

SUBJECT: Sustainable Development Policy
MEETING: Strong Communities Select Committee
DATE: 28 ^h April 2016
DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide members with the opportunity to scrutinise the proposed Sustainable Development Policy prior to a decision being sought by full Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Strong Communities Select Committee scrutinise the Sustainable Development Policy and make recommendations as appropriate.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 In April 2016 the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 became law setting what sustainable development means in Wales. It places a duty on local authorities to apply the sustainable development principle to maximising their contribution to 7 national well-being goals.
- 3.2 The Council was an early adopter of the Act. As part of this approach we worked with Wales Audit Office who produced a report on our preparedness. The results of this work have been presented at Audit Committee and Cabinet and have been used to help us implement The Act.
- 3.3 Sustainable Development has always been central to how we operate as a Council. The authority will now amend its existing policy to reflect The Act and ensure a clear and consistent understanding across the organisation. This will allow the organisation to have coherence across its policy framework and future policies and programmes that are brought to members for decisions will be expected to reflect it. The revised policy is attached as an appendix to this report.

4. REASONS:

- 4.1 To ensure a clear and consistent understanding of what sustainable development means and ensure a common emphasis and focus across the council's policy framework.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 There are no specific resource implications arising directly from the adoption of this policy.

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 All decisions taken by Council or Cabinet need to be assessed in accordance with the sustainable development principle. This is already an established process and is not impacted on by the change in policy.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

8. CONSULTEES:

Not required.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None – Policy attached as an appendix.

10. AUTHOR:

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It is our policy to pursue sustainable development through all of our work.

Monmouthshire County Council, in line with other public bodies across Wales, has adopted the aspirations of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as its definition of sustainable development.

Sustainable development is the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principles to achieve the 7 national Wellbeing Goals:

Wellbeing Goal	Description of the goal
A prosperous Wales	An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.
A resilient Wales	A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).
A healthier Wales	A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.
A more equal Wales	A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).
A Wales of cohesive communities	Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.
A globally responsible Wales	A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

In working to achieve these goals, Monmouthshire County Council will embed the following sustainable development principles into the way we work:

Sustainable Development Principle	What this means
 Long Term	<p>It is important to balance short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long term needs. We are expected to look at least 10 years ahead, although best practice would be to look 25 years ahead.</p>
 Prevention	<p>We need to understand the underlying causes of the problems people and communities face, and then take action early and develop solutions to prevent problems from getting worse or arising in the future.</p>
 Integration	<p>We need to integrate social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing by demonstrating how we are contributing to all of the wellbeing goals, not just one. We need to resolve, manage and mitigate any potential conflicts between our wellbeing objectives, and make sure that they integrate well with the objectives of other organisations.</p>
 Collaboration	<p>It is important that we work collaboratively with public bodies, private and third sector partners to achieve our wellbeing objectives, to maximise our collective impact.</p>
 Involvement	<p>Involving people who are affected by decisions is important and is at the heart of improving wellbeing. Involvement and engagement should reflect the diversity of the population we serve.</p>

In delivering our wide range of services, Monmouthshire County Council aims to contribute to all of the Wellbeing Goals and to embed the sustainable development principles into the way we work.

We will do this by integrating the aims of the Act into corporate, financial and workforce planning, procurement, asset management, risk management and performance management, as well as through all decision making, policies and strategies and communications.

We believe that sustainable development and future generations are crucial aspects to everything that we do, and when working with partners, contractors and other organisations we would expect them to share these values.

April 2016