

SUBJECT:	Strategic Risk Assessment
MEETING:	Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee
DATE:	30th June 2026
DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED:	All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide members with an overview of the current strategic risks facing the authority.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That members scrutinise, on an on-going basis, the risk assessment and responsibility holders to ensure that strategic risks have been appropriately identified and risk is being appropriately managed.
- 2.2 That members use the risk assessment to inform the future work programme of the committee and brief chairs of other committees where issues are of relevance to their work.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 The strategic risk management process ensures that strategic risks are identified and monitored by the authority; Risk controls are put in place that are appropriate and proportionate; Senior managers and elected members systematically review the strategic risks facing the authority.
- 3.2 The Council's strategic risk management policy and guidance and risk 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 mitigations to ensure, as far as possible, risk reduction/risk management.
- 3.3 Strategic risks covered by the assessment are typically 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 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. The strategic risk assessment should continue to focus on medium term risks to service delivery.
- 3.4 Appendix 1 provides the latest strategic risk register for the council. The assessment is a detailed document. Any significant changes or updates made to each risk can be found in the 'key changes' column in the summary table at the start of the full register. The council continues to operate in a dynamic environment and has controls in place to assess, manage and mitigate, as far as possible, a variety of risks. The strategic risk register is a live document and is continually updated based on the latest evidence. This will include adjusting the focus, detail and risk levels of risks where necessary. Some key changes made in the last six months can be found below:
- The addition of a new risk, Risk 6, related to the possible risk of disruption to the global supply chain, including the supply of fuel, impacting the council's ability to deliver key services and projects.
 - A re-escalation of Risk 14, related to the possible risk of the rising cost of living tipping more families into crisis requiring public service interventions.
- 3.5 Cabinet agreed an updated Strategic Risk Management Policy in June 2024, including the further definition of the council's risk appetite. A period of transition in implementing the policy was agreed to allow the council time to strengthen arrangements in line with the revised policy. Arrangements have now been developed to implement the requirements of the policy. These are:
- The requirement and responsibilities to consistently produce directorate risk registers.

- The definition of the Council's risk appetite, using a 'risk appetite range' for various categories of risk that are based on organisational activity.
- Updates to the strategic risk register, including the addition of risk categories, appetite levels, treat/tolerate categories and target risk scores.
- A developed risk radar, found in appendix 2, outlining some of the potential risks that Monmouthshire may face over coming years.

3.6 An overview of the strategic risk register was presented to Governance and Audit Committee on the 4th June 2026 to fulfil the committee's role of assessing the effectiveness of the authority's risk management arrangements. The strategic risk assessment was also presented to Cabinet on the 10th June 2026 to provide members with an opportunity to review the strategic risk assessment and assess whether it provides a realistic and evidenced appraisal of the strategic risks facing the authority over the next three years. Feedback from committees is continuously considered in the update of the strategic risk register and implementation of the policy. Any key conclusions will be shared with Cabinet.

4. REASONS:

4.1 To provide timely, relevant information on strategic risks and the strategic risk management process 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. AUTHORS:

Richard Jones, Performance and Data Insight Manager
Hannah Carter, Performance Officer

6. CONTACT DETAILS:

E-mail: richardjones@monmouthshire.gov.uk
E-mail: hannahcarter@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Monmouthshire County Council Whole Authority Strategic Risk Assessment – June 2026

Ref	Potential Risk	Risk Level (score) – Pre mitigation	Risk Level (score) – Post mitigation	Proposed Target Risk Score	Key changes
Risks to resources					
1	Financial pressures and increased complexity of demand for services, impacts on delivering all of the council’s commitments in the Community and Corporate plan, leading to longer term outcomes for the county not being achieved	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	2026/27 – Medium (8) 2027/28 – Medium (8) 2028/29 - Medium (8)	Medium (8)	A full review of progress made in achieving organisational objectives during 2025/26 in the form of a self-assessment report will be presented to Council in September.
1b	The absence of a political majority makes it harder to ensure timely and appropriate decision making which results in delays and uncertainty in some projects	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	2026/27 – Medium (9) 2027/28 – Medium (9) 2028/29 - Medium (9)	Medium (9)	A range of actions continue to be undertaken to mitigate this risk.
2	Some services will become financially unsustainable in the short to medium term in their current form due to increasing demand and continuing financial pressures	2026/27 – High (16) 2027/28 – High (16) 2028/29 – High (16)	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	High (12)	The latest budget update notes a forecast surplus of £1,146,000. This is a significant improvement on the £29k surplus noted in the previous update. This update also forecasts a 93.1% delivery rate of the service savings required, again an improvement on the previous update which forecast a 90.4% delivery rate.
3	Some infrastructure and assets may become inoperative in the medium term due to insufficient capital funding available to sustain the level of maintenance needed.	2026/27 – High (16) 2027/28 – High (16) 2028/29 – High (16)	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	High (12)	Capital expenditure of £50.84 million is forecast for the year, with no significant variances anticipated at the current time. The £1.3m capital contingency budget remains unallocated and will now be released and utilised to fund further capital investment in the 2026/27 capital programme.
4	Difficulty recruiting for some posts that require specific skills or qualifications and continued wage inflation will impact the organisation’s retention and workforce planning which may affect the delivery of Council services	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	2026/27 – Medium (8) 2027/28 – Medium (8) 2028/29 – Medium (8)	Medium (6)	The People Strategy was approved in May 2024 which sets out a range of commitments and activity to mitigate this risk, including a focus on improving recruitment processes and ensuring retention of talent.
5	Loss or corruption of data due to cyber-attack or data mismanagement, which will compromise the delivery of essential council services	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	2026/27 – Medium (8) 2027/28 – Medium (8) 2028/29 – Medium (8)	Medium (8)	A range of mitigation actions continue to be undertaken to mitigate this risk.
6	Instability in global politics and the recent war in Iran may result in disruptions to the global supply chain, including the supply of fuel, restricting the Council’s ability to deliver key services and projects	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	High (12)	This is a new risk recently added related to the possible risk of disruption to the global supply chain.
Risks to service delivery					
7	Significant harm to a child or adult may occur due to a specific failure of safeguarding arrangements	2026/27 – Medium (8) 2027/28 – Medium (8) 2028/29 – Medium (8)	2026/27 – Medium (8) 2027/28 – Medium (8) 2028/29 – Medium (8)	Medium (8)	The most recent Annual Safeguarding Evaluation Report was presented to Scrutiny in September 2025. The report evaluates the progress of the Council’s key safeguarding priorities during 2024/25, highlighting progress, identifying risks and setting out actions and priorities for 2025/26.
8	Risk of harm if we are unable to meet the care and support needs of some vulnerable children due to an increase in demand and complexity of cases	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	Medium (8)	A Placement Development Strategy update was presented to scrutiny in April. This outlines progress in meeting objectives including the development of four additional children’s homes/supported accommodation.
9	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	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	Medium (8)	A whole authority preventative strategy, the ‘Living-Well Strategy’, has been approved by Cabinet. This strategy aims to implement preventative action to support residents, to live a healthy life, enabling them to remain at home and in their communities.

10a	Failure to return attendance figures to those seen before the pandemic, particularly among vulnerable pupils and those eligible for free school meals, could lead to a worsening in educational attainment	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	2026/27 – Medium (8) 2027/28 – Medium (8) 2028/29 – Medium (8)	Medium (8)	Work continues to support schools and learners to increase attendance levels. Training has been undertaken with schools to increase awareness of drivers of low attendance.
10b	An increase in behaviours that challenge in schools as a result of the continuation of trends that first emerged during the pandemic may lead to harm to a pupil or member of staff	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	Medium (8)	A range of action is being undertaken to mitigate this risk, including the work of the Education Support Team which has enabled those learners most at risk of repeat Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE) or of Permanent Exclusions (PEX) to receive support from specialist professionals.
Risks to policy priorities					
11	Welsh Government/PEDW does not find the Replacement Local Development Plan sound or Council do not adopt the RLDP which restricts our ability to take forward key policy objective such as job creation, affordable housing development and the adoption of key policies to protect the environment and tackle climate change	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	Medium (8)	This risk has been refocused following the endorsement of the Deposit Replacement Local Development Plan by Council in October. The Deposit Plan will now be subject to public examination from Welsh Government and Planning and environment Decisions Wales (PEDW).
12a	The council is unable to deliver its commitment to decarbonise its operations in sufficient time to achieve net zero by 2030 because our resources are not commensurate with the scale and complexity of the challenge	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	Medium (9)	Work has been progressed to develop an understanding of the scale of the change needed in striving to collectively become net zero. A costed decarbonisation plan and survey for the Council's built estate have been completed. This will provide the council with a sound understanding of the funding needed to implement change.
12b	The Council is unable to deliver services as a result of the increasing frequency of climate-related emergencies such as floods or extreme heatwaves that increase the demand for emergency responses and can cause damage to infrastructure and the closure of facilities	2026/27 – High (16) 2027/28 – High (16) 2028/29 – High (16)	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	Medium (8)	A range of action is being undertaken to mitigate this risk, including the development of an updated flood risk management strategy.
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	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	2026/27 – Medium (8) 2027/28 – Medium (8) 2028/29 – Medium (8)	Low (4)	Rapid rehousing is facilitating increased resource into homeless prevention, for example through additional staffing and the availability of the Homeless Prevention Fund.
14	The rising cost of living tips more families into crisis requiring public service interventions which diverts resources from other policy priorities	2026/27 – High (12) 2027/28 – High (12) 2028/29 - High (12)	2026/27 – Medium (9) 2027/28 – Medium (9) 2028/29 - Medium (9)	Medium (6)	This risk has been re-escalated to the Strategic Risk Register after being previously de-escalated to be managed through directorate risk registers. This is to reflect changes to the wider economic climate which may impact the cost of living.

Monmouthshire County Council Whole Authority Strategic Risk Assessment

Risks to resources

Ref & Status	1	Risk	Potential Risk that: Financial pressures and increased complexity of demand for services, impacts on delivering all of the council’s commitments in the Community and Corporate plan, leading to longer term outcomes for the county not being achieved.							
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Paul Matthews (Chief Executive) and Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby (Leader)		Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All All	Risk category and appetite level	Strategic Cautious	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Treat		
Reason why Identified										
The council has an agreed Community & Corporate Plan 2022-28 that contains six well-being objectives which focus on the longer-term future of the county and aims to address complex challenges, in line with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The objectives include a focus on equality, climate change, economy and skills, housing, care and support and learning. The Council is facing significant budget pressures and increasing complexity in demand for its services. The contemporary policy challenges that need to be addressed, working with communities, are complex and evolving. The immediate pressures the council is facing risks impacting on the ability and resources to deliver the longer-term objectives in the plan and meeting the requirements on the Act.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Possible	Major	Medium	8	Medium (8)
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	2028/29	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress					
Regularly review progress made in implementing the commitments of the community and corporate plan, ensuring resource is targeted in the most pertinent areas			Strategic Leadership Team Six Monthly		A full review of progress made in achieving organisational objectives is completed annually in the form of a self-assessment report. This is developed based on a range of evidence from across the organisation. An assessment of progress made during 2025/26 will be presented to Council in September. A six-month progress report on the delivery of the community and corporate plan is also prepared following Q2 of each financial year. This provides a regular review of progress made in implementing the commitments made in the plan and facilitates targeted activity and intervention in areas requiring further development. This also includes an update on measures contained within the revised measured framework, which was approved by Cabinet in September 2024, ensuring an increased focus on outcomes. The latest progress update was presented to Cabinet in December 2025.					
Review the progress of the Enabling Strategies which support delivery of the community and corporate plan to ensure alignment of resources with policy priorities			Enabling Strategy lead officers. Annually (July 2026)		The enabling strategies which support the delivery of the community and corporate plan have now been updated. These include: the People Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Asset Management Strategy, Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy and Digital and Data strategy. These will be subject to an annual review, as outlined in each strategy, to evaluate progress and ensure they continue to support delivery of the community and corporate plan. A composite report including the annual review of each strategy was presented to Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee in July 2025. The next review is currently being prepared.					
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 Ongoing		The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was approved by Council in July 2024. This strategy provides the strategic framework for the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), and a set of key principles to guide medium term financial planning. These two together form the link between the council’s long-term policy objectives and its financial capacity. As part of the development of the strategy, a delivery plan has been established, which sets out clear timescales for completion; this is monitored regularly by Cabinet and Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee. The Council’s evolving programme of change, underpinned by strong financial governance, provides the strategic framework through which services will be reshaped to meet resident needs within available resources. This programme is not simply a response to financial pressures but also a proactive effort to modernise and improve outcomes. To maximise its impact, there is a requirement for coordination and discipline to how this work is captured, aligned, and reported. Doing so will help create a more coherent and connected picture of the overall programme, even though different elements are at varying stages of development.					

Engage with communities to understand challenges and opportunities from their perspective including participation of residents and service users	Strategic Leadership Team Ongoing	The Council has undertaken a range of assessments 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 were used to inform the development of the Community and Corporate Plan. An annual resident's survey is undertaken to understand resident's views on their local area and council services. The results are analysed and used to evaluate progress with the community and corporate plan and inform future decision making in the council. An annual consultation exercise on the proposed budget is also undertaken in January/February of each year. The involvement and participation of and engagement with Monmouthshire's community groups, public service partners, service users and residents continue to be strengthened to help further understand experiences in the County.
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Ref & Status	1b	Risk	Potential Risk that: The absence of a political majority makes it harder to ensure timely and appropriate decision making which results in delays and uncertainty in some projects							
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Paul Matthews (Chief Executive) and Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby (Leader)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All All	Risk category and appetite level	Strategic, Service Delivery Cautious	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Tolerate			
Reason why Identified										
The local elections of May 2022 resulted in no political party having overall control of the Council. The Labour party was the largest party and formed a new cabinet without an overall majority. The lack of a majority Council has resulted in a politically unstable council, which has had a significant effect on the speed of the organisation's decision making and the ability to implement policy change. A coalition agreement has subsequently been reached between the Labour party and the Green party, however this isn't enough to form an overall majority. The democratic process has seen some decisions be subject to call-in which can cause uncertainty in some projects.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	2026/27	Likely	Substantial	Medium	9	
2027/28	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	2027/28	Likely	Substantial	Medium	9	
2028/29	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	2028/29	Likely	Substantial	Medium	9	
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress					
Undertake pre-decision scrutiny on relevant decisions			Chief Officer Law & Governance and Chief Officer People, Performance & Partnerships Ongoing		Each scrutiny committee has an established forward plan. This is shared regularly with department management teams to seek their input on items that will require scrutiny. A number of special meetings have been held to ensure decisions are scrutinised in advance of decisions. There is a need to improve the timeliness of completion of the forward plan to ensure appropriate time can be allocated by scrutiny committees to forthcoming decisions.					
Utilise members seminars and scrutiny workshops to engage and involve all councillors in the development of policy			Chief Officer Law & Governance and Chief Officer People, Performance & Partnerships Ongoing		Members seminars are being used to share developments and involve councillors on significant forthcoming decisions. Recent seminars include on Homesearch and Culture Strategy. Scrutiny workshops are held to seek councillors' involvement in the development of proposals. These have included the review of primary school catchments and Gypsy and Traveller needs assessment.					
Maintain a fully populated forward work planner of Cabinet and Council business			Chief Officer Law & Governance Ongoing		An established forward work planner for cabinet and Council business is available to all councillors and is a standing item on the agenda of scrutiny committees to inform their own work programme. There is a need to improve the timeliness of completion of the forward plan to ensure all interested parties are sighted as early as possible on planned decisions being brought forward.					

Ref & Status	2	Risk	Potential Risk that: Some services will become financially unsustainable in the short to medium term in their current form due to increasing demand and continuing financial pressures						
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Peter Davies (Deputy Chief Executive) and Cllr Ben Callard (Cabinet Member for Resources)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All All	Risk category and appetite level	Service Delivery Cautious	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Treat		

Reason why Identified

Councils across the UK are continuing to face significant financial challenges. It is widely acknowledged that local government funding has not kept pace with increased service demand and inflationary pressures. The Council has seen continuing financial headwinds which are severely impacting the service operating environment. The Inflationary drivers impacting pay, supplies and services continue to far outstrip available resources: demand led pressures continue to increase in the areas of Homelessness, Social Care, Children’s additional learning needs, and Transport; interest rates remain significantly higher than seen in previous years; the Council continues to deal with a shortage of staff resources due to ongoing labour market challenges which require the use of more costly temporary solutions; supply chain issues continue which require more costly alternative or expedited arrangements.

This will be further exacerbated over the medium term by a weak growth forecast in the UK economy impacting on public sector spending. The recent war in Iran is also likely to impact both residents and Council budgets, with increases in the cost of oil and energy, food and possible risk of disruption to global supply chains. All the aforementioned results in a growing need for supportive Council services, a reduced demand for income generating services, increased risks around debt recovery, and a continued high-cost operating environment.

Current modelling predicts a continuously increasing budget deficit, despite a higher than expected increase in Welsh Government funding, with a projected cumulative shortfall of £37.4m by 2029/30. 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 an ambitious Corporate and Community Plan being implemented.

A continuation of challenges seen during the pandemic has meant that an increasing number of our schools are experiencing budget deficits. Currently 19 out of 35 schools are anticipated to have a deficit balance at the end of the financial year, totalling a collective deficit balance of £7,517,000.

Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	High (12)
2027/28	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	
2028/29	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	

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 Ongoing	The latest 25/26 revenue budget update notes a forecast surplus of £1,146,000. This is a significant improvement on the £29k surplus noted in the previous update. The improvement is primarily driven by changes in Social Care where the ability to maximise the impact of grant funding to meet core expenditure has benefited the forecast. This update also forecasts a 93.1% delivery rate of the service savings required, again an improvement on the previous update which forecast a 90.4% delivery rate. Despite the improved position in the overall budget, pressures remain within services, including Adults and Children social care and Housing and homelessness. Work will continue to deliver on the structured approach to tackling the underlying cost pressures, with particular importance assigned to tackling costs which have the ability to be recurrent for 2026/27 and beyond.
Develop a set of budget proposals for 2026/27	Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources March 2026	The budget proposals for 2026/27 were finalised and agreed by Council in March 2026. This was following a public consultation, scrutiny by members and consideration of impact of proposals on protected characteristics and groups.
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 Ongoing	The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was approved by Council in July 2024. This strategy provides the strategic framework for the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), and a set of key principles to guide medium term financial planning. These two together form the link between the council’s long-term policy objectives and its financial capacity. As part of the development of the strategy, a delivery plan has been established, which sets out clear timescales for completion; this is monitored regularly by Cabinet and Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee as part of six-monthly MTFP updates. The authority’s budget modelling assumptions are reviewed and updated regularly. The latest Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), presented to Cabinet in November 2025, estimates a budget gap of £11.5 million for 2026/27, increasing to a cumulative total of £37.4 million by 2029/30. These figures represent a positive change from the previously reported £13.6 million and £38.0 million, respectively. This update reflects updated assumptions around pay inflation, non-pay inflation, superannuation rates, and service pressures.
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	The overall level of school reserves are currently forecast to move further into deficit by the end of the 2025/26 financial year. This would result in 19 out of 35 schools being in deficit at year-end, with a cumulative deficit balance of £7,517,000.

		<p>The legacy impact of the pandemic continues within the school environment, particularly in respect of attendance, behaviours and increased additional learning needs. This has required increased staff and specialist resources to tackle the issues presenting and increased overall costs of provision. Higher than budgeted pay awards for both teaching and non-teaching staff have also impacted upon budgets in recent years.</p> <p>All schools with a deficit budget must agree a recovery plan with the Local Authority - this plan will set out clear actions that the school and Governing Body must take to see the school to return to a surplus. These plans are monitored on a frequent basis and where schools do not meet their recovery plans further challenge is provided by the Local Authority to understand the reasons and to look at mitigating actions to bring plans back on track.</p>
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Ref & Status	3	Risk	Potential Risk that: Some infrastructure and assets may become inoperative in the medium term due to insufficient capital funding available to sustain the level of maintenance needed.							
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Peter Davies (Deputy Chief Executive) and Cllr Ben Callard (Cabinet Member for Resources)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Service Delivery Cautious	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Treat			
Reason why Identified										
<p>As with revenue budgets, Capital budgets have also faced significant pressures in recent years. Given ongoing financial constraints and rising construction costs, the Council faces significant challenges in delivering its capital investment programme. Demand for capital resources exceeds what is available, requiring careful prioritisation of projects, the pursuit of external funding, and collaboration with partners. Inflation is increasing the price of materials and contracts, while external grants have not kept pace, making affordability a key concern. The recent war in Iran may lead to disruptions to the global supply chain, resulting in delays, the risk of possible shortages and further cost increases. The need for ongoing investment is heightened by an ageing asset base, and annual allocations are focused on tackling the most urgent maintenance and refurbishment needs, though these efforts are insufficient to fully resolve the backlog.</p> <p>Though significant projects have reached completion or progressed to contract, including the development of the school estate, there remains significant pressures that sit outside of any potential to fund them within the Capital MTFP and carry significant risk. In addition to this, there are various schemes/proposals 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.</p> <p>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 Local Development Plan is known and for which the Council has put forward a number of strategic sites in its ownership.</p> <p>These significant pressures on capital budgets sit alongside changes to regional transport funding processes which may result in further decreases to available funding. This would further limit our ability to implement improvements to our key infrastructure and highways network.</p>										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)				Target risk score	
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level		Risk Score
2026/27	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2026/27	Likely	Major	High		12
2027/28	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2027/28	Likely	Major	High		12
2028/29	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	High (12)
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>The Capital MTFP was updated as part of the development of the Capital Strategy in March 2025. The capital MTFP and capital strategy seek to work towards a financially sustainable core capital programme, whilst balancing the need to deliver capital investment plans in line with policy commitment and need. The current capital MTFP does not cover all the capital budget pressures that have been identified. This shows that there is more demand for capital spending than the Council considers it can reasonably afford. This means that capital schemes will have to be ranked or the capital available has to be divided more widely than is ideal.</p> <p>The capital programme includes yearly investment for property maintenance, highways maintenance, relevant specific capital grants and the future schools programme. This will help to deal with the most urgent backlog issues, focussing on worst condition first and related risk. However, estate rationalisation programs, closure/disposal of assets, asset transfers and other capital projects to refurbish</p>					

		<p>or replace operational properties will also be used to reduce the backlog funding needed. This will not solve the specific total backlog but is a way of targeting the main issues in a reasonable way.</p> <p>The value of Capital receipts forecast after 2025/26 drops off quite considerably which is reflective of the replacement local development plan (RDLP) not proceeding as quickly as envisaged in the original delivery agreement. This will have an impact on the balance of receipts available to fund future capital investment demands in the near term.</p> <p>The Council has strengthened its scrutiny and challenge of the Capital Programme through the establishment of Capital and Asset Management working groups. The respective working groups look to ensure that projects are prudent, affordable and will deliver tangible benefits to core policy objectives over the long term.</p>
Review and refresh the council's Capital Strategy	Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources March 2026	The Council's Capital Strategy provides a framework for investment decisions, ensuring alignment with corporate objectives and promoting transparent planning. All projects are being reviewed for timing and strategic relevance, with non-urgent schemes potentially deferred to prioritise critical works or generate capital receipts. The Capital Strategy was recently reviewed and agreed at Council as part of the organisation's budget setting process.
Continue to monitor the Capital budget	Deputy CEX/Chief Officer, Resources Ongoing	<p>Capital expenditure of £50.84 million is forecast for the year, with no significant variances anticipated at the current time. A small under spend of £35,000 is currently reported across a small number of specific grant funded schemes which has no impact on the Council's available capital funding as it is specific to individual schemes. The £1.3m capital contingency budget remains unallocated and will now be released and utilised to fund further capital investment in the 2026/27 capital programme.</p> <p>Capital schemes by nature are usually multi-year, and some slippage is to be expected as expenditure profiles change based on flex in project circumstances. A total of 32 capital schemes are indicating that slippage will be required into 2026/27 totalling £21.0 million. This represents slippage of just under a third of the total budget for the year. Recent experience suggests that the final amount of schemes requiring slippage will increase as the year progresses as scheme progress becomes clearer. A full review of slippage will be undertaken at year-end to establish the need for schemes to continue into 2026/27 or alternatively if any re-prioritisation is required.</p>
Further refinement of priority assessments in the property and infrastructure budgets to ensure all pressures have been considered and ranked.	Head of Landlord Services Ongoing	<p>A regular programme of property condition surveys is underway, supported by routine compliance checks for all assets. This information as well as technical input from the council's Landlord Services team, will continue to be used to inform prioritisation of planned capital maintenance spend. 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 have informed the capital MTFP and pressures that will need to be accommodated and funded therein in future financial years. The Capital Working Groups and Asset Management Working Groups will contribute to decisions on the capital spend and MTFP.</p>
Deliver the Asset Management Plan to manage the Council's land and property portfolio	Head of Landlord Services Ongoing	The Asset Management Strategy has been adopted, introducing clearer alignment to the Community & Corporate Plan and establishing key principles which will inform strategic decision making for the council's land and property portfolio. The Asset Management Strategy is delivered via the associated Asset Management Plan, which is subject to regular monitoring and progress reporting. An annual review of the Asset Management Plan delivery is presented to Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee as part of wider review of the enabling strategies.
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 Management Strategy	Head of Landlord Services Ongoing	<p>The Asset Management Strategy commits to maximising and commercialising assets wherever possible, including achieving income generation or revenue enhancement where opportunities are identified to do so. The core principle is achieved with acknowledgement of the council's policy objectives and ambition to achieve both financial and social returns.</p> <p>The performance of the council's commercial and investment portfolios are reported to Performance & Overview committee on six monthly cycles. The updates provided include an acknowledgement of the performance of the assets, their capital value and risk, market information and transaction updates. Officers provide recommendations and updates in accordance with the revised financial performance terms, as outlined in the Asset Management Strategy.</p>

Ref & Status	4	Risk	Potential Risk that: Difficulty recruiting for some posts that require specific skills or qualifications and continued wage inflation will impact the organisation's retention and workforce planning which may affect the delivery of Council services
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Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Matthew Gatehouse (Chief Officer People, Performance & Partnerships) and Cllr Ben Callard (Cabinet Member for Resources)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Service delivery, Governance Minimalist	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Treat			
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.										
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 facing considerably increased workloads to meet increasing demand and personal home-based factors such as financial strains due to the increased cost of living.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)				Risk Level (Post-mitigation)				Target risk score		
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact		Risk Level	Risk Score
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Possible	Major	Medium	8	Medium (6)
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	2028/29	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action		Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress						
Recruit and retain staff more effectively		Chief Officer People, Performance & Partnerships 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, have seen reductions in applicants, and this is impacting on service provision. Solutions for the national recruitment issues do not sit solely with local authorities.</p> <p>The People Strategy was approved by Cabinet in June 2024 and contains a specific objective, and actions, aimed at improving recruitment and retention. An e-recruitment system has been implemented to support the development of recruitment as a genuine talent acquisition process. This will benefit recruiting managers who want speed, simplicity and agility. The HR team are also utilising different social media channels to reach applicants.</p> <p>A new work experience and apprentices' policy has been developed and will seek to increase the number of apprentice positions, creating a new pipeline of talent. People Leaders Workshops are supporting the sharing of information with service areas and promote networking and sharing ideas.</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 Organisation Workforce Development Ongoing		<p>Staff well-being is affected by a range of factors, including additional work pressure and demand, personal factors and societal factors.</p> <p>Supporting the health and well-being of our colleagues is a key objective of the People Strategy. 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>An audit has been undertaken of the council's wellbeing offer and location of access allowing for consolidation and ease of access for all colleagues. Opportunities for further support are being explored. Options for providing support and guidance to colleagues in relation to financial wellbeing are also being assessed.</p> <p>The Digital 'Cwtch' continues, although less frequently. The people services team 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. Colleague Conferences have also been held to bring staff together and allow colleagues to engage in meaningful discussions that will help us find innovative solutions to improve our operations and better serve our communities.</p>						
Embed workforce planning to ensure the right skills, expertise and knowledge are available for future changes		Chief Officer People, Performance & Partnerships Ongoing		The new People Strategy has created a clear commitment to embed workforce planning across the organisation. This is aimed at addressing shortages and ensuring career pathways are in place. New arrangements within the HR team will ensure that HR business						

		<p>partners can continue to play an active role in strategic discussions at Directorate Management Teams to ensure effective workforce planning.</p> <p>The development and retention of existing staff is an essential component of workforce planning. Action to retain colleagues includes promoting career development opportunities to ensure that talent stays in local government. A new work experience and apprentice policy has been developed to create a new pipeline of people being recruited and trained to supply the workforce of the future.</p> <p>A learning management system (Thinqi) has now been rolled out to all staff; this provides a centralised training and development area for officers, and includes a host of learning resources for staff as well as the opportunity to book face to face and digital/online training.</p>
Adopt a qualitative approach to ensuring professional development, wellbeing and information flow is taking place for those that want or need it	<p>Head of Organisation Workforce Development</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The colleague appraisal scheme has been redesigned to allow all colleagues to engage in performance discussions with their line manager. This process facilitates both a training needs and skills analysis.</p> <p>A Leader/Manager Developmental Pathway is being created. This pathway will comprise of a number of modules including meaningful staff/line manager engagement and communication. 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.</p> <p>The Colleague Survey provides feedback loops to ensure colleagues requirements are being met.</p>

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 (Head of Information, Technology & Security) and Cllr Ben Callard (Cabinet Member for Resources)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All Governance and Audit Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Information Governance, Service delivery Averse	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Tolerate			
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 recent years bringing an increase in the potential for loss of data through cyber incidents.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	2028/29	Possible	Major	Medium	8	Medium (8)
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		<p>The Council recognises that total elimination of cyber-attack is not possible, but 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.</p> <p>Significant investments in ICT infrastructure and software have been undertaken, which will mitigate against the likelihood of a cyber-attack.</p> <p>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.</p>					

		A cyber security report is taken to Governance and Audit Committee to provide assurance to the committee that the arrangements in place are robust.
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Ref & Status	6	Risk	Potential Risk that: Instability in global politics and the recent war in Iran may result in disruptions to the global supply chain, including the supply of fuel, restricting the Council's ability to deliver key services and projects							
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Peter Davies (Deputy Chief Executive), Cath Fallon (Head of Strategic Change, Partnerships and Procurement) & Cllr Ben Callard (Cabinet Member for Resources)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All All	Risk category and appetite level	Service delivery, Economic Cautious	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Tolerate			
Reason why Identified										
In recent years, the world has experienced growing instability in geopolitics and international relations. This volatility has had direct consequences for international markets, and has driven a growth in economic uncertainty. As supply chains have become more globalised and specialised, they have also become more vulnerable to disruption. These vulnerabilities were clearly exposed during and after the Covid-19 pandemic, when global shortages of essential goods—including medical supplies, construction materials, and electronic components—highlighted the fragility of supply chains. Although some sectors had begun to stabilise, wider global instability has continued to create uncertainty for public bodies and businesses alike.										
The recent war in Iran has intensified these pressures. Disruption in the region has already contributed to increases in oil and energy prices, placing additional strain on national economies and further inflating operational costs for public services. Rising energy prices also affect the wider economic environment, increasing transportation and production costs across multiple sectors. Agriculture and food production are similarly impacted. Higher energy prices increase the cost of fertilisers, transportation, and processing, which can feed into higher food prices for consumers. As global shipping routes face potential disruption or restrictions, the possible risk of delays and shortages may become more common, particularly shortages in fuel. This may restrict our ability to deliver services reliant on fuel, such as home care, refuse collection or home to school transport.										
These challenges are likely to affect everyone, including the Council's projects and service delivery. Disruptions in the global supply chain could lead to delays in construction projects, increased costs in procurement, challenges in sourcing essential goods and materials, and reduced resilience across service areas. These pressures may also affect commissioned services and partners, potentially influencing contract delivery, pricing, and availability. As a result, the Council could face increased financial challenges, greater difficulty planning long-term projects, and a reduced ability to respond effectively to local needs.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	
2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	High (12)
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress					
To work with national, regional and local partners through emergency planning arrangements to assess and prepare if needed for any risks related to fuel supply			Emergency Planning Manager Ongoing		We are working with partners through the Gwent Local Resilience Forum to prepare and respond to potential risks with a focus on ensuring business continuity of services.					

Risks to service delivery

Ref & Status	7	Risk	Potential Risk that: Significant harm to a child or adult may occur due to a specific failure of safeguarding arrangements							
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Jane Rodgers (Strategic Director Social Care and Health), Will Mclean (Strategic Director Learning, Skills and Economy) and Cllr Ian Chandler (Cabinet	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	A Connected Place Where People Care People Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Safeguarding Averse	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Tolerate			

Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services)										
Reason why Identified										
The Council and its partners must maintain a consistent focus on safeguarding vulnerable people in order to both prevent and reduce the likelihood of harm, and to respond effectively to reduce risks if harm occurs.										
The social care system is facing increased pressures with more complex presentations and increased vulnerability within communities. This demand pressure, alongside ongoing resource and workforce challenges, impacts on the council's ability to protect children and adults who are at risk.										
Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) continue to inspect and conduct assurance checks of our services. Recommended areas of improvement from reviews have been recognised by the council and inspection action plans developed.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Possible	Major	Medium	8	2026/27	Possible	Major	Medium	8	Medium (8)
2027/28	Possible	Major	Medium	8	2027/28	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
2028/29	Possible	Major	Medium	8	2028/29	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
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, Annual Evaluation		<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 most recent Annual Safeguarding Evaluation Report was presented to scrutiny committee in September 2025. The report evaluates the progress of the Council's key safeguarding priorities during 2024/25, highlighting progress, identifying risks and setting out actions and priorities for 2025/26. The report evaluates the cornerstones of safeguarding in Monmouthshire - 3 areas of safeguarding arrangements are assessed as Level 5 Very Good– and 2 areas as Level 4 – Good. 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 Core Data set has been agreed by Whole Authority Safeguarding Group (WASG). Moving forward, this should provide increased opportunity to inform WASG members of safeguarding performance at a whole authority level including safe workforce practices, preventative safeguarding and compliance with statutory safeguarding processes.</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, Annual Evaluation		<p>The Whole Authority Safeguarding Group [WASG] has continued to meet bi-monthly on a digital platform. The group ensures that corporate Safeguarding has oversight at a senior level, with membership from each directorate lead. These meetings identify safeguarding concerns and themes; share knowledge around safeguarding issues and, where required, promote a strategic and coordinated approach. The WASG ensures that any actions arising from the annual evaluation are taken forward.</p> <p>Despite resource pressures across directorates and capacity issues within the Safeguarding Unit, safeguarding has remained a priority for the Council with key strengths within directorates and across council relationships. The SAFE (Safeguarding Assessment Framework for Evaluation) process has continued to roll out across directorates and reviews have taken place in a timely manner. The Safeguarding Unit continues to be available to offer support and advice as well as being the conduit for new and developing safeguarding policy and guidance from the Regional Safeguarding Board. Issues raised within the previous SAFE assessment led to the strengthening of support in the safe recruitment process.</p> <p>The Safeguarding Unit also ensures that regional or national safeguarding policy and guidance is implemented.</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, that they are working well, share learning and implement any recommendations.			Chief Officer, Social Care, Health & Safeguarding Ongoing, Annual evaluation		<p>There continues to be full representation at all levels of the work of the regional safeguarding board. There is strong engagement in regional approaches to addressing the risks of sexual and criminal exploitation of children; Modern Day Slavery; Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse; Sexual Violence (VAWDASV); and Contest (PREVENT anti radicalisation).</p> <p>The priorities set in the regional board's annual plan are reflected in the priority work of the Council's Safeguarding Unit. The Whole Authority Safeguarding Group continues to receive, review, and implement developments in safeguarding flowing from the outcomes of Safeguarding case reviews (SUSR) as well as regional and national policy. The Council's safeguarding unit supports quarterly safeguarding learning networks to share learning and developments in safeguarding across agencies.</p>					

		The Council is represented in numerous operational multi-agencies safeguarding forums, including multi-agency child exploitation meetings (MACE).
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Ref & Status	8	Risk	Potential Risk that: Risk of harm if we are unable to meet the care and support needs of some vulnerable children due to an increase in demand and complexity of cases					
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Jane Rodgers (Strategic Director Social Care and Health) and Cllr Ian Chandler (Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	A Connected Place Where People Care People Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Safeguarding Averse	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Treat	

Reason why Identified

The number of contacts into the ‘front-door’ of children’s services has increased in recent years and remains high. The council is currently supporting 206 children who are looked after. The number has stabilised in recent years. The number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) being looked after by the local authority is currently 16.

There remains significant financial pressures in Children’s services, particularly driven by increased Counsel costs, increasing costs of placements and reductions in grant funding. The workforce position within children’s services also remains challenging, with reliance on agency workers and short-term grant funded posts, which can affect continuity of social work relationships for children. Though the financial position is stabilising, it remains highly sensitive to any new high-cost demand entering the system.

There is an insufficiency of placements for children who are looked after at a local, regional and national level, particularly those with complex needs or disabilities. Because of this, there is a risk that we may need to place children in unregistered provision in emergency situations. There is considerable instability within the placement provider market, against the backdrop of the Welsh Government’s policy commitment to eliminate profit from the care of looked after children. This creates an on-going risk for the council that is difficult to fully mitigate at present.

Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	Medium (8)
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	
2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	

Mitigating Actions

Mitigating Action	Responsibility Holder & Timescale	Mitigation action progress
Continue to strengthen the preventative offer to support children living safely at home, with their families and communities, and continue to review and monitor the Children Looked after population in line with Welsh Government expectations around reduction	Head of Children’s services Ongoing	The council is currently supporting 206 children who are looked after. The number has stabilised in recent years. In recent years, the number of contacts into the ‘front-door’ of children’s services has increased and remains high. The focus is on keeping children safe, which can mean there is less time for strength-based engagement with parents and children. There is a coherent approach to early help and prevention to support families. This allows families to receive support at the right level of intensity to enable parents to provide their children with the safety, nurture and care they need. Services are in place to support the rehabilitation of children following periods of being looked after e.g. Families Re-connect; to provide medium-term holistic support to families making sustainable change e.g. Achieving Change Together Team; and to provide a therapeutic response to parents and carers in supporting children with trauma presentations e.g. MyST. Family support has been further strengthened to provide intensive community supervision and support to children. The focus remains on practice development and working with families to support strengths, manage risks and achieve good outcomes, reducing the need for children to be looked after. An additional focus is to increase resilience within Child Protection services to work with increased levels of risk and vulnerability within the community.
Develop and expand the Children’s Services Commissioning Strategy in response to the intention to eliminate profit from children’s social care	Head of Children’s services Ongoing	A commissioning and placement strategy has been developed, with a specific emphasis on the development of in-county residential and support living accommodation. This is aligned with Welsh Government’s ambition to eliminate profit from children’s care. As part of the development of the strategy, demand has been mapped and placements designed as a result of this exercise. Two projects have been completed providing aged 16+ supported accommodation for five placements and a four-bed residential children’s home. In addition, two further therapeutic children’s homes have been completed. Two further projects are being developed, one children’s

		<p>residential home and a further aged 16+ supported accommodation. This is improving the availability of placements and helping to ensure children and young people can remain close to their communities.</p> <p>Children Services continue to explore the market for a suitable and appropriate property to develop a further 3 /4 bed, 16+ supported accommodation service. This has proven challenging, not only due to issues of location and affordability, but also because several properties assessed have presented complications relating to Land Registry status, restrictions, and covenants that limit their potential use. Work remains ongoing to identify a viable option that meets the needs of the service and complies with all legal and regulatory requirements.</p> <p>The service area continues to review the demand of placements against the work undertaken by the service in line with the Reduction of Children Looked After Strategy and Placement Commissioning Strategy. Children Services continue to plan for each child and a “horizon” list is kept to identify children who may need, at some point, to be accommodated. Predicting demand, however, remains a challenging and dynamic process, complicated by uncertainty within the care market nationwide.</p>
Continue to implement the fostering strategy on the recruitment, retention and skills development of in house fostering.	Head of Children’s Services Ongoing	The recruitment and retention of foster carers remains an area of significant challenge. There is an insufficiency of in-house carers in Monmouthshire, particularly carers who are able to provide more specialist care or look after sibling groups. Over recent years progress in increasing the number of in-house foster carers has been slow, despite considerable effort and attention. This is because of the net effect of carers leaving, often through retirement. In March 2025 a decision was passed to improve the overall support and financial offer to Monmouthshire foster carers, including increasing the allowance paid and applying council tax reduction. This has resulted in a recent uptick in the number of carers going through the assessment process. However, there remains an over-reliance on private and independent providers and increased uncertainty and potential insufficiency of placements given the new legislation (Health and Social Care Act).

Ref & Status	9	Risk	Potential Risk that: Risk of harm if we are unable to meet the care and support needs of some vulnerable adults due to high demand and complexity of cases							
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Jane Rodgers (Strategic Director Social Care and Health) and Cllr Ian Chandler (Cabinet Member for Social Care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	A Connected Place Where People Care People Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Safeguarding Averse	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Treat			
Reason why Identified										
The longer-term impact of the pandemic, together with the ageing demographic has increased the complexity of referrals into Adult Services. As a result, services are under considerable pressure, particularly given the added challenges of the Council’s financial situation and the pressures within partner agencies, particularly health. There are waiting lists in place for social care assessments and some people are having to wait for services they need, including for reablement, care at home and mental capacity act assessments. There has also been an increase in the number of residential care placements due to the complexity of people’s needs.										
The availability of workforce in some key posts remains a risk - specifically mental health practitioners, direct carers and therapies. There is insufficient capacity within the current core workforce structure to meet the demand pressures, particularly at times of peak demand associated with hospital discharge (for example). The medium term financial context for both health and social care places restrictions on the ways in which services can respond to need.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	
2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	Medium (8)
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		Ensuring that there is a sufficient workforce has been a risk for some time, particularly in key posts around direct care, mental health, team leader posts and occupational therapy. The perceptions of working in social care tend to be negative; recruitment is focussed on counteracting these negative perceptions and demonstrate the opportunities, career progression, work life balance and job satisfaction that people experience who work within the sector. Generally, the workforce in Adults social care remains stable, however attraction					

		and recruitment of people into the social care sector, particularly in some roles, continues to be a challenge. Workforce planning remains a priority within the service to ensure that scarce resources are utilised in the best way possible.
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 and Head of Adult Services Ongoing	There are on- going regional and local partnership meetings to identify and address difficulties across health and social care. These include Gwent Adult Service Partnership, and at a local level the Integrated Services Partnership Board. At a local and regional level, grant money received via the Regional Partnership Board is used to best effect to meet population needs and respond to demand pressure in particular within hospital discharge; supporting people with frailty to remain well at home, and ensuring the development of effective early help and preventative services via the Integrated Wellbeing Network. Establishing targeted early help and ensuring there are good pathways between social care and community based wellbeing support is central to trying to mitigate demand pressures over time.
Increase focus on preventative services such as reablement and in-house care	Chief Officer, Social Care & Health Ongoing	There is increased capacity to provide reablement services to those who would benefit from it. While this is good progress the aim is to improve this further. In line with the aims of the commissioning strategy the focus is on further increasing the availability of in-house home care to support reablement as opposed to providing long term care, and to increase the number of people accessing the opportunities that reablement provides. Over time this should help to mitigate demand pressures. A whole authority preventative strategy, the 'Living-Well Strategy', has been approved by Cabinet. This strategy aims to implement preventative action to support residents, particularly vulnerable or older residents who are likely to need to enter the social care system, to live a healthy life, enabling them to remain at home and in their communities.
Monitor requests for services to ensure demand is being met and delays are minimised	Chief Officer, Social Care & Health Ongoing	On-going pressure across the social care and health system, together with workforce shortages in some areas, has meant that there are continued challenges in being able to respond to people's care and support needs as timely as we would want. All referrals are triaged at point of referral to ensure that those in most need are prioritised for assessment and intervention. Case reviews are being undertaken, applying the principles of the Social Services and Well-being Act to ensure a strengths-based approach looking at individual, family and community based support where appropriate. Access to care and support is not always timely; however, overall, there is increased capacity across home care which has assisted in supporting 96% of demand in the last year. Action is being undertaken to ensure that home care runs, both in-house and provider services, are coordinated as efficiently as possible. The commissioning strategy is being implemented to strengthen locality based provision of home care and increase capacity into rural areas.
Implement a 'place-based' approach to create sustainability in care at home services	Chief Officer, Social Care & Health – As per commissioning strategy	The Council remains committed to developing a more sustainable care at home sector for the future. A comprehensive strategy for commissioning home care through increased block purchasing has been developed. The first procurement exercise under the new strategy has commenced in the south of the county. The micro-care project within Monmouthshire continues to support the self-employed carers to develop their businesses. This is increasing care and support capacity across the county and allowing people increased choice and control over how they receive support.
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 and as such the council has a role in ensuring their financial sustainability through fair fee negotiations and supporting with recruitment and training. The Council has built positive relationships with local providers and intervenes and provides support where difficulties emerge. There is effective contract monitoring in place, based on partnership approaches. The position in Monmouthshire, whilst challenging, has seen very few providers withdraw their services and most have managed to weather the difficulties around recruitment and retention with the social care sector. Positively home care services have increased and there has been a reduction in the number of people waiting and the average length of wait time.

Ref & Status	10a	Risk	Potential Risk that: Failure to return attendance figures to those seen before the pandemic, particularly among vulnerable pupils and those eligible for free school meals, could lead to a worsening in educational attainment					
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Will Mclean (Strategic Director Learning, Skills and Economy) and Cllr Laura Wright (Cabinet member for Education)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All	Risk category and appetite level	Strategic Minimalist	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Treat	
Reason why Identified								

The pandemic caused widespread disruption to learning, with a significant effect on both teachers and learners. Longer-term effects of the pandemic on pupil well-being and attendance have emerged. There is a risk that our schooling system struggles to adjust to the new patterns of need amongst our children and young people in the post-pandemic period. 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 (eFSM) remains a concern. There is variation in eFSM learner progress and outcomes across schools. Leadership, management, capacity and performance has been identified as in need of improvement in some schools.

Attendance levels have been particularly affected. Though attendance at a primary level has returned to pre-pandemic levels, attendance in our secondary schools remains below levels seen before the pandemic and an area for concern. Attendance of those eligible for free schools meals remains below pre-pandemic levels and below those of their peers not eligible for free school meals. The low attendance of those eFSM has been identified by Estyn as an area for concern in one of our secondary schools. We need to increase attendance for those eFSM to ensure no pupil is left behind.

Ensuring pupils return to school, and understanding the barriers to prevent them doing so, will be key to ensuring our learners are achieving their potential.

Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Possible	Major	Medium	8	Medium (8)
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	2028/29	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action		Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress						
Implement the new Attendance and Engagement Policy and processes		Head of Attainment Ongoing		<p>The Local Authority Attendance and Engagement Policy has been updated to encompass all aspects of the Engaging, Belonging and Participating guidance issued by Welsh Government in October 2023. This has now been rolled out to all schools. The policy provides a graduated approach for schools and the pupil referral service (PRS) to support improvements in attendance, through the consistent application of effective school-based strategies, well-established systems and processes such as: targeted support for pupils and their families from Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) and Family Liaison Officers (FLOs); bespoke support for pupils to re-integrate into school after a period of absence; targeted interventions to improve attendance and reduce persistent absenteeism, particularly for vulnerable pupils; support for pupils and families who elect for an education at home; a robust approach to managing pupils missing from education; advice and guidance including an Attendance Toolkit and Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) guidance; close collaboration with key services such as inclusion, social services, health and the police.</p> <p>Alongside the policy, the team have created a handbook for schools to summarise the roles and responsibilities in the new policy, the graduated response for attendance, model policy and the local code for fixed penalty notices and prosecutions. The Education Welfare Service have also prepared training for governors as they implement the new policy.</p>						
Work with schools through the Education Welfare Service (EWS) to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and are able to access excellent teaching and learning		Head of Attainment Ongoing		<p>The Education Welfare Service (EWS) regularly analyses a wide range of attendance data to track and monitor levels of attendance for schools and groups of pupils, including those eligible for free school meals (FSM), ALN, and those who are persistently absent. This enables them to identify trends across the LA and evaluate the impact of their support on school attendance over time. This work forms the basis of consultation meetings and supports schools to reflect appropriately on their own data so that they evaluate the impact of their work to plan and implement long-term strategies to improve pupils' attendance.</p> <p>The EWS hold consultations with secondary schools and the Pupil Referral Service (PRS) fortnightly, and primary schools half-termly. These meetings provide worthwhile opportunities for EWOs to challenge individual schools on the impact of their strategies to improve pupil and whole school attendance and understand the reasons behind cases of school absence. These discussions also include a review of individual cases to ensure interventions are appropriate, check attendance coding, carry out official register checks. This identifies pupils where non attendance is a concern and a potential consideration for intervention and enables EWOs to provide appropriate advice, guidance and undertake planned interventions in a timely manner.</p>						
Work with schools and partners to better understand drivers of low attendance		Head of Inclusion Ongoing		<p>Extensive multi-agency work has enhanced the understanding of, and support offered, around emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA) by professionals, including school staff, working with pupils and their families. This focuses on early identification and preventative support so that timely intervention occurs to promote positive outcomes and improve attendance, to prevent entrenched patterns of EBSA and persistent absenteeism. The local authority uses a multi-agency Inclusion Panel and the Fair Access Panel to seek clarification on the most appropriate next steps or provision for particular groups of learners where low attendance or learner engagement are barriers to learning.</p> <p>The local authority fosters positive relationships through a range of approaches of which attendance is a key feature. Family Liaison Officers (FLOs) promote good relationships within schools and the community and link closely with wider Community Focused Schools (CFS) work. They work with pupils, families, schools and community agencies such as food banks, and ensuring families are accessing services they may need. This collaborative working supports better engagement with schools, improves communication and helps to</p>						

		overcome barriers to attendance. CFS colleagues also use school spaces to develop and promote school community engagement for families through the provision of school uniform support and community gardens.
Support pupils' wellbeing and address barriers to learning	Head of Inclusion Ongoing	The whole school approach to emotional and mental well-being has been implemented which helps schools to understand how they are best placed to promote well-being. This has been introduced in a phased approach and increased the number of schools engaged in the approach from 43% to 74%. This is increasing the support available for the well-being needs of pupils and has a significant effect on children's attendance and achievement in school. All schools and settings are engaged with Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs), and there are currently 67 practicing ELSAs who access regular supervision, operating across all but one school in the county, making a positive impact on the emotional literacy of pupils. Schools are also engaged in professional learning related to Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA); Trauma Informed Approaches; and Autism; currently 94% of schools are engaged.

Ref & Status	10b	Risk	Potential Risk that: An increase in behaviours that challenge in schools which may lead to harm to a pupil or member of staff							
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Will Mclean (Strategic Director Learning, Skills and Economy) and Cllr Laura Wright (Cabinet member for Education)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All People Scrutiny Committee, Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Safeguarding, Health and Safety Averse	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Treat			
Reason why Identified										
<p>Monmouthshire is currently experiencing high levels of exclusions, particularly Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE), and this presents a risk to the positive engagement and outcomes for children / young people and increasing pressure on local authority services and provisions. Local authorities across Wales and England have experienced similar trends post covid. The reasons for this are complex and not easily resolved. Due to improvements in the operation of the Inclusion Panel, the number of upheld Permanent Exclusions (PEX) at the end of the 24/25 academic year was zero. However, the number of FTE is continuing to increase. Of concern is that the data shows clear rises in the issue of FTE for reasons linked to violent or aggressive behaviour, this can be verbal or physical against another student or an adult.</p> <p>Despite investments in improving the capacity of the Pupil Referral Service (PRS), this service has continued to face pressure, particularly from high levels of fixed term exclusions.</p>										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	
2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	Medium (8)
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress					
Support learners most at risk of repeat Fixed Term Exclusions or of Permanent exclusions through the Education Support Team (EST)			Head of Inclusion Ongoing		The Education Support Team was created in March 2023 and has enabled those learners most at risk of repeat Fixed Term Exclusions (FTE) or of Permanent Exclusions (PEX) to receive support from specialist professionals. This team have experience in responding to behaviours of concern/ challenge, an enhanced understanding of social emotional and mental health needs and additional learning needs (ALN) in a way that is trauma informed and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) aware. This supportive team has enabled learners to maintain their current placement by reducing the risk of PEX by stabilising behaviours and thus reducing risk, they have supported learners to integrate into other schools via managed moves to prevent PEX and supported in year transfers of learners with prior FTE.					
Implement the outcomes of the Pupil Referral Service (PRS) review			Head of Inclusion Ongoing		The Pupil Referral Service has been reviewed. This has helped understand the current demand, while considering the future role and function of the PRS. Positive changes include increasing the capacity of the PRS through an enhanced staffing structure and improved learning environments across two Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) in the north and the south of the county. This has enabled the PRS to respond in more cases earlier to prevent permanent exclusion, by allowing for some pupils to receive input and interventions prior to a permanent exclusion, with the aim of successfully returning them to school. The renewed focus of the PRS on reintegration into mainstream school led to eight pupils returning to school during the 24/25 academic year.					
Work with officers in community partnerships to secure Home Office grant funding to support the reduction of violence in schools			Vulnerable Learners Lead Ongoing		The Vulnerable Learner Lead worked with officers in community partnerships to secure Home Office grant funding to support the reduction of violence in schools and to reduce exclusions (both FTE and PEX) associated with this. This funding enabled several learners at risk of PEX to avoid this outcome, including learners in their final year of school, who were able to complete their exams in school. Further multi agency work has also been undertaken to consider how to reduce FTE and PEX linked to aggression and violence amongst both pupils and towards staff. Focused efforts are underway to improve representation at multi agency meetings in schools					

		and with focused consideration of learners who have been excluded for these reasons in the intervening periods between each meeting.
Continue to roll out training for all staff in all school and settings (i.e. ACEs and Trauma Informed practice) to increase the understanding of the impact on learner behaviours, strategies and approaches to deescalate and ensure safety and wellbeing.	Head of Inclusion Ongoing	A key part of our approach to reducing exclusions is to improve an understanding of the drivers for children’s behaviours. Trauma Informed approaches form part of a universal, whole-school, preventative approach supporting school communities to become trauma informed and mentally healthy places for all. Being Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) aware and trauma-informed is recognised by the Welsh Government in guidance and reflects the evidence base that it is important to build relational practice to improve positive outcomes for all learners. Trauma Informed Schools (TIS) and relational practice approaches are being developed and embedded. A multi-agency TIS Steering Group, including colleagues from health and social care, has been established to achieve this, led by the Educational Psychology Service (EPS), and a tiered training programme has been developed.

Risks to policy priorities

Ref & Status	11	Risk	Potential Risk that: Welsh Government/PEDW does not find the Replacement Local Development Plan sound or Council do not adopt the RLDP which restricts our ability to take forward key policy objective such as job creation, affordable housing development and the adoption of key policies to protect the environment and tackle climate change					
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Craig O’Connor (Chief Officer Place and community well-being) and Cllr Paul Griffiths (Cabinet member for Planning and Economic Development)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	A Thriving and Ambitious Place A Safe Place to Live Place Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Governance, Strategic Minimalist	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Tolerate	

Reason why Identified

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 Replacement Local Development Plan (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.

The Council has faced a range of delays in proceeding the RLDP, including challenge from Welsh Government, which resulted in the need for a new Preferred Strategy, high phosphate levels in the rivers Usk and Wye which resulted in restrictions on developments, and delays in agreeing appropriate Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites. The delay in implementation is restricting the council’s ability to deliver key objectives including increasing affordable housing and employment opportunities.

There are a range of issues the RLDP will need to address, including: the limited number of affordable housing available in the county; a lack of suitable employment land; a need to grow renewable energy opportunities; and aligning infrastructure ambition and delivery.

Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	Medium (8)
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	
2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	

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.	Chief Officer Place Spring 2026	The RLDP Deposit Plan was endorsed by Council in October 2025. The Deposit Plan sets the ambition for development within the county. This plan also addresses a number of key issues and align with the priorities of the organisation; it has allocated 50% affordable housing on each new development and is introducing enabling policies which will allow for further affordable housing developments to come forward. This includes facilitating more single person accommodation in the county which is currently extremely limited and is a factor contributing to homelessness. All homes developed under this plan will also be net zero carbon. The Deposit Plan will now be subject to public examination from Welsh Government and Planning and environment Decisions Wales (PEDW).
Work with partner organisations to identify and implement solutions to phosphate pollution in the Rivers Usk and Wye	Chief Officer Place Ongoing	In May 2024, Cabinet approved the Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy. This includes an action plan on how we will work in partnership to improve the health of our rivers and oceans. Progress is monitored regularly by the Climate and Nature Emergency Steering Group.

		Over the last few years there has been significant work in this area and there is planned strategic phosphate mitigation work in the form of phosphate stripping being installed in Llanfoist (Abergavenny) and Monmouth to serve their settlements. This will enable appropriate development to be permitted within these settlement areas. There has also been a comprehensive review of the Environmental Permits of wastewater treatments across Monmouthshire and, where there is capacity, appropriate development proposals will be permitted.
Ensure RLDP growth ambition is met by essential infrastructure	Chief Officer Place	Close working is being undertaken on the infrastructure requirements and the delivery between the Local Planning Authority and colleagues in the Local Education Authority, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Highways Authority, Passenger Transport Unit, Active Travel Team, SUDs Approval Body and Green Infrastructure team. The Infrastructure Plan has been published alongside the Deposit Plan.

Ref & Status	12a	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 because our resources are not commensurate with the scale and complexity of the challenge					
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Debra Hill-Howells (Chief Officer Infrastructure) & Cllr Catrin Maby (Cabinet member for Climate Change and the Environment)		Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	A Green Place to Live Place Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Strategic Minimalist	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Tolerate

Reason why Identified

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.

Despite a nation-wide climate emergency declaration and a common recognition of the importance of reducing carbon emissions, the resources provided to tackle this issue have consistently not met the scale of the challenge. A significant investment in public funding would be required if net zero 2030 is to be met.

Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	2026/27	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	Medium (9)
2027/28	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	2027/28	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	
2028/29	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	2028/29	Almost certain	Substantial	High	12	

Mitigating Actions

Mitigating Action	Responsibility Holder & Timescale	Mitigation action progress
Deliver the Monmouthshire County Council Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy	Strategic Leadership Team Timescales as per strategy	<p>The Climate and Nature Emergency Strategy was approved by Cabinet in May 2024. This strategy is underpinned by four action plans to better reflect the breadth of work that is taking place: Internal decarbonisation, Biodiversity and Nature Recovery, Rivers and Oceans and Community climate change. Progress in implementing the strategy is regularly monitored by the Climate and Nature Emergency Steering Group.</p> <p>Support is being provide to communities to reduce their carbon emissions through circular economy projects such as Benthylg library of things and reuse shops. The Monmouthshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP) continues to share best practice and resources. This partnership developed the Monmouthshire Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP); the public consultation of this action plan was launched in September. The action plan provides practical and achievable actions to help reverse the decline in biodiversity and ecosystem resilience in the county.</p> <p>The council is a member of the Wye Nutrient Management Board Technical Advice Group which is identifying and analysing options for delivering improvements in water quality. The council also has continued involvement in the Wye Catchment Partnership to protect water quality, water quantity and biodiversity. An Usk Catchment Partnership Core Group has been established and has agreed its priorities for the draft Integrated Catchment Plan.</p>

Develop a decarbonisation strategy for the council's estate	Chief Officer Infrastructure Ongoing	Work is underway as part of this strategy to better understand the scale of the challenge we face in striving to collectively become net zero. A costed decarbonisation plan and survey for our built estate has been completed. This will provide the council with a sound understanding of the funding needed to implement change. The findings of this survey will be used to inform a decarbonisation strategy for the council's estate.
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Ref & Status	12b	Risk	Potential Risk that: The Council is unable to deliver services as a result of the increasing frequency of climate-related emergencies such as floods or extreme heatwaves that increase the demand for emergency responses and can cause damage to infrastructure and the closure of facilities							
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Strategic Leadership Team & Cllr Catrin Maby (Cabinet member for Climate Change and the Environment)		Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All Place Scrutiny Committee		Risk category and appetite level	Environmental. Service Delivery Minimalist	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Treat	
Reason why Identified										
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.										
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 record high temperatures, 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.										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	
2027/28	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	
2028/29	Almost certain	Major	High	16	2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	Medium (8)
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress					
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. The Council is currently participating in the development of a Gwent Climate Change Risk Assessment being led by the Gwent Public Services Board (PSB), and has taken part in workshops to identify the most prominent emerging risks in this area and identify possible mitigating actions. The council is also part of broader assessments of climate risk being carried out by the Cardiff Capital Region as part of their Carbon Disclosure Project commitments.</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 is currently developing an updated Flood Risk Management Strategy.</p> <p>Much of the work to coordinate emergency responses is organised through the Gwent Local Resilience Forum (LRF). The council continues to work with partners on the LRF to make sure that we are prepared for severe weather events. Established emergency response arrangements are in place. These were utilised as part of the response to Storm Claudia, ensuring support for residents, particularly the most vulnerable.</p> <p>As part the reworking of the Climate Emergency Strategy, climate adaptation, which includes preparing and adapting for the impact of climate change, has been embedded across each of the 4 action plans. 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</p>					

		parks to provide a cooling effect; and continuing to promote and support council services with business continuity and emergency response strategies.
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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							
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Jane Rodgers (Strategic Director Social Care and Health), Matthew Gatehouse (Chief Officer People, Performance and Partnerships) & Cllr Sara Burch (Cabinet Member for Rural Affairs, Housing & Tourism) and Cllr Angela Sandles (Cabinet member for Equalities and Engagement)	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	A Safe Place to Live A Fair Place to Live People Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Service Delivery Minimalist	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Treat			
Reason why Identified										
<p>Welsh Government's homelessness policy changes, though positive, have increased pressures on local authorities creating challenges largely relating to lack of accommodation and support needs. 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 of the need to identify alternative accommodation, which largely has relied on B&B accommodation, re-housing households, housing management and placement break downs. This has also created placement and staffing challenges.</p> <p>There are challenges regarding the availability of temporary, supported and permanent 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 delays in implementing the RLDP.</p> <p>The Renting Homes Act, which came into force from 1 December 2022, has made significant changes to 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, although the current anecdotal evidence suggests the impact has not been too disruptive to date.</p> <p>Whilst the council has made positive progress with homeless delivery evidenced by reductions in homeless presentations and the need to provide homeless accommodation due to a more positive performance in respect of homeless prevention, identification of additional homeless accommodation and move-on to social housing, risks remain.</p> <p>Monmouthshire welcomed large numbers of refugees from Ukraine. Local residents have opened their homes under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Thank You payments under this scheme are coming to an end from Autumn 2026 upon the expiry of 18 month visa extensions. Alternative accommodation may be needed when these temporary arrangements come to an end. In addition, many of those who have come through the Welsh Government Super Sponsor Scheme have found jobs and settled locally. All local authorities also need to find accommodation for Afghans arriving in the UK under the Afghan Resettlement Programme. A shortage of suitable and affordable accommodation, along with the challenges associated with our rurality, will affect our ability to provide suitable long-term accommodation.</p> <p>The widening of asylum dispersal from 2022 could place further pressure on the housing market as the council plays its part in assisting the Home Office to find short term accommodation for asylum seekers in line with UK Government Policy</p>										
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Possible	Major	Medium	8	
2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	2028/29	Possible	Major	Medium	8	Low (4)
Mitigating Actions										
Mitigating Action			Responsibility Holder & Timescale		Mitigation action progress					
Prevent homelessness through Rapid Rehousing			Head of Housing, Strategic Partnerships and Reform As per Homeless Transition Plan		The Rapid Re-Housing Transition plan was adopted by Cabinet in April 2023. This sets out the Council's five-year plan to prevent homelessness, increase accommodation and focus support, and includes 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. Rapid rehousing is facilitating increased resource into homeless prevention, for example through additional staffing and the availability of the Homeless Prevention Fund. The council is working with partner agencies such as the Department for Work and					

		Pensions (DWP) and Shared Benefit Service to support more people at risk of homelessness, granting awards to households to help tackle arrears/debt and households experiencing homelessness to enable them to remain in their current accommodation or access alternatives. These areas of work have contributed to increasing the percentage of households prevented from homelessness to 76%.
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 Housing, Strategic Partnerships and Reform As per Homeless Transition Plan	The RLDP was recently approved by Council for submission to Welsh Government. The delivery of the RLDP will be key to increasing the availability of housing in the county; the plan has allocated 50% affordable housing on each site and is introducing enabling policies which will allow for further affordable housing developments to come forward. This includes facilitating more single person accommodation in the county which is currently extremely limited and is a factor contributing to homelessness The availability of both temporary and settled homes for homeless households is being increased through a range of means including partnerships with private landlords through Monmouthshire Lettings and more homes through new build developments and acquisitions. The Council has also started to acquire accommodation for temporary accommodation. We have worked with housing association partners to make additional general needs social housing available for homeless households. There is a need to determine how much scope there is to allocate further social housing to homeless applicants without being overly detrimental to other housing need groups. The increased support for those at risk of homelessness, combined with the increase in availability of both temporary and settled accommodation, have contributed to the reduced use of bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation. As part of the focus to reduce the use of unsuitable and costly B & B, a key initiative has been to repurpose Severn View, a former residential home, to temporary homeless accommodation with dedicated support. This is helping to mitigate against the use of B&B accommodation. The general homeless position is enabling a review of Monmouthshire Lettings with a view to reducing the stock whilst also reconfiguring the portfolio in terms of quality, location and type.
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.	Chief Officer Place Head of Housing, Strategic Partnerships and Reform Ongoing	Detailed update contained in risk 10.
Work with partners including Welsh Government, UK Government, local sponsors and landlords to identify a range of accommodation to accommodate Ukrainian refugees and those arriving from Afghanistan.	Chief Officer People, Performance and Partnerships Ongoing	The authority has been successful in helping those fleeing the war in Ukraine to find properties in the area. Residents participating in the Homes for Ukraine Scheme have gone above and beyond what was initially asked of them. We have exceeded the 'population share' of refugees identified by Welsh Government. Recognising the challenges faced by this community, we have a specialised team comprising of two homeless prevention workers, complemented by dedicated translation and administration support. Our approach involves close collaboration with local landlords to cultivate strong local networks and access to properties, addressing concerns related to affordability and financial assessments. We have also begun to work through the Strategic Migration Partnership and the WLGA to develop solutions suited to rural authorities.
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.	Chief Officer People, Performance and Partnerships Ongoing	The Home Office has made all local authorities Asylum Dispersal Areas. This has broadened the responsibility for accommodating asylum seekers in Wales which had previously been shouldered by a small number of authorities. The Home Office's contracted provider continues to struggle to find suitable affordable properties in Monmouthshire. Separate to asylum accommodation, the authority is exploring options to accommodate a limited number of people leaving Afghanistan through specific resettlement schemes.

Ref & Status	14	Risk	Potential Risk that: The rising cost of living tips more families into crisis requiring public service interventions which diverts resources from other policy priorities				
Risk Owner and cabinet Member responsible	Paul Sullivan, Head of Customer, Communication and Engagement & Cllr Angela Sandles, Cabinet member for Equalities and Engagement	Strategic objective & Scrutiny Committee	All People Scrutiny Committee	Risk category and appetite level	Service delivery, Economic Cautious	Terminate/treat/transfer/tolerate	Tolerate
Reason why Identified							

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.

For families on lower incomes the rising cost of living, including higher energy prices and cost of fuel, rising food prices – risks adding additional financial pressures to households. The recent war in Iran is likely to exacerbate cost of living pressures and could draw more people into crisis. This could result in a further increase in the 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 in support required over recent years. The cost-of living will also impact Council staff, including costs for working, which could impact staff well-being and capacity to deliver services.

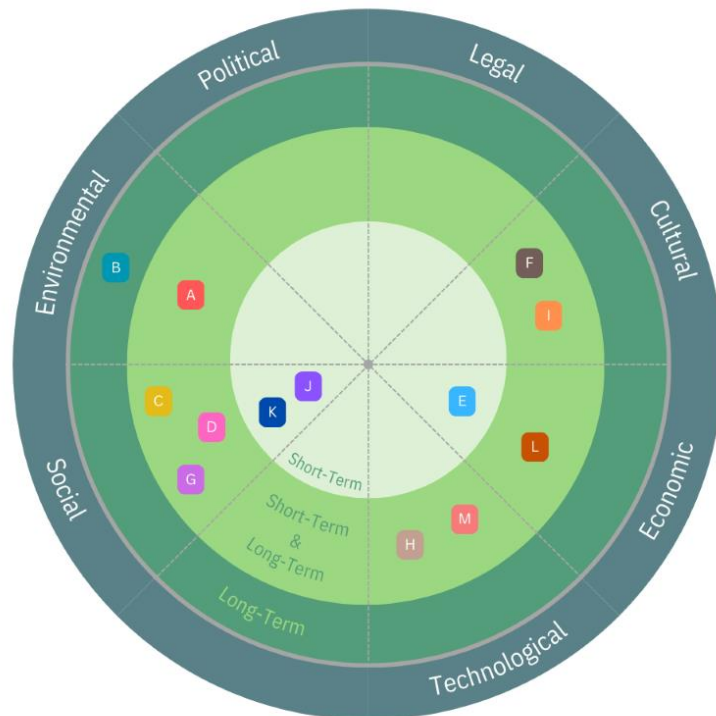
Risk Level (Pre-mitigation)					Risk Level (Post-mitigation)					Target risk score
Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	Risk Score	
2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	2026/27	Likely	Major	High	12	High (12)
2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	2027/28	Likely	Major	High	12	
2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	2028/29	Likely	Major	High	12	

Mitigating Actions		
Mitigating Action	Responsibility Holder & Timescale	Mitigation action progress
Undertake data modelling to identify communities at greatest risk and use this to target pro-active responses such as commissioning of services	Head of Customer, Communication and Engagement. Ongoing.	We have undertaken extensive data analysis and qualitative research furthering our understanding of inequality at a local level and how it affects people's lives. Close working with partners is being undertaken to help understand the 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).
Support residents with the cost-of-living crisis through ensuring they have the right advice and support	Head of Customer, Communication and Engagement. Ongoing.	The Council is 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 across the organisation to address food insecurity	Head of Customer, Communication and Engagement. Ongoing.	We continue to support community-based food insecurity interventions including community fridges. These provide an indirect source of support for those experiencing food insecurity. The number of people accessing community fridges has increased in recent years; there is a need to ensure the long-term sustainability of these interventions. There is a risk that community fridges support residents who otherwise would have reached the foodbanks, which require a referral process and can trigger more extensive support which may be required. We are working alongside the community fridges to sensitively support frequent users to connect with appropriate support, particularly through the Housing Gateway.
Ensure residents are made aware of opportunities, grants and other relevant information to assist with combatting the cost of living challenges through effective communication and providing up to date information through key front line services.	Head of Customer, Communication and Engagement. Ongoing.	Through the collection of services within the Head of Customer, Communication and Engagement portfolio clear communication channels are now established with key services related to this action, including; Community Development, Communication, Contact Centre and Community Hubs. Promotion and social media campaigns highlight key support to residents, as well as direct targeted work with community groups. Information is kept up to date on a cost-of-living website which front line services have access to and are able to signpost residents to for further support.

Appendix 2 – Risk Radar

In line with Strategic Risk Management Policy, the Council has developed a risk radar. The radar outlines some of the potential risks that Monmouthshire may face over the coming years. This report draws on national and global emerging risks identified in a range of horizon scanning reports, including most prominently the World Economic Forum (WEF) global risks report, UK Government’s National Risk Register and Welsh Government’s Future Trends Report. Evidence from this will help inform risk management by highlighting the key uncertainties and challenges that may affect our organisation's objectives and operations. Consideration will be given to the annual Risk Radar Report when identifying and managing strategic risks and in the Council’s wider service planning.

A range of evidence is collated to inform the radar. An overview of risks identified on the radar can be seen below. Risks have been categorised by a main factor and timescale, some will impact across multiple factor categories and varying timescales.



- A Increasing frequency of extreme weather events/changes in weather patterns which may impact Monmouthshire communities

- B Declining ecosystem resilience and biodiversity loss which threatens the ability of natural resources to provide benefits to current and future generations

- C Growing inequality in societies, particularly income inequality

- D An ageing demographic and decreasing numbers of young people which may result in increased pressures in social care and labour market challenges

- E Increasing levels of economic uncertainty paired with geopolitical instability

- F Growing misinformation and disinformation which may widen societal divides

- G Growing societal polarisation as a result of growing political and societal isolation and fragmentation

- H Cyber attacks increasing in frequency and complexity

- I Malicious threats which aim to disrupt our way of life and could threaten communities

- J Major adult social care provider failure which will impact those with care and support needs

- K A pandemic which may impact communities, particularly the most vulnerable

- L Recruitment and retention issues, particularly in digital and data sectors, which may restrict ability to deliver services

- M Increased use of Artificial Intelligence which could have both positive and negative implications on the Council

Appendix 3: Strategic Risk Management – Summary

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

Risks are also given a score. Scores of 1-4 are low risks, scores of 6-9 are medium risks and scores 12-16 are high risk. Providing a score as well as a risk level allows the variations within risk levels to be more clearly stated.

Target risk scores are also used in risk assessments. These indicate the optimal risk score that could be achieved following successful mitigation, within the context of available resources. Some target risk scores may remain the same as post-mitigation risk scores; this indicates that risk scores are not able to be lowered further with available mitigation.

Major (4)	Low (4)	Medium (8)	High (12)	High (16)
Substantial (3)	Low (3)	Medium (6)	Medium (9)	High (12)
Moderate (2)	Low (2)	Low (4)	Medium (6)	Medium (8)
Minor (1)	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)
	Unlikely (1)	Possible (2)	Likely (3)	Almost certain (4)