

SUBJECT: Self-Assessment Report 2025/26

MEETING: County Council

DATE: 24th September 2026

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1 PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To seek Council approval of the self-assessment report 2025/26 to ensure that members have a clear and transparent assessment of the authority's performance during the year ending 31 March 2026 in line with requirements outlined in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the self-assessment for 2025/26 be approved.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 The Community and Corporate Plan established a clear purpose for Monmouthshire to be a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life. Self-assessment is a way of evaluating, critically and honestly how well the authority is progressing with the delivery of the objectives set in the plan and the effectiveness of our supporting arrangement such as finance, workforce and asset management. The full self-assessment report is included as appendix 3 with a summary at appendix 2.
- 3.2 The objectives within the plan seek to address complex challenges in an increasingly uncertain environment. The plan sets a long-term ambition focused on the well-being of current and future generations. Delivery continues against a backdrop of sustained financial and demand pressures across local government.
- 3.3 An evaluation score of between 1 (unsatisfactory) and 6 (excellent) has been applied to each of the council's six objectives. For 2025-26 four objectives have been assessed as level 4 (good) and two as level 5 (very good). The table below highlights the scores in the previous two years showing a positive trajectory of improvement since the plan was approved by Council in 2023.

Objective	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Trend
A Fair Place to Live	4	4	4	↔
A Green Place to Live	3	3	4	↑
A Thriving and Ambitious Place	4	4	4	↔
A Safe Place to Live	4	4	4	↔
A Connected Place Where People Care	4	4	5	↑
A Learning Place	4	4	5	↑

- 3.4 The focusses on the 'what we want to achieve' outcome statements for each of the six objectives. These are each underpinned by specific actions for each objective. The report

also describes the progress that has been made following the recommendations made in last years' evaluation as well as highlighting future areas of development.

3.5 The report demonstrates that the council has made progress in achieving its intended outcomes including:

- Improving life chances for people irrespective of their income or background. We have provided targeted support to those experiencing disadvantage including providing warm spaces in winter, emergency food aid and practical cost-of-living support.
- Continuing our commitment to locally produced, sustainable food. We improved or revived 220 allotment plots and served more than 200,000 portions of Wesh veg in our schools.
- Residents have made a significant contribution to the green agenda by recycling 73.4% of household waste - one of the highest rates in the UK.
- Delivered a range of projects to develop a diverse local economy in which businesses and working people can thrive, including supporting 120 people into employment.
- Since 2022, the council has secured over £35m to implement transport projects across the county to enhance access, safety and infrastructure. Changes have been made to increase local bus services improve connections and efficiency.
- Since 2022, we have made strides in homeless prevention and reduced the use of B&B accommodation for homeless households by 93.5%.
- Changed the way social care is provided by taking a more preventative approach, intervening earlier and bringing some provision back into the county, for example by opening new childrens' homes. In adult social care, there has been a significant reduction in the amount of unmet domiciliary care need from 804 hours to 271 hours per month.
- Supporting pupils to return and remain in schools through developing an understanding and inclusive school environment. Primary school attendance is now at 93.9%, and secondary attendance is at 89.5%.

3.6 Self-assessment is a continuously evolving process which we aim to improve each year. This has been enhanced by the involvement of the Governance and Audit and Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committees alongside regular input from cabinet members. Changes to our approach include:

- Increased use of feedback from residents and services users including the resident survey, make your mark and service satisfaction surveys.
- Seeking views from residents through our *Let's Talk* forum on the accessibility of the report, providing them with the summary of the report as well as the assessment of the objectives during its development.
- Incorporating independent evidence from Panel Performance Assessment, regulators and inspectors.
- Developed the strategic assessment to provide an integrated overview of impact
- Assessing progress and the impact made over the four years of the plan.
- Incorporating case studies for each objective
- Developing a visually engaging summary of the report to increase accessibility of the document for residents.
- Striving to improve how impact and outcome are measured. This remains an ongoing area for development.

3.7 The self-assessment report 2025/26 has been informed by the independent peer Panel Performance Assessment undertaken in February 2026. Overall, the panel found that "Monmouthshire is an ambitious, well-run Council with communities at its heart and a reach

that transcends boundaries.” It also noted that the council has “The capability to become ‘great’”. The findings of the assessment, along with the council’s response to the recommendations, was presented to Council in June.

- 3.8 To support the delivery of the objectives, it’s important that all teams are working efficiently and effectively. The report assesses the effectiveness of the enabling functions that support front line delivery to meet changing demands and ensure their sustainability. These include corporate planning, performance and risk management, financial planning, workforce planning, procurement, assets, digital and data.
- 3.9 Alongside the assessment of the delivery of our objectives, the report assesses how well we have achieved the areas for development identified in the 2024/25 self-assessment report. This can be found in the ‘our actions’ section. This section also sets out additional areas for development that have been identified as part of the 2025/26 assessment.
- 3.10 This report is primarily an evaluation of what did in 2025/26. It informs our future work but it does not purport to set out detailed action or delivery plans. That work sits elsewhere, including in the service business plans that are produced annually by teams across the authority. Nor does it cover the authority’s budget position which is considered in more detail in the financial monitoring reports received by Cabinet and Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.11 As well as being an incredibly useful tool for councillors and officers, the production of a self-assessment report is a legal requirement under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The Act requires each local authority in Wales to keep under review the extent to which it is meeting the ‘performance requirements’ defined in the Act. This means the extent to which: it is exercising its functions effectively; is using its resources economically, efficiently and effectively and its governance is effective for securing these.
- 3.12 The Act creates a duty to publish a report setting out the conclusions of the self-assessment once in respect of every financial year. This informs decisions on how to secure improvement for the future. The self-assessment process has been embedded as part of the council’s performance management framework (appendix 1 of the assessment). This ensures it can help the council continually learn and achieve sustainable improvement and better outcomes for citizens, service users and its own workforce. Our self-assessment began with a desk-based evaluation of available evidence. The initial findings were tested refined through a series of workshops with Directorate Management Teams before being subject to challenge by Strategic Leadership Team and Cabinet members.
- 3.13 A draft assessment of the objectives was provided to Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee. Members conducted a thorough scrutiny of performance and the content of the assessment. The committee did not recommend any changes to the proposed scores. The draft report was also presented to Governance and Audit Committee, which has a statutory role to review the draft assessment. The report was used by the committee to seek assurance on the effectiveness of the council’s governance and assurance arrangements. Governance and Audit Committee are also able to make recommendations for changes to the conclusions or actions the council intends to take as set out in paragraph 2.40 of the statutory guidance. The committee did not make any recommendations for changes to the report.
- 3.14 The commissioning of an external Panel Performance Assessment is also a requirement of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, which requires councils to make arrangements for an independent panel, appointed by the council, to assess the extent to

which the council is meeting the performance requirements. The implementation of the recommendations made by the panel will be monitored as part of future self-assessment reports.

- 3.15 The self-assessment is a public document and should be accessible to a wide audience. Once approved the assessment and summary will be published on the council's website and shared with key partners in accordance with paragraph 2.42 of the statutory guidance.

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

- 4.1 This report is an evaluation of previous commitments and is not seeking a decision that would have an impact on these areas. The progress the council has made on the Well-being of Future Generations Act, equalities and safeguarding is set out in the report. Any action the Council takes that requires further decision will be evaluated in line with the decision-making process.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 5.1 The self-assessment report is an evaluation of previous commitments and is not seeking a decision on a future policy direction. The report provides an analysis, using a range of information, on the council's performance in 2025/26. The structure of the report has been informed by the legislation it is required to meet.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 6.1 The report provides a comprehensive evaluation of the performance of the council in 2025/26 using a range of performance information and evidence.

7. REASONS:

- 7.1 To ensure that the council can be held to account for performance and can demonstrate progress towards delivering better outcomes for citizens.
- 7.2 To comply with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 This report is a review of performance in 2025/26. This report does not commit the council to any explicit actions which result in additional resource commitments. Any resource implications of action the Council takes in future in response to the assessment will be dealt with in accordance with the usual decision-making rules.

9. CONSULTEES:

Directorate Management Teams
Strategic Leadership Team
Cabinet

The draft self-assessment report has been scrutinised by Performance & Overview Scrutiny Committee and reviewed by Governance & Audit Committee. The feedback from the committees is set out in this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021
Performance and governance of local authorities: statutory guidance
Community and Corporate Plan 2022-28
Self-assessment Report 2024/25
Panel Performance Assessment 2026 and recommendation action plan

11. AUTHORS:

Matthew Gatehouse, Chief Officer People, Performance and Partnerships
Richard Jones, Performance and Data Insight Manager
Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Hannah Carter, Performance Officer

12. CONTACT DETAILS:

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

Appendix 1

Performance Management Framework

Our performance management framework makes sure that everyone is pulling in the same direction to deliver real and tangible outcomes.

Building a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life is the unifying purpose of the diverse range of services for which we are responsible. We are a partner in the Public Service Board, which is responsible for setting well-being objectives for the county. The council's own well-being objectives are set by Council and form the backbone of our Community and Corporate Plan. Each of our teams has a service business plan that aligns to these objectives. We have a range of performance measures that we use to keep track of our progress. Our risk management policy enables us to manage strategic risks to our delivery. Our employee aims and objectives show the contributions that individual colleagues make to these objectives and delivering our vision in accordance with our values.

