

Tuesday 28th February 2017

Dear Blaenau Gwent Public Services Board members and support team,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide feedback on your draft Assessment of Local Well-being sent to the office in January 2017.

The first thing I want to do is to make it clear that I fully appreciate the challenges that you have faced in the development of the assessment this time around, and I congratulate your team on their hard work and efforts.

My primary focus in providing this feedback is to help you consider how well your work so far will help you to set your collective objectives and undertake well-being planning. For me Public Services Boards are one of the biggest opportunities for the public sector in Wales to change the way we do things in Wales and to collaboratively make decisions and deliver services that will benefit future generations.

Your assessment is a key part of this, and whilst I appreciate that it may not be a full picture by the time you publish it, it is important that it sets out a clear and informed picture of the well-being of Blaenau Gwent and your communities, that is relevant now and into the future. **Your assessment should enable you to clearly identify key challenges for your area and communities, and to develop collective objectives that address these challenges.**

I attach a document that gives you detailed feedback on your draft assessment, and what you should think about building on both in the short term as you move towards well-being planning and in terms of assessing well-being in the future.

During 2017-18 one of your key tasks will be to develop your collective well-being objectives as part of your Well-being Plan. The legislation requires you to seek my advice on how to take steps to meet your objectives in accordance with the sustainable development principle (five ways of working).

Below I set out some of the things I will be looking for as my office continues to work with you. In my view those PSBs who have showed they are already taking account of the five ways of working will be well placed to develop objectives and Well-being Plans, which will have benefits for all organisations involved in terms of maximising their collective contribution to the goals and addressing inter-generational challenges.

I was pleased to see that you have made a good start with your approach to **involving people and communities** through the *Blaenau Gwent we Want* and it is great that ongoing engagement is such a clear priority for the PSB members. The qualitative information and evidence you have gathered is well presented as a core part of the assessment which gives you a strong basis to show that you are listening to what people are saying to you. You are

well placed to build on this to make sure that you continue to provide opportunities for a broad range of stakeholders and citizens to get involved in influencing the development of your objectives, and be able to demonstrate that their input has an effect on what you do.

The approach you have taken to developing an understanding of well-being in your four community areas is commendable. The qualitative narrative developed for these areas is excellent, with very clear descriptions of what are 'special', assets, the nature of the communities, what needs to improve and excellent use of information from the *Blaenau Gwent we Want*. I think you have the opportunity of exploring further the **integration** between policy and challenges under the four themes (economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being), and making greater links with the seven well-being goals. This will be particularly important in thinking about the relative roles of your different organisations in **maximising your contribution** to the goals.

I acknowledge that it has been challenging to build in significant consideration of future trends and longer term data, but this focus on the **long term** is something I will be looking for as you move towards well-being planning. In particular, this assessment would benefit from attention being given to the potential impact of long term trends across the four themes for Blaenau Gwent as a whole and the four community areas.

A key element of the legislation is the focus on **preventing problems** from occurring rather than just responding to them and I see this as a key priority for your well-being planning. This is an area where I would encourage you to give detailed consideration to what the data and evidence is telling you, in order to make sense of key challenges you have identified.

And **collaboration** is key to all of this – in Gwent you already collaborate regionally through the G7 and GSWAG and you now have the opportunity to take your partnership working to a new level, collaborating with resources and finding new ways to deal with old problems. Your assessment should be helping you to identify the most fruitful opportunities to do this.

Your support team have worked hard to develop this assessment and the people who support your well-being planning will need your full buy-in and support. Key features of this are likely to be the leadership you show and your willingness to give people space and permission to explore new ways of addressing old problems. This cultural change is what the Well-being of Future Generations Act is all about.

In anticipation of the requirement for me to provide advice on how you should take steps to meet your collective objectives I would like to see further detail of how you will use your assessment as you move towards well-being planning. I would appreciate you letting my office know how you have responded to our feedback. With this in mind it will also be important for you to provide my feedback to the scrutiny committee that has the lead for scrutinising the work of the PSB. The need for a more constructive approach to scrutiny has been identified as an important part of maximising collective action at the local level.

I hope that our feedback is clear and useful at this stage. However, I must reiterate that I don't see the development of your assessment as a one-off event. Going forward I will be providing opportunities for PSBs to share learning and best practice which I hope you will be involved in, in order to provide the best platform for you to fulfil your ongoing obligations under the Act.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sophie Howe', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sophie Howe,
Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

Feedback from the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner on

BLAENAU GWENT Public Services Board Draft Assessment of Local Well-being

1. Introduction

The following report provides feedback to Blaenau Gwent Public Services Board from the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner on the *Blaenau Gwent Well-being Assessment 2017 Consultation Draft*. This feedback is based on our project team¹ reviewing the following key documents and discussions:

- Blaenau Gwent Well-being Assessment 2017 Consultation Draft: Introduction
- Blaenau Gwent Well-being Assessment 2017 Consultation Draft: Economic; Social; Cultural; Environmental Sections
- Blaenau Gwent Well-being Assessment 2017 Consultation Draft: Blaenau Gwent We want Display Boards
- a phone discussion between the project team and members of the PSB team on 22nd February

It is intended that his feedback should be used to inform both the publication of the assessment in spring 2017 where possible and recognising the timescales that exist, but it is more important that it informs ongoing processes of developing your assessment and well-being planning.

The assessment has been reviewed by the project team using a set of criteria, developed specifically to focus on aspects of assessment production, methodology and analysis and the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. These criteria enable us to review the wide range of approaches to local assessment of well-being that have been used across Wales. This has also enabled us to provide bespoke feedback to PSBs, highlighting strengths and potential areas for improvement. This consistent approach will also enable the Commissioner to identify key issues and highlight opportunities for shared learning, at a Wales-wide level, for the wide range of public sector and other bodies involved in well-being planning.

While we understand that the Well-being Assessment is an ongoing process, and that further work will be undertaken in coming months, it is important that the following comments are noted and acted upon as the well-being assessment is developed, adapted and built upon to inform well-being planning across the PSB.

¹ Dr. Alan Netherwood, Netherwood Sustainable Futures, Dr. Andrew Flynn, Cardiff University and Dr. Mark Lang, Mark Lang Consulting

2. National well-being goals

One of the issues we have considered is how effectively the seven national well-being goals have been reflected in the assessment as the WFG Act requires PSBs to demonstrate how they plan to *maximise* their contribution to the goals.

We understand that PSBs will develop different ways of reflecting well-being; in Blaenau Gwent's case focusing on four elements - economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being, four community areas and 30 well-being 'measures'. It is important that there is a clear link between the data, its interpretation and our understanding of all aspects of well-being in our communities.

While we recognise the evolution of the approach from previous partnership work, the assessment could be strengthened with a clearer explanation about how and why the 30 well-being measures were chosen. Why are these measures particularly important to Blaenau Gwent and other potential measures of the well-being not used? Throughout the assessment there could be greater explanation of *what* the measures tell us about well-being in Blaenau Gwent. Limited *interpretation* of data is something that needs to be addressed throughout the assessment and is highlighted throughout this feedback.

While the seven national goals are referred to in the introduction, there is no reference to them under the themes or within the evidence or analysis within each section. For the PSB to understand how it can maximise its contribution to the seven national well-being goals, we think that the relationship between this 'frame' in the assessment and the national goals will need to be understood and clearly communicated.

The sections under each of the measures – "*What does this tell us about Blaenau Gwent?*" provide an opportunity for authors to develop and describe this link. This could also be done with a simple table explaining the contribution of each of the 'measures' to the national well-being goals as part of the introduction to the assessment. It is good to hear from the phone conversation with the PSB team that the prioritisation work planned with partners in coming months will focus more strongly on this issue and we will look forward to seeing evidence of this relationship throughout your well-being planning.

3. Data content – area and place

The WFG Act requires well-being assessments to focus on the area and 'place' and reflect the variety of communities across your area. We have considered the extent to which the data content of your assessment does this. It is very positive that the introduction to the assessment highlights the importance of the place based approach.

The approach taken to developing an understanding of well-being in the four community areas² in Blaenau Gwent is commendable. The qualitative narrative developed for these areas is excellent, with very clear descriptions of what are 'special', assets, the nature of the communities, what needs to improve and excellent use of data from the *Blaenau Gwent We Want* consultation. This could be developed by further interpretation and a summary analysis of the data – what does this tell us about well-being and the challenges and strengths of for each community? What are the critical issues for public services to address? Are there any recurring issues across all four areas?

Our phone conversation with the PSB team was useful in understanding the difficulty of gathering data at a very local level. The Lower and Medium Super Output Data provided for Blaenau Gwent as a whole provide an excellent basis for the PSB to understand well-being in different localities and within localities. The explanatory table on the data available in the Introduction is useful.

However within the four themes and 30 'measures', there is a wide variability in how Gwent wide and local data is interpreted. In some sections there is excellent analysis and interpretation, particularly in many of the 'Social' commentaries - e.g. health. This should be replicated in the narrative around other 'measures' and themes. The sections on "*What this tells us about well-being in Blaenau Gwent*" could be strengthened and we look forward to seeing this progress. Specific comments on each theme are provided in point 5 below.

4. Data content – public service needs

We think it is important that you have a clear picture of the different needs of people and communities now and in the future, and that the implications of these needs are understood. We have considered the extent to which the data content of the assessment focuses on public service needs, within communities and for particular groups of individuals. It would be helpful to see a clearer link in the Introduction about how other Assessments including the Population Needs Assessment and Climate Change Risk Assessment have linked into this work to inform your understanding of where collective action from the PSB can add the most value to well-being in your area.

A priority for my office is encouraging public bodies and PSBs to make sure that they are firstly involving people and communities in ways that give them greater insights into people's lived experiences of public bodies, and secondly acting upon these insights when they make decisions and deliver services.

It is good to see how the *Blaenau Gwent We Want* consultation has collated community views on public service needs in '*making Blaenau Gwent a better place*'. The questions to the community provide good data on what concerns people in their communities and what

² Sirhowy (including Tredegar); Ebbw Fawr (including Ebbw Vale); Upper Ebbw Fach (including Brynmawr, Nantyglo and Blaina) ; Lower Ebbw Fach (including Abertillery)

their aspirations are for the future, and there is also useful information on access to services. You could further build on this by collating and summarising these from the four communities and the four themes to provide the PSB with an understanding of the challenges for public service delivery. The phone conversation highlighted to us the richness of data which has been collected through the consultation, the PSB should invest resources to analyse this data to inform the objectives of the plan across the area as whole and within the four communities.

While projects and 'interventions' are listed throughout the summary documents, it could be clearer what additional specific service needs are required, at what scale and how this differs across communities. While we understand this will be picked up in the response analysis and plan development, the narrative of the main document would benefit from some interpretation of the challenge to communities and public services. Are these issues currently managed adequately and in what areas might they need more collective action?

5. Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis

We recognise the challenge of balancing data, insights and evidence to produce a rounded understanding of well-being of communities and individuals of the short, medium and long term. One of our main considerations has been the extent to which both quantitative and qualitative analysis and methods in assessments provide a broad picture of environmental, economic, cultural and social well-being, together with initial commentary on the implications of this 'picture' for communities. i.e. what really matters?

As discussed in point 3, there is a clear contrast between the qualitative approach to Section 3 for the four community areas, and the quantitative approach used under each of the four themes for the 30 'measures'. The quality of the narratives for the 4 community areas is excellent, whereas the data provision and interpretation under the measures is variable and in some places absent.

Section 3 provides strong descriptions on community assets of settlements, landscape, built assets, transport links, town centres, industrial estates, schools, regeneration and community support. It uses census information and information on public services and from *Blaenau Gwent We Want*. Greater interpretation is the next step to determine and communicate what well-being issues are most critical to address. In general, the assessment could be strengthened by drawing themes or issues together and so present a much richer, narrative-driven picture of well-being (see example questions under point 3)

The narrative on well-being under the four themes and 30 measures, in places, could be improved. The well-laid out lists and tables need more interpretation to identify and communicate the critical and most significant issues for well-being for Blaenau Gwent as a whole, for the four community areas and for the PSB. Clearly a great deal of effort has gone into developing this resource with contributions from NRW, GSWAG and the Data Unit, and

we recognise from the phone conversation that time constraints have limited its development. We would encourage the PSB to develop these sections and explore the inter-relationships of different aspects of well-being (see later comments on Integration in point 9).

The following paragraphs provide more specific feedback on each theme.

Economy - this theme focuses on a range of measures on economic activity; working households; income; business start-ups; education and skills and travel to work. Well-being facts help the reader to understand this information but on the whole this is very descriptive. There is good qualitative data from *BGWW* and what we know from existing research. On the whole the sections on “what does this tell us about well-being” could be more authoritative on the implications and significance of this data to well-being. Some begin to, such as business, but on the whole analysis is limited. Have businesses been consulted including Chambers of Commerce, retailers and other business groups? Further improvements could be made by this section painting a broader picture of economic well-being in the Borough by: describing who does what and where; the inter-relationships of Blaenau Gwent with other local economies; and the nature of the opportunities from the City Region project and Circuit of Wales development; Clearly having 50% of the working population commute out of Blaenau Gwent has well-being implications – what is the impact of this on the area? While we understand that Brexit provides great uncertainty, the potential implications of Brexit, for example on funding, is a key issue which will impact on Blaenau Gwent across well-being themes.

Social - this theme covers: life expectancy; healthy lifestyles; babies and children; ageing well; emotional health, community safety; homes and households; transport, care. Data on LSOA and MSOA areas and Acorn Groups paint a clear picture of *determinants* and elements of social well-being. However again with limited interpretation or summary we are unclear of implications of well-being across the area and within the four communities. Like the Economy section, this section could benefit from a summary to set out the broad strategic *implications* for well-being across the area. The Housing section is an example of where this is done well and should be used as a benchmark for other sections within this theme. Sections on Social Care, mental Health and Crime need to more clearly communicate the scale of the challenge and the spatial variation across the area. On what and where should the PSB focus its efforts? More emphasis should be provided on community *and social assets* as part of a broader commentary on social well-being in the area e.g. social capital and networks; and the role of the non-monetary economy in social well-being and levels of unpaid care.

Environment - this theme covers landscape; hydrology; air, water, soil; carbon and ecological footprint; renewable energy and waste and recycling. This section on the

whole provides a much better balance of commentary supported by data, although the carbon and ecological footprint measures would benefit from a better context and commentary than at present. In Section 3 the narrative on the environment for each community area is asset focused with a good description of what is good about the environment: for example, the level of community engagement in environmental activity. There is less sense from Section 3 and the associated measures, about the nature and scale of the challenges: what is the scale nature of biodiversity decline and where are particular problems in the area? how do problems with air, water and soil quality in the area impact on well-being? are they a big problem or are we doing OK? Is contaminated land an issue? How significant is flood risk and where? Again, a strategic summary of the implications of environmental issues to well-being would be useful.

Culture – this theme covers language, cultural identity and cohesion, sports, recreation, arts and culture, tourism and current and future technologies. This measures section needs to be developed, as there is limited or no interpretation for some of the indicators. The impact of IT on culture is far more than access to broadband. How has social media affected well-being in the area? For the assessment as a whole, there needs to be much more focus on cultural *assets* of Blaenau Gwent and this should be developed and reflected in Section 3 on the community areas. What is the area's culture around the arts, social networks, cultural activities, local food and drink, information networks and volunteering? There is clearly a great deal of community activity that is going on – some of which is referred to in the four area 'profiles' and through the *Blaenau Gwent We Want*. A broad summary of these cultural assets would be useful for the PSB to better understand how they can work *with* the community to enhance well-being.

6. Key challenges

It is important that well-being assessments, in assessing the state of well-being, focus on key challenges to well-being over the short, medium and long term, as well as the positive attributes and assets in the area. This includes the trade-offs between different well-being goals, tensions, and deficits within the area.

As described earlier points in this document, the assessment provides data on a range of indicators which illustrate key aspects of well-being, but could be strengthened by more interpretation to identify the nature and the scale of the key challenges, trade-offs, tensions and how they impact on the area. We need, across all themes, a clearer understanding of the *significance* of these issues to well-being.

We understand from the phone conversation with the PSB team that work is already underway to begin to interpret the data that has been collected to understand the key challenges to Blaenau Gwent. We will be keen to see how you utilise the information

gathered so far to better identify the challenges, and their inter-relationships, but also to explore how you might respond to these as a PSB.

Clearly there are a number of strategic challenges which provide a backdrop to your assessment which perhaps need to be considered within a broader commentary under each theme (as suggested in point 5 above). These challenges are common to all areas within Wales, but have little profile in many parts of the documents as they stand—perhaps due to the lack of interpretation. How are the following issues impacting on well-being in Blaenau Gwent? inequalities in health and standard of living, infrastructural resilience, accommodating population decline; air pollution and flood risk; limited resources for social care; under-provision of housing; people living in poverty; welfare reform; climate impacts; austerity; natural resource depletion. This is an area where existing data and information might help to provide a broad strategic context for the work of the PSB. While these are picked up occasionally within the 30 'measures' there is a need for a broader and integrated understanding of how they are impacting on and might affect the area in the future.

7. Engagement, involvement and collaboration

The WFG Act clearly indicates that collaboration and involvement are two of the five ways of working which PSBs need to consistently apply to their work. As a consequence, we have been particularly interested in the level and method of engagement, involvement and collaboration across the partnership in producing the assessment, including engagement with communities, public, third sector and private sector organisations.

It is clear that *Blaenau Gwent We Want* has involved citizens, and stakeholders to gather both quantitative and qualitative data to inform the assessment. It is understood from the phone conversation with the PSB team that a great deal of effort has been expended to inform the assessment through this consultation.

We believe that the material to engage with the community has been well thought out and has clearly been successful, with 2500 contributions. The way this qualitative information has been used to illustrate the four community profiles is commendable. As suggested above, with further analysis, this is a resource which should be hugely useful to the PSB in your consideration of objectives as you move towards well-being planning.

It is positive that the Chair's introduction places great emphasis on the continuing engagement through the consultation period, and that the assessment is an ongoing process. We understand from the phone conversation that there is a two-year plan for engagement.

It is also good to hear how much this assessment has acted as a catalyst to develop collaborative working across the PSB, and that work has continued in February to explore the data sets utilising a tool incorporating both the well-being goals and the five ways of

working set out in the WFG Act. This activity and any key findings from the sessions should be highlighted in the assessment if this is feasible before the final version. It would also be useful for the assessment to highlight the level of engagement with private sector in the process as it is unclear at present where their perspectives have fed in.

8. Integration

One of the key aims of the WFG Act is to develop integration at all levels across the public sector. We believe it is important to understand the inter-relationship between environmental, social, economic and cultural well-being. As a result we have been keen to consider the level of integration between traditional policy and organisational silos in producing the assessment. It is important that the data listed in the assessment is explored across traditional policy and organisational silos, to interpret what this means for well-being in the area.

There is scope for greater consideration of data from each section (and within each section) alongside that of the others, and consideration of the inter-relationships between data and this is an area for you to give further consideration as you finalise your assessment for publication, and as you move toward well-being planning. There is scope for greater integration and more exploration of the relationship of policy/challenges between each theme – for example air quality and health, contaminated land and flooding, business and the potential of City Region.

Integration across well-being themes should be an important issue for the PSB to consider as it develops its Well-being Plan, not least to understand how resources and public sector might need to adapt to address issues which cut across traditional policy silos.

9. Foresight and future trends

One of the key challenges from the legislation is to consider the short, medium *and long term* well-being throughout the assessment and Plan process. We are interested in the level of foresight and use of future trends analysis in producing the assessment and recognition of the well-being of future generations. It is noted from the discussion with the PSB team how challenging this has been.

The Assessment would benefit from consistent attention being given to the potential impact of long term trends across the four themes for Blaenau Gwent as a whole and the four community areas. This is something we would expect to see evolve as the assessment and Plan are developed.

The section on *Future Trends* in the main document, at present, provides limited interpretation of the impact and significance of population trends, climate change, economic trends, and health trends. What are the likely impacts on Blaenau Gwent – what

challenges do they present, and which specific localities, communities and people are likely to be most affected? Are current approaches adequate? For example, on climate change - how significant is change likely to be in terms of water, soils and its impacts on Blaenau Gwent? These are the types of issues which could be explored by the PSB as you move towards well-being planning.

A simple approach could be adopted to address this issue. Summarising the short, medium and long term challenges for each section, identifying where there are potential significant implications for the area, and gaps in your understanding of long term trends where further analysis is needed.

The Welsh Government will be producing their Future Trends Report in May 2017. The current plan is to include 6 key themes: Population, Economy, Natural Resources & Climate Change, Health, Land Use & Infrastructure & Societal Change. As it develops your assessment will need to take account of data included in this, but should aim to provide a clearer emphasis on long term challenges to well-being in the initial assessment published in the coming months.

10. Cross boundary issues

Integration and collaboration are central to public bodies applying the sustainable development principle to their activities. One of our aims has been to review the extent to which the assessment has considered cross boundary issues for regional and national action.

We believe that a more detailed analysis of key regional and cross border issues which affect Blaenau Gwent would be beneficial, to inform the well-being plan process. The assessment could provide a clearer explanation of the area's 'role' within the region and it will be important for PSBs to consider the conclusions of neighbouring local assessments of well-being as plan production develops, and your involvement in GSWAG provides a great foundation for this. It would also be useful to understand the regional impact of Brecon Beacons National Park, on Blaenau Gwent which as it is a regional 'asset'.

Although there is reference to the City Region project it is unclear what the implications of this major, long term project might be for *all* aspects of community well-being across Blaenau Gwent. Even if the specific impacts are uncertain at present, it will clearly have an influence on cohesion, equality, resilience and so on. This was acknowledged in the phone conversation with the PSB team. The project's potential influence should be included for all sections of the assessment, beyond the 'Economic well-being' section, as it is likely to have multiple impacts across different parts of the area.

Greater insight could be provided on the significance of commuting patterns to well-being (especially given the scale of this in Blaenau Gwent), critical issues for transport

infrastructure regionally and the nature of inter-relationships with the G7 and other regional partners. This could all be included in a commentary and analysis of the wider strategic context as mentioned in previous comments.

11. Data quality and data gaps

The WFG Act intends that well-being planning will be a continuous process where the evidence base will be gradually improved over time, to enable public bodies and others to understand and plan for well-being in their communities. We are keen to understand the approach of PSBs to data quality and data gaps during the assessment and data issues moving forward.

This is an area where the assessment would benefit from more consideration. Sections 1, 2 and the measures would benefit from a section providing a synthesis of data gaps from different aspects of the work to understand what might be needed in the short term, medium and long term – i.e. what is missing that matters now to inform Plan development, what would be good to build over the medium term and what longer term data issues are. This would enable the PSB to build on existing work and plan for improving data quality during the next year and beyond, helping PSB partners to build in data research and management into their business and corporate planning. It would also provide an indication to Welsh Government, the Office and Data Unit Wales on PSB needs.

12. Use of the sustainable development principle

The statutory guidance places a responsibility on PSBs to *maximise* their contribution to the well-being goals by utilising the sustainable development principle in the way that they operate. We have been keen to understand how the sustainable development principle and five ways of working have been utilised during well-being assessments.

Clearly there are activities which illustrate the sustainable development principle and are implicit in the approach taken and these activities show an understanding of the WFG Act and its intentions:

Long term – through the Future Trends Section

Involvement – through the consultation work undertaken and currently underway

Collaboration – through work with statutory partners, GAVO and GSWAG

While *Prevention* is mentioned in the context of early year's intervention and environment, the Assessment would benefit from a description of how the preventative agenda is critical to well-being planning and public service delivery.

From the documents originally provided to us, there is little evidence that the sustainable development principle has been applied as a *modus operandi* to this assessment. (see

comments on *Integration* under point 9. It is therefore positive to hear of the commitment to utilise the five ways of working in work across the PSB strategic group and see the draft section on the five ways of working which has been prepared for the assessment. This is encouraging, as it is important for PSBs to use these principles in the way that they work as well as demonstrating how these principles have *changed* the approach of the PSB to well-being planning.

13. Looking forward to plan production

A critical issue for our review of this assessment was whether the documentation was clear about how the work would be carried forward to develop local objectives and plan production. It is positive to the Chair's foreword being very clear on the purpose of the assessment and the '*Blaenau Gwent We Want*' encouraging further engagement by the public and stakeholders.

The assessment would benefit from being more explicit about: the next steps; how individuals and organisations can remain involved; the timetable; and what the Plan is intending to do. Importantly, this explanation needs to communicate how the material collected in the assessment is going to be used to formulate objectives for the PSB.

We believe that further interpretation, analysis and summary of the material would help in objective setting, with a particular need to distil the strategic long term challenges from the assessment, as mentioned above. While we understand that timescales for plan production are tight, we believe that careful consideration should be given to interpreting this data before well-being objectives are set. Clearly the use of your prioritisation matrix and the *logic model* are going to part of this part of this process and further analysis of the data would benefit both of these exercises.

14. Overview

The documentary analysis above has identified a number of areas where we believe the assessment could be strengthened, both in the short term, before its publication and over the medium term as the response analysis develops and the Plan is produced. In addition to this we organised a phone call to discuss the assessment with members of the PSB team who had been involved in the process. The aim of the phone call was to provide us with an opportunity to clarify/explore particular issues that our initial review has highlighted and to enable the PSB to flag up issues which are part of the broader context of assessment production.

A number of clear, recurring broad themes have emerged from our review and the conversation. It is clear that this has been a huge undertaking over a relatively short period of time, and that partners have put a great deal of effort into producing the draft

assessment. The Blaenau Gwent We want has clearly been a success, and the PSB have a challenge ahead to make sense of and interpret the data that has been collected.

We believe the following issues need to be tackled to improve the assessment, which are applicable to Blaenau Gwent as a whole and to the individual community areas:

Well-being goals – a clearer understanding of the relationship between the issues identified and the seven national well-being goals.

Strategic context – a broader description of well-being challenges for Blaenau Gwent over the short, medium and long term to provide the context for the four themes and associated measures

Integration across themes – a greater focus on the inter-relationships between the data gathered on the four themes and the implications of this for well-being

Interpretation of the data and significance – more explanation of how the issues identified through the data impact on well-being of individuals and communities, and their significance across Blaenau Gwent

Regional context – a greater understanding of Blaenau Gwent's place in the region and its inter-relationships with neighbouring areas and communities, including the potential impact of the City Region initiative and Circuit of Wales

Social and Cultural Assets – a broader understanding of social and cultural assets and their role in well-being across Blaenau Gwent

Future Trends – greater attention given to the potential impact of long term trends on well-being in Blaenau Gwent

Moving forward – providing clarity on how the assessment will be used to inform objective setting

It is recognised that some of these may be addressed in the PSBs proposed activities between now and the final publication of the assessment.

We hope that the issues raised above will inform this collaborative work so that these elements are reflected more strongly by the PSB in the final Blaenau Gwent Well-being Assessment and throughout the well-being planning process.