



Shaping Our Future

Improvement Plan 2014 -17



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

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Version Control

Title	Improvement Plan 2014 – 17
Purpose	This plan outlines the council's responsibility to publish its Improvement Objectives in line with the plans for the year ahead as outlined in section 15(7) of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009. The council is satisfied that the information given in this plan is accurate based on the information available at the time of publication.
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Consultation	In Progress

Welsh Language and Alternative Formats

In line with the Council's Welsh Language Scheme, a Welsh language version of the Improvement Plan will be available on the Council's bilingual website.

Y Gymraeg a fformatau eraill

Yn unol â Chynllun Iaith Gymraeg y Cyngor, bydd fersiwn Gymraeg o'r Cynllun Gwella ar gael ar wefan ddwyieithog y Cyngor

We can also provide this document in Braille, large print, on tape or in electronic form. If you would like a copy in a different format please contact our Equality and Welsh Language Officer by:

Phone: 01633 644010 or 07793798920

Fax: 01633 644666

e mail: equality@monmouthshire.gov.uk

If you want to comment on the council's performance or give your thoughts on issues that you feel should be set within the council's Improvement Objectives next year, please get in touch.

We have included a short form for feedback at the end of this plan. You are welcome to use this and return it to us via post or e-mail. However we welcome all views however you wish to supply them.

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Leader & Chief Executive Foreword

We believe that the key to Monmouthshire being successful lies in its people and its communities. Our job as a Council is to create conditions that make it more likely that people and communities can come together to become more sustainable and more resilient – better able to define their needs and more willing to apply their talents and abilities to satisfy these needs. As a Council we recognise that our role is as much about helping communities to deliver for themselves as it is to be a direct provider of service. This re-balancing is not always easy or popular, but it is necessary if we are to continue to provide the range of services that you, Monmouthshire citizens, tell us clearly that you want to see. And tell us you have.

We had a really extensive conversation running from September 2013 into March 2014 where we shared dilemmas and sought ideas and fresh thinking on ways forward – and the ideas came. We want to continue with this conversation over the coming months to see where it takes us.

We have equally been deepening our conversation with colleagues that work for the organisation. We have an amazing amount of ability here that we are still learning about. There is a pride in Monmouthshire as a place, our place, and we want to do the best we can by it.

We are not taking our eye off service improvement challenges. We accept tough financial times but don't agree that these are good enough reasons not to strive for more, to retain ambition and to be optimists. We are doing lots of really good things, some of them cutting edge, but we aren't good enough at explaining what we are doing, why we are doing it and the impact it is having on peoples' lives – we have to change this over the next few months because if you can't see the impact, what's the point!

We hope that you find this document an easy read. We have tried to strike a balance between giving information that you will be interested in without going into long-winded government speak. We are really happy to provide more detail if you would like it.

Most importantly though, we have a tough year ahead. We are going to do our very best to be successful. As ever, you will be the judge of whether we make it.



Councillor Peter Fox
Leader



Paul Matthews
Chief Executive

Introduction

Public services are at the heart of our communities. They perform a vital role for many of us whether that is educating the workforce of tomorrow; ensuring the roads are gritted so that we can get around in winter or providing vital social care that enables vulnerable people to remain living at home. However the continuing fallout from the recession has resulted in our budget being reduced by 16% over the next three years, this means we can't keep delivering services in the same way.

During the past year we have held a series of well-attended events to talk with people in our communities about what this means for them and to gather ideas about how we can meet people's expectations in new ways and deliver services with less money. We heard a clear message that services are valued and that we need to work hard to transform what we do and preserve the things that our communities value. This means that we have not been able to freeze council tax for a third successive year.

There has been much coverage in the media of the [Williams Commission](#) into Public Service Delivery and Governance which has recommended that Wales needs fewer and larger local authorities. While we await the formal response of the First Minister to the report we remain committed to showing that small organisations that are well connected to those they serve can be amongst the most efficient when it comes to service delivery.

We remain focused on our three priorities of the education of young people, protecting the vulnerable and supporting business and job creation. We are also committed to working in a sustainable way in line with the [Future Generations Bill](#) that places sustainability at the heart of Public Services in Wales. We continue to be ambitious and have high expectations for our citizens and communities.

The Council subscribes to a vision shared with other public service partners of working to deliver '*Sustainable resilient communities*'. This is the cornerstone of the County's Single Integrated Plan which has been developed under the leadership of the Monmouthshire Local Service Board. Reflecting the growing importance of collaboration in public services we have now adopted the three themes and nine outcomes that sit within these for the council. These will replace the five population outcomes that we have referred to in previous plans.

We will continue to put our energy into redesigning our services and changing the way that things are delivered. We expect our staff to work with communities to design and deliver services that make a real difference and encourage individuals and communities to identify the resources and skills needed to resolve problems and create opportunities for themselves. It seems almost certain that the Council will be providing fewer things directly or on its own. More things will be provided in partnership with others.

Our improvement objectives have been updated to reflect the progress that was made last year and our focus for the year ahead. They do not reflect everything we will be doing this year to improve although they outline the main areas of activity.

The Vision for Monmouthshire

Sustainable and Resilient Communities

The vision for our county is described in the Single Integrated plan for Monmouthshire. This was developed by the Local Service Board – the group which brings together the leaders of key organisations in Monmouthshire.

The sustainability of a community depends on creating and maintaining its economic and environmental health, promoting social equity and increasing citizen participation.

Health and well-being is central to quality of life, our economic success is dependent on our ability to improve education, training and employment outcomes. An individual's ability to achieve their educational, social and economic potential is greatly influenced by their own sense of well-being. Across Monmouthshire, '[The Five Ways to Wellbeing](#)' is being introduced at individual, community and organisational level to enable our communities to be more capable and resilient.

Communities that engage and involve people and institutions to achieve environmental, economic, and social goals are generally likely to be more successful. This engagement and involvement must take place across generations, recognising the contribution that all parts of the community can make, from children and young people through to our older people.

Job creation, energy use, housing, transportation, education and health are considered complementary parts of the whole. Since all issues are interconnected they must be addressed as a system. Sustainability is a process of continuous improvement so communities constantly evolve and make changes to accomplish their goals. In essence if we work together we will make our community even healthier, safer, greener, more liveable, and more prosperous.

Working towards this vision we identified three themes which form part of a cohesive story about how we will achieve our vision.

Nobody is Left Behind: we want to be a place of cohesive communities where everybody is treated with dignity and respect and has the same opportunity to achieve what they wish.

People are Confident, Capable and Involved: we want Monmouthshire to feel safe and people to be confident. We want to create a place where people want to be involved; they are confident in themselves and their abilities and what they contribute to their own community.

Our County Thrives: we want our county to thrive which includes the economy that supports our communities and families to live a good life. It also means that our environment, its range of habitats and biodiversity thrives.

Our Improvement Plan describes the contribution that Monmouthshire County Council is making to turn this vision into tomorrow's reality.

The Values that Guide us

We want to ensure communities can access and shape the county on their own terms. Our organisation will enable change on things that matter today whilst looking ahead to the things that that will be important tomorrow. We are trying to create an organisational culture that is innovative, responsive and flexible.

We have a very clear set of values that underpin all work of the Council and guide the behaviours that are expected of everyone working for us or working with us. These do not change as time passes. They are consistent and they define us.

Openness: we aspire to be open and honest to develop trusting relationships

Fairness: we aspire to provide fair choice, opportunities and experiences and become an organisation built on mutual respect

Flexibility: we aspire to be flexible in our thinking and action to become an effective and efficient organisation

Teamwork: we aspire to work together to share our successes and failures by building on our strengths and supporting one another to achieve our goals

These values are our compass. They are consistent points that we look to as we take forward our work.

We have developed a programme [your county, your way](#) which is helping us model a set of behaviours that makes this possible. The programme has been acknowledged at UK level as having the potential to transform public service delivery. It is about:

- An agile workforce that operates as a network rather than a command and control model. This means we have the right people working on the right things at the right time. To help do this we have fundamentally changed the working environment
- A commitment to reviewing our services to make sure they are efficient, effective and sustainable. We start by asking the people who use services what matters to them and then try and redesign the service from that perspective. Staff are empowered to do what matters and encouraged to challenge processes that they believe get in the way of purpose.
- An in-house training and personal development experience that provides our staff with the training to think differently and develop the creative solutions needed to transform key areas of our business, learning from some of the best ideas around the globe and engaging with some of the inspirational people on our doorstep.
- More meaningful community-led engagement and where possible co-producing services with the people who use them

There are some other really important things that we always have in the front of our minds when we deliver services take into account such as sustainability, equality and the Welsh language:

Equality and Welsh Language

The Council has shown a long standing commitment to equality and diversity. To strengthen this commitment the Council has adopted a [Strategic Equality Plan 2012 - 2016](#). This will help to assure us that our functions, decisions and behaviours fully take into account the impact they have on Protected Characteristic groups¹, while also improving the lives of individuals and communities. The Council's Welsh Language scheme 2013-16 sets out the Council's commitment to the Welsh Language.

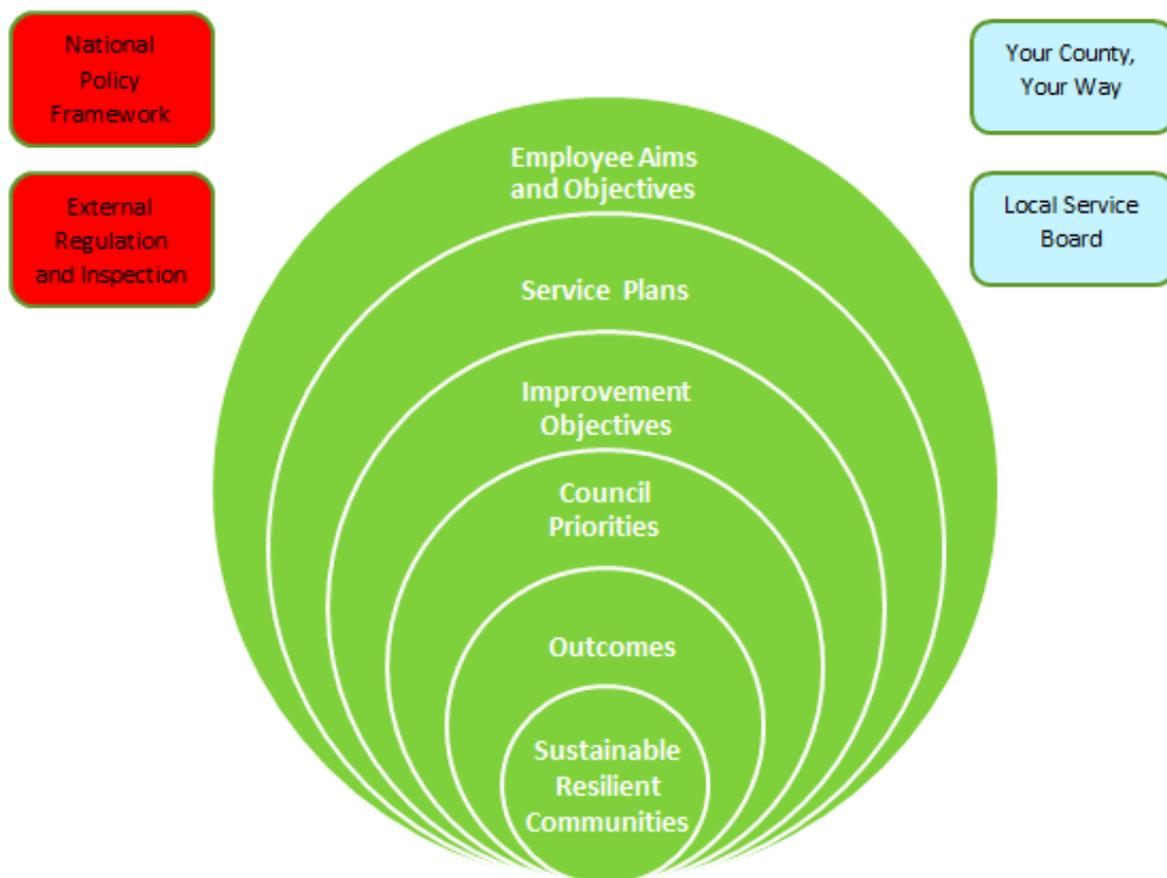
Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development is central to how we operate as a Council. This means giving equal consideration to social, economic, environmental and ecological issues and thinking about our impact on the earth in the long term. Our response to financial pressures and increasing demand for services driven by our [your county, your way](#) programme has these sustainable development considerations at its heart. Our decision making process requires a Sustainable Development checklist to be considered to make sure that the decisions we take consider sustainable development issues. We are committed to economic and environmental health of communities, promoting social cohesion and increasing citizen involvement in local community action. The implementation of the Welsh Government Future Generations Bill will place sustainable development as our central organising principle. We welcome this.

Our Improvement Framework

Monmouthshire is an ambitious county. The strength of Monmouthshire lies in its people. Not just those on our payroll but all of the people who work with us in delivering services and achieving value for money. Our Improvement Framework helps to ensure that we can harness everyone's efforts and makes sure that everyone is pulling in the same direction to deliver real and tangible outcomes.

At the heart of our Improvement Framework is the vision of sustainable resilient communities. This is unifying purpose for the diverse range of services that we are responsible for. Each of our teams has a Service Plan that aligns to our three priorities and the outcomes we are striving to achieve and we have a range of key performance indicators so that we can keep track of our progress. Our Employee Services team help us recruit and retain people who share our values and have the skills and passion to make a real difference.



Key:

-  Performance Framework
-  Improvement Activity
-  External Influences

Our Priorities

Monmouthshire Council is run by a partnership administration of two political parties. They have an agreement, supported by the council to deliver against three specific priorities.

Education

Learning is an absolute priority. Performance in the summer of 2013 reflected improved pupil achievements across the majority of the key stage results and a range of other measures which are also important, such as attendance.

The Estyn inspection of the Council in November 2012 found that education services are unsatisfactory, with capacity to improve also deemed unsatisfactory. We accept these findings and we have been working hard to address the concerns. The action plan produced in response to the inspection sets clearly our expectations for change and how it will be achieved. It continues to be monitored regularly. We are making progress and are confident that educational attainment in Monmouthshire will improve further and it will improve quickly.

Safeguarding vulnerable people

Working to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe will always be central to our work. The way in which we work with others to safeguard people is crucial and we want to get better at how we listen to people and give them as much control as possible of the processes and decisions that affect them.

Over the past year we have made significant improvements in some of the processes to safeguard vulnerable children although we know that more work is needed. We are continuing to change the way we work building the relationships and resources to support people in our communities to live meaningful and dignified lives. Our staff will be supported to build effective relationships, listening and concentrating on what really matters to people and developing new ways to measure whether we are helping people to work towards the outcomes they set themselves.

Supporting businesses and job creation

Improving the prosperity of our county remains essential if we are to remain economically resilient, prosperous and sustainable.

A key measure of productivity in the UK economy is GVA - or gross value added per head of population. Monmouthshire's GVA was the joint highest in Wales at £19,229 in 2009 yet the average gross weekly full time earnings was the ninth lowest in Wales. This indicates that although Monmouthshire is home to the most qualified population in Wales, with those *living* in the county among the highest wage earners, those who *work* in the county have some of the lowest earnings suggesting a strong element of out-commuting. To reverse this trend and create better employment prospects in our county we need to develop and promote an enterprising culture, which builds business resilience and creates excellent outcomes for our communities.

2014 - 15 Improvement Objectives

It is important that the things we are spending our time and resources doing reflect the views of our communities as well as the national policies set by the governments in Westminster and Cardiff Bay. We have engaged with citizens and partners throughout the year which helps us to shape our Improvement Objectives for the year ahead.

Between October and February we carried out a series of events called Monmouthshire Engages. More than 600 people came to venues throughout the county to share their thoughts on the future of council services. The events were widely publicised in the media and are key in helping your council understand the things that matter most to local people.

We regularly consult on our work; our reviews focus on re-designing services from the citizen's perspective, our Whole Place programmes are grounded in conversations and actions at a local level whilst new programmes of work such as community coordination held large consultation events to enable partners and residents to co-produce the approach. The Single Integrated Plan was built off a platform of extensive consultation and engagement and is subsequently based around the issues people have told us are important in Monmouthshire. This Improvement Plan aligns closely with the direction set in the Single Integrated Plan.

Our Improvement Objectives have evolved from those we set last year. The first two objectives remain unchanged – improving educational attainment and introducing different ways of meeting the needs of vulnerable people.

We have combined our activities around job creation, whole place and sustainability into a single objective. This is because there is a lot of synergy and overlap between these different programmes of work so it makes more sense to combine them. Our fourth objective is purely focused on our effectiveness as an organisation. One of the things we learnt from the Monmouthshire Engages event is that we need to get better at demonstrating to people that we use our resources effectively.

Our Improvement Objectives are:

Objective 1

We will provide an improved education provision for Monmouthshire – In particular we will work hard to continue to raise attainment and minimise the differential in attainment between pupils.

Objective 2

We will work to help people live their own lives by building flexible and responsive services. Our focus will be on safeguarding people, further developing our approach to integrated services and implementing community coordination in the pilot areas.

Objective 3

We want to enable our county to thrive – This objective aligns closely with the single integrated plan for Monmouthshire. There are three inter-related elements: Supporting and encouraging enterprise and job creation, developing a whole place approach to make sure that all the key people and organisations in the community work together to leverage resources and have the best possible impact for the area and thirdly minimising our impact on the environment through effective management of waste and habitats.

Objective 4

We want to be an efficient, effective and sustainable organisation – We remain committed to continually improving the way we work by listening to the views of people that use our services and empowering staff at the front line. We will continue to be innovative in our approach, moving swiftly to transform our services and deliver our priorities within increasing financial pressures. To do this we need to be able to demonstrate that we are using our staff and other resources to the best possible effect to deliver value for money for the people and communities of Monmouthshire.

Over the next few pages you can read more about these, some of the things we will be doing and the measures we have put in place to test whether they are working or not. This makes it easier for us to assess our progress, learn and evaluate how well we are doing. It also means that there are clear commitments against which citizens and regulators, such as Wales Audit Office, can hold the council to account. Data showing comparisons to other council areas in Wales will be released by Welsh Government in September. In the meantime the 2012/13 comparisons can be viewed at www.infobasecymru.net

The Council is responsible for a range of services that are not necessarily priorities for improvement in the year ahead. However we recognize that all of these services are important. We monitor how well we are performing throughout the year as we strive to maintain standards and where resources allow, deliver improvement. You can see more of our measures in the final section of this report.

Objective 1

MCC Improvement Objective 1: We will provide an improved education provision for Monmouthshire.		
Council Priority: Education	Single Integrated Plan Outcome: People have access to practical and flexible learning	
What the Single Integrated Plan identifies that we will contribute to		
<p>To provide practical and flexible learning we need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesign our schools and make them fit for purpose • Offer a more flexible education system that meets the needs of pupils, their families and employers • Improve access to education for vulnerable groups • Address key factors to underachievement 		
What do we want to achieve this year?		
We will continue to re-focus the whole education service to ensure that it responds to the needs of all children and young people and addresses the concerns of the Estyn, the education inspectorate.		
Why have we chosen this?		
<p>Learning is an absolute priority but our responsibility to children and young people goes wider than this. In setting this objective we want to coordinate the contributions of everyone who works with us so that we can provide the best support to respond to all children and young people's needs. Within this, we aim to provide an education offer that will stand the test of any measure.</p> <p>Our intention is to re-cast the whole education service to ensure that our actions all sit comfortably within a service framework designed to take us forward over the next decade.</p>		
What will we do?	Timescale/ milestone	What difference will it make? / If we are successful what will we expect to see?
Build the capacity of schools to meet a wider range of pupils needs in partnership with the Education Achievement Service, for example by reviewing our services for pupils with Additional Learning Needs.	Summer 2016	The gap in attainment between learners who face the challenge of poverty and those who don't will be narrowed.
Identify pupils at risk of leaving school without qualifications as early as possible and ensure that appropriate learning pathways and support are provided.	Summer 2015	No Monmouthshire pupils leaving full-time education without a qualification.
Continue to review processes for target setting, monitoring of progress and scrutiny of pupil performance as they move through the school system.	Summer 2015	Improved attainment at key stage 4 across all indicators and no schools in the bottom free school meal benchmark quartile.
Support and challenge schools that are in Band 4 and 5 to raise standards through targeted intervention plans.	Summer 2015	All Monmouthshire schools should be in Band 3 or above.
Strengthening leadership at all levels to reduce the variation within and between schools.	Summer 2017	Leadership should be graded good or better at all schools inspected by Estyn.
Ensure regular contact with all young people within the Careers Wales five tier model to facilitate the most appropriate provision suited to their needs.	Summer 2015	Reduction in the number of children and young people not in education, training or employment.

How will we know the difference it has made	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15 Target
How much did we do?			
The percentage of pupil attendance in primary schools			
i) All pupils	i) 94.7%	i) 94.4%	i) 95%
ii) Pupils receiving free school meals	ii) 92.0%	ii) 91.8%	ii) 92.6%
The percentage of pupil attendance in secondary schools			
i) All pupils	i) 93.2%	i) 93.5%	i) 94%
ii) Pupils receiving free school meals	ii) 87.8%	ii) 88.4%	ii) 89.7%
How well did we do it?			
The percentage of pupils achieving the Foundation Phase indicator:			
i) All pupils	i) 86.8%	i) 89.5%	i) 92.6%
ii) Pupils receiving free school meals	ii) 72.9%	ii) 74.6%	ii) 87.5%
The percentage of pupils achieving the Key Stage 2 Core Subject Indicator:			
i) All pupils	i) 86.3%	i) 89.3%	i) 91%
ii) Pupils receiving free school meals	ii) 62.3%	ii) 75.8%	ii) 79%
The percentage of all pupils achieving Key Stage 4 Level 2 Threshold including English or Welsh and Maths			
i) All pupils	i) 56.3%	i) 57.3%	i) 67%
ii) Pupils receiving free school meals	ii) 25.7%	ii) 26.7%	ii) 36%
Is anyone better off?			
Percentage of pupils leaving education, training and worked based learning without a recognised qualification	0.1%	0.4%	0%
Percentage of pupils who have been looked after leaving education, training and worked based learning without a recognised qualification	0%	0%	0%
Percentage of 16 year olds who are not in education, employment or training	3.8%	3.8%	3.3%
What resources will we use?			
The budget for the education service is £51,918,000			
Partners we are working with?			
Education Achievement Service, Estyn and Welsh Government			
Want to find out more?			
Take a look at the annual report of the Chief Officer for Children and Young People on our website. Education performance is regularly reported to Children and Young Peoples Select Committee. Copies of the reports can be viewed on our website http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/meetings/			

Objective 2

MCC Improvement Objective 2: We will work to help people live their own lives by building flexible and responsive services. Our focus will be on safeguarding people, further developing our approach to integrated services and implementing community coordination in the pilot areas		
Council Priority: Safeguarding vulnerable people	Single Integrated Plan Outcome: Families are supported & Older people are able to live their good life	
What the Single Integrated Plan identifies that we will contribute to		
<p>We need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support our families earlier to prevent them becoming more vulnerable. Better co-ordinate support which can react more quickly. <p>For older people to live their good life we need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable older people to be fully independent, maintaining good mobility, health and well-being, confidence and dignity and plan for their futures. Nurture good support networks in the community. Enable older people to do what matters to them when they choose to. Focus on preventative health and well-being programmes for older people 		
What do we want to achieve this year?		
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on families to ensure they are supported during key transitions in times of stress. Build new safeguarding and protection approaches so that people are protected and that this is achieved in ways which will empower the individual to sustain/regain control of their life 'Do what matters' so that people are supported to "live their own life" i.e. take more control over life they live. Find integrated solutions so that services are built around the needs of the individual rather than for the convenience of the people who provide them Strengthen communities so that people are engaged in and supported by their communities and not dependant purely on statutory services. 		
Why have we chosen this?		
<p>In the current financial and demographic context if we don't find ways to support people to find better solutions we will end up rationing services and only intervening in crisis situations. The human cost of failing to have the right conversations at the right time includes young people placed in institutional placements away from home and older people experiencing isolation and loneliness in their communities</p>		
What will we do?	Timescale/ milestone	What difference will it make? / If we are successful what will we expect to see?
Establish community coordination pilot in Abergavenny and Caldicot and decide whether or not to use throughout the county.	Pilot scheme until March 2016	People are engaged in and supported by their communities and not dependant purely on statutory services.
Strengthen the whole authority approach to safeguarding with a focus on evaluating impact and strong leadership.	On-going	People are protected and that this is achieved in ways which will empower the individual to sustain/regain control of their life.
Roll-out an integrated assessment, care and support plan and personal outcomes framework that all providers contribute to.	March 2015	People are supported to "live their own life" i.e. take more control over life they live.

How will we know the difference it has made	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15 Target
How much did we do?			
Number of older people receiving traditional long-term community based packages of social care	1168	1157	<1157
Number of older people in local authority funded nursing or residential care	234	227	230
Number of people supported via community coordination	0	0	36
Number of children on the child protection register at 31 March	55	41	not applicable
How well did we do it?			
Percentage of people using social services who report that they are happy with the service they receive	96%	90%	>90%
Number of delayed transfers of care from hospital that were because social care was not in place	16	17	<21
Percentage of reviews of children on the child protection register that were carried out on time	90.5%	93.5%	100%
Is anyone better off?			
Percentage of people who believe that the service they get meets their needs	88%	82%	>82%
Percentage of people whose personal outcomes are improved	New measure – baseline to be established		
Percentage of people who are fully independent following a period of reablement	54.5%	53.5%	50% – 55%
Average length of time that children spend on the child protection register (months)	11.8	6.4	not applicable
What resources will we use?			
The budget for social services is £36 million. Our net investment in community coordination is £211,875 We have also secured funding from the Intermediate Care Fund			
Partners we are working with?			
Gwent Police, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, GAVO, other local authorities in Gwent, Welsh Government, The Centre for Welfare Reform, Community Catalysts (a Community Interest Company), CMC ²			
Want to find out more?			
Take a look at the annual report of the Chief Officer for Social Services and this short animation that describes some of our work.			

Objective 3

MCC Improvement Objective 3: We want to enable our county to thrive		
Council Priority: Supporting business & job creation	Single Integrated Plan Outcome: Business and enterprise & protect and enhance the environment	
What the Single Integrated Plan identifies that we will contribute to		
<p>To enable business and enterprise to prosper in Monmouthshire, we need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better paid local employment opportunities • To build on the services already being provided by Monmouthshire Enterprise and its partners to support the growth of new and existing enterprises. • Retain more of the spend of visitors, citizens and businesses within Monmouthshire • Improve access to a range of transport opportunities <p>To enhance and protect our environment we need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce less waste and recycle more. 		
What do we want to achieve this year?		
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in communities to enable them to build their own resilience • Promote a community-wide vision for land-use • Assist in enabling business and enterprise to prosper • Continue to work towards providing a safe, clean and sustainable environment 		
Why have we chosen this?		
<p>This objective aligns closely with the single integrated plan for Monmouthshire. For our county to thrive we need to continue to work with our residents, invest in communities and base our delivery on 'what matters' to people in their communities. Shaping our approach like this will help us to meet needs and expectations of our residents and join up our services to make more efficient use of increasingly limited resources.</p> <p>The objective brings together three inter-related elements of our approach; supporting and encouraging enterprise and job creation, whole place area delivery and minimising the impact on the environment.</p>		
What will we do?	Timescale/ milestone	What difference will it make? / If we are successful what will we expect to see?
Support the activities of the Caldicot Town team in their first year of operation.	March 2015	Enable Caldicot town team to deliver local based action to shape their local community.
Support the roll out of the Business Improvement district in Abergavenny.	On-going	Abergavenny businesses supported to fund an ongoing programme of physical improvement works in Abergavenny Town Centre
Evaluate the Whole Place approach in Severnside.	March 2015	Learn from what we have done and implement through future work
Develop Whole Place Plans for Lower Wye and Central Monmouthshire.	March 2016	Provide plans with a long term vision and clear and connected priorities for local action based on 'what matters' to people
Enable and support festivals and events in the County, including establishing a special events team.	On-going	Sustained contribution of tourism to the local economy in Monmouthshire
Establish an enterprise strategy and lead on the joint Rural Development Plan (RDP) submission for Monmouthshire and Newport.	March 2015	Clear direction set for economic growth priorities RDP funding that can be used to help our county thrive is attracted into rural areas

Determine the availability and coverage of superfast broadband access in Monmouthshire and identify opportunities for businesses to exploit the benefits.	March 2015	Gaps in coverage identified which will allow options to be brought forward. Opportunities identified for businesses to successfully exploit superfast broadband.		
Enable the on-going sustainability of communities through implementation of the Local Development Plan framework.	On-going	Effective policies and proposals contributing to the local economy, housing market, environment and land supply		
Sustain improvements in recycling and waste performance.	March 2015	Recycling rates maintained above Welsh Government targets and low levels of residual waste collected.		
Establish a strategic transport working group.	March 2015	A better focus on the provision of public transport throughout the county including development of new ideas and options.		
How will we know the difference it has made		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15 Target
How much did we do?				
Number of new business start-ups where assistance was provided by Monmouthshire Enterprise and Partners		60	104	70
Number of inward investment projects delivered as a direct result of Monmouthshire Enterprise support		5	1	5
Number of tourists per year ²		2,015,300	2,052,500	>2,052,500
Housing land supply years ³		4.4	3.6	5
Total tonnes of overall residual waste collected ⁴		20,045	16,774	<17,000
How well did we do it?				
Number of new jobs created where assistance was provided by Monmouthshire Enterprise and Partners		331	130	200
Percentage of planning applications approved		93.7%	93.7%	93%
Percentage of municipal waste which is recycled / composted		56%	61%	61%
Percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days		82.12%	95.98%	96%
Is anyone better off?				
Percentage of people with a feeling of belonging to local area ⁵		82%	84%	>84%
Percentage of people who agree they can influence decisions affecting local area ⁶		22%	26%	>26%
Average wage levels in the county (gross weekly pay by workplace) ⁷		£438	£427	£465 ⁸
Income generated from tourism per year ⁹ (£ millions)		£163.33	£165.08	>£165.08
What resources will we use?				
The cross-cutting nature of this work means it is funded across a range of council budgets and the time commitment of external partners. We will invest and work with communities to utilise existing knowledge, skills and enterprise resource. We will continue to attract further grant funding and coordinate existing revenue funding across services to deliver joint objectives.				
Partners we are working with?				
Community and Town Councils, local citizens, local community groups, businesses along with national and international organisations and our key partners such as Aneurin Bevan University Health Board Gwent Police and Housing Associations				
Want to find out more?				
Take a look at the Sevenside and Bryn y Cwm whole place Plans and the work of the Caldicot Town Team You can also view the Local Development Plan and information about Waste & Recycling in Monmouthshire				

Objective 4

MCC Improvement Objective 4: We want to be an efficient, effective and sustainable organisation.		
Council Priority: Being an efficient organisation helps us to maximise the impact on the council's priorities	Single Integrated Plan Outcome: This Objective helps us maximise our impact on delivering the vision of sustainable resilient communities	
What the Single Integrated Plan identifies that we will contribute to		
This objective is about our efficiency and effectiveness as an organisation. By doing the basics well we can maximise the amount of money that we can spend on front-line services.		
What do we want to achieve this year?		
To develop our workforce and build the enterprising capacity to reinvent our future and deliver more effective and efficient services.		
Why have we chosen this?		
<p>The scale and magnitude of the challenges now upon Local Government are unprecedented and these future challenges are mounting. Alongside severe financial constraint as reflected in our Medium Term Financial Plan, we face changes in customer needs and expectations, together with challenges as a result of new technologies and regulatory and policy changes.</p> <p>We must continue to develop and implement processes and ways of working that will help us meet these challenges to maximise our chances of success and remain relevant to the citizens we serve.</p> <p>This will not be achieved without promoting an enterprising culture in the way the Council works to listen, adapt and deliver in different ways.</p>		
What will we do?	Timescale/ milestone	What difference will it make? / If we are successful what will we expect to see?
Roll-out a new employee performance framework and ensure we have the right people in the right jobs.	September 2014	All staff have regular appraisals and their personal objectives are focused on delivering the things that matter most to the people of Monmouthshire
Complete an Asset Management Plan that seeks to maximise the benefits of the property and land owned by the council.	March 2015	Buildings are fit for purpose, efficient, in the right locations and meet the needs of the users and service providers
Improve the way we manage the performance of our services and introduce a new approach to self-assessment.	March 2015	More of our key performance indicators will be in the top quartile or showing improvement
Develop our internal intranet site as a central hub for all council information, networking and engagement.	November 2015	Employees access council information, files, policies, news and tools and share knowledge, skills and talents all within one IT system
Continue with and build on the Monmouthshire Engages events and put in place new approaches to regularly seek ideas from citizens.	November 2014	More people will feel that they are able to share ideas and influence the direction of the local authority
Ensure effective financial management of the organisation.	March 2015	Despite an increasingly difficult financial settlement the authority continues to deliver services within budget

Increase installation of renewable energy on Monmouthshire Council sites.	On-going Programme	A reduction in carbon emissions and generation of income		
How will we know the difference it has made		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15 Target
How much did we do?				
Gross revenue spend of the local authority (£000's)		139,700	145,463	138,532
Number of employees (headcount)		4,025	3,880	N/A
Total installed capacity of renewable energy (Kw)		425	796	875
How well did we do it?				
Revenue outturn expenditure against budget (£000's) and percentage over/underspend		419 0.3% underspend	1,227 0.8% underspend	N/A
Percentage of council tax due in the financial year received		97.5%	97.9%	98%
Number of working days/shifts per full-time equivalent (FTE) local authority employee lost due to sickness absence		11.9	11.0	<11.0
Percentage turnover of local authority employees		6.6%	9.3%	N/A
Percentage of national performance indicators that are improving or at maximum ¹⁰		63%	70%	>70%
Percentage reduction in Carbon dioxide emissions ¹¹				
i) Absolute		1%	5%	3%
ii) Adjusting for seasonal conditions like cold winters		11%	+2%	
Is anyone better off?				
Percentage of people who agree the local authority provides high quality services. ¹²		53%	63%	>63%
Percentage of people who agree they can influence decisions affecting local area ¹³		22%	26%	>26%
Percentage of people who agree the local authority is good at letting them know how we are performing ¹⁴		41%	47%	>47%
What resources will we use?				
The local authority budget for service provision in 2014/15 is £138,532,000				
Partners we are working with?				
We are involved in over 100 collaborative projects and partnerships. Details can be found here				
Want to find out more?				
Visit our website www.monmouthshire.gov.uk or follow us on twitter @monmouthshireCC for the latest news.				

Regulation and Inspection

Close working with our regulators and inspectors to quality assure our activities is vital to ensuring improvement. We use their assessments to help us focus the things we need to improve across the council.

Our regulators Wales Audit Office (WAO) have produced their [Annual Improvement Report](#) which comments on how we delivered services in 2012/13 and on how well the council plans to improve. At this point in time the report has not been finalised and published by WAO. It's findings will be added to the online version of this document as soon as they are published.

Inspection reports about education and social services are produced by specialist regulators, [Estyn](#) and the [Care and Social Services Inspectorate](#). Their latest reports are available online.

The Auditor General has confirmed that during 2014-15 Wales Audit Office will undertake assessment work under three themes: Financial Management; Governance; and Performance Management. These themes are consistent with the findings of the Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery and with the Wales Audit Office Strategy 2013-16. The Auditor general has stated that undertaking work under these themes will also enable his staff to collect the evidence required for corporate assessments.

Performance and Comparisons

We measure the results of our work against the things we have described our Improvement Objectives. As local priorities these can't always be compared easily with other areas – and sometimes the things we are trying to achieve like people living a good life or enhancing the environment are not always easy to measure. To make sure that people can understand how well their council is doing in comparison to other local authorities in Wales we have a national performance measurement framework.

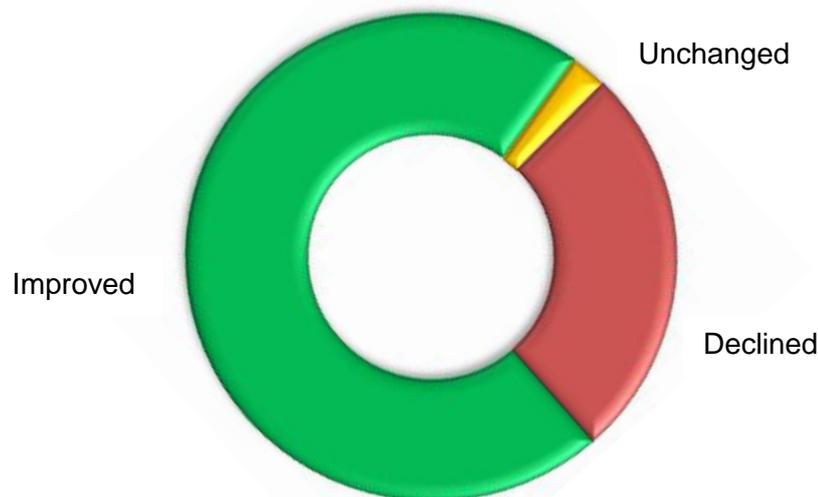
Wales Comparisons

All local authorities in Wales are required to measure their performance using a nationally agreed set of measures. These are examined by the Wales Audit Office to make sure we are publishing accurate data.

It is not always easy to compare performance across very different communities. Even in a small nation like Wales places vary greatly in terms of social, economic and environmental conditions whereas some of our local priorities, such as economic prosperity and job creation are not featured in the national framework. To place these national measures in the local context we publish a [performance bulletin](#) to accompany them.

Comparisons with our past performance

Our latest performance data will be published in the second part of this plan in October, once it has been verified by Wales Audit Office. In the meantime our own analysis of performance on key indicators in the national framework in 2013/14 compared to 2012/13 showed:

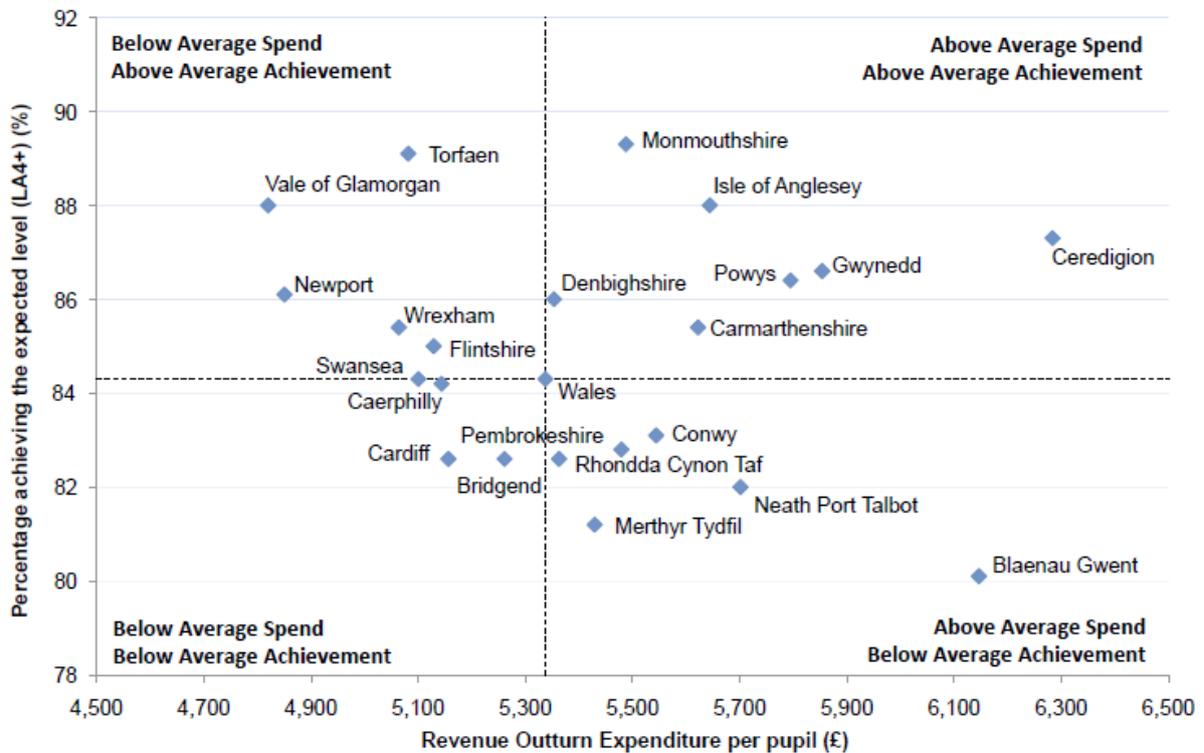


Value for Money Comparisons

In 2013/14 Monmouthshire received the lowest level of funding per head of population of any local authority in Wales. Welsh Government has produced and published four charts that show local authority performance in the context of expenditure for selected services.

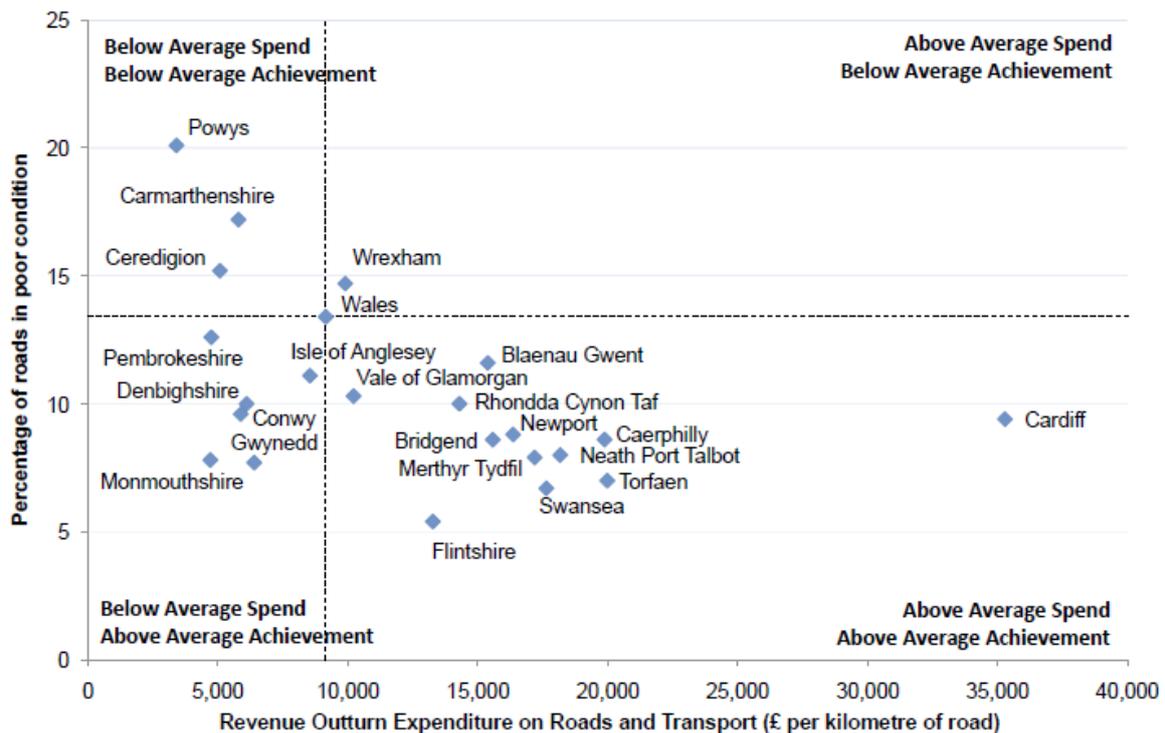
Education

Revenue Outturn Expenditure per pupil, 2012/13 and Percentage Achieving Expected Level (L4+) 2011¹⁵.



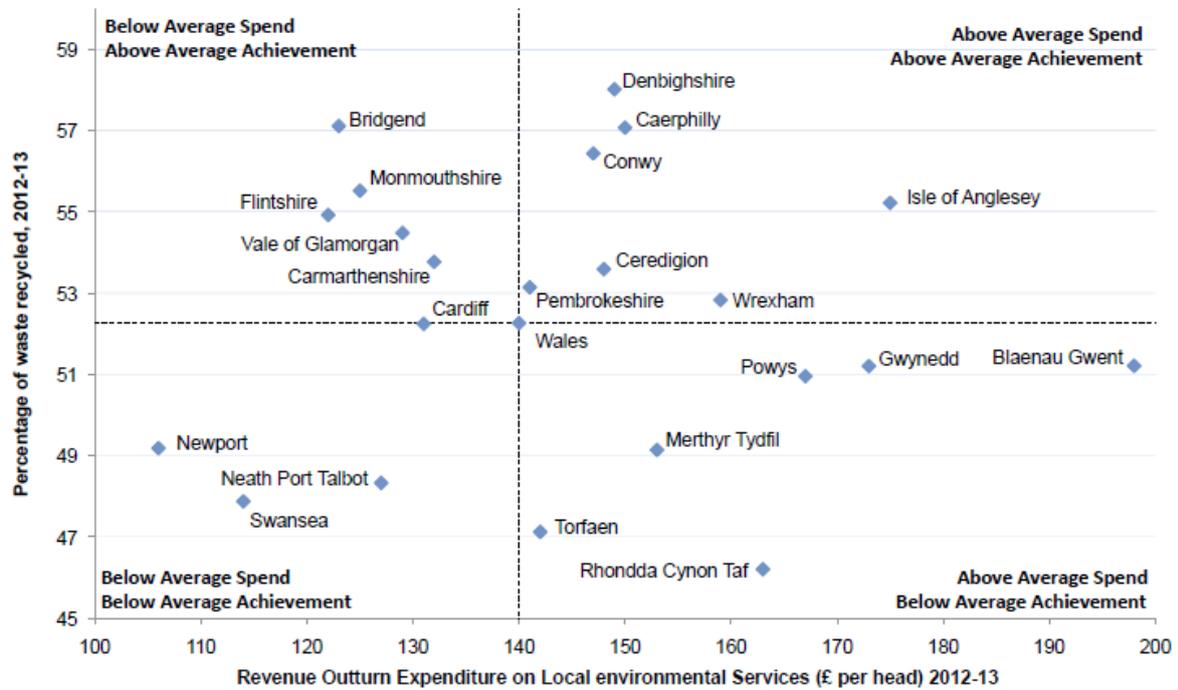
Roads and Transport

Revenue Outturn Expenditure, Roads and Transport per Kilometre of road and percentage of roads in poor condition 2012-13. ¹⁶



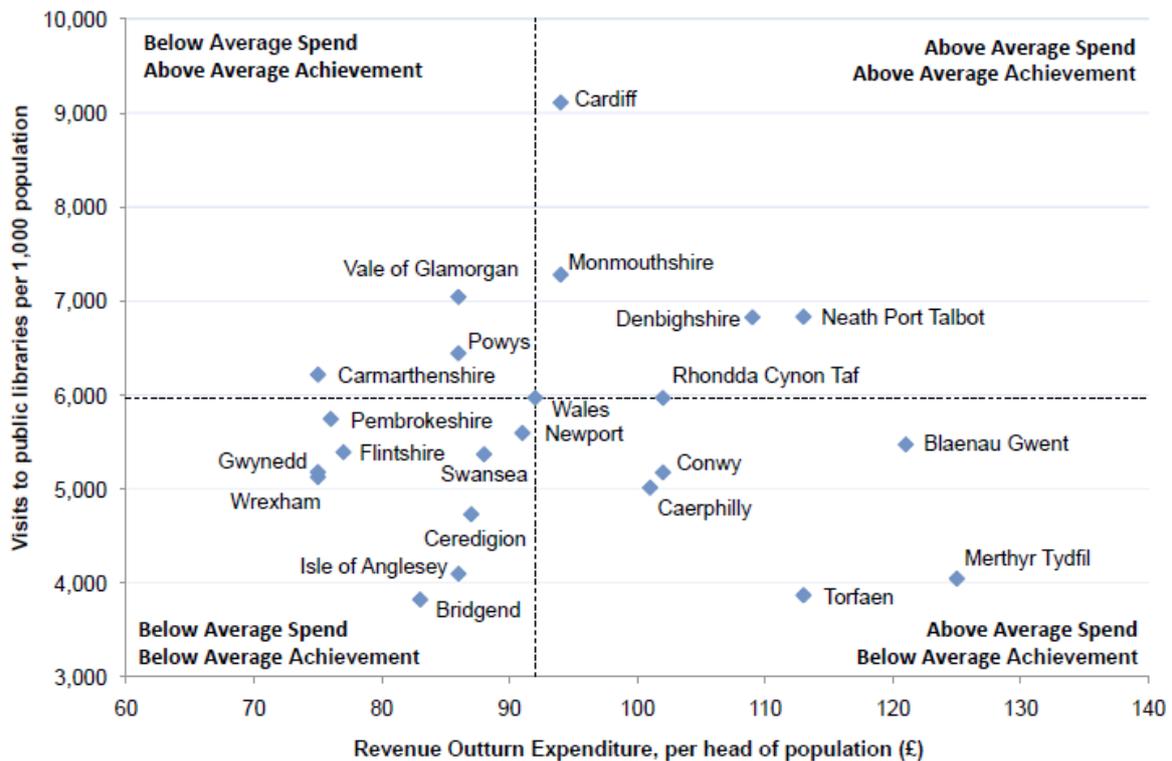
Waste and Recycling

Revenue Outturn Expenditure on Local Environmental Services
(a) per head and Percentage of Waste Recycled, 2012-13



Libraries, Culture, Sport and Recreation

Revenue Outturn Expenditure per head on Libraries, Culture, Heritage, Sport and Recreation and Visits to Public Libraries per 1,000 head of population, 2012-13



UK Comparisons

The national performance measurement framework only allows us to compare with other councils in Wales rather than with the whole UK.

To allow a wider comparison of performance based on the outcomes we are striving for we have selected a number of nationally published measures to show how Monmouthshire compares with the rest of Wales and, as far as possible, with the UK. We will publish this information in our stage 2 Improvement Plan in October.

Other National Performance Measures

The Council is responsible for a range of services that are not necessarily priorities for improvement in the year ahead. However we recognize that all of these services are important. We monitor how well we are performing throughout the year as we strive to maintain standards and where resources allow, deliver improvement.

This section contains a selection of measures which are comparable with other authorities but do not feature in our improvement objectives. Data for 2013/14, where included is provisional and has not yet been subject to audit. It has been included here to help readers understand our improvement priorities in the context of the most recently available set of data. A full and comprehensive performance report of all nationally comparable measures will be published in October.

Ref	Definition	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2012/13 Wales Average
SCA/018a	The percentage of carers who were offered an assessment or review.	23.0	74.2	97.3	86.8
HHA/013 ¹	The percentage of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented	30.4	21.4	24.2	62.6
PSR/002	The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant.	311	236	186	271
local	Percentage of new housing benefit claims decided within 14 days	83	87	94	N/A
SCC/011b	The percentage of initial assessments where looked after children were seen alone by the Social worker	25.2	22.4	33.2	37.5

¹ Wales Audit Office, as part of their work in 2013, identified a wide variation in how Councils interpret Welsh Government guidance for this indicator resulting in a wide variation in performance. Therefore Monmouthshire data can only be compared accurately against the Council's own performance year on year and can't be compared accurately to other areas in Wales as data across Wales is inconsistently reported.

SCC/033d	The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at the age of 19	88.9	88.9	92.3	93.4
SCC/033e	The percentage of young people formerly looked after who are known to be in suitable, non-emergency accommodation at the age of 19	93.8	100	91.7	93.2
SCC/033f	The percentage of young people formerly looked after who are known to be engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19	62.5	25	58.3	56.4
STS/005b	The percentage of highways and relevant land inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness	95.71	98.4	99.38	95.8
STS/006	The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days	81.09	82.12	95.98	92.16
THS/012	The percentage of principal (A) roads, non-principal (B) roads and non-principal (C) roads that are in overall poor condition	9.4	7.8	9.8	13.4
LCS/002	The number of visits to local authority sport and leisure centres during the year per 1,000 population where the visitor will be participating in physical activity	5962	6852	8099	8864
LCL/001b	The number of visits to public libraries during the year, per 1,000 population	7293	7279	7270	5968
PPN/009	The percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards	84.3	88.1	91.2	86.63

Glossary

We try to avoid the use of jargon. However we recognise that we sometimes use these when they are commonly used in the media or are likely to be understood by informed readers. Some of those that crop up in this plan are listed below:

CSSIW	Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales
Estyn	Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales who inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales.
LSB	Local Service Board. This is a group of the main service providers in Monmouthshire
SIP	Single Integrated Plan to meet the needs of the people of Monmouthshire
WAO	Wales Audit Office

Please let us know what you think of this plan and whether it is clearly written by e-mailing us improvement@monmouthshire.gov.uk or writing to Will Mclean, Head Partnerships and Performance, Monmouthshire County Council, County Hall, Usk, NP15 1GA

Feedback

We're always interested to know what you think about our services and the priorities for improvement that we've written about in this plan. You can complete this form and return it to us via e-mail or post. However we're interested in all views however you wish to supply them. Details of how to get in touch are at the bottom of the page.

1. What do you think about the four improvement objectives we've identified?

	Agree	Disagree	Don't know	Comments
We will provide an improved education provision for Monmouthshire.				
We will work to help people live their own lives by building flexible and responsive services.				
We will enable our county to thrive.				
We want to be an efficient, effective and sustainable organisation.				

2. Is there anything else that you think should be an improvement objective in the future?
Please tell us here.

3. We're interested to know what you thought of our plan. Please let us know:

	Agree	Disagree	Comments
Was it easy to understand?			
Was the content informative?			

 improvement@monmouthshire.gov.uk

 Will Mclean, Head of Policy and Partnerships, Monmouthshire County Council,
County Hall, Usk, NP15 1GA

 @MonmouthshireCC

References

- ¹ The Equality and Human Rights Commission provides more information on each of the [nine protected characteristics](#)
- ² Based on annual calendar year data produced by STEAM
- ³ Data is produced each year by Monmouthshire County Council Joint Housing Land Availability Study. The land supply is dated at 1st April each year and looks at activity in the previous year, for example as at 1 April 2014 data relates to activity in 2013/14 and the target for 2014/15 relates to the land supply situation at 1 April 2014, a figure that will not be formally established until September 2014 or, if subject to objection, until an inspector's report is provided in March 2015. Local planning authorities are required by Planning Policy Wales to ensure that sufficient land is available, or will become available, for a five-year supply of land for housing.
- ⁴ (This includes all black bag waste, kerbside & CA sites, street sweepings, fly tipping & trade waste)
- ⁵ Welsh Government [National Survey for Wales](#)
- ⁶ Welsh Government [National Survey for Wales](#)
- ⁷ ONS, Annual Survey of hours and earnings - based on 2012 & 2013 data respectively. Median earnings in pounds for employees who work in Monmouthshire. This based on place of employment not place of residence; therefore this is likely to include a mix of people who live outside as well as inside Monmouthshire. NOMIS Official labour market statistics - www.nomisweb.co.uk
- ⁸ Target set in Outcome Agreement 2013-16 with Welsh Government, the NOMIS Official labour market statistics data on which this target was based has been revised and therefore this target is likely to be revised, subject to agreement with Welsh Government.
- ⁹ Based on annual calendar year data produced by STEAM. Income is indexed using the Retail Price index therefore data from 2012 is revised from £158.1 to £163.33
- ¹⁰ National performance indicators from the National Strategic Indicators and Public accountability measures set. Only indicators that can be directly compared to the previous year and were published in the year by the Council are included.
- ¹¹ Calculated from all stationary sources, for example buildings and street lighting. Absolute and weather adjusted figures have been included to provide a more standardised and comprehensive comparison as emissions are dependent on energy consumption used for heating which will be influenced by periods of cold weather. The closure of County Hall will also have an influence on 2012/13 CO2 emissions.
- ¹² Welsh Government [National Survey for Wales](#)
- ¹³ Welsh Government [National Survey for Wales](#)
- ¹⁴ Welsh Government [National Survey for Wales](#)
- ¹⁵ Welsh Government 2013, Local Authority Service Performance 2011/12
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/improving-services/publication-events/publications/lasperf1112/?lang=en>
- ¹⁶ Welsh Government (2014), Local Authority Service Performance 2011/13
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/improving-services/publication-events/publications/lasperf1112/?lang=en>