



Y GYLLIDEB **BUDGET** 25/26



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

Welsh Government's provisional funding settlement represents a very different approach to the funding of local services by both UK and Welsh Government and is an important first step in recognising the increased demands on Council services

- Monmouthshire will receive an increase of 2.6% in core revenue grant in 2025/26. In cash terms, after allowing for transfers of specific grants in/out of core funding and for tax base adjustments, this equates to an additional £5.1m in funding
- Whilst this is a significantly better position than was anticipated following the previous UK Government budget, there remain difficult local budget choices. The increase in grant funding does not cover the cost and demand for all the services we provide in their current form. Total cost pressures being accommodated in this draft budget total £23.7m
- Constructive discussions will continue with Welsh Government about the necessity for a minimum funding floor to be added to the final settlement. It is not expected that any such floor will cover in full the remaining budget gap of £2.86m

Key frontline services will see increases in funding with Social care & health increasing by 10.6% and for Education by 10.7%

- *An additional £1m investment in school budgets to restore attendance levels and standards. This investment is above meeting in full all pay and pension related pressures in schools*
- There will continue to be a focus on tackling inequalities and to protect the most vulnerable in our society:
 - Support for additional learning needs provision will increase
 - Investment in specialist resource bases for children and young people helping them stay in their local schools
- Investing in our Foster carer service to retain and recruit valued carers and to recognise their essential skills, patience, time, and the resources that it takes to support some of the most vulnerable children in our County
- The services that are available to residents this year will be available in 2025/26. Waste collections will remain the same. Leisure centres, recycling centres, libraries and community hubs are all remaining open
- Total additional capital investment of £2.3m will be made within some of our key infrastructure, predominantly around Highways structures, carriageways, footpaths, public rights of way, and our property estate
- Protecting our local environment and nature with increased investment in Flood alleviation measures, and continuing to review our property estate and energy usage to reduce our carbon footprint

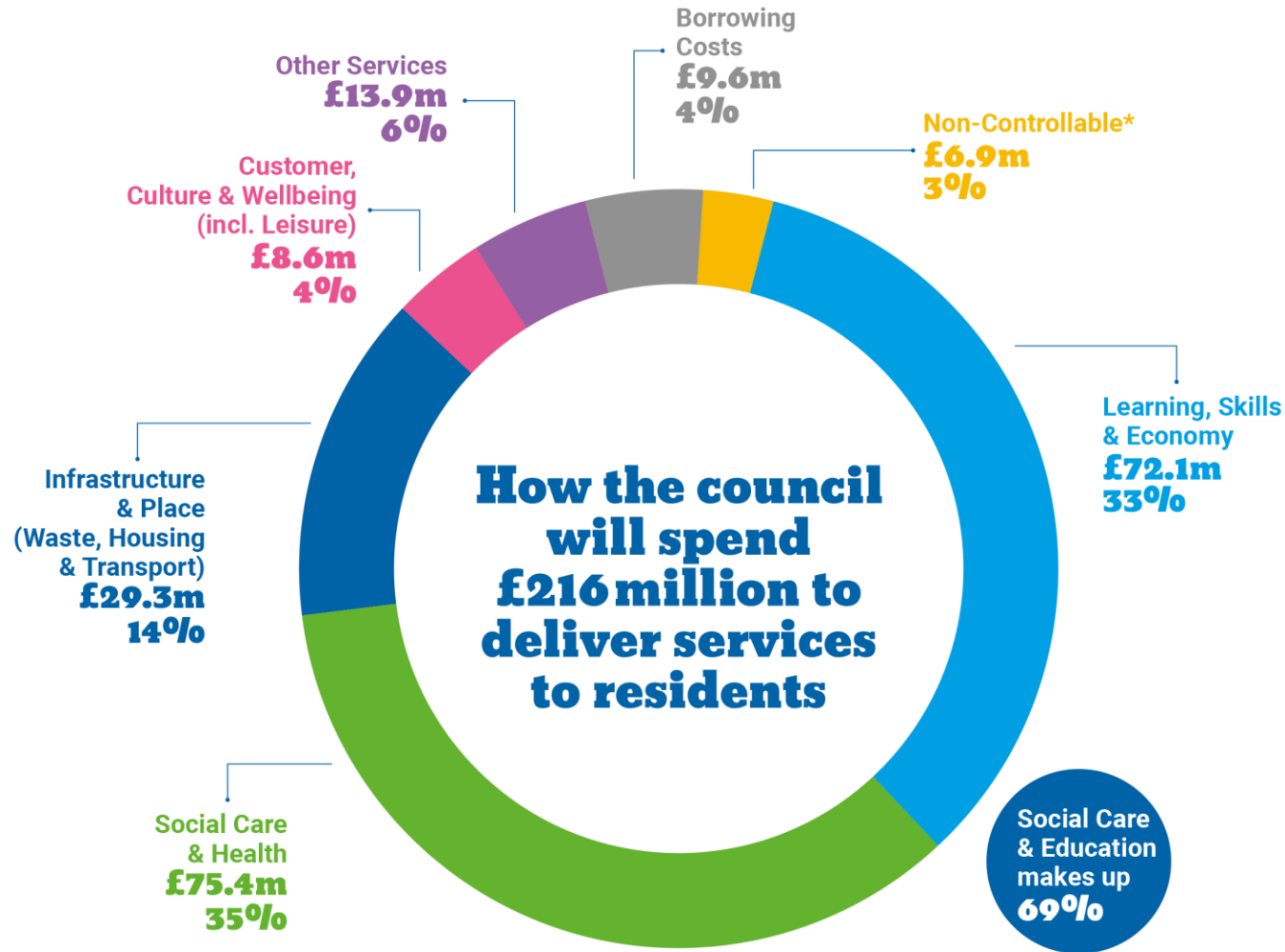
To partly fund the increased investment in key services noted above, we are intending to change the way some things operate and increase our income

- The draft budget includes £5.1m of service savings and efficiencies. Our residents will rightly expect us to reduce our costs wherever possible and to ensure we are operating as efficiently and effectively as we can
- We plan to increase income through an indicative increase in council tax of 7.8% and through specific charging for on-demand services to cope with the increased demand and cost of our services
- A cumulative impact assessment has been produced for the draft proposals which enables us to assess the overall potential impact of the budget on residents within our communities, and where any negative impact can possibly be mitigated

Budget strategy: Our approach

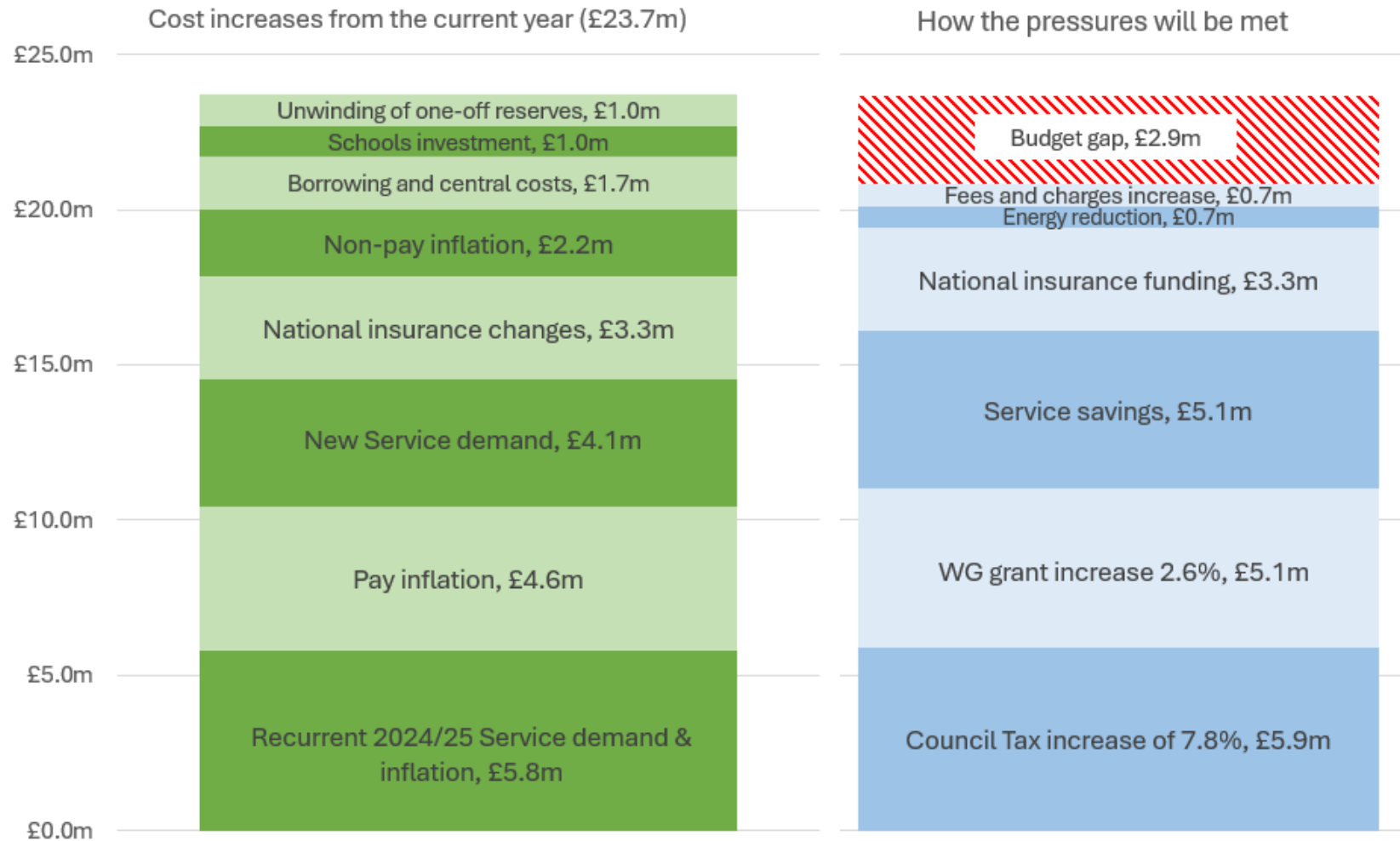


What we will spend to deliver services



**Levies paid to other organisations such as the Fire Service, National Parks, and Drainage Boards.*

What it costs to deliver services



£10.9m of additional service cost pressures and targeted investment

- Social care demand and inflation (£6.8m)
- Foster carer allowances (£0.3m)
- Investment in schools (£1m)
- Children with additional learning needs (£0.7m)
- Specialist education resource bases (£0.3m)
- School transport (£0.6m)
- Transport and fleet (£0.2m)
- MonLife income shortfalls (£0.2m)

The balance therefore to be struck...

- The cost of delivering our existing services increases next year by £23.7m
- Income increases of £15.0m (Government Grants, National insurance funding, Council Tax, and Charges)
- Energy costs will reduce by £0.7m
- Revenue reserves not available to support budget
- The balance £8.0m will be partially met by service savings proposals of £5.1m
- This leaves a budget gap of £2.86m which will need to be resolved in full by the time that the final budget is set by Council in March 2025.



£5.1m of savings proposals – a summary

Overall increase in our learning, skills & economy budget by 10.7% next year, with savings identified as follows:

Monmouthshire Specialist Teachers team	£40,000	A 0.6FTE specialist teaching post that has become vacant due to a retirement in the service will not be replaced within the structure.
Education Welfare grant	£51,000	An increase in grant funding will allow core staffing costs to be funded
Additional learning needs	£100,000	To bring MCC pupils with ALN currently educated outside of Monmouthshire in maintained and independent specialist placements back into MCC provision at key points of transition.
Capitalisation direction	£350,000	To fund the transformational costs of integrating changes to the Specialist resource bases, and to the Digital roll out in Schools from capital receipts.
School maintenance costs	£40,000	A reduction in maintenance costs at the new King Henry school as warranties remain in place during the initial phases of opening.

£5.1m of savings proposals – a summary

Overall increase in our Social Care budget by 10.6% next year, with savings identified as follows:

Adult social care	£375,000	£250,000 - Continuation of the practice change agenda £125,000 - A staffing review to consolidate existing vacancies within our home care teams.
Children's services	£1,887,000	Continuation of the placement and practice change - reviewing children's care plans in high-cost placements and developing appropriate services and placements to support their long-term needs.
Community meals	£15,000	A part time staff vacancy that the service will release.
Social care Health – Fees and charges	£366,000	A range of increases across Adult social care, Public health, Trading standards, and registrars.
Public protection	£100,000	Removal of Head of Public Protection post with review of longer-term arrangements for ensuring leadership of this key area of the Council's services. Interim arrangements in place allow for the saving to be made in 2025/26.

£5.1m of savings proposals – a summary

Overall increase in our Infrastructure & Place budget by 9.7% next year, with savings identified as follows:

Fees and charges	£321,000	Planning application fees (£100k), Car parking fee increase by 10% (£180k), Building Control Application fees (32k), Home to school discretionary (£6k), Introduce an annual membership fee of £10 for Grass routes users (£3k)
Home to School transport	£447,000	Reversion to statutory distances of 2 miles for primary and 3 miles for secondary
Management costs	£170,000	Savings in senior management costs from a restructure exercise
Homelessness	£557,000	Savings driven from the reduction of B&B usage and utilising Severn View
Grants & Recoupment	£117,000	An increase in income from grant or recoupment in Building cleaning, Youth Enterprise, and Highways external works.
Fleet	£20,000	Reduce gritter fleet by extending the working hours of each vehicle.
Energy audit	£20,000	Undertake energy audit to identify discrepancies and potential savings

£5.1m of savings proposals – a summary

Overall increase in our Customer, Culture and Wellbeing (MonLife) budget by 3.7% next year, with savings identified as follows:

Borough Theatre	£50,000	Service Redesign and optimisation of space
Community Hubs	£110,000	Realigning opening hours at our four hubs to ensure consistency and availability throughout the county
Youth service	£40,000	A more sustainable operating model by making changes to our youth clubs in the rural parts of Monmouthshire and retaining the youth centre provision in the four main towns
Leisure income	£150,000	Increase income across the four Leisure Centres
Old station Tintern	£30,000	Review Operating Model for Old Station Tintern. Including consideration of in house delivery model, lease or sale. Normal delivery will take place during the 2025 season.
Markets	£20,000	A review of existing contracts for Waste collection
Management structure	£38,000	Further development of the area management structure down to operational teams
Rights of way & Section 106	£44,000	Appropriate recharge of officer time into capital schemes

£5.1m of savings proposals – a summary

Overall increase in our People, Performance & Partnerships budget by 4.3% next year, with savings identified as follows:

Welsh Translation	£82,000	To amend Welsh language translations to reduce costs in the face of rising demand, by capitalising on the potential of AI driven translation tools.
Systems & Payroll Automation	£22,000	To deliver increased automation in the way in which staff are onboarded, following recruitment, and paid throughout their career at MCC.
Workforce	£8,000	Implement Apprentice First approach
Subscriptions	£15,000	A reduction in subscription fees following review

£5.1m of savings proposals – a summary

Overall increase in our Resources budget by 1.9% next year,
with savings identified as follows:

Insurance	£98,000	Cease our Cyber Security Insurance provision
ICT - Digital, Design & Innovation	£64,000	Management restructure which removes a head of service post
Administration support	£23,000	Reduction in Chief officer admin Support (0.6 FTE)

Council tax proposal

A planned increase in Council Tax of 7.8%

Band s	Current 2024/25	7.8% increase	Proposed 2025/26 Charge	Increase per month	Increase per week
A	£ 1,124.47	£ 87.71	£ 1,212.18	£ 7.31	£ 1.69
B	£ 1,311.88	£ 102.33	£ 1,414.21	£ 8.53	£ 1.97
C	£ 1,499.29	£ 116.94	£ 1,616.23	£ 9.75	£ 2.25
D	£ 1,686.70	£ 131.56	£ 1,818.26	£ 10.96	£ 2.53
E	£ 2,061.52	£ 160.80	£ 2,222.32	£ 13.40	£ 3.09
F	£ 2,436.34	£ 190.03	£ 2,626.37	£ 15.84	£ 3.65
G	£ 2,811.17	£ 219.27	£ 3,030.44	£ 18.27	£ 4.22
H	£ 3,373.40	£ 263.13	£ 3,636.53	£ 21.93	£ 5.06
I	£ 3,935.63	£ 306.98	£ 4,242.61	£ 25.58	£ 5.90

- Striking the balance between council tax rises and the reduction of services that support the most vulnerable is not easy
- Provides £5.9m of much needed funds to sustain service delivery
- Vigorous help and support for low-income households

All Local Authority budgets carry risks every year

- **Service budget savings delivery** - the level of savings will require significant service change and commitment of resources to be successfully delivered
- **Pay awards** - Actual pay awards will not be confirmed nationally by independent pay bodies until later in 2025
- **Employer's national insurance contributions** – level of cost vs allocated funding
- **Funding** – Specific grant levels

Capital programme oversees maintenance and enhancement of our roads, schools, leisure centres, farms and much more.

- Continued support for Council priorities in line with the community and corporate plan
- Tackling the longer-term challenges communities are facing
- Further investment of £2.3m to be made in our key infrastructure, predominantly around Highways structures, carriageways, flood alleviation, footpaths, public rights of way, and our property estate

“Let’s Talk Monmouthshire”

- 4-week period consultation and engagement
- Face to face and virtual engagement events – Countywide and targeted
- Online survey and social media campaign
- **Council Scrutiny meetings** – Jan-Feb 2025
- **Final Budget Cabinet** – 5th March 2025
- **Council tax setting and budget** – 6th March 2025



**ANY
QUESTIONS?**