

# Public Document Pack

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of County Council held  
at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 28th July, 2016 at 5.00 pm

**PRESENT:** County Councillor J. Higginson (Chairman)  
County Councillor P. Jordan (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: D. Batrouni, J. Prosser, M. Powell, V. Smith, G. Burrows, P. Clarke, J. Crook, D. Dovey, G. Down, A. Easson, D. Edwards, R. Edwards, P. Farley, P.A. Fox, J. George, R.J.W. Greenland, L. Guppy, E. Hackett Pain, R. Harris, B. Hayward, M. Hickman, P.A.D. Hobson, G. Howard, S. Howarth, D. Jones, S. Jones, S.B. Jones, P. Murphy, B. Strong, F. Taylor, A. Watts, P. Watts, A. Webb, K. Williams and A. Wintle

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Paul Matthews	Chief Executive
Kellie Beirne	Chief Officer, Enterprise
Will McLean	Head of Democracy, Engagement and Improvement
Joy Robson	Head of Finance/Section 151 Officer
Robert Tranter	Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer
Nicola Perry	Senior Democracy Officer
Hazel Clatworthy	Sustainability Community Officer
Deb Hill-Howells	Head of Community Led Delivery
Claire Marchant	Chief Officer Social Care, Health & Housing
Teresa Norris	Policy & Performance Officer
Ian Saunders	Head of Tourism, Leisure and Culture
Ben Winstanley	Estates Manager

### **APOLOGIES:**

Councillors D. Blakebrough, R. Chapman, D. Evans, P. Jones, J. Marshall and S. White

### **2. Public Open Forum**

In response to the question submitted by Mr. J. Callard regarding traffic on the A4143, County Councillor S.B. Jones apologised for the lack of response initially. Ideas for improvements on traffic flow, and ways to reduce delays on our highways network were welcome and officers would be asked to undertake a review of the traffic flow at Waitrose roundabout. Councillor Jones added that he was not convinced that moving parking from this location would improve traffic flow, and consideration must be given to the impact that such an action would have on residents in the area. Should the review identify that moving parking at times may reduce congestion at the approach further consideration would be given to Mr. Callard's suggestion.

Further enquiries would be made to establish if the road in question is a trunk road.

### **3. Chairman's Report and receipt of petitions**

Council received the Chairman's report.

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The Chairman informed members of information received regarding success at visitor attractions across the County. Tintern Old Station, Caldicot Castle and Country Park and Abergavenny's Castle Meadows have retained the coveted Green Park Award, and had been described as being the best kept parks and green space areas in the County. Particular mention was made of Paul Cheeseman, of the Old Station, Tintern, whose efforts had been awarded with the Green Flag Employee of the Year Award.

Members were updated on the new Morrison's store in Abergavenny. We were informed that the new store would be of a different design to that which had been granted planning permission, and a new application would be submitted as of 28<sup>th</sup> July 2016. The store would be the first of the new style of trading for Morrison's. Further detail would be provided when the agreement is confirmed.

### **Petitions:**

County Councillor S. Jones presented a petition on behalf of County Councillor P. Jones in relation to the retention of smallholdings in Monmouthshire, and New Trecastle Farm, Penyclawdd. The petition was passed to the Chairman.

County Councillor G. Burrows presented a petition in relation to traffic control at Toll House, Mitchel Troy. The petition was passed to the Chairman.

### **4. Declarations of Interest**

County Councillor F. Taylor declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest under the Member's Code of Conduct in relation to Item 7, Bwr Nawr, as an independent community member of ABUHB.

Further declarations would be made under the relevant item.

### **5. To confirm and sign the minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016 at 5.00pm, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

We noted the continued request for an action sheet.

### **6. Notices of Motion**

#### **a) Motion from the Chairman of Monmouthshire County Council:**

*We are proud to live in a diverse and tolerant society. Racism, xenophobia and hate crimes have no place in our country. Our Council condemns racism, xenophobia and hate crimes unequivocally. We will not allow hate to become acceptable. We will work to ensure local bodies and programmes have the support and resources they need to fight and prevent racism and xenophobia. We reassure all people living in Monmouthshire that they are valued members of our community.*

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The Leader thanked the Chairman for putting the motion forward, and noted that many members had been in receipt of the motion. He added that in supporting the motion it was important that, in addition to the opposition to hate crimes, xenophobia and racism, we recognise our welcoming cohesive communities.

Following discussion, and being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

#### b) Motion from County Councillor D.Batrouni

*Many young people searching for their first job often find it a difficult process mainly because they are told they have no experience. The Labour group believe Monmouthshire County Council could help Monmouthshire's young people with this problem. As one of the biggest employers in Monmouthshire, the Council has the ability to provide a number of internships across a number of departments covering a wide range of skills. The Labour group believe we should set up a formal internship process whereby the Council actively recruits people that live in Monmouthshire. All interns should get paid the living wage commensurate to their age. By doing this, we could give them a head start in today's tough job market.*

In moving the motion Councillor Batrouni highlighted the following points:

- Rather than an informal process, the motion suggests the setting up of a formal internship programme that gives people in the community experience.
- The range of skills and experiences that could be offered by the council is vast, such as a trade, office experience and media experience, and experience in professions that not many organisations could cover.
- Given our status, it makes sense to create a formal programme to provide these skills.
- The work of Yprentis was applauded but this was thought to be an everyday simple measure which could make a difference.

During debate we noted the following points:

- The Cabinet Member concurred that Council would agree with the sentiments of the motion, and agreed that it was suitable for the Council to help.
- We recognised the opportunities with the two new Secondary Schools, and highlighted the opportunities available to young people in the County. So far in Caldicot there had been 12 jobs created, career information about the construction business, 200 training weeks, 12 certificates for qualifying within the workforce.
- The Youth Service have also provided opportunities for young people who have then been employed in the wider community.
- It was suggested that the term 'internship' be changed to reflect wider opportunity.
- As Corporate Parents, we had not been effective in providing work experience to our Looked After Children, and it was suggested that significant work would need to be undertaken to take the motion forward.

County Councillor Greenland explained that we are already doing what is being asked for in terms of apprenticeships and internships. Yprentis has 70 apprentices across the greater Gwent area, some of whom from Monmouthshire and are paid above the living wage. There are a number of internal apprenticeships, and wherever there is an opportunity within the Council internships are offered.

Councillor Greenland proposed an amendment to the motion, which was duly seconded, this became the substantive motion:

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*Many young people searching for their first job often find it a difficult process mainly because they are told they have no experience. Monmouthshire County Council offers various initiatives, both within the Council and externally to help Monmouthshire's young people with this problem. As one of the biggest employers in Monmouthshire, the Council provides a number of internships/apprenticeships/work experience opportunities across a number of departments covering a wide range of skills. Through these initiatives the Council gives work to those living in Monmouthshire and elsewhere. Wages paid are in line with the living wage commensurate to their age. By doing this the Council gives them a head start in today's tough job market and we will continue to do this wherever we can.*

During discussion we noted the following:

- Data was requested to clarify the information in the substantive motion.
- A point was raised that restrictions made by Welsh Government prevented young people crossing the border and obtaining work experience in England.
- It was questioned how young people could access work placements with the lack of transport in the County.
- The Cabinet Member for education agreed that young people should be able to take the best placement suitable, regardless of it being England or Wales. Further information would be sought.
- The Chair of Economy and Development Select Committee advised that this area was regularly scrutinised

Upon being put to the vote, the substantive motion was carried.

### c) **Motion from County Councillor K. Williams:**

*This council is pleased to host the cycling event in Abergavenny each year. It will continue to ensure that local small businesses benefit from it each year.*

County Councillor J. Prosser declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest under the Member's Code of Conduct as Deputy Mayor of Abergavenny.

In moving the motion, Councillor Williams added that he wished to add 'Friday night cycling event' to the motion.

The Cabinet Member agreed with the sentiments of the motion and added that we hoped to continue to host events in the town. Inevitably there would not always be benefit to all businesses but the aim was to be fair to all traders, and it was suggested that the start and finish points be moved accordingly.

Councillor Greenland proposed an amendment to the motion, which was duly seconded, and became the substantive motion:

*This council is pleased to host the Friday evening cycling event in Abergavenny each year. It will continue in its efforts to promote health through sport whilst offering added benefits to local small businesses through the increased footfall that this and similar events bring. We will endeavour to move the start/finish line around so that all traders can share the benefits.*

Upon being put to the vote, the substantive motion was carried.

## **7. Reports of Chief Officer, Social Care and Health**

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Council were presented with a report, the purpose was to inform Monmouthshire County Council of the development of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and its partners as a Beacons site for the development of Byw Nawr.

Byw Nawr is the Welsh equivalent of Dying Matters. This was set up by the National Council for Palliative Care to support the End of Life Care Strategy. The aim of which is to raise public awareness about the importance of talking more openly about dying, death and bereavement and of making our wishes known.

We welcomed Bobbie Bolt, Associate Director Efficiency and Effectiveness, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, who was in attendance to provide further insight.

During discussion we noted the following:

- Adults Select Committee had been fully engaged throughout the development of the implementation of the programme, and Council were urged to support the Byw Nawr programme and to recognise the importance of the topic. Adults Select Committee wished to continue monitoring progress and create a forum to enable further discussions.
- A member highlighted that with the demographics of people across Monmouthshire and Gwent, further consideration should be given to cost implications at end of life.
- A member of the Crematorium Committee suggested section 4 of the report should include an added point highlighting the importance of ensuring funeral wishes are kept up to date.
- It was recommended that information and advice relating to planning and recording a will, such as Office of the Public Guardian, be included to ensure the best protection and to avoid exploitation.
- A member requested that emphasis on the specialised area of children and young people, who have life limiting illnesses, be included in the report.
- The Leader thanked Ms Bolt for the report, and welcomed the opportunity for discussion.

Council resolved to agree the recommendations:

- That Council note the contents of this paper.
- That Council agree the Health Board will support this campaign.

### 7.1. Safeguarding Performance 2015-16

Council were presented with the End of Year Performance 2015/16 on Whole Authority report, the purpose was to provide Council members with an overview of the performance on whole authority safeguarding in 2015/16.

During debate, the noted the following:

- A Member referred to the point 8 of the table at 3.8: *We operate best safeguarding practices and can demonstrate how we identify and address areas where improvement is needed.* There were concerns that there had been no improvement in this area in two years, and it was expressed that we should be demonstrating improvements in identifying weaknesses. The Chief Officer for Social Care and Health responded by

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explaining that the way issues are scored demonstrates how officers are taking a forensic look at where we stand. We heard that the vigilant assessment processes meant being harsh in terms of scoring but ensured we were always trying to better ourselves.

- A Member highlighted an issue surrounding Leisure and the importance of ensuring safeguarding policies are in place. Assurance was requested that Council ensure that young people are protected, and as an organisation we recognise that those using our leisure services, parks, or land should be aware of, and adhere to, the policies. The Chief Officer reassured Members that the safe audit process enables the Council to ensure policies are adhered to in all our settings. The next phase of work, included in the action plan would be to ensure the process is properly embedded across all areas involving children and vulnerable adults, not just educational settings.
- Council were assured that plans were in place for those areas needing improvement. Audit processes would alert officers of issues as they arise and it was anticipated that those would continue to improve.
- A Member noted that the report did not cover individuals placed in Monmouthshire but under the Care Standard of Wales. The Chief Officer explained that we do have responsibility for people out of County, in facilities within Monmouthshire, and as far as safeguarding is concerned the establishments are regulated by CSSIW or Health Inspectorate Wales.

Council resolved to agree the recommendations in the report:

- That Members consider this information in parallel with the separate report on the proposed changes to the whole authority safeguarding approach.
- That Members seek assurance that the proposed changes will improve performance on issues highlighted through this report.

### **7.2. Safeguarding Strategy & Programme**

Council were presented with a report, the purpose was to provide Council members with proposed changes to the whole authority safeguarding approach.

During debate we noted:

- Clarification was sought regarding point 3.8 of the report in terms of what had been shared, whether it was the future programme, or proposals. The Cabinet Member agreed to discuss further with the head of Children's Services.

Council resolved to agree the recommendations in the report:

- Introduce a Safeguarding Strategy – Appendix 1
- Underpin the strategy with an activity programme of three distinct elements covering: Corporate, Children and Young People and Adults - Appendix 2
- Change the terms of reference and representation of the Whole Authority Safeguarding Coordination Group - Appendix 3
- Discontinue the current performance report mechanism and replace it with a scorecard of key safeguarding measures to monitor performance

### **7.3. Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services**

Council were presented with a report, the purpose was to provide Council with the Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services.

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The Chief Executive reminded Members that this was an opportunity to put questions to the Chief Officer who would provide a straight professional view, rather than directing through a Cabinet Member.

During discussion we noted:

- A Member thanked the Chief Officer for a professional, clear report which identified wins and successes but also noted areas for improvement.
- A question was addressed to the Chief Officer regarding resources. In response we heard that it was thought that social services in Wales has improved since resources had started to become more limited. Adversity had taken the service to a different place in terms of the service offer. The challenge was now to see how much further this could continue, particularly in terms of Adult Services with the challenging demographics. In terms of Children's Services, the aim was to achieve a sustainable financial position, and not coming back to Council year on year requesting more money. Overall, the feeling was dismayed but optimistic.
- A Member made the following comments:
  - Page 14 – the infographics did not provide enough information.
  - Page 16 – inappropriate nature of workforce training, the workforce had not felt supported through the scale of change.
  - Page 18 – request for consistency in reporting.
- A Member noted that the report had been presented to Adults Select Committee and raised the issue of variation and variability. There were concerns if residents in Chepstow and Abergavenny were receiving the same benefits as those in Caldicot and Monmouth, and if not how far away were we from achieving that. The Chief Officer advised that when looking at Community Coordination, the assets within different communities will differ, therefore the service would not be identical offer but the principle needed to be the same.
- In terms of commissioning services, care services in particular, many are a low margin business and providers would have been affected by a number of factors. A question was presented that, should providers increase their pricing structure, how would we respond to that, and was there a danger some providers may disappear. The Chief Officer responded that MCC had responded to the National Living Wage, which had been reflected in the fair price of care paid to care homes and domiciliary providers. The issue regarding how we work with the provider market on a sustainable basis, is referred to in the Turning the World Upside Down work, and is the biggest challenge, but good progress was being made.
- It was suggested that the report identified areas for improvement in Children's Services and a Member referred particularly to page 30 *The percentage of initial assessments where the child has been seen alone by the Social Worker*. It was questioned if it was preferable for the initial assessment to be alone or accompanied, or had there been a policy change. The Chief Officer advised that this related to an audited indicator and appropriate reasons were recorded. It was noted that there had been a high level of agency which was not best practice and could impact on the quality
- The Leader thanked the Chief Officer on behalf of all Members for the forensic insight of the service, enhanced by the answering of questions.

We resolved to agree the recommendations:

- That Council consider and endorse the analysis in 2015/16 Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services concerning the performance, and impact, of adult and children's social care and health services over the last financial year.

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- Council also consider and endorse the 2016/17 areas for improvement set out in the report to address the critical risk and developmental issues in social care and health.

### 7.4. Dementia Friendly Report

Council were presented with a report, the purpose was to provide an overview of the work undertaken to develop a Dementia Friendly Local Authority Community (DFA) and set out recommendations for consideration that can support the DFA process going forward through training and subsequent accreditation.

We welcomed Mr. Philip Diamond, from Gwent Transformation Team, who officially presented Council with the Dementia Friendly Community Award, achieved through an accreditation process developed by the Alzheimer's Society.

During discussion we noted the following:

- A Member noted that there is an increase in the number of younger people with dementia, which could result in problems with the police authority. It was pleasing to see that the Police and Crime Commissioner taking the issue seriously, and taking steps to protect individuals who may fall into trouble through no fault of their own.
- A Member referred to Dementia Friendly Businesses, and recommended that the authority undertakes the same initiative.
- We would be embarking on training, and in the weeks and months ahead, this would start to roll-out to all Members, officers, and through training methods.

Council resolved to agree the recommendations in the report:

- That Council note content of report.
- That Council discuss points for consideration.
- That Council identify next steps.

## 8. Reports of the Head of Governance, Policy and Performance

### 8.1. Sustainable Development Policy

Council received a report to provide Council with a revised Sustainable Development Policy.

During debate we noted:

- A Member questioned if, in terms of assessments carried out by officers, a copy of the Future Generations Evaluation form, with guidance, could be circulated to Members.
- A Member active on the Agri-Urban project, one of the themes being sustainability in the agricultural environment, and was assured by the amended procedures.
- Members were welcome to challenge officers to ensure developments were sustainable, and not simply a process of completing a form.
- A Member referred to '*We believe that sustainable development and future generations are crucial aspects to everything that we do, and when working with partners, contractors and other organisations we would expect them to share these values*' and raised a question of what do we do if they don't share the values. The Sustainability Policy Officer explained that there were many strategies in place, and officers were working together to imbed the wellbeing goals into other policies. We noted that the work through the Public Service Board ensured the goals were shared through partnership organisations across Wales.

Council resolved to approve the recommendations in the report:



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- That Council adopt the new Sustainable Development Policy.
- That the Sustainable Development Policy be adopted as part of the Council's Policy Framework in its constitution.

### **9. Reports of the Head of Community Delivery and the Head of Tourism, Leisure & Culture**

#### **9.1. Velothon 2017-2020**

Council were presented with a report which updated Members on the 2016 Velothon event and sought the Council's commitment to supporting the Velothon event from 2017 – 2020 by enabling the route to travel through Monmouthshire.

County Councillors B. Jones, B. Strong, and P. Clarke declared a non-personal, prejudicial interest pursuant under the Members Code of Conduct and left the Council Chamber for the following discussion.

County Councillor R.J. Greenland presented the report and highlighted that Run4Wales had been appointed to take on the management of the Velothon, and had consulted widely regarding problems of previous years.

During debate we noted:

- Concerns were expressed surrounding the improvements carried out by Run4Wales.
- It was recognised that Monmouthshire is a cycling county, but as the Velothon is centred around Cardiff, there were concerns that there was no benefit to the County.
- Members sought clarification regarding the costs incurred in hosting the event, and requested further financial information. In response advised that any infrastructure costs were picked up by the organisers, and there was no set budget for the Velothon.

County Councillor S. Jones proposed an addition to the recommendation in that the following be added: *This review will include pro-active and direct engagement with Town and Community Councils and with the business community, particularly those businesses who have been adversely affected over the last two years.* This was duly seconded.

- A Member agreed that communication had improved, but felt that the level of disruption had an inequitable impact on communities.
- A Member briefing on the Velothon had been poorly attended, and those who had attended suggested that this would have been an ideal time to present questions to the organisers. However, some who had attended were still not convinced that concerns have been addressed.
- It was expressed that high profile, televised events held in Monmouthshire were an advantage for the County. However a Member expressed that the Velothon is not in that category, and is a Cardiff event, and therefore the benefits were received by Cardiff only. In comparison Monmouthshire is disrupted and effectively closed for the day.
- The Leader agreed that Council would like to receive more evidence of the benefits, but added that such events were important for the future economy of Monmouthshire.
- There were concerns that the staff costs directed towards the event should be used in other areas, again it was requested that figures and costs should be included in the report.
- A Member expressed that the main concern was the prolonged closures of the roads.

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- A Member advised that at the Member briefing a suggestion had been made to persuade organisers to arrange that start and finish points be in Monmouthshire in the future.

Following a proposal to defer the item to a later date it was agreed to adjourn for 10 minutes.

Upon return the Chief Executive advised Members that officers would not be able to determine the exact benefit to the County, and it could not be guaranteed that costs would be quantified at the next Council meeting. Furthermore, we would not be in a position to negotiate a change in the start/finish for 2017, and there was a concern that Monmouthshire would not have the capacity for this. Newport could be a consideration, and alternative route proposals may be influential to 2018.

County Councillor R.J. Greenland confirmed the amended recommendation as:

*That Council agrees to support the 2017 Velothon subject to an annual post event review. This review will include pro-active and direct engagement with Town and Community Councils, and with the business community, particularly those businesses who have been adversely affected over the last two years.*

The Chair proposed that, following the discussions, an agreement be made with Run4Wales to support the 2017 Velothon, but that they (Run4Wales) address urgently the concerns put to them and officers provide the evidence, that is available including costs, requested by members. This information will be presented to Council in September 2017.

Upon being put to the vote the amended recommendation was carried.

#### **10. Members Questions**

##### **10.1. From County Councillor D.W. Hughes-Jones to County Councillor S.B. Jones**

**From County Councillor D.W. Hughes-Jones to County Councillor S.B. Jones**

*"Monmouthshire is in a unique position offering a special attraction for visitors. It forms part of the Brecon Beacons National Park which adds to the special appeal of our County. The problem of litter can undermine the attraction as it tarnishes the appearance and impression given to any person travelling along the roads of urban and rural Monmouthshire.*

*What is Monmouthshire's policy regarding litter collection, prevention and imposing of fines for dropping litter, and is there any evidence that this strategy is working? How many fines have been imposed for littering our County over the last 5 years and what are the totals of money collected annually from this? Can this "revenue" be used to deter the littering of all Monmouthshire communities in the future?"*

In response, the Cabinet Member thanked constituents for collecting litter and advised that the main objective of the Waste and Street Services Improvement Plan is to make a clean, green and safe environment for residents and visitors. There is a comprehensive schedule for litter collection across the County but it was appreciated that there were gaps in some rural areas. There are a number of projects being undertaken in place where officers from Environmental Health were authorised to issue fixed penalty notices. Police Community Support Officers, on the Council's behalf, can also issue fixed penalty notices. Only 3 have been issued in recent years, but the intention is to extend to include officers from Waste and Street Services. The revenue from FPNs is minimal so of little use in deterrent schemes. There have been five successful prosecutions for instances of fly tipping.

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As a supplementary question:

What plans do the Council have to ease the problem in rural towns in particular, for example, Grosmont Town?

In response the Cabinet Member advised he would make enquiries regarding Grosmont Town. The following points were noted:

- Waste and Street Services work closely with SEWTRA to tackle litter along main routes, and are working with neighbouring authorities to develop a litter campaign.
- A strong and consistent message that littering is unacceptable across the trunk road network will help reduce the problem.
- Work is undertaken with Keep Wales Tidy, who coordinate work with community payback teams.
- Educational programmes are delivered through the One Planet Centre.
- Number of littering and fly-tipping complaints reduced in 2015/16 with the downward trend continuing.

#### 11. Oak Grove Solar Farm

Council received a report referring to Oak Grove Solar Farm. The purpose was to retrospectively inform members of the urgent decision taken to authorise payment to commence work on the electricity grid connection, also to amend the basis for which authority is delegated for future decisions on the project based on necessary amendments to the original business case.

Following discussion Council resolved to accept the recommendations in the report.

**The meeting ended at 9.55 pm**

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