

04/10/2017

## Advice from the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales: Newport PSB

Dear Newport Public Services Board and supporting officers,

Thank you for seeking my advice on how you might take steps to meet your draft well-being objectives. My team have found regular conversations with your supporting officers and the opportunity of attending your Public Services Board (PSB) workshops very helpful in giving them an understanding of how you work together as a PSB; the method you have taken to well-being planning and your intentions to deliver the objectives and take steps in a different way. As they will have discussed with you, I was keen that my advice would be useful to you and the context within which you work, so I hope you have also found these regular touch-points helpful and that they have given you some guidance along the way.

I understand that you have been working hard to develop a method that translates the findings of your well-being assessment into draft objectives and steps. I see that you initially agreed high level priorities from your assessment and have now agreed that you will seek to find integrated interventions that would maximise your contribution to the seven national well-being goals and span the initial list of thirteen priorities, which are:

Theme	Emerging Priorities
<b>Environmental well-being</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Newport has a clean and safe environment for people to use and enjoy.</li> <li>2) Improve Air Quality across the city.</li> <li>3) Communities are resilient to climate change.</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural well-being</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4) People feel part of their community (community cohesion &amp; resilience).</li> <li>5) Participation in physical activity is important for people's physical and mental well-being and resilience.</li> <li>6) Participation in arts, heritage and history is important for people's well-being.</li> </ul>
<b>Economic well-being</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7) Improve the perceptions of Newport as a place to live, work, visit and invest.</li> <li>8) Drive up skill levels for economic and social well-being.</li> <li>9) Support regeneration and economic growth.</li> </ul>
<b>Social well-being</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10) Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life.</li> <li>11) Long and healthy lives for all (equalise up health life expectancy and life expectancy and health inequalities).</li> <li>12) Ensuring people feel safe in their communities, by reducing crime and antisocial behaviour and fear of crime.</li> <li>13) People have access to stable homes in a sustainable supportive community.</li> </ul>

I believe my team have already been helpful in advising your supporting officers on this approach and I would encourage you to continue with developing inter-connections between the priorities in agreeing and delivering your steps to meet objectives. It is important that you consider how your objectives both individually and as a collective set, maximise their contribution to all of the well-being goals and not just make links to a smaller number of well-being goals where there is a clear and direct connection.

The purpose of setting objectives and steps is not to include all of your organisation's corporate priorities, but to consider where the PSB can have a collective and powerful impact. To do this, you need to think differently, be aspirational and repurpose resources, which will inevitably mean stopping some things. By exploring connections to all of the well-being goals you will not only gain a more holistic picture of the issue you are trying to resolve but you also can maximise the range of resources and opportunities you can draw on to help you find solutions. This recent [NESTA and Alliance for Useful Evidence guide](#) is intended to help public bodies use research and information gathering approaches effectively, which you may find useful as you move from priorities to objectives and steps, to delivering change.

As you are currently running workshops to progress your thinking on draft objectives and steps, I cannot yet advise you on the steps you might take to meet your draft objectives. But I can give you general advice on the steps you might seek to take to improve well-being around the priorities you have supplied us and the conversations you have had with my team. My advice is in two parts – firstly, to help you consider how you might use the five ways of working to challenge business as usual and to maximise their contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals effectively. Secondly, based on your priorities, it provides prompts, resources and contacts to help you demonstrate through your well-being plan that you have used the five ways of working and seven well-being goals to shape your steps. The purpose of this advice is not to give you my opinion on your well-being objectives. These are determined and owned by you, as a collective PSB.

I would encourage you to read this in conjunction with my response to your well-being assessment. I was keen that it was a 'feed-forward', rather than 'feedback', helping you to consider how to approach continuous assessment and well-being planning. As you know, I have recently published '[Well-being in Wales: Planning today for a better tomorrow](#)', which highlights key findings and recommendations for all PSBs and public bodies on the key areas of change needed to make better decisions for future generations. Both of these resources are also intended as advice to you.

### ***Adopting different ways of working to take steps to meet your draft objectives:***

Setting objectives and steps is not business as usual. In the past, we have drawn out themes and priorities and written plans that show what we are doing anyway. Achieving the ambitions of this Act is about the 'what' and the 'how' i.e. what are you doing to contribute to our shared vision of the seven national well-being goals? The goals acknowledge that sustainable development connects the environment in which we live, the economy in

which we work, the society in which we enjoy and the cultures in which we share, to people and their quality of life, so what are you going to do differently together? And, how you are applying the sustainable development principle to shape your actions for Newport?

To adapt your ways of working in this way requires a fundamentally different approach. It is good to hear that you have identified that you want your PSB to be 'ambitious, serious about working in partnership, firmly focused on people and outcomes, and not to be solely driven by data.' I have advised all PSBs to give themselves the time and space to question whether current approaches to public service delivery are fit for the future and explore key pressures and tensions in delivery for each of their objectives. Academi Wales' [Sustainable Futures Architecture](#) articulates succinctly how leadership behaviours need to change. You could use this framework to help explore your board's own behaviours and how you can change.

I am encouraged to hear that you are already having these conversations at PSB about how you can work differently. But this should then be focused on action - what new approaches you will take together in the steps you will take to meet your objectives and maximise contribution to the seven national well-being goals. For your well-being plan, I would like to understand how the five ways of working have shaped your approach, how you have considered the contribution you currently make (and could make) to each of the well-being goals, in relation to each draft objective and step you are setting. What does it mean for Newport and how is it different to what you have done before?

**I would advise that you will need to demonstrate how your PSB has considered the following in relation to each of your objectives:**

- **Long-term:** What do you understand about the long-term trends, opportunities, risks and likely scenarios for this issue? What are they and have you explored their impact on your steps? Are there current gaps in your data or understanding? What fore-sighting or future trends information do you need to understand this issue better? What capacity, confidence and expertise do you need to fill gaps in knowledge? The work you have commissioned with the Gwent area PSBs will hopefully provide you with future scenarios for your area. These can be extremely powerful in starting a discussion about the opportunities, risks and mitigating actions we can take for the long term.

To inform the action you take, you will need to adequately map and consider the future trends for each of your objectives. My office is working with others to build capacity in this area and, as your support team are aware, Welsh Government have been adding to the 'Future Trends' report resources, which you should make most use of by accessing through Objective Connect or by contacting David Thomas. [The Oxford Martin 'Now for the long-term'](#) report shows global and national future trends that we all need to react to in carrying out sustainable development.

- **Prevention:** In considering this issue, do you have an understanding of what you are trying to prevent? What are the root causes of the issue and when and where would be the best point to intervene? Are you clear on whether it is primary prevention i.e. seeking to prevent something before it has even occurred; secondary prevention i.e. preventing something from getting worse; or tertiary prevention i.e. softening the impact of something that has ongoing effects; that is needed? This is the difference between encouraging someone to wear a bicycle helmet (primary prevention of head-injury); putting someone in the recovery position if they have fallen from their bike (secondary prevention of the injury worsening) and counselling after the accident (tertiary prevention to help ongoing injuries from worsening).

Many PSBs haven't used their assessments to fully understand both the current situation and the scale and nature of the response required. I appreciate you might not know the full picture yet, but I want to see all PSBs exploring how they break cycles and dig deeper into data to see the implicit messages in the data to better understand the causes and effects of key issues and trends to inform your steps.

- **Collaboration:** I commend the time your support officers dedicate to working across the Gwent area and I am pleased to hear the positive collaborations and pilot approaches being undertaken as a result. I am also pleased to hear that you are considering the different relationships between national, regional and local structures and considering where the most effective interventions may need to happen in order to address the issues you have identified in your assessment of well-being. I acknowledge that this process is complicated but it is important that the people who sit around the PSB table can bring the best range of insights, constructive challenge, data and solutions to the PSB. Have you got the right people around the table, at the right level to make decisions around an issue? Who else might you need to be collaborating with to better understand this? As recommended in my report on the Well-being Assessments, now is a timely opportunity to review the invited membership of the PSB and consider who are the 'unusual' suspects that you may need to work with to take steps to meet your objectives?

In delivering the steps, how might your organisations collaborate? You will need to demonstrate how your PSB is considering the steps that need to be taken together and across organisational boundaries in order to effectively meet your objectives. This could include co-locating staff, breaking down traditional structures, arranging job-swaps and secondments and, importantly, pooling resources. I will want to see how you have considered these benefits and how the steps you will take move you towards achieving this collaboration.

- **Integration:** For each objective, how are you going to move away from just doing something that meets the objective, and instead, demonstrate that you are taking steps which maximise your contribution to each of the goals? I am pleased to hear that in your discussions you have started to consider the interconnections between your emerging priorities to help inform your decisions about the most effective steps and would urge you to continue to do this deliberately and explicitly. Instead of looking at this issue in a traditional and general sense, have you looked at the definition for each of the goals to widen your understanding of well-being for this issue and the opportunities which might exist for meeting these goals

through each of your objectives? How well do you understand the contribution your organisation makes at the moment to this objective? And do you understand how different is the contribution you will need to make going forward for this objective?

How can you plot what's going on elsewhere in your organisations, the strategies and plans at a regional or a national level, to connect and lead with others on achieving this objective? My team have spoken positively about the work being undertaken at a Gwent wide level and I will be really interested to understand the benefits of this as we move towards delivering well-being plans. As a PSB, have you yet acknowledged the barriers or tensions that have arisen and what steps can you (or others) take to remove them? Who else is needed around the PSB table to help you interconnect decision-making and improve well-being for this issue?

- **Involvement:** I want to see PSBs keeping a focus on continuously involving people in the development of well-being objectives and going beyond the usual consultation and ad-hoc engagement. How are you taking steps to understand the lived experiences of people in your area and how is this shaping your actions? How are you actively seeking better ways of involving people in decision-making? How can you collaborate with members of the community in meeting these steps? As with the Social Care Wales Board, what options are there for involving people with lived experience on Boards and partnership groups?

Your support officers have worked hard to help you achieve this level of progress in assessing well-being for the area, synthesising this evidence into high-level priorities, creating an extremely comprehensive response analysis and engaging with a wide range of people to move your well-being planning forward. But I must emphasise that it is your leadership that is required to adopt a new way of working. I am aware that the Act can be seen as another thing for organisations to comply with and the PSB as another meeting that you must attend. But the Act is an enabler, a way of challenging the methods we have always adopted to try and make more sense for the people of Wales – now and in the future. I have a role to recognise and mitigate barriers, but only you – as senior leaders, can make this change happen and create a PSB that actually achieves change.

This leadership and partnership working needs to permeate at every level of your member organisations. Consistency in representation and how you take messages back from PSB to your own organisations is critical to building relationships and creating action. The well-being plan is not a culmination of all of your current work, but an opportunity for integration and beneficial collaboration at a senior and influential level. Communicating why the work of the PSB matters to your own senior management teams and using the well-being plan to challenge current practices within your own departments is crucial to creating the culture change you have highlighted in your discussions with my team. Challenge your managers to work differently and be 'safe to fail'. In doing so, you will need to demonstrate how each of your organisations are taking all reasonable steps in the exercising of their functions to meet the PSB's objectives. I appreciate that during the first phases of implementation of the Act this may be challenging as the objectives of individual public bodies have already been set. So, whilst I am sympathetic to the needs of PSBs and public bodies to have time to work towards alignment I

will want to see that the work of the PSB is not seen as something separate to the priorities of its member bodies or to other partnership meetings.

It follows that co-ordinating this work needs to be recognised by all of you as members of the PSB. I am interested in how different PSBs are supported and it appears that when support is multi-agency, resourced and committed to by different partners, collaboration and integration across departments and structures becomes easier. A member of my team attended the well-being plan sub-group and was encouraged by the multi-agency commitment demonstrated there; the Fire Service have particularly been commended for taking ownership of the work. But I know that there are still some partners who are reluctant to collaborate at all levels across Wales, which is vital to achieving any sense of change. Some PSBs are already adopting closer working arrangements, a multi-agency virtual team with a senior leader or more formal secondments and co-location. There are several resources that may be of use, such as [Designing Multi-Agency Partnerships; Leading Culture Change](#) and [Stepping up: a framework for public sector leadership on sustainability](#). This will require you, people in positions of leadership, to play your part and be brave in driving the changes needed. I hope you continue to lead an intelligence-based approach to finding different solutions to how things have previously been done.

This advice should be taken by all PSBs, but I appreciate every PSB has taken a different approach to drafting their well-being objectives and will be going about delivering their well-being plan in the context that is right for them. The second section of my advice seeks to help you demonstrate through your well-being plan that you have used the five ways of working and seven well-being goals to shape your steps.

***Advice on how you might take steps to meet your draft objectives:***

From the regular conversations you have had with my team, I know your supporting officers have worked hard over the summer to draw on your assessment findings, prioritise issues through engaging with you and are taking a considered approach to drafting objectives and steps. This section of my advice is based on your emerging priorities and is intended to give you ideas, information and contacts that might help to demonstrate how you have considered the steps you will take in the context of Newport.

In general, as you go about holding workshops to explore each of your objectives, I think that seeking to understand the differences across the city will help to inform the steps you decide to take. The fact that your well-being assessment focused on 20 community areas can help and should be built upon to help you do this effectively. Consistently using the five ways of working to challenge your usual approach and seeking to maximise your contribution to the seven well-being goals in each of your objectives will give you a framework for planning and delivery.

Should you consider what local services will be impacted if you redirect investment? Are there long-term trends for particular communities that you believe will get worse if you don't take action? Which communities would benefit and how? What can you do differently to contribute to each of the seven goals? I know you will be

continuing to work on this throughout the next year or so and are working across Gwent to help you consider new solutions. I will be really interested to see this learning shared and I want to see how you're demonstrating this thinking in your published well-being plan, even if this is stating that you don't have the answers yet and explaining what you're going to do about it!

- *Environmental well-being: currently including use of the environment, improving air quality and resilience to climate change.*

Your well-being assessment rightly recognised that Newport has a diverse and important natural environment, with coast, green spaces, rivers and wetlands. You have acknowledged the multiple benefits of having a good quality natural environment, the important economic role it has through the development of tourism and sustainable energy infrastructure, but also the positive impact it has on physical and mental health, as well as mitigating the effects of extreme weather and climate change. For all of your draft objectives, I want to see an acknowledgement of what you can do as individual organisations to take steps to meet the objective and maximise your contribution to the seven well-being goals, by collaborating with others outside of the PSB, or influencing other organisations.

How can you, as senior officers, create organisations that are more globally responsible and contributing to a resilient Newport? What can you do to mitigate the effects of our loss of environment? To do this, you will need to understand each other's roles and motivations, and understand the significance of these issues, plus the impact it could have on your organisation and resources. The seven areas of change in the Act: corporate planning, financial planning, workforce planning, procurement, assets, performance management and risk are the core organisational activities where applying the five ways of working would ensure the sustainable development principle frames how you work.

For example, together you are responsible for a large amount of public sector estate. How you plan, design and locate future developments, buildings, infrastructure and other public and community spaces (as part of your Local Development Plan) should all be considered. [The Closing the Circle](#) report on the circular economy and the Welsh Environment is a useful report by Constructing Excellence in Wales, giving practical examples of where the public sector can look to minimise waste and resources in future projects. You can also take inspiration from some of the projects mentioned in the recent [Constructing Excellence Awards](#), such as the Active Classroom. Having a consideration of how 'green' these buildings are, both in terms of energy efficiency and sustainable construction, is a quick win for you as a PSB. The [Wildlife Trust in Wales report into green infrastructure](#) outlines how green infrastructure delivers a wide range of proven, tangible, and cost-effective economic, social and environmental benefits. The [Design Commission for Wales](#) also has case studies and resources on design that focuses on users, maximises energy efficiency and has been shown to significantly improve patient recovery in health.

[The Welsh Government recently published](#) carbon emission levels subdivided by Local Authority and also released a [Call for Evidence](#) to explore the most effective mechanisms for achieving a carbon neutral public sector by 2030. Although the public sector only accounts for a relatively small amount of Wales' emissions, you are uniquely placed to influence emissions far more widely in areas such as transport, energy, land use and procurement. I will be hosting an event on the 9<sup>th</sup> November, in partnership with Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales to: explore how the public services in Wales can involve people in collaborating and integrating their work, to take greater account of the long-term carbon implications of their activities, and help prevent the effects of climate change becoming even worse.

Air quality is a particular issue for you in Newport, with combined pollution very high, due to traffic levels, industry and urbanisation. Responses to your well-being assessment engagement show that residents are concerned about air and noise pollution, particularly in communities near the M4 motorway. People are concerned that general development is compromising the natural environment and resilience of the county for future generations. As you will be aware, I have written to Welsh Government and the Planning Inspectorate on my concerns that the arguments presented to date on the creation of a M4 relief road are in danger of misinterpreting the Act and undermining the spirit of the legislation. Your well-being assessment and subsequent inquiries have shown that some objections to the relief road have been about the environmental impact of the road. The [letter sent to the public inquiry](#) is in respect of how the Act is being used to make decisions based on economic value, rather than on improving social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being.

In setting objectives and steps, I urge you to consider the impact of climate change on Newport, as an area at risk of tidal and river flooding. [Zero Carbon Britain's recent 'Making it Happen'](#) report sets out what responsibilities we all have to future generations to act on climate change now. Flooding affected homes and businesses last year in a number of counties and well-being assessments show how flooding affects people's well-being long after the event. Expected annual damage [to residential properties is estimated to be £22 million](#), so, understanding how different weather events impact on communities is crucial to prevention. I would like to see the PSB considering the specific effects for Newport in their short, medium and long-term actions. In the future, the effects of climate change are likely to cause droughts in the summer, meaning a shortage of water, declining bio-diversity and a knock-on effect for agriculture across Wales. We all rely on our environment for income, food, water, recreation and I suggest you need to look at critical infrastructures most at risk. Using the seven well-being goals to frame your approach can help all partners understand their contribution to this significant issue. Are current approaches adequate to cope? How can you use scenarios to imagine what preventative action you could take to protect agriculture, water supplies and transportation in the event of extreme weather? Projects such as ['Rainscape' through Dwr Cymru](#) suggest ways that we can all mitigate the effects of floods, with communities playing an equal role.

Sustaining your natural environment also requires the involvement of residents and you are keen to enable them to use their environment to improve their well-being. Involving people and understanding their motivations for certain behaviours can help you direct your efforts. Why has traffic increased so significantly in recent years? Why



the use of cars, rather than active travel? Restoring woodland, encouraging people to use their cars less frequently and waste less has an impact on your emissions. [NESTA has a guide](#) to working with communities to tackle climate change, including the 'Big Green Challenge', where participants changed their lifestyles to reduce their carbon footprint. The [WWF environmental footprint calculator](#) also serves a sharp reminder to us all of our potential to impact change.

Collaborating with businesses in how you take steps to meet this objective will also be important to protect and enhance the land and halt declining biodiversity and habitat loss. For each of your steps, use the definitions of the well-being goals to think about how you can do something different and achieve maximum impact, plus integrate across many of your draft steps. For example, how can you enable corporate volunteering opportunities that seek to enhance the resilience of the natural environment? What volunteering schemes could help to create a more globally responsible Newport? How can people encourage equality through their volunteering and cohesion within some of your communities? [Business in the Community](#) has a range of practical ways for businesses to work together and take action to help tackle some of the key environmental and social issues facing society.

Your well-being assessment identifies strong renewable energy capacity in the county. I would advise you to consider how you encourage this. We have clear commitments to meet in terms of carbon reduction, the UK has pledged to have zero emissions by 2050 and every Welsh Government has pledged for more green jobs. But despite Wales being a place of great potential in providing natural energy, only 10% of Wales' electricity in 2013 was provided through renewable energy. Last year, the National Assembly for Wales Environment and Sustainability Committee produced '[A Smarter Energy Future for Wales](#)', with 19 recommendations for how Wales could transform its approach to energy. More recently, Smart Energy GB have produced a report on '[A Smart Energy Future for Rural Areas](#)', giving examples and case studies of rural areas across the UK who are making that transition. [The Policy Forum for Wales](#) keynote seminar takes place on the 7<sup>th</sup> December this year, with a focus on priorities for energy policy, growing the sector in Wales and increasing investment in renewables.

Most PSBs have draft objectives around their natural environment, climate change and extreme weather including Pembrokeshire; the Vale of Glamorgan; Powys; Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion.

- ***Cultural well-being: currently including people feeling a part of their community, taking part in physical activity to improve health and taking part in arts, heritage and history.***

As leaders of local agencies, you have a key role to play in promoting and supporting community cohesiveness, given your role in community leadership and support and in community capacity building through, for example, facilitating networking and coordination and providing training for community groups and employees. The research documented in '[What Works in Community Cohesion](#)' provides a useful reference for PSBs on the different dimensions of community cohesion. The diversity of Newport should be celebrated, but as your well-being assessment describes, perceived differences can cause tension in communities and people have spoken

about a sense of not belonging. You reflected on this in conversation with my team, thinking that perhaps this is due to the transient nature of some communities in Newport, with housing playing a part in how people connect with each other.

Only by understanding the differences across communities through listening to people and spending time there can you begin to see where the PSB can add value. Well-being is not just about our health, but our social lives, our feelings of belonging, our built and natural surroundings, our income and community life – all of which are wider determinants of health. Involving people to understand what matters to them is central to achieving this and I would advise each of your organisations to commit to the National Participation Standards. You may wish to contact [Participation Cymru](#), who can support your officers in gaining the skills vital for effective and meaningful involvement. [Co-production Network Wales](#) could help you consider time banking schemes, provide examples of good coproduction and help you to identify and engage community leaders. This work should also be taking an asset based approach, helping people across Newport to recognise their strengths, see the positives about their communities and build upon them. How can breaking down barriers between geographical and demographic communities help to alter preconceptions?

Deepening your understanding of communities is best learnt from the lived experiences of people who live there. Involving your staff, getting out and about to speak to people and collaborating with them to deliver projects is a way of winning the trust of communities and seeing positive results. I am interested in the positive work that's happening in Pill and wonder how you can use this as an example to try out initiatives and work together in solving a particular issue. The Invest Local Big Lottery funded project is already working across Wales in this way, [in Pill](#), through the programme Building Communities Trust. You may not know who the potential community leaders and connectors are in some other areas, so if you are committed to this, re-purpose your resources to do more work in communities, to begin to know a place as the people who live there know it.

Understanding the lived experiences of people could give you an important insight into how different communities are functioning and where your services would be most helpful. Most people will only get involved in something that directly impacts them, their family or the place where they spend time and, often, this can lead to much bigger outcomes - shown by the work that ['Nurture Development' do around Asset Based Community Development](#). The [Centre for Regeneration Excellence Wales' 'Deep Place' study in Tredegar](#) also gives inspiration on how an understanding of place can have multiple benefits on well-being. For instance, are there ways the PSB could encourage and reward this community activism in ways that would help you meet your objectives in particular areas? The Royal Town Planning Institute's report on ['Poverty, Place and Inequality'](#), includes several recommendations around why place-based approaches are key to tackling inequality between and within communities.

This area of work is in territory that most PSB members are not comfortable with, but feeling a sense of community and belonging is crucial to good well-being. Therefore, I advise that you involve and collaborate with 'unusual suspects' in understanding the value of this on other aspects of well-being. Collaborating with different

people and using the definition of the seven well-being goals as a guide can give you steps you could take to meet this objective that contribute to a more equal Newport as well. Involve children and young people through schools; draw on the membership of Coleg Gwent and the University of South Wales; consider the role the Community Councils and the third sector play in connecting people too. Many people will only get involved in something if it's fun and of benefit to them, so how can you use sport, heritage, language, the outdoors and culture to enable people to participate? As we know, sport knows no language limits and can be extremely powerful in bringing people from all walks of life together. Sport Wales are keen to work with PSBs on how they can maximise their contribution to the seven well-being goals.

Change often 'sticks' when people are involved in wider social and cultural activities together; for example, the [Nudjed 'Behaviour Change is a Team Sport'](#) report found getting people together increased exercise patterns. Their work has included successfully working with young mums in the South Wales Valleys to get them involved in more physical activity. How does this relate to your other objectives and high-level priorities? How can improving the natural environment also help manage their health? As I'm sure you've recognised there are opportunities for you to work with organisations such as the National Trust and Wildlife Trusts to develop a county-wide approach. The [Natural Resources Wales' 'Actif Woods'](#) project is an example of getting people outside, protecting their environment and enjoying the positive effects on health and well-being. How can the third sector feel empowered to help? In some areas, community organisations have been funded by the Intermediate Care Fund to act as community coordinators for older people – linking them with local activities and services in their area and helping them to stay active and well. If this is proving successful, how can we better collaborate on resourcing initiatives like this?

Bringing people together with their different cultures, cooking, art and performance creates cohesion and a sense of belonging. How might people take part in cultural activities to help feel involved and potentially improve their health? The Welsh Language Commissioner is working with my team to understand the best way for supporting PSBs to increase the number of Welsh speakers, as in '[Cymraeg 2050](#)'. Often, people settling in Wales are keen to learn the language as a sign of their new identities. Similarly, the [Arts Council for Wales' strategy](#) outlines some of the benefits involvement in creative activity can have on the health, cohesion and skills of the population. The [Cultural Commissioning Programme, funded by Arts Council England](#) seeks to help commissioners of public services understand how they can improve outcomes by integrating arts and cultural activities into a range of services, including mental health and wellbeing, older people and place-based commissioning. Only by giving people a hook can you seek to grow volunteering, help people celebrate the community connections of their area and create wider benefits. Collaborating with the national public bodies subject to the Act, such as Sport Wales, Arts Council for Wales, National Museums of Wales and National Library of Wales, may be able to help you see how your steps to meet this objective could maximise contribution to each of the goals.

Digitilisation means the world is now a different place and this is only set to continue over the long term. This recent report on [Digital Childhoods](#) from Barnados shows the pace at which technology is moving and the way children now consume information. How are your organisations harnessing the power of technology to help you meet this objective? How can it be used in a positive way? What changes might you have to make to your

organisational systems and policies to enable people to get more involved in communities and shape local services? How can you use technology to gather community intelligence and involve people? I see public services in Wales stuck in the early 2000s in the way they call residents to a community hall for 'engagement'. Currently, research shows that children aged between five and 16 years spend an average of six and a half hours a day in front of a screen; [28% of young people use social media](#) as their primary news source; and [43% of 'millennials' are driven to make financial donations through social channels](#). There is a real opportunity to engage with people that is most convenient to them and is part of their daily life, not an additional chore. "[Monmouthshire Made Open](#)" is an example of an online platform that has anticipated how people might contribute to improving their area in the future, with opportunities to share ideas, ask the community, start a project and seek volunteers or resources.

Opening up land and buildings to the community could be a way of encouraging community ownership, bringing people together in areas where they don't have a community facility and, in cases of parks or green spaces, allow for better use of the natural environment. Across the UK, austerity has meant that buildings, land and services have been transferred to community ownership and, in many cases, it has increased well-being for the people involved. How can you better use the collective public estate you have in Newport? The [Welsh Government National Assets Working Group](#) captured some Welsh examples that you might wish to explore, but there are many national organisations promoting better use of publicly owned land and assets, such as [Shared Assets](#), [Nurture Development](#) and [Locality](#), with the aim of encouraging communities to thrive.

You will not be surprised to note that other Public Services Boards are also considering setting objectives around engagement, developing / sustaining strong social networks, fostering belonging and shaping services. In particular, you may wish to share ideas with Vale of Glamorgan; Ceredigion; Cardiff and Powys PSBs, who have supplied me with similar draft objectives.

- ***Economic well-being: currently including improving perceptions of Newport, driving up skills and improving regeneration and economic growth.***

Your assessment of economic well-being identifies the complexity of economic growth and challenges faced in different parts of the county. Although there will be multiple reasons for the deprivation experienced in some parts of the city and no easy solutions, there are steps you could take as a PSB to strengthen the resilience of these areas and encourage economic growth and regeneration. I am encouraged that you have started to consider what role you can play as leaders of the public and voluntary sector in Newport and you should appreciate the influence you can have other partnership arrangements and organisations in Wales. To take steps towards maximising your contribution to the seven well-being goals and improving economic well-being, you will need to be brave in pooling resources, changing policies and taking risks by trying different approaches. You will need to communicate these changes within each of your organisations. You will need to be clear about how you have reflected on the full definitions of each of the well-being goals, including the goal for a Prosperous Wales. To do this, you need to dig deeper into the data and do more analysis about what this means for Newport - where there is scope for innovation; low-carbon economy; and the potential for decent jobs.

As I have already advised, the seven areas for change in the Act provide a blueprint of the quick-wins for PSBs. How can your procurement procedures help to meet the seven national well-being goals? Your well-being assessment found positive news in the number of business start ups and active enterprises, can your organisational policies seek to help sustainable local businesses? In contributing to cutting your emissions also, how can supporting local business help to reduce transportation of goods and look at wider sustainable development, not just economic value? [Forum for the Future](#) have published reports on this and my office are working with [Value Wales](#) to pilot sustainable procurement in the context of the Act. How can your policies also champion equality in business and seek to grow the Welsh language in the area? Alun Davies AM [announced funding for growing bilingual small businesses](#) recently to increase visibility of Welsh in our communities. In seeking to enable entrepreneurship and growth, how about introducing initiatives that stipulate people set up sustainable enterprises that maximise their contribution to the seven goals?

The Cardiff Capital Region is an exciting opportunity for South Wales, but I have previously expressed concern that the deal is being progressed with those involved seeing the Well-being of Future Generations Act as something you assess your actions against, rather than shaping how things are planned and agreed. You play a central role in steering these opportunities as a city benefitting from the investment. I would advise that, as people in positions of leadership, you need to influence the current negotiations with the economic, environmental, social and cultural well-being of people across the region in mind. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimates that poverty costs the whole region £2.2 billion per year. Increasing GDP has little impact on reducing inequalities, and in eight out of the ten Local Authority areas in the region, child poverty is above the Welsh average. So, interpreting the value of the City Region as purely economic would be misplaced. Yes, this is a positive economic opportunity but how can we balance our responsibilities to develop a city region that is sustainable and puts people at the centre. My [letter to those involved in December 2016](#) hopefully provides you with some advice on the matter and [I also recently commented](#) in response to Dr Mark Lang and Professor Terry Marsden's recent report "[Re-thinking Growth: Toward the Well-being Economy.](#)"

The future of work is uncertain. Jobs that exist now were unheard of when I left school and it will be the same for our children. Currently, your response to growing the economy is based on last century assumptions of travelling to work and doing jobs that currently exist in Newport, Cardiff and Bristol. The [Future of Work report](#) predicts that 65 percent of the children who are now starting school will find themselves working jobs as adults that don't exist yet. The shape and nature of work is predicted to change. How have you considered these long-term trends in setting your steps and enabling people to adapt their skills for future earning? How can you act for the long term now and seek to instill skills in young people that are fit for the future? What life skills might your children need to make it in Newport in the future? The [Future of Work report](#) also suggests project-based work is likely to become more widespread, with skills like creativity, connectivity, communication and problem-solving being far more important than specific knowledge. Team work, communication and confidence are as valuable to young people as good grades when entering the workplace (in the [Prince's Trust recent Results for Life report](#)). How are

you planning to involve people from across Newport to seek their advice on creating opportunities? How can your organisations offer apprenticeships for all ages to learn these skills?

According to [McKinsey](#), technology could automate 45 percent of the tasks people are currently paid to do— how have you considered the impact of many of these roles being replaced by automation? What action can you take now, as public service providers, to encourage learning and jobs in the foundational and social economy, around local care, retail and food industries, which are jobs less likely to be automated in future and good for the local economy? A [recent report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#) highlights the value of the social economy in creating jobs, strengthening skills and employability. How have you considered these long-term trends in setting your steps and enabling people to adapt their skills for future earning?

You should consider who else you might need to collaborate with in developing the draft objectives, such as schools, businesses, Coleg Gwent, universities and social enterprises. What social responsibilities have the private sector adopted in the area? How are businesses coming together to drive positive, long term change and does the PSB have any influence over this? What opportunities can be offered to budding community enterprises through the PSB collaborating with the private sector and education providers? What research has been undertaken about the local economy? How might you encourage local businesses to use their social responsibilities and enable better learning for younger and older people?

Whilst providing opportunities for people to learn and develop is no bad thing, enabling people to take full advantage of these opportunities is most important. Therefore, I would advise that you need to dig deeper into the data here and understand the full picture. Ask yourselves, what would really make a difference to the learning and development of people in Newport throughout their lives? You have recognised in your response analysis that barriers to participation might be multiple, “institutional barriers (e.g. place, time, cost of learning), or personal circumstances (such as childcare requirements, access to public transport, health issues), significant issues around feelings of low confidence and self-esteem, and negative perceptions of learning that are embedded. There will be a need to develop soft skills such as personal confidence and self-assurance and remove other barriers before more technical skills can be acquired.” How can you work to recognise and remove these barriers for people?

What other things are having an impact of people’s life chances that you, as public services, can prevent? For example, Social Finance were commissioned by Newcastle City Council to do some deeper digging for them to help them address the problem with NEETs (those Not in Education, Employment and Training). Whilst traditional focus looks at GCSE attainment, what this analysis shows in reality is that academic achievement is not the most significant factor at all, instead showing that 67% of 17-19 year olds who were NEET had come from the 25% of 17-19 year olds who had multiple contacts with social services during their childhood. The research showed that those who had had as little as six interactions with social services spent almost three times longer out of education or training. This study demonstrates that looking at the issue in a more holistic way clarifies the steps you can take as a PSB to achieve your objectives.

As I have mentioned above, it will be critical that the steps you take are integrated across the other priorities and objectives. For instance, your assessment identifies the economic impact of tourists due to having a high quality natural environment. How can you encourage sustainable tourism for the area in growing a well-connected county? How can the communities around Newport be involved in finding active travel routes; creating small and local business opportunities? Encouraging a focus around the culture and language of the area can also help you maximise your contribution to all of the goals.

Several other PSBs are drafting similar objectives and steps include Powys; Cardiff; Ceredigion; Pembrokeshire; Monmouthshire and Caerphilly.

- *Social well-being: currently including giving children the best start in life, increasing life expectancy, ensuring people feel safe in their communities and sustainable homes.*

You have rightly identified in your assessment that children who experience stressful and difficult childhoods are more likely to have poor well-being later in life. Most PSBs have drafted objectives linked to this topic and I would like to understand, in taking steps to meet their objective, what's going to change at all levels to make this happen? How will services aimed at prospective parents and families change in Newport to provide children with the best start in life? What local evidence will you use to understand the successful service models and the preventative interventions that work? How might focusing on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) as a PSB play out in reality for your organisations and services? Who might you need to involve to understand this better? Who needs to be around the table to make it happen?

I have been working closely with the Children's Commissioner for Wales, to produce advice on taking a child's rights approach to maximising contribution to the seven national well-being goals. The Well-being of Future Generations Act upholds the spirit of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and it is important to recognize children's rights across each of the well-being goals and how they should inform Wales' approach to implementing the five ways of working. As you have identified, poverty, abuse, discrimination and other forms of disadvantage can have long-lasting effects on children and young people's well-being and can severely impact their prospects of securing a prosperous, healthy, safe and socially active future. Childhood is a key window of opportunity and the positive interventions Wales puts in place now to protect and provide for children will help to secure a more prosperous, healthy and cohesive future for Wales. Consideration should be given to how well public bodies and PSBs factor children's rights into processes for consultation, decision-making and programme-planning. This will include developing in a children's rights policy focus, enabling children to learn about their rights and empowering them to play an active role in their communities. To support this work, a toolkit is being tested and will be available before the end of the year. The Children's Commissioner's office would be happy to advise on engaging with children and young people and taking a child-rights approach to securing well-being for future generations.

The costs of the worst start in life are enormous, both to the individual's life and to public services. [Late intervention services for young people are estimated to cost England and Wales £17bn per year](#) (£6bn on child protection and safeguarding, £5.2bn on crime and anti-social behaviour, £3.7bn on youth economic inactivity, £680m on school absence and exclusion, £610m on child injuries and mental health problems, and £450m on youth substance misuse). I want to see that you have considered the long term trends related to this issue. Prevention is at the core of this objective and I would advise that your organisations recognise it is part of all of their responsibilities to prevent poor outcomes. Of course, this objective is about prevention and breaking the cycle, which not only relates to children yet to be born but those families already in need and young people likely to become parents. I am also encouraging PSBs to think about what this draft objective means in the context of the seven well-being goals. The Public Health Wales' [First 1000 days](#) work shows how investing in a child's life from the very beginning can have benefits to all areas of their well-being. Public Health Wales have established a national '[Health and Sustainability Hub](#)' to co-ordinate their own work around the Act and, through your PSB representative, you might find it useful to link with the national team for further evidence and knowledge.

Giving children the best start in life is often seen through the narrow lens of health, education and funding programmes aimed at young children. Children live in families, that live in communities, so although a focus on health and early years is key, we need to look at the situation much more holistically. For example, your well-being assessment identified the significant impact poverty has for children in Newport, despite the situation improving statistically. A [2013 review carried out by the London School of Economics for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#) found that children in lower-income families have worse cognitive, social-behavioural and health outcomes. Crucially, this study demonstrated that it was in part because they are poorer, not just because low income is correlated with other household and parental characteristics. Linked to your other priorities, how can the PSB collaborate with others to improve the economic well-being of families across the region? How can these communities, in particular, be focused on? Again, is the partnership work in Pill a way of trialling particular ways of working? If we know that by the time children in some areas reach reception class in school, the circumstances of where they live already affects well-being, then we need to be intervening at a much earlier stage in responding to these trends. In considering what steps you might take, the [New Economics Foundation work](#) on investing in children might be helpful, which highlights the need to address both material wellbeing and external circumstances – such as housing, poverty, and schooling – as well as psychosocial well-being and inner resources.

Maternal and familial well-being has a massive impact on a child's outcomes, as demonstrated by the study into ACEs. As public services, we spend a lot of time and resource treating the symptoms of adversity experienced in childhood, like mental illness, substance misuse and domestic abuse, rather than the root causes. Taking a preventative approach means shifting resources to deal with root issues. This means a focus on identifying ACEs and having an ACE aware public service, but importantly, having the integrated surrounding services for the family to be able to prevent the situation from worsening. Therefore, in the steps you take, it is important to not just focus on early years but to review initiatives that focus on mental health, substance misuse, criminal justice, housing, services and others to ensure they are preventative, joined up and actively seeking to better situations for families and for future parents to stop the cycle continuing to the next generation. Alyson Francis, Director of the ACE Support Hub, has recently worked with my office to write to you, outlining that ACEs are not another



thing to do, but an opportunity to reconsider how we deliver services together that make sense for the families receiving them. The ACE Support Hub could also act as a central place for PSBs to share practice, as almost all of the PSBs in Wales have discussed early years, children and ACEs in their draft objectives and steps. Alyson Francis and I are also on the panel of the [Good Practice Exchange Wales webinar on understanding ACEs](#) on the 7th November, which may be helpful to you in considering your steps for this objective.

The issues associated with ACEs also have an impact on our feelings of safety and community cohesion. Your assessment identifies that substance misuse, anti-social behaviour and alcohol abuse can be an issue in particular areas. How can you bring partners together to collaborate on these issues, involving the communities in finding solutions and integrating your services to enable a swift response? Sharing data and information together is central to taking this approach; I advise you take immediate steps in understanding each other's roles, information you hold, pool resources and consider co-locating teams to prevent these issues from occurring. Often the root causes behind these issues are not fully understood by public services and only by working with the community can we ensure people feel safer and know how to act in threatening situations.

Understanding the lived experiences of people who are committing crimes or have been through trauma in their lives also gives a fresh perspective on shaping preventative services. Currently, our services are often not set up in a way that would deliver this objective. We deal with people in neat 'service-user' categories, such as 'domestic abuse victim', 'anti-social behaviour perpetrator', 'substance misuser', 'problem tenant', which often create barriers for people to have equality of opportunity or outcome. This approach means we fail to join up the dots, to integrate and to spot signs of a worsening situation. The five ways of working are intended to challenge how we currently do things and provide a different lens as a whole public service for dealing with problems. Involving people is central to challenging the system because only by understanding the lived experiences of people can we design services that are fit for current and future generations. This example ['Why poor people don't plan long-term'](#) provides an insight into the barriers people face in overcoming inequality and the case studies [contained in this report by Locality](#) demonstrate the financial and social costs of not taking this holistic and preventative approach to people's lives.

Linking to your priority around physical and mental health, approximately 50% of people with enduring mental health problems display symptoms by the time they are 14 years old, and many at a much younger age. If the symptoms are there at such an early age – what can be done to prevent the problems at later life? If we know that on average, the NHS spend over £21 million on the prescription of anti-depressants, how can we act earlier? The [Children's Society Good Childhood Report 2017](#) found that children's happiness is at its lowest since 2010 and this is being impacted by fear of crime. [Cardiff have trialled mental health lessons for children](#) and a new report from Respublica and Barnado's, ['Making young minds matter'](#), highlights early interventions (such as in-school counselling in Wales) that can have a positive impact on mental health. I would advise you to involve children and young people in understanding any issues with accessing the right care and support, designing different services and evaluating the effects of this approach.

Evidence suggests that enabling people to make healthy choices is linked to their economic status, their environment and how they connect with others. It links to their communities, their housing, their work and their

families. So, collaborating with 'unusual suspects' and involving people in how you take steps to meet this objective will enable you to think about this differently and help you to maximize your contribution to the seven well-being goals. For example, I have already suggested how culture and sport can help communities connect and can improve physical health, reducing chronic conditions, encouraging behavior change and increasing life expectancy. There are many models of social prescribing and alternative models of health, but evidence is suggesting how taking a different approach to health can have multiple benefits. This [study, on social prescribing in Bristol](#), provides information on different models and gives some insight into the improvements in mental and general physical health. The recent BBC documentary, '[The doctor who gave up drugs](#)', showed several examples of how alternative approaches to prescribing pills can have a more holistic, long-lasting positive impact on someone's life – with people getting physically fitter and healthier mentally without the reliance on prescriptions. I would encourage the PSB to use the five ways of working to challenge the re-purposing of resources and support other such initiatives.

Many of the priorities you have identified contribute to people living longer and healthier lives. The long term trends are pointing in this way, but how have you considered the long term trends and opportunities of an older population? Your assessment acknowledged that this can create a pressure on health and social services, but with health and life expectancy improving, I advise you recognise how much of an asset the older population are in terms of caring, volunteering and contributing to the economy. The work of the [Older People's Commissioner](#) is particularly helpful in exploring the steps you could take to meet this objective and includes her recent guidance to PSBs.

Ask yourselves if current provision is appropriate to manage this growing issue? Are these issues currently managed adequately and in what areas might they need more collective action? Currently, social services and health are barely dealing with the current demand and, unfortunately, many are looking at traditional models of resourcing 'crisis' intervention to deal with this. This is where the five ways of working should be challenging your thinking and I will be interested in seeing how you influence and task the Social Services and Well-being Regional Partnership Board in delivering your response to your objectives. I am encouraged to hear that the PSB are looking at creating a Dementia Friendly City; [this report by the Young Foundation](#) provides inspiration on 'Innovating better ways of living late in life', challenging the traditional siloes we are working in. Creating flexible and age friendly communities and environments can prevent people from needing social care, from becoming isolated, from suffering ill-health or having an accident at home.

Research [by Ageing Well Wales](#) has shown this and suggests that loneliness in people is both about how connected people are to their communities physically and about feeling purposeful in society. In our sharing economy, could there be other online technical solutions to preventing social isolation, around car-pooling or community transport connected to social media? The '[Hypervillage](#)' concept developed by FutureScape imagines villages connected by their assets, [encouraging people in rural communities to capitalise on technology](#). How have you thought about the long-term possibilities of employing technological solutions for this issue? How can older people become more connected to social opportunities and volunteering? Are volunteers currently involved in the work of the PSB to help you consider how they can help you to meet your objectives?

Linked to this, you have a role in planning, housing and transportation of creating places that are adaptable and able to change for at least the next two generations. I advise that the seven well-being goals are used as a frame to shape thinking around planning and developing communities. It is encouraging to hear that you have good representation at PSB from Newport City Homes. Who else might you need to collaborate with to realise your contribution to the seven well-being goals? At the moment, most of the older housing in Wales fall short of energy efficiency, homes are being built for families and without flexibility of use, and we are consistently seeing large estates being built with little appreciation for active travel, far from walking distance to shops, pubs, green or blue space, or public services.

Wales has an opportunity to develop housing that better meets demographic change, adopting technology to allow people to live independently for longer. Programmes like the [World Health Organisation's Age Friendly Cities](#) initiative have encouraged and recognised those cities that have made themselves more age-friendly adapting buildings, transport and planning rules, which enable older people to stay healthy and connected to things that matter to them for longer; [Laguna woods](#), the first city exclusively for older people in the US and the Marjala suburbs in Finland are examples of design suited to multiple abilities. As well as responsibilities around planning and designing infrastructure, there are numerous innovative global projects encouraging co-housing, supported housing and homeshares. [Students are living rent free in nursing homes](#) in exchange for socialising and providing basic care to the older residents; Australia and New Zealand have introduced '[HomeShare](#)' schemes, and, as part of their national government's demography strategy, [Germany](#) has introduced intergenerational housing for older people and young families in need. In Singapore, young people are given a \$50,000 grant if they move within 1km of their aged grandparents. These are all innovations that are proving to have an impact.

The [Resolution Foundation](#) finds that across the country, millennials [are spending three times as much as their grandparents on housing](#) with today's 30-year olds half as likely to own a home as their parents - a long term trend now worsening for future generations. This, of course, links to several of your other objectives on growing older, having a good start in life, helping people to feel safe and improving health. There is no question that if we are to change people's travel habits and reduce our carbon emissions, we need homes in communities that are fit for the future. The [Welsh Government has launched a £20 million innovative housing fund and](#) over the next two years, it will support both the supply of affordable housing and the improvement of the quality of housing that is delivered. PSBs should be seeking to influence how this fund is utilised and understand the impact it has on Wales to inform their long-term steps on housing.

Other PSBs looking at similar objectives include Cardiff; Conwy / Denbighshire; Neath Port Talbot; Monmouthshire and Powys PSBs. Most PSBs are looking at objectives around children, adverse childhood experiences and the best start in life.

**I hope you have found this advice helpful in moving forward towards publishing a well-being plan for formal consultation. Please get in touch with my team if you want further contact details for any of the organisations and reports mentioned in this letter.**

I am also learning the best ways to advise, support and monitor how public bodies are seeking to apply the five ways of working and maximise their contribution to the seven well-being goals, so I would welcome any feedback from you, supporting officers and the Newport PSB Scrutiny Committee on how I have chosen to approach this statutory duty and the advice I have given.

I look forward to receiving your draft well-being plan and please keep in touch with me and my team.

Kind regards,



Sophie Howe