



**Review of Community Engagement & Governance
Inc. Section 106 Contributions
Monmouthshire County Council
April 2017**

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Executive Summary

This report is in the conclusion of a series of integrated Reviews that informs the future shape of community engagement within Monmouthshire County Council.

The **Purpose** of the Review is to:

- Clarify strategic direction to meet legislative requirements & enable place based delivery;
- Repurpose Whole Place;
- Identify joint working opportunities internally to enable a streamlined approach;
- Assess new roles in provision of impartial advice across five strategic settlements;
- Understand how S106 & Community Grants can be used strategically to enable resource implications for place based approach; and
- Reconfigure community governance model to preserve the leadership role of Members and encourage wider community participation.

Whole Place and Community Engagement Now. There is a current lack of strategic alignment to local and corporate outcomes perceived to be a weakness, with a need for clearer identity & purpose. There are mixed experiences where Whole Place has supported community governance leading to inconsistency in ways of working and outcomes. Community engagement is seen as timely and bottom up with consensus that community development is when conversation turns into action, and is about asset based opportunities and not just issues. A community's maturity shapes the approach that Monmouthshire needs to adopt to grow community leaders with the need to bring existing toolkits and training into one place to facilitate this.

Responsible officers do work together in spite of existing structures which is resulting in missed opportunities. There are various roles across the Authority in community development supporting engagement, partnerships, empowerment through volunteering, tackling rural issues, funding and the well-being of individuals and communities, amongst others leading to confusion. Existing 'soft' skills are strong across a diverse range of Officers along with technical and project management skills, but there are opportunities to train some responsible officers in core community development skills. There is therefore a clear opportunity for a more centralised and integrated way of working amongst communities.

Community Governance Now. Role of ward Members key to community participation & engagement, with legislation and cluster areas important to the future shape of community governance & area committees. The new Community Leadership Academy can provide the resource to upskill members as well as community organisations so that there is a common approach. Area committee grants need to work in a more integrated manner, providing a smarter smart use of funding aligned to maximise impact and value.

Section 106. Section 106 contributions are well managed with robust monitoring processes but are not focussed on outcomes or long term impacts that meet local or strategic needs. There is a current lack of strategic community engagement and data sharing resulting in missed opportunities to address medium to long term priorities. The current lack of promotion of S106 projects results in missed opportunities to encourage wider community participation to address longer term needs.

Review Conclusions

- There is a current lack of community engagement/partnership coordination leading to missed opportunities to share and maximise resources and intelligence;

- There is a lack of Town/Community Council engagement resulting in disconnect with communities and lack of knowledge of needs and priorities;
- There is a disconnect between Public Service Board (PSB) and Town/Community Councils;
- There is a disconnect between PSB, internal partners and funding opportunities and local community needs and priorities;
- The review leads to gaps in meeting legislation requirements to apply a strategic approach to enable cross county coordinated delivery.

Summary Recommendations

1. The Well-Being Future Generations (WBF) Act requires co-delivery with partners. There is a current disconnect between Public Service Board and community to be addressed, with community engagement to be repositioned within a more centralised role.
2. There is a need to provide resource & access to training for community leaders to enable co-production, as well as building internal skills and provide a centralised resource and toolkits (e.g. Made Open, Mon Maps) and complete clarity on community engagement to Local Members.
3. There is a need to promote local democracy through the Role of Community/Town Councils/Other Organisations through developing skills in community engagement and understanding their role in the WBF Act. The need to provide a local forum to shape local priorities is important with the need to develop local 'plans' and work co-operatively to address common issues and joint working opportunities.
4. Role of Cluster Areas provides the opportunity to involve Community/Town Councils in strategic policy & highlight funding opportunities with the opportunity to think spatially as well as locally. This provides the conduit for county wide organisations to share thinking and support, providing a bridge between Community/Town Councils, Area Committees and the Authority's Senior Leadership Team.
5. Role of Area Committees provide a clear link between clusters & Authority decision making; with a key opportunity for community to have a voice and participate in local democracy. This provides a place to receive local plans that respond to community need, provide support for joint working solutions, adopt strategic approach to coordinated funding and receive community engagement updates
6. Role of Local Members. There is a need for elected members to *take a proactive approach to providing local information to aid local and county decision making, identify opportunities for co-production, participatory budgeting and prioritisation, in addition to providing complete clarity on Authority resources and defined pathways to community engagement*
7. Benefits of the Proposed Restructure. The review recommends a restructure to enable the repurposing of Whole Place. The benefits of this are:
 - Centralised specialist resource to enable delivery of WBF, MCC priorities and staffing efficiencies;
 - Address current disconnect between communities & PSB and to grow trust between the Authority, Town/Community Councils & communities;
 - Provide central resource/toolkits to grow and support high quality community leaders which enables co-production and co-delivery;
 - Build skills in developing frameworks that guide local priorities, and support the alignment of funding to enable additional leverage;
 - Provide management information systems to capture, analyse and interpret data to help us tell the stories.

1 Purpose/Background

1.1 Purpose

Chris Jones Regeneration has been asked to undertake a series of integrated reviews that informs the future shape of community engagement within Monmouthshire County Council.

The initial review of community governance established the need to understand the level and type of community engagement as this has a direct relationship to how local need and solutions are developed and delivered, with the role of local decision making such as area committees central to the review.

The review was subsequently extended to look at the current roles and responsibilities around community engagement, as well as how “need” is funded, specifically focusing on the current management and distribution of S.106 monies towards community projects. A mini review of Section 106 has therefore been undertaken.



Specific review objectives are:

- To understand the clarity of strategic direction for community engagement that meets legislative requirements and how this applies within a place based and person centred approach to community participation delivery in Monmouthshire.
- To understand how the current Whole Place team needs to be “repurposed” and rebranded to meet the legislative requirements and in meeting the Council’s corporate outcomes and understanding how this role leads to decisions that lead to more people based services.
- In addition to the Whole Place team - to identify joint working opportunities internally to enable the Authority to provide a more streamlined approach to delivery to include other community engagement officers such as the Council’s volunteering programme. It is envisaged that this would lead to place based delivery enabling improved community and area governance and improved efficiency amongst partnerships.
- To assess whether the new roles of a reframed Whole Place team can act as intermediaries, providing independent and impartial advice at a local and strategic level across the five strategic settlements and wider rural area.

- To understand how S.106 monies are being used and to identify the need for a more strategic allocation of future resources to enable the place based approach and resultant resource implications.

1.2 Background

The need to review community governance has been underway since 2015 with the following background note providing the context to this specific review.

1.2.1 Community Governance

In March 2015, Keith Edwards was appointed to undertake a review of Community Governance. His report was initially taken through the political processes in October 2015 Cabinet and then Council in December 2015. This report recommended a cross party Member working group to be established which equally represents the four administrative areas, now five cluster areas. This group was tasked with the responsibility of developing a revised framework which preserves the leadership role of elected members, supports and encourages community participation and oversees the delivery of the local Whole Place plans. The report recommended a revised framework to the County Council in March 2016.

We understand that a number of meetings have been held which have discussed the nature of democracy and County Council elected members' expectations of community governance. At the second meeting in June 2016 the group discussed a set of specific proposals which are included below:

- Provide a forum for local Councillors to engage with residents about local issues;
- Give local communities a stronger and more direct voice in decision making in their local area;
- Enable members to have influence over decisions that are specific to their local area;
- Develop and oversee the delivery of localised plans;
- Engage with representatives of town and community councils;
- Harness and channel community energy to deliver improved outcomes for the local area and its communities; and
- Bring together partner agencies to focus on locally specific issues.

Members were also asked to consider the five principles of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act in their thinking on future community governance, being i) Integrated ii) Collaborative iii) Long term iv) Involving and v) Preventative.

At this meeting the following option was approved as the preferred model for implementation.

Option 2) Area Committees are retained as the sole structure with an increase in co-opted community members

Positives	Negatives
Members are accountable	Scale of meeting (number of committee members)
Transparent co-opting arrangement	Can co-opted members vote?
Clear alignment to the constitution	Community representatives could be elected (C&T Council), representative or individual – how will this be determined?
Decision making strengthened and streamlined	Breadth of geographical cover
Single entry point to public	Disparity between the area committees' effectiveness
Community voice greater than currently	

The adoption of the model was agreed unanimously by the member working group. In essence it provides an evolutionary development of the current area committee model but embraces several of the factors of good community engagement that were included in the last Local Government (Wales) Act in November 2015.

In March 2017, the County Council agreed the decision to pilot the above model in Bryn Y Cwm as Bryn Y Cwm was proven to be the most resilient example of Area working and has a high level of social capital in the area with developed links to the local town and community councils. The decision to pilot the work rather than a universal roll out is due to this review and its final recommendations on the broader organisational aspects of community engagement.

1.2.2 Review Process

The review has centred on the following process and tasks:

Figure 1 - Review Process



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

1.2.3 Tasks and Activities

1.2.3.1 Stage 1

- Inception Meeting with lead client officers to agree scope of review
- Desktop review of key documents: policy, previous reviews, committee reports, Whole Place documents

1.2.3.2 Stage 2

- Interviews with responsible officers – Community Governance Review:
 - Whole Place Team manager and officers
 - Changing Practice, Changing Lives Lead officer – Social Services
 - Head of Community Led Delivery
 - Head of Policy and Engagement
- Workshops: Community Engagement Review (2 x no.)
 - Workshop 1: Understanding Roles, Responsibilities and Ways of Working – 16th February
 - Workshop 2: Skills, Toolkit and Future Structure – 9th March
- Section 106 Review:
 - Attendance at S.106 monitoring meeting - 10th February
 - S.106 planning workshop – 17th March
 - Community Infrastructure Coordinator meeting – 24th March
- Post Workshop Discussions
 - Policy and Performance Manager – 24th March
 - Head of Economy and Innovation – 24th March
 - Training Officer – 4th April

1.2.3.3 *Stage 3*

- Drafting of final report

The report is split into the following sections:

Section 2 – Policy Context

Section 3 - Community Engagement – Now

Section 4 - Community Engagement – Future

Section 5 – Next Steps and Recommendations

Specific key points or actions are highlighted through the review report.

2 Policy Context

The future role and function of community engagement needs to fulfil legislative requirements so that it meets statutory need and is strongly aligned to Welsh Government policy. The following Acts need to be acknowledged within future community engagement working.

2.1 Local Government (Wales) Act 2015

The Act sets out a new and reformed legislative framework for Local Authority democracy, accountability, performance and elements of finance. Key provisions that relate to this review include the requirement for Local Authorities to encourage public participation in Local Government, to establish community area committees for the purpose of ensuring that community interests and priorities are taken into account by the Authority in exercising its functions. The previous White Paper described an area-based approach, with 'area boards' made up of Elected Members, community bodies, the third sector, Community Councils and other public services.

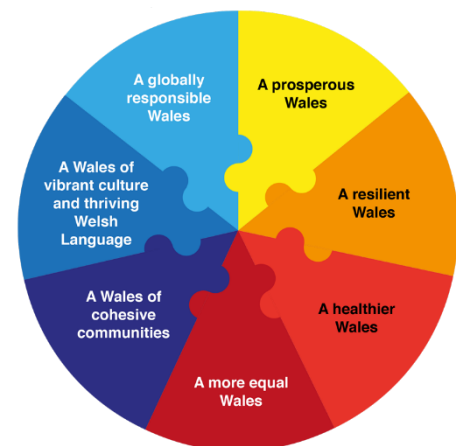
In listening to consultation, Welsh Government agreed that there should be flexibility to design the approach that is suitable to their area. The provisions in the Act therefore set out the intention to require Local Authorities to establish a committee in each of their community areas (as determined under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015). Community area committees will provide a structured way for views on local priorities to be expressed and fed into the Local Authority budget planning process, and for communities and local people to engage with their Elected Members on practical matters of local importance. Local Authorities will also be able to seek the advice of these committees on any matter relating to the committee's community area. The provisions also enable the Local Authority to delegate functions to community area committees. Which functions may be delegated to community area committees will be determined by regulations to be made by the Welsh Ministers.

2.2 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Act makes the public bodies think more about the long term, working better with people and communities and each other, looking to prevent problems and taking a more joined-up approach and importantly to do it in a sustainable way. Public bodies therefore need to make sure that when making their decisions they take into account the impact they could have on people living their lives in Wales in the future.

It will expect them to:

- work together better;
- involve people reflecting the diversity of our communities;
- look to the long term as well as focusing on now; and
- take action to try and stop problems getting worse - or even stop them happening in the first place.



Public bodies will need to apply sustainable development principles with the need to demonstrate that they have used the following five ways of working:

- Integration – demonstrating a joined-up approach to communities and people, the economy, the environment and culture;
- Long-term thinking - balancing current and long-term needs;

- Prevention - taking action now to prevent problems in the future;
- Collaboration - working with others to meet objectives; and
- Involvement - involving the people affected by actions

<http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-act/?lang=en>

2.3 Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

The Act imposes duties on local authorities, health boards and Welsh Ministers that require them to work to promote the well-being of those who need care and support, or carers who need support. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act changes the social services sector:

- People have control over what support they need, making decisions about their care and support as an equal partner;
- New proportionate assessment focusing on the individual;
- Carers have an equal right to assessment for support to those who they care for;
- Easy access to information and advice is available to all;
- Powers to safeguard people are stronger;
- A preventative approach to meeting care and support needs is practiced; and
- Local authorities and health boards come together in new statutory partnerships to drive integration, innovation and service change

Principles of the Act are:

- The Act supports people who have care and support needs to achieve well-being;
- People are at the heart of the new system by giving them an equal say in the support they receive;
- Partnership and co-operation drives service delivery; and
- Services will promote the prevention of escalating need and ensuring the right help is available at the right time

<http://gov.wales/topics/health/socialcare/act/?lang=en>

2.4 The Planning (Wales) Act 2015

This will require Local Planning Authorities to:

- Have regard to 'Local Well-being Plans' to be published by Public Service Boards (PSBs) and ensure greater development engagement at the pre-application stage to ensure local communities are able to engage early on in the planning process to influence development proposals;
- Establish Strategic Development Plans that will focus planning for areas with matters of greater than local significance. The key will be to focus on areas where development is of a strategic nature; and
- A requirement for Local Planning Authorities in Wales through the Positive Planning agenda associated with the Planning Wales Act should consider the role of community based planning such as the pilot "Place Plans". These are not statutory but need consideration within broader community engagement activity. Place Plans are still in their pilot phase with limited guidance on how they should be prepared and what they should include.

<http://gov.wales/topics/planning/legislation/planning-wales-act-2015/?lang=en>

2.5 The Environment (Wales) Act 2016

This will require the Council to undertake a range of duties including:

- Objectives to maintain and enhance the resilience of ecosystems thereby contributing to the achievement of the well-being goals in section 4 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015;
- To adopt the principles of sustainable management of natural resources include, managing adaptively at an appropriate spatial scale; promote public engagement; use an evidence base; take appropriate action for the short, medium and long term; prevent significant damage to ecosystems and take account of the biodiversity aspects of ecosystems; and
- Seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of functions.

<http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/consmanagement/natural-resources-management/environment-act/?lang=en>

- Legislation is clearly seeking greater participation from people and communities to reach integrated ways of ensuring economic, environmental and social well-being.
- The role of community area committees is a key priority for Government in facilitating discussions on local importance and prioritisation.
- A preventative approach to care and the needs of individuals is a priority for service delivery in social services and through multi-partner working.
- Early engagement and the future role of Place Plans are about residents having a greater say on developments and infrastructure needs within their community.

3 Community Engagement - Now

Role and Responsibilities

This section of the report describes where Monmouthshire County Council has directed resources towards community engagement, specifically within the Whole Place team and other associated officers that have participated through a series of review workshops.

3.1 Whole Place Team

The Council sees 'Whole Place' as an approach to planning and delivery providing a view into and a connection with its communities, shaping new priorities, relationships and services. Against the backdrop of serious economic constraint and public funding cuts 'Whole Place' is seen as a primary means of delivering sustainable and resilient communities.

The first 'Whole Place' plan, 'Seven for Severnside', was devised in October 2012 resulting in the establishment of the Severnside Programme Board and the Caldicot Town Team soon afterwards, with support from the Authority's then Area Services Officers. The Programme Board was initially chaired by the Authority's Chief Officer Kellie Beirne whilst the Terms of Reference were being agreed, after which a local Chair was appointed.

A similar process was also instigated in the north of the County in Abergavenny where in 2013 the Bryn y Cwm Programme Board was established. In March 2015 the Whole Place team was borne of the former Area Services Officers to support the community in the delivery of 'Whole Place', with a Whole Place Team comprising of a manager and three Whole Place officers, whose purpose is "to lean into" communities and enable them to shape their places, services and futures in ways which best meet local needs.

In terms of specific roles, officers have been tasked with *"the delivery of the 'Whole Place' agenda within communities, supporting local initiatives and delivery agents by developing skill sets, local capacity and knowledge sharing"* in addition to *"supporting colleagues in developing service delivery models that support the Whole Place agenda through co-design and co-production, targeting resources to locally identified priorities and where possible switching off demand"*.

The range of work from the Whole Place team is broad with roles and responsibilities linked to whole communities, individuals mostly planned and sometimes reactive. This ranges from supporting organisational development of local groups such as Caldicot Town Team in addition to writing business cases and bids for 'Vibrant and Viable Places' funding through to reacting to the need for the rehousing of Syrian refugees within local communities. These examples demonstrate a spirit of wanting to make things happen and partnership e.g. getting to know the 'Cities of Sanctuary' group, but this has meant that at times, the team has strayed away at times from core Whole Place work.

The role of Whole Place officers has developed over recent years to include:

- Capacity builders and community groups facilitation at a grass roots level and enabling leadership;
- Mediators and relationship builders within communities and across partners e.g. Usk Library and its transition to a community hub;
- Building local intelligence through surveys, feasibility and understanding need;

- Task/finishers – reactive and planned activities; and
- Developing social capital with groups such as transition towns

The Whole Place team has witnessed some areas of positive practice with examples of joint working with the LDP team on aligning need to S.106 funds through liaison on community linkages. There are also several organisations and activities that are collaborating across the County with the opportunity of scaling up with more effective resource use e.g. SOUP project, play streets pilot model, transition town groups.

In reviewing the past and current roles/responsibilities that the Whole Place team have experienced, the following themes are highlighted.

3.1.1 Local Leadership/Community Governance

The role of the Whole Place team within broader community governance has been seen to be confusing at times, lacking clarity of purpose at a strategic level, leading to the resource not being properly directed. Where community governance has materialised in the form of Programme Boards e.g. Abergavenny, there has been a lack of continuity amongst responsible officers and board members, no sense of finishing off tasks with community representatives seeing “it being done to them, not with them”. “Directing the Council and not doing it” was an area of concern for Abergavenny’s Programme Board, with a perceived wrong approach of chasing funding rather than establishing need first, in addition to plans being too overarching and setting out to fix everything.

In contrast, Caldicot Town Team is recognised as a good example of ‘Whole Place’ working and directing community effort toward strategic outcomes. The need for a business/community centre organisation was an outcome of the Severnside Whole Place Plan where there was no existing body to champion town centre activity. The creation of a Town Team was made possible through the S.106 monies due to the immediacy of developing stronger links with an edge of centre supermarket. The success of this community vehicle has been identified through the Town Team chair who is seen as a “doer” with direct and tangible results that have been based around street markets, pop up uses, magazines, supporting a masterplan exercise, amongst other initiatives. The Whole Place team in this case have supported the process with group formation, accounts and financial systems, data and survey advice as well as signposting to grants and funding, highways and finances.

The lack of strategic alignment to local and corporate outcomes is perceived to be a weakness of the Whole Place approach, with team members seen to be stumbling across communities and groups and not being shown strategic connections, thereby not maximising impact.

3.1.2 Communication

Communication, at times, can be informal with some of the hard conversations, choices and decisions not being confronted, resulting in relationships being difficult to manage, leading to roles and responsibilities within the Whole Place team sometimes being blurred.

In relation to Whole Place and its approach, resource and resultant benefits, some commentators have also acknowledged that the Authority (internally) knows about Whole Place but it is not known outside in the community, by its name and its role. Whatever happens, the pathways of community governance and its users, enablers and decision-makers needs to be communicated internally and externally with clear

and user friendly protocols and systems as well as stronger communication messages and the need for a subsequent 'rebranding' of the Service to provide much needed clarity of purpose.

There is also a need to integrate tools such as 'Made Open' amongst the communication framework and to show how it plays a role in converting need and ideas into community led action. In addition, community Hubs, My Council Services App and its contact centres need to point people to places to discuss needs as well as connecting people with similar agendas.

3.1.2.1 Role of Place Based Delivery in the Future

Roles that Whole Place officers identify in going forward include:

- Enabling and stimulating benefits which does not necessarily lead to direct delivery by the Whole Place team;
- Finding community activists and providing learning/mentoring/leadership pathways, leading to sustainability and resilience within communities, with a specific focus on emerging and youthful groups;
- Developing toolkits that build these skills and independence, and support elected members, parish/community councils and groups;
- Making the community aware of opportunities, unlock these operationally within the culture of Council and other strategic partners and provide an integrated policy/plan framework to influence ;
- Working alongside thematic and specialist leads in the Council and with other strategic partners;
- Developing role of place based officers to look at opportunities to scale up across the County;
- Demonstrating how outcomes are being met but acknowledge that stories as well as hard data are equally important; and
- Ensuring place based work needs continuity, minimal interruption and also needs a visible champion

<http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2015/01/7-Whole-Place-Strategy.pdf>

3.2 Other Responsible Officers

Whilst not entirely representative of the wider range of responsible officers that have a role in community engagement, the following officers have participated through the series of workshops, in addition to the whole place team:

- Changing Practice, Changing Lives Lead (Asset Based Community - Asset Based Individual);
- Volunteering Lead;
- Planning Policy Officer;
- Development Management Officer;
- Partnerships Officer ;
- Sustainability Policy Officer;
- Community Cohesion Officer;
- Business Manager Sport, Community Development and Events;
- Funding Officer;
- Communication/Engagement Officer; and
- Vale of Usk Rural Development Officer

3.2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

In looking outside of the Whole Place team, there are a number of specific roles and responsibilities that support community engagement.

“place-making - the art of creating public ‘places of the soul,’ that uplift and help us connect to each other.”

Planning. Planning Policy deals with the management and decision-making on land use within communities, with a strong focus on the statutory process specifically the Local Development Plan process, often working with Community and Town Council, groups and individuals. How Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy funds is directed to future land use priorities is seen to be important. The role of Place Plans under the Wales Planning Act also requires consideration within Development Management. The Authority provides pre-application advice to community groups and organisations and works toward mediation when dealing with planning applications and understanding the context and needs of the community. Casework is diverse dealing with large housing schemes to a new vehicular access.

Partnerships. This team supports the Public Service Board and helps to deliver the Single Integrated Plan. It works with partner organisations so that alignment to common goals is achieved. Within the wider team it has developed the well-being assessment with a number of systems and touch points created for partners and the wider community to participate in the assessment. The development of the well-being plan is the next priority and its delivery. Supporting partnerships work through community and engagement is key with Your Voice, Your Choice supporting the Future Generations & Well Being Act, providing a flexible approach to engagement through rural shows, one stop shops and digital opportunities. A specialist role within the team is the Community Cohesion Officers that is part of the Prevent, Extremism, Terrorism initiative. The project has strong links to children and young people through outreach educational programmes provided by RSLs and education providers. Support has also been focussed on the rehousing and assimilation of Syrian/Afghan refugees, providing the “welcome” to Monmouthshire.

Volunteering. The 'A County that Serves' programme in Monmouthshire aims to support and enable volunteers to make a major contribution to the core purpose of creating sustainable and resilient communities. The purpose of the officer resource is to develop more consistent good practice across Council departments and to pioneer new ways of involving volunteers within public services in Monmouthshire. Baseline voluntary activity is extremely high with 1757 volunteers supporting MCC, from Tourism Ambassadors to Community Bus drivers, Sports Ambassadors and Countryside volunteers.

Rural Development. Rural development activity is long established in Monmouthshire due to its eligible rural status. The joint Vale of Usk rural programme with Newport provides LEADER funding support and tackles rural poverty and need. The main focus of the team is to communicate opportunities to rural groups and communities of interest, encouraging innovation and sustainability with funding provided for targeted themes such as renewable energy and provision of non-statutory services.

Funding. This resource capitalises ideas into action through large funding ‘pots’ of domestic and European funding and where possible mainstreaming activities. Working with the Authority’s ‘Pyramid of Plans’ and strategies, aligning robust cases for need for funds is key, being pulled into "community engagement" as and when required.

Social Services. This resource focusses on Social Care at an individual level through well-being. The purpose of adult social care and health is to “help people live their own lives.” Key to this is the ability to intervene at the earliest opportunity and support people to build networks and connections and to find their own solutions to the issues they face. This is delivered through Community Well-Being & Enterprise Hubs, Volunteering for Well-Being Co-ordinators, Place Based Housing & Well-Being Teams and Supporting Gateway Teams.

Sports and Leisure. This resource works with clubs to enhance sports and leisure provision by accessing grants. The service also works with primary and secondary schools in promotion of exercise and sports, as well as providing exercise referral opportunities across its four 4 Leisure Centre sites.

Economy & Innovation. A diverse management role that covers Youth, Economic Development, the Whole Place Programme, the Transitioning of the Museum Services, Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, Apprenticeships and Partnerships. Communication is seen as key in explaining how community engagement works across these services.

Workshops were carried out with staff to identify where their time was spent and what the impact of this was. The outcomes shown in Figure 2 were self-defined by attendees at the workshop and differ in the extent to which they meet the council’s priorities or the stated outcomes of the PSB. While one attendee has referred directly to the authority’s purpose of building sustainable resilient communities others are less specific, such as ‘working to a common goal’. Most of these could be mapped against higher level outcomes such as the impact of growing social capital to people being confident, capable and involved but people were not always making the connections explicitly.

Figure 2 - Community Engagement Activities/Outcomes



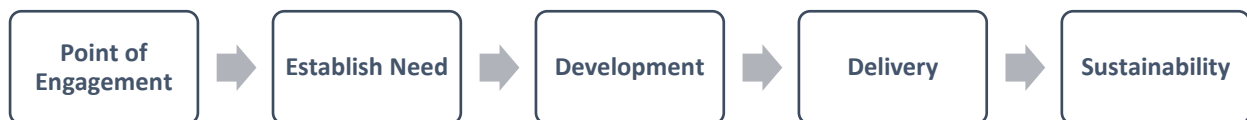
Source: Community Engagement Workshop Attendees – 16th February

- The purpose of the Whole Place team has been about capacity building and facilitation within communities and enabling leadership.
- The lack of strategic alignment to local corporate outcomes is perceived to be a weakness of the Whole Place approach, with the need for a clearer identity and purpose also identified.
- There have been mixed experiences with community governance approaches where the resetting of existing relationships is sometimes needed, with others still developing.
- Other responsible officers have a role in community development that supports engagement, partnerships, empowerment through volunteering, tackling rural issues, funding and the well-being of individuals and communities, amongst others.
- There is an opportunity for a more centralised and integrated way of working amongst communities.

3.3 Process-Ways of Working

As part of the community engagement workshop, participants were asked to reflect on the current process and ways of working through community engagement.

Figure 3 - Understanding Community Engagement Pathway



Source: Community Engagement Workshop – 16th February

3.3.1 Point of Engagement

The Council provides a number of ways for officers to engage with communities through rural shows, roadshow type events, forums and the use of web and digital mediums. On the whole, Officers tend to have the right skills in engagement with stakeholders and the wider community.

When enquiries come to the Council directly, there are sometimes cases where elected Members and senior management have not considered the capacity and reality of delivering the outcome with the issue quickly cascading down to officers who then have to manage the situation. There is a need to understand the “promise” and how signposting and collective expertise is important, managed through systems navigation and customer journey.

This is not just the need for the implications of a promise to be thought through, but also for the final agreement of a project/priority to be communicated to all relevant parties so that a co-ordinated approach is adopted. The referral sift to the community or place based officer is also key in going forward so that the Council’s website, contact centres, ‘Made Open’ and call centre staff signpost the community in a smart way.

A key priority is also to release pressure on the Authority with other partners taking a more direct responsibility for community engagement. The Public Service Board representatives need to be more accountable for strategic outcomes with co-ordination across partner organisations on how targets are being met and identifying joint solutions. There should also be recognition of the resources required to provide partnership support underpinned by community engagement with an equitable allocation from PSB members to funding contributions.

There is a very open culture with elected Members and officers, but their knowledge is not fully utilised as part of the community engagement journey. There is now an opportunity with the new political administration to engage on community engagement providing clarity on what it is and what it isn’t. The first six months of the administration will provide a focus for gathering local intelligence collated during their period of canvassing and this will help in understanding future priorities.

The need to understand the skillset of a community group is a necessity from the point of engagement and to identify where any specific gaps can be plugged. The forthcoming Leadership Academy programme funded through the Vale of Usk Leader Rural Programme will be a key resource for community groups to upskill and build their capacity. The proposed ‘Collective Impact’ tool also has a role in demonstrating to communities the logic and method in developing and delivering ideas and how their benefits can be captured.

In essence, an analysis of the current situation highlights a lack of coherence of vision which needs to be articulated going forward.

“Community engagement covers the interactions between Council, communities and other stakeholders. Community engagement allows community members to actively contribute to Council decisions and actions by creating an inclusive environment in which community feedback is embraced, considered and acted upon. Community engagement is also about engaging with the community to provide access to a greater range of solutions – The collective wisdom of the community can help Council to achieve the vision and aspirations of our community.”

3.3.2 Establish Need

Comments from officers suggest that strategy has dictated the need which is the wrong way round with the well-being assessment denoting a fresh start to directing activity to short, medium and long term priorities. However, “need” should be hooked into strategies early on, in order to make the case for funding and support. A number of workshop comments were made on whether the current use of Section 106 monies has been ad-hoc recognising the need for a series of local community plans to guide investment as well as leveraging in other sources of funding to maximise impact.

“A community development approach means ensuring that the issues and priorities are identified and agreed by the communities themselves, and that people are encouraged to work together towards a collective solution to a shared concern or opportunity.”

Toolkits that help identify need are key to building capacity and skills, specifically the GAVO Creative Communities Toolkit which needs to link into future community engagement practice. In addition, a reality check on funding needs to be built in at the needs based stage to ensure evidence is gathered to support future applications.

An idea to adopt a triage approach to understanding need and resultant action was also identified in order to develop a sense of order on how officers should treat an issue and respond to an opportunity. Protocols or a standard set of design principles such as through the Future Monmouthshire model could be adopted here so that consistency is maintained.

The role of partners is again re-enforced with the need for the Public Service Board to understand community led need and associated data, with the “same endeavour” from strategic to local to street level. The use of the proposed ‘Collective Impact’ tool needs to be considered at this stage to identify how need is measured, collected, analysed and forms part of continual assessment going forward.

3.3.3 Development

How need is developed and progressed can take various forms. Some community groups will have their own resource and skills to develop ideas that are not dependent on other partners. This may be about organising a community or street or to tidy up an area of land or start a growing project.

In most cases, there will be a need to be dependent on the Authority and partners to help develop proposals. This may be due to land ownership, specific regulations and consents required. Responsible officers that tend to provide technical advice tend to get involved later on in the community engagement process unless the issue has a direct relationship to their service area. Proposals can be perceived as being desirable at times and non-statutory which results in community engagement type officers having informal chats outside of mainstream work. There is therefore a need for technical staff to be engaged in the early days of community engagement and to understand where community input and resource can lead to local ownership, opportunities for delegating maintenance/management and shared costs.

3.3.4 Delivery

Delivery of projects often sits outside of community engagement practitioners control, sometimes due to physical works that are led by commissioning organisations. There is still a need to help groups oversee and monitor to ensure physical results meet the projected need in terms of function and sustainability.

On commissioning, officers also discussed whether a consortia approach to procurement could be developed that helps network local commissioning organisations thereby achieving smarter procurement and value for money.

Moving away from capital type community projects, the role of volunteering and local businesses is an untapped opportunity which can be corralled with corporate and social responsibilities enabling community painting, tidy ups and supporting local schools and organisations.

3.3.5 Sustainability

In addition to sustaining community projects through use, management and maintenance, there is still a perceived need to work with groups to watch their natural progression as they move from smaller confidence building projects to ones that may grow in scale but are jointly delivered by the community and enabled by the Authority. There is also opportunity for maturing community groups to coach other emerging groups with their experiences and lessons learnt to ensure they keep growing whilst considering succession planning.

Finally, how outcomes are reported back to the Authority and the Public Service Board are important in seeing where effort has realised local benefits and whether these demonstrate a localised impact or across a number of communities of interest.

The proposed 'Collective Impact' tool could provide a mechanism for channelling both hard and soft outputs that can be aggregated at a local level or towards County outcomes and could be used by the Public Service Board in understanding outcomes and the process that were used to achieve them.

3.3.6 Plans or Frameworks?

The need for a "plan" or a "framework" was questioned through the community engagement process with some officers recognising that a plan provides focus, accountability and direction for a place. The Local Government Bill and Wales Planning Act places emphasis on the need for local planning authorities to work closer with Town/Community Councils with its promoting "Place Plans", although these are a non-statutory requirement. Some interviewees commented on the existence of historical place based plans through rural development activity and the subsequent risk of duplication and over-consultation. Other comments spoke of the risk of Place Plans being town centric and not relating to their immediate hinterland and wider rural area. Planning officers also commented on the timing of Place Plans in Monmouthshire with the Local Development Plan due for review and an emerging Strategic Development Plan to place strategic priorities on the area. Place Plans do however help manage change e.g. housing allocations and do direct S.106 monies from developers towards targeted needs, and therefore need to be considered in the community engagement "mix".

Outside of physical place, some interviewees commented that Plans don't always fit with the well-being agenda, specifically the Council's Prevention and Early Intervention with social inclusion, befriending and volunteering activity focusing on participation in community life and engendering a sense of belonging. Consideration of the word "framework" rather than "Plan" may provide more flexibility in approach yet achieve the same outcomes.

3.3.7 Funding

The need to co-ordinate funding and bring together the small parts to create the whole is an overwhelming message from community engagement practitioners. At an area committee level, interviewees saw the need for the pooling of area committee grants, discussion on how Community Council precepts can be used and more of a community-plan led use of Section 106 contributions. Early engagement with community type organisations so that the need dictates the type of funding is also required.

- Community engagement is about listening, consulting, having a conversation, sometimes regulatory but mostly bottom up with timing and motive important; the Council current provides various forms of engagement through the Wales Future Generation and Well-Being Act but it needs alignment and continued involvement and collaboration.
- Community development is about moving from a conversation into action, removing barriers, giving resources, space and trust to develop shared ideas.
- Community development is not asset based not just issue based – this diversity requires the need for new thinking.
- The maturity of community will shape the approach to how you engage and support, with the need to help grow community leaders to enable diversity and equity.
- There are a number of toolkits that are available which need to be brought into one place for communities to use.
- There are examples of officers working together due to “personality” rather than structure, there are therefore some missed opportunities including opportunities to look at different ways of delivery.
- Discussion on how communities present their priorities in the form of local plan and frameworks.

3.4 Skillset

As part of the series of community workshops, participants completed a skills profile form as well as further discussion in the workshop. Skills were grouped into softer and the more harder, technical skills.

3.4.1 Soft Skills

There is a common skillset within those officers that see themselves as community facing and acting as intermediaries, co-ordinators and enablers. Engagement skills are a pre-requisite for striking up a conversation and participation within a community with strong inter-personal qualities key to ensuring community engagement practitioners are perceived as accessible, helpful, approachable and friendly. This is supported by the ability to identify potential individuals and groups within a community specifically when the Authority is presenting an opportunity to make a difference.

Figure 4 - "Soft" Community Engagement Skills

Facilitation is a key role for most officers when managing change and a key quality in shifting ways of working and the role of communities in co-delivery. This is supported by coaching, mentoring and leadership skills and creating positive working relationships within the Authority and across communities.

When looking at communication skills, comments focussed on the need to listen to individuals and community groups, being able to speak and articulate key areas for discussions and joint ideas, and capturing these in a user friendly written format. Interpreting discussions within a community and how these meet local need as well as alignment to wider strategic outcomes is also important, specifically when looking at resources and funding. As part of the communication skillset, “telling stories” through pen portraits of a community and sharing similar experiences through case studies, all help build confidence and support community led action.

Negotiation, persuasion and influencing are skills that are essential for internal ways of working within the Authority, as well as building consensus within a wider community. Building relationships, and sometimes “conflict resolution” and having a political awareness, are also key skills in problem solving and reaching a shared solution. All of the above are also about focussing on growing individuals and groups using a broad skillset to achieve this outcome.

3.4.2 Hard Skills

Due to the diverse range of jobs and professions in the workshop sessions, the range of technical skills are transferable as well as specialist:

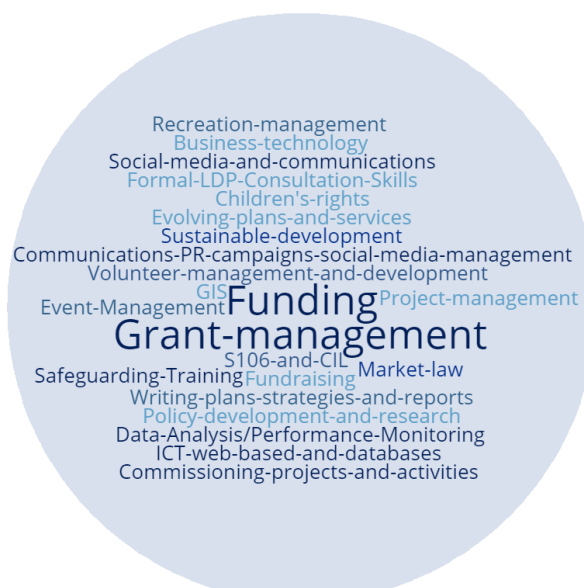
- Qualifications in project management as well as being able to commission projects and activities;
- Volunteer management and development which also includes Safeguarding Training Level 2 and Trainer Status;



Source: Community Engagement Workshop Attendees – 9th March

Figure 5 - "Harder" Technical Community Engagement Skills

- Communication skills specifically:
 - Copy writing
 - Public relations and campaigns
 - Social media management
 - Formal Local Development Plan consultation skills;
- Event management;
- Grant management and funding;
 - Writing funding applications;
 - Domestic and European funding knowledge e.g. RDP;
 - Fundraising;
- Knowledge of Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy;
- ICT;
 - Web based;
 - Databases;
 - Business technology;
 - Geographical information systems;



Source: Community Engagement Workshop Attendees
– 9th March

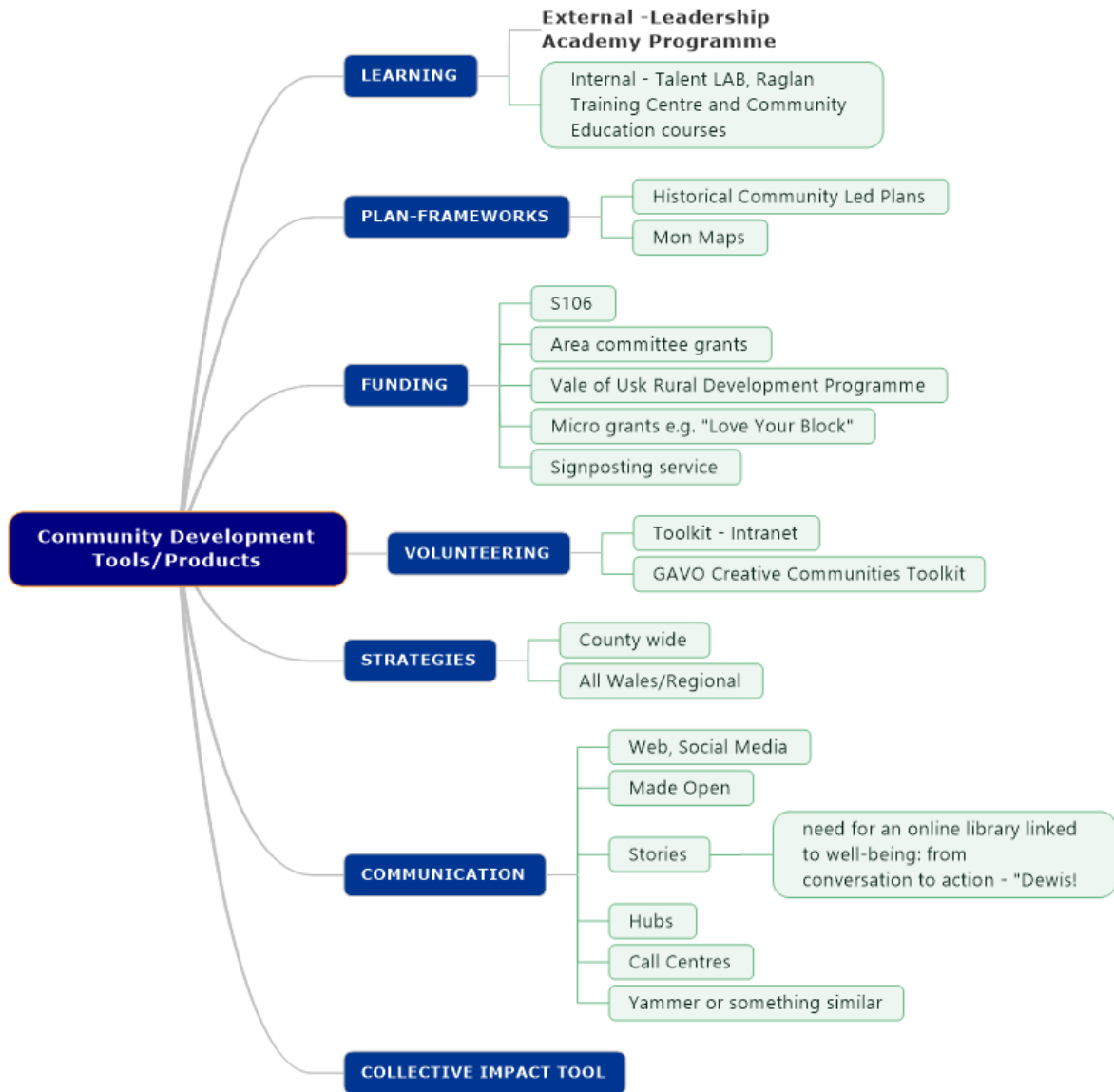
- Recreation management;
- Policy development;
- Data analysis;
- Performance management, monitoring and evaluation;
- Sustainable development;
- Specific skills: Market law, Children's rights - SOUL and Hidden Sentences Training; and
- Writing plans, strategies and reports, evolving plans and services.

3.5 Current Toolkit

Figure 6 overleaf illustrates the range of resources within the existing toolkit that a more integrated community engagement could provide. Areas for development include:

- Online libraries for staff and the wider community to access on best practice, stories (video) and downloadable case studies, evaluation reports;
- Integration of 'Made Open' into community engagement pathway so that users understand its placement, purpose and how it can lead to other means of support and networking outside of public meetings;
- Training – develop in-house training for community engagement that extends core skills, innovation and how to develop joint solutions;

Figure 6 - Community Engagement Toolkit - Now



Source: Community Engagement Workshop Attendees – 9th March

- The people based skills for community engagement and development are strong across a diversity of services and officers. Project management, communication, ICT and bid writing skills are also core technical skills that people possess.
- There are opportunities for training some responsible officers in core community development skills which would release time and resources from the current Whole Place team.
- There are a number of existing resources that can be pooled into a community development toolkit for Council users and for the wider community

4 Community Governance - Now

4.1 Role of Local Members

Local elected Members are seen to be the first point of contact for local residents and organisations when there is an issue or a proposal that relates to community well-being. Local members will often reside in their ward or community and will subsequently have a strong awareness of need and issues and the type of organisations that are active. Some members are very visible in their community with ward walkabouts and surgeries and are seen as local conduits for raising problems and making connections with the Authority. Some examples have been given though where elected members have turned to the Whole Place team on issues that are not directly related to community engagement i.e. streetscene. This diverts resources and blurs the role of community engagement type activity. There is therefore a need for some training and mentoring for elected Members. The Councillor's Workbook on Neighbourhood and Community Engagement Guidance from the Local Government Association¹ may be useful in shaping an approach to training material whilst the embryonic Community Leadership Academy will provide an opportunity to deliver bespoke training courses.

4.2 Area Committees to Date

Area committees were originally established following the need to engage the community in Area Working with the following roles and functions:

1. To help the Authority shape major proposals affecting the area and to advise the Authority about the implications for the area of the proposed objectives, plans and policies;
2. To lead the development of the local community planning process and produce a Community Plan for each area in a way which communicates the Authority's overall policies as well as safeguarding local interest;
3. To ensure properly coordinated services at a local level;
4. To encourage effective collaboration with public, private and voluntary sector partners locally to help the Authority meet the aspirations of local people;
5. To provide a forum for views of local communities and to encourage discussions and debate on matters of particular relevance to the area including participating in the process of Best Value Reviews as a formal consultee; and
6. To make decisions on matters within the area that have been delegated by the Executive provided those decisions are within the Authority's overall policies and budgetary allocations and do not adversely affect other areas of Monmouthshire.

Monmouthshire Council has operated a system of four area committees in Bryn-y-Cwm; Severnside; Lower Wye and Central Monmouthshire. Some area committees are perceived to work well, others not so which may relate to the level of social capital and activity within an area such as the presence of voluntary and community organisations and in some towns the existence of Programme Boards and Town Teams that have a local focus. Other comments have identified the lack of an area services officer (ASO) or direct resource for the committee following the removal of resource due to capacity and a lack of delegated powers to implement decisions arising from meetings. The ASO role was also seen to support making connections across community organisations which Whole Place has supported.

¹ <http://www.local.gov.uk/councillors-workbook-neighbourhood-and-community-engagement>

Comments on the role of area committees have focussed on the need to avoid duplication with local decision-making within communities. The role of local elected Members in bridging grass roots issues and ideas via area committees and onwards to Cabinet meetings is key to demonstrating that issues are being addressed and changed is being managed within a community. The need for area committees to be equitable and inclusive is seen as important with the need for co-opted representatives being key to opening up the local democratic process so that organisations are listened to and also form part of the local prioritisation process as well as supporting co-delivery.

4.3 Area Forums

There were three Community Forums in Monmouthshire in Bryn-y-Cwm, the Rural Forum and the Monmouthshire Partnership Forum. The Bryn y Cwm Forum ceased to exist when the Whole Place team were no longer able to provide facilitation services due to resource issues, the Rural Forum ceased when the Usk Cluster was formed however the Monmouthshire Partnership Forum continues although it is no longer serviced by the Whole Place team and is run as an independent forum to discuss local issues.

4.4 Programme Board - Town Teams

Programme Boards were devised to support the delivery of Place Plans with two set up in Bryn-y-cwm and Severnside. These town centred Boards were initially serviced by Whole Place officers. These have not met for some time with Town Teams appearing to have taken over responsibility for delivering actions within the respective town centres. These sit outside of the Authority with both the Caldicot Town Team and the Abergavenny Town Team formally incorporated as Community Interest Companies. Comments on how the respective town teams have operated can be found earlier on in the report.

4.5 Area Committee Grants

Area committees have operated a small capital grant fund of £20,000 per annum which is currently distributed equally amongst the four Committees, with £5,000 distributed to local projects across each of the four areas. Observations on the use of these small grants related to their need for greater governance around funding criteria, promotion, evidence of need and the type of projects that grants have funded. There is also a case for aligning these grants with other funding such as Section 106, RDP and small lottery grants so that leverage is maximised and greater impact generated.

4.6 Area Committees and Relationship to Community Centred Delivery

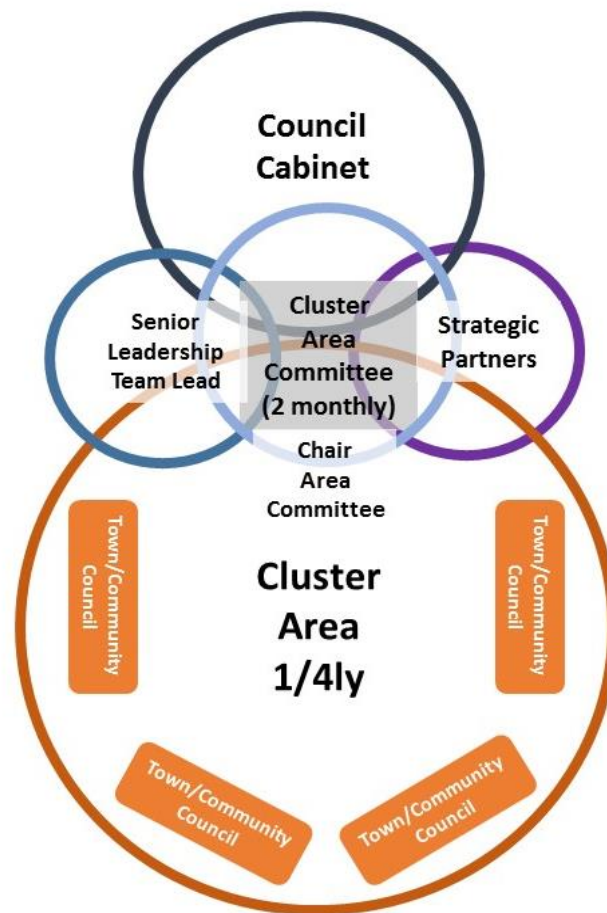
In 2016, the Authority saw the need to improve communication and relationships with its Town and Community Councils and so Cluster Area meetings were established. The cluster area roll out was identified by all interviewees as key to relationship building and establishing roles and responsibilities especially amongst Town and Community Councils. A Senior Leadership Team member in each of the five areas is a key bridge to corporate outcomes and strategic signposting to the Authority and onwards to the Public Service Board.

There is however a need to discuss the cascade of community engagement and place based support with Town and Community Councils specifically how they engage with their communities of interest. This is in relation to their geographical reach, types of groups, their residents, skills within Town/Community Council and any necessary training (possible use of RDP Vale of Usk Leadership Academy Training project). The role of community engagement and place based officers needs clarification and how plans/conversations are developed in the future especially within the context of place plans or local frameworks. The role of area committee grants and the future role of section 106 contributions or

Community Infrastructure Levy specifically with projects that are at a County or a town/community level also needs consideration to ensure transparency

When interviewees were asked about the future role of area committee, most officers had concerns over duplication and where Area Committees can add value when there is a greater emphasis on Town and Community Councils and increased devolution to a local level. The role of local County Councillors was seen to be part of the local solution and the devolved approach, with their involvement in their ward key to the gathering of intelligence, identifying needs and directing resources. Examples of proactive Members undertaking regular ward walkabouts and surgeries were identified with one suggestion that if there was to be a consistent approach to community engagement that joint training/mentoring for elected Members and responsible officers be provided.

Figure 7 - Relationship of Area Committees to Cluster Area Working



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

The evolution of the clusters areas into joint decision-making bodies with area elected Members is logical and joined up, however representation from other community organisations is important in shaping prioritisation. Where interviewees saw merit in retaining and developing area committees, they saw the committee as a platform from where strategic and local decision-making meets. By bending strategic programmes to meet local need, interviewees recognise a role for area committees as a conduit for developing and delivering the well-being plan at a local level and directing resources such as S.106 contributions in a coordinated manner.

- The role of local ward Members is key to how communities participate and engage in their local area.
- Key legislation and the formation of the five area clusters is important to the future of shape of community governance and relationship to area committees, with implications for upskilling Community Councils and other community organisations.
- There needs to be a more integrated and smarter way of aligning grants and funding to local need to maximize leverage and gain greater impact. Use of digital platforms such as Made Open could also in prioritizing local issues through community voting and where resources such as grants should be spent.

5 Role of Section 106

The review of Section 106 has been undertaken through a workshop amongst planning officers and an interview with the Community Infrastructure Officer in the County Council.

5.1 Section 106 Funding

Section 106 agreements and their associated funding are made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, sometimes called planning obligations or planning gain.

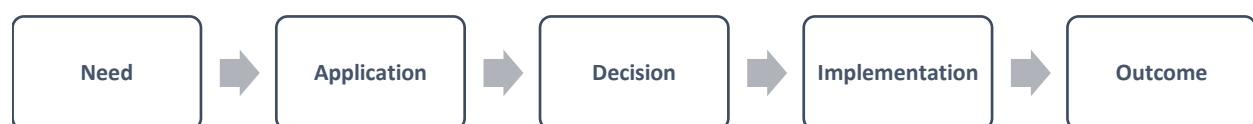
The agreement is between a developer and a Local Planning Authority which operates alongside a statutory planning permission. Such an agreement is entered into to prescribe the nature of development, to secure a contribution from a developer to compensate for any loss or damage caused by a development, or to mitigate a development's wider impact. Section 106 agreements are signed once planning permission has been granted. Any agreement needs to meet the statutory tests that any planning obligations in the agreement are "necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development, and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind²".

Section 106 contributions can be made in several ways, including:

- Affordable housing – either construction or financial contributions towards;
- Education – contributions from developers (up to 5 individual developers' contributions can be pooled) can be collected towards larger infrastructure developments such as a local school;
- Direct site access;
- Flood protection;
- Wildlife protection measures; and
- On-site leisure recreation such as open space
- Off-site adult recreation
- Sustainable transport

5.2 Process

Figure 8 - Section 106 Review Process



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

5.2.1 Management

The management and monitoring of Section 106 agreements and contributions is overseen by the Head of Planning, Housing and Place-Shaping with day to day responsibility to a planning officer and enforcement officer. These act as point of contacts at pre-application stage with the development management officer and on agreement, the follow-on monitoring undertaken by the enforcement officer.

² Welsh Government guidance – Planning – Section 106 agreements, July 2015

A Section 106 working group has been established for some 10 years, meeting regularly with the following responsibilities:

- To monitor Section 106 Agreements from first expressions of interest to the application of commuted maintenance and capital sums;
- To review arrangements for Section 106 Agreements and make recommendations for improvement;
- To receive regular reports from the Planning Enforcement Section identifying details of Section 106 Agreements, implementation timescales and payments received;
- To receive regular reports from Central Finance that sums received on the Authority's ledger reconcile to the Section 106 combined report, confirming budgets established and slipped, expenditure incurred and balances remaining on schemes. Highlighting capital budgets which are required to be added to the capital program and ensuring that controls within the Section 106 environment accord with financial processes elsewhere in the Authority;
- To be consulted on all matters in relation to Section 106 Agreements; and
- To be consulted on the application of Section 106 monies held for programme maintenance and capital schemes.

The working group comprises of responsible officers from planning, legal and finance with respective officers (highways, active travel, leisure, education, housing) reporting on progress against agreed contributions, associated consents/permissions, status of any agreements, expenditure incurred and general progress. The review attended a meeting of the working group meeting which presented a robust and well managed systems approach to how developing and approved Section 106 agreements were being delivered. The meeting provided a forum for co-ordination, troubleshooting and risk management and monitoring progress during the implementation of respective works.

It is chaired by the Head of Planning, Housing and Place Shaping with some strategic areas of scrutiny including viability on housing, clarifying the need and mitigation, and link to the development. The Chair is supported by a planning officer and by the enforcement/monitoring officer, who specifically:

- Logs the Section 106 agreements and any associated covenants;
- Ongoing monitoring: occupancy conditions with reminders to service heads; and
- Acts as an intermediary with other partners e.g. National Park Authority

The Whole Place Manager attends working group meetings with the remit to feedback local need, scrutiny of applications with lead officers and the lead elected Member prior to Cabinet approval.

Due to the Brecon Beacons National Parking (BBNPA) being the local planning authority for the northern edge of the Authority's area, representation from BBNPA is open but attendance has been sporadic. This is noted to be causing a lack of co-ordination on where Section 106 monies are being spent as well as transparency on monitoring of contributions. This issue needs to be addressed if a more integrated way of understanding need and directing contributions is made.

5.2.2 Need

Within the planning sphere, the needs of communities are identified through the infrastructure plan as part of the Local Development Plan (LDP) process with statutory bodies consulted as part of the process. Planning officers also use the Community Council profiles to understand specific characteristics and

potential areas of need. The workshop did identify the need for a more user-friendly asset or infrastructure plan that wasn't entirely welded to LDP documents but something that was accessible and potentially could inform any future Place Plans or frameworks within communities. County Councillors have also historically come to planning officers with requests as well as to officers in leisure with proposals that have come from Community Councils or other local organisations.

When looking at statistical or quantitative need for a proposal, there is agreement that well-being data needs to link to physical assets of a place. Opportunities with the project managed by the Authority's Policy and Performance Manager is a future action and could help to shape how future Section 106 contributions are targeted. By mapping data and evidence used in the well-being assessment and other information held by officers as part of the newly formed data network this could help shape how future S.106 contributions are targeted. The use of available digital platforms such as Made Open could enable the community to comment and vote on options enabling a more participatory form of local democracy in line with the involvement and collaboration principles enshrined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

There is also a need to review how, when and why communities are engaged as this is presently undertaken at the post Section 106 decision stage. Early engagement through community asset plans or place based plans could help in setting priorities across the five cluster areas. This would provide a hierarchical approach to investment, identify pipeline projects, in addition to leveraging other grants and adding value to Section 106 contributions. The need to develop a local prioritisation tool linking into 'Mon Maps' has also been identified. Some interviewees have also commented on the lack of a strategic focus or list of medium to long term projects that can guide Section 106 contributions which does result in single sites and projects being considered, albeit there is a cap on pooling up to five individual Section 106 contributions which does not restrict supporting larger strategic projects. The example of Monmouth pool has been highlighted with three housing sites being pooled together to meet "major priorities". The lack of a strategic framework to direct contributions which also provides a rationale to other groups that are seeking money for leisure/recreational projects is therefore needed.

5.2.3 Application

Development management officers will be the main point of contact with applicants and developers. A development management proforma has been devised which helps in co-ordinating responses to developers in relation to need and proposals (see annex). Main areas of liaison are on active travel, Education, S278 highways, affordable housing, leisure/open space and green infrastructure. Calls for Section 106 contributions are sometimes seen to be for "pet projects" or for proposals that have been historically linked to a series of old decisions which tends to block new ways of thinking. Larger applications are referred to Head of Planning with the majority mainly handled by development management officers.

Education and affordable housing requests are managed directly with off-site recreation needs led by the Community Infrastructure Officer. This officer does provide support to developers at pre-application meetings in terms of standards and cost estimates.

Working with the data network group, there is an opportunity to provide transparency on funding criteria for the use of Section 106 monies, how to identify ideas, develop proposals and provide a digital forum for the community to vote on priorities. Other non-digital voting systems would also need to be provided.

5.2.4 Pre-Decision

On affordable housing needs linked to Section 106 contributions, viability tests are undertaken in relation to demand and sustainability.

The main resource focus are the legal negotiations between the developer and Council solicitors which takes time and is a high-risk item in safeguarding the interest of the agreement, its conditions and future fulfilment. Some interviewees have commented on the various forms of Section 106 agreements and that a standard format needs to be agreed between developer, agent, landowner and the Authority.

5.2.5 Decision

The planning decision notice is the “trigger” for the period of implementation for the Section 106 agreement, with the Authority’s monitoring database helping to report on key triggers and co-ordinate when money comes in to the Council.

5.2.6 Implementation

Consultation with the community has historically started at the post planning application decision stage, with some interviewees feeling that this should form part of earlier engagement through a local plan approach. This tends to develop design proposals further, prior to contracted works, specifically on open space and play/recreation. Local decision-making through “local panels” has mixed views from interviewees with some believing that they help reach a consensual decision and others stating that the panel is not representative or elected. The Monmouth local panel is held up as an example where responsible officers in leisure, asset management and Whole Place have assessed and directed Section 106 monies in consultation with the Cabinet Member and a Town Councillor with three members of the public also observing proceedings. This approach has looked at evidence of need and level of match funding contribution which has made shortlisting easier and made Section 106 monies go further.

In looking at open space and recreation schemes to date, some interviewees have commented on the previous interpretation of the standards for play provision with one housing scheme in Rockfield having 8 no. play areas with 20 no. play areas in Monmouth town area. In going forward, interviewees have outlined a more flexible approach on the amount and type of open space that will be provided in new development. This common-sense approach and relaxation of standards therefore seems to be logical in terms of reaching sustainable and integrated solutions and helping with future maintenance costs.

Dependent on the nature of the works, a clerk of works will check on the physical progress of works in relation to quality and certification which is linked to monitoring reports to the S.106 working group. When an open space or play/recreation space is to be adopted by the Authority final checks will be made on completion.

There were mixed views as to whether the Authority should communicate which developers have helped to support community infrastructure in projects through S.106 contributions such as play and recreation as they are seen to be a form of mitigating impact or have specific sensitivities e.g. Chippenham Playing Fields campaign. Other interviewees see a need to promote the benefits of their investment so that it feels part of the community.

5.2.7 Outcome

There is no post monitoring of usage and benefits that have been generated from S.106 contributions. This is seen to be beyond the development management process but it is seen to be part of community

development and understanding how the well-being of residents has been impacted through works that will help with activity, cohesion and development.

- There is a robust system of monitoring Section 106 contributions from application, decision to implementation, however Brecon Beacons National Park Authority needs to more of an active role on the working group, could the PSB influence this?
- More user-friendly asset or infrastructure plans could be developed that may form part of local “place plans” in going forward so that medium to long term priorities are agreed; these can direct future Section 106 contributions and generate pipeline projects.
- Greater data sharing between local need and outcomes should be developed across the Authority so that the relationship of land use and well-being can be captured e.g. Mon Maps, with a greater focus being placed on outcomes and impacts.
- Agree standard forms of agreements for Section 106 contracts.
- Consider ways of promoting the Section 106 investment from developers through site promotion or through community information to avoid missed opportunities from other potential community schemes.
- Maximise impact by identifying opportunities to use Section 106 funding as match funding to unlock bigger community schemes.

6 Community Engagement/Governance - Future

6.1 Focus/Ways of Working

In looking towards the future focus for the present whole place team and community engagement in Monmouthshire, there are several policy drivers and changes to ways of working that need to be acknowledged.

6.1.1 Monmouthshire's Well-being Assessment

Some of the key issues identified within the Well Being Assessment that relate to community engagement include:

Short term

- Monmouthshire has high levels of social capital and volunteering. By taking an asset and placed based approach there is an opportunity to improve well-being.

Medium term

- An ageing population brings many opportunities, however there are also challenges for service provision and increases in the number of people living with long term conditions which will create pressures on health and social care services.
- There are many vulnerable people in our society, this can arise from many things such as mental or physical disability or factors such as age, rural isolation and loneliness.
- Arts and culture can have a positive impact on emotional health and well-being providing opportunities for expression and social contact. However, funding for the arts can come under pressure in terms of austerity and there is a need to increase accessibility of arts, culture and heritage to maximise their contribution to well-being.

Long term

- There is inequality between communities and within communities. This includes educational attainment, wage levels and health outcomes. Research shows that inequality has a negative impact in many aspects of well-being with more equal services experiencing better outcomes.
- Development, climate change and pollution all present risk to the natural and built environment. These are central to our well-being and need to be protected and preserved for future generations.
- Climate change is likely to increase the risk of flooding, as well as many other risks, so mitigating climate change and building resilience will be crucial for communities.

6.1.2 The Planning (Wales) Act 2015

The Act requires Local Planning Authorities to:

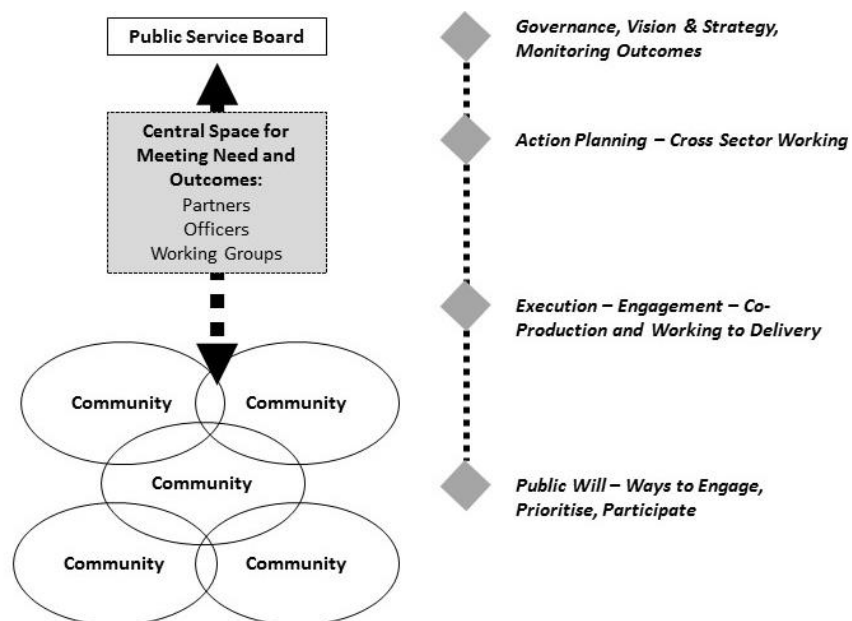
- Have regard to 'Local Well-being Plans' to be published by Public Service Boards (PSBs);
- Greater development engagement at the pre-application stage; and
- To consider the Positive Planning agenda and role of pilot Place Plans which should be prepared and led by communities to enable residents to have a greater say on developments within their local area.

6.1.3 Positioning Community Engagement

The review has come to an informed view that community engagement needs to be repositioned within a more centralised role as shown in Figure 9 below, for the following reasons:

- The Authority’s Well-Being Assessment will move next to the Plan stage and subsequent co-delivery with partners, focussing on how its resource structure and alignment can embrace i) integration ii) long-term thinking iii) prevention iv) collaboration and v) involvement - involving the people affect. The Public Service Board (PSB) is strategically responsible for the delivery and monitoring of the future Well Being Plan with the need for a coordinated and cross cutting approach to thematic areas and outcomes. There is a need to align the existing Whole Place team with the Authority’s Partnership team to help with delivery and provide the central channel where need leads to delivery and generates outcomes. Annex C to this report details the PSB structure, outcomes and leads.
- The Local Government Act and Planning Wales Act place emphasis on encouraging greater public participation in Local Government with community governance moving to an area based approach and “boards” made up of Elected Members, community bodies, the third sector, Community Councils and other public services. The Planning Wales Act has a focus on community led plans that supplement the Local Development Plan.
- The County Council has recognised the need to engage closer with its Community Councils since 2016 with the five-area cluster model now providing the forum for respective Town and Community Councils to come together and liaise with the County Council. This integrated approach provides an opportunity for the current whole place team to have more of an enabling and facilitating role, in addition to supporting the co-delivery of community led ideas. There is also a need to support Town and Community Councils with their skills and training as part of the transition in their roles in meeting well-being objectives and co-producing locally led frameworks such as Place Plans.

Figure 9 - Positioning Community Engagement



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

6.2 Community Governance approach

The original objective for the review of community governance was to understand the role of area committees in facilitating community governance. As policy and legislation is opening up, the wider roles for elected Members in local authorities and Community Councils will not be solely directed along the Areas Committees pathway. There is therefore a need to recognise how other organisations and ‘joined-up’ working will have a role in community governance going forward

In Monmouthshire, the following pathway is therefore proposed that will facilitate and enable community participation and development.

Figure 10 – Community Governance/Engagement Pathway



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

6.3 Roles/Responsibilities

The following roles and responsibilities are centred on awareness, building capacity, co-resourcing, coordination, scaling up and influencing local decisions and actions within communities.

6.3.1 Community Lead Enablers

This is not exclusive to the present Whole Place team as other responsible officers have responsibility for community engagement whether this be within leisure, community infrastructure, sustainability, planning or the Rural Development Programme.

Key roles and responsibilities include:

- Providing resources for high quality community leaders including elected Members at a County and Community Council level;
 - Access to Leadership Academy Programme (external);
 - Community engagement training for elected members (internal);
- Enabling the co-production and delivery of community led ideas through innovative ways of working;
- Building skills across the Authority in framework and plans development that guide local and strategic priorities;
- Providing a centralised resource that helps deliver against need through a well-being and place based approach at a local and strategic level, providing a conduit between the Public Service Board and its communities of interest;
- Recording intelligence and conversations that help establish need, types of support and resultant signposting whilst also providing toolkits to help visual outcomes.

6.3.2 Community/Town Council – Other Organisations

For Community and Town Councils to be competent and skilled in their role in local community engagement, there is a need to support them in this transition, whilst also respecting that some Community Councils may already be equipped to undertake this role.

Key roles and responsibilities include:

- To promote and raise awareness of local democracy and participation amongst residents and organisations;
- For local elected Members to develop skills in community engagement and development with the support of Community Engagement Enablers and organisations such as Planning Aid Wales;
- To understand the role of Community and Town Council in well-being and place based plans;
- To provide a local forum for partners/residents to shape local priorities and participate in the engagement and delivery of local plans and frameworks;
- To develop “local plans” that meet the needs of people and places within a Town and Community Council area; and
- To work with other Town and Community Councils where there is a need to address common issues and develop joint solutions e.g. community transport, local tourism initiatives.

Whilst there needs to be a focus and support for Town and Community Councils, support for community and voluntary groups and organisations needs to be maintained as well as helping non-formalised groups with their growth. Close working with Gwent Association for Voluntary Organisations on their Creative Rural Communities toolkit needs to be tied into these networks.

6.3.3 Cluster Areas

We understand that the five cluster areas have been established to improve communication between the Authority and Town and Community Councils, such a forum can also facilitate a space that brings issues and locally grown ideas for sharing and augmenting.

Key roles and responsibilities include:

- A place to involve Community Councils in strategic policy (Well Being Plans, Social Care Place Based approaches), cluster and County wide proposals, plans and initiatives, and funding opportunities such as Section 106, future CIL resources and other strategic investments;
- Relationship and shared locality solutions;
- Developing areas where local plans can join up and develop cross Community Council working;
- A place to gradually filter out “background noise” and deal with strategic issues and proposals;
- A conduit for County wide organisations to attend and share thinking and support e.g. GAVO;
- To aggregate local monitoring reports and to understand/celebrate outputs, outcomes and stories;
- A bridge between Community Councils and Area Committees where issues and priorities are raised with Senior Leadership Team officer and Area Committee Chairs.

6.3.4 Area Committees

A renewed focus on area committees needs to be an integrated way of supporting and ensuring Monmouthshire’s communities are resilient with a clarity for purpose when seen from a community perspective. From review workshops and interviews, area committees need to be citizen focussed and

seen to add value and influence, “where strategic and local decision-making meets” whilst directing resources to local priorities.

The March 2017 report to County Council has agreed to a pilot whereby Area Committees are retained as the sole structure with an increase in co-opted community members. There will be a need to discuss the numbers and type of community members that can be co-opted and whether these need to be nominated from within the respective cluster area. A key consideration for selection of the co-opted member will be their specific knowledge or competency that can support guiding the well-being of all communities within the respective geographical area of the committee. It is suggested that they are impartial and would not be there to influence their own organisation or place of residence.

Key roles and responsibilities include:

- Providing a clear link from the cluster areas in relation to area decision-making and onwards to Cabinet and County Council;
- To provide a place for the public to participate in local democracy as well as promoting other means of engagement outside of meetings that are accessible and responsive;
- To receive local plans/framework that evidence community need;
 - Local well-being plans and how they are contributing to Area and County outcomes;
 - The role of “Place Plans” and how these relate within the five respective cluster areas;
 - To respond to other community led initiatives in a strategic way;
- To provide support where necessary and look for ways of developing joint solutions within an area that is place and partner based;
- To adopt a more strategic way of co-ordinating funding that aggregates former area committee grants, Section 106 funding, domestic grants and innovative funding streams that maximises opportunity and impact;
- To understand how community engagement is making an impact within respective communities through regular monitoring and evaluation reports (local stories and hard data); and
- To conduct area committees’ business within a collective advocacy role and a culture of doing.

A draft terms of reference for area committees is found in Annex B to this report.

6.3.5 Role of Local Members

Whilst not shown in Figure 10 as part of the community governance/engagement pathway, elected members at a County and Community level are the visible face of local democracy and key to the well-being of community life, as they represent and influence services and local investment.

With a new political administration to be elected in May 2017, this presents a perfect opportunity to focus on a refreshed approach to local engagement and community engagement.

Future key roles and responsibilities include:

- To provide information to local people to help them make informed decisions e.g. fact sheets, websites and open houses/surgeries;
- Where there is a key issue or an opportunity for a community, offering consultation and a community workshop, walkabout;

- Where residents and communities want to work in an equal partnership with the Authority, provide opportunities for co-production, participatory budgeting and prioritisation and resident managed projects; and
- To provide clarity on the resources and defined pathways to community engagement support within the Authority and with other partners.

6.4 Values, Brand, Communication & Toolkits

Further to the recommendation to repurpose whole place and its associated community engagement activity following the realignment with the Partnerships team, there is a need to provide an identity and brand that has the right values and is communicated in the right way.

A key message from this review has been that community engagement activity in the form of Whole Place has been known within the Authority but has not been widely recognised as the vehicle for community engagement and development, within the Community.

Once agreement on the form and function of community engagement and its role with community governance has been made, this needs to be considered in terms of the following items:

- What should the service be called so that it is clear and accessible to its audience - the community of Monmouthshire – Communities and Partnerships for example?
- What are the brand values of the service and how should these be projected in any material that promotes what it does and how it does it, both internally and externally?
- What existing forms of communication does the Authority have and how can these be adjusted to meet the refreshed identity for community engagement?
- What internal forms of communication can be provided to facilitate more integrated community engagement activities across Authority services? These can be discussion or project based areas in association with the Authority's Communications Team.

6.4.1 Toolkits

There are several existing toolkits and support programmes that could be have a stronger alignment to community engagement so that an integrated approach is shown to potential users. These include:

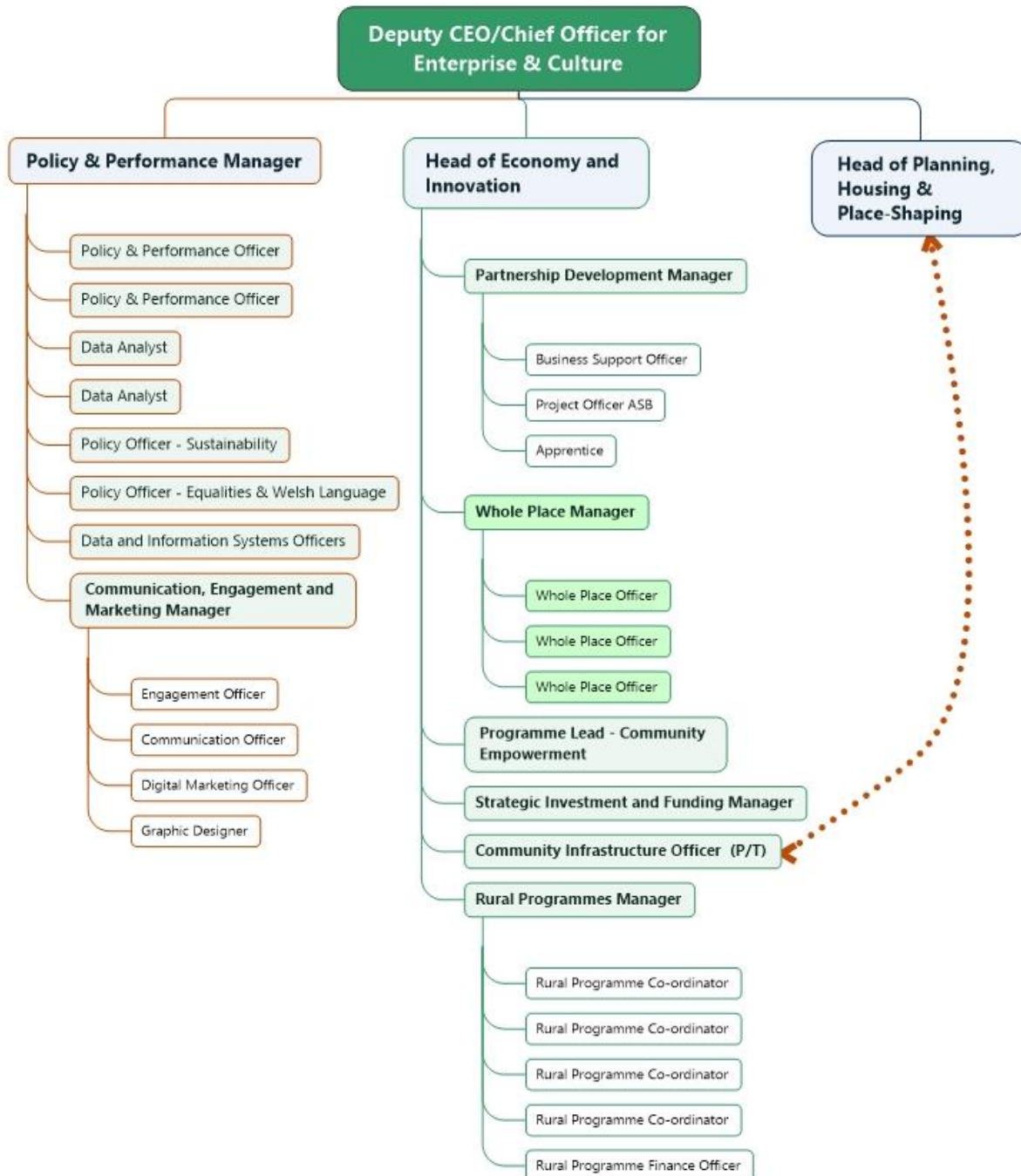
- Made Open: <https://monmouthshire.madeopen.co.uk/>
- GAVO Creative Communities Toolkit: <http://monmouthshire.biz/project/creative-communities-toolkit/>
- Community Leadership Academy: <http://monmouthshire.biz/project/community-leadership-academy/>
- Funding finder: <http://monmouthshire.biz/funding-finder/>

7 Next Steps and Recommendations

7.1 Proposed Structure

Error! Reference source not found. Figure 11 below shows the current structure of where the existing whole place team is placed.

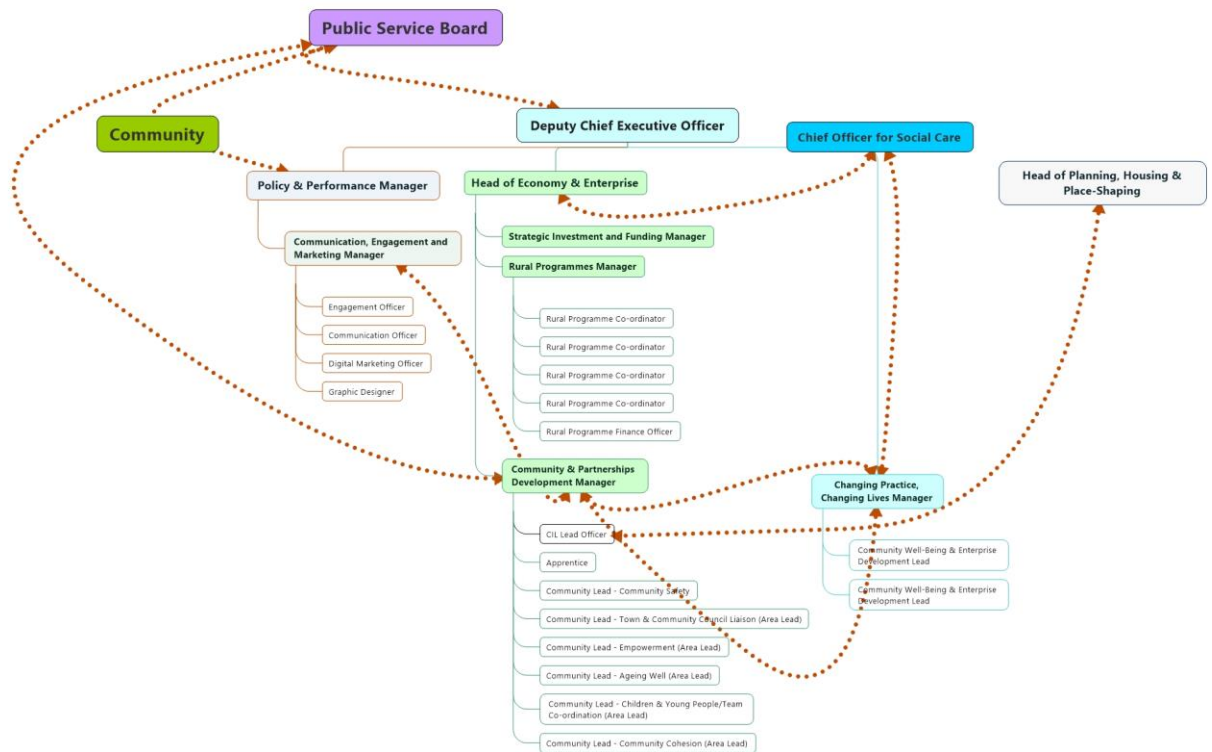
Figure 11 – Current Interim Structure for the Whole Place Team



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

Figure 12 below, proposes how the proposed structure to meet the strategic needs identified earlier in Figure 9, which detailed the need for a more centralised approach that would enable closer working with the Partnerships team and alignment to the Authority’s future Well Being Plan as well as enabling and influencing other strategic ways of working.

Figure 12 - Proposed Structure



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

7.2 Line management

The current Whole Place team is line managed by the Head of Economy and Innovation by restructuring both the Whole Place and the Partnerships along with Community Empowerment and Community Infrastructure it provides a much more consolidated offer. Strengthened links with Strategic Investment and Funding and Rural Programmes will offer further opportunities to align resource for added value and maximum impact whilst enabling stronger collaboration, signposting across teams and a closer association to the Well-Being Plan enabling a visible link between communities and the Public Service Board.

Outside of this immediate structure, there is a need to continue cross team working through the Strong Communities Group and support other teams in skills development and looking to co-production.

Figure 13 - Centralised and Thematic Working Across Services and Teams



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

7.3 Roles and responsibilities

For the newly aligned Communities and Partnerships the following roles and responsibilities are proposed.

7.3.1 Role

“Enabling communities to shape their priorities by understanding their needs and encouraging people to work together towards a collective concern or opportunity that improves and sustains well-being for all.”

7.3.2 Responsibilities

- To provide a centralised resource that helps deliver against need through well-being and place based at a local and strategic level, providing a conduit between the Public Service Board and its communities of interest;
- To provide a common ground where current legislative drivers and County outcomes meet local need and priorities;
- To build on relationships and grow trust between the Council and communities, specifically Community Councils, local organisations and residents;
- To provide resources for high quality community leaders including elected members at a County and Community Council level;
 - Access to Leadership Academy Programme (external)
 - Community engagement training for elected members (internal)
- To enable the co-production and delivery of community led ideas that are both physical and/or through social capital and through innovative ways of working;
- To help build skills across the Council in developing frameworks and plans that guide local and strategic priorities e.g. well-being plans, place plans;

- To provide toolkits for communities that support the pathway from need to delivery;
- To support the management and alignment of funding and investment in communities that is integrated, enables additional leverage and is sustainable; and
- To provide management information systems that help capture, analyse and present the outputs and outcomes of community engagement that aren't just about hard data but about community stories.

7.4 Recommendations

That the review findings be considered and form part of future delivery for:

- a. Community Engagement
- b. Section 106 Contributions
- c. Community Governance

The table below sets out recommendations that are linked to the three parts of the review.

Theme	Recommendation
Community Engagement	1. To pool and integrate community engagement tools e.g. Made Open, Mon Maps, online stories/best practice, draft Collective Impact Tool into a central resource that supports more co-ordinated internal working and facilitates local communities to engage, learn and co-deliver.
	2. The Public Service Board needs to recognise its role in delivering strategic outcomes with partner organisations acknowledging their role in partnership support and community engagement, specifically recognising a need for the equitable funding of resources.
	3. The forthcoming Leadership Academy programme funded through the Vale of Usk Leader Rural Programme is a key resource for community groups to upskill and build their capacity and needs to be integrated into other touch points for training, learning and development, and needs to be widely promoted when ready for publicising.
	4. To provide training for some responsible officers that are community facing in core engagement skills and working towards a suite of co-delivery principles.
	5. The Authority's data network needs to ensure an integrated approach to how data shows need, informs decision-making and tracks the results and outcome of how resources are directed across communities and how these relate to key legislative drivers such as the Future Generations & Well Being Act.
	6. The Authority needs to consider the role of community plans, specifically historical activity to date, the Positive Planning agenda and role of Place Plans and the role of Community Councils with their co-delivery if these are seen to have more direction from Welsh Government.

	<p>7. The existing Whole Place resource be repurposed to be strategically align to the delivery of the Future Generations & Well Being Act, meeting the role and responsibilities outlined in 7.3.1 and 7.3.2. To align other responsible officers to a more centralised approach to community engagement and co-delivery with the local community.</p>
	<p>8. That the suggested future structure be considered and the Authority commences the implementation of officer and resource changes that responds to the future needs of Monmouthshire communities.</p>
	<p>9. To develop a communications strategy and campaign for the repurposing of the former Whole Place programme that has clear internal and external messages on its specific purpose, services and ways of working and how other partners form part of the wider community engagement activity.</p>
Section 106	<p>10. To maintain the sound management and monitoring work of the Section 106 Working Group</p>
	<p>11. To ensure Brecon Beacons National Park Authority take a more participatory role in the Working Group so that a holistic approach to the direction of Section 106 contributions is achieved.</p>
	<p>12. To work with other responsible officers on the development of local asset or infrastructure plans that could support place based or locality based planning and delivery.</p>
	<p>13. Responsible officers to work with the Authority's data network in order to link need to delivery to local/strategic outcomes.</p>
	<p>14. To develop a standard format for Section 106 agreements.</p>
	<p>15. To integrate decision-making on Section 106 contributions through area committees with local communities provided with opportunities to recommend priorities, where feasible.</p>
Community Governance	<p>16. For area committees to have a key role in the delivery of Monmouthshire's Well Being Assessment and Plan, providing a forum and local decision-making body to understand need and priorities, listen to its community and direct resources that meet both local and strategic outcomes. Suggested roles and responsibilities are outlined in 6.3.4.</p>
	<p>17. To pool existing area committee grants with other grants, funding and contributions such as Section 106 so that a more integrated approach to addressing need and maximising funds is achieved.</p>
	<p>18. To provide joint training/mentoring in community engagement for elected Members and responsible officers be provided.</p>

	19. To support Community Councils with the transition of co-delivering community led ideas through training, provision of tool-kits and continued communication through the five-area cluster model.
	20. For the terms of reference in Annex B to be considered by the Authority.

Annex A
Section 106 Proforma

Affordable Housing Requirements:	
Relevant Officer:	Shirley Wiggam
Transport Contributions:	
Relevant Officer:	Christian Schmidt
Education Contributions:	
Relevant Officer:	Matthew Jones
Recreation Contributions:	
Community Projects:	
Relevant Officer:	Mike Moran
Countryside Contributions:	

Relevant officer:	Ben Terry, Shaun Pritchard, Kate Stinchcombe, Jim Keech
Highways Contributions: Details of any s278 contributions/ Requirements: (s38 Agt required if land is required to be dedicated as highway) Payment Dates: Relevant Officer:	 Christian Lowe
EH Contributions:	
Relevant Officer:	Paul White
Other Contributions:	
Relevant Officer:	Martin Davies

Annex B

Terms of Reference for Area Committee

The Terms of Reference and delegated powers of the Area Committees shall be to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area by:

- championing the area by raising issues of concern to residents, organisations and businesses with the Council and other organisations, and influencing how services are delivered and spending plans for the area
- supporting, co-developing and approving Area based plans and frameworks through statutory, private and third sector participation, consultation, development and delivery; these plans need to respond to the issues and need of Monmouthshire's Well-Being Assessment and other key legislation and policies
- consulting with neighbouring area committees where there are issues and solutions that can be jointly delivered
- contribute to the five-cluster area working so that Town and Community Council have strong links to area committees and feel equals in local community governance
- contribute to the decision-making process on funding and grants such as Section 106 contributions, local area grants and where funding unlocks proposals that meet local need
- providing a forum at which local residents, organisations and businesses can question the Council and partner organisations about local issues, the delivery of services and proposals affecting the respective area
- consulting on matters affecting the local community and expressing a view on matters affecting more than one area of the Borough
- promoting the role and responsibilities of local elected members and ways to engage with them outside of area committee meetings
- receiving feedback on the outcome of petitions relevant to their area submitted to the Council, and if necessary pursuing issues further
- advising the Council's Scrutiny Committee on matters of interest in the area and giving views on matters referred to them by this Committee
- producing an Annual Business Plan, and an Annual Report on the work of the Area Committee which will inform the Business Plan for the next year.

The work of the Area Committees will be based upon the following principles:

- encouraging the active participation of residents, local organisations and businesses in improving the well-being in the area
- enabling local communities to express their views upon, and have opportunities to influence, decisions which affect them
- ensuring that local needs are taken into account by decision makers
- fostering good community relations between people of different ages, and ethnic and social backgrounds, both within the area and across the County
- building partnership between the Council, communities and other organisations in working for the benefit of the area and the wider County
- to demonstrate the economic, environmental and social return from participating in area committees and wider community development activity

Annex C Public Service Board Structure, Outcomes and Leads

