

Monmouth Town Council

Annual Report 2021-22



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1. WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR

Dear residents of Monmouth,

During the past year, as we progress forward from the Pandemic, we as a Town Council have slowly but surely moved back to normal, holding Hybrid meetings in both the Shire Hall and the Bridges Community Centre.

We have also continued to work in partnership with local Community groups by agreeing Partnership Agreements with a further two voluntary organisations.

These are now the local groups we support; ACE Monmouth (Action Climate Emergency) and the Carnival organising Committee, Citizen Advice, Mind Monmouthshire, and the Savoy Theatre. This is as well as supporting other groups within the town through our Community and Larger Grants scheme.

It was very pleasing to be able once again to hold three Civic Events: The Mayor's Civic Service, The commemoration of the Centenary of the War Memorial and Remembrance Day.

The changes implemented last year in our Administration Systems are now coming into practice, making the workings of the day-to-day of the council more efficient.

Best wishes,

Terry Christopher

Town Mayor

May 2021-May 2022



2. ABOUT MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

Background

Monmouth Town Council is the tier of local government closest to the community and represents the views and interests of the people of Monmouth to other authorities including Monmouthshire County Council, the Police, the Welsh Government and others. It consists of 16 elected Councillors that cover the 5 wards of Monmouth; Drybridge, Overmonnow, Osbaston with Dixton, Wyesham and Town. A full list of Councillors can be found at Appendix 1 of this report.

The majority of the present councillors were elected in May 2017 to serve a five year term of office and together they serve a population of 10,508 (2011 census). This year has been the final year of this Council with an election taking place in May 2022.

The Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor are elected each year by the council at the annual meeting in May.

The Pandemic

The past 2 years have seen significant changes globally, nationally and locally as well as for Monmouth Town Council (MTC). This civic year saw the start of hybrid meetings which meant that Councillors could return to meet at the Shire Hall or continue to attend remotely via Zoom Conferencing. Hybrid meetings have facilitated excellent debate both in the Council Chamber and from home and has enabled members of the public to easily participate in or just observe our weekly meetings.

Throughout this civic year, staff have continued to work flexibly and have been able to work from home as well as in the Shire Hall following the Council's purchase of suitable home equipment. Staff have been able to welcome residents back to the office and have been able to answer enquiries from members of the public in a way that is reminiscent of pre-pandemic times.

Committees

All Councils conduct their business through meetings which are formal, agenda-led events with a clear purpose of making democratic decisions for the benefit of the town. As well as Full Council, which includes all elected members, the Council has 3 committees that meet on a regular basis. These are:

- Finance and Policy, which meets 4 times a year.
- People and Places, which meets once a month.
- Planning, which meets twice a month.

All meetings are open to the public and normally take place at the Shire Hall, Agincourt Square, Monmouth as well as being available via Zoom Conferencing. Every agenda provides members of the public with an opportunity to address the committee or Council during a designated "Public Participation" item. This ensures there is opportunity for members of the community to be involved in the decision-making process. Meetings sometimes include invited guests to speak on particular agenda items

Councillors have a duty to attend all meetings and must provide a reason for absence which is acceptable to Council if they are unable to attend. A record of attendance at meetings for all Councillors can be found at Appendix 2 of this report.

Responsibilities

Monmouth Town Council and Monmouthshire County Council are completely separate authorities with different responsibilities, however, both authorities work closely together on matters affecting Monmouth and its residents.

Monmouth Town Council has a number of assets in the town including the war memorial in St James Square, the public toilets at Agincourt Street, over 40 dog waste bins, Drybridge Play Park, the Town Field and a number of planters located both within the town and in residential areas. The Town Council has also taken responsibility of the maintenance of the new wooden planters in Monnow Street introduced as part of the COVID-19 measures installed by Monmouthshire County Council.

Monmouth Town Council also provides the Christmas trees, street decorations such as Christmas lights and bunting and the history banners displayed on Monnow Street which were renewed this civic year.

In addition, Monmouth Town Council contributes to a number of services provided by Monmouthshire County Council such as CCTV, the cleaning and maintenance of Blestium Street public toilets, street cleaning and summer playschemes for local children to attend.

As part of our responsibilities, the Town Council hosts and/ or financially supports public events in the town such as Freedom Parades for the military, cycling events and the music festival to name just some, although in light of the pandemic there hasn't been the opportunity to host as many events as would be usual.

The Town Council also financially supports a number of local organisations that provide benefit to the local community through grant funding or partnership agreements.

Finance

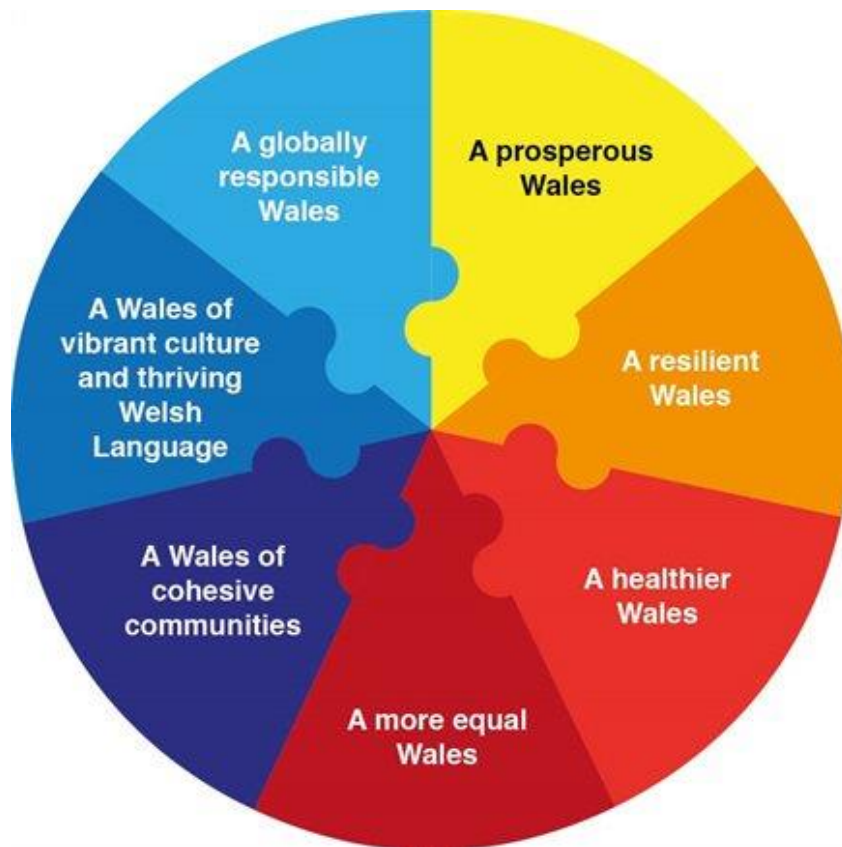
The Town Council is required to set an annual budget each year. The budget for 2022-23 is £468,506. From this, MTC determines how much to request from Monmouthshire County Council which collects the funds via Council Tax. This is known as a precept demand. Council agreed to fund £40,000 of the budget using the General Reserves already held by the Council, therefore reducing the precept request. As such, the precept for 2022-23 is £428,506 which represents an increase of £45,245 from 2021-22.

It should be noted that 2021-22 saw a reduction in the precept request from previous years to take into consideration the impact of the pandemic on local residents.

A financial statement for the year end is included at Appendix 3

3. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015

“The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.” (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales) Monmouth Town Council is one of the public bodies that is governed by this legislation. The legislation sets out 7 wellbeing goals that we should strive to achieve which are shown below.



It is imperative that, as a council, all decisions have consideration of the wellbeing goals for the benefit of the future generations of Monmouth but also the Wellbeing Plan that Monmouthshire County Council set for the whole County as a result of the 2015 Act.

The Wellbeing Plan for Monmouthshire has the following 4 objectives:

1. Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.
2. Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change.
3. Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change.
4. Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.

4. WHAT MONMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL HAS BEEN DOING IN 2021-22

It is not surprising that 2021-22 has been another abnormal year for the Town Council however, the Council has been able to arrange a number of Civic events including the Mayoral Civic Service, a Centenary Commemoration for the War Memorial and a Remembrance Sunday parade and service. Furthermore, 2021 saw the return of the spectacular Christmas Lantern Parade and a Christmas Market organised in partnership with the Monmouth Chamber of Commerce.

Furthermore, this year saw some significant changes in the staff with the current Town Clerks & RFOs being appointed on a job share basis from December 2021 and the welcome addition of 2 more members of staff (1 temporary and 1 permanent) to support the Town Clerks.

Some of the key achievements for the Council are as follows:

a. Partnerships

The pandemic brought challenges for many community organisations and charities in the area, with fundraising opportunities being reduced significantly. In light of this, Monmouth Town Council established additional three year partnerships with two local organisations to provide financial stability and assurance for the foreseeable future.

These partnerships are with:

➤ Monmouth Carnival Committee

The partnership with Monmouth Carnival Committee provided £8000 per year for the organisation of the Monmouth Carnival for 3 years.

➤ ACE Monmouth

ACE Monmouth started as a working group of Monmouth Town Council but it was thought to be more effective as a constituted community group that worked with and was financially supported by the Town Council. The partnership is a three year partnership which secures the sum of £15,000 per year for the purpose of providing guidance, advice and events for the Town Council and the residents of Monmouth in respect of the action against the climate and nature emergency.

National Wellbeing Goals Achieved :

A Wales of Cohesive
Communities

A Prosperous Wales

A Wales of vibrant culture
and thriving Welsh
language

Local Wellbeing Objectives:

1. Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life
2. Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change
3. Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change

b. Community Events

Despite the pandemic, Monmouth Town Council was able to support and/ or host the following events in 2021-22:

➤ Climate Future Festival

September 2021 saw the first Climate Future Festival organised by the Town Council's working group ACE Monmouth. The festival was spread over 7 days with workshops, talks, stalls, exhibitions and a political debate taking place in various sites around Monmouth. The purpose of the festival was to highlight the importance of action against the climate emergency. Monmouth Town Council supported the festival through funding and a number of Councillors were part of the core organising team. The success of this festival led to the development of the partnership agreement between the Town Council and ACE Monmouth as it is hoped that the group will be able to build and develop the festival further with additional financial support. *(photo credit: ACE Monmouth website)*



➤ War Memorial Centenary Commemoration

This year, it became apparent that the War Memorial in St James Square was the responsibility of the Town Council and so, in October we held a commemorative service to mark 100 years of the unveiling. This event involved local veterans, local school children and the clergy of the town. It was an event well attended by members of the public and reminded all present the reason for the War Memorial and gave an opportunity to remember and thank all those who it honoured. (photo credit: Google images)



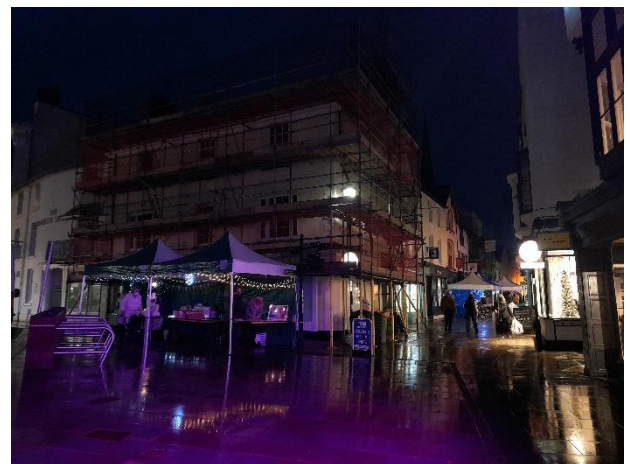
➤ Christmas Event 2021

2021 saw the return of the spectacular Christmas Lantern Parade which had a theme of “Christmas at the Box Office”. As always the event was supported brilliantly by the local residents with their lanterns. The Christmas Lantern parade is a Town Council event that is funded by the council with a number of Councillors working closely with members of the public to bring together a wonderful festive occasion. We also saw the return of the Pont Obaith that was installed on the Shire Hall gates for December to March. (photo credit: Christmas Lantern Parade Facebook)

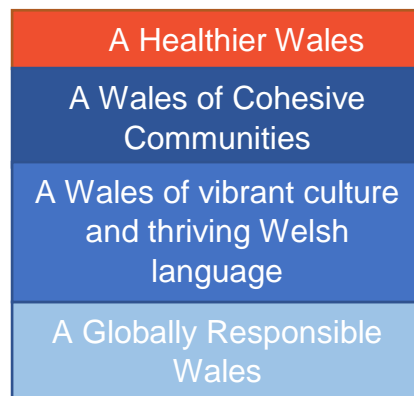


➤ Christmas Market 2021

After the Lantern Parade, the Town Council worked closely with the Chamber of Commerce to organise and initially fund a Christmas Market that focused on the vendors of Church Street, White Swan Court and Beaufort Court. This event was part of the Transforming Town Business Fund that was applied for by Monmouthshire County Council for the benefit of all towns in Monmouthshire and the fund reimbursed the costs incurred by the Town Council. The market was a great success and highlighted the wealth of independent shops Monmouth has. Entertainment was also provided by a number of local acts including the Great Baldini Magician.



National Wellbeing Goals Achieved:



Local Wellbeing Objectives Achieved:

1. Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life
2. Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change
3. Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change
4. Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.

c. **Community Grants**

2021-22 saw Monmouth Town Council commit over £17,500.00 to local community projects that will benefit residents of Monmouth. Community grants were approved for:

<u>Community Group</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Amount of Grant</u>
Rockfield Park Community Garden	Improve vegetable garden area, and publicly accessed sensory garden	£2016.87
Rock Up and Run	Training for 3 running coaches	£960.00
Monmouth Sports Association	Improvements to security and safety at the Sports Ground.	£1308.00
Monmouth Cricket Club	Girls in Cricket	£527.00
Monmouth Tennis Club	Resurfacing of tennis courts	£2000.00

Gwent Federation of Womens Institute	Publication of a book to celebrate 100 years of the Gwent Federation of Womens Institutes	£75.00
Kymin View Primary School	Adventure Trim Trail	£4410.00
Monmouth Male Voice Choir	Project Trailer	£1785.00
Ty Price Community Hall	Caretaker	£4000.00
Monmouth Breast Cancer Support Group	Running Costs and Publicity of the group	£750.00

Grants were also approved for the Monmouth Girl Guides and Monmouth Cycling Club but due to unforeseen circumstances, neither accepted the funds awarded. This does not impact their ability to reapply in the future.

The Council recognised that many of the local community groups would still have been impacted by the pandemic and so, grants of up to 100% of the project costs were available as well as the usual 75%. As part of the Community Grant process, applicants are asked to set out how the project adheres to the Wellbeing Goals imposed by the 2015 Act. As part of the analysis of the applications received, the projects' ability to satisfy some or all of the goals is considered and is a strong determining factor.

For more information on the Council's grant funding scheme, please visit www.monmouth.gov.uk

National Wellbeing Goals Achieved:

A Prosperous Wales
A More Equal Wales
A Healthier Wales
A Wales of Cohesive Communities
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
A Globally Responsible Wales

Local Wellbeing Objectives Achieved:

1. Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life
2. Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change
3. Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change
4. Develop opportunities for communities and businesses

d. Whole Office Review

This year saw the continued efforts of the Council to reconsider and reassess how well the office and its procedures worked with the hope of improving the efficiency of the Council as a whole. One of the Town Clerk & RFOs, Paula Hartley, was tasked with undertaking a Whole Office review as a long term project. This body of work has concluded and the following has been undertaken as a result:

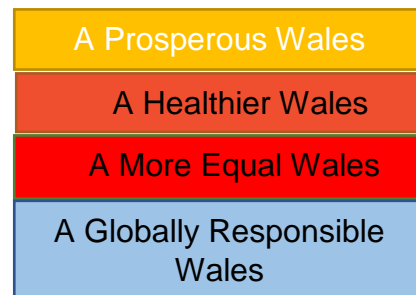
1. Internet banking – cheques are no longer used, (unless specifically requested). This speeds up the time it takes to get payments to suppliers, saves on postage, prevents cheques lost in the post or on arrival, provides security as the bank checks bank account numbers and names match, and allows payments to be authorised remotely if required.
2. A debit card to enable purchases from suppliers that only accept this method of payment, or for a quick or emergency purchase. This has stopped the use of staff cards which is unacceptable.
3. Technology for staff – Laptops and printers have been provided to enable staff to work from home, or in other areas of the Shire Hall or elsewhere for meetings.
4. The purchase ledger module in the finance system- This provides more security with the automated production of purchase orders, which are then matched to the invoice enabling quick identification of incorrect invoices and more control over the allocation of budget codes and use of EMRs.
5. MTC's own broadband and telephone system was installed to provide separation from MCC and security. Both this and the telephone system enable MTC to operate without reference to MCC's IT supplier which proved difficult.
6. The telephones are VoIP phones, which can be taken home by staff if there is a prolonged period when the Shire Hall office is not open, allowing the public and councillors to contact staff if needed during normal opening hours.
7. Modern.Gov, a meeting management system designed specifically for local authorities has been introduced which produces agendas and minutes and supporting documents easily and in a professional and easy to access format. This has saved huge amounts of staff time, during a period when they have been stretched. This is integrated into MTC's website and enables agendas and minutes to be published with the push of one button, whereas previously they had to be converted from Word and Adobe and then collated.
8. A new IT contractor was engaged and has proved to be efficient and helpful and the downtime previously experienced with IT issues has been all but eradicated.
9. A secure method of accessing all applications and Office 365 was introduced through the use of Microshade's server, designed for local authority use, which means that MTC's data is more secure and robust and Microshade take care of any Microsoft changes which have previously caused problems.
10. MTC have now moved from the use of two offices to the office on the top floor.
11. A smaller, faster, newer printer has been leased at less cost, freeing up more space and enabling the scanning to be completed faster.

12. Adobe Acrobat Pro has been licenced enabling the use of electronic signatures on agreements and other forms, so that these can be signed remotely and quicker.
13. A large TV screen has been purchased to enable the new hybrid meeting equipment to work more efficiently and to provide clearer viewing during meetings.
14. Electronic folders and files have been partially sorted and archived to make it easier to administer.
15. Version control for documents has been introduced for audit purposes.

The following areas have also been identified for future improvement:

1. The introduction of an Investment Strategy, and more secure placement of MTC's funds is in progress
2. The move over to MTC councillor email addresses.
3. The investigation of the BACS process to enable payments to be made on a monthly basis with one push of a button.

National Wellbeing Goals Achieved:



Local Wellbeing Objectives Achieved:

1. Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change
2. Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change
3. Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.

National Wellbeing Goal	Local Activity
<p>Prosperous: An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the Global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately, and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monmouth Town Council is committed to working actively with partners to encourage and promote the town. • Monmouth Town Council continues to develop the new website and increase use of our Facebook page. The website provides key contact information and responsibilities of the Council. Both the website and our social media are used to inform and communicate with residents, publicising meeting information, events and signposting to other service providers. This has been essential during the pandemic. • The use of Modern.Gov this year and incorporating the same with our website, reduces the workload of Officers and ensures that correct and accurate information is distributed efficiently and effectively to all Councillors, stakeholders and members of the public. • The Town Council financially supports a number of events and activities within Monmouth through the grants process and as part of the agreed budget, which include Christmas Lighting, the Carnival, MCC Playscheme, Civic Ceremony, and Remembrance Sunday parade. • The Town Council is committed to development of young people in the area and supports the local library by providing funding for the free newspapers and reading competitions as well as working closely with local schools for civic events. • Town Council grants are available for local groups and organisations.
<p>Resilient: A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monmouth Town Council is committed to ensuring that the town and its historical sites remain a pleasant clean and safe environment. The Town Council is not responsible for any highways or street cleaning, however, has developed excellent working relationships with the responsible authority, Monmouthshire County Council and supports them by funding the street cleaner position and cleaning of the toilets blocks. • Monmouth Town Council provides public toilets, and dog waste bins, whilst contributing to street cleaning and CCTV in the town. • The Town Council acts as consultee on planning matters and recommendations are made to the Local Planning Authority which includes any issues which are determined to be a detriment to the town. • The partnership with ACE Monmouth (Action on Climate Emergency) will ensure that the Council and the residents of Monmouth will be able to make educated and sound

	decisions regarding the Climate and Nature Emergencies in Monmouth which will maintain and enhance our local biodiversity in and around the town.
Healthier: A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Council actively promotes a society in which health is key by supporting mental health services in Monmouth such as Mind Monmouth and Citizen's Advice as well as providing funding to support groups through the Community Grants process. • The Town Council supports the Sports Association and its associated clubs through the Community Grants scheme. • The mental wellbeing of children is supported through the Monmouth summer playscheme that is part-funded by the Town Council.
More Equal: A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Council has commenced hybrid meetings via Zoom Video Conferencing which enables all elected members and members of public to attend the meeting either in person or remotely. • Monmouth Town Council supports the summer playscheme for children in Monmouth, including those who receive free school meals. • The community grant scheme in 2021-22 allowed all groups to apply for grants for up to 100% of the project costs to take into consideration the lack of fundraising opportunity during the pandemic.
Cohesive Communities: Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monmouth Town Council is responsible for the delivery of a number of services and amenities. • Through devolution of services, the Town Council now manage the public toilets, taken on from Monmouthshire County Council, over 40 dog waste bins, street decorations and local planters. • The Town Council support services, operated by Monmouthshire County Council, which include provision of CCTV, street cleaning and local parks. • Monmouth Town Council is committed to working with partners and community groups to create an attractive, viable, safe and well-connected community. • Monmouth Town Council continues to support the recent improvements to Monnow Street including the maintenance of the planters and the provision of additional seating areas that can be used by residents and visitors to the town.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Planning Committee consider the impact of any development on the community and local businesses to ensure that a cohesive community is encouraged.
Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language: where we have lots of opportunities to do different things and where lots of people can speak Welsh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town Council organises or supports a number of cultural events including the Christmas Lantern Parade, the River Festival and Monmouth Raft Race. • Monmouth Town Council funded the cleaning of the Old Monnow Bridge and its pathways which removed the bird waste, debris and foliage that was damaging a historic site. • The Town Council tries to ensure that publicity of events is done bilingually. • The Town Council funded new historical town banners that are on display on Monnow Street. These banners are bilingual.
Globally Responsible: where we look after the Environment and think about other people around the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monmouth Town Council's ACE Monmouth Working Group have continued to arrange events that focus on the Climate and Nature Emergencies including the Dr Bike Event, the Bee Festival and the organisation of the Future Festival in 2021-22. It is hoped that the partnership agreement with ACE Monmouth will ensure that the work of ACE Monmouth will continue for the duration of the partnership and beyond. • 2021 marked the 1st anniversary of Monmouth being declared a Bee Friendly Town which has seen the planting of perennial plants in the local planters, reduced mowing and more natural environments in the town. • The Town Council continues to support the Nature Isn't Neat initiative. • The Planning Committee includes the sustainability and ecological impact a development may have on the area when considering applications. • The Active Travel Working Group is working closely with Monmouthshire County Council to promote and encourage the use of active travel routes in and around Monmouth to reduce car use. • The Litter Working Group has been working closely with Monmouth Comprehensive School students to promote their campaign "Love Monmouth, Hate Litter". This campaign has included litter picks in Monmouth as well as in school competitions that deter students from creating litter and taking responsibility for their waste.

Local Wellbeing Objectives	Local Action
Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors appointed as Governors on all 3 primary schools in Monmouth. • The continuation of support for Monmouth Comprehensive School through the “School Council Liaison Working Group”. • Working with Monmouth Comprehensive School to promote their anti-litter campaign “Love Monmouth, Hate Litter”. • Financial support of the Summer Playscheme and art boxes supplied by Monmouthshire County Council (including distribution of art boxes to local children). • Continuing the Kids Club Cinema scheme in partnership with the Monmouth Savoy Theatre. • Mayors Charities this year include Quest Busters, a local charity that supports children with disabilities.
Respond to the challenges associated with demographic change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing a working partnership with Mind Monmouthshire to ensure the long term provision of mental health support for Monmouth residents including the provision of a “Wellbeing Officer”. • Responding as a consultee for the Local Development Plan for Monmouthshire and Councillor attendance at workshops for the same. • Supporting local groups that focus on reducing loneliness and isolation and encouraging community engagement through the community grant scheme. • Supporting the Citizens Advice which in turn provides support to the community on a range of issues. • Working with local police officers to ensure an understanding of how demographic change has an impact on crime in Monmouth.
Protect and enhance the resilience of our natural environment whilst mitigating and adapting to the impact of climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing the project work required for Nature Isn't Neat. • Supporting Monmouth as a Bee Town initiative by changing the planting scheme in all local planters and flower beds to perennial, bee-friendly plants. • Supporting the “No Mow May” initiative and wildflower planting in open spaces around the town. • Continuation of the project work undertaken by the ACE Monmouth Working Group which included the Bee Festival and Dr Bike event and ensuring its continued efforts by supporting through a partnership agreement for the following 3 years. • Continuation of support for the Plastic Free Working Group, Active Travel Working Group and the Litter Working Group which all focus on the protection of our natural environment.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The willow arch created for the Christmas event was a natural material which comes from a sustainable source and can be reused for future events. • Consideration is given to reduce the use of single use plastic in all civic events and organised events for the town including the Christmas Lantern Parade.
Develop opportunities for communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well-connected county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of partnerships with ACE Monmouth and Monmouth Carnival as well as continuing to support the partnerships established in 2020-21. • Supporting the Monnow Street improvements to encourage tourism and local shoppers to the area following the COVID 19 pandemic. • Financially supporting community based projects through the community grant scheme. • The Christmas lights and associated Christmas events bring the community out to enjoy all the town has to offer and encourages support of the local economy. • The Planning Committee has been keen to encourage new businesses to Monmouth during the pandemic approving many changes of use for buildings and approving advertisement consent when applicable.

g. Biodiversity in Monmouth (S6 Environment Act 2016 (Wales))

Monmouth Town Council is committed to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity.

We work in partnership with Monmouthshire County Council to ensure a 'no spray' policy is practiced in our Town Field. We protect and encourage wildlife by being part of the Nature Isn't Neat project, which supports the re-wilding of green spaces and planting pollinator-friendly plants to encourage bees and other pollinators. In 2020, Monmouth was named the first Bee Town in the UK and also awarded the Caru Gwenyn (Bee Friendly) award. The Council has continued its support of the Bee Town Status in 2021-22 through the continued planting of pollinator-friendly plants and use of peat-free compost.

Monmouth Town Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and set up the ACE Monmouth Working Group that continues to promote the impact of climate change on society and arrange events to encourage change in the town and to raise public awareness locally. In 2021-22 ACE Monmouth held the first Future Festival that raised awareness through a variety of different mediums including film, talks and workshops. ACE Monmouth has now become a self-constituted group that will be supported by the Town Council through a Partnership Agreement which will ensure that the efforts of the group continue to thrive.

We also support the Plastic Free Monmouth scheme which sets out to reduce the usage of single-use plastic that is washing up in our rivers and can be found increasingly in the countryside. By contributing funds to the drinking water fountains in the town we hope to reduce plastic waste even further. With our support and funding of Plastic Free Monmouth, the community-led steering group was able to

obtain Surfers Against Sewage accreditation for the town and have encouraged local businesses to reduce their use of single-use plastic and apply for Plastic Free Status. This work has continued throughout 2021-22.

The Council has also established a relationship with the Friends of the River Wye group that are investigating the significant and damaging changes to the River Wye that has seen the demise of the biodiversity in the river.

We help to deliver a cleaner, greener Monmouth with the provision of dog waste bins and the 'Give Dog Fouling the Red Card' campaign and also support our very active litter group (run in partnership with the local authority and a team of dedicated community volunteers).

Our Active Travel working group work diligently with the Local Authority to encourage the development of suitable routes for cyclists and walkers to reduce the use of vehicles and take into account such impacts when considering local planning applications. Provision for additional cycle parking in Monmouth was secured by the Active Travel group in 2022 with a covered shelter now sited near the Blesitum Street toilet block. The Town Council and the Active Travel group have also continued to be consultees for the development of an active travel route from Kingswood Gate and Williamsfield Lane, working with Sustrans and Monmouthshire County Council

As a Town Council we also grant aid to local community groups for environmental projects such as the improvement of the Rockfield Community Garden. Consideration has also been given to improving the availability of local allotments and community gardens in Monmouth. It is thought that that will not only increase the biodiversity in the area but will also provide many easier access to fresh, locally grown food.

Monmouth Town Council will continue to work with groups such as Nature isn't Neat and Plastic Free Monmouth to support projects which protect and improve our local biodiversity and through the partnership with ACE Monmouth continue to support the projects of Transition Monmouth. We will, also, continue to promote the need to be Bee Friendly in all planting schemes in the town.

5. Conclusion

Despite 2021-22 being a challenging time for Monmouth and its residents, it continued to highlight the strength in our community that was prevalent throughout the pandemic.

Whilst the Town Council was able to increase its project work this year, there was no mistaking the impact restrictions had on the local community projects, groups and on the Council itself in its final year.

2022 will see a new Council but, hopefully, it will also see the start of local groups and projects able to increase their activity for the benefit of all residents. Together with the support of the Town Council, these improvements will bring new opportunities, increased biodiversity, improved community connections and a

strength in spirit that will ensure Monmouth always remains a place of wonder, beauty and history to be enjoyed by people near and far.

Monmouth Town Council

Shire Hall

Agincourt Square

Monmouth

NP25 3DY

APPENDIX 1- YOUR COUNCILLORS

Dixton with Osbaston Ward



Claudia Blair

Indy Monmouth, Independent



Jane Lucas

Conservative



Richard Roden

Conservative



Anthea Dewhurst

Liberal Democrat (resigned March 2022)

Wyesham Ward



Ken Breeze

Indy Monmouth, Independent



Kelly Jackson-Graham

Indy Monmouth, Independent



Emma Bryn

Indy Monmouth, Independent



Jane Gunter

Independent

Drybridge Ward



Rachel Jupp

Indy Monmouth, Independent



Alice Legg

Labour



Mat Feakins

Welsh Conservative

Town Ward



Simon Jones

Indy Monmouth, Independent

Overmonnow Ward



Terry Christopher

Independent



Rod Smith

Welsh Conservative



Jamie Treharne

Welsh Conservative



Sue White

Conservative

APPENDIX 2: COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE

COUNCILLOR	FULL COUNCIL				FINANCE & POLICY				PEOPLE AND PLACES				PLANNING				ANNUAL MEETING
	N	P	A	%	N	P	A	%	N	P	A	%	N	P	A	%	
ClIr Blair	15	12	3	80	5	4	1	80	8	7	1	88					1
ClIr Breeze	15	2	13	13					8	0	8	0					A
ClIr Bryn	15	14	1	93					8	8	0	100	22	10	8	45	1
ClIr Christopher	15	15	0	100	5	5	0	100	8	7	1	88					1
ClIr Dewhurst *	12	12	0	100	5	4	1	80	7	7	0	100	18	16	2	73	1
ClIr Feakins	15	11	4	73	5	4	1	80	8	4	4	50					1
ClIr Gunter	15	11	4	73	5	5	0	100	8	6	2	75	22	21	1	95	1
ClIr Jackson Graham	15	10	5	67	5	1	2	20	8	3	5	38					1
ClIr Jupp	15	7	7	47	5	1	3	20	8	4	4	50	22	3	14	14	1
ClIr Jones	15	7	5	47					8	0	5	0	22	7	10	32	1
ClIr Legg **	15	3	2	20					8	0	0	0	19	0	0	0	
ClIr Lucas	15	10	2	67	5	4	1	80	8	4	4	50					1
ClIr Roden	15	13	2	87	5	4	1	80	8	7	1	88					1
ClIr Smith	15	11	4	73	5	4	1	80	8	5	3	63	22	18	4	82	1
ClIr Treharne	15	15	0	100	5	5	0	100	8	5	3	63	22	20	2	91	1
ClIr White	15	11	4	73	5	3	2	60	8	6	2	75	22	20	2	91	1

N	Actual number of meetings held.	Black	Non-Committee member
P	Number of meetings attended.	Yellow	Non-Committee member in attendance
A	Apologies given and received.		

* Cllr Dewhurst resigned from the Council on 09.03.2022

** Cllr Legg resigned from the Planning Committee and joined Finance and Policy Committee on 28.03.2022

APPENDIX 3 – FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS 2021-22

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Working Detail for ANNUAL RETURN

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2022

Monmouth Town Council Current Year

	Last Year £	This Year £	Code	and Centre	Code Description
1	0	0	301	0	Current Year Surplus/Deficit
1	294,671	343,831	310	0	General Reserve
1	0	0	320	0	EMR Utilities
1	0	0	321	0	EMR Museum Contribution
1	10,000	10,000	322	0	EMR Cemetery
1	0	0	323	0	EMR Millennium Wheel Tiles
1	0	0	324	0	EMR Commemorative Oak Tree
1	45,000	45,000	325	0	EMR Public Realm Contribution
1	0	0	326	0	EMR Elections
1	0	0	327	0	EMR Dixon Field Water Supply
1	0	0	328	0	EMR Town Furniture
1	10,000	-1,653	329	0	EMR Staff Absence Contingency
1	1,000	1,000	330	0	EMR Chapter 8 Training
1	4,830	4,830	331	0	EMR Welsh Language
1	0	0	332	0	EMR Agincourt St Toilets Repai
1	0	-240	333	0	EMR CILCA/ILCA Course Costs
1	300	1,345	334	0	EMR Cycling Promotion
1	0	0	335	0	EMR Mayoral Expenses Overrun
1	0	0	336	0	EMR Carbonne Twinning 2018/19
1	0	0	337	0	EMR Place Plan Training
1	10,000	10,000	338	0	EMR Office Mangt (was QMS)
1	0	800	339	0	EMR Newbridgepaving/Wye Bridge
1	0	0	340	0	EMR MCC Grant play scheme
1	0	928	341	0	EMR CCTV
1	0	1,600	342	0	EMR Noticeboards
1	0	1,308	343	0	EMR Emergency Grant Funding
1	0	0	344	0	EMR Cycling Promotion
1	0	5,000	345	0	EMR Power Supply Costs Christm
1	0	652	346	0	EMR Drinking Water Fountains
1	0	1,000	347	0	EMR Air Quality Monitors
1	0	350	348	0	EMR Highfield Rd-cut through p
1	0	694	349	0	EMR IT upgrade
1	0	3,262	350	0	EMR 19/20 4th Qtr Office Equip
1	10,000	10,000	351	0	EMR Community Engt.& Resid. Su
1	0	300	352	0	EMR ACE Mon Green spaces -tool
1	0	29,650	353	0	EMR MTC Covid-19 Recovery Fund
1	0	11,795	354	0	EMR Active Travel/Bike Shelter
1	0	0	355	0	EMR Staff Training
1	0	0	356	0	EMR Allotment Association
1	0	0	357	0	EMR Future Events
1	0	0	358	0	EMR Communications

Working Detail for ANNUAL RETURN

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2022

Monmouth Town Council Current Year

	Last Year £	This Year £	Code	and Centre	Code Description
1	0	0	359	0	EMR Green Spaces Tree Planting
1	0	0	360	0	EMR Army Covenant Grant
1	0	0	361	0	EMR Chippenham Play Park
1	0	0	362	0	EMR DO Not Use Active Travel A
1	0	0	363	0	EMR C/F from previou year
1	0	0	364	0	EMR War Mem Repairs
1	0	0	365	0	EMR Allotments
1	0	0	366	0	EMR Toilet Upgrade
1	0	0	367	0	EMR Playground Replace
1	0	0	368	0	EMR Replace Dog Bins
1	0	0	369	0	EMR History Banners
1	0	0	370	0	EMR Litter Bins
1	0	0	371	0	EMR Street Furniture
1	0	0	372	0	EMR Xmas Lights Contingency
1	0	0	373	0	EMR Planter Replacement
1	0	0	374	0	EMR Monnow Bridge Clean
1	0	0	375	0	EMR Allotments
1	0	0	376	0	EMR Upgrade IT software
1	0	0	377	0	EMR Member Training
1	0	0	378	0	EMR Queens Jubilee Grants
1 Balances brought forward	385,801	481,452	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Must agree to line 7 of the previous year.		
2	396,395	383,261	1176	101	Precept Received
2 (+) Income from local taxation/levy	396,395	383,261	Total amount of income received/receivable in the year from local taxation (precept) or levy/contribution from principal bodies.		
3	6,954	3,966	1050	101	Miscellaneous Income
3	462	1,181	1190	101	Interest Received
3 (+) Total other receipts	7,416	5,147	Total income or receipts recorded in the cashbook minus amounts included in line 2. Includes support, discretionary and revenue grants.		
4	103,393	45,469	4000	101	Salaries
4	0	34,171	4001	101	Tax/NI and Pensions
4	1,128	0	9010	901	EMR CILCA & ILCA Course Costs
4 (-) Staff costs	104,521	79,640	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and related expenses eg. termination costs.		
5	0	0	5	0	Loan Interest
5 (-) Loan interest/Capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on external borrowing (if any).		
6	240	240	4005	101	Payroll Contract
6	48	0	4007	101	Officer & Member Travel
6	970	812	4009	101	Staff training & Subsistence

Working Detail for ANNUAL RETURN

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2022

Monmouth Town Council Current Year

	Last Year £	This Year £	Code	and Centre	Code Description
6	180	80	4011	101	Member Training
6	547	146	4021	101	Stationery & Office Supplies
6	68	6	4022	101	Postage
6	735	349	4023	101	Copying
6	0	416	4024	101	Copier Consumables
6	-917	1,916	4025	101	Insurance
6	2,044	3,986	4027	101	Subscriptions
6	0	216	4030	101	Website
6	1,714	75	4031	101	Publicity
6	1,561	1,231	4057	101	Audit
6	4,138	2,627	4060	101	IT Contract
6	0	3,071	4062	101	IT Software,Subs & Finance Sys
6	1,786	1,620	4070	101	Office Equipment
6	1,368	5,892	4071	101	Shire Hall SLA annual payment
6	5,701	2,978	4081	101	Specialist advice services
6	13,382	13,720	4093	201	CCTV
6	225	60	4095	101	Clerks Contngency Fund
6	95	2,893	4100	102	Mayor's civic expenses
6	3,117	1,187	4105	102	Civic Expenses
6	0	1,309	4107	102	Meetings Costs
6	0	350	4108	102	Professional Fees
6	400	600	4110	102	Mace Bearers
6	-1,500	0	4115	102	Elections
6	2,865	4,944	4120	102	Members' payments allowances &
6	55	54	4200	101	Section 137
6	16,000	8,000	4203	201	Community Contributions
6	22,385	17,832	4204	201	Community Grants combined
6	0	31,359	4206	201	Partnership Agreements
6	1,875	6,044	4216	201	Christmas Festival/Monlight
6	1,146	1,128	4221	201	Events
6	0	-1,792	4222	201	Armed Forces Covenant Funding
6	0	0	4306	301	New bridge area paving
6	17,023	17,765	4307	301	Agincourt St. Toilets
6	26,922	27,595	4308	301	MCC Street Sweep
6	7,551	12,481	4309	301	Dog waste bins
6	3,528	4,140	4310	301	Town Maintenance Contract & Ex
6	24,170	0	4315	301	Street Decorations2021FlorCon
6	719	2,303	4317	301	Decorations & Town Centre Enha
6	14,356	14,356	4321	301	Blestium St. Toilets
6	56	1,533	4324	301	Climate Change Emergency
6	0	2,650	4350	301	Litter Bins

Working Detail for ANNUAL RETURN

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2022

Monmouth Town Council Current Year

	Last Year £	This Year £	Code	and Centre	Code Description
6	0	1,280	4351	301	Street Furniture
6	0	23,426	4352	301	Christmas Lights & Trees
6	0	1,134	4353	301	Fountains
6	0	10,013	4354	301	Floral Contract
6	556	830	4600	401	Plg extra meeting costs
6	255	772	9009	901	EMR Cycling Promotion
6	21,653	8,458	9014	901	EMR Staff Absence Contingency
6	1,000	0	9017	901	EMR Mayoral Expenses Overrun
6	0	10,936	9020	901	EMR Office Management (was QMS
6	2,000	0	9024	901	EMR MCC Grant play scheme
6	2,448	0	9029	901	EMR Drinking Water Fountains
6	0	350	9031	901	EMR Highfield Rd-cut through p
6	0	1,320	9032	901	EMR IT upgrade
6	825	128	9033	901	EMR 19/20 4th Qtr Office Equip
6	350	14,156	9035	901	EMR MTC Covid-19 Recovery Fund
6	0	5,795	9036	901	EMR Active Travel Activities
6	0	2,641	9038	901	EMR Future Events
6	0	35,940	9041	901	EMR C/F from previous yr
6	0	10,000	9042	901	EMR Chippenham Play Park
6	0	4,650	9044	901	EMR Allotments
6	0	0	9104	901	DO NOT USE
6 (-) Total other payments	203,640	328,002	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook minus staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).		
7 (=) Balances carried forward	481,452	462,218	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).		
8	3,200	152	101	0	Debtors
8	15,877	13,771	105	0	Vat Due
8	5,128	5,189	110	0	Prepayments
8 (+) Debtors	24,205	19,113	Income and expenditure accounts only: Enter the value of debts owed to the body at the year-end.		
9	316,384	301,712	201	0	Lloyds TSB Combined
9	0	0	202	0	Lloyds TSB Treasury Deposit
9	155,449	156,615	204	0	Monmouthshire Building Society
9	66	24	210	0	Petty Cash
9 (+) Total cash and investments	471,899	458,351	All accounts: The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and investments held at 31 March. This must agree with the reconciled cashbook balance as per the bank reconciliation.		
10	2,060	1,916	500	0	Creditors P/L
10	263	119	501	0	Creditors
10	1,487	0	502	0	Pension Due
10	2,046	0	503	0	TAX/NI due
10	8,795	13,211	510	0	Accruals

Working Detail for ANNUAL RETURN

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2022

Monmouth Town Council Current Year

	Last Year £	This Year £	Code	and Centre	Code Description
10	0	0	599	0	Opening Balance Suspense
10 (-) Creditors	14,652	15,246	Income and expenditure accounts only: Enter the value of monies owed by the body (except borrowing) at the year-end.		
11 (=) Balances carried forward	481,452	462,218	Total balances should equal line 7 above: Enter the total of (8+9-10).		
12	301,463	300,034	12	0	Total Fixed Assets
12 Total fixed assets and long-term assets	301,463	300,034	The asset and investment register value of all fixed assets and any other long-term assets held as at 31 March.		
13	0	0	13	0	Total Borrowings
13 Total borrowing	0	0	The outstanding capital balances as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB)		