the additional funding made available to those schools will allow a period of transition and as to allow those underlying budgetary issues to be rectified without impacting on educational standards.</p> |

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| Ref & Status | 3 | Risk | Potential Risk that: The authority is unable to deliver its political priorities or maintain key infrastructure and meet other identified pressures due to insufficient capital funding availability | | | |
| Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible | Peter Davies & Cllr Rachel Garrick | Scrutiny Committee | Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee | Strategic objective | All | |
| Reason why Identified | | | | | | |
| Underlying the Capital Strategy is the recognition that the financial resources available to meet council priorities are constrained by the level of one-off reserves and capital receipts that the Council holds and the level of capital grant funding from Welsh Government and other funding bodies, and the extent to which the Council is able to entertain further prudential borrowing. The core capital programme has been impacted in recent years in order to enable the Band A new schools programme to be funded, which has now successfully concluded. Subsequent to a Council decision having been secured in June the 3-19 school in Abergavenny is now progressing into contract and into its construction phase, supported under the Welsh Government Band B programme. | | | | | | |

There remain a considerable number of pressures that sit outside any potential to fund them within the Capital MTFP, and this has significant risk associated with it. These include property and highways infrastructure, DDA work, and public rights of way. In addition to this, there are various schemes/proposals (e.g. Monlife, tranche C Future schools, climate emergency response, any enhanced DFG spending etc.) that could also have a capital consequence, but in advance of quantifying those or having Member consideration of these items, they are also excluded from current capital MTFP. In the event of emergency pressures, resources will have to be diverted. Projects, such as the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, also require significant capital investment to realise the outcomes.

The timing of capital receipts always remains uncertain due to market conditions. Future investment in capital schemes is in part dependent on future success of achieving capital receipts and there are risks attached to some receipts materialising. There is a risk associated with relying on the use of capital receipts in the same year that they come into the council and the potential for this to have significant revenue pressures should receipts be delayed and temporary borrowing be required. Significant further capital receipts are now not forecast and until such time as the outcome of the Replacement LDP is known and for which the Council has put forward a number of strategic sites in its ownership.

Since entering 2020, the council has faced significant and unprecedented challenges, notably the flood response and recovery resulting from Storms Ciara and Dennis in February 2020, and the subsequent Covid-19 pandemic and the impact of the lockdown restrictions that were put into effect. As well as the direct effects of the covid pandemic the wider economic and social factors including increasing inflation and the rising cost of living needs to be continually planned for, such as price inflation on building materials and digital hardware and delays due to increased demand. This could have an impact on the scope of planned maintenance work, should the price increases continue, and this is being monitored by officers in partnership with other agencies.

| Risk Level (Pre-mitigation) | | | | Risk Level (Post-mitigation) | | | |
|---|------------|-------------------------------------|------------|---|------------|--------|------------|
| Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level | Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level |
| 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High | 2022/23 | Possible | Major | Medium |
| 2023/24 | Likely | Major | High | 2023/24 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2024/25 | Likely | Major | High | 2024/25 | Likely | Major | High |
| Mitigating Actions | | | | | | | |
| Mitigating Action | | Responsibility Holder | Timescale | Mitigation action progress | | | |
| Regularly review assumptions as part of the capital MTFP taking account of any new information that is relevant and the consequential impact on the revenue MTFP. | | Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources | ongoing | <p>An updated capital budget strategy was approved by Council, alongside the treasury strategy, in March 2022. In preparing the draft capital budget proposals for 2022/23, and the subsequent three years of the capital MTFP, regard was given to the underlying principles of the previous strategy that remained fit for purpose.</p> <p>Final capital budget proposals, along with proposed changes following consultation, were presented to Cabinet and Council in March 2022. The current climate of financial constraints and a continued Medium Term Financial Projection (MTFP) revenue budget gap, means that expenditure on capital needs to remain within affordable limits. Demand for capital resources remains high and therefore inevitably, prioritisation of projects, leveraging in other sources of funding and working with partners remain key to meeting this demand. Within the context of significant demands for capital resources and limited availability, there is the need to develop our use of the various strategic plans across the organisation which drive the need for capital investment and develop alternative strategies to meet demand, so the Councils own capital programme is prioritised within an affordable framework. This will include clearer and corporate visibility and assessment of demand for schools, highways and other operational assets.</p> | | | |
| Continue to monitor the Capital budget | | Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources | Ongoing | <p>The capital expenditure outturn in 2021/22 shows a net under spend of £1.139m against budget. Capital slippage for 21/22 totals £68.558m. The vast majority of the slippage requests are due in some degree to the delays encountered relating to the impact of Covid-19 and was very much outside of the control of the Authority, with two schemes (Asset Investment Fund and Abergavenny 3-19 School) accounting for two thirds of the total slippage.</p> <p>The impact of Covid-19 on the capital programme has varied and has very much been dependent on the nature of the works being undertaken. Following initial delays on schemes during periods of operating restrictions, contractors adapted to revised working arrangements, although the wider indirect impacts of cost inflation and supply chain issues continue to present a challenge to project delivery. Some of these issues will be temporary, however it still remains unclear whether certain increases in cost inflation will be sustained over the medium term. Building materials have seen a considerable price inflation, as well as those required for digital hardware. Demand is also resulting in problems associated with production capacity for digital equipment, causing delays of up to six months on standard laptops, mobile devices and computer consumable. Council Finance Officers are working with the Capital and Asset Management Working Group to understand the implications such that the effects and associated risks are reflected in in-year capital budget monitoring and in the draft capital budgets proposals and MTFP.</p> | | | |

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| | | | Whilst overall capital receipts balances at out turn 2021/22 on the face of it are healthy, there remains the risk that forecast receipts receivable for 2023/24 onwards are at comparatively low levels, and combined with the fact that receipts are continuing to be used to subsidise the revenue budget through capitalisation direction means that the scope for further capital investment funded via receipts will be limited. |
| Further refinement of priority assessments in the property and infrastructure budgets to ensure all pressures have been considered and ranked. | Head of Commercial and Integrated Landlord Services & Head of Placemaking, Housing, Highways and Flood | Ongoing | <p>A programme of property condition surveys are currently being undertaken by external consultants; these will be used to inform prioritisation of capital maintenance spend. A programme of Health and safety surveys is currently being commissioned. Independent condition assessments of key highways infrastructure are completed as required depending on condition. These inform prioritisation of available capital budget.</p> <p>A review of the pressures and associated risks is being undertaken to inform the capital budget process. A previous review in 20/21 had concluded that further feasibility studies and technical assessments needed to be undertaken on specific infrastructure assets, funded from existing highways infrastructure capital budgets. The results of these studies and assessments will inform the capital MTFP and pressures that will need to be accommodated and funded therein in future financial years. The Capital and Asset Management Working Group will review this feed into the budget process for next year and across the MTFP. In tandem with this, the Capital and Asset Management working group will investigate the impact of significant construction price inflation on materials such as steel, wood, plaster, etc.</p> |
| Deliver the Asset Management Plan to manage the Council's land and property portfolio | Head of Commercial and Integrated Landlord Services | Timescales as per plan | The Asset Management strategy is being implemented and actions from the plan have been integrated into the relevant business plans for ongoing monitoring and progress reporting. The strategy will be updated in 2023, and subsequent to the Corporate and Community Plan having been approved by Council, and which will provide a good opportunity to review progress and the strategic focus and priorities going forward. This will also consider the findings from the Audit Wales Springing forward review on asset management. |
| Help sustain Council Services and enhance the asset base by investing in commercial property assets in order to increase the net rental income stream for the Council in line with the asset investment policy | Head of Commercial and Integrated Landlord Services | Ongoing – see Asset Management strategy | <p>As part of the delivery of the Corporate and Community Plan, a Commercial Strategy has been developed, which seeks to enhance income generation, develop an approach to commercialising assets and create a commercial culture and ethos. The strategy has a short-, medium- and long-term view and aims to provide a framework, with defined objectives, for new commercial projects and for the delivery of future commercial activity.</p> <p>The council has continually assessed its commercial risk appetite and exposure, and the updates are issued to the Investment Committee on investment performance and mitigating action being taken. The commercial risk appetite has been adjusted in light of the current pandemic and uncertainties in the investment and property market at this time. Going forward, we will need to focus on a commercial approach being taken to enable the policy aims and ambitions of the council to be delivered.</p> |

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| Ref & Status | 4 | Risk | Potential Risk that: Relatively high age profile, a global skills shortage and wage inflation will impact recruitment, retainment and workforce planning and affect the delivery of Council services | | | | |
| Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible | Matt Phillips & Cllr Rachel Garrick | Scrutiny Committee | Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee | Strategic objective | All | | |
| Reason why Identified | | | | | | | |
| There is a global skills shortage, and the impact is being felt in several sectors that Monmouthshire County Council is either a part of or competes with for talent. Some services have identified challenges with recruitment; Social Care, Operations and Facilities are all facing difficulties, which is affecting service provision. Driver shortages are affecting transport, with some contractors withdrawing from home to school contracts. In addition to this, the average age of staff in the council is 48 and the most common age is 55 creating workforce planning challenges. | | | | | | | |
| There is a continuing risk that staff well-being could be impacted by a range of factors from work related pressures such as staff in some areas are facing considerably increased workloads to meet increasing demand, to personal home-based factors such as financial strains due to the rising of cost of living. | | | | | | | |
| Risk Level (Pre-mitigation) | | | | Risk Level (Post-mitigation) | | | |
| Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level | Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level |
| 2022/23 | Almost certain | Major | High | 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2023/24 | Almost certain | Major | High | 2023/24 | Possible | Major | Medium |
| 2024/25 | Almost certain | Major | High | 2024/25 | Possible | Major | Medium |

| Mitigating Actions | | | |
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| Mitigating Action | Responsibility Holder | Timescale | Mitigation action progress |
| Recruit and retain staff more effectively | Chief Officer, People and Governance | Ongoing | <p>Recruitment issues are being reflected nationally within some sectors, and the council is not exempt from this. Positions within Social Care, Operations and Facilities, for example, are seeing a dramatic reduction in applicants, and this is impacting on service provision. Solutions for the national recruitment issues do not sit solely with local authorities, and some factors affecting the availability of staff sit with government. However, HR and managers within the council are working together to try to reduce the recruitment problem and determine ways of lessening its impact on services.</p> <p>The People team have put arrangements in place to strengthen recruitment procedures, such as adapting the recruitment process, whilst still maintaining safeguarding and safety requirements, promotion of opportunities and recruitment of graduates, apprentices and work experience. This has led to successful recruitment campaigns in some service areas. The Communications Team are promoting positions in a variety of ways to reach a broader audience, using drives such as 'Job of the Week'. The weekly Leaders Q&A sessions are encouraging discussion between service areas to promote networking and sharing ideas.</p> <p>Recruitment arrangements need development to meet remaining challenges. An e-recruitment system has been procured and implementation will commence in Autumn 2022 to support the development of recruitment as a genuine talent acquisition process. This will benefit recruiting managers who want speed, simplicity and agility.</p> <p>HR staff sit on various local government groups and are collaborating with partner organisations to identify commonalities and information sharing. This is being fed into Welsh Government to inform their decision-making and to influence their response to the issue.</p> |
| Develop the support mechanisms to support staff wellbeing | Head of HR | Ongoing | <p>The Digital 'Cwtch' continues, although less frequently, along with a weekly People Leaders Q&A session. HR has developed a People Leaders Support Site which enables 'live' discussion/news feed, enabling direct support and a shared learning platform for managers and head-teachers. The SUPPORTALL HUB portal allows colleagues to access information directly from any device on a range of subjects and includes an extensive range of FAQ documents on all people management related topics.</p> <p>Staff well-being is affected by a range of factors, including additional work pressure and demand, personal factors and societal factors. Learning from, and building on, arrangements from the pandemic, staff well-being needs continual support. The use of networks and communication digitally, surveys and feedback loops to senior managers, has extended the reach of contact with the workforce. This has also created the conditions for a wider system of self-supportive networks sharing practice, ideas and support.</p> <p>Cost of living is a live issue and there has been work progressed to identify the best way of addressing this on top of the considerable amount of information and advice that has been made available throughout the summer in 2022. A report to Cabinet is due in September 2022.</p> |
| Embed workforce planning into team management processes to ensure the right skills, expertise and knowledge are available for future changes | Chief Officer, People and Governance | Ongoing | <p>The ability of the organisation to plan the workforce it needs to meet current and future demands, and to implement this, requires development, especially given recruitment and national skill challenges. A team with a specific focus on workforce planning and development in the Council has been established, incorporating recruitment, retention, Apprenticeship, Graduate and Internship and training. The team is working with service areas to strengthen workforce planning arrangements. A new people strategy will be developed taking account of the latest evidence. This will also consider the findings from the Audit Wales Springing forward review on workforce.</p> <p>The development and retention of existing staff is an essential component of workforce planning. A learning management system has been procured and is in the early stages of implementation.</p> |
| Adopt a qualitative approach to ensuring professional development, wellbeing and information flow is taking place for those that want or need it | HR Manager | Ongoing | <p>The staff appraisal process, Check In-Check Out, needs to evolve to meet the varying needs of the organisation based on learning that a one-size-fits-all approach is not effective for the varying services the council delivers.</p> |

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| | | | Arrangements are being developed to ensure there is meaningful staff/line manager engagement and communication by right. Colleagues need to be given the 'right' to seek meaningful 1-1s on a regular basis, and there needs to be a focus on improving the skills of line managers to enable a variety of different approaches to the process so that performance development is realistically achieved. There is also a need to ensure feedback loops are in place to evaluate whether this is happening effectively, and to determine if they are informed by other enabling arrangements such as Service Business Plans, and staff training and development needs. |
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| Ref & Status | 5 | Risk | Potential Risk that: Loss or corruption of data due to cyber-attack or data mismanagement, which will compromise the delivery of essential council services | | | | |
| Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible | Sian Hayward and Cllr Rachel Garrick | Scrutiny Committee | Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee | Strategic objective | All | | |
| Reason why Identified | | | | | | | |
| There have been a number of high-profile cases across both public and private organisations where cyber-attacks and data breaches have compromised service delivery and financial loss. These attacks occur due to insecure infrastructure or staff who are not cyber literate and may inadvertently introduce attacks through their personal actions. Cyber security can also be compromised through a lack of structured governance arrangements, risk assessments and planning. | | | | | | | |
| Digital working has increased in the last two years bringing an increase in the potential for loss of data through cyber incidents. | | | | | | | |
| Risk Level (Pre-mitigation) | | | | Risk Level (Post-mitigation) | | | |
| Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level | Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level |
| 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High | 2022/23 | Possible | Major | Medium |
| 2023/24 | Likely | Major | High | 2023/24 | Possible | Major | Medium |
| 2024/25 | Likely | Major | High | 2024/25 | Possible | Major | Medium |
| Mitigating Actions | | | | | | | |
| Mitigating Action | | Responsibility Holder | Timescale | Mitigation action progress | | | |
| Ensure robust arrangements are in place to safeguard the organisation's data and systems from cyber-attack | | Cyber security service | Ongoing | The Council recognises that total elimination of cyber-attack is not possible, but we will ensure robust arrangements are in place to safeguard data and systems from cyber-attack via: Physical barriers to the network, staff awareness, training and culture and structured governance, risk analysis and business continuity planning. Significant investments in ICT infrastructure and software have been undertaken, which will mitigate against the likelihood of a cyber-attack. An operational risk register, which is exempt from publication under the Data Protection Act, is maintained by the Information Security Team, the SRS Security Team and MCC. | | | |

Risks to service delivery

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| Ref & Status | 6 | Risk | Potential Risk that: Significant harm to children or adults may occur due to a failure of safeguarding arrangements | | | |
| Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible | Will Mclean & Jane Rodgers, Cllr Tudor Thomas | Scrutiny Committee | People Scrutiny Committee | Strategic objective | The best possible start in life Lifelong well-being | |
| Reason why Identified | | | | | | |
| Safeguarding vulnerable people requires a consistent focus to be maintained across the council and its partners in order to both prevent and reduce the likelihood of harm to vulnerable individuals; and to respond effectively to reduce risks if harm occurs. | | | | | | |
| The upward trend in demand within children's and adult's services including early help, puts services under pressure creating an increased risk that safeguarding responses will be compromised. The on-going consequences of the pandemic and the current economic and social pressures on families generates further pressure within the social care and health system with more complex presentations and increased vulnerability within communities. | | | | | | |
| There is a national shortage of capacity in the social care workforce, which alongside of increased demand pressure, impacts on the council's ability to conduct safeguarding enquires and protect children and adults who are at risk. | | | | | | |

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) also conducted an assurance check in February 2021 and reported broadly positive findings under the four principles of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014: People – Voice and Control, Prevention, Well-being, Partnerships and Integration. Our senior leaders have commenced work on scoping the future needs of the community and are continuing to work collaboratively with partners to build and support community resilience.

A further CIW Performance Evaluation Inspection of Adults social services was undertaken in July 2022, which includes performance of Adults Safeguarding. This found that *“The local authority responds to immediate safeguarding concerns. Through reading social care records, we saw evidence of professionals in the safeguarding team working effectively with colleagues from the local health board and the police, as well as wider local authority teams, to protect adults at risk”*. Areas for improvement included further work to embed the threshold for safeguarding concerns and to ensure that statutory timescales for undertaken enquiries are met.

| Risk Level (Pre-mitigation) | | | | Risk Level (Post-mitigation) | | | |
|---|------------|---|------------|---|------------|--------|------------|
| Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level | Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level |
| 2022/23 | Possible | Major | Medium | 2022/23 | Possible | Major | Medium |
| 2023/24 | Possible | Major | Medium | 2023/24 | Possible | Major | Medium |
| 2024/25 | Possible | Major | Medium | 2024/25 | Possible | Major | Medium |
| Mitigating Actions | | | | | | | |
| Mitigating Action | | Responsibility Holder | Timescale | Mitigation action progress | | | |
| Continually monitor and evaluate safeguarding processes and practice and ensure good accountability for safeguarding. Ensure that where actions are identified from self-evaluation processes that these are implemented. | | Safeguarding & quality assurance service manager | Ongoing | <p>Progress against the council’s safeguarding priorities is evaluated annually and the priorities reflect the cornerstones for keeping people safe in Monmouthshire, as set out in the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.</p> <p>The Annual Safeguarding Evaluation Report was presented to Council on 4th November 2021 and is based on activity and information from April 2020 to March 2021. An updated evaluation for April 2021 to March 2022 is being undertaken and will be presented to Council in October 2022. This evaluation report forms an integral part of the improvement of safeguarding practice across the Council and drives the work of the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group.</p> <p>A safeguarding ‘self-assessment’ is undertaken on a two-year rolling programme, on a directorate basis via the Safeguarding Assessment Framework for Evaluation (SAFE). The key development has seen directorates sharing the outcomes of their SAFEs through a work-shop approach, using real case studies from their service areas to demonstrate safeguarding in action.</p> | | | |
| Drive the strategic agenda and the associated programme of activities for safeguarding through the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group (WASG). | | Chief Officer, Social Care, Health & Safeguarding | Ongoing | The Whole Authority Safeguarding Group (WASG) meets 6-weekly, chaired by the Statutory Director (Chief Officer). Every directorate has a representative on the group, and minutes are retained for each meeting. The WASG continues to provide leadership, direction, oversight, support and challenge to strengthen safeguarding activity in the Council. | | | |
| Ensure that robust systems are in place within the authority to respond to any concerns regarding child protection and protection of adults at risk. | | Chief Officer, Social Care, Health & Safeguarding | Ongoing | <p>The continued upward trend in demand within both children’s and adult’s services puts services under immense pressure. Children’s services remain committed to promoting good practice around child protection and safeguarding through an on-going programme of service and practice development. Family support services across all tiers of need and vulnerability have been significantly increased and there is a good level of stability within the workforce and leadership.</p> <p>Adult safeguarding referrals remain in an upward trend. CIW carried out an assurance check in February 2021, and the report specifically identified positive working practices within the safeguarding arena. They did, however, identify some areas for improvement, specifically in relation to the number of adult safeguarding enquiries completed within seven days, and improved management oversight in the adult safeguarding records viewed. The CIW Performance Evaluation undertaken in July 2022 found that there has been an increase in the proportion of adults safeguarding enquiries completed in seven days during 2021/22, but that further improvement in timeliness is needed.</p> <p>The outcomes from the inspection report related to Adult safeguarding arrangements will be addressed and monitored via an action plan. CIW will monitor progress through its ongoing performance review activity with the local authority.</p> | | | |
| As a statutory partner of the regional safeguarding boards, continue to work with other statutory partners to ensure that there are effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and that they are working well. | | Chief Officer, Social Care, Health & Safeguarding | Ongoing | There continues to be full representation at all levels of the work of the regional safeguarding board and VAWDSV board. There is strong engagement in regional approaches to addressing the risks of sexual and criminal exploitation of children; Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) and Contest (PREVENT anti radicalisation). | | | |

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| Share learning and development in safeguarding. Implement the recommendations and learning from any Domestic Homicide review, adult practice review or child practice review that is undertaken under the safeguarding board. | | | <p>The Monmouthshire Exploitation Group (MEG) has been implemented, with representation from the Safeguarding Unit, Public Protection, Partnerships, Police, Gwent Missing Children's Team, Education and community-based teams. This group has overseen the development of a Monmouthshire Protocol for responding to Modern Day Slavery and Exploitation.</p> <p>The Council's safeguarding unit supports quarterly safeguarding learning networks to share learning and developments in safeguarding across agencies.</p> |
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| Ref & Status | 7 | Risk | Potential: Risk of harm if we are unable to enact our corporate parenting responsibilities to some children in our care as result of an increase in demand and complexity of cases | | | | |
| Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible | | Jane Rodgers & Cllr Tudor Thomas | Scrutiny Committee | People Scrutiny Committee | Strategic objective | The best possible start in life | |
| Reason why Identified | | | | | | | |
| <p>The council is supporting 208 children who are looked after (31st March 2022). The number has risen substantially in recent years but has recently stabilised, although it remains higher than the average of children who are looked after across Wales. The number of children on the child protection register is seeing considerable fluctuations and has increased significantly during 2021/22, with the rate exceeding the Welsh average from the previous year. As a result, significant demand on Children's Services remains.</p> <p>The 2021/22 budget for Children Services was £16m, over half of which relates to children who are looked after, in particular, placements for children who are looked after. Despite an increase in budget for 2021/22, the Children's Services budget over spent by £534k, with higher costs of placements as a result of increased complexity contributing to part of this. With the increased demand comes added pressures on other services such as legal and transport provision, contact and staffing, and extended reliance on agency staffing as a consequence.</p> <p>Current critical risks, which are being managed and monitored as far as possible, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in referrals because of the impact of the pandemic on vulnerable families - Increase in some spend areas to support certain areas of risk where demand has increased, particularly within 'front-door' services - Reduced capacity and absence of staff due to staff sickness, welfare and recruitment difficulties - Increase in complexity within family need and vulnerability - There is a critical shortage of specialist fostering and residential placements for children with complex needs, meaning that some children cannot be placed and could result in adverse outcomes and reduced well-being for children requiring support. This is likely to be exacerbated by the policy commitment to eliminate profit from the care of looked after children which could lead to private providers exiting the market. | | | | | | | |
| Risk Level (Pre-mitigation) | | | | Risk Level (Post-mitigation) | | | |
| Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level | Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level |
| 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High | 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2023/24 | Likely | Major | High | 2023/24 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2024/25 | Likely | Major | High | 2024/25 | Likely | Major | High |
| Mitigating Actions | | | | | | | |
| Mitigating Action | | Responsibility Holder | Timescale | Mitigation action progress | | | |
| Continue to review and evaluate performance of Early Help and Family Support services in order to reduce the pressure on statutory services as much as possible | | Head of Children's services | Ongoing | Children's Social Services have implemented a co-ordinated approach to early intervention and prevention providing support to children and families who need it as soon as possible, and to ensure that the right help is provided at the right level of intensity. There has been a significant increase in demand for these services in the last year, particularly due to the impact of the pandemic. The number of contacts for children not already in receipt of care and support received by statutory Social Services during the year increased from 4,329 to 5,776. Services are under pressure trying to meet this demand and providing appropriate and timely support is challenging. Evaluation and feedback of family support services indicates clear and positive outcomes for families. For example, during 2021/22, out of 140 families, 84% reported a positive outcome from the 'early help' intervention. There is a need to develop capacity and arrangements to meet increased demands for early help and preventive services. | | | |
| Continue to implement the fostering strategy on the recruitment, retention and skills development of in house fostering. | | Head of Children's Services | Ongoing | The council is working with Foster Wales to run active campaigns to increase the rates of in-house foster carers to provide accommodation and support to children requiring it, which launched in September 2021. To date, the transition from local to national campaigns has not had the anticipated impact in Monmouthshire and no new foster carers were recruited during 2021/22. There is also a critical shortage of specialist fostering and | | | |

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| <p>Continue to review and embed MyST, a Multi-disciplinary Intensive Therapeutic Fostering Service and assess impact on placement activity with children with complex needs.</p> | | <p>September 2022</p> | <p>residential placements, with considerable instability within the provider market, which could result in adverse outcomes and reduced well-being for children requiring support.</p> <p>The Council has collaborated with Blaenau Gwent and implemented the MYST service, a Multi-disciplinary Intensive Therapeutic Fostering Service for Looked After Children and Young People, which will help to support children who are looked after and who have complex needs. The second stage of implementation has now been completed, so that Monmouthshire has its own individual MyST. The challenges remain however, in terms of being able to secure suitable alternative placements for children in order to stabilise and reduce our ongoing reliance on residential placements.</p> |
| <p>Implement the next phase of children's services development programme focused on achieving the best outcomes for children and families through building best practice</p> | <p>Head of Children's services</p> | <p>September 2022</p> | <p>Children's Services completed a 3-year improvement programme (2016-2019), which concentrated on securing stability in the workforce, and developing a delivery model of practice, commissioning and service critical issues. This was extended into a further 3-year programme (2019-2022). The focus remains on practice development that will shape the way the service works with families over the next number of years. The importance of relationships and how we work with families to support their strengths, manage risks and achieve good enough outcomes will be key indicators of success. This continues through on-going programme of service and practice development – an additional focus over next period will be to increase resilience within Child Protection services as we continue to work with increased levels of risk and vulnerability within the community.</p> |
| <p>Review and monitor the Children Looked after population in line with Welsh Government expectations around reduction</p> | <p>Head of Children's services</p> | <p>As per plan provided to WG</p> | <p>The council is supporting 208 children who are looked after (31st March 2022). The number has risen substantially in recent years but has recently stabilised, although it remains higher than the average of children who are looked after across Wales.</p> <p>Whilst we develop interventions to address early identification and manage appropriately pre- and post-statutory intervention with families, the growing numbers mean that services are under pressure. Work is underway to maximise the opportunities to reduce the current trends. Welsh Government recently carried out a Looked after Children's review across Wales. As part of this, we have services in place aimed at reducing the numbers of children being looked after. This relies heavily on all parts of the system being geared to support the plans for reduction.</p> <p>Over the next year, as well as continuing to embed preventative services, the family support offer has been expanded to ensure that children are equally supported to leave care safely.</p> |
| <p>Develop and expand the Children's Services Commissioning Strategy in response to the intention to eliminate profit from children's social care</p> | <p>Head of Children's Services</p> | <p>Five years</p> | <p>There is an insufficiency of placements for children who are looked after at a local, regional and national level. This year, the service will work in partnership with regional Local Authorities to develop a commissioning and service development strategy and implementation plan, aimed at increasing appropriate placements for children, particularly those with complex needs. This will include the completion of 2 'solo' residential children's homes through a partnership model with third sector organisations. There are huge challenges with this work particularly around workforce, resources and the time it takes to develop provision. At present there is considerable instability within the provider market and a paucity of suitable alternative options, meaning that some children are not in regulated provision. This creates an on-going risk for the council that is difficult to fully mitigate at present.</p> |

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| Ref & Status | 8 | Risk | Potential: Risk of harm if we are unable to meet the care and support needs of some vulnerable adults due to an increase in demand and complexity of cases | | | | |
| Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible | | Jane Rodgers & Cllr Tudor Thomas | Scrutiny Committee | People Scrutiny Committee | Strategic objective | Lifelong wellbeing | |
| Reason why Identified | | | | | | | |
| <p>Referrals to Adult's Services have increased exponentially over recent years, and services are facing unprecedented pressure as a result. The care at home/domiciliary care sector is under immense pressure; Monmouthshire has specific challenges due to rurality and demographics. Demand following lockdown, and the complexity of need, is significantly higher than seen before and services are under immense pressure as a result, which is causing delays in service provision. A number of providers have left the market, which has created some critical pressure points.</p> <p>The fragility of the social care sector and the availability of care staff remains a key risk. Difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff in care posts has exacerbated the pressure, and this is being impacted by, and impacting upon, hospital discharge protocols. Some of the long-term impact of the pandemic is not yet fully understood, and Adult's Services will need to monitor closely emerging issues as they become clearer.</p> <p>The care home sector has been under significant pressure through the pandemic, and some are experiencing financial challenges threatening longer term sustainability.</p> | | | | | | | |
| Risk Level (Pre-mitigation) | | | | Risk Level (Post-mitigation) | | | |
| Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level | Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level |
| 2022/23 | Almost certain | Major | High | 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2023/24 | Almost certain | Major | High | 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2024/25 | Almost certain | Major | High | 2024/25 | Likely | Major | High |
| Mitigating Actions | | | | | | | |
| Mitigating Action | | Responsibility Holder | Timescale | Mitigation action progress | | | |
| Work with Welsh Government to recruit and retain care staff | | Chief Officer, Social Care & Health | Ongoing | <p>Recruitment and retention of care staff has been a considerable concern for some time, despite an ongoing recruitment programme across Wales. In recent months however, the issue has become significantly worse. The 'We Care' campaign, a national recruitment campaign initiated in 2020, funded by Welsh Government, continues to promote careers in social care, however, Local Authorities and independent providers are struggling to retain and recruit carers.</p> <p>We are running a 24/7 recruitment campaign to encourage as many applications as possible, and we have created a fast-track recruitment process. This aims to streamline the application process, whilst maintaining all safe recruitment protocols, to provide a more user-friendly platform for potential employees to use. We are also adopting different mechanisms to advertise posts other than the conventional Council website, such as a social media campaign. Funding has been obtained from the Welsh Government Recovery Fund to employ two part time posts dedicated to recruitment. A campaign was launched to advertise positions for people who only want to work weekends, with a view to attracting students or parents with child-care commitments during the week.</p> | | | |
| Work to address the difficulties in the health and social care system through the Regional Partnership Board and its sub-groups. | | Chief Officer, Social Care & Health Head of Adult Services | Ongoing | There are on- going regional partnership meetings to identify and address difficulties across health and social care. These include Gwent Adult Service Partnership, Regional Leadership Group and Regional Partnership Board. | | | |
| Monitor requests for Domiciliary Care to ensure demand is being met and delays are minimised | | Chief Officer, Social Care & Health | Ongoing | <p>All referrals are triaged at point of referral to ensure that those in most need are prioritised for assessment and intervention. Despite the availability of short-term funding streams e.g. Winter monies, Discharge to Recover, there has not been available workforce (Social Work / Therapies) through agency or any other means to manage the capacity gaps. Access to care and support is not always timely, and at times, our weekly unmet need within home care has reached 2000 hours.</p> <p>We are undertaking case load reviews and a replacement exercise with other services to see if they can assist with providing services to users. We are working with families to determine if there is help available to support a loved one. We are also working extensively with other care providers to coordinate runs better to be as efficient and effective as possible.</p> | | | |
| Implement a 'place-based' approach to create sustainability in care at home services | | Chief Officer, Social Care & Health | Ongoing | A key risk that remains is the fragility of the social care sector and the availability of care; COVID-19 has added a further risk to what was already a difficult area, and we did not foresee the impact of lockdown on residents and on the care sector itself. Recruitment is a significant challenge, staff are leaving for other sectors, and the cost of living in Monmouthshire is a prohibitive factor when trying to recruit. | | | |

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| | | | The Council remains committed to developing a more sustainable care at home sector for the future. A place-based approach is being progressed that encompasses all aspects of the community, including third sector, housing, education, residential settings and the community itself. This also needs to allow those wishing to live independently the opportunity to shape their own support to meet their own goals and desires. |
| Ensure the long-term sustainability of social care providers | Chief Officer, Social Care & Health & Head of Public Protection | Ongoing | It is vital that social care providers are able to provide care and support during and after the period of the pandemic and as such the council has a role in ensuring their financial sustainability and that they have access to sufficient resources, e.g. staffing. There is a national recruitment problem within the care sector, and this is impacting both public and private services. We are working with private care providers to align routes and services as much as possible to make the system as effective and efficient as possible. |

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| Ref & Status | 9 | Risk | Potential Risk that: Failure to implement the new national curriculum and other reforms alongside strong delivery of teaching and examinations following disruptions during the pandemic meaning that some children, including vulnerable learners, are unable able to achieve their full potential | | | | |
| Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible | Will Mclean & Cllr Martyn Groucutt | Scrutiny Committee | People Scrutiny Committee | Strategic objective | The best possible start in life | | |
| Reason why Identified | | | | | | | |
| Meeting the needs of vulnerable learners remains a priority and the gap in attainment between those not eligible and those eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) remains a concern. There is variation in FSM learner progress and outcomes across schools. Leadership, management, capacity and performance has been identified as in need of improvement in some schools. | | | | | | | |
| There is an increasing demand for support for children with additional learning needs. The Monmouthshire PSB well-being plan recognises the importance of greater support for the well-being of children and young people, and there are areas where students' well-being can be further supported. There are also challenges in meeting the demand for Welsh Medium education provision in the future. | | | | | | | |
| Estyn's report into Local Government Education Services in Monmouthshire County Council was published in April 2020. The report concluded that the authority's education service does not give cause for significant concern. There are four recommendations for development: - Improve outcomes for pupils eligible for free school meals - Further strengthen the focus on increasing the number of pupils achieving excellent standards - Articulate a clear strategy for SEN provision - Strengthen the use of information gathered through self-evaluation to better inform improvement planning | | | | | | | |
| The new curriculum will be implemented in 2022. The disruption from the past 18 months may impact on the ability of some schools to fully and effectively implement the curriculum and this will need to be monitored throughout the remainder of the academic year. | | | | | | | |
| Given the external pressures of the new curriculum and the wider aspects of the reform agenda, such as the introduction of the ALN Act, some schools may not return to levels of teaching and learning that were seen prior to the pandemic as quickly as necessary. This also recognises that there will be significant pressures on schools to support accelerated learning and wellbeing provision. | | | | | | | |
| Risk Level (Pre-mitigation) | | | | Risk Level (Post-mitigation) | | | |
| Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level | Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level |
| 2022/23 | Possible | Major | Medium | 2022/23 | Possible | Major | Medium |
| 2023/24 | Possible | Major | Medium | 2023/24 | Possible | Major | Medium |
| 2024/25 | Possible | Major | Medium | 2024/25 | Unlikely | Major | Low |
| Mitigating Actions | | | | | | | |
| Mitigating Action | Responsibility Holder | | Timescale | Mitigation action progress | | | |
| Ensure the agreed arrangements with the Education Achievement Service (EAS) continue to challenge and support schools | EAS & Chief Officer, Children and Young People | | Ongoing | Working with the local authority, EAS continue to provide ongoing challenge, monitoring and evaluation work in schools with a continued particular focus on vulnerable learners. All schools will continue to be provided with a bespoke support package that compliments the priorities identified within their own School Development Plans (SDPs) in line with the levels of support they require. There is a degree of flexibility within the deployment model to allow for in-year changes in circumstances and to allow for changes in light of the pandemic. | | | |

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| | | | <p>Monmouthshire's strategic priorities for 2021/22 aligned well with the recommendations from the Estyn inspection in April 2020. The years that followed saw unprecedented disruption and in managing our response to the global pandemic, previous improvement priorities had to take a step back to allow focus on the operational and tactical steps required to safely operate schools and provide blended learning. Whilst some uncertainty remains, work continues to progress addressing our Estyn recommendations, and prioritising emerging need. The second year of the pandemic, with a more localised and unequal impact, was harder for schools to manage.</p> <p>Schools have prioritised the wellbeing of all pupils as a pre-requisite for effective learning. This includes the development of a flexible approach to curriculum delivery, suitable for use in a range of contexts, and additional support to close the gap, to recover and to raise standards for priority groups. EPS and Healthy schools are providing advice and support to practitioners to support the well-being of children and young people impacted by COVID-19.</p> |
| Prepare for the implementation of the new school curriculum | EAS & Chief Officer, Children and Young People | September 2022 | <p>The new curriculum will be implemented in September 2022, which is a significant challenge. The position of schools in implementing the new curriculum is varied; some are in a strong position as they had undertaken significant work prior to the pandemic; others less so and will require additional support and time to bring them up to speed. For those schools that have been unable to move forward at pace, there is bespoke support available, and a framework around them to continue the move forward at their own pace. Schools will have support from their school improvement partner or their school-to-school link. School development planning guidance has been provided to help with strategic planning over the next year, and there is a national professional learning programme for senior leaders, headteachers and middle leaders. Professional learning support is also available for Teaching Assistants.</p> <p>The Council and EAS continue to work with schools in ensuring that they are preparing for the new curriculum and meeting the needs of students. EAS and MCC continue to monitor the progress schools are making towards the implementation of the curriculum and identify those who may need additional support.</p> |
| Continue to improve the quality of self-evaluation in the CYP directorate. | Chief Officer Children & Young People | Ongoing | <p>The Chief Officer's report will be presented to Full Council in the Autumn of 2022. It will capture the emergence from the pandemic and the challenges that remain for the local authority. This will align well with the emergent Corporate Priorities of the newly elected administration.</p> |
| Develop and implement plans to address the recommendations in Estyn's report into Local Government Education Services | EAS & MCC | Ongoing | <p>Monmouthshire County Council underwent an Estyn inspection in February 2020 and ordinarily, would focus on meeting the report's recommendations. The themes from the inspection included pursuing excellence, creating an holistic vision and strategy for learners with additional learning needs, securing better outcomes for our learners eligible for free school meals (FSM) and improving the way we use data in our evaluations. Draft ALN and FSM strategies have been scrutinised by Children and Young People Select Committee and continue to be developed in response to the impact of COVID-19. We also continue to develop leadership across our schools and create better learning environments for all our learners.</p> <p>Estyn provided a letter early in 2021, which captured the actions that the Education Team, schools, and EAS colleagues have taken to ensure the transition through the previous months had been as effective as possible. Some things identified in the letter include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in terms of Leadership and Collaboration, their recognition of our communication and clear expectations for schools • members have been kept up to date with events as they have unfolded. The quality of questions and level of challenge from members has been good • the good work undertaken by colleagues in education and social services to ensure that the needs of the more vulnerable learners were met |
| Deliver the Welsh Education Strategic Plan (WESP) in collaboration with neighbouring authorities | Head of Achievement and Attainment | Timescales as per WESP | <p>The agreed WESP is a long-term planning tool, which sets our direction for the next 10 years. It is an ambitious plan and interfaces clearly and closely with the local authority five-year Welsh language strategy, which is currently being reviewed.</p> |
| Ensure that the Additional Learning Needs review delivers sustainable, adequate and appropriate support to pupils with Additional Learning Needs | Head of Achievement and Attainment | September 2020 | <p>The new ALN Strategy identifies four distinct and ambitious work streams, all of which aim to build sustainable and resilient provision and are now embedded in the business plans of the ALN and Educational Psychology Services. Whilst lockdowns have had an impact on some actions, progress has been made in other areas. The</p> |

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| | | | <p>Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) cross-directorate initiative has been developed as part a whole school, whole authority approach to promoting attendance and well-being in Monmouthshire schools. The Education Psychology Service's training platform has continued to be developed, which provides information on support for well-being, as well as other key issues.</p> <p>The ALN team have been a key part of the regional preparations and developments for the new ALN and Tribunal Act legislation, which was implemented in September 2021. In preparation for the implementation of the Act, all Monmouthshire ALN Coordinators have been provided with an extensive range of training through the regional ALN transformation initiative, and Headteachers have been kept up to date with developments associated with ALN implementation through head teacher meetings and targeted communications.</p> |
| Work with PSB partners, through the Children & Young People Strategic Partnership, to deliver the steps in the PSB well-being plan related to focusing on children and young people's well-being and supporting their mental health and emotional wellbeing. | Chief Officer Children & Young People | Timescales as in developing PSB delivery plan | <p>The Monmouthshire Public Service Board has prioritised the step in its well-being plan. The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership is being developed to bring key partners together to lead on the delivery plan.</p> <p>Work on the well-being plan step on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) has good support regionally and should continue to be progressed through the new Gwent PSB. The response to this involves an understanding of the impact of ACEs within our communities, and coordination with a range of partners, to develop a long-term approach to prevention, taking account of the complexity of issues involved. ABUHB have also developed the Melo Cymru resource to provide a range of resources to support mental health and well-being.</p> |
| Support learners' wellbeing through excellent teaching and learning and through wider school based activity | Head of Achievement and Attainment Head of Inclusion | Ongoing | <p>It is vital that all Monmouthshire settings understand that the principal means of supporting wellbeing in school is through excellent and engaging teaching and learning for all learners. There will be times and areas where this has to be supported and developed by other interventions.</p> <p>As work continues in embedding the Whole School Approaches to Emotional Wellbeing this will be a routine focus for all schools.</p> |
| Continue to support schools through the ongoing and evolving demands of the pandemic | EAS & MCC | Ongoing | <p>September 2022 will see the return to school without COVID management requirements. This should enable schools to focus on the delivery of the new curriculum and excellent teaching and learning.</p> <p>Estyn has returned to a full inspection cycle and three Monmouthshire schools were inspected in the summer term of the academic year 2021/22. One of those schools was placed into a statutory category of requiring special measures. This school will now be subject to an extensive monitoring process to ensure that its recovery is robust and sustainable.</p> |
| Work with Education Welfare Services to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and are able to access excellent teaching and learning. | Head of Achievement and Attainment | Ongoing | <p>Attendance is still a legacy of the pandemic and an issue in schools. Education Welfare Officers are working with vulnerable pupils to bring them back into the educational setting, where possible. There are varying reasons for pupil absence, so a different approach is being adopted for different cohorts, and the Education team are working with multiple agencies to ensure these children and young people return to school.</p> <p>The teams are focused on the appropriate interventions for learners but there has also been work undertaken to provide additional depth and breadth to our understanding of the full range of reason for absence such as those reasons that are emotionally based.</p> |

Risks to policy priorities

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| Ref & Status | 10 | Risk | Potential Risk that: Delays to the adoption of a replacement Local Development Plan inhibits our ability to take forward key policy objectives such as job creation and affordable housing development | | | | |
| Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible | | Mark Hand and Cllr Paul Griffiths | Scrutiny Committee | Place Scrutiny Committee | Strategic objective | Thriving and well-connected county | |
| Reason why Identified | | | | | | | |
| <p>The current Local Development Plan ran until 31st December 2021; it will remain the principal development plan for decision-making purposes until the adoption of the RLDP. This does not change the urgent need for the council to make timely progress on its RLDP and to adopt it as soon as realistically possible to address key issues and challenges, including rebalancing our demography and responding to the climate emergency, and to meet the future needs of the county.</p> <p>Factors contributing to the delays include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has caused a delay in the progress of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP), both internally and where external factors impact upon it. • Updated evidence, for example the Welsh Government published the corrected 2018-based population and household projections in August 2020. This new data resulted in the need to revisit the Growth and Spatial Options and Preferred Strategy stages of the RLDP process in 2021. • Welsh Government has challenged the level of development in the Preferred Strategy on the basis that it is not consistent with Future Wales: the National Plan 2040, which identifies that new housing development, essential services and facilities, advanced manufacturing, transport and digital infrastructure should be in Newport, Cardiff and the Valleys. • High levels of phosphates in the rivers Wye and Usk have resulted in Natural Resources Wales placing restrictions on development that can take place within the catchment area. • Local elections and the need to ensure the RLDP direction of travel aligns with the new Administration’s priorities. <p>There are a range of issues and challenges the RLDP will need to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The delivery of affordable housing continues to be a concern. While all strategic sites are being progressed, targets for new dwelling completions and affordable dwelling completions are not being achieved. There are a significant number of households on the Councils waiting list, and there are limited affordable homes that could be developed within the current LDP. • There is a recognised lack of suitable employment land in the northern part of the County (Abergavenny and Monmouth in particular). Delays to the RLDP mean that new allocations to attract investors or retain growing businesses will not be available. There may be some scope for employment sites to come forward adjacent to settlement boundaries outside of the current LDP allocations. • The RLDP will identify areas with potential for renewable energy. A delay to the RLDP will have limited impact in this regard because renewable energy schemes such as solar farms can come forward for consideration via the existing LDP and under national planning policy. • There is a need to consider the Council’s future vision and the extent to which the current LDP and RLDP aligns with that, and the impact on wider infrastructure planning, such as transport, which could affect future economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being. | | | | | | | |
| Risk Level (Pre-mitigation) | | | | Risk Level (Post-mitigation) | | | |
| Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level | Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level |
| 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High | 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2023/24 | Likely | Major | High | 2023/24 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2024/25 | Likely | Major | High | 2024/25 | Likely | Major | High |
| Mitigating Actions | | | | | | | |
| Mitigating Action | | Responsibility Holder | Timescale | Mitigation action progress | | | |
| Prepare a replacement Local Development Plan to address the county’s issues/challenges, including in relation to the provision of housing (market and affordable) and employment opportunities, and to facilitate the identification and allocation of additional housing land and appropriate employment land, with associated infrastructure. | | Head of Placemaking, Regeneration, Highways and Flooding Head of Planning | Ongoing | <p>The revised Preferred Strategy was subject to statutory public consultation and engagement for 8 weeks during July – August 2021. The Second Call for Candidate Sites commenced alongside the Preferred Strategy consultation. Approximately 450 responses have been received to the Preferred Strategy consultation. Approximately 150 candidate sites proposed for development have also been submitted, together with 8 candidate sites for protection.</p> <p>Following the consultation/engagement on the Preferred Strategy, a number of challenges have arisen which have impacted on the progression of the RLDP and require further consideration, including the Welsh Government objection to the Preferred Strategy level of growth and phosphate water quality issues in the Rivers Wye and Usk.</p> <p>Consideration is being given to how to progress the RLDP having regard to the above challenges, whilst also ensuring that the RLDP delivers on the Council’s objectives and addresses the core issues of delivering much needed affordable housing at pace and scale, responding to the climate and nature emergency by delivering zero carbon ready new homes for our communities, and ensuring our communities are socially and economically sustainable by attracting and retaining younger people to rebalance our ageing demographic. A</p> | | | |

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| | | | report to Council in September 2022 will set out the options for progressing the RLDP and will seek a Council decision on how to proceed. |
| Work with partner organisations to identify and implement solutions to phosphate pollution in the Rivers Usk and Wye | Head of Placemaking, Regeneration, Highways and Flooding | Ongoing | <p>Natural Resources Wales (NRW) recent announcement of water quality (phosphate) issues in Riverine Special Areas of Conservation, including the River Wye and River Usk, has significant implications for the progression and implementation of the RLDP. The Preferred Strategy that we consulted on in July-August 2021 directed future growth to key sustainable settlements (including Abergavenny and Monmouth) within these affected catchment areas over the plan period (2018-2033). The council is proactively liaising/working with various organisations, including NRW, Welsh Water and Welsh Government, and local authorities and the development industry, to seek solutions/a way forward with this issue.</p> <p>Following discussions with Welsh Water and NRW, it has become apparent that whilst a workable solution to this water quality issue is achievable for the Llanfoist WWTW (River Usk catchment), there is no strategic solution for phosphate mitigation at the Monmouth WWTW (River Wye catchment) during the Plan period. The restrictions on future growth have implications for new housing and employment allocations in this area during the Plan period and subsequent implications for the RLDP spatial strategy.</p> |

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| Ref & Status | 11 | Risk | Potential Risk that: The council is unable to deliver its commitment to decarbonise its operations in sufficient time to achieve net zero by 2030 due to the scale and complexity of the challenge | | | | |
| Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible | | Strategic Leadership Team & Cllr Catrin Maby | Scrutiny Committee | Place Scrutiny Committee | Strategic objective | Maximise the potential of the natural and built environment | |
| Reason why Identified | | | | | | | |
| <p>Tackling climate change and moving to a low carbon economy is one of the biggest challenges facing our society. Rising temperatures and more extreme weather events bring increased risks to our communities and are causing long-term and potentially irreversible damage to our planet's eco-systems, with significant local impacts such as flooding and loss of species. If we are to stand a chance of slowing the rise in the Earth's temperature, we need to act now. In 2019, councillors were unanimous in declaring a climate emergency. The council will strive to reduce its own emissions and work with communities and local businesses to help them reduce their emissions. This will require engagement, community involvement and commitments from third parties.</p> <p>When considering climate change, it is important to consider both how Monmouthshire is contributing to climate change, but also how resilient the county is to the likely impacts of climate change. Extreme weather, such as flooding and the record high temperatures in Summer 2022, can impact significantly on infrastructure, homes and businesses, along with disruption to community life and public services, particularly critical public services people rely on such as care services.</p> | | | | | | | |
| Risk Level (Pre-mitigation) | | | | Risk Level (Post-mitigation) | | | |
| Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level | Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level |
| 2022/23 | Almost certain | Major | High | 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2023/24 | Almost certain | Major | High | 2023/24 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2024/25 | Almost certain | Major | High | 2024/25 | Likely | Major | High |
| Mitigating Actions | | | | | | | |
| Mitigating Action | | Responsibility Holder | Timescale | Mitigation action progress | | | |
| Deliver the Monmouthshire County Council Climate Emergency Strategy | | Head of Decarbonisation, Transport and Support Services | Timescales as per strategy | <p>The climate emergency action plan was updated in 2021, informed by extensive community engagement and the latest evidence, including the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, ensuring actions remain up to date. We have made good progress on some of the actions in the plan.</p> <p>We have developed baseline carbon emissions data for 2019/20 and 20/21, but there is not yet enough detailed understanding about the extent to which some of the actions in the plan reduce emissions to understand the precise impact some of the work we are undertaking is having. This makes it difficult to ensure activity and resources are focused in the right areas. We are sourcing additional expertise and capacity to help develop trajectories and pathways to the 2030 net zero carbon target. This will enable us to establish where we should best be focusing our resources to generate the maximum carbon savings.</p> <p>There is also a growing recognition nationally and internationally of the need to build climate change into a green recovery. Work has started on establishing a new strategic Environment Partnership Board, comprising</p> | | | |

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| | | | <p>of multi-agency partners who have a role to play in addressing issues in relation to biodiversity, climate change and other environmental matters.</p> <p>Work to reduce carbon emissions at a regional level continues through the work of the newly established Gwent Public Service Board (PSB) who have identified climate and environment as one of their three key priorities. This work will be strengthened through the development of a Gwent PSB Wellbeing Plan by May 2023. In addition, there is also collaboration across the Cardiff Capital Region to reduce carbon emissions, including the development of Local Area Energy Plans.</p> |
| Prepare and adapt for the impact of climate change. | Strategic Leadership Team | Ongoing | <p>In recent years, council services have considered what the potential risks to their services are, in order to start thinking about how to adapt to these risks. In 2021, some services updated these Climate Change Risk Assessments to allow service areas to better understand their necessary adaptation requirements.</p> <p>The Replacement Local Development Plan has a key role to play in making sure our communities are sustainable and resilient to the impacts of climate change. Changes to national planning policy on flooding are still awaited, but officers intend to take a precautionary approach, avoiding all built development on greenfield sites at known flood risk. Welsh Government has produced The National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management in Wales, and in response, Monmouthshire will be producing an updated Local Flood Management Plan during 2022/23.</p> <p>Much of the work to coordinate emergency responses is organised through the Gwent Local Resilience Forum (LRF). We will continue to work with partners on the LRF to make sure that we are prepared for severe weather events.</p> <p>The Climate Emergency Action Plan has recently undergone a review to ensure it accurately reflects the county's priorities. As part of this review, and subsequent update, a section has been included on climate adaptation, which includes preparing and adapting for the impact of climate change. Some of the actions within this include developing the management of green infrastructure to improve climate resilience; increasing urban tree canopy, including new street trees and in car parks to provide a cooling effect; and continuing to promote and support council services with business continuity and emergency response strategies.</p> |

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| Ref & Status | 12 | Risk | Potential Risk that: The rising cost of living could tip some families into crisis requiring public service interventions which diverts resources from other policy priorities | | | | |
| Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible | Frances O'Brien & Cllr Catherine Fookes | Scrutiny Committee | People Scrutiny Committee | Strategic objective | All | | |
| Reason why Identified | | | | | | | |
| <p>Monmouthshire is a beautiful county, blessed with strong communities and a competitive local economy. However, the county's relative affluence compared to much of Wales, when viewed through the lens of aggregated data, masks the day-to-day reality and lived experience of those citizens who are experiencing poverty, financial hardship and who do so in the context of the considerable financial inequality that exists within the county. In many ways, living in an area of relative affluence and wealth whilst struggling to make ends meet can make that experience even harder and more isolating. This is Monmouthshire's particular challenge and one that we are determined to understand and address.</p> <p>For families on lower incomes the rising cost of living, including - rising energy prices, exacerbated by a further increase of the price cap in October, increasing cost of fuel, rising food prices and increasing inflation - risks adding additional financial pressures to households. This also follows financial challenges experienced through the pandemic. This could cause significant pressures and could result in an increasing number of families requiring additional public service support from services such as housing support, Mental health, health, debt advice and customer contact and support services. Many of these services have already seen increasing demands and complexity support required through the pandemic. The cost-of living will also impact Council staff, including costs for working, which could impact staff well-being and capacity to deliver services.</p> | | | | | | | |
| Risk Level (Pre-mitigation) | | | | Risk Level (Post-mitigation) | | | |
| Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level | Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level |
| 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High | 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2023/24 | Likely | Major | High | 2023/24 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2024/25 | Likely | Major | High | 2024/25 | Possible | Major | Medium |
| Mitigating Actions | | | | | | | |

| Mitigating Action | Responsibility Holder | Timescale | Mitigation action progress |
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| Undertake data modelling to identify communities at greatest risk and use this to target pro-active responses such as commissioning of services | Head of Enterprise & Community Animation and Head of Policy Performance and Scrutiny | As per action plan | We have undertaken extensive data analysis and qualitative research furthering understanding of inequality at a local level and how the affects people's lives. Close working with partners is being undertaken to track data in real time to help understand the emerging situation and act accordingly (e.g. the number of food bank parcels issued, referrals for housing support, nature or queries to Citizens Advice, use of Register Social Landlords hardship funds). |
| To implement the discretionary Cost of Living Support Scheme | Head of Enterprise & Community Animation | | In July 2022, Cabinet agreed a Monmouthshire discretionary Cost of Living Support Scheme to distribute £498,551 of funding to support those most impacted by the Cost-of-Living crisis. The scheme has been designed following engagement with national and local partners, and stakeholders and comprises of direct payments and targeted resilience support in the county. This is in addition to the mandatory Welsh Government scheme, which provided funding to local authorities to provide a one-off £150 cost-of-living payment to all households in properties in Council Tax bands A to D, and to households in all Council Tax bands who receive support through our Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The Council is also delivering a range of activities to support residents including the Money Matters campaign which signposts to sources of support and further delivery of the campaign to staff in schools and other projects related to the costs of the school day. |
| Work in partnership with community fridges to identify individuals and families in need of further support. | Head of Enterprise & Community Animation | Ongoing | Community Fridges are citizen-led projects that seek to prevent food waste and to stop fresh food going to landfill. The food is accessible to the whole community with no means-testing. Whilst their ethos is primarily environmental, their presence in a community does have the ability to reduce the amount of money spent on essential outgoings for poorer families. Community Fridges are currently operating in Monmouth, Abergavenny, Caldicot, Goytre and Chepstow. We have secured funding for consultancy support to help the community fridge volunteers and to look at sustainable funding options, common policies, practices and developing new fridges. There is a risk that community fridges 'prop up' residents who otherwise would have reached the foodbanks, which require a referral process and can trigger more extensive support. We are working alongside the community fridges to sensitively support frequent users to connect with appropriate support, particularly through the Housing Gateway. |
| Work with the Gwent PSB to use the Marmot Principles as the framework for action to reduce inequalities across Gwent | Chief Executive | May 2023 | Gwent Public Services Board (PSB) has formally agreed to become a 'Marmot Region', and to work in partnership with the Institute of Health Equity (IHE) to use the social determinants of health approach as the basis for the response to well-being and health inequalities in Gwent. The Gwent PSB have adopted the eight Marmot Principles as the framework for action to reduce inequalities across Gwent as part of the development of the Gwent PSB Well-being Plan by May 2023. |

| Ref & Status | 13 | Risk | Potential Risk that: Residents are unable to secure or retain suitable accommodation, leading to rising homelessness and outward migration as a result of failures in the housing market | | | |
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| Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible | Frances O'Brien, Matthew Gatehouse and Catherine Fookes | Scrutiny Committee | People Scrutiny Committee | Strategic objective | All | |
| Reason why Identified | | | | | | |
| <p>The Council is currently experiencing significant challenges and risks in relation to homelessness. Initially due to the pandemic, Welsh Government required Councils to avoid people sleeping rough, then made the subsequent decision to transition homeless services with the aim of homeless becoming rare, brief and unrepeatable, together with an improvement in the quality of homeless accommodation. Welsh Government homeless policy changes through the Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness and Housing Support, whilst positive, has created challenges. Although homeless presentations have remained broadly consistent, the impact of Welsh Government policy has seen a significant increase in demand for homeless accommodation. This in turn has impacted significantly on the Housing Options Team operationally in respect the need to identify alternative accommodation, which largely has relied on B & B, re-housing households, housing management and placement break downs. This has also created placement and staffing challenges.</p> <p>There are problems regarding the availability of temporary, supported and permanent accommodation, the type and quality of accommodation and the range of housing support available necessary to meet current and emerging homeless need. Further challenges are also being experienced in respect of acquiring existing accommodation and repurposing properties due to the buoyant market in Monmouthshire and constraints relating to funding eligibility and Planning. There are also delays in the construction of new homes due to labour and supply chain problems, and phosphates issues in the north of the county.</p> | | | | | | |

From 1 December 2022, the Renting Homes Act will make significant change the way all landlords in Wales rent their properties. There is a risk this could impact on the private rented sector in the County and reduce the availability of rental properties, further decreasing housing availability and increasing accommodation challenges in the County. The Council is anecdotally seeing evidence of landlords leaving the market.

Monmouthshire has welcomed more refugees from Ukraine, in absolute terms, than any area in Wales apart from Cardiff. The number of hosts who have opened their homes is incredible, but all refugees may need alternative accommodation when hosting arrangements come to an end after six months. There is insufficient accommodation to house all those in the county. A shortage of move-on accommodation combined with uncertainty over long-term funding will challenge our ability to provide the necessary support and welcome to refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine.

The widening of asylum dispersal from 2022 will put further pressure on the housing market as the council plays its part in assisting the Home Office to move asylum seekers from hotels and other unsuitable accommodation in line with aspirations for Monmouthshire to become a county of sanctuary.

| Risk Level (Pre-mitigation) | | | | Risk Level (Post-mitigation) | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------|---|------------------------------|------------|--------|------------|
| Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level | Year | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Level |
| 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High | 2022/23 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2023/24 | Likely | Major | High | 2023/24 | Likely | Major | High |
| 2024/25 | Possible | Major | Medium | 2024/25 | Possible | Major | Medium |
| Mitigating Actions | | | | | | | |
| Mitigating Action | Responsibility Holder | Timescale | Mitigation action progress | | | | |
| Implement systems to meet the requirements of the new Phase 2 Homeless Transition Plan | Head of Enterprise & Community Animation | As per Homeless Transition Plan | <p>Welsh Government has released the Phase 2 Planning Guidance for Homelessness and Housing Related Support, which sets out their future homeless policy intentions. The core of the policy is rapid rehousing and to provide long-term accommodation with support if needed. The necessity to provide temporary accommodation continues to increase, and many applicants need specialist accommodation and housing support, which largely is not available in Monmouthshire.</p> <p>The Council's Phase 2 Homeless Transition Plan, seeks to address the identified issues listed above, and help to transform homeless services in Monmouthshire. We have worked with housing association partners to make additional social housing available for homeless households, and the proportion has increased from 38% in 2020/21 to 47% in 2021/22. Whilst positive, there is concern how much scope there is to allocate further social housing to homeless applicants without being overly detrimental to other housing need groups. We have remodelled housing support to include high-need accommodation for young people, dedicated substance misuse support, temporary accommodation support and re-settlement support. We have also expanded private sector accommodation under the Monmouthshire Lettings Service.</p> <p>There remain challenges that need to be addressed including the lack of temporary, supported and permanent accommodation, and the need to introduce either new support schemes or expand existing schemes for homeless applicants, particularly in respect of young people and those with mental health and substance misuse needs. Support is needed for those households in temporary accommodation, which there are currently 191.</p> <p>Work is being progressed to establish a Rapid Re-Housing Transition Plan by the end of September 2022, that has active buy-in from wider agencies involving homelessness. For example, the role of Health and Social Care is extremely important in homeless prevention and helping people (such as young people and those with mental health issues) maintain their existing accommodation.</p> | | | | |
| Deliver the Housing Support Programme Strategy 2022-26 and action Plan | Head of Enterprise & Community Animation | As per Homeless Transition Plan | <p>In July 2022 Cabinet approved the Housing Support Programme Strategy 2022-26. The document provides a single strategic view of the Council's approach to homelessness prevention, housing support service delivery, statutory homelessness functions (delivered by the Housing Options Team) funded through the revenue settlement and non-statutory preventative services funded through the Housing Support Grant (HSG) programme. The Council has and will continue to engage closely with Welsh Government in respect of the Council's HSG annual funding allocation, which at present is insufficient to meet identified support needs in the County.</p> | | | | |
| Develop suitable accommodation for homeless people, including long-term housing for all those accommodated in temporary housing and specialist provision for those with additional needs | Head of Enterprise & Community Animation | As per Homeless Transition Plan | <p>The Social Housing Grant (SHG) allocation for 2021/22 was £7,522,704, which was a significant increase on previous years. It was a difficult year with several schemes on hold due to the issue of phosphates and completions not being possible by the end of the financial year, despite efforts by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and requests for flexibility from the Council to Welsh Government which resulted in an underspend. For 2021/22, 91 affordable homes were delivered. There are 125 affordable housing completions projected for</p> | | | | |

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| | | | <p>2022/23, these have been funded via a mixture of SHG, Integrated Capital Funding or delivered as part of Section 106 Agreements. The Council has established a Strategic Housing Forum with local RSL's to identify further solutions to maximise delivery opportunities.</p> <p>The Housing & Communities Team re-structure in 2021 increased staff capacity and resilience, essentially to strengthen homeless prevention, accommodation management and sourcing new accommodation. Further staff requirements have subsequently been identified. In addition, Housing association partners have made additional social housing available for homeless households, and housing support has been re-modelled, typically moving away from generic floating support. Housing First has been introduced, along with high needs accommodation for young people, dedicated substance mis-use support, temporary accommodation support and re-settlement support. Private sector accommodation under Monmouthshire Lettings has also expanded.</p> <p>Continuing challenges include the on-going lack of temporary, supported and permanent accommodation, and a need to introduce either new support schemes or expand existing schemes for homeless applicants, particularly in respect of young people and those with mental health and substance misuse needs. There is a need to improve the support available to those with on-going needs in temporary accommodation; placement issues and failure are commonplace. At December 2021, 75% were assessed as having medium, high and intensive support needs.</p> <p>Further activity includes implementing the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2014 in respect of temporary accommodation, seeking to re-focus to pro-active homeless prevention (and identifying new opportunities for earlier intervention) rather than re-active re-housing to reduce numbers coming through for temporary accommodation and seeking to improve the quality of temporary accommodation, particularly increasing the availability of self-contained accommodation.</p> |
| Prepare an RLDP to address the county's issues/challenges, including in relation to the provision of housing (market and affordable) and employment opportunities, and to facilitate the identification and allocation of additional housing land and appropriate employment land, with associated infrastructure. | Head of Placemaking, Regeneration, Highways and Flooding Head of Planning | Ongoing | Detailed update provided as in risk 10. |
| Work with Welsh Government, local sponsors and landlords to identify a range of accommodation to accommodate Ukrainian refugees. | Head of Policy, Performance and Scrutiny | March 2023 | Sourcing accommodation to house those fleeing the war in Ukraine is a priority to both facilitate move on accommodation from Welcome Centres and for host sponsoring placements either coming to a natural end or breaking down. In addition to making public appeals for hosts and accommodation, the Council is using Homes for Ukraine expressions of interest provided by Welsh Government to identify new host sponsors and Monmouthshire Lettings to engage with private landlords and identify self-contained accommodation as well as working with refugees to help them find their own accommodation with the help of financial contributions to rent and paying their bonds where they lack the financial means to do this |
| Work with national providers and the Home Office to identify suitable accommodation for those fleeing persecution and ensure that appropriate support services, including trauma informed support, are available. | Head of Policy, Performance and Scrutiny | December 2023 | This is a new action. Initial meeting is pending with the Home Office provider |

Risks removed from the Whole Authority Strategic Risk Register

| Risk | Mitigating Action Update | Reason for Removal |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Potential Risk that: The Council may not deliver its objectives due to a lack of appropriate and effective governance infrastructure</p> | <p>The Council is implementing the requirements of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governance and Audit Committee has been established, terms of reference agreed and lay members appointed. • The Council has implemented live streaming of democratic meetings and provides all meeting papers on its website. Learning from the arrangements during the pandemic, hybrid meeting technology has been implemented accommodating both remote and physical attendance at meetings. • Scrutiny arrangements have been reviewed following a self-evaluation and four new role-based scrutiny committees established in place of the existing committees. Two of the new committees play a key role in engaging the public in developing policies, shaping services and reflecting the public voice to decision makers in advance of decisions being taken. In addition, the Public Open Forum process has been revised to enable the public to attend meetings in person or remotely, and to submit representations to scrutiny committees by video, audio or in writing. • More needs to be done to increase public participation in scrutiny. A wide-ranging piece of work has been commenced for a wholesale review of all engagement with a view to the production of the council's Public Participation Strategy as required by the Local Government and Elections Act 2021. • The first 'self-assessment' process has been completed and the report is due to be presented at full Council in September. The self-assessment process will be reviewed to further develop self-assessment arrangements to inform the next self-assessment report and <p>The formal establishment of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal as the South east Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) is underway, and transition has begun, with a completion date to be confirmed. The council needs to work with Welsh Government and the Cardiff Capital Region on the transition arrangements for services that will form part of the CJC to ensure effective governance arrangements are in place; an officer group has been formed for this.</p> | <p>The Council has developed its governance infrastructure in response to the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act and has strengthened mechanisms to continually assess and challenge arrangements in place.</p> <p>The Annual Governance Statement provides a high degree of assurance that arrangements are effective. This statement dovetails with the self-assessment required under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, this first report of which has been produced.</p> <p>New arrangements for Governance and Audit Committee have been introduced, including the appointment of lay members, which will provide additional rigour to the role of this committee in ensuring that effective governance arrangements are in place</p> <p>Good governance is a fundamental part of local authority working; arrangements are multifaceted and will need to continue to be subject to continuing review to ensure they are effective and mitigate any risks. The Annual Governance Statement will continue to be produced and findings from the self-assessment and panel assessment process will all be used to keep governance arrangements under review and identify any areas for improvement or risks that need to be addressed.</p> |
| <p>Potential Risk that: The council does not make sufficient progress in improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area due to a lack of progression with new regional and collaborative structures</p> | <p>The Public Service Board has produced its annual report for 2021/22. With a substantial focus of PSB partners on the pandemic, there has been a lessened focus on progressing some of the PSB's well-being objectives. The report provides an update on the activity delivered by the PSB during 2021/22 on the steps in its well-being plan; this includes activity partners have delivered, adapted or changed through the pandemic.</p> <p>Public Services Select Committee and Cabinet were provided with an overview of proposals to create a single Public Service Board for Gwent, and the related development of delivery arrangements in Monmouthshire. During 2021/22, the Monmouthshire Public Services Board merged with the other four Public Services Board in Gwent to form a Gwent-Wide Public Service Board. An integrated and collaborative approach has been undertaken to produce an updated Well-being Assessment in 2022. This assesses the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Gwent-Monmouthshire as a whole and five local areas within Monmouthshire.</p> <p>The Council has worked closely with partner organisations as part of the Gwent COVID-19 Recovery Co-ordinating Group (RCG) to take a strategic overview of, and give direction to, recovery work in line with agreed priorities and timescales. The RCG is now in abeyance but can be stood up where required. The council also continues to work with partners to understand the impact of the pandemic and adapt/develop existing partnership working accordingly.</p> | <p>The Gwent Public Service Board has been established, a Gwent wide and local well-being assessment produced and the Board is developing its well-being plan. A number of elements of the delivery and governance arrangements of the Public Service Board are being further developed to ensure it maximises the opportunities identified, mitigates as far as possible potential risks and meets its statutory duties and requirements under well-being of Future Generations Act. The related development of delivery arrangements in Monmouthshire are being implemented.</p> <p>Monmouthshire programme board have continued to lead the implementation of the Monmouthshire well-being until 2023 when a new Gwent-wide well-being plan will be agreed. The developed Programme Board in Monmouthshire will lead Monmouthshire's role in local delivery of regional actions as well as delivering activity specific to Monmouthshire, ensuring the well-being needs of Monmouthshire are prioritised locally and integrated in regional delivery as appropriate.</p> <p>Arrangements are being established to monitor and challenge the progress and performance of regional and collaborative arrangements. The Gwent PSB is developing its performance management and scrutiny arrangements. In Monmouthshire the Public Services Scrutiny Committee has broadened its</p> |

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| | <p>The formal establishment of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal as the Southeast Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) is underway, and transition has begun, with a completion date to be confirmed. The council needs to work with Welsh Government and the Cardiff Capital Region on the transition arrangements for services that will form part of the CJC to ensure effective governance arrangements are in place; an officer group has been formed for this.</p> | <p>remit to focus on collaborative activity including but not limited to the partnership arrangements under the PSB. It will scrutinise and constructively challenge, where powers allow, the work and effectiveness of strategic partnership sand other public service providers to ensure public accountability of collaborative services and improved outcomes for people in Monmouthshire.</p> |
| <p>Potential Risk that: Insufficient broadband infrastructure and a lack of digital skills in the county have the potential to lead to social and economic disadvantages</p> | <p>The Council has continued to work with Welsh Government and Openreach to support the delivery of the Superfast Cymru successor programme. As of June 2021 (last available data), 2,075 premises in Monmouthshire were included on the list of contracted premises and therefore should (but are not guaranteed to) be provided with a gigabit-capable connection (fibre to the premises) through the programme by the time of its completion in June 2022.</p> <p>For premises not included in the Welsh Government-funded fibre rollout, Council officers provide information on other options and signpost them to Welsh Government’s Access Broadband Cymru scheme and/or UK Government’s Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme as appropriate. Welsh Government’s Local Broadband Fund (running until 2023) supports local authorities and social enterprises to deliver broadband projects locally. The Council submitted two applications to its first tranche and was successful with both.</p> <p>In September 2019, Cabinet approved the Digital Infrastructure Action Plan, which identifies opportunities to address the issue of 12.5% of premises not having access to Next Generation Access broadband (our Digital Deprivation Rate). The Plan will be refreshed and will be further updated to include the revised deprivation data when published by Welsh Government in 2022.</p> | <p>The Council has supported, invested in and facilitated a range of schemes to improve broadband connectivity, both access and speed in the County. This has led to an improvement in broadband in the County.</p> <p>There remain areas without access to sufficient broadband provision and while it is proposed to de-escalate from the Council’s strategic risk register (which is focussed on strategic risks directly to Council service delivery), the council recognises this still remains a community-based risk in those areas effected and relevant Council service areas will still be manging and working to further mitigate the risk in partnership with communities that still don’t have sufficient connectivity. Data that is awaited from the Welsh Government Open Market Review of broadband provision in Wales, will inform any further targeted action.</p> |
| <p>Potential Risk that: The spread of Coronavirus accelerates as vaccine immunity wanes and new variants emerge that will impact on staff and residents’ health and cause delays or reductions in the council’s service delivery</p> | <p>The main element of the council’s response, the Emergency Response Team (ERT), the multi-agency Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) and relevant Tactical Subgroups have all been stood down. However, these are now equipped with the experience to be stood back up quickly and efficiently, should the situation require it.</p> <p>There has been considerable focus on the Business Continuity strategies and alternative methods of service delivery since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. Business continuity planning continues in line with the current Monmouthshire County Council Business Continuity Management cycle and review periods, noting good practise gained during the Covid response.</p> <p>Although the immediate response to the pandemic has been managed, any potential increase in the spread of coronavirus and the resultant impact on the Council will continue to be monitored. There remain longer-term impacts, for example the impact on health services and the financial impact. These, and other areas of potential issues have been covered in other risks within the strategic risk register.</p> | <p>The world has been living with Coronavirus for more than two years and, processes for limiting the spread have been deployed during this period, alongside the mass vaccination rollout and plans to live with Covid.</p> <p>The risk is being deescalated from the strategic risk register based on the assessment of the current impact on the Council’s service delivery. Waves of infections and potential variants emerging are an ongoing concern, as their emergence is unknown. The Council continues to have arrangements in place to monitor this in the county. These include being an active partner in the Test Trace Protect approach across Gwent in accordance with the Wales TTP Strategy and data is analysed regularly to identify patterns and potential outbreaks. Response arrangements are available to be stood up if the situation requires it and these are able to draw on previous experience to act quickly and efficiently. Risk management arrangement can also be escalated if required.</p> <p>As well as the direct impact of the virus, remaining service risks and longer-term direct and in-direct impacts of the pandemic continue to be managed through the Strategic Risk Register and services business plans for ongoing updates, for example the impact on increased complexity in demand for social care and mental health and well-being support.</p> |

Appendix 2: Strategic Risk Management Policy – Summary

This sets out the Council’s policy and approach to strategic risk management. A copy of the full policy and guidance is available to staff and members on the council’s intranet the Hub (Finance & Performance Management section – risk assessment)

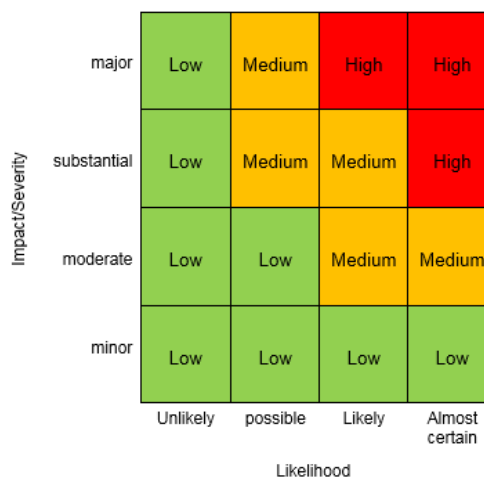
Risk Management is the process of identifying risks, evaluating their potential consequences and determining the most effective methods of controlling them or responding to them. Strategic risks are those which affect the Council as a whole. Typically these will be key risks which could significantly jeopardise the Council’s ability to achieve its objectives, statutory plans and/or provide operational services as planned.

The Council is committed to the effective management of risk. As a large public sector organisation, it is exposed to a wide range of risks and threats in delivering key services to communities. Within the Council the purpose of risk management is to:

- preserve and protect the Council’s assets, reputation and staff
- promote corporate governance and aid good management in controlling and managing risks
- support successful delivery of strategic aims, objectives and outcomes
- improve business performance and better anticipate calculated risks where these are likely in delivering improvements
- avoid unnecessary liabilities, costs and failures

The Council seeks to ensure that risk management is effective from strategic to individual services and employees. Therefore, all employees and councillors are responsible for ensuring there are good levels of internal control and risk management throughout the Council in order that the Council’s specified outcomes are achieved.

The Council uses a ‘traffic light’ system of Red/Amber/Green associated with High/Medium/Low to categorise risk levels. This is determined using the risk matrix below



| | |
|--------------------|--|
| High risk | The risk is highly likely to occur and the impact will be major. Management action/control evaluation and improvement is required coupled with continued pro-active monitoring |
| Medium risk | The risk is unlikely to result in a major issue, however, if it did the impact would be significant or serious . This risk is relatively less significant than a High risk however it needs to be closely monitored within timely management action/controls to ensure it does not escalate. |
| Low risk | The risk is very unlikely to occur and the impact will be minor or moderate at worst. Risk will be managed by seeking control improvements where practical and / or monitoring and reviewing at regular intervals |