

By email

10/10/17

Advice from the Future Generations Commissioner to Ynys Môn and Gwynedd PSB

Dear Ynys Môn and Gwynedd 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 very helpful in giving them an understanding of how you work together as a PSB; the method you have taken to well-being planning and your intentions to deliver the objectives and take steps in a different way. As they will have discussed with you, I was keen that my advice would be useful to you and the context within which you work, so I hope you have also found these regular touch-points helpful and that they have given you some guidance along the way.

I understand you have developed eight key messages to inform your objectives and steps, underpinned by the five ways of working, plus two additional principles of the Welsh language and equality. I am basing my advice on your right key messages, which are:

- Support, develop and maintain a healthy community spirit.
- Protect the natural environment.
- Protect and promote the Welsh language.
- Boost the use of natural resources to improve health and well-being in the long term.
- Improve transport connections to enable access to services and facilities.
- Create the environment to attract high quality jobs.
- Ensure housing that is affordable for local people.
- Ensure every child has the opportunity to succeed.

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, to help you consider how you might do this effectively. Secondly, based on your themes and draft objectives it provides prompts, resources and contacts to help you demonstrate through your well-being plan that you have used the five ways of working and seven well-being goals to shape your steps. The purpose of this advice is not to give you my opinion on your well-being objectives. These are determined and owned by you, as a collective PSB.

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

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

Setting objectives and steps is not business as usual. In the past, we have drawn out themes and priorities and written plans that show what we are doing anyway. Achieving the ambitions of this Act is about the 'what' and the 'how' i.e. what are you doing to contribute to our shared vision of the seven national well-being goals? The goals acknowledge that sustainable development connects the environment in which we live, the economy in which we work, the society in which we enjoy and the cultures in which we share, to people and their quality of life, so what are you going to do differently together? And, how you are applying the sustainable development principle to shape your actions for Gwynedd and Ynys Môn?

To adapt your ways of working in this way requires a fundamentally different approach. Academi Wales' [Sustainable Futures Architecture](#) articulates succinctly how leadership behaviours need to change. As such, 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. As one of your PSB members said, 'it's just common sense, but we have created a system that's not common sense. We need to remove these barriers together'. Practically, I am advising that PSBs take a dedicated meeting or create sessions for each of your draft objectives to be discussed in an honest forum.

I know your supporting officers have been working really hard to drive these changes through holding a series of workshops to bring people together around developing draft objectives. I am encouraged that you have involved people throughout this process and impressed that you have devised a method of gathering the implicit messages from the sessions to describe how organisations need to work together differently. I will be interested to see how you demonstrate in your well-being planning how you have taken on board these messages. In general, for each of your draft objectives, I would like to understand what the steps mean for Ynys Môn and Gwynedd, and how this is a different way of working to what you would 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? To inform the action you take, you will need to adequately map and consider the future trends for each of your objectives. My office is working with others to build capacity in this area and, as your support team are aware, Welsh Government have been adding to the 'Future Trends' report resources, which you should make most use of by accessing through Objective Connect or by contacting David Thomas. [The Oxford Martin 'Now for the long-term'](#) report shows global and national future trends that we all need to react to in carrying out sustainable development.

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

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

- **Collaboration:** I commend the time your support officers dedicate to working across the North Wales region and I am pleased to hear that collaborations are being undertaken as a result. It is important that the people who sit around the PSB table can bring the best range of insights, constructive challenge, data and solutions to the PSB. Have you got the right people around the table, at the right level to make decisions around an issue? Who else might you need to be collaborating with to better understand this? As recommended in my report on the Well-being Assessments, now is a timely opportunity to review the invited membership of the PSB and consider who are the 'unusual' suspects that you may need to work with to take steps to meet your objectives?

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

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

How can you plot what's going on elsewhere in your organisations, the strategies and plans at a regional or a national level, to connect and lead with others on achieving this objective? I understand you have acknowledged the relationship between your Board and that of the regional Social Services and Well-being Board. Integration means ensuring that the other partnerships understand and contribute to each other's work. The PSB should not be seen as a separate entity. Have you yet acknowledged the barriers or tensions that have arisen and what steps can you (or others) take to remove them? Who else is needed around the PSB table to help you interconnect decision-making and improve well-being for this issue?

- **Involvement:** I commended the approach you took to involving people in your well-being assessment and I am impressed that this has continued to be a priority for you. I want to see a demonstrated focus now from all PSBs of going beyond the usual consultation and ad-hoc engagement. PSBs will need to demonstrate how they are seeking to understand the lived experiences of people in the area and how this is shaping your actions. Your work to date has been comprehensive in gathering people's views. How are you now 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?

I must emphasise that your leadership is required to adopt a new way of working. As leaders, I am sure that you are part of many partnership structures, meetings and initiatives, but the PSB is meant to be the opportunity for integration and collaboration at a senior and influential level. To create ownership and collaborative action at PSB, you need to build understanding and respect for each other's professions and debate your motivations as organisations.

As such, I have made the recommendation in ['Well-being in Wales: Planning today for a better tomorrow'](#) that we move away from seeing PSBs as a local authority-led meeting in Council committee rooms. The PSB should be about a new way of working, not driven by any one organisation's culture. The Chair of the PSB, how and where meetings are held and how the PSB is supported can all shift mindsets and allow for healthier challenge to 'business as usual'. In order to explore the tensions and opportunities of working together to deliver your objectives, the PSB needs to be a place of action, not a place of interesting presentations.

The leadership and partnership working at PSB should permeate through every level of your member organisations. Consistency in representation and how you take messages back from the PSB to your own organisations is critical to building relationships and creating action. Communicating why the work of the PSB matters to your own senior management teams and using the well-being plan to challenge current practices within your own departments is central to creating the culture change you have highlighted in your discussions with my team. I have a role to recognise and mitigate barriers, but so do you – as senior leaders, in challenging your managers to work differently and be 'safe to fail'.

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 am encouraged to hear that both Local Authorities are using the well-being assessment to inform their corporate plans. This is a good start and I want to see that the work of the PSB is not seen as something separate to the priorities of all members bodies. The Act sets out seven areas for change: corporate planning, financial planning, workforce planning, procurement, assets, performance management and risk. Often, officers do not understand the work of the PSB in these areas of work, yet these are the core organisational activities where applying the five ways of working would ensure the sustainable development principle frames how you work.

It follows that co-ordinating this work needs to be recognized by all of you as members of the PSB. I am interested in how different PSBs are supported and it appears that when support is multi-agency, resourced and committed to by different partners, collaboration and integration across departments and structures becomes easier. As with other areas, you now have a regional officer to co-ordinate this work. Some PSBs are already adopting closer working arrangements, a multi-agency virtual team with a senior leader or more formal secondments and co-location. There are several resources that may be of use, such as [Designing Multi-Agency Partnerships](#); [Leading Culture Change](#) and [Stepping up: a framework for public sector leadership on sustainability](#). This will require you, people in positions of leadership, to play your part and be brave in driving the changes needed.

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

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

From the regular conversations you have had with my team, I know your supporting officers have worked hard over the summer to draw on your assessment findings, engage with many people, synthesize key messages and draft your objectives and steps. I am encouraged to hear that you are having mature conversations at PSB about how you might approach these key messages by working together differently. Building on the inter-connections between the key messages is important and in drafting your objectives, you should consider them individually, and

as a collective set, maximize their contribution to all the well-being goals. By exploring connections to all the well-being goals, you will not only gain a more holistic picture of the issue you are trying to resolve but you also can maximise the range of resources and opportunities you can draw on to help you find solutions.

- *Support, develop and maintain a healthy community spirit.*

Your well-being assessment clearly celebrates the assets of Gwynedd and Môn, with community spirit coming through strongly in both areas. I have said to all PSBs that interpreting and understanding the differences between communities and how these manifest in people's lived experiences is important in planning public services. I was keen that you explored the differences between the fourteen community areas in your assessment, so I am pleased to hear that you are already pursuing this in your work.

To actively understand the variations between communities, you may need to jointly repurpose resources to spend time with people in their own communities and begin to know the areas as they know it. Only by listening to the lived experiences of people can you take steps to develop a healthy community spirit. Listen to what people have told you about their communities and collaborate to find solutions using the seven well-being goals as a frame. I would advise each of your organisations to commit to the National Participation Standards and [Participation Cymru](#) can support your officers in gaining the skills vital for effective and meaningful involvement. [Co-production Network Wales](#) could help you to identify and engage community leaders, explore time-banking and volunteering schemes and give you access to a network of other organisations.

Most people will only get involved in something that directly impacts them and, in this way, your key messages interlink. People's identities and communities are strongly connected to their heritage, their language and their culture. How is community spirit linked to protecting the Welsh language or boosting the use of natural resources for health and well-being? People are passionate around sharing their languages, their traditions, cooking and eating together, and playing sport or doing creative activities together. Although it is a territory that most PSBs are not comfortable with exploring, this is the social fabric of towns and villages and the cornerstone of well-being.

This is an opportunity to think about how you maximise your contribution to the national goals in setting this objective. [The Arts Council for Wales' strategy, which](#) outlines some of the benefits involvement in creative activity can have on the health, cohesion and skills of the population. The [Cultural Commissioning Programme, funded by Arts Council England](#) seeks to help commissioners of public services understand how they can improve outcomes by integrating arts and cultural activities into a range of services, including mental health and well-being, older people and place-based commissioning.

As leaders of local agencies, you have a key role to play in promoting and supporting community cohesiveness, given your role in community leadership and support. You also have a role in community capacity building through, for example, facilitating networking and coordination, and providing training for community groups and

employees. [‘What Works in Community Cohesion’](#) provides a useful reference for PSBs on the different dimensions of community cohesion. But collaborating with ‘unusual suspects’ can help you to understand the multiple benefits that could be realised. Locally, how can children and young people, schools, colleges and the Town and Community Councils and the third sector play an important role in connecting people? In some areas, community organisations have been funded to act as community coordinators for older people – linking them with local activities and services in their area and helping them to stay active and well. [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.

Giving communities that small encouragement, through for example, schemes that reward volunteering, or small grants to create attractive community spaces can lead to much bigger outcomes - shown by the work that [‘Nurture Development’ do around Asset Based Community Development](#). The idea of ‘community hubs’ is becoming more widespread and examples such as the [Bromley by Bow Centre in East London](#); [Leeds Neighbourhood Networks](#) and [Solva Care](#) demonstrate innovative initiatives that focus on the needs of the community first and integrate services to improve well-being. Opening up land and buildings to the community could be a way of encouraging residents develop their own community spirit, linked to your other key messages around the natural environment. People often feel disconnected from their surroundings and apathetic towards the services of the area. Across the UK, austerity has meant transfers 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.

How have you also thought about the long-term trends of this? Communities take different forms and online communities are now how people connect. 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](#). What sort of changes might you need to make to your organisational systems and policies to enable people to get more involved in communities and shape local services? There is a real opportunity to engage with people that is most convenient to them and is part of their daily life, not an additional chore. "[Monmouthshire Made Open](#)" is an example of an online platform that has anticipated how people might contribute to improving their area in the future, with opportunities to share ideas, ask the community, start a project and seek volunteers or resources. Matthew Gatehouse, working with Monmouthshire PSB, would be able to share their learning with you on establishing this website.

A number of PSBs are drafting objectives to develop strong social networks, introduce behaviour change, develop community connectedness and safety including the Vale of Glamorgan; Newport; Powys; Cwm Taf; and Monmouthshire.

- *Protect the natural environment.*
- *Boost the use of natural resources to improve health and well-being in the long term.*

I have linked these key messages together, given the effect our natural environment has on health and well-being, and the recognized need to protect it. The green and blue infrastructure of Gwynedd and Môn is outstanding and this was recognised by your well-being assessment in terms of the economic, cultural and social aspects of why the environment is so important. With the Wales Coastal Path, Snowdonia National Park, many public rights of way, rivers and mountains, it is a real asset to the people of Ynys Môn and Gwynedd.

Linked to your earlier objectives, getting people involved around a place and a common cause can be extremely powerful. Getting people outdoors with some knowledge and the empowerment to take action can help to make the local environment more resilient. How can you facilitate this to happen and, using the definitions of the seven well-being goals, have a bigger impact? [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.

You are right to acknowledge the use of natural resources to improve health. The [Natural Resources Wales' 'Actif Woods'](#) project is an example of how getting people outside and protecting their environment has positive effects on health and well-being. There are many emerging models of alternative health care, with 'social prescribing' becoming more commonplace in treating health conditions. This [study, on social prescribing in Bristol](#), provides information on different models and gives some insight into the improvements in mental and general physical health. The recent BBC documentary, '[The doctor who gave up drugs](#)', showed several examples of how alternative approaches to prescribing pills can have a more holistic, long-lasting positive impact on someone's life – with people getting physically fitter and healthier mentally without the reliance on prescriptions. This is inherently a preventative approach, as the [University of Essex have shown](#) in research into volunteering with the Wildlife Trust – mental health improved for participants after three months. Collaborating with different organisations to understand and evaluate these methods could have a transformative effect on our current approaches to health.

Many people visit your area to improve their health and well-being. I am interested in how PSBs across Wales are promoting sustainable tourism. As a member of your PSB, Bangor University have been looking at tourism opportunities across North Wales. Linking to your key messaging around transport, can you seek to work more regionally to connect fantastic environmental assets, towns rich in heritage, coastline and sites of special interest with active travel opportunities, public transport and, at the same time, benefit local business? This will involve

looking at this through the lens of the seven well-being goals, taking a place-based focus to planning – rather than based on pure economic gain.

As my team have already advised, the change demanded by the Well-being of Future Generations Act starts with you and your own ways of working. As with all of your objectives, I would strongly advise you to consider how your own policies and workplaces contribute to delivering your plan. What can you do, as Chief Executive, Chair or Leader, now to mitigate the effects of our loss of environment and be more globally responsible? Both Ynys Môn and Gwynedd are at significant risk of rising sea levels, coastal erosion and flooding. As has been widely reported, particular communities could be largely lost to the sea by 2055. Expected annual damage [to residential properties from flooding is estimated to be £22 million](#), so, understanding how different weather events impact on different geographical and demographic communities is crucial to prevention.

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 critical infrastructure, 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.

Your communities are concerned that development could impact their natural environment, damage habitats and further contribute to the national decline in biodiversity. The main causes of poor air quality are urbanization and associated deforestation, manufacturing, industry (particularly the burning of fossil fuels) and traffic levels. Air pollutants have a significant effect on our health, including links to respiratory diseases, cancer and organ damage. Collaborating with businesses in how you take steps to meet this objective will be important to protect and enhance the land and halt declining biodiversity. For each of your steps, use the definitions of the well-being goals to think about how you can do something different and achieve maximum impact, plus integrate across many of your draft steps. For example, how can you encourage agile working policies, cutting down on the use of cars? Some PSBs themselves are introducing electric charging points and electric pool cars into their organisations to encourage this modal shift. How can you enable corporate volunteering opportunities that seek to enhance the resilience of the natural environment? How can people encourage equality through their volunteering and cohesion within some of your communities? [Business in the Community](#) has a range of practical ways for businesses to work together and take action to help tackle some of the key environmental and social issues facing society.

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 and also released a [Call for Evidence](#) to explore the most effective mechanisms for achieving a carbon neutral public sector by 2030. 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.

Decisions made by public sector organisations around infrastructure can have an impact on emissions, air quality and health. My team are already in conversation with you on using the Act to consider the impact of infrastructure developments and we will be using our 'Future Generations Framework', developed in partnership with the New Economics Foundation, to assist thinking. The purpose of this framework (originally intended for projects concerning infrastructure) is to help public bodies use the Well-being of Future Generations Act as a framework for thinking when developing projects; it can also be used to review progress as the project develops. We are working on ensuring the framework is applicable to a wider range of projects including policy/programme development. We would be interested to hear any feedback on its usefulness to your work.

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. How have you considered the potential of marine, wind and solar energy as a PSB? Last year, the National Assembly for Wales Environment and Sustainability Committee produced '[A Smarter Energy Future for Wales](#)', with 19 recommendations for how Wales could transform its approach to energy. More recently, Smart Energy GB have produced a report on '[A Smart Energy Future for Rural Areas](#)', giving examples and case studies of rural areas across the UK who are making that transition. [The Policy Forum for Wales](#) keynote seminar takes place on the 7th December this year, with a focus on priorities for energy policy, growing the sector in Wales and increasing investment in renewables.

There are many PSBs seeking to protect their environment and undertake further work to understand the risks for their communities, including Blaenau Gwent; Caerphilly; the Vale of Glamorgan; Powys; Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion.

- *Protect and promote the Welsh language.*

Being able to speak Welsh and maintaining the language is clearly of great importance to the people in your areas. As you'll be aware, nationally, this has become a significant priority with the introduction of '[Cymraeg 2050](#)'. The Welsh Language Commissioner's team are also seeking to support PSBs in how they encourage and support the growth of Welsh across Wales – please let my team know if you would like specific support from the team.

You have stated that the Welsh language is one of your principles, along with the five ways of working, underpinning everything you do as a PSB. Despite Gwynedd and Anglesey being the areas with the highest number of Welsh speakers, your assessment identifies a declining rate over the last 30 years. This could be for several reasons, which you have begun to identify, but I would encourage you to involve people in digging deeper

into the data - only by understanding the reasons behind this can you begin to collaborate on the solutions. For example, there is a belief that the rate is declining due to young people migrating from the area - [a trend being seen across Wales](#). If this is the case and linking to your other key messages, what can you do to encourage opportunities that would allow them to stay? Rural communities in Japan and Canada have seen a recent upsurge of younger people staying in their place of birth, both with improved technologies, but also by celebrating the way of life and introducing sustainable tourism. [This World Economic Forum article](#) suggests that some of the answers may lie in bottom-up community initiatives, where young people take a sense of pride and ownership in telling others about their heritage and environment, starting small scale businesses that benefit from visiting tourists. These already exist in Gwynedd and Môn, and should be involved in understanding how the PSB can foster growth through its influence and involve local young people undertaking apprenticeships or training?

Your assessment identifies that if the rate of decline continues, some communities could be left with very few Welsh speakers by 2050. As you dig deeper into the issue, a possible response is both children being born in the area having access to Welsh childcare, Welsh medium community facilities and good quality Welsh education; as well as helping people moving into the area to learn Welsh. Again, consider the actions of your own organisations in protecting and promoting the language. You are already doing a huge amount of work here, so how can you collaborate further? How can you work together in identifying employees and members of their family that would benefit from accessing Welsh language teaching and support? Can you pool resources to provide this provision?

In approaching this, consider how you can maximise your contribution to the seven national well-being goals – linked to integrating across your other key messages. I advise that you start with the seven areas of change in the Act to think about what impact you can have: corporate planning, financial planning, workforce planning, procurement, assets, performance management and risk are the core organisational activities where applying the five ways of working. Do all of the organisations around the table understand the responsibility they have in meeting this aspiration? Are the right people around the table? Collaborating with other institutions and organisations can also be of benefit. If this is the 'unique selling point' of your PSB, then you must prioritise it across all of your objectives. How can you be working with the University to encourage opportunities? What role do the Mentrau Iaith of the area have here? Other grassroots organisations in your fourteen community areas can all provide you with insight and action to protect the language.

I have been advising all PSBs that they must consider how they maximise their contribution to a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Your PSB are most explicit in seeking to protect and promote the language and I would encourage you to share your learning across Wales in relation to this.

- ***Improve transport connections to enable access to services and facilities.***

Linked to your other key messages, transport and energy are two of the biggest things we can influence to effect climate change. You have a responsibility around transport, planning and infrastructure and you must now

consider this from the perspective of the seven well-being goals and give ways of working framing your thinking. How can you plan, design and locate future developments (as part of your joint Local Development Plan) in a way that contributes to a more globally responsible Wales and a resilient Wales? How can you seek to create communities that promote equality, have a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language at their core and are safe, cohesive well-connected and viable?

Thinking about the long term opportunities in relation to transportation opens up some interesting possibilities. You may have seen my [earlier](#) and [recent](#) challenges to the plans for a M4 relief road, which amongst other reasons for the challenge, I do not feel that the proposed scheme has fully taken into account the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This includes not taking into account the emerging future trends in transport, such as rapid increase in rail travelers, the predicted emergence of driverless vehicles which could reduce congestion, and the change in working patterns which has already seen fewer people needing to commute to work every day. Fewer younger people are also learning to drive, which demands we look at transportation in a different way. How can we instead look [for the opportunities that self-driving vehicles](#) can bring to our communities and to our economy? Likewise, [cleaner vehicles will become more widespread](#) over coming years; this article describes the rise in start up businesses focusing on electric, hydrogen vehicles and different road materials. As I said above, organisations across Wales are looking at how they can encourage their own staff to use electric pool cars and installing charging points; such as Caerphilly Council. How can you take steps to meet several of your key messages? A shift to low carbon infrastructure would also help you to protect your environment.

Your assessment identifies that being able to get around the area in a sustainable way is important to people, with public transport cited as a problem. [Local Authorities have a duty to promote active travel](#), how can you seek to build and improve the infrastructure for working and cycling? The city of [Freiburg](#) is often held up as an example of urban development that has public and active transport integrated into the heart of its design. Besides prioritizing active transport and sustainable, affordable, reliable public transport, a traffic avoidance strategy means it is a city of short distances, where people's needs are met within short distances. An example of rural and less populated areas can be found in the Netherlands, where demand responsive transport schemes mean a commercial shared taxi service are provided at 111 train stations – it is financially supported by Dutch Railways.

How can planning infrastructure promote wider benefits, such as [‘solar roads’ generating renewable electricity](#) or roads made from [recycled plastic](#), such as those being trialed in Rotterdam? How can this be linked to creating green, connected community spaces – in line with your other key messages? The [Shape My Town](#) tool from the Design Commission for Wales is an interactive resource for community place-making that prompts you to think through some of these possibilities.

As a PSB, you should explore the tangible actions you can take in relation to this key message in how you improve infrastructure, locate public spaces and refurbish your own buildings, which can have a positive impact on well-

being. Think about the seven corporate functions outlined in the Act above and what you can do to effect change in each; for example, you have a large amount of public estate. This is an opportunity to maximise your contribution to the seven well-being goals and create interconnections between your objectives. 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.

How can you also create high quality jobs through application of the Act? [The Closing the Circle](#) report on the circular economy and the Welsh Environment by Constructing Excellence in Wales demonstrates a potential economic opportunity of an additional £1 billion per annum by 2035 through the practical application of circular economy principles and give practical examples in where the public sector can look to minimise waste and resources in future projects. This is an increase of 12.5 per cent in the turnover of the Welsh built environment sector and generates 7,300 jobs (gross). 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. Other PSBs seeking to create better connected communities and focusing on transport include Conwy / Denbighshire; Ceredigion and Monmouthshire.

- ***Create the environment to attract high quality jobs.***

Your well-being assessment highlights that, although people are working in many skilled roles in Gwynedd and Ynys Môn, there is a lack of high quality, highly paid roles. I advised in my response to the assessment that looking across social, cultural, environment and economic well-being was important to gaining a better understanding of this issue. For example, what is the role of the natural environment in the local economy – through green infrastructure and the National Park? What economic value do your natural assets hold that could be a unique selling point for your area? Using the definitions of seven well-being goals to frame your thinking will help you in creating a low carbon, innovative, productive society, which protects culture and the Welsh language, maintains the natural environment, creates more equality, connects communities, is more globally responsible and improves people's health. This should be your starting point in considering draft objectives.

In looking at your assets, your assessment states that 19% of employers are in agriculture. Linked to your objectives around protecting the natural environment, how are you considering the long-term risks to this sector? Is farm succession a key issue? How might Brexit impact on rural funding? What opportunities are there to expand the sector and bring in more high-quality jobs? As I said above, how can you collaborate with partners, like Bangor University, to encourage tourism to the region? Although most roles in tourism are not highly skilled, encouraging people to the area boosts other local economies and creates the conditions for growth. Considering that the ability to speak Welsh is becoming increasingly important, how can businesses be attracted to the region

on this basis? What can you do to promote this? 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 business support initiatives that stipulate people set up sustainable enterprises that maximise their contribution to the seven goals?

I commented on your well-being assessment that greater regional links could be made to the North Wales Economic Ambition Board. For this objective, regional links and links across the border is vital and I will be looking for acknowledgement of this in your well-being plan. How is the work of this Board integrated with the work of the PSB? The Board must produce a regional skills and employment plan; I would advise you to encourage that the value of this Board 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 of the region to encourage skills in technology, creativity and problem-solving to break inter-generational patterns of poverty. Many people commute across Local Authority boundaries to work providing opportunities to collaborate with different partners to enable people to access opportunities outside of county.

How are you thinking long-term to address this key message? 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. 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. [Furthermore, according to McKinsey](#), technology could automate 45 percent of the tasks people are currently paid to do. This is both an opportunity and a potential risk, as [this article suggests](#) we have a responsibility in recognising this and thinking about advantages. 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?

Consider how you might work differently to look outward as a PSB. Who do you need to collaborate with to create high-quality education and skills? 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 can you work with schools, colleges and the University to explore what this means in the context of Gwynedd and Anglesey? How are you involving businesses and the farming sector in understanding the issue? How might you encourage local businesses to use their social responsibilities and enable better learning for younger and older people?

Linking to your other objectives and aiming for 'equality', you will also need to identify specific considerations you have taken to maximising your contribution to a more equal Wales. Your assessment identifies significant pay differences between women and men. What can you do to encourage more women into higher skilled and paid

roles? This should be considered as part of your duties to the Equality Act and your strategic equality objectives. For instance, less [than 1% of apprenticeships in Wales are taken up by disabled people](#) and, there remains an average [disability pay gap of 13.7%](#) across Great Britain. The [Equalities and Human Rights Commission in Wales](#) have several research reports highlighting the wider issue around disability, ethnicity and gender pay gaps. Considering how this message is realised from place to place is important in this respect, to understand what steps you might need to take where. For instance, what might this mean for flexible childcare in particular communities? How can accessibility be improved? How are opportunities being held back by digital infrastructure? As more employment will become reliant on digital connectivity, how can the PSB influence private sector providers to improve the digital infrastructure of the counties? How can you collaborate with businesses to provide a financial case for change?

I would advise that, as public service leaders, you consider what actions you can take or influence to meet this objective. Are all of your organisations currently living wage employers? How are you considering the well-being of your own employees? The collaboration between Welsh Government, Public Health Wales and Cardiff University, '[Healthy Working Wales](#)', is full of resources and guides to help you collaborate in creating a well and resilient workforce that benefits the local economy. How can your procurement policies seek to support local business and focus on more than economic value? How can you be more globally responsible by procuring organic produce, Fair Trade and, where possible, cutting down on transportation in line with protecting your environment? [Forum for the Future](#) have published reports on this and my office are working with [Value Wales](#) to pilot new approaches to procurement in the context of the Act. How can you integrate your support for these businesses and how are your plans to do this linked with policy and service delivery opportunities at a national and regional level?

Other PSBs drafting similar objectives and steps include Ceredigion; Cardiff; Monmouthshire; and Caerphilly.

- [Ensure housing that is affordable for local people.](#)

Housing affordability is an issue affecting people across Wales. As your assessment identifies, in both areas, there is particular concern that average wage levels are out of kilter with average house prices. The [Resolution Foundation](#) finds that across the country, millennials [are spending three times as much as their grandparents on housing](#), with today's 30-year olds half as likely to own a home as their parents - a long term trend now worsening for future generations. Housing has an impact on health, social cohesion and personal finances. Addressing good quality, energy efficient and affordable homes will impact on a number of your key objectives, including enabling children to succeed, protecting the natural environment, creating high quality work and there are arguments in protecting the Welsh language by creating schemes similar to those in the Irish Galetacht Housing Scheme, where new homes are sold to only those able to speak Irish. I would like to see a demonstrated consideration of the integration between these issues in your well-being planning.

You have a role in planning, housing and transportation of creating places that are adaptable and able to change for at least the next two generations. By 2036, 29% of housing stock in Wales will be over 90 years old. Your Local Development Plan sets out 8,000 new homes by 2026. I advise that the seven well-being goals are used as a frame to shape the thinking of planning and development and consider your other key messages around transport, the environment and enabling people's health and well-being to improve. Housing is the cornerstone of well-being; how it is built, affordability, where it is located and how suitable it is to the needs of its inhabitants now and for the future can have a massive impact on health, equality, community cohesion, the environment. Most of the older housing in Wales falls short of energy efficiency, homes are being built for families and without flexibility of use, and we are consistently seeing large estates being built with little appreciation for active travel, far from walking distance to shops, pubs, green or blue space, or public services.

As well as developing housing that meets demographic change, Wales also has an opportunity to develop housing that better meets modern conceptions of what it means to live well, adopting technology to allow people to live low-carbon lives. The [Welsh Government has launched a £20 million innovative housing fund, which](#) will support both the supply of affordable housing and the improvement of the quality of housing that is delivered. PSBs should be seeking to understand how this fund is utilised, learning from its use and seek to influence the next steps on availability of the fund. The [Good Local Economies website](#) suggests how public sector and community organisations can work together to have multiple benefits for their areas in housing, energy, procurement, finance and local economies.

Recent statistics from Fuel Poverty Coalition Wales show that 1 in 3 households in Wales live in fuel poverty, with an estimated cost of cold-related admissions amounting to over £100 million and causing 475 deaths per year. Fuel poverty is currently a bigger killer than alcohol related deaths in Wales. Taking steps to ease fuel poverty and generally improving housing quality will have benefits elsewhere in the public sector. So, collaborating with registered social landlords and private landlords to take action on how new and existing homes could become more energy efficient might be a step the PSB wish to explore. There are several innovative examples; Passivhaus Standard is one such way of building and refitting homes for the future (www.passivhaus.org.uk). The Design Commission for Wales also run workshops, training and accreditation courses on the [Building for Life 12](#) industry standard that has helped local communities, local authorities and developers to work with the common objective of creating good places to live.

In developing communities, I want to understand how you are taking a long term and preventative approach. How are you thinking about the growing number of older people living and moving to the area? How are you seeking to create connected and viable communities through development, linked to your key message on transport? [This report by the Young Foundation](#) provides inspiration on 'Innovating better ways of living late in life', creating flexible and age friendly communities and environments that can prevent people from needing social care, from becoming isolated, from suffering ill-health or having an accident at home. Programmes like the [World Health Organisation's Age Friendly Cities](#) initiative have encouraged and recognised those cities that have made themselves more age-friendly adapting buildings, transport and planning rules, which enable older people

to stay healthy and connected to things that matter to them for longer; [Laguna woods](#), the first city exclusively for older people in the US and the Marjala suburbs in Finland are examples of design suited to multiple abilities, contributing to a more equal society. In Singapore, young people are given a \$50,000 grant if they move within 1km of their aged grandparents. The work of the [Older People's Commissioner](#) is particularly helpful in exploring the steps you could take to meet the needs of your demography, including her recent guidance to PSBs.

Technology could also change the way we live and where homes are developed. The '[Hypervillage](#)' concept developed by FutureScape imagines villages connected by their assets, [encouraging people in rural communities to capitalise on technology](#). There are also global projects encouraging co-housing, supported housing and homeshares - many of them connecting people through the internet. For example, students [are living rent free in nursing homes](#) in exchange for socialising and providing basic care to the older residents; Australia and New Zealand have introduced '[HomeShare](#)' schemes, and, as part of their national government's demography strategy, [Germany](#) has introduced intergenerational housing for older people and young families in need. I would really encourage you to think creatively about this issue and seek to collaborate with unusual suspects in the third sector, further education and digitisation to understand how you can take a different approach.

Other PSBs seeking to draft objectives around housing and affordability include Ceredigion; Monmouthshire; Cardiff; Cwm Taf and Powys.

- [Ensure every child has the opportunity to succeed.](#)

Most PSBs have drafted objectives linked to this topic, recognising the importance of investing in future generations. I have asked each PSB: what is going to change at all levels to make this happen? How will services aimed at prospective parents and families change locally to provide children with an opportunity to succeed? How are you looking at this issue differently? What local evidence will you use to understand the successful service models and the preventative interventions that work? How might focusing on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) as a PSB play out in reality for your organisations and services? Who might you need to involve to understand this better? Who needs to be around the table to make it happen?

In general, children and young people in your area are doing well, but there are families all over Wales that are not receiving the right support at the right time, and cycles are continuing to the next generation. In considering a preventative approach, this concerns all of you as a PSB. [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 and breaking the cycle not only relates to children yet to be born but those families already in need and young people likely to become parents. I am also encouraging PSBs to think about what this draft objective means in the context of the

seven well-being goals. The Public Health Wales' [First 1000 days](#) work shows how investing in a child's life from the very beginning can have benefits to all areas of their well-being.

As such, it is time that we stopped seeing pregnancy and early years purely as a 'health' issue, and explore the opportunities that exist in challenging current service delivery with this objective as a focus and the seven national well-being goals as a guide. Children live within families, that live within communities and they access many services.

The [New Economics Foundation 'Backing the Future' report](#) highlights how we have a role in addressing both material well-being and external circumstances – such as housing, poverty, and schooling – as well as psychosocial well-being and inner resources, which links to your other messages on the natural environment we grow up in, connected communities, high quality jobs and health. Your consideration has to be wider than what early years, education or health services can do. 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. What can each of your organisations do to change these outcomes?

Early intervention and prevention is crucial; your assessment identifies a decline in mental well-being for young people. Approximately 50% of people with enduring mental health problems display symptoms by the time they are 14 years old, and many at a much younger age. We know that on average, the NHS spend over £21 million on the prescription of anti-depressants, how can we act earlier? Cardiff [have trialled mental health lessons for children](#) and a new report from Respublica and Barnado's, '[Making young minds matter](#)', highlights early interventions (such as in-school counselling in Wales) that can have a positive impact on mental health. I would advise you to involve children and young people in understanding any issues with accessing the right care and support, designing different services and evaluating the effects of this approach.

The work on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) provides us with the evidence to show how children's long-term well-being is affected by events of situations in their childhood. Although having workforces that are ACE-aware, able to spot warning signs and provide some support is important; this goes beyond that to making sure that services people access are integrated, in order to break the cycle. As public services, we often treat the symptoms of ACEs, such as mental illness, substance misuse and domestic abuse, rather than the root causes and deal with people in service user categories, such as victim, substance misuser, problem tenant or criminal, rather than seeking to understand the full picture. We fail to join up dots and take action when needed. Alyson Francis, Director of the ACE Support Hub, has recently worked with my office to write to you outlining that ACEs are not another thing to do, but an opportunity to reconsider how we deliver services together that make sense for the families receiving them. The ACE Support Hub could also act as a central place for PSBs to share practice. We have worked with the Good Practice Exchange Wales to create a [webinar on understanding ACEs](#) on the 7th November, which may be helpful to you; Alyson Francis and I will both be on the panel and questions can be provided to us live.

Poverty, abuse, discrimination and other forms of disadvantage can have long-lasting effects on children and young people's well-being and can severely impact their prospects of securing a prosperous, healthy, safe and socially active future. Childhood is a key window of opportunity and I have been working with the Children's Commissioner to advise that public bodies and PSBs should give a greater focus to children's rights and well-being in their ongoing assessment work and well-being planning. A focus on children's rights can help PSBs in consultation, decision-making and programme-planning. This would include developing a children's rights policy focus, enabling children to learn about their rights and empowering them to play an active role in their communities. To support this work, a toolkit is being tested and will be available before the end of the year. The Children's Commissioner's office would be happy to advise on engaging with children and young people and taking a child-rights approach to securing well-being for future generations. Involving children and young people in understanding how you approach this should be central to your work.

In this way, your work to understand the differences and similarities across the fourteen community areas can be beneficial in focusing efforts and funding opportunities on a geographical place. Giving children the opportunity to succeed must be about integration of services and providing preventative support to families and young people. How have, or will, the assets of the area been explored beyond what public services exist and more about the heart and soul of 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 the Royal Town Planning Institute's report on '[Poverty, Place and Inequality](#)', includes several recommendations around why place-based approaches are key to tackling inequality between and within communities.

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. Seeing things from other people's perspectives, from all walks of life, will help you to contribute to a more equal Gwynedd and Ynys Môn.

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.

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 Gwynedd and Ynys Môn PSB Scrutiny Committee on how I have chosen to approach this statutory duty and the advice I have given.

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

Kind regards,



Sophie Howe