

# Minutes



## Council

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Date: 16 July 2024

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors M Al-Nuaimi, S Cocks, E Stowell-Corten, J Harris, A Screen, J Peterson, A Pimm, D Batrouni, D Jenkins, P Drewett, B Davies, S Adan, J Reynolds, R Howells, A Sterry, G Horton, J Cleverly, P Cockeram, D Davies, M Evans, D Fouweather, M Kellaway, M Linton, D Mayer, R Mogford, J Mudd, M Spencer, K Thomas, C Townsend, J Clarke, Y Forsey, P Hourahine, J Hughes, L Lacey, S Marshall, A Morris, F Hussain and B Perkins

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### 1. Preliminaries

#### 1.i Apologies

Councillors Reeks, Whitehead, M Howells, P Bright, and M Pimm.

Approximately one hour prior to the start of the meeting, a hardware fault affecting the broadcasting equipment in the council chamber was identified. Despite numerous attempts to rectify the fault and the involvement of the system supplier, the equipment remained out of order at the scheduled start time for the meeting with no prospect of it being repaired on the same day. The meeting remained quorate by virtue of the number of Council members present in the chamber. Therefore, by agreement of the Presiding Member, Monitoring Officer, Chief Executive, Leader and Leader of the Opposition, the meeting proceeded in the absence of those members who had intended to join it remotely.

Those members were recorded as: Councillors Mayer, Routley, Mudd, Jordan, Baker-Westhead, James, D and T Harvey and it was acknowledged that those individuals had intended to join the meeting but were prevented from doing so due to the system failure which was outside of their control.

#### 1.ii Declarations of Interest

None received.

#### 1.iii Presiding Member's Announcements

The Presiding Member welcomed Councillor Evans back to the Council meeting and was pleased to see that he was feeling better. Councillor Evans thanked everyone across the floor for their well wishes.

### 2. Minutes

Minutes of the last meeting held on 23 April and 21 May 2024 were accepted subject to the following:

Minutes of 21 May Council AGM - Item 5: The Cabinet Member title was Climate Change and Biodiversity.

Councillor Davies seconded the approval of the Minutes.

### 3. **Appointments**

To consider the proposed appointments set out in the report.

Councillor Drewett moved the appointments set out in the report, as agreed by the Business Managers as set out below.

Councillor Evans seconded the report.

**Resolved:** That the following appointments be agreed.

#### **Governing Body Appointments**

<b>Governing Body</b>	<b>Appointments/Resignations</b>	<b>Name</b>
Newport Admission Forum	N/A	Debbie Harvey
Newport Admission Forum	N/A	Tim Harvey
Newport Admission Forum	N/A	Debbie Jenkins
Lliswerry High School	Disqualification	Adam Smith
Lliswerry High School	Appointment	Richard Shuttleworth
Glasllwch Primary School	Resignation	Allan Hyland
Glasllwch Primary School	Appointment	Robert Cornelius
Ringland Primary School	Resignation	Laura Lacey
Ringland Primary School	Appointment	Emma Harris
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Teyrnion	Resignation	Tom Pedley
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Teyrnion	Appointment	Daniel Minty
Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael	Resignation	Joseph Chambers
Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael	Appointment	Sian Jenkins
Lliswerry Primary School	Resignation	Ruqia Hayat
Lliswerry Primary School	Appointment	Ben Edwards
Monnow Primary School	Resignation	Valerie Delahaye
Monnow Primary School	Appointment	Ruth Jones
St. Joseph's High School	Resignation	Alex Pimm
St. Joseph's High School	Appointment	Lawrence Cullen
Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael	Resignation	Olwen Allender
Ysgol Gymraeg Ifor Hael	Appointment	Hugh Knight
Clytha Primary School	Resignation	Peter Bray
Clytha Primary School	Appointment	Paul Price
Clytha Primary School	Reappointment	Matthew Evans
Crindau Primary School	Reappointment	Paul Cockeram
Glasllwch Primary School	Reappointment	Matthew Evans
Llanwern High School	Reappointment	Ray Truman
Maes Ebbw School	Reappointment	Kate Thomas
Malpas Court Primary School	Reappointment	Jane Mudd

Mount Pleasant Primary School	Reappointment	Stephen Bowen
Newport High School	Reappointment	David Mayer
St Davids RC Primary School	Reappointment	David Hutchings
St Gabriels RC Primary School	Reappointment	Jan Furtek
St Woolos Primary School	Reappointment	Kate Thomas
St Woolos Primary School	Reappointment	Miqdad Al-Nuaimi
St. Julians School	Reappointment	Louise Moore
The John Frost School	Reappointment	Trevor Watkins
The John Frost School	Reappointment	Jan Atkinson
Ysgol Gyfun Gwent Is Coed	Reappointment	John Harris
Ysgol Gymraeg Casnewydd	Reappointment	Llio Elgar

#### 4. **Police Issues**

The Presiding Member introduced Superintendent J White of Gwent Police, who provided Council Members with an update on police issues within East, West, and Central Newport.

When the Superintendent had addressed Council, the Presiding Member invited the Leader to address Superintendent White.

The Leader thanked Supt White for his continued work in his role and thanked the team that protected residents across the city.

The Leader referred to an email from a resident who felt that the city centre was not a priority for the police and asked if Supt White could offer some assurance to residents on this matter.

Supt White advised that there was increased officer foot fall from 5pm to 10pm as well as dedicated night shift officers working in the city centre. Police officers also provided further additional police presence if they were called there to support the arrest of individuals.

##### Questions to the Police raised by Councillors:

- Councillor Morris referred to 'boy racers' in the West of Newport causing issues on a Sunday night in particular Supt White advised that Inspector Rowlands had found that early engagement with these drivers was a worthwhile deterrent against speeding. More could also be done with partner agencies in terms of approach which the police were looking to address.
- Councillor Fouweather had been approached by residents regarding their former beat officer J Harris who walked the streets in Allt-yr-yn regularly. Could residents have that presence back, or a special constable in place? Supt White agreed in principle, but unfortunately policing teams did not have the numbers of staff required to fulfil all requests and therefore had to go where required. Neighbourhood policing teams were carrying out more engagement instead. There had also been staff cuts with Community Safety Officers (CSOs), therefore the Police were looking at where CSOs and officers were most needed.
- Councillor Adan also mentioned that Pill was in need of officers 'on the beat', particularly on Commercial Road and Dolphin Street due to community safety issues. Feedback Councillor Adan had received from traders in the areas was also quite concerning. In light of this, Councillor Adan asked what proactive measures the police were intending to take. Supt White confirmed that the Pill police team was taking proactive measures and were working in partnership with Trading Standards. Operation Firecrest had been in

place to address the selling of counterfeit tobacco. This was carried out over six-month period resulting in warrants issued and the seizure of £1.6 M counterfeit tobacco. These efforts were commended by UK Trading Standards, as one of highest seizure records. Stop searches and intelligence logs were also in place. With more CSOs in Pill and Maindee, the police were seeing the benefits of their work.

- Councillor Corten mentioned that the Ringland redevelopment work was attracting anti-social behaviour and was concerned that children playing on the building site could hurt themselves. Supt White confirmed he would speak to the Ward Inspector and in the meantime, would obtain further details from Councillor Corten outside of the meeting.
- Councillor Hourahine thanked Supt White for the additional policing around the Neon building, Victoria, and St Julians Wards. Money had been provided to the police from the Home Office in order to address low level crimes, so with this in mind, Councillor Hourahine asked if there were any plans to extend this further. Supt White advised that this would not be extended but there would be a review by the Home Office, which might lead to a continuation, although at this point it was too early to say.
- Councillor Cocks referred to access points/slip roads near the Celtic Manor which was a source of complaints by residents because of the 'boy racers' in the area, as well as driving up and down Broadmoor Road. Councillor Cocks stated that there were four accidents in 2023 and one other accident this year in these areas, and speed bumps had been removed from Bulmore Road. Supt White said that he would speak to Go Safe regarding an assessment.
- Councillor Marshall thanked Supt white for the work around Maesglas tackling anti-social behaviour and asked for increased patrols as there were youths causing issues near the local shops. Supt White confirmed that he would raise this with his colleague.
- The Presiding Member added that monthly meetings in the Shaftesbury Ward were invaluable, partly due to the intelligence residents shared with police in these meetings.
- Councillor Thomas wished to congratulate the former city centre Police Inspector Richard Shapland on their retirement. Councillor Thomas considered that they had been very helpful and informative to the ward members and residents over the 12 months where he had been in post.

## 5. **Treasury Management Year End Report - 2023/24**

The Presiding Member invited the Leader to present the first report, which outlined the Council's treasury management activity for 2023/24 and confirmed that treasury activities during the year complied with the Treasury Strategy previously considered and set by Members.

The purpose of the report was to inform Council of treasury activities undertaken within the financial year 2023/24.

The report outlined borrowing and investment activities during the year, including compliance against the agreed prudential indicators. The report also provided an outlook for the forthcoming year and over the medium term.

The report was already considered by Governance and Audit Committee and Cabinet who provided no further comments for Council's consideration.

During the year, total borrowing reduced from £138.6m to £137.1m.

- This movement included repayment of Lender Option Borrower Option (LOBO) loans totalling £15m, which were replaced with £15m of PWLB borrowing.
- The LOBOs were redeemed because the lender exercised their option to increase the interest rates and the Council took the opportunity to exit the arrangement at that point.
- The new Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loans were the first new long-term loans for the Council in a number of years, although they were only taken out to replace existing long-term loans.
- There was an increase in interest-free Salix loans which were used for energy efficiency projects.
- Two small PWLB loans were redeemed and a number of EIP (Equal Instalment of Principal) loans were repaid in instalments over the course of the year.

Investments reduced from £47.2m to £13.9m

- This was expected to happen, as reserves were being used as planned and the progress of the capital programme reduced internal borrowing capacity.
- Of the year-end balance, £10m continued to be held in long-term covered bonds, to ensure the Council retained its professional client status, meaning it could access better borrowing rates.

The report noted that all of the prudential indicators were complied with.

The outlook for next few years showed that:

- There was an underlying need to borrow coming to the fore, as the capital programme was delivered, and reserves were used.
- This would most likely result in new external borrowing.
- This was expected and the capital financing budget allowed for that.
- There was also a need to refinance some large loans (circa £20m) towards the end of the year which was also planned for.
- There was a risk that the remaining LOBOs could need redeeming, but the hope was that equivalent, if not better, interest rates could be accessed for any replacement loans required.
- Officers would monitor interest rates closely, to ensure the best rates were accessed for any new borrowing, in liaison with external treasury advisers.

Councillor Drewett seconded the report.

#### Comments of Councillors:

- Councillor Al-Nuaimi raised his concern in relation to the Greater Gwent (Torfaen) Pensions Fund and their source of funding. The Monitoring Officer advised that if Councillor Al-Nuaimi wanted to raise a notice of motion, this would need to be done in accordance with the Standing Orders. Councillor Evans felt that it was not appropriate to discuss the matter under this item. Councillor Al-Nuaimi did not want to raise a notice of motion but wanted to add a comment.
- Councillor Drewett supported the financial statement as a prudent measure.
- Councillor Morris supported an investigation into the pension scheme.
- Leader added that this was a factual end of year report. Whilst outside of the report presented to Council, the Leader confirmed that the Council had already engaged with the Greater Gwent (Torfaen) Pensions Fund and Newport City Council had a stronger voice moving forward regarding pensions.

**Resolved:**

Council noted the report on treasury management activities for the period 2023/24

**6. Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report - 2023/24**

The Presiding Member invited Councillor Lacey, Cabinet Member for Social Services to present the annual Safeguarding Report, which demonstrated how Newport City Council met its obligations towards safeguarding.

This was the seventh annual report highlighting Corporate Safeguarding and Newport City Councils commitment to keeping children and adults at risk as safe as possible.

The report evidenced what Newport City Council were doing to ensure that all staff knew and understood how to identify and report any safeguarding concerns they had.

The Corporate Safeguarding policy covered all functions and services of the Council and applied to all Council employees, elected members, foster carers, individuals undertaking work placements, volunteers and anyone carrying out work on behalf of the Council, including independent contractors.

The report documented mandatory training compliance and looked objectively at how to improve reporting data.

The report showed how safeguarding was a consideration in every service area. A safeguarding self-assessment was undertaken by service areas annually so directorates were clear about their knowledge and awareness of safeguarding and could work with help to make improvements and build confidence where necessary.

Councillor Marshall seconded the report.

**Resolved:**

Council received the Annual Safeguarding Report by the Head of Corporate Safeguarding.

**7. Director of Social Services Annual Report - 2023/24**

The Presiding Member invited Councillor Lacey, Cabinet Member for Social Services to present the report. Councillor Lacey, as incoming Cabinet Member, thanked Councillor Jason Hughes and Councillor Stephen Marshall for their commitment, contribution, and diligence as the previous Cabinet Members.

The report of the Director of Social Services provided an annual overview of the work across Adults, Childrens and Prevention and Inclusion. The case studies provided a snapshot of the work across Newport supporting the most vulnerable citizens. the impact of the services was crucial, and the stories breathed life into the data.

Councillor Lacey said that it was pleasing that despite the challenges and pressures staff were able to deliver excellence and maintain their commitment and enthusiasm. There were over a thousand staff in Social Services and their dedicated work underpinned the care and support for citizens.

Councillor Lacey added that it was a privilege to take forward the work of Social Services with the staff and welcomed the opportunity to learn more and provide support over the coming year.

The Strategic Director, as the designated Director for Social Services, had a statutory duty under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and as amended by the

Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 to produce an annual report to the Council.

The report was required to set out the personal assessment of the Director of Social Services and the performance of Social Services in delivering its social care functions during the preceding 12 months.

This report covered the period of 2023/2024. A mixture of case studies and examples from staff to demonstrate the work of Social Services was well received last year and this report utilised the same format. The data to support the qualitative materials was available in the appendices.

Despite the significant issues and challenges of 2023/2024, the Director of Social Services was satisfied that the Council continued to comply with its statutory duties.

Social services staff were able to look beyond the relentless demands and still delivered innovation, continued development of services and indeed excellence.

Councillor Lacey thanked all staff and also mentioned that Sally Ann Jenkins, Strategic Director for Social Services was retiring and welcomed Sally to say a few words about the report and the hard work and dedication of the officers in social services.

#### Comments of Councillors:

- Councillor Fouweather mentioned that the report was discussed at Performance Scrutiny Committee, People recently, and it told a good story about the hard work social services carried out. Councillor Fouweather reflected that this was the most challenging portfolio that Newport City Council had. Councillor Fouweather was concerned about staff sickness levels and the spike of young people going into custody and asked about the support did 19+ year olds receive. The Strategic Director for Social Services advised that staff sickness was high but was being addressed and Social Services were working on this to emulate the success achieved in this area in Children's Services. The Director reflected that there were some years when there were no young people in custody or on remand, and that the team was highly proactive in keeping a careful eye on these figures. Regarding accommodation with 19+ year olds, there was a concern about how to support them and social services was working with agencies regarding safeguarding to ensure young people were protected with transitional safeguarding measures being developed to support people across that gap.
- Councillor D Davies wanted to thank the preventative and inclusion team who worked hard but relied on grant funding and added that teams needed to focus on value for money.
- Councillor Marshall remembered those children in the case studies, outlined in the report and felt that the Strategic Director was leaving Newport City Council with a positive memory of her time and impact there. Councillor Marshall thanked Sally for her work.
- Councillor Hughes added that Sally was highly respected and mentioned her leadership both during covid and post-covid. The team was a safer place and had exceptional staff, adding that it was a pleasure working with Sally.
- Councillor Hourahine commended social services staff on their outstanding work.
- Councillor Reynolds mentioned that being a social worker was a stressful job and the case studies within the report emphasised facts that there were hundreds of success stories. Councillor Reynolds wanted it to put on record that Sally Ann Jenkins' name was legendary within social care circles.

- The Presiding Member also added his well wishes for Sally for her future endeavours.
- The Leader also added his gratitude for Sally and her hard work during her years with Newport City Council.
- Councillor Evans echoed the sentiments of colleagues and wished her a long happy and healthy retirement.

**Resolved:**

Council -

- 1 Noted the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services.
- 2 Was asked for comments on the content of the Annual Report of the Director of Social Services.

**8. Safer Newport Plan**

The Presiding Member invited Councillor Drewett, Cabinet Member for Communities and Poverty Reduction to present the Safer Newport Community Safety Strategic Needs Assessment and plan for 2024 to 2029.

Newport City Council had a responsibility under the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) to formulate and implement a plan to reduce crime and disorder in the area through the local Community Safety Partnership, Safer Newport.

This important partnership included Gwent Police and other relevant partners and supported a multi-agency approach to complex problems.

Part of the partnership responsibility included undertaking a Strategic Needs Assessment for Community Safety. The primary goal of this assessment was to pinpoint the underlying causes, patterns, and significant community safety issues, such as Anti-Social Behaviour, Serious Violence, Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse, and Sexual Violence.

The Strategic Needs Assessment presented with the report provided an evaluation of the current picture of community safety in Newport, based on quantitative data from various agencies and qualitative insights from citizens and partners.

This was previously considered by the Performance Scrutiny Committee; Partnerships and their comments were included within the report.

This was successfully recommended by Cabinet to Council for formal adoption.

These documents were considered by the partnership and was also recommended by Cabinet to be adopted by Full Council.

Councillor Davies seconded the report.

Comments of Councillors:

- Councillor D Davies mentioned that the detailed assessment and data showed high levels of crime but that it was reassuring that people felt safe in the city. Councillor D Davies thought that it was important to note that this was due to a multi-agency approach. This would help provide a targeted evidence-based approach.
- Councillor Evans referred to anti-social behaviour and the results of the bus and wi-fi survey in that people felt that they might be a victim of crime in Newport, which was



concerning. Residents were tired of excuses and wanted concrete action and therefore hoped that this approach would bring the city back on track.

- Councillor Adan referred to the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) which was up for review, and this would go out for public consultation and added that Councillor Drewett was working within the community and should be given time to make an impression for the residents of Newport.
- Councillor Al-Nuaimi fully supported the report but pointed out the safety of women and girls was paramount and that street lighting within the city should remain on for their safety.
- Councillor Fouweather referred to drug agencies providing methadone within Newport as he felt this could be a factor in anti-social behaviour. Councillor Fouweather stated that people did not feel safe after 4pm and needed to take into consideration offenders and crime in Newport. The city centre was a great place but needed to be better. Councillor Fouweather had started however to see an improvement with the new Leader in place, such as the cleaning and fixing of the paving stones.
- The Leader thanked Councillor Fouweather and added that this action was due to the efforts of Councillors Forsey and R Howells' Cabinet Member portfolio. The Leader also addressed Councillor Al-Nuaimi's concern about street lighting. The Council budget had been decimated and whilst he would like to street lighting switched back on the Council could not afford it. The Leader stated that the Council needed to work better with the private sector because of the financial struggles the Council was facing.
- Councillor Cocks welcomed the report which was focused on tackling anti-social behaviour and crime.
- Councillor Hourahine referred to the PSPO debate that would be discussed at council, following Scrutiny Committee, and hoped that members would take the opportunity to find out what was happening within the city.
- Councillor Reynolds referred to perception in relation to crime within Newport and the provision of real data rather than anecdotal evidence. Levels of policing had been decimated, and crime was on increase. The report however, outlined how the Council would take action that would improve the city centre.
- Councillor Evans suggested that Cabinet Members take a walk around the city centre to appreciate the concerns raised.
- Councillor Morris mentioned that residents were afraid to go into city during the day because of people asking for money. He thought that the city was struggling, and that Councillors needed to work in unison to improve the city.
- Councillor Clarke understood the points made but also made reference to positive aspects. The Placemaking Plan was out for consultation, for residents and businesses and encouraged everyone to get involved to be part of change.
- Councillor Corten thanked officers that brought this to Performance Scrutiny Committee, Partnerships and for their hard work and mentioned the positive aspects of people visiting the city to experience the music and other nighttime venues on a regular basis.
- Councillor Thomas observed that the city had changed since moving here in 2002 but that she felt safe. Councillor Thomas also chaired the Licensing Committee and was aware of issues raised through that channel. Councillor Thomas wished to remind residents that any criminal activity should be reported to the police as it was vitally important to record

and address these issues. Newport was a valuable resource and added that the biggest area of growth in crime was shoplifting not poor street lighting.

- Councillor Marshall mentioned that the report was positive and mentioned the importance of working with partners. Places such as the Indoor market, leisure centre, and Corn Exchange were part of a new dynamic, and the Council was part of amazing events such as Pride in the 'Port and the Food Festival; a lot of events were free, and this was very important so that everyone could participate, and visitors were attracted to the city.
- Councillor Horton reflected that part of the challenge for small businesses was competing with global rivals.
- Councillor Sterry mentioned that Cwmbran and Spytty were thriving.
- Councillor Spencer said that he used the city centre regularly and did not encounter any trouble.
- Councillor Screen added that the report included a plan to address the problems of the city centre.
- Councillor Hussain stated that she regularly visited a local mosque in the city centre with her daughter in law at about 10pm and always felt safe.
- Councillor Mogford reflected that as Mayor he had been invited to many events in the city centre and the positivity was reassuring. There was an onus on all of the elected members to promote the city. Whilst there were problems, the Council had to move forward, and these plans could be measured to see what could be achieved. The Council had to learn to manage problems as part of the growth of the city.
- The Presiding member mentioned that having the Safer Plan in place was a viable way of going forward.

**Resolved:**

Council approved and adopted the Safer Newport Community Strategic Needs Assessment and Community Safety Plan appended to this report.

## 9. **Gwent Serious Violence Strategy Plan**

The Presiding Member invited Councillor Drewett, Cabinet Member for Communities and Poverty Reduction to present the Serious Violence Duty Strategic Needs Assessment and Strategy.

The Serious Violence Duty became law across England and Wales at the end of January 2023 and placed a mandatory requirement on local authorities to work with other 'specified authorities' to develop a plan and strategy to reduce and prevent serious violence.

It was noted that the development of the Strategic Needs Assessment and Strategy was undertaken in collaboration with partners across Gwent, however, the duty applied to Newport City Council.

The four strategic priorities identified to meet the vision of 'to create a Gwent Without Violence' were:

- Better use of data to inform action
- Prioritise addressing the risk factors for violence with evidence-based interventions
- Join the dots to better understand and maximise impact

- Adopt a place-based approach that utilised local experience, listened to community voices and was strengthened through regional governance

Within Newport, the findings of the assessment and the four priorities was embedded within the Safer Newport Community Safety Plan, also on today's agenda.

Both documents were considered by the partnership scrutiny committee and their comments were included within the report.

– This was the first Gwent wide strategic needs assessment and strategy, and Councillor Drewett thanked all partners involved for their work on this.

– The strategy's aim of creating a 'Gwent Without Violence' was one that everyone could support.

The Leader seconded the report.

#### Comments of Councillors:

- The Leader added that perception could vary significantly from the hard data, as mentioned in the previous item. The Leader therefore wanted to move to a place of using evidence-based data in order that the council could be held to account with evidence-based facts.

#### **Resolved:**

Council approved and adopted the draft Serious Violence Duty Strategic Needs Assessment and Serious Violence Strategy appended to this report.

## 10. **Questions to the Leader of the Council**

Before Commencement with questions, the Leader made the following announcements to Council:

#### **Microsoft**

Microsoft to create 120 jobs when it opens a new data centre in Celtic Way, site of the former Quinn Radiators factory, as well as creating construction jobs during the development.

Datacentres provide the physical infrastructure for the technology we depend on at work and in our personal lives. Whenever you open an app on your phone, join a virtual classroom or meeting, snap and save photos, or play a game with your friends online, you are using a datacentre.

This represents a significant investment in our city by a leader in the global tech industries.

#### **Summer playschemes**

The youth and play service summer programme had been launched and free sessions were available to book online.

There was a huge variety of activities including indoor and outdoor fun, circus skills, cooking and pottery sessions, number tots and more.

Those attending could also get free transport on Newport Bus to the event by showing their Eventbrite ticket to the driver.

There were more events in the libraries too, including the summer reading challenge – this year's theme is "marvelous makers".

## **Ship summer event**

The Ship Centre's annual Medieval Summer Fair returns on Saturday 27 July from 10am-4pm.

From craft workshops and demonstrations to family activities, there will be lots to see and do throughout the day, and entry is free.

The Ship Centre is open Fridays and Saturdays from 10am-4pm until Saturday 2 November.

## **Big splash**

The Big Splash Festival takes place this Saturday and Sunday. This is a free event with activities for all ages.

The festival includes the premiere of Ballet Cymru's Daydreams and Jellybeans, Tiny Circus, Bards on the Bus, live music performances, Xtreme Gaming, Big Mac's Wholly Soul Band, street entertainment and more.

## **Graffiti wall**

A second dedicated graffiti wall has opened in Newport.

The space at Jack's Wharf, along the riverside in Pillgwenlly, gives artists a place to display their works, while bringing a splash of colour to the area, and reducing the level of graffiti in unauthorised areas.

Set up as part of a project led by the council, working in partnership with Gwent Police and the force's volunteer police cadets, who helped clear the wall ready for opening, and Newport City Homes who have kindly donated the wall to the project.

This follows on from the success of our first graffiti wall in Glebelands park which opened last year.

## **Newport City Radio DAB**

Congratulations and happy birthday to Newport City Radio.

Our community radio station is moving to brand new site in the Kingsway Centre with its grand opening today – and the very exciting move to Digital Audio Broadcasting.

We wish the station and all its amazing volunteers the best of luck.

## **Leader's Questions**

### Councillor Evans:

Referred to three weekly bin collections and the promise that the previous two Leaders made about not moving to monthly bin collections. Councillor Evans then asked would residents be hit with massive council tax hikes and would they be above inflation. This second question was supplementary, however, the Leader agreed to respond to it as a supplementary.

### The Leader:

The Leader confirmed that there were no plans to reduce waste collections to monthly collections. The Leader considered that council tax would increase, and he would provide in writing a response to Councillor Evans.

Councillor Morris:

Further to the debate on the Safer Newport Plan, Councillor Morris suggested a cross-party working group to explore the topic further.

The Leader:

Agreed to this and suggested the Place Making Plan would be an ideal forum and that Councillor Morris should put his views forward to Councillor Clarke.

Councillor Jones:

Referred to budget cuts and asked could monthly bin collections be avoided.

The Leader:

Advised that he would avoid this at all costs.

Councillor Routley:

Presented the following as a QAAT as he was unable to join the meeting –

You have recently stressed the importance of halting negative discourse about Newport City Centre, and I wholeheartedly agree. On Civic Sunday, July 14th, during the celebrations for the mayor and other public servants, I was disheartened to see the roads outside the cathedral dirty, bins unemptied, and overgrown grass around the graves near the entrance. This reflects a lack of civic pride.

Similarly, a walk-through Newport High Street on Saturday left me feeling ashamed as a council member. We have significant work ahead. Therefore, I urge you to engage with all council members and business leaders so we can unite and develop strategies to improve the city centre.

We need to be bold, brave, and take immediate action. Let us prioritize our community over politics.