

By email

20/09/2017

Advice from the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales: Caerphilly PSB

Dear Caerphilly 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) meeting earlier this month 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.

At your PSB on the 5th September, the following draft objectives were discussed, which I am using as the basis for this advice:

- **Positive change: a shared commitment to cross-sectoral change.**
 - Provide leadership to facilitate the necessary organisational culture change, and shift to new ways of working in accordance with the sustainable development principle.
 - Use our assets and resources more intelligently and sustainably.
 - Support our residents and partners to contribute fully to the Caerphilly we want.
- **Positive start: giving our future generations the best start in life.**
 - Investigate opportunities to invest in the early years to build resilience across the life course and improve outcomes for current and future generations.
 - Create an Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) informed Caerphilly county borough to enable collaborative strategic action that can reduce and prevent ACEs and build resilience in children.
- **Positive people: empowering and enabling all our residents to achieve their own potential.**
 - Facilitate a shift towards collaborative working with an emphasis on prevention to address current and future health and well-being challenges.
 - Develop a co-ordinated programme of volunteering, maximising it as a route to personal well-being and employment, including promoting corporate volunteering.
 - Establish all age apprenticeship programmes across PSB member organisations with co-ordinated points of access.

- Equip our residents to manage their health and well-being needs in partnership with services.
- **Positive places: enabling our communities to be resilient and sustainable.**
 - Support our most disadvantaged communities to be resilient, cohesive and enable them to help themselves.
 - Protect, enhance and promote our natural environment and foster community action on environmental issues.
 - Work with regional partners to create safe, confident communities and promote community cohesion.
 - Increase the contribution that the environment makes to the health and well-being of residents.
 - Provide primary and community health services closer to home.

I understand that you have also been working on a draft delivery plan, which I have also used to give you this advice on how you might take steps to meet your draft objectives.

As you know, in setting draft objectives and taking steps to meet them, PSBs must 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. My advice is in two parts – firstly, is intended to help you consider how you might do this effectively. Secondly, it is based on your draft objectives and 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 or your draft plan. 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 Caerphilly?

To adapt your ways of working in this way requires a fundamentally different approach. You need to give yourselves the time and space as a PSB 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 your objectives. I am encouraged to hear that some of you are already having these conversations at PSB about integrating budgets, making the well-being plan the 'day job' and seeking to take action together. This is good to hear and I am advising all PSBs that, taking this time and space means having an honest discussion about the tensions between policy issues and current practice within your organisations in relation to each objective. 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. I would like to understand what each draft objective and step you are setting means for Caerphilly and how this is 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 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:** 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. 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. Have you got the right people around the table, at the right level to make decisions around this 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 this objective?

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? 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 with others on achieving this objective? Have you acknowledged the barriers or tensions that have arisen between member organisations 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 know you have tried to continuously involve people in the development of your well-being objectives over the last few months and I am glad to hear this is planned to continue. I want to see a demonstrated focus on this for all PSBs that goes 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?

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. Your support officers have worked hard to help you achieve this level of progress in assessing well-being for the area, drafting your objectives and steps, but I must emphasise that it is your leadership that is required to adopt a new way of working.

This leadership and partnership working permeates at every level of your organisation. Consistency in representation and how you take messages back from PSB to your own organisations is critical to building relationships and creating action. One of my recommendations within the 'Well-being in Wales' report suggests that we need to move away from seeing PSBs as formal, local authority-led committee meeting, with members having built stronger relationships and having a better understanding of each other's motivations. In order to gain this mutual understanding and respect of each other's professions, in some areas, PSB meetings are now PSB workshop sessions, taking place in each of the member organisation's workplaces or in a place relevant to the topic for discussion. In some areas, giving PSB members objectives to lead has established more commitment to the work. Alongside this, you will also 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 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.

How the PSB is supported also has on well-being planning. Although not a 'water-tight' model, where support is multi-agency, this enables better resourcing of the PSB and, inevitably, allows easier integration between organisations, departments and issues. You should feel that the well-being plan of the PSB helps you to integrate your work and challenge current practices within your departments. The draft objectives and steps you have provided me suggest corporate centres of your organisations working in a very different way. So, in order to truly own this plan and ensure the steps you take are understood and undertaken by the member bodies of the PSB, you should consider closer working arrangements, a multi-agency virtual team with a senior leader or more formal secondments, co-location and joint resourcing. There are several resources that may be of use, such as [Designing Multi-Agency Partnerships and Leading Culture Change](#).

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

Setting your draft plan has already drawn on a number of sources of evidence and your own professional knowledge. I know you have done a lot of work to get from 65 initial areas identified in your assessment to four draft objectives. This advice 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 Caerphilly. In setting your draft objectives in this way, it was pleasing to hear that you are trying to move away from treating these topics as separate and foster an asset based approach. I would encourage you to continue with this focus and build on developing these inter-connections in agreeing and delivering your steps to meet these objectives.

- **Positive change: a shared commitment to cross-sectoral change.**

For every objective, you should consider what your role and action is in making this change, as Chief Executives, Leaders, Chairs and senior managers. This objective demands strong leadership, as I have advised above, that permeates throughout each of your organisations. To take steps to meet this objective, 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. 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. I would advise that you critically challenge your current practices within these areas using the five ways of working in taking steps to meet this objective.

As public bodies, you have many statutory responsibilities and deliver a multitude of services on a daily basis for the people of Caerphilly. The duties of the Act are not intended to be an additional burden, but a way of maximising the benefit of these activities. My team have told me about how this is already being realised in some areas of business in Caerphilly. For example, the innovative Deep Place Study for Lansbury Park, creating a 'Coalition for Change' at PSB level has potential to be transformative for the well-being of residents. I will be interested to see how the Act is being applied in practice by all members of the PSB on the estate. Secondly, the partnership project between the Sirhowy Valley Honeybee Company Ltd, Caerphilly County Borough Council and Ynysddu Primary School, where the hives in the school educate people about the importance of pollinators to our environment and make local honey is a simple venture that has multiple benefits. Also, the commitment by the Council to install solar panels on twenty new schools and the Council's trial of electric vehicles as pool cars and installation of electric charging points. These sorts of initiatives change behaviour and challenge what's gone before, as well as providing economic, environmental, social and cultural improvements to people's well-being.

In setting your draft objectives and steps, you must maximise your contribution to the well-being goals. For each objective, it is important to consider how you can have a positive impact across each goal, as with the examples of above. For instance, your draft delivery plan includes actions around procurement and I am aware the Council is part of the work my office are doing with [Value Wales](#) to pilot new approaches to procurement in the context of the Act. As your assessment identified, most people in Caerphilly are employed in the manufacturing sector and there are many local businesses and industrial sites. How can your organisational policies seek to help sustainable local businesses grow? How can your procurement also champion equality? How can policies 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? And how can your procurement procedures be the maximum of what you can do to contribute to a globally responsible Powys? Your draft actions include seeking to ensure the goods and services you procure are sustainable, low carbon and ethically responsible. You may find [Forum for the Future](#) resources useful in this respect.

Furthermore, 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. [The Welsh Government recently published](#) carbon emission levels subdivided by Local Authority. The Welsh Government also released a [Call for Evidence](#) to explore the most effective mechanisms for achieving a carbon neutral public sector by 2030 and I wrote to you urging you to consider and contribute before the deadline. I will be hosting an event on the 9th 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.

It is pleasing to see that your draft delivery plan considers how you can work together to make the best use of your assets. Together, you have a large amount of public sector estate, responsibility for infrastructure and a say in how public buildings are designed and refurbished. There are tangible actions that you can take, such as how you plan, design and locate development (as part of your Local Development Plan), how you refurbish buildings, improve infrastructure and locate public spaces, which can have a positive impact on well-being. [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 in 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. In each of these areas my office can connect you to these people and organisations who may be able to assist you as you develop your work.

Opening up land and buildings to the community could be a way of encouraging residents to contribute to the 'Caerphilly we want'. People often feel disconnected from their surroundings and apathetic towards the services of the area. Across the UK, austerity has meant that buildings, land and services have been transferred to community ownership and, in many cases, it has increased the strength of community cohesion and well-being for the people involved. 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.

Other PSBs seeking to create organisational change through their objectives include Torfaen, who are looking at organisational development in the context of the Act, Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire and you may wish to engage directly with them to share ideas and learning, again my office is happy to connect you if this is helpful.

- *Positive start: giving our future generations the best start in life.*

For each of your draft objectives and the steps you seek to take, I would advise you to be clear about what this means for Caerphilly in your well-being planning. What local evidence have you used (or will you use) to understand the specific areas of successful preventative interventions in Caerphilly? What local services will be impacted if you redirect investment to the first 1000 days of a child's life? How might taking an adverse childhood experience (ACE) informed approach play out in reality for your organisations?

Have you considered the long-term trends of this objective? The complex socio-economic situations in many communities in Wales would suggest that families are not receiving the right support at the right time, and cycles are continuing to the next generation. 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). 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.

As public services, we often treat the symptoms of ACEs, such as mental illness, substance misuse and domestic abuse, rather than the root causes. Taking a preventative approach means shifting resources to deal with root issues. In this way, dealing with ACEs is as much about having an ACE aware public service and identifying where ACEs have happened, as making sure that services families access are integrated. 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 also 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.

I advise that understanding the lived experiences of people who have been through trauma in their lives also give 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. This way of working 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.

I am encouraged to see that your draft delivery plan for this objective is wider than focusing on 'health'. Pregnancy and the early years of life are often seen as a 'health issue' but I would advise you to take immediate steps towards better integration of services, co-locating teams, pooling resources and working in a way that makes sense for that community. Some families access many services and better integrating these provisions would help them to help themselves. 'Parenting' and the need for better support came up as several times in your engagement on well-being. As such, giving future generations a healthy start in life is not just down to you, but the families that children grow up in and the communities they live in, as well as the families they then start of their own. So, 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. I would also advise you to use the knowledge gathered by Public Health Wales on the [First 1000 days](#) of a child's life and the benefits that can be realised from investing in the early years to determine what steps you can take now to improve the well-being of our future generations. 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.

Many things impact on the life chances of children and young people. For example, 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. How can the PSB collaborate with others to improve the economic well-being of families across the region? Your well-being assessment highlighted pockets of extreme deprivation in the Upper Rhymney Valley and in other parts of the county. How can these communities, in particular, be focused on? 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.

As well as income, we know that maternal and familial health has a big impact on a child's life, linking to your other objective on 'positive people'. A common theme emerging from your well-being assessment included a shift

from mental and physical ill-health and increasing behaviour change. Between 10% and 20% of women develop mental health problems during pregnancy or within a year of giving birth. These illnesses are one of the leading causes of death for mothers during pregnancy and the year after birth. Despite this, women in around half of the UK have no access to specialist perinatal mental health services and in other geographical areas, services are inadequate. Considering the impact of services like this on young families is important if you are to take a cross-sector approach. The ['Mums and Babies in Mind' project in England](#) has given a focus to local leaders to create a pathway across sectors that provide expectant and new mothers with the right support at the right time.

Most PSBs have identified draft objectives connected to early years, giving children a good start in life and preventing ACEs including Cwm Taf, Bridgend, Blaenau Gwent, Newport and Conwy / Denbighshire. 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.

- ***Positive people: empowering and enabling all our residents to achieve their own potential.***

Empowering your residents to achieve their potential requires building confidence and capability in communities. This objective is about health, education, employment, community life and people's natural and built surroundings. As you have started to do in your delivery plan, you should consider what meaningful positive steps you can take for residents to realise their own strengths, which should be about taking action rather than writing strategies or creating red tape.

For each of the steps you decide to take, I am interested in the rationale of how you have used the five ways of working to shape your thinking and what the intended outcome of your step is. I am encouraged to see you want this objective to drive a move towards prevention and I advise that you involve people in understanding how this objective could be achieved as much as possible. Re-purposing resources to truly listen to and involve the people who live in the more deprived areas of the county is important to gain an understanding of how they perceive the assets and deficits of their community. What are the current barriers they encounter to addressing their health and well-being needs? How can services collaborate with different groups to ease these barriers? This is an opportunity to actively use the definitions of the seven well-being goals, in exploring the multiple benefits on well-being you could have.

For example, people will only get involved in something if it's fun and of benefit to them. How can you use the heritage, language, traditions and natural environment of Caerphilly to enable people to meet their potential? There are some good examples of projects that seek to bring people together to learn new skills, socialise and build their resilience in later life, like [Men's Sheds Cymru](#), happening across Wales that the PSB could encourage and support. [Solva Care](#) also demonstrates innovative initiatives that focus on the needs of the community first and integrate services to improve well-being. The Older People's Commissioner recently wrote to you as PSBs, outlining some of the approaches you may want to take in recognising this part of your population.

Your well-being assessment found that people associate the Welsh language inextricably with the heritage of the region and that it is of importance to people's belonging, identity and employment prospects. With the long term national target set out in [Cymraeg 2050](#), contributing to this goal by providing opportunities to use Welsh, encouraging the growth of the language and promoting it as a life skill would help people in reaching their potential. The Welsh Language Commissioner's team have been working with my office on how they might support PSBs in their role – please let me know when you'd like more details.

In contributing to a Wales of vibrant culture, you may find the [Arts Council for Wales' strategy useful, which](#) outlines some of the benefits involvement in creative activity can have on the health, cohesion and skills of the population. As with other areas in Wales, your well-being assessment identified a number of stark trends in worsening lifestyle choices. Your assessment identifies the thriving arts and cultural scene in Caerphilly, which is to be celebrated and can help many people build capacity, confidence and reach their potential. 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.

For instance, 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. 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 does this relate to your other objectives and overall vision? What cultural activities can encourage children and adults to live healthier lives? How might people take part in cultural activities to help manage their health? This is an opportunity to improve access to cultural activities and promote heritage, use of the Welsh language and encourage people to get together around a local cause, such as their environment. Collaborating with the national public bodies subject to the Act, such as Sport Wales, Arts Council for Wales, National Museum 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.

Your assessment identifies that educational attainment is improving, but the rate is slow. Plus, there are a high number of people in the county with no qualifications. 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 causes of achievement levels not improving at pace before setting steps to how you might meet this draft objective. Ask yourselves, what would really make a difference to the learning and development of people in Caerphilly throughout their lives? What other things are having an impact of people's life chances that you, as public services, can prevent? A study in Newcastle should be of interest to you in this respect. Social Finance are a not-for-profit organisation who specialise in in-depth analysis and looking at social return on investment, and 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.

Your well-being assessment explored the current economic landscape in Caerphilly and identified assets, such as being strategically positioned between Cardiff and the valleys, with good road links to other parts of Wales, England and Ireland; risks, such as Britain's exit from the European Union; and opportunities, such as the City Region and work of the Valleys Taskforce. As with your other objectives, being ambitious with the role you can play as organisations in taking action and influencing others is important in agreeing the steps you will take. Your draft delivery plan has identified some collaborative actions you can take now that would begin to have a positive impact on well-being, such as all age apprenticeship programmes and introducing corporate volunteering opportunities. For each of these 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 Caerphilly? How can people encourage equality through their volunteering and cohesion within some of the communities in Caerphilly?

How have you thought about the long term economic landscape of Caerphilly? What skills might people need to achieve their potential? The future of employment and how we see 'work' is changing; 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 even exist yet. [And, according to McKinsey](#), technology could automate 45 percent of the tasks people are currently paid to do. Your well-being assessment identified that the majority of the population in Caerphilly are employed in manufacturing – an industry that will become more automated in the future. 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 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?

It follows that the skills we will need in the future will clearly be different to what we need now. As this recent [World Economic Forum blog](#) quotes: "I believe in a future where the point of education is not to prepare you for another useless job, but for a life well lived." What life skills might your children need to make it in Caerphilly in the future? The [Future of Work report](#) 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. As your local business leaders identified in responding to your well-being assessment, linking up school curriculums and future skills is needed if young people are to be work-ready and if businesses are going to find local people with the right skills, of any age. The Caerphilly Youth Forum echoed these comments, which is in line with the [Prince's Trust recent Results for Life](#) report, which explored how teamwork, communication and confidence are as valuable to young people entering the workplace.

In thinking about the long-term skills required, who do you need to collaborate with to create the high quality education and skills needed? How can this maximise your contribution to the seven goals? For example, schools are often at the heart of a cohesive community and the right package of skills can lead to a much more equal society. How are schools and Coleg y Cymoedd collaborating with the PSB on this work? Keeping the Youth Forum and local businesses involved is also advantageous in helping you understand the issue. How can you encourage local businesses to use their social responsibilities, encourage better learning for people of all ages and link these to apprenticeship opportunities?

I have previously spoken about the opportunity presented by the Cardiff City Region. There is clear interest at the PSB about taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the region and I would advise that you influence the current negotiations with your draft objectives for Caerphilly PSB 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. I would therefore advise you to encourage that value within the City Region is not just placed on economic growth but on developing patterns of employment and work that are fit for the future, investing in the most deprived communities to encourage skills in technology, creativity and problem-solving to break inter-generational patterns of poverty. [I recently commented on the work of city regions](#) in response to Dr Mark Lang and Professor Terry Marsden's recent report "[Re-thinking Growth: Toward the Well-being Economy.](#)"

A number of PSBs are drafting objectives to improve prevention, enable people to take more responsibility for their health, introduce behaviour change and seek to help people reach their potential; including Cwm Taf; Carmarthenshire; Ceredigion; Pembrokeshire; Conwy / Denbighshire and Monmouthshire.

- ***Positive places: enabling our communities to be resilient and sustainable.***

As with all of your objectives and draft actions, this objective connects to the others, in empowering residents to achieve their full potential, building resilience in families to give future generations the best start in life and realising your own shared commitment to cross-sectoral change. As your well-being assessment identified, people of all ages said that the community spirit of Caerphilly is a great asset and one to be 'brought back'. As you have rightly identified, the natural and built environment of the county should also be celebrated to help people improve their well-being. Although you identified many areas of Caerphilly that are disadvantaged, communities branded as 'deprived' or 'in poverty' by statistics rarely define themselves like that. In reading the assessments, many people took pride in their local natural environment, community buildings and the way people get along

together. Therefore, involving people in how you approach this objective is crucial, as you need to avoid putting your own assumptions on how to 'solve' issues. Identifying the assets of these areas and working with the local people in how you build upon them will help in coming up with solutions to reduce inequality together.

I have been impressed with the range of people you have involved throughout your well-being assessment and subsequently in your planning. It is encouraging to see you have involved people in different ways, appropriate to their interests and levels of commitment to the PSB and I have said to every PSB that I expect to see this strengthened as you develop your steps and begin to deliver against your plan. I have recommended that PSBs dig deeper into data to inform your well-being plans and take time to better understand your communities, using the lived experiences of people that are living and working there every day. 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 and identify the community leaders and connectors. I would advise each of your organisations commit to the [National Principles for Engagement](#) and Participation Cymru can support your officers in gaining the skills vital for effective and meaningful involvement.

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. [Co-production Network Wales](#) could help you to identify and engage community leaders that can help you to deliver benefits for the community. The [Centre for Regeneration Excellence Wales](#) 'Deep Place' study in Tredegar gives evidence on how an understanding of place can have multiple benefits on well-being and you are embarking on the results of your [own 'Deep Place' study in Lansbury Park](#), which has the potential for real change. Your learning as a PSB of applying the Act in practice will be useful across Wales and beyond.

Have you also considered what sort of changes you need to make to your organisational systems and policies to enable people to get more involved in communities and shape local services in the future? 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; 43% of 'millennials' are driven to make financial donations through social channels; and according to the 2017 ONS survey, 87% of all adults in Wales were recent internet users (meaning they had used the internet in the last three months). Although some people are currently offline, and there is clearly a need for a tailored approach, this is a way to engage with people that is most convenient to them and is part of their daily life, not an additional chore. Your support team will be aware of "[Monmouthshire Made Open](#)", 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. Matthew Gatehouse, working with Monmouthshire PSB, would be able to share their learning with you on establishing this website.

As well as the strong community spirit, the natural environment was identified as a fantastic asset through your well-being assessment. With over 80% of the county borough classed as 'countryside', the green spaces of your area form an important factor in people's well-being. With much of the land maintained by farmers or farming businesses, your natural environment also has an important economic role to play and collaborating with these

businesses in how you take steps to meet this objective will be important to protect and enhance the land and halt declining biodiversity and habitat loss (which your assessment identifies is mainly due to development and land management).

It is pleasing to see you are considering how local communities can take more ownership of the local environment to become more resilient, but there is an absence currently of your demonstrated consideration of the long-term impacts of extreme weather events that will pose particular risks for your area. I urge you to consider the impact of climate change on Caerphilly, as an area with 12 community areas at severe or high risk of flooding, and identified negative impacts on water quality in extreme weather. Flooding affected homes and businesses last year in the county 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.

The long-term vision of some communities could be that they are cut off from fresh water supplies and unable to leave due to extreme weather. Many of the people in Caerphilly rely on their environment for income, food, water, and recreation. 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. As most of your land is either forestry or farmed, both of which are high susceptible to weather changes, how are you considering the potential economic effect of a changing climate? If you are seeking to use your natural resources for economic benefit, how have you considered the long-term impact of extreme weather events on these resources? 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? [Zero Carbon Britain's recent 'Making it Happen'](#) report sets out what responsibilities we all have to future generations to acting on climate change now.

Involving people in the running of their community can have a positive effect on improving perceptions (and realities) of community safety and help to make the local environment more resilient. [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. Projects such as ['Rainscape' through Dwr Cymru](#) suggest ways that we can all mitigate the effects of floods, and an extreme example includes the [Isle of Eigg in Scotland](#), where the community are having a positive impact on their environment by introducing renewable community energy schemes, building sustainable businesses and improving biodiversity. I would encourage you to use the asset of Town and Community Councils, as working with community councils, the third sector and other networks can help you to understand how best to engage people and encourage behaviour change focused on place. [WCVA produced wider information](#) on how the third sector play a role in contributing to the Act including resources on the seven well-being goals.

In line with your draft objective of adopting a cross-sectoral change to your work as a PSB, you should also consider your own roles as organisations in developing resilience and becoming more globally responsible. 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. You may find this [seminar](#) from the National Assembly for Wales' Research Service and the Learned Society for Wales, provides insights from the leading energy experts in Wales and their thoughts on the future of renewable energy in Wales. [The Policy Forum for Wales](#) keynote seminar takes place on the 7th December this year, with a focus on priorities for energy policy, growing the sector in Wales and increasing investment in renewables.

Other PSBs that are drafting objectives around sustainability, cohesion and resilience include Ceredigion; Conwy/Denbighshire; Monmouthshire and Carmarthenshire.

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 Caerphilly 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.

Yours sincerely,



Sophie Howe