

By email

27/10/17

Advice from the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales to Bridgend PSB

Dear Bridgend 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.

Thank you for sharing a copy of your draft well-being plan with the team. I am basing this advice on the draft objectives and steps you have set to date. 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.

I understand that you have held assessment workshops as a PSB and expert working groups to determine your draft objectives, which are:

1. **Objective 1: Best start in life.**
2. **Objective 2: Support communities in Bridgend to be safe and cohesive.**
3. **Objective 3: Reduce social and economic inequalities.**
4. **Objective 4: Healthy choices in a healthy environment.**

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 Bridgend?

To adapt your ways of working in this way requires a fundamentally different approach. My team have been developing a 'Future Generations Framework' 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 and it will be available shortly. We would be interested to hear any feedback on its usefulness to your work.

Academi Wales' [Sustainable Futures Architecture](#) articulates succinctly how leadership behaviours need to change in line with the principles. 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. 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. In general, for each of your draft objectives, I would like to understand what the steps mean for Bridgend, 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? Your draft well-being plan currently looks ten years into the future. My statutory role is to act as the guardian of future generations to meet their needs and to encourage public bodies to take greater account of the long-term impact of the things they do. I am advising public bodies to think beyond the next five, ten or fifteen years and think about future generations, in twenty-five, thirty, thirty-five years' time.

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 understand you are collaborating more across Local Authority boundaries and have regional support. 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? 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?

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 telling all PSBs to deliberately and explicitly consider the interconnections between your objectives to help inform your decisions about the most effective steps. 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:** My response to your well-being assessment suggested that you build on the engagement work to date as a PSB. 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. 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. This needs to permeate through every level of your own 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.

I am encouraged to hear that many of you are taking responsibility for work at the PSB, but it remains that there are organisations across Wales not fully collaborating. A consistency in representation is vital to build these relationships and how you take messages from the PSB back to your own organisations is important to create 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 your team acknowledge is needed. 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 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, synthesize key messages and draft your objectives and steps. I am encouraged that you are looking at the strengths of Bridgend and have developed a focused draft plan, with actions that can make a real difference to well-being. Explicitly recognising the inter-connections between your draft objectives is important; you should consider how they individually, and as a collective set, maximize their contribution to all of the well-being goals. I advise you to look at the definitions of the seven well-being goals and look for ways that maximise your contribution to all seven, for each objective. Ask yourselves – what more could we do? By exploring connections to the 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.

- ***Draft objective 1: Best start in life.***

Most PSBs have drafted objectives linked to this topic, recognising the importance of investing in future generations. It is good to see that you are focusing on your roles in ensuring services that families access are integrated and preventative. I have asked each PSB setting similar objectives: what is going to change at all levels to make this happen? How will services aimed at prospective parents and families change locally? What local evidence will you use to understand the successful service models and the preventative interventions that work? How might focusing on preventing 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?

You have a clear advantage as a PSB in that Alyson Francis is a member of your PSB and Bridgend has also been a pilot site for multi agency work on ACEs funded through the Police Innovation Fund. I would like to see how you intend to build on this work and ensure that this does not remain a small scale localised project but that informs the design planning commissioning and delivery of local services which at relevant to tackling ACEs going forward. We have worked together recently to write to PSBs 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; Alyson and I will both be on the panel and questions can be provided to us live.

As you have identified, the costs of the worst start in life are enormous, both to the individual's life and to public services. [Late intervention services for young people are estimated to cost England and Wales £17bn per year](#) (£6bn on child protection and safeguarding, £5.2bn on crime and anti-social behaviour, £3.7bn on youth economic inactivity, £680m on school absence and exclusion, £610m on child injuries and mental health

problems, and £450m on youth substance misuse). I want to see that your organisations recognise it is part of all of their responsibilities to collaborate in preventing poor outcomes. The Public Health Wales' [First 1000 days](#) work shows how investing in a child's life from the very beginning can break cycles and have benefits to their long term well-being. How might local services have to change if you redirect investment? What does this mean in the context of communities in Bridgend?

As public services, we often treat the symptoms of ACEs, such as mental illness, substance misuse and domestic abuse at great cost to our organisations and to people's lives. We fail to treat the root causes and tend to deal with people in service user categories, such as victim, substance misuser, problem tenant or criminal, rather than seeking to understand the full picture. This means we fail to join up dots and take action when needed – in a preventative, integrated and collaborative way. Therefore, although having workforces that are ACE-aware, able to spot warning signs and provide some support is important; tackling ACEs must be seen as a responsibility of the whole system, not just in terms of awareness but in terms of how the system actually operates. Making people and those who work with them aware of the signs and able to adopt a trauma informed approach is important, but I want to see how you intend to address services as a whole. It is important that you consider how well the services which currently respond to families where ACEs are a factor are responding and whether they are fit for purpose in terms of preventing on ongoing adverse experiences for children and families. Applying the five ways of working to this issue would mean that services for families in criminal justice, housing, social services, early years, substance misuse, domestic abuse and others would be commissioned, reviewed and integrated in preventing and responding to ACEs.

Although rates are decreasing, Bridgend recently had the highest rate of teenage conceptions in 15-17 year olds and you have identified the impact of teenage pregnancy on outcomes of mothers and their children. As a complex issue, impacted by social, economic and cultural values, I would encourage you to understand the lived experiences of teenage mothers to realise how best to enable young people to make informed choices. As well as understanding this in the context of Bridgend, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation produced [a report on 'Planned teenage pregnancy'](#) in disadvantaged parts of England. Public Health Wales continue to look at this issue in a [Welsh context with recommendations](#) on how organisations need to take a multi-agency approach. [International studies](#) have found that encouraging children to value their education and providing them with alternative opportunities of learning also help to delay parenthood.

It is time that we stopped seeing pregnancy and early years purely as a 'health' or an 'education' 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. Involving people and understanding is central to understanding and challenging the whole system; only by understanding the lived experiences of people can we design services that are fit for current and future generations. 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.

Many things impact on the life chances of children and young people and it is important for the PSB to understand where they can have most impact. 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. 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 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. Linked to your draft objective on reducing social and economic inequalities, 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 deprivation in 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 healthy choices. 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.

These 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.

I am encouraging collaboration between PSBs to share learning and ideas. Most PSBs have identified draft objectives connected to early years, giving children a good start in life and preventing ACEs including Cwm Taf, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Newport and Conwy / Denbighshire.

- ***Draft objective 2: Support communities in Bridgend to be safe and cohesive.***

You have defined two draft priority areas for this objective, committing to working together to “create safe, confident communities and tackle crime, disorder and all aspects of anti-social behaviour” and “improving community cohesion so that people in communities get on well together and differences are respected and tolerated.” Your well-being assessment does not identify crime as a particular problem in Bridgend, but states

that perception of crime is a challenge. As you have stated, there is increased reporting of domestic abuse and sexual violence over the last decade in Bridgend, but this is a positive step given this crime often goes hidden and unreported. Tackling crime and particularly the root cause is clearly complex, but the five ways of working in the Act provide a blueprint for looking at problems and can provide a focus for you, as a PSB. Linked to your first objective, you will need to consider how you can take a preventative approach across your organisations – which organisation is best placed to intervene at an earlier point in the cycle of crime and indeed beforehand to prevent the issues occurring? Getting better at prevention by integrating services, listening to where people need support or have concerns, and preventing issues from escalating will be crucial. Understanding the reasons for perceived crime is crucial in creating “safe, confident communities” and you will need to involve a diversity of people to dig deeper into your data on this issue. Involving the people who live there could help you to gain a clearer picture of why there are problems, but also provide you with insight into the assets of that community and provide you with solutions.

For each of your draft objectives and steps, you will need to demonstrate how you have considered the relevance for different communities – outside of the current delivery of public services. How can you work together, using the seven well-being goals as a frame, to understand how services can be delivered differently? Your well-being assessment looks at crime on at a Local Authority level, so as your draft steps outline, you need to understand how this differs across Bridgend in order to properly assess the action you need to take. You may need to collaborate with partners to share information and data on what sorts of issues are pertinent in certain areas. Are the causes of this properly understood?

The advantage of working as a PSB means you are able to look at a problem from a number of perspectives and collaborate with different partners to find quite simple solutions, often by redesigning services together and with the people who receive them. The work of [Professor John Shepherd around the night time economy](#) in Cardiff involved looking at the problem of alcohol related violence from a number of perspectives and introduced measures that reduced crime. We are so often dealing with the crisis issue that impacts on our service, we forget to look around us and recognise that there should be another preventative way to look at the problem. Information sharing and evidence based work is hugely important in preventing criminal and extremist behaviour which, of course, relies on community knowledge, trust and confidence. [Nesta and the Alliance for Useful Evidence have published 'Using Research Evidence'](#) as a guide to public bodies to encourage a confidence in taking new approaches. short, sharp interventions by empowered individuals.

Seeking to maximise your contribution to the seven well-being goals may help you to look at different means of bringing communities together and increasing cohesion. The definitions of the well-being goals illustrate that cohesion is about attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities. Therefore, how can you celebrate the assets of the area? Bringing people together with their different cultures, cooking, art and performance creates cohesion and a sense of belonging. Many people will only get involved in something if it's fun and of benefit to them. How can you use sport, heritage, language, traditions and natural environment to enable people to participate? There is a real opportunity here for you to think about how you maximise your contribution to the national goals. As we know, sport can be extremely powerful in bringing people from all walks of life together. Sport Wales are keen to work with PSBs on how they can maximise their contribution to the seven well-being goals. [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 could help you recognize how projects can have

multiple benefits for your organisations. 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. The potential for your role in this area goes beyond building community capacity through facilitating networking and coordination and providing training for community groups and employees. These aspects of community support can only go so far in addressing the problems that people and communities face. How are you tackling some of the systemic barriers that stop people, communities and employees from using their training or knowledge or prevent them from accessing services that can help? Have you considered how you could reform current services so they could deliver a preventative approach- stopping problems such as ACEs before they happen- through commissioning these services differently? The research documented in [‘What Works in Community Cohesion’](#) provides a useful reference for PSBs on the different dimensions of community cohesion. Might working with communities provide new solutions to helping people to feel safe?

Involving people in a more meaningful way is at the centre of achieving this objective and I would advise each of your organisations to commit to the National Participation Standards. You may wish to contact [Participation Cymru](#), who can support your officers in gaining the skills vital for effective and meaningful involvement. [Co-production Network Wales](#) could help you consider time banking schemes, provide examples of good coproduction and help you to identify and engage community leaders. 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? How are different voices represented at the PSB? [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. 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. 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](#).

Deepening your understanding of communities is best learnt from the lived experiences of people who live there. Involving your staff, getting out and about to speak to people and collaborating with them to deliver projects is a way of winning the trust of communities and seeing positive results. Similar work is already being done through the Big Lottery funded [Building Communities Trust](#) across Wales. You may not know who the potential community leaders and connectors are in some areas, so if you are committed to this, you should re-purpose your resources to do more work in communities, to begin to know a place as the people who live there know it. How have you also thought about the long-term trends of this? Communities take different forms and online communities are now often how people connect – particularly those that perceive they are in the minority. This recent report on [Digital Childhoods](#) from Barnados shows the pace at which technology is moving and the way children now consume information. How are your organisations harnessing the power of technology to help you meet this objective? 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 encourage safer, more cohesive and connected communities including Flintshire; Cardiff; the Vale of Glamorgan; Newport; Powys; Cwm Taf; and Monmouthshire.

- ***Draft objective 3: Reduce social and economic inequalities.***

You identified through your well-being assessment that inequalities exist in the well-being of people across Bridgend. As I have already advised you, understanding the lived experiences of people is critical in helping to prevent inequalities. This example '[Why poor people don't plan long-term](#)' provides an insight into the barriers people face in overcoming inequality and how they are often overlooked. You stated that you would be doing a follow up piece of work to your assessment to research the impact of poverty at a community level and understand the differences between how localities and people experience poverty. If this work hasn't already been done, I advise you to use the five ways of working in planning and undertaking the work – it will prove useful for ensuring children have the best start in life and creating safe and cohesive communities. 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.

As public services, you employ a significant chunk of the population and many of your workers will have families living in the area also. More than a third of your population work in public administration, health or education. I have advised every PSB that the change begins with them and their own organisations; so I am encouraged that you are looking at your own organisations' approach to health, well-being and reducing economic inequality. 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 would ensure the sustainable development principle frames how you work. I would also advise you to appreciate the influence you can have over other organisations too.

There are many different ways of taking steps to meet this objective and examples across the world of innovative approaches. It not only makes financial sense (the conservative cost of work-related ill health in Wales is £500m per year) but can improve environmental, social and cultural well-being for the residents. Are there opportunities to start schemes that bring employees together and contribute to the well-being goals? For example, some organisations have introduced tree planting and bee-keeping, which contributes to a more globally responsible Wales, a resilient Wales and a healthier Wales. Change often 'sticks' when people are involved in wider social and cultural activities together; for example, the [Nudjed 'Behaviour Change is a Team Sport'](#) report found getting

people together increased exercise patterns. Their work has included successfully working with young mums in the South Wales Valleys to get them involved in more physical activity.

Ideas can be found in the [Sunday Times compile an annual list of the 100 best companies](#) to work for; with the ability to filter by which ones are top for 'well-being' and countries like [Sweden](#) have been ahead of Britain in how they ensure their staff are well and working to their best abilities. Closer to home, the collaboration between Welsh Government, Public Health Wales and Cardiff University, '[Healthy Working Wales](#)', is full of resources and guides to helping you collaborate in creating a well workforce. 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.

Sport Wales, Public Health Wales and Natural Resources Wales are increasingly collaborating to improve well-being and [Sport Wales have just published data](#) that shows the significant positive association between sport and good mental health. Evidence suggests that enabling people to make healthy choices is linked to their economic status, their environment and how they connect with others. Your fourth draft objective clearly links to this, in improving your natural environment helping people to managed their health. Collaborating with other organisations to explore these links is the purpose of the PSBs. As I'm sure you've recognised there are opportunities for you to work with organisations such as the National Trust and Wildlife Trusts to develop a county-wide approach. The [Natural Resources Wales' 'Actif Woods'](#) project is an example of getting people outside, protecting their environment and enjoying the positive effects on health and well-being. Alternative ways of improving well-being are growing and 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.

Your assessment identified that Bridgend has a higher rate of people employed than the Welsh average, but that there are a declining number of skilled roles – particularly in Bridgend North. The recent [Dying from Inequality](#) report from the Samaritans highlighted the increased suicide risks for those in lower-skilled jobs and living in areas of deprivation. Many could be identified at a young age, as those with low educational attainment are often at higher risk, drawing links with your first objective around giving children and young people the best start in life. As with [many areas across Wales](#), there is a belief that young people are migrating from the area. If this is the case and linking to your other draft objectives, 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. With healthy business growth in Bridgend, how can the PSB can foster growth through its influence and involve local young people undertaking apprenticeships or training?

In looking at your assets, one of your growing areas of employment is in distribution, hotels and restaurants – clearly linked to tourism. What opportunities are there to expand the sector and bring in more high-quality jobs? Encouraging people to the area boosts other local economies and creates the conditions for growth. Who might you need to collaborate with to encourage greater numbers of tourists? Improving your natural environment and collaborating regionally could have benefits for your area. Maximising your contribution towards a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language and seeking to contribute to '[Cymraeg 2050](#)' means the ability to speak Welsh is increasingly important for businesses. Alun Davies AM [announced funding for growing bilingual small businesses](#) recently to increase visibility of Welsh in our communities. 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 them.

I would advise that, as public service leaders, you consider what actions you can take or influence to meet this objective. I am pleased that you are seeking to develop common process for recruiting apprenticeships and an introductory apprenticeship programme across partners. Other things you should consider in order to maximise your contribution to the goals are whether all of your organisations are currently living wage employers? 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? How about introducing business support initiatives that stipulate people set up sustainable enterprises that maximise their contribution to the seven goals?

How are you thinking long-term in seeking improve skills levels? 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?

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 Universities to explore what this means in the context of Bridgend? How are you involving businesses 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?

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

I have advised most PSBs to start with their own organisations and employees in improving well-being; Neath Port Talbot PSB have also set a draft well-being objective around workforce well-being. Several PSBs are seeking to improve skills and some are looking at joint apprenticeship schemes, such as Cwm Taf.

- ***Draft objective 4: Healthy choices in a healthy environment.***

I am pleased that in seeking to improve physical and mental well-being through improving the way you use our natural resources, you have set draft steps that not only relate to how health can be improved but link to people's built and natural surroundings, their income and their community life – all of which are wider determinants of health. I advise you actively use the definitions of the seven well-being goals, as they are intended to show you how we can have multiple benefits on well-being through actions we take. Your well-being assessment describes the natural assets of Bridgend and many of your residents talked about how their well-being is improved by their

surroundings and by being outside. Thinking of the long-term trends for your area, protecting these assets and promoting the biodiversity of the county is becoming increasingly important. [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.

I would advise you to think about your own roles in protecting this environment for future generations, which will need to be clear in the steps you will take to meet this objective. This will include how you plan, design and locate future developments (as part of your Local Development Plan and your work with the Cardiff City Region), buildings, infrastructure and other public and community spaces. 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? For instance, decisions made by public sector organisations around infrastructure can have an impact on emissions, air quality and health. 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. You will have been invited to an event I am hosting 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.

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? Your assessment identifies that Maesteg, in particular, is at significant risk of flooding and other communities were affected in 2012. 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. Flooding also impacts on people's physical and mental well-being long after the event itself, which is difficult for those involved and inevitably costs other services.

How can you get communities themselves involved in delivering this objective? 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.

Collaborating with businesses in how you take steps to meet this objective will also be important to protect and enhance the land and halt declining biodiversity. 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. For each of your steps, use the definitions of the well-being goals to think about how you can do something differently to achieve maximum impact, and 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.

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 how the five ways of working are framing your thinking. How can you plan, design and locate future developments (as part of your 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?

You have identified that you want to promote your duty on active travel. This requires behaviour change also, which can be determined by infrastructure. 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. 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.

In developing skills for the future (your third draft objective), how can your responsibilities around infrastructure also create high quality jobs through application of the Act? How can you influence the work of the City Region in this respect? [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). 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.

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? In creating a low carbon economy, how can you consider the impact of energy use on Bridgend? 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.

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. 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 objectives and steps around transport, the environment and enabling people's health and well-being to improve. Housing forms 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.

How are you considering demographic change on planning and development? Older people should be seen as an asset – contributing to the economy, providing unpaid care, skills and volunteering. The work of the [Older People's Commissioner](#) is particularly helpful in exploring how you help people to age well in Bridgend and includes her recent guidance to PSBs. I want to see 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 and 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. Linked to your objective on cohesion, 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. How can volunteering attract this sort of role?

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. We are unlikely to get different results by doing the same things.

There are many PSBs seeking to protect their environment including Blaenau Gwent; Caerphilly; the Vale of Glamorgan; Powys; Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion. There are also PSBs seeking to encourage active travel and thinking about planning in the context of changing demographics, including Neath Port Talbot; Cardiff and Flintshire.

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

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

Kind regards,



Sophie Howe