

SUBJECT:	PANEL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT
MEETING:	Cabinet
DATE:	19 November 2025
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To seek approval for the proposed scope and arrangements for Monmouthshire's forthcoming Panel Performance Assessment (PPA), including confirmation of the panel chair and next steps for panel member appointments.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 Approve the draft scope for the Panel Performance Assessment as set out in this report.
- 2.2 To confirm the appointment of Beverley Smith as Chair of the Panel, and instruct the Chief Officer for People, Performance & Partnerships to finalise the remaining panel membership in consultation with the Leader and WLGA.
- 2.3 To agree the proposed timing for the assessment as the week commencing 23rd February 2026.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Commissioning an external Panel Performance Assessment is part of the Council's ongoing commitment to transparency, improvement, and assurance for both councillors and residents. The assessment is a requirement of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The Act requires councils to make arrangements for an independent panel, appointed by the council, to assess the extent to which the council is meeting the performance requirements. Namely:
- exercising its functions effectively;
 - using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively; and
 - having effective governance in place for securing the above.
- 3.2 This must take place at least once every electoral cycle and supplements the annual self-assessment, the most recent of which was approved by Council on 18th

September. Monmouthshire's assessment will take place during the week commencing 23rd February 2026

3.3 The panel will be made up of:

- An independent panel chair – not currently serving in an official or political capacity within local government.
- A peer from the wider public, private or voluntary sectors.
- A serving local government senior officer, likely to be equivalent to chief executive or director.
- A senior elected member.
- Staff from the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).

3.4 Beverley Smith has agreed to chair our panel. Bev is the former Chief Executive of North West Leicestershire District Council and current holds a number of Board roles including chair of the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales. Discussions are underway to appoint the other panel members. These will bring a range of knowledge and experience which is relevant to the scope of the review. There is a commitment to ensuring a gender balance on the panel.

3.5 The purpose of the assessment is to support the council to achieve our aspirations through developing and deepening our understanding about how we are operating, and how we can ensure effective services for the long term. It is for the Council to determine the scope of the review. This needs to be realistic for a panel of 4-6 people to undertake in a week including writing up and feeding back conclusions. The proposed scope has been developed following informal discussions and cabinet and SLT with subsequent input from the WLGA:

- How well does the council align across directorates to optimise delivery of the priorities set out in the Community and Corporate Plan?
- What opportunities are there to further develop the council's emerging person-centred and preventative approaches to working with its communities, local businesses and other stakeholders, (including town and community councils)?
- How well are we able to demonstrate the intended outcomes and emerging impacts of our Community and Corporate Plan and, how well do we communicate them to councillors, residents and other stakeholders, including town and community councils and local businesses?

The panel will be asked to review the above and offer positive suggestions on how the above facets of our work can be improved.

3.6 The panel will be guided in the ways of working and corporate governance headings set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act: Corporate planning; Financial planning; Workforce planning (people); Procurement; Assets; Risk management and Performance management

3.7 It is for the panel to decide how it will consult with groups such as staff, local people and trade unions. They can use existing engagement mechanisms to achieve this. For example, they could make use of our staff survey and residents surveys. Both of these are being conducted for a second time ahead of the assessment taking place.

- 3.8 The panel's findings must be published. The authority cannot amend the panel's report but does get the opportunity to publish a response. Both the report and response be presented to Governance and Audit Committee. The panel must send the report to The Auditor General for Wales, Estyn, CCIW and Welsh Ministers.

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

- 4.1 A full impact assessment is not required for this decision. The Panel Performance Assessment is expected to have a positive impact by strengthening accountability and supporting better outcomes for all residents, including future generations.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 5.1 Not conducting a Panel Performance Assessment is not an option as it is a statutory requirement. The process is likely to identify learning that will enable the generation of options related to both performance management and service delivery which would be the subject of separate future decisions.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Completion of the Panel Performance Assessment within the agreed timeframe.
Quality and relevance of panel recommendations.
Evidence of improved delivery against the Community and Corporate Plan priorities.
Feedback from councillors, residents, and external partner

7. REASONS:

- 7.1 To provide independent assurance on the Council's ambitions and delivery, support continuous improvement, and meet the statutory requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 The costs associated with the panel will be met by The Welsh Local Government Association. There are no direct costs associated with the assessment. The preparation work will be carried out officers.

9. CONSULTEES:

Cabinet
Strategic Leadership Team
WLGA

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

11. AUTHOR:

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12. CONTACT DETAILS:

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