



Comisiynydd
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**Future
Generations**
Commissioner
for Wales

The Future Generations Report 2020



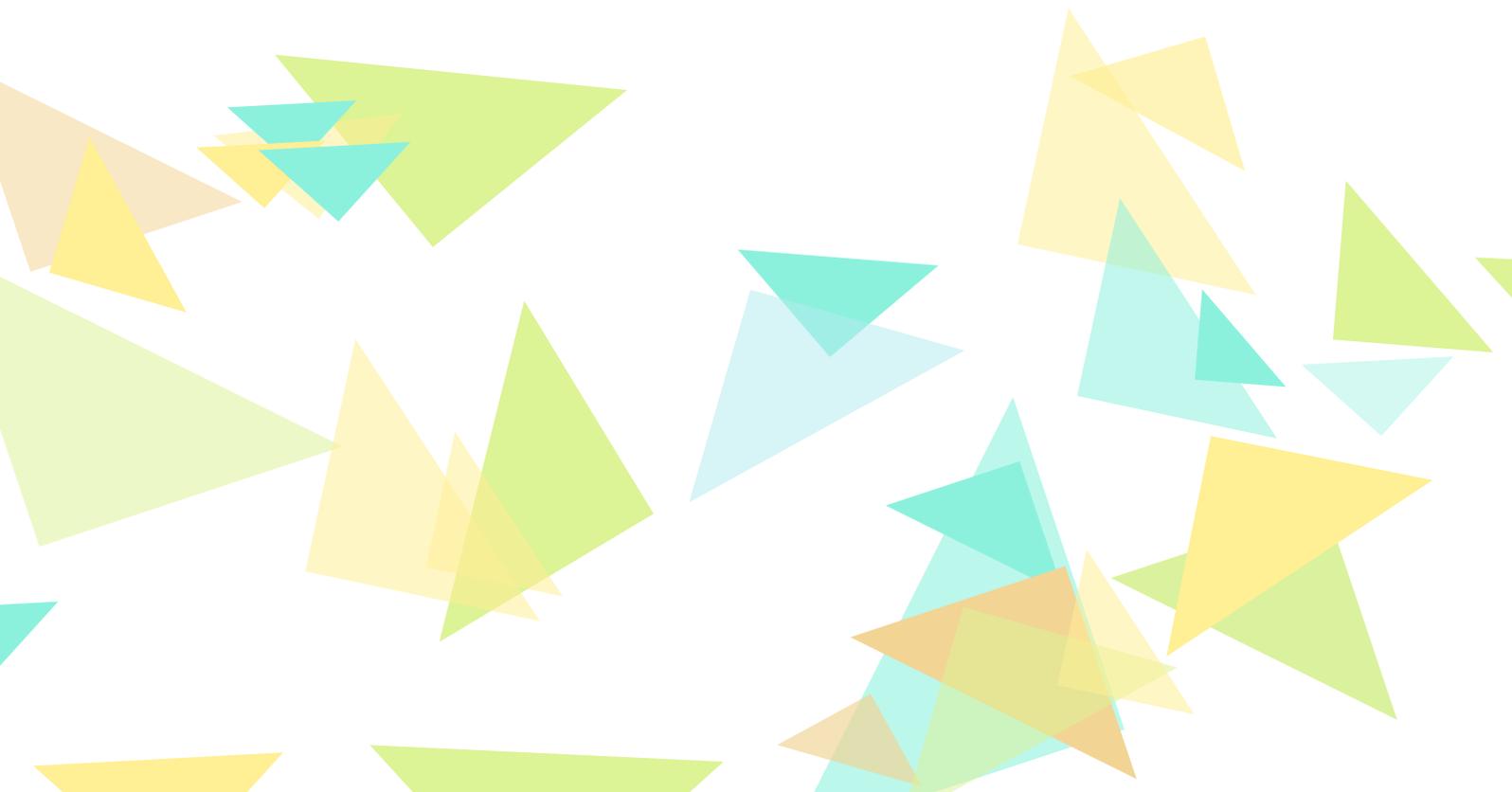
Let's create the future together

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Chapter 2

Leadership and

implementation of the Act





Future Generations Report 2020

Changing our public sector culture

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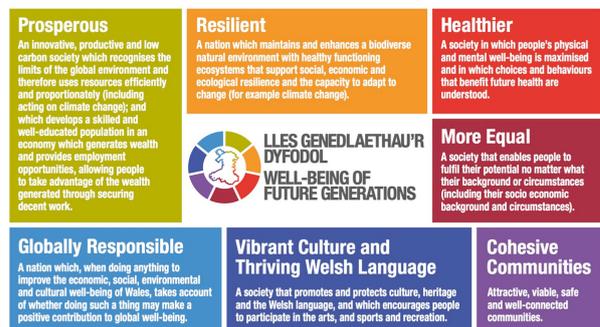
Changing our public sector culture

The vision – a public sector with well-being at its heart

For Wales to realise the aspirations of the Act, public servants need to be braver, broader-thinkers and collaborate better together and with other sectors.

The public sector will be streamlined, with less bureaucracy and more time, space and resources to reflect, research and to innovate. Leaders will be trusting, encouraging freedom, flexibility and creativity in their employees to enhance what's asked of them and strive to do more than the minimum.

The corporate centre of public bodies will always put well-being first, and kindness will be at the core of government and public policy values. Public services will have started with their internal functions and asked: "what can we do differently?" Procurement of goods and services will be done with future generations in mind. Financial planning will be long-term and focused on improving well-being, not wealth. Public bodies will have co-located and reformed their assets, so they are carbon-neutral, accessible and culturally vibrant places.



All staff will understand the national mission of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, and they will reinforce and communicate it through their work towards well-being objectives and the national well-being goals.

Public bodies will be applying the sustainable development principle and five ways of working to everything they do. A better understanding of 'integration' will mean organisations are collaborating to find ways of improving economic, environmental, social and cultural well-being, involving and working with their community members to understand the issues and opportunities locally. Having demonstrated the impact of preventative spending and planning, they will be working in a way that recognises the long-term challenges, opportunities and impacts of their actions on current and future generations. They will have this knowledge through collaborating with others to scan the horizon, forecast and plan further into the future.

Measures of success will be based on well-being, not on economic factors alone. By involving people better, there will be richer, deeper data on how policies and decisions impact on the diverse range of people in the population.

People's perception of public sector culture change

Listening to what people think and believe is an important part of involvement. That is why, in this section, I wanted to give a flavour of what people have told me, since the beginning of my term and in relation to this report.

People's views included:

- People are in favour of the five ways of working – especially focusing on the long-term, working preventatively and stopping crisis-working.
- People raised issues of how involved in the work of public bodies and Public Services Boards they felt. Some organisations, in particular, such as businesses and town and community councils, had found communicating with public bodies challenging.
- There is a perceived lack of risk-taking in the public sector and services are losing the human touch and important focus on well-being because of this.
- There is an issue of trust between the public and public sector leaders. People felt concerned about whether leaders had the right skills or conflicting interests to be making decisions on their behalf. Similarly, public services had doubts about whether they empower and trust their community members.
- Those working in the public sector were supportive of what the legislation is seeking to achieve but felt that barriers such as resources, governance and culture still exist.



Introduction

The Well-being of Future Generations Act is the greatest cultural change programme the Welsh public sector has ever gone through. Any cultural change takes time, but changes of the magnitude envisaged by the Act will inevitably mean that this is a long-term mission rather than a short-term fix – or as I often describe it, an expedition rather than a journey.

The Act applies to everything we do – from the conception of an idea to making major policy decisions on services or infrastructure. It is more than publishing documents or demonstrating compliance with the five ways of working or the seven national well-being goals. It is about changing the way we think, plan and act. This is a significant cultural change for the 400,000 employees of public services in Wales, and it will not happen overnight.

My duty to monitor and assess the progress public bodies are making towards their well-being objectives involves me understanding whether the culture of organisations is changing in line with the aspirations and legal requirements of the Act. To do this, I have visited all public bodies, analysed their well-being objectives, provided advice on reporting progress, worked with them to develop an approach to self-reflection of progress and provided them with individual feedback.



You can read my analysis of the initial well-being objectives set by public bodies and my advice to them on reporting progress in this report, [published in May 2018](#).

My overall findings on progress so far are in this report, [published in December 2019](#).



I also work closely with the Auditor General for Wales and Audit Wales. The Auditor General has a complementary duty under the Act, to examine how public bodies are using the sustainable development principle and five ways of working in setting and meeting their well-being objectives. The Auditor General must report on these examinations every five years.

The findings of Audit Wales and the Auditor General are a crucial source of evidence for me in understanding the improvements public bodies should make to apply the sustainable development principle. Given our respective roles under the Act, we have worked together to publish these reports and the Auditor General's report should be read in conjunction with this chapter.



The early years of the Act required significant focus on process and on building relationships, but attention is now turning to action

The first five years of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act being in force have been unique. Individual public bodies were required to set their first well-being objectives part way through this five-year period, by April 2017. At the same time, Public Services Boards were coming together for the first time, preparing their assessments of well-being by May 2017 and their first well-being plans by May 2018.

Understandably, for many public bodies, this early focus on process was a distraction to delivering differently.

“The Act prescribed a challenging planning timetable and, of course, none of the 44 bodies was starting with a blank sheet. Some were required to publish their first well-being objectives mid-way through an existing planning cycle. Local authorities, fire and rescue authorities and national park authorities had to meet the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, but the Act also required them to publish well-being objectives shortly before the local elections.”

Auditor General for Wales (2018)

The timing of the legislation meant that public bodies were publishing their well-being objectives before the first assessments of well-being for their area and the collective well-being plans of Public Services Boards were published. This part of the legislation is seen as ‘backwards’ for some and has meant that some public bodies have since changed their well-being objectives and steps to be more fitting with those of their Public Services Board.

Another anomaly to these early stages of the legislation is that, while I must advise Public Services Boards on both their well-being assessments and draft well-being objectives, I have no legal duty to advise individual public bodies. However, I must monitor and assess the progress public bodies (not Public Services Boards) are making towards their objectives.

We have all been learning. While the early work of public bodies and Public Services Boards is not perfect, it has set the foundations by raising awareness, getting people on board and building the movement of change that I am now seeing across Wales – focused on people rather than process.

The Act is bringing about some excellent innovation. I am seeing a growing movement of change, with people daring to deliver differently to improve economic, cultural, social and environmental well-being

Across Wales and in virtually every public body, I am seeing the Act frame innovation and new ways of doing things. The best examples tend to be led by a growing movement of ‘frustrated champions’ who, whatever sector they work in, are fed up with dealing with the problems created by a system that has only responded in the short-term.

These champions can see that service boundaries and organisational siloes often work against doing the right thing for citizens and they believe public service organisations have the power and the ability to change things for the better, rather than just carrying on with business as usual. They operate at all levels in every organisation, and their innovation ranges from the relatively small and sector-based, right up to significant programmes and new delivery models that have a substantial impact.



However, they are tenacious, often inspired by the aspiration set out by the Act and the permission it gives them to challenge the system:

“The Act has given us a chance to look wider. For example, traditionally we’ve looked at carbon reduction in our buildings, but the Act gives us a chance to think right across the services that are done within the authority. We have installed solar panelling on our schools, introduced electric fleet vehicles, and we’ve got an electric bus being trialled in Caerphilly town centre. The Act has given us the permission to raise ideas with leaders and our leaders permission to try out new and different things.”

Caerphilly County Borough Council

Lansbury Park

Caerphilly Public Services Board are radically changing their approach, by taking a place-based, collaborative approach to focusing services and regeneration in high areas of deprivation, such as Lansbury Park. In targeting regeneration funding at the homes and neighbourhood of the area, organisations have involved people, listening to their issues, concerns and reasons to celebrate the community. The Public Services Board involve the community in delivering their well-being objectives. For example, parents and children producing books designed to inform carers, teachers and children about the effects of adversity experienced in childhood.

This is a good example of a Public Services Board considering both what they do in line with the Act and then applying the principles of the Act to how they do it.



Solar power for future generations

Monmouthshire Council have developed a solar farm on council-owned land. The Council is contributing to A Globally Responsible Wales, a resilient Wales, A Prosperous Wales and A Healthier Wales by setting an objective to 'Maximise the benefits of the natural and built environment for the well-being of current and future generations'.

The council say the farm can generate enough electricity to power around 1,400 homes and also save over 2,000 tonnes per year of CO2 by generating clean, renewable energy.

Bilingual virtual reality

Amgueddfa Cymru are contributing to A Prosperous Wales, A More Equal Wales, a Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh language and looking to the long-term, through their objectives 'Wales has a strong and creative economy' and 'Digital users are attracted by an interactive and animated online experience'.

They are experimenting with digital augmented reality and virtual reality innovations at National Museum Cardiff, National Roman Legion Museum and Big Pit. This work is developed in partnership and developed through participation with users. For example '[A Bilingual Google Expedition at Big Pit](#)' provides the first Welsh language virtual reality tour available on Google Expeditions.



Finding new ways to solve problems

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service and Natural Resources Wales have demonstrated the power of collaboration, integration and involvement by seeking to work towards their objective to 'Reduce the number of deliberate fires'.

A range of methods have been adopted, but the '[Healthy Hillside](#)s' project in collaboration with the Wildlife Trust, local authorities, other voluntary sector partners, local farmers and the wider community shows contribution to A Prosperous Wales, A Resilient Wales, A Healthier Wales, A Wales of Cohesive Communities and A Globally Responsible Wales.

Wildfires were having a significant impact on the habitats, watercourses and biodiversity of the region, as well as the well-being of the community. By working together, the partnership adopted land management techniques like bracken management, controlled burns and encouraging grazing animals; moving to an approach that prevents wildfires, prevents resources being spent on fire fighting and prevents further habitat loss.

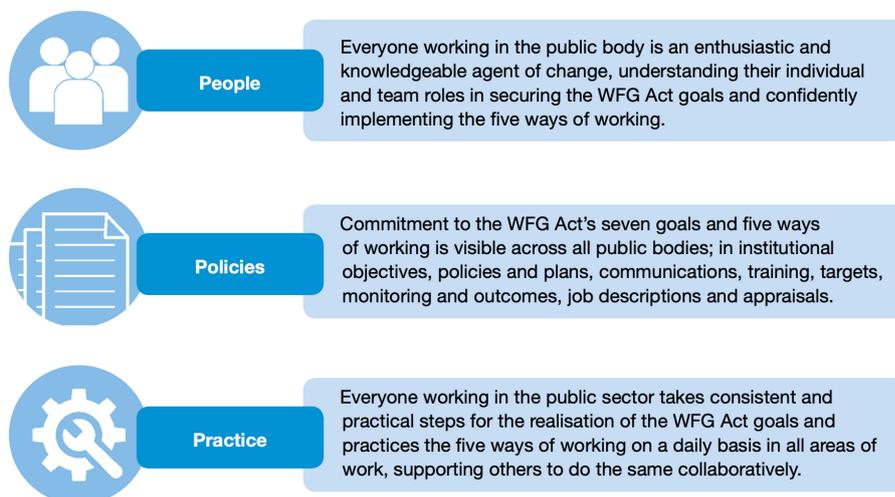


There is more to be done to develop the public sector workforce and enable them to understand the national mission of the Act – and their place within it. The public bodies who are successfully driving cultural change have brought on board a much wider group of staff than just their corporate centres. They have started from the position of their corporate areas of change and thought “what can we do differently?” first, and they have involved staff, citizens and the organisations to work this out.

Most public bodies are making progress on implementing the Act but in different ways. In the next phase, they need to apply the Act across all of its aspirations and legal requirements

To fully embed the act, people, policies and practice need to be working in harmony.

Figure 10: Aspiration for people, policies and practice to deliver the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the five ways of working.



© Public Health Wales (2019)

My analysis of progress loosely categorised public bodies into the following groups:

1) The Planners:

Organisations that have started with their corporate planning and strategies, and are working on their culture, delivery and decision-making.

These organisations have set a strategic direction and are at different stages of looking at communicating this, delivering differently and demonstrating progress differently.

They tend to be those who have funded the production of resources, training and specific staff posts to encourage cultural change.

Organisations who described being in this space during 2017-18 include Sport Wales, Public Health Wales, Hywel Dda Health Board and some local authorities, like Blaenau Gwent Council, Wrexham Council and Powys Council.

2) The (Lone) Innovators:

Organisations who have sometimes struggled to fit their corporate planning and annual reporting into well-being objectives but are thinking and delivering differently because of the Act.

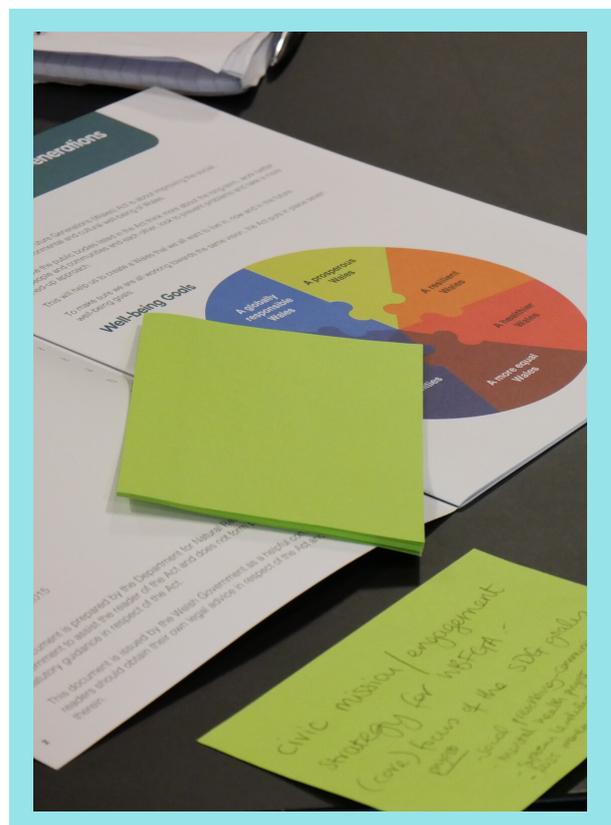
Pockets of individuals and teams within the organisation who are often seeking to change culture alone, against corporate centres reluctant to transform.

These organisations typically tend to ‘undersell’ themselves when it comes to the innovative work they are doing, which is improving well-being and having multiple benefits. For example, some national bodies have many examples of the work they’re doing to contribute to the national well-being goals but struggle to align corporately and affect change more widely across the organisation.

The Arts Council for Wales outlined how this had been a challenge for them, and we could see this for some national park authorities too, where their work is excellent in implementing the aspirations of the Act, but their planning cycles do not necessarily align to setting well-being objectives.

Likewise, fire and rescue authorities have embraced the Act and have case studies, collaborative working and evidence in how they have gone way beyond their ‘traditional duties’. However, their examples are not always shown in the context of their well-being objectives or the five ways of working.

While it is encouraging that a movement of change is growing, it is disappointing that many people report feeling isolated, exhausted and disheartened by the effort it takes to break the mould of an unsupportive system. Nevertheless, it is clear that, for many of these change makers, the Act is providing a helpful tool to challenge the system.



3) The Believers and Achievers:

Organisations where there are examples of innovative practice, change makers and champions of the Act – sometimes daring to deliver differently against a culture of ‘business as usual’, other times supported by corporate centres and leaders to work in a new way.

Public bodies should be in this space. There are many examples across most public bodies, of the changes brought about by dedicated individuals and teams, who understand the potential of using the Act as a framework for change. These pockets of innovation vary across each organisation.

For example, there are several large-scale programmes of work in public bodies like Natural Resources Wales that demonstrate their contribution to the goals and application of the ways of working – as well as a strategy that shows the organisation is trying to deliver in new ways. Public Health Wales are increasingly moving into this space, having established a dedicated ‘Hub’ team to educate on the Act.

The national park authorities describe excellent examples through their self-reflections that show their contribution to the national goals, their use of the five ways of working and the sustainable development principle. There are cultural projects that aim to provide alternative models to well-being, projects aimed at reducing carbon emissions through electric vehicle charging and managing tourism access, and collaboration with others to provide employment and skills opportunities.

In Welsh Government, there are ‘pockets’ within departments looking to push the civil service into using the lens of the Act to affect policy and guidance; a team has been established dedicated to implementing the Act, programmes rolled out like ‘Future, Engage, Deliver’ set up by the Permanent Secretary to change mindsets.

The First Minister has set the direction of his term in the context of the Act.

4) The Overwhelmed and / or Overconfident:

Organisations who see the Act as a ‘side-line’ to their core business or where the leadership believes their organisation has already ‘cracked’ the Act and giving further attention to their organisational culture is unnecessary.

Some of these organisations seem overwhelmed by responding to crises, and others use this as a regular excuse not to implement the Act.

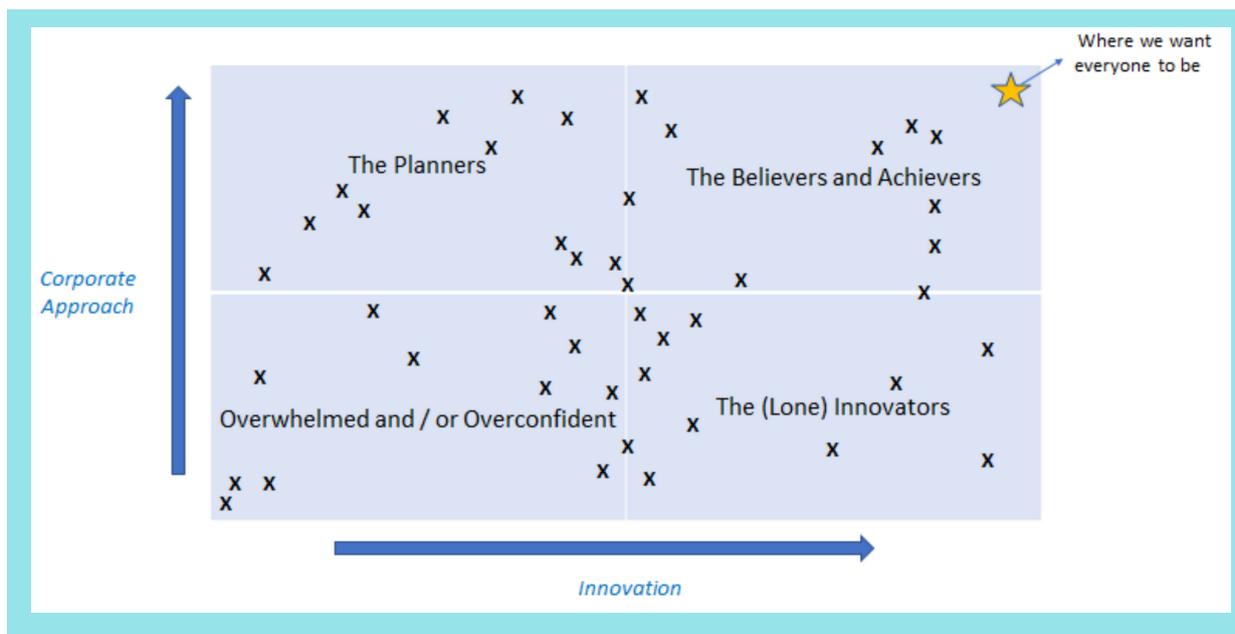
I have commented that many of the health boards were in this space during 2017-18, with the Act often seen as something for local public health teams to deal with. I believe that there are some positive shifts in this regard, but often the approach from government continues to undermine, rather than support, the necessary changes in the health sector.

There are also a few local authorities and national bodies that are reluctant to see the Act as an opportunity and a way to shape their core work. As well as providing this feedback to them directly, I have shared my views on these public bodies with the Auditor General for Wales to ensure we work together to advise and monitor progress within these organisations.

There appears to be a balance between a reliance on too much corporate planning, which risks increased bureaucracy and losing the ‘hearts and minds’ of the workforce, and not enough corporate planning, which risks people feeling isolated and disempowered to change the culture.



With these four categories in mind, I have mapped the 44 public bodies subject to the Act based on my monitoring and assessing in the grid below:



For me, cultural change comes back to the idea that we can have all the policy, legislation and ideas in the world, but if we don't win over 'hearts and minds' and take people with us – we'll never deliver upon the changes that are needed. I have recommended to Welsh Government that they place kindness and well-being at the centre of government and public policy.

Public bodies and Public Services Boards need to follow suit, providing permission for people to work differently, compassionately, building a movement of change within their workforce.

“Many acts of kindness are done by those working at the edge of the rules, or indeed outside them...The risk takers – at any level within or outside an organisation – can identify the rules that get in the way, can apply their humanity to those rules, and emotionally literate organisations can then reward and protect them. As the English proverb says: "It's better to beg for forgiveness than to ask for permission."”

[Carnegie Trust \(2018\).](#)

Dedicating time to a corporate vision pays off, but you need corporate vision, innovation and 'hearts and minds' in balance.

It is positive that some public service leaders have recognised that the Act requires culture change and have set a strategic direction, then funded training, resources and specific staff posts for this purpose. This is done alongside a clear senior-level commitment and action to task these specific resources to embed the new ways of working throughout the organisation rather than to be the team in the organisation who 'does the Act' on everyone's behalf.

Health and Sustainability Hub

[Public Health Wales](#) have established a team to help them, the wider NHS and other partners, to implement and exemplify the Act. The Hub has produced tools for individuals, teams and organisations on translating the Act into practice. For example, recent research with Kingston University on using the five ways of working: [Implementing the Sustainable Development Principle.](#)



Future and Integrated Policy-making Division

In [Welsh Government](#), a team has been established to support civil servants across government to implement the Act and strengthen policy-making. The team has a matrix-management approach, working across departments collaboratively to promote an integrated approach and support understanding and implementation of the five ways of working. The team's remit is to support and challenge departments across government to implement the Act, and they challenge any expectations that they should be doing and reporting on the Act for the government. This team shows promise in terms of its approach but is substantially under-resourced and needs to have more capacity if it is to be effective in driving cultural change across Government.

Some public bodies have adopted integrated impact assessments, trying to understand how officers have considered the five ways of working, seven well-being goals and other issues when proposing a change. While integrated impact assessments are a good idea as part of a wider package of awareness-raising and winning over 'heart and minds', they can quickly become a tick-box exercise.

Those who do not understand the Act or feel any passion for change will focus too much on process and not enough on innovation and understating the mission. Staff need to understand and feel the cultural change before they begin to practice it.

Some studies suggest it takes 17 years for evidence-based initiatives to be widely adopted, even when they are proven to improve outcomes. Public bodies should be investing in building a movement of change, identifying and breaking down barriers to implementation and promoting wide understanding of how each part of their organisation contributes to the national mission of the Act - improving the well-being of future generations.

In implementing the Act, some public bodies are delivering the 'what' and some are delivering the 'how'; however, there is further work needed for public bodies to fully demonstrate the 'double test' of the Act - applying both

The Act should apply at two stages of decision making – as a 'double test'. Firstly, 'what' you decide to do should consider the five ways of working and seek to find the solution that maximises your contribution to as many of your public body's well-being objectives and national well-being goals. Secondly, you should apply the five ways of working again and consider 'how' to maximise contribution to more of the well-being goals in 'how' the organisation implements the proposed solution. ([See section on Setting Good Well-Being Objectives in Chapter 4.](#))

For example, if a public body was considering how to address a problem with traffic congestion, they should:

Firstly, using the five ways of working, consider 'what' solution (from a range of options) would best contribute to all of their well-being objectives and the well-being goals. They may decide to invest in public transport solutions, which contribute to better health outcomes, a reduction of carbon emissions, better-connected communities, and aim to help those at socio-economic disadvantage – THE WHAT.



Secondly, in deciding how they invest in public transport, they should use the five ways of working to consider how the investment could have the most benefits. Considering how the solution could best contribute more well-being goals 'how' they go about making the proposal happen. For instance, in the way the project is planned, who carries out the work, how it might seek to connect communities, be linked to active travel to improve health, could be delivered by low carbon vehicles and support good employment opportunities – THE HOW.

Considering the 'double test' of the Act

In identifying the need to introduce a more integrated and efficient public transport service to South Wales, [Welsh Government](#) and other local services considered 'what' solution was needed. My advice led to the Act being placed at the centre of how government procured the contract – the biggest procurement contract tendered in Wales at £5 billion.

The successful rail operator, [Transport for Wales Services](#), were challenged to show 'how' they would be applying the Act in creating a more integrated and efficient transport network for South Wales. This included 'how' they would be applying the seven national well-being goals, such as working with a social enterprise that helps people with disabilities access employment, ensuring electricity overhead and in stations comes from zero-carbon energy and support local artists through cultural work and displays in stations and trains.

However, there are many examples of public bodies considering the 'what' and neglecting to apply the 'how'. For example:

Initially, the [Housing Innovation Fund](#) was established by Welsh Government with the Act at its centre - to fund innovative ways of increasing housing stock that was fit for the future. However, in implementing the 'what', government initially did not fully consider the 'how' and the first few rounds of funding asked bidders to demonstrate their contribution to only one well-being goal. This meant that bids were not as innovative or sustainable as they could have been, had government fully considered the 'how' in implementing the scheme. In recent bidding rounds, Welsh Government have taken on board my advice and bidders are now asked to fully explain contribution to all seven national well-being goals and how they have used the ways of working in their proposals.

[Cardiff Council](#) took a positive decision to develop and improve the infrastructure around Cardiff Central Station, to create a more connected public transport hub, regenerate the area and develop employment opportunities (the 'what'). However, the 'how' was not fully considered because the resulting regeneration has failed to maximise contribution to the national well-being goals. For example, there is little use of green infrastructure, and the bus station has not been connected to the train station, undermining their approach to a more connected public transport system. Furthermore, they have missed opportunities to promote the station concourse as a cultural gateway into the capital city, showcasing local heritage, materials, arts and local enterprise.

Other public bodies have been considering the 'how' but not the 'what', suggesting a lack of integration and collaboration. This report has many examples of good initiatives which could be improved by anchoring them within the context of the wider public body's well-being objectives or the well-being goals.



For example, [Swansea Bay Health Board](#) have positively reduced gas and electricity consumption, partly by using the “ReFIT - Green Growth” loans via Welsh Government, which enables organisations to borrow money to fund carbon-reducing schemes. While positive, this does not appear to be linked to their well-being objectives and therefore opportunities to consider the wider opportunities that decarbonisation could deliver to their core duties of improving the health of their population are being missed.

Welsh Government have reformed the transport appraisal guidance, ‘WeITAG’, which is a significant change in the right direction regarding how transport interventions are considered. However, they have not yet set a national transport strategy so, whilst the ‘how’ is there through ‘WeITAG’, the ‘what’ we are aiming towards is unclear.

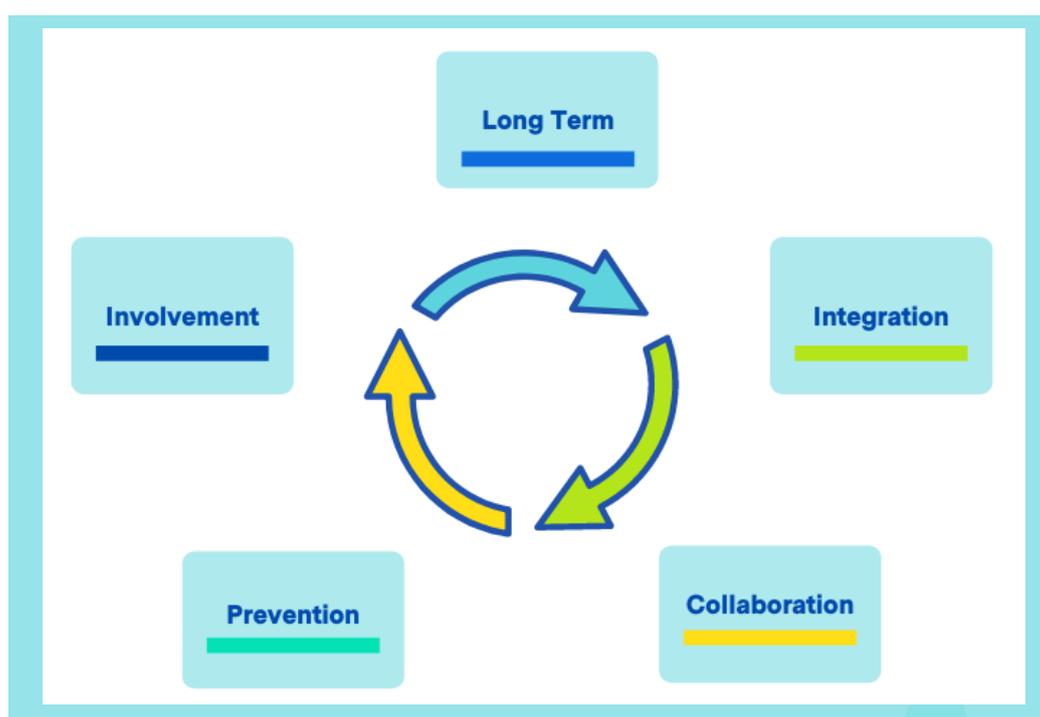
This is where it is important that organisations seek to ensure both their leadership and [corporate planning](#) processes apply the Act in ‘what’ they decide to do, but also that understanding of the Act is embedded

throughout the organisation so that those implementing policies can apply the Act to ‘how’ the policy or service is developed and delivered. The final part of the Act’s guidance on applying the ‘double-test’ is to communicate this – show your workings and communicate progress.

In many cases, public bodies describe their actions retrospectively, i.e. they describe what they have been doing and how it fits into the five ways of working and well-being goals, rather than showing how the ways of working and goals have shaped their thinking, proposals and decision-making on the ‘what’ and the ‘how’.

Public bodies can only apply the ‘double test’ of the Act by using the ways of working and national well-being goals.

The five ways of working are interconnected and mutually reinforcing – one naturally leads to another. So, when public bodies are seeking to apply the ways of working to an idea, a proposal, a service or an evaluation, it doesn’t necessarily matter where they start, as applying one of the ways of working should lead to another.



Public bodies and Public Services Boards should use my [Future Generations Frameworks](#) during corporate planning and implementation stages to help them do this properly.

Challenges and opportunities for change

Remove barriers to effective implementation of the Act

What future generations need

Welsh Government need to lead the way in changing public sector culture, as I have recommended within this report, towards well-being and kindness at its core. They need to show a willingness to remove barriers to implementing the Act, provide trusting leadership to public bodies and Public Services Boards, incentivise and encourage adoption of the Act, reduce bureaucracy on public bodies and welcome new approaches.

Likewise, to enable us to get towards meeting the national well-being goals, public bodies and Public Services Boards need to challenge the status quo and challenge government on the way things were to move us closer to the way things should be for future generations.

In order to change public sector culture, there will need to be a level of risk. Performance management and audit will need to be sympathetic towards a changing culture – and the mistakes made along the way. Culture change does not happen overnight, and we will need time, space and additional resources for public bodies to reflect, research and, ultimately, innovate for future generations.

Where are we now

Public Services Boards are beginning to work together more effectively. However, their efforts to operate in a more transformational way are being hindered due to barriers such as funding, complex governance and capacity

There are 19 Public Services Boards covering Wales and, under the Act, their first tasks were assessing the well-being of their area by May 2017 and producing collective well-being objectives in a Local Well-being Plan by May 2018. You can find out what your local Public Services Board is doing on [our website](#).

In the last year, I have seen promising improvements in the way Public Services Boards are operating. Many have spent this first year focusing on building trust, relationships, and understanding each other's perspectives. Some are seeking to try different models of service delivery to deal with local problems, and most boards are more effectively sharing information between organisations.

In the five [Gwent Public Service Boards](#), partners are [collaborating](#) on a regional basis to use funding for projects like the Gwent Green Grid, which is identifying local collaborative opportunities for protected sites, natural and built environments to contribute towards the resilience of wider ecosystem in the region. The region has also introduced Integrated Well-being Networks, a place-based collaborative project to set up health and well-being hubs and use the assets of communities, with the aim at preventing people in the community needing to access hospitals or social services.



I have been providing advice and assistance to [Cwm Taf Public Services Board](#) to help them work collectively to tackle adversity experienced in childhood. Through a “Live Lab” approach, my team have supported member organisations of the Public Services Board to use the Act to challenge their thinking, understand different organisational cultures and find an [integrated](#) way forward to a complex issue.

“[We] developed more acceptance that change is required – we now acknowledge that we need to act differently.”

“The Live Lab provided exposure to different services – improving involvement and collaboration, among their Public Services Board members, their organisations and their communities.”

Quotes from Cwm Taf Public Services Board participants (July 2019)



Funding for Public Services Board infrastructure is inadequate

Despite this promising work, Public Services Boards are working in an environment of complex partnership arrangements, inadequate funding arrangements and the pressures of austerity on their own organisations. They now require more support through flexible funding from Welsh Government to move forward with the scale of challenges they have identified.

“Public Services Boards are unlikely to realise their potential unless they are given freedom to work more flexibly and think and act differently.”

Auditor General for Wales (2019)

Public Services Boards are intended to be the collaborative mechanism of improving well-being within the Act. Welsh Government provide an annual support package to the boards, consisting of regional funding – to be shared across the footprint of the health body for that region; access to a network of support officers; and opportunities for training.

Members of the Public Services Boards have argued for some time that, in order for the boards to be treated with the same priority as other partnerships and work programmes, they need more substantial resources.

Firstly, more capacity to support the work of Public Services Boards is needed. Currently, every Public Services Board has different support in place – ranging from one officer in the local authority with a long list of partnership responsibilities to whole teams of partnership officers, funded through collaboration. More capacity and capability in long-term, futures thinking, involvement, research and data analysis are often described as gaps.



Secondly, Public Services Boards require access to more government funding opportunities that would enable the board to take more substantial steps towards meeting their well-being objectives. Thirdly, Public Services Boards have called for more flexibility from government over how they spend their current regional funding allocation.

“We are challenged by how some funding grants are awarded, setting tight criteria and limiting how monies can be used. Some flexibility on how we can use grants to achieve our objectives would be extremely helpful and warmly welcomed.”

Torfaen Public Services Board (2019)

“When funding becomes available [for collaborative working], timescales are tight, which goes against how we are trying to in Wales to work for the long-term.”

Wrexham Public Services Boards (2019)

I have recommended to Welsh Government they should consider how to provide more funding opportunities to Public Services Boards, strengthening the link between national and local delivery. I have also recommended that Welsh Government provide a clear steer to Public Services Board members that the boards are able to apply for and accept funding if one partner holds the funds.

Public Services Boards are interdependent on the work of other boards, but the governance structures between them are complex and often confusing

Linked to my advice to Welsh Government, Public Services Boards have reported they are struggling to be as effective as they could be because the boards exist in a complex partnership governance landscape. The lack of clarity from Welsh Government has the knock-on effect of some partners not being engaged in Public Services Boards – their attention diverted elsewhere. Several reviews of partnership governance have been undertaken by Welsh Government recently with the aim of clarifying these issues, including these listed by the Minister in a recent letter to board members:

- The 'OECD Multi-Level Governance Review'.
- An independent Review of the Regional Skills Partnerships.
- An Audit Wales local government study on Public Services Boards and the effectiveness of partnership working.
- Joint inspectorate work on the progress of new local models of health and social care, and the effectiveness of Regional Partnership Board joint working.



In addition to these reviews that my team have come across:

Public Services Boards received a joint Ministerial letter and an independent report by Professor Keith Moultrie regarding how they are working with Regional Partnership Boards in practice;

The Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee undertook an inquiry into Public Services Boards during 2018;

Other government-led initiatives are underway, such as CLES - the national organisation for local economies - seeking to work with several Public Services Boards on progressive procurement and local spend.

These reviews seem disconnected and there are more immediate actions that could be taken. While reviews are sometimes a helpful way to understand the context and make recommendations (if they are conducted in an integrated way), action is now needed. Welsh Government should be providing a clearer role for their representative on each Public Services Board; finding ways to give more funding flexibility to Public Services Boards and clarifying relationships between numerous partnership boards. (see my [recommendations to Welsh Government in Chapter 2](#))

Welsh Government have this clear role to play in cleaning up governance complexity – but Public Services Boards should also be challenging government, challenging complex governance structures and seeking ways to overcome these to integrate their efforts more locally to meet their well-being objectives.

In a joint letter with the [Children's Commissioner for Wales](#), I asked the Chairs of Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Boards how the situation is working locally.

While several outlined the difficulties of dealing with conflicting legislative duties, some have found positive ways to [integrate](#) and [collaborate](#). For example:

[Cwm Taf](#) Public Services Board and Regional Partnership Board came together to undertake the well-being and population assessments and write their respective plans in 2018 (required by Welsh Government legislation). They have worked together on issues such as addressing loneliness and social isolation and in developing a place-based 'Community Zone' model, seeking to support people in challenging circumstances and prevent problems from getting worse. The 'Community Zones' have been partly funded through Intermediate Care Funding, which is administered by the Regional Partnership Board.

In the West Wales region, [Ceredigion](#), [Pembrokeshire](#) and [Carmarthenshire](#) Public Services Boards seek to work closely with their Regional Partnership Board, bringing together members of the boards from across the region. The Regional Partnership Board has been tasked by the Public Services Boards to carry out particular regional work concerning vulnerable children and families, feeding back intelligence and insight.

The corporate planning, performance management and reporting requirements set by Welsh Government for public bodies need to reflect the Act better

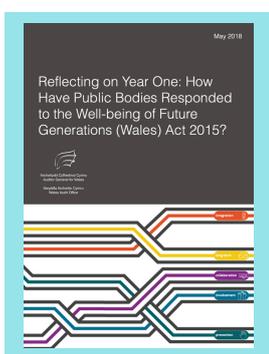
Public bodies from every sector covered by the Act have raised that corporate planning and reporting progress on their well-being objectives is a challenge because they are responding to other duties and requirements placed on them by Welsh Government.



“Our reporting systems are a mess, and Welsh Government could do a lot more to sort it out. There’s a lot of tidying up that Welsh Government could do through the new Local Government Bill. But please don’t add to it and duplicate.”

Local authority representative (Feb 2019)

The Auditor General for Wales flagged it as a barrier to implementing the Act in his [year one commentary](#), published in May 2018:



“Some [public bodies] were required to publish their first well-being objectives mid-way through an existing planning cycle. Local authorities, fire and rescue authorities and national park authorities had to meet the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009, but the Act also required them to publish well-being objectives shortly before the local elections.”

Auditor General for Wales (2018)

Corporate planning is linked to performance management, and public bodies have also reported how difficult it is to change to a long-term, integrated and collaborative form of measuring progress when Welsh Government continue to hold leaders to account on short-term plans and short-term performance and financial measures. They say this is hampering their ability to think long-term and act in a preventative way

“The legislative requirements of other acts like the Equality Act creates a churn in public bodies. The timescales are clashing and isn’t this meant to be about integration?!”

National body representative (Feb 2019)

For example, in health bodies, their main vehicle of corporate planning and reporting performance is their Integrated Medium Term Plans. While the plans cover three years, the majority of financial planning and approval undertaken with Welsh Government still follows an annual cycle. Even a three-year cycle contradicts the Act in thinking long-term and preventatively, driving behaviour within health bodies that focuses on short-term, crisis management.

Despite some positive changes to the NHS Planning Framework, the Integrated Medium Term Plans do not adequately align with the Act. There is no requirement on health boards to account for their performance against their well-being objectives from the Health Minister or senior officials in government.

Health bodies, therefore, feel they are going ‘above and beyond’ their normal requirements to meet the duties of the Act. The Act is not given priority and prominence in the organisation – from management board discussions to how health bodies contribute to Public Services Boards. This is due to the pressure on leaders to focus on the short-term, performance and financial measures prescribed by Welsh Government.



“Yes, the guidance for the Integrated Medium Term Plans have changed to encompass more about well-being but I’ll send you the guidance for the annual reporting for the NHS, and there’s just no space for well-being. It means I’m producing two different reports – before I produce an annual equality report and all the other things Welsh Government ask us to do.”

Health board representative (Feb 2019)

It is entirely within the power of government to rectify this situation and enable health bodies to shift from focusing on short term delivery and move to planning **preventatively**, for the **long-term** and in an **integrated** way. This should be addressed as a priority.

The national public bodies also find reporting requirements placed on them challenging. Welsh Government provide annual remit letters to each body, with an outline of deliverables and allocated funding. The short-term, annual nature of these letters is hampering the ability of national bodies to focus over and above their immediate deliverables. It is encouraging to see some national bodies are challenging this system, for example:

Sport Wales are challenging output-based performance management systems and challenging government on how they are held accountable. The organisation is going through a period of seeking to base their whole performance management system on outcomes, breaking down traditional siloes between departments and functions. Sport Wales are also seeking to connect their duties under the Equality Act and Well-being of Future Generations Act, by reporting on equality objectives using the Act. Welsh Government should respond positively to this challenge and seek to work with public bodies to identify new methods of measuring performance in line with the Act.

Currently, the remit letters provide some reference to the Act at a high level, but they should be more explicitly linked to the well-being objectives of the body and government. Where performance measures are in place, they are mostly traditional output measures, not focused on measuring well-being. This means national bodies struggle to show their impact and progress against their well-being objectives.

Whereas local authorities previously found this challenging, it is encouraging that the [Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Bill](#) seeks to provide local government and fire and rescue authorities with a new performance and governance system, based on self-assessment.

I have provided evidence to the National Assembly for Wales and advised government that this is an opportunity to refine and streamline requirements on these sectors to provide them with the space to reflect and innovate. This is welcome progress, and Welsh Government should be replicating such an approach in other sectors covered by the Act. However, this can take time, and public bodies themselves should be seeking to integrate their own duties and challenge government according to the Act’s requirements.

Financial planning and short-term funding inhibit the ability of public bodies to meet their well-being objectives and make collaboration, prevention, long-term thinking and integration more challenging

The Auditor General for Wales and I have found that annual budget cycles and short-term funding, with late notification of available funds, makes applying the sustainable development principle challenging.



“Public bodies were clear that short term funding hampers their ability to plan effectively over the long term. Some sponsored bodies stated that the annual remit letter poses the same challenge. Linked to this, they cited a lack of flexibility over how grant funding can be spent and disproportionate monitoring requirements as inhibiting long term planning and a focus on outcomes.”

Auditor General for Wales (2020)

Financial planning and budgeting are currently disconnected to the ethos of the Act. My advice to government outlines that, while Welsh Government blame UK Government for short-term funding allocations, public bodies blame Welsh Government and, often, the voluntary sector blame both.

All public bodies should do more to align financial planning and well-being to plan for the **long-term**. While public bodies would also welcome longer-term funding, they should accept that a large proportion of the budget is static and does not change year on year. Setting out a vision through their well-being objectives should help them to plan longer-term and work towards funding meeting their objectives.

“Being constrained by annual funding arrangements – which inhibits long term and preventative spend and sometimes hinders collaboration arrangements. We need to work with Welsh Government to address this.”

Observations from a representative of a national public body (Feb 2019)

Short-term financial planning sometimes means that successful pilots or initiatives are short-lived because they are reliant on grant funding or short-term funding allocations, which are discontinued.

This should not be happening at Welsh Government or public body level, with the Act in place. Examples of successful initiatives should be scaled up and implemented more effectively and securely with core funding.

As the [statutory guidance of the Act](#) states, public bodies should set out within their well-being statement when publishing objectives: “how each body will ensure that resources, including financial, are allocated annually for the purpose of taking steps to meet its objectives.”

All public bodies should clearly align their **financial planning** and decisions to the achievement of their well-being objectives. The vision provided by well-being objectives should provide a **longer-term** plan of funding, and corporate plans/well-being statements should set out how spending plans will seek to finance their steps.

The culture change starts with Welsh Government. The world is watching Wales, with our ground-breaking Act, and the budget must reflect Welsh Government’s commitment to sustainable development and wider well-being. Both the budget process and budget itself should reflect the Act and drive cultural change through:

Clear consideration and explanation of how budget decisions relate to the achievement of the Welsh Government’s well-being objectives;

Clear consideration of the five ways of working throughout the budget process and during decisions about spending, particularly considering:

- **Long term** - using future trends and foresight to take long term spending decisions, including through providing longer term stability to other services;
- **Prevention** - using the definition of prevention to enable a robust approach to understand the opportunities of investing in preventative activities.



The recently published budget was the fourth since the Act came into force in 2016. While there were some positive signs of things changing, there is scope for significant progress in terms of a budget process that is fit for future generations and focuses on well-being, such as the approach introduced by the New Zealand Government.

“Success is making New Zealand both a great place to make a living, and a great place to make a life.”

Grant Robertson, New Zealand Finance Minister (2019)

Starting with Welsh Government, [financial planning](#) should move to a model of well-being budgets. While our legislation requires us to look at the whole budget, starting with ‘new money’ would be a positive place to start this transition. (See [section on Welsh Government in Chapter 2](#))

The corporate areas of change outlined in the Act are potential levers to drive change, but public bodies must make better use of them

The ‘corporate areas’ of corporate planning, financial planning, workforce planning, procurement, assets, risk management and performance management are outlined in the [Act’s statutory guidance](#) as “catalysts for change”. These are the departments and teams within public bodies which will need to evolve their culture to meet the aspirations of the Act.

In reality, I have found a mixed picture as to how organisations have begun to change their culture with regards to these corporate areas of change. I asked public bodies to reflect on the changes within their corporate centres during my monitoring of progress last year. Some public bodies had clearly taken on the advice I provided within my report [Well-being in Wales: the journey so far](#), which was:

“Expectation 5: Applying and implementing the Act

Annual reports must:

- outline how the seven corporate areas of change set out in the guidance of the Act have begun to adapt their ways of working
- describe how decisions have been affected by applying the Act
- provide examples of what they are doing differently since the implementation of the Act and what is planned next.”

These public bodies had dedicated some time and space within their annual reports to reflect how they were progressing in the seven corporate areas of change and set out their intended next steps.



“We will be looking at strategic priorities and the goals, the five ways of working and seven corporate areas of change in a different way this year. The self-reflection tool has really helped with that – with thinking differently. Last year, the corporate officers asked each service area how they contribute most to one of the seven goals – this year, I have a much better understanding of the Act thanks to the tool. We'd never really looked at the corporate areas of change before.”

Representative of the fire & rescue services (2019)

However, some public bodies do not recognise the significance of these areas of change in helping them implement the Act. All public bodies and Public Services Boards should be concentrating on these corporate areas and providing information on this within their well-being statements, well-being plans, corporate plans and annual reports. Public bodies and Public Services Boards should be evidencing that applying the Act to their corporate areas of change is informing the steps they are taking.

Under my power in the Act to advise the Auditor General, I am currently discussing with him how his examinations, studies and other work concerning economy, efficiency and effectiveness (“value for money”) could in future explore more closely how public bodies are properly applying the Act within these seven corporate areas of change. For example, when assessing whether public bodies have made proper arrangements for securing value for money, the Auditor General could consider how their financial planning arrangements ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations.

The pace of change across the seven corporate areas is variable. I have described how some public bodies are beginning to reform their approach to [corporate planning and performance management](#) and how they are thinking [long-term](#) in setting well-being objectives and steps within this chapter.

However, as I have outlined above, when it comes to [corporate planning, performance management and financial planning](#), many organisations are seeing these functions as a hindrance rather than a help to meeting the aspirations of the Act. My work on [financial planning](#) within Welsh Government and [procurement](#) across all public bodies shows the challenges public bodies face to compromise policy, guidance and legislation with the ethos of the Well-being of Future Generations Act – [See the section providing a ‘Spotlight on Procurement’ in Chapter 2.](#)

I am seeing some positive progress with public bodies using their [assets](#) to deliver their well-being objectives and contribute to the well-being goals, often challenging existing [procurement](#) procedures. Many public bodies are considering how [assets, fleet and workforce](#) can work together to promote well-being.

Some are considering how they can reduce their carbon emissions, increase their usage and use them as ways to improve social connectedness and promote culture:



Turning a market hall into a cultural hub

Wrexham Council supported the creation of “Ty Pawb” – which was a covered market owned by the Council, in need of refurbishment and losing trade. By long-term thinking, collaborative working, and involving local people, they have supported the re-creation of the building as an arts and cultural centre. Through involving local people and businesses, they have created a space which is a street food market, marketplace, gallery, arts and crafts school, and cinema – providing multiple benefits for the town centre and local people.

Carbon Positive Project

As part of their contribution to several objectives, including 'Champion the Welsh environment and sustainable management of natural resources', [Natural Resources Wales](#) have been working on a 'Carbon Positive Project', to become an exemplar in carbon management and share their work with others.

This has involved looking at their entire estate, procurement, fleet and ways of working, to estimate their carbon emissions and begin ways to reduce them. Already, this has resulted in the purchasing of electric vehicles, installing LED lighting, solar PV panels, energy-efficient boilers, developing a Carbon Management Policy for procurement and working with contractors to estimate and reduce emissions. Their work is now being shared across the public sector.

Workspaces for well-being

Similar to the approach I have taken within my own office, [Public Health Wales and Swansea Council](#) have recently furnished and decorated their offices using the Act as a guide. As much as possible, furniture was sourced second-hand, flooring and paint were obtained from off-cuts and social enterprises were used to carry out the restoration and refit.

With [Public Health Wales](#), an office neighbour was moving out, so a significant proportion of their furniture was remanufactured and repurposed to suit their needs. This avoided waste and disposal costs while providing high-quality furniture with no transport costs. 95% of the total furniture items were refurbished or remanufactured, and one-third of the 5% new furniture came from social enterprises. 82% of the flooring was reused or reclaimed.



© Ty Pawb



Investing in children's well-being

In [Carmarthenshire](#), two new primary schools have recently been built to Passivhaus standards, Ysgol Parc y Tywyn and Ysgol Trimsaran, and Carmarthenshire Council will be seeking to deliver more to these standards in future.

The [Passivhaus standards](#) adopted by the companies involved mean a high-quality learning space for pupils, a sustainable environment using less energy and local materials being used. The companies describe the method as: “creating uplifting learning spaces and rooting the schools in their rural Welsh context with locally sourced materials that reference the local vernacular, and landscapes that encourage inside and outside play and learning. Schools have been finished in a pallet of Welsh brick to reflect the area's heritage in brick production, alongside Welsh Larch in both schools in support of the local supply chain and reducing the carbon footprint of the school.”

In the first eight months of occupation, [Ysgol Trimsaran](#) reported a 75% cost saving in energy bills compared to other new build schools.

The schools were delivered for an uplift in capital cost of just 6%, with payback expected to be achieved within the first two years of occupation. As more schools are delivered in this way, costs will go down to be equal to usual builds for other Local Authorities.

Veg on the Ledge in the centre of Cardiff

Staff in [Public Health Wales](#)' office in Capital Quarter, [Cardiff](#) have set up a gardening project. The group aims to:

- Create a green haven for staff, visitors and wildlife on the 6th-floor balcony.
- Improve the mental well-being of staff and visitors by providing a pleasant environment to clear heads and connect with nature.
- Plant flowers and plants to attract local insects and wildlife, including bees and other pollinators

With a focus on sustainability, the group have used donations of pots and equipment from colleagues across the organisation and recycling sites. Early successes have seen courgettes, strawberries and tomatoes grown from seed. Staff have enjoyed picking lavender and mint for herbal teas and having a scattering of fresh herbs on their salads.

There are inconsistencies in how far public bodies are going to achieve what's possible and driving cultural change within their corporate areas of change.

All public bodies and Public Services Boards should be seeking to follow these case studies and examples and introduce changes to how they do things corporately, in line with the Act.



Cultural change requires everyone to play their part

My monitoring of progress has shown me that collaboration and integration, as well as the other ways of working, are often impeded by one public body in a partnership arrangement. Sometimes this is down to organisational culture; sometimes, it is due to one department or one individual. For example:

- The successful initiative between a fire and rescue authority, local authorities, a health board and Welsh Government that aimed to decrease the number of emergency calls and pressure on the health and ambulance service due to falls in the home. Funding couldn't be secured to continue with the initiative because the ambulance and health services would not recognise the **preventative** impact of the work.
- The police service who funded a mobile partnership first aid and help-unit to improve safety during the night-time economy. Despite seeking **collaboration** and funding through the health bodies and other partners, the police funded this service alone until, eventually, the **preventative** benefits of stopping high numbers of people presenting to accident and emergency departments were identified, and health bodies contributed to keeping the initiative going.
- The many examples of public bodies who, in times of austerity, have proposed closing local services, buildings and amenities behind closed doors. These are often introduced without first having open conversations with other private, public and voluntary sector organisations or the members of the community on how they could work differently to collaborate and save services or prevent problems in different ways.

While these are some negative examples, I have come across several positive examples, such as:

- the local authority who have **collaborated** with their health board to place a housing officer within the local hospital, helping with the discharge of patients who would otherwise face housing issues and homelessness. Patients are now discharged from hospital in a timely way to a home suited for them.
- In some cases, it takes tenacity from one public body to continue doing a project that they know is successful, to attract **collaboration** and support from others. The Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) project is aimed at general practices to help early identification of domestic abuse within primary health services and swift referral to intervene early and **prevent** problems from getting worse. The project was introduced by the police and took several years to gain funding from the local health bodies, despite **the success of the programme**. Between 2011 and 2014, local domestic abuse support services only received seven referrals from general practitioners. When the programme was gradually introduced in Cardiff, 265 referrals were received by the end of its second year. By October 2019, there were 806 referrals from Cardiff and Vale practices. Over 60% of cases were also first time disclosures, showing the power of **collaboration** in **preventing** issues worsening.



While cultural change takes time, it is essential we all actively challenge these barriers to progress. Five years on from the Act being in place, it is now incumbent on me, the Auditor General for Wales, Welsh Government and organisations themselves to call out this behaviour and challenge the decisions being made that do not reflect the ways of working required by the Act.

The Act has brought about new ways of working with public bodies and Public Services Boards applying the five ways of working in some areas and creating transformational change

What future generations need

Future generations need a public sector that has braver, broader thinkers, who are collaborating better together, through Public Services Boards, with purposeful leaders open to trying new things. Public bodies will be applying the sustainable development principle and five ways of working to everything they do – placing the interest of future generations alongside meeting the needs of current generations.

The well-being goals cannot be achieved by one organisation alone. In a rapidly changing world with challenges like the nature and climate emergencies, demographic changes, automation, poverty, poor physical and mental health, future generations need public services to act in a collaborative, preventative and integrated way.

We need more people understanding the national mission of the Act and public servants moving between public (and private/voluntary) sector organisations to gain a variety of skills and insight into other fields to ignite better collaboration, integration, involvement and prevention.

Where are we now

Public bodies and Public Services Boards are considering the long-term more than ever before, but the whole system needs to move to thinking and acting for the long-term

The Act has been responsible for more public bodies making decisions based on the long-term future of Wales. The sustainable development principle is at the heart of the Act - public bodies acting in a way that meets the needs of today, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs tomorrow.

Acting for the long-term requires public bodies to work differently and many elements of the public service system (like [financial planning](#) and [performance management](#) frameworks, for example) are yet to catch up.

I can see examples of how public bodies and Public Services Boards are using long-term thinking:



While the level of analysis of future trends in well-being assessments was variable; some examples stood out. [Cardiff Public Services Board](#) looked at 'Cardiff Tomorrow', exploring the possible scenario for every topic based on existing trends and what shift might be needed to take preventative actions now.

[Powys Public Services Board](#) reflected on what the long-term outcomes of issues might be, what questions this might raise and the possible consequences of inaction.

[The Vale of Glamorgan Public Services Board](#) focused on future scenarios in their community areas, providing a persuasive narrative about the likely impacts of trends for different communities. While the quality of the analysis varied, the discipline of thinking specifically about future generations was clearly part of these assessments, and this is to be commended.

The Public Services Boards in the [Gwent region](#) collaborated with Ash Futures Consulting to publish a Horizon Scanning report on likely trends for the next 10-20 years. The model for this work was based on the 'Three Horizons' approach, looking at themes such as population, mobility, natural systems, economy and society. The Public Services Boards in Gwent are now using the information to determine steps to meet their well-being objectives and inform their regional work. I have [produced a toolkit](#), in collaboration with Public Health Wales, for organisations to understand and apply the 'Three Horizons' futures method to their work.

There are also some examples where public bodies have set a [longer-term](#) vision:

Through my challenge to Welsh Government and health boards to extend their planning beyond the three-year cycles of Integrated Medium Term Plans, my team advised [Hywel Dda University Health Board](#) on setting a 20-year strategy for their work: 'A Healthier Mid & West Wales: our future generations living well.'



[Powys Public Services Board](#) have set a vision and well-being plan in the context of what they'd like Powys to look like in 2040. Having used their future trends data and information of the well-being assessment, members of the Board decided to set a longer-term plan for how they'd like the county to serve future generations.

Well-being objectives set by public bodies and Public Services Boards generally tend to be [long-term](#). For example, 'Supporting people to learn, achieve and reach their potential' or 'Maximise opportunities to enable people to live the lives they want to lead'.

Unfortunately, the steps to meet these well-being objectives and the measures of success are often short-term and public bodies need to give further consideration to defining what success looks like for that objective in five, ten, fifteen or twenty years.



Many public bodies and Public Services Boards are thinking about the **long-term**. However, fewer are **long-term** planning, horizon scanning, scenario planning, and using other futures-techniques to explore future trends, considering the connections between them and what this might mean for the future. As such, they are not yet consistently allocating resources on the basis of achieving a long-term outcome or identifying appropriate measures of success.

“We expect to see public bodies thinking about the future and engaging with uncertainty. That means understanding needs, risks and opportunities as they are now, and also as they are likely to play out over the long term. It means being clear about what they want the future to look like and what they can do to get there.”

Auditor General for Wales (2020)

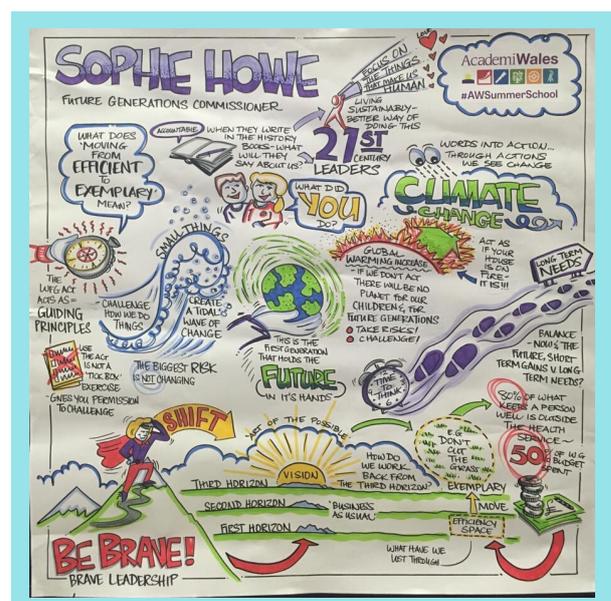
Some public bodies have found thinking or planning for the **long-term** particularly challenging and have misunderstood the definition, describing the likely long-term impact of their project in a narrow sense. For example, “This proposal contributes to a future digital industry” or “This programme will seek to provide long term transformational change to the council.”

The Auditor General for Wales has found that, while many public bodies could describe demand and trends over time, fewer public bodies were finding the connections between social, economic, environmental and cultural trends, beyond those most obvious. Public bodies should be undertaking exercises to think, plan and resource for the **long-term** future with others in **collaboration** – public, private, voluntary sector and members of their community.

I have produced [a resource in collaboration with Public Health Wales](#), based on the International Futures Forum model 'Three Horizons' to help organisations think long-term. Public bodies and Public Services Boards should be seeking to use futures techniques like this toolkit in setting or reviewing their well-being objectives and steps.

Welsh Government have set some targets for particular aspects of well-being. For example, a [carbon-neutral public sector](#) by 2030; at least [a 95% reduction in carbon emissions](#) by 2050; and [one million Welsh speakers](#) by 2050. But the government are yet to [publish milestones](#) regarding the national well-being indicators of the Act, which may help public bodies to act more for the **long-term** and set appropriate annual targets or measurements to get closer towards overall milestones.

Welsh Government should seek to set milestones in **collaboration** with others. Public Services Boards and public bodies should be considering a similar method to define appropriate success measures for achieving well-being objectives and steps in five, ten, fifteen and twenty years.



Public bodies have an increasing understanding of the need to take preventative action but lack understanding and confidence of how

“Public bodies can delve into root causes by working with partners, service users and the public to ask why people are choosing not to take part in an activity or service or why interventions have not been successful.”

Auditor General for Wales (2020)

I am encouraged that many organisations and Public Service Boards have set well-being objectives and steps that are seeking to be **preventative**. For example, 'Promote good health and well-being' or 'Help to give children the best possible start in life', and in many cases, there are positive new projects and programmes which support preventative activity. However, public bodies need to move beyond projects and programmes towards recognising and acting on the connections between all of their functions and the opportunities for prevention.

I can see that there is a good theoretical understanding of **prevention** when it comes to the impact of social determinants on health and well-being – things like housing, poverty, education and environment having a positive or negative effect on your life. However, there seems to be less understanding of the action that needs taking.

Public bodies are struggling to identify where to intervene because they are often looking at problems in isolation. No one organisation has a helicopter view of all of the points of intervention and, therefore, public bodies are missing opportunities because they are not effectively applying the five ways of working.

As I have described above, the five ways of working are mutually reinforcing. Applying a **long-term** lens to what a public body is trying to achieve would lead to applying the other ways of working. Public bodies should be showing their workings.

4 steps to prevention

1. Setting a long-term vision, including analysis of future trends.
2. Collaborating and involving others to work out the problems they need to prevent and whether they fall into primary, secondary or tertiary prevention and using evidence to identify what the best preventative interventions are.
3. Assessing those interventions to identify how they could prevent and maximise contribution to other well-being objectives.
4. Shifting funding in line with these identified best value interventions.

The Auditor General for Wales identified that most public bodies had not identified a way of measuring the impact of **prevention**. While challenging, doing so would help build the evidence base for preventative work, inform decisions about shifting spending to activities that support primary and secondary interventions.

I advised Welsh Government officials to define four categories of prevention (primary, secondary, tertiary and acute) to enable their spending decisions to be appropriately challenged ([see section on Welsh Government in Chapter 2](#)). All public bodies should be using these definitions of preventative intervention.

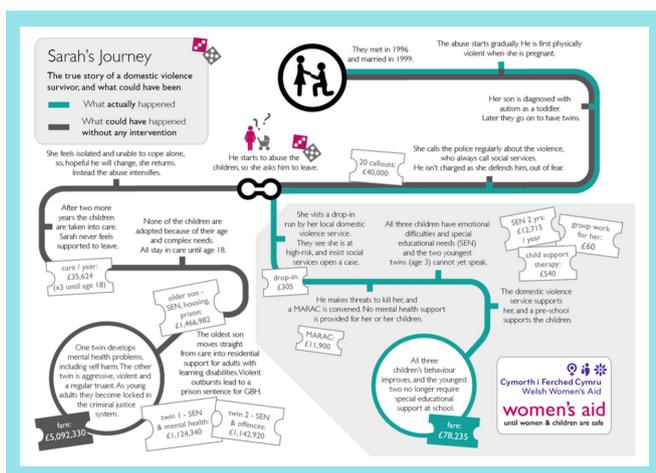
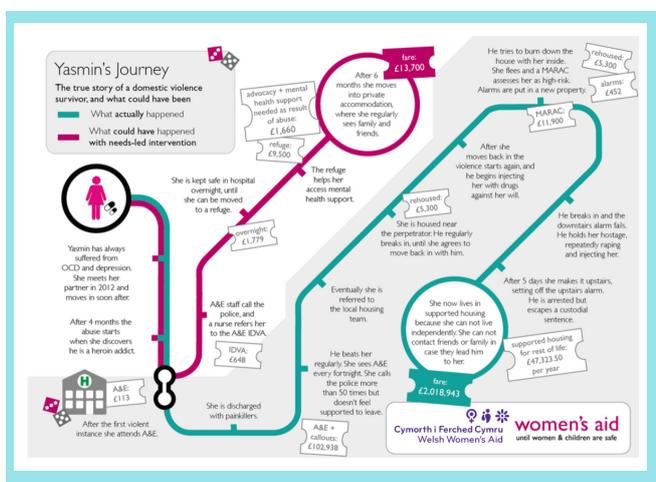
“We found that public bodies were missing opportunities to identify preventative benefits and to make the connections between their work and the outcomes that other bodies were seeking to achieve. There were opportunities to integrate different agendas and work with a broader range of partners to deliver wider preventative benefits.”

Auditor General for Wales (2020)



While some public bodies lack confidence and knowledge on how to intervene, in others, despite knowing what **preventative** action is needed, they put the issue into the 'too difficult to do' box. This is an example of what Margaret Heffernan describes as '**willful blindness**' - a legal term used to describe an ignorance adopted by people to avoid challenging the status quo or challenging authority, often due to fear of repercussions or fear of inaction. Heffernan draws on numerous large-scale examples such as the financial crisis of 2008, where mortgages were sold to people who could not afford them, or the Rotherham child exploitation scandal, where young people suffered organised sexual abuse and the authorities failed to act.

To a certain extent, 'willful blindness' exists in every institution and organisation, but good leaders will recognise and address this using the five ways of working.

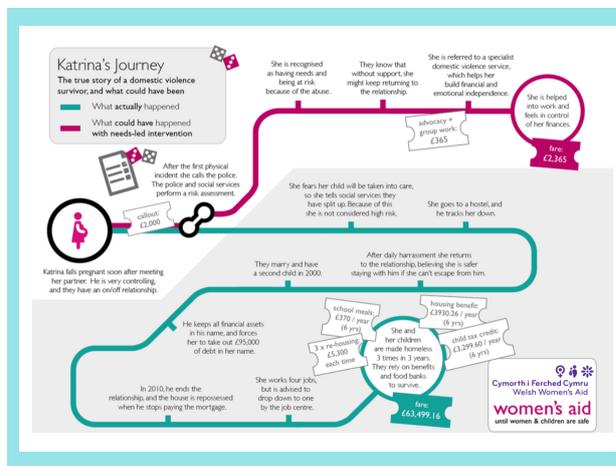


Understanding the point of prevention

Newcastle City Council found that their school-based approach to dealing with young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) was focused on the wrong things.

Whereas the Council had been seeking to identify young people at risk of being NEET by looking at GCSE attainment, the study found that the biggest indicator was multiple contacts with social services. The research showed that those who had had as little as six interactions with social services spent almost three times longer out of education or training.

Welsh Women's Aid have created infographics, showing the journey that people go through when experiencing domestic abuse, based on the stories of women they have worked with recently. The stories illustrate the enormous cost, in human and financial terms, of not involving people, listening to them or responding to their needs. These women's stories show the power of intervening and how public services should be using the five ways of working, particularly collaboration and involvement, to know when to prevent issues from getting worse effectively.



© Welsh Womens Aid



Many public bodies are beginning to use funding to explore preventative action, but there are fewer examples of public bodies redirecting core resources from day-to-day reactive services to prevention

Through their examinations, Audit Wales have found many examples of public bodies investing in prevention. However, often this was through accessing grant funding, drawing funding streams together and adapting roles and responsibilities to help deliver preventative benefits. This is absolutely the kind of innovation I welcome in changing culture and using the five ways of working.

However, the Auditor General for Wales found fewer examples of public bodies significantly shifting their core resources or making a stronger move towards preventative models of delivery:

“Rising demand pressures, funding constraints and performance monitoring are some of the reasons public bodies find this extremely difficult. However, they need to consider how best to sustain or mainstream activities that are likely to deliver better value and results over the long term.”

Auditor General for Wales (2020)

Public bodies should be allocating resources to preventative action that is likely to contribute to better outcomes and use of resources, even where this may limit the ability to meet some short-term needs. I appreciate public bodies are working in challenging times, with current demands taking away attention and resource from prevention and longer-term thinking.

However, the Auditor General for Wales and I have been clear in our advice that public bodies should factor this into

decision-making and accountability arrangements, accepting short-term reductions in performance and risks in pursuit of better long-term, integrated outcomes.

Welsh Government could greatly assist public bodies by following my advice and more widely directing funds at preventative measures and integrating their currently siloed financial planning structures. All public bodies should adopt the definition of prevention I have agreed with Welsh Government (see the section on Welsh Government in Chapter 2), particularly in financial planning and risk management to inform spending decisions.

The Act is facilitating more integrated thinking, with many Public Services Boards working together effectively to tackle issues and public bodies working beyond traditional boundaries, making links with other objectives and organisations. This integration is leading to better collaboration and a focus on prevention

The five ways of working are intrinsically linked. I agree with the Auditor General for Wales that:

“Integration is a precursor to effective collaboration and can facilitate a system-wide response, which enables public bodies to work preventatively.”

Auditor General for Wales (2020)

Fire and rescue authorities, in particular, have shared case studies demonstrating the application of the Act and how this sector is going beyond their 'traditional duties' to prevent problems from occurring. For example, finding ways of preventing injury in the home and introducing education programmes to prevent arson, fire, general anti-social behaviour and injury.



Growing the diversity of volunteers through collaboration

Amgueddfa Cymru are showing the impact of collaboration through their objective 'People in Wales have opportunities to develop skills through cultural learning'. They have embarked on a project to increase the number and diversity of their volunteers. In 2011, approximately 80 people volunteered for the national museum, and most were of a white, middle-aged, retired, well-educated and female demographic. By actively collaborating with other organisations including the Wallich, Diverse Cymru, the Wales Council for Voluntary Action, Volunteer Cardiff Services, Quest Support, New-Link Wales and others over the past seven years, they have diversified and broadened the volunteer base and substantially increased the numbers volunteering to approximately 700 people.

Collaborating to find different solutions

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service have worked in collaboration towards their objective "To support people to prevent accidental dwelling fires and stay safe if they do occur" by developing a "Safe and Well Check". These checks include advice on gas and electrical safety and hazards that could cause falls to make every contact count with members of the public. Collaborating with Betsi Cadwaldr Health Board, North Wales Police, local authorities, voluntary sector and housing associations like Cartefi Conwy, the fire service have sought to contribute to A Healthier Wales, A Wales of Cohesive Communities and A More Equal Wales, through this dedicated work.

In some cases, integrated thinking and collaborative working are triggered by dealing with an emergency situation. As I write, there are hundreds of examples across Wales where public services are doing everything the Act envisages in terms of collaboration and integration to respond to the crisis of the COVID-19 outbreak.

We can also see this as a pattern more generally; where the most fruitful, collaborative relationships form in response to a crisis. For example:

Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Public Services Boards

Both local authority areas were consistently in the top five areas across the UK for drug-related deaths, and it was clear that urgent action was required to challenge the criminal gangs who were targeting the area to meet a higher incidence of demand for drugs.

The establishment of a Critical Incident Group was agreed, under the auspices of a regional Public Services Board - jointly chaired by the Deputy Leader of Swansea and the Chief Executive of Neath Port Talbot Council. The group agreed urgent actions to target preventative measures across the range of functions for which partners were responsible. These actions include health and public health issues (with a particular emphasis on vulnerable groups, for example, sex workers); substance misuse services; housing ('cuckooing'); increasing demand on social services - including safeguarding matters— as well as the role of the police in tackling criminality. The central rationale was that a partnership approach was essential, as the Police could not "arrest our way out" of the problem in isolation. It was recognised that Public Services Board partners, including housing and Neath Port Talbot College,



also played a part in addressing the issue through managing housing allocations and through direct work with young people.

The Public Services Boards tell me that this work has now prompted further discussion amongst them about how they can link this issue to broader work on tackling Adverse Childhood Experiences. The boards recognise that the people they are dealing with in terms of 'county lines' and drug-related deaths are likely to be the same children who experienced adversities in childhood. This awareness is helping them to consider how they can shift their collaborative and integrated activity to ensuring that they act now to avoid another generation becoming the 'county lines' of the future.

While public bodies are discussing prevention far more, they are sometimes missing opportunities to achieve wider preventative benefits through integrating their objectives and collaborating with others

While the Act is driving increased integration, not all public bodies are making the right connections. We are seeing more *integrated* thinking across public bodies but there is still work to be done. The Act is ambitious in its requirements that public bodies make connections across well-being goals, the organisation's well-being objectives and those of other public bodies.

There are encouraging examples of where public bodies and Public Services Boards have started to show this. For example, in setting well-being objectives and steps on housing, they have linked this to steps to improve the local economy, meet carbon emission targets and use local materials.

For example, [Merthyr Tydfil Council](#) set out that they will 'Increase opportunities for sustainable and renewable housing, and renewable energy developments.' [Powys Council](#) have a step on their project: 'Home-Grown Homes', to 'encourage the use of local, sustainable timber for new council and housing association projects.'

However, many public bodies have missed connecting their objectives with the objectives of other organisations in their local area, such as housing and health – failing to recognise the preventative benefits of good quality housing. Poor housing in Wales is estimated to cost the NHS £95 million per year because of the increased likelihood of respiratory diseases in cold, damp homes; increased risk of injury in unsuitable homes; and poor mental health due to stress and financial issues. However, public bodies are failing to make these connections in preventing poor well-being. It has not helped that individual public bodies were required to set their well-being objectives before the Public Services Boards. It would have made more sense in this context to set collective objectives first and for these to be considered in the objectives and steps set out in each public body.

“We also highlighted examples of public bodies missing opportunities to identify preventative benefits and to make the connections between their work and the outcomes that other bodies were seeking to achieve.”

Auditor General for Wales (2020)



Some public bodies are not making positive connections even within their own organisation, showing a lack of integration. For example, the new [Planning Policy Wales 10](#) recognises the impact of land use planning on well-being. But, in their reporting, Welsh Government have not fully recognised the far-reaching impact of their new policy in helping them meet their well-being objectives and steps. Placemaking and planning are crucial to meeting many of the well-being goals and having links to other objectives (such as 'Deliver modern and connected infrastructure' and 'Build healthier communities and better environments'). Despite this, Welsh Government's most recent [Annual Report \(2019\)](#) doesn't recognise the major reform of planning policy through [Planning Policy Wales 10](#).

Public bodies and Public Services Boards should be setting and reviewing their well-being objectives and steps in collaboration with a range of people. They should apply the 'double-test' of the Act to the solutions they consider, to improve the economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being.

Several public bodies have introduced tools and templates to help people consider how their proposal is integrated and contributing to each of the seven national well-being goals. However, paper-based exercises are not enough to show how public bodies are working differently

Encouraging people to think more holistically than their own area of work is part of changing culture and helping people to achieve multiple benefits across all dimensions of well-being.

“Public bodies were often able to describe some of the connections between their work and the national goals or...how they might improve social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being.”

Auditor General for Wales (2020)

Many public bodies have introduced online impact assessments and templates for proposals and papers, which aim to force you to think about a proposal from different angles – using the five ways of working and goals as a guide. For instance, [Denbighshire County Council](#) have developed an online impact assessment tool, and Welsh Government have been working on an integrated impact assessment and an accompanying training course.

As a result, many public bodies believe they are showing their work is integrated and how their actions are linked to the national well-being goals.

For example, in monitoring progress, I have seen that many annual reports, corporate plans and supplementary documents show diagrammatically how objectives or proposals link to each of the well-being goals – in tables or as graphics of the goals. The Auditor General for Wales and I have also seen many examples of alignment between the well-being statements of individual public bodies and the collective well-being plans of Public Service Boards in a diagram or list format.

This is welcome and shows *integration* at a basic level, but paper-based exercises are not enough to show how public bodies are working differently. This does not 'show your workings' adequately, because there is often no explanation or narrative attached to the diagrams.

“Retrofitting or cosmetic alignment of objectives and actions is both a missed opportunity and a waste of time.”

Auditor General for Wales (2020)



There are some national well-being goals that are less understood and clarity is lacking on how public bodies are meeting them

In fact, some examples of this demonstrate how filling in forms, and following guidelines alone can result in ‘ticking the box and missing the point’, with people filling in the impact assessment or template demonstrating a complete misunderstanding of the definition of the well-being goals and ways of working. A selection of examples I have seen include:

- interpreting ‘A Prosperous Wales’ as a purely economic goal (when it is a legal definition containing low carbon, innovative, productive – as well as skills and fair work);
- interpreting ‘A Resilient Wales’ as a goal focused on personal resilience against adversity (when it is a goal about resilient ecosystems), and
- integrated’ as meaning integration of services, rather than a collective contribution to the national well-being goals and integration of well-being objectives.

More broadly, correctly applying **integration** means understanding the full legal definition of the seven national goals and exploring the contribution a public body can make towards each of them – alone and in collaboration with others. There are some well-being goals that are less understood (see, for example, sections on ‘A Prosperous Wales, ‘A Resilient Wales’ and ‘A Globally Responsible Wales’ in Chapter 3) meaning opportunities to improve economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being simultaneously are being overlooked.

However, many public bodies are effectively using the framework of the Act to take actions that would not have been considered before. These positive examples and case studies feature throughout this report.

Public bodies should move beyond paper-based exercises, ensure staff are trained, supported and constructively challenged on the application of the Act. Public bodies should consider how they help each other to have conversations about the wider connections between work – something that can only be achieved by applying the other four ways of working.

Public Services Boards are showing the power of collaboration, and many public bodies are going beyond their traditional functions to work with others.

Collaboration now needs to move beyond involving the most obvious partners and from ‘information-sharing’ towards pooling resources

“Integration is still sometimes misinterpreted. Public bodies will need to recognise the value it can add and seek opportunities to deliver a wider range of benefits.”

Auditor General for Wales (2020)

The Act places ‘**collaboration**’ in law for 44 public bodies and has introduced Public Services Boards as a collaborative mechanism to improve well-being. Never before have such a broad range of organisations and functions been brought together to work on such a broad remit. This collaboration is necessary to create a public service for future generations that works together to improve well-being.

“collaboration from all relevant agencies is necessary with seamless transition to other relevant agencies.”

‘People’s Platform’ response (2019)

Understandably, this new way of working takes time. Public Services Boards have spent the early years of the Act focusing on getting well-being plans in place, and building relationships with each other and I am now seeing evidence of this trust and understanding beginning to pay off.



Through [collaboration](#), the member organisations of the Public Services Boards are integrating their efforts more than they were previously. For example, [Cardiff Public Services Board](#)'s approach to improving air quality:

Collaborating to create integration in Cardiff

By seeking to understand the wider social, economic, environmental and cultural impact they could have, Cardiff Council collaborated with the wider partners of Cardiff Public Services Board, residents and businesses to develop a clean air and transportation strategy for the city, recognising that this is an important lever to meet a number of their well-being objectives and the national well-being goals.

This work has been given a 'public health' lens through the secondment of a Public Health consultant to the council. This has prompted a significant refocus on how they can address problems with congestion and poor air quality in a way which drives further progress on meeting their objectives.

This work has led to a focus on making active travel the norm through schemes like 'nextbike', proposals, to introducing the 'congestion charge' to the city, and creating buildings like Ysgol Hamadryad in the Butetown area as a school inaccessible to vehicles; encouraging more people to walk or cycle. They have considered the socio-economic links to this work by prioritising the most deprived areas with the lowest life expectancy for investment in cycle lanes and active travel infrastructure.

They are also considering how to design this infrastructure can in a way which facilitates sustainable drainage, allowing the processing of surface water in a way that is clean and sustainable, while also improving the area with trees and planting.

Secondly, all Public Services Boards partners have considered use of two of the corporate areas of change - the planning and infrastructure of their own assets, such as schools, roads and community buildings and through the '[Cardiff Healthy Travel Charter](#)', (which has 14 public sector signatories – including my office). The Charter is considering how their own workforce and visitors can be encouraged and supported to use healthy and less polluting modes of transport.



© Cardiff Council

Public bodies are at varying stages of [collaboration](#) – from talking to one another, to sharing information, to working together on an informal basis when it makes sense, to equally working together at every stage of a project, to organisations being interdependent on each other.

While some [collaboration](#) remains in the 'talking to one another' or 'sharing information' categories, the Act has been driving deeper collaboration amongst some public bodies. Some organisations have started with their corporate areas of change – like co-locating staff.



Collaborating and co-locating

Caerphilly Public Services Board have co-located staff from different organisations to work towards “Safer Communities” - one of their agreed action areas. Other members of staff join them for fortnightly meetings, which aim to identify, problem-solve and respond to different demands in the county.

The board say this is a “people and places’ approach that focuses on repeat victims, prolific offenders, and repeat callers, in addition to crime and anti-social behaviour hotspot areas.”

Four emergency services in South Wales (South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, South Wales Police, Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust and HM Coastguard) have co-located in Llantwit Major. They say the new way of working – with 999 services co-located on one site – is already strengthening relationships between emergency service partners, creating more effective ways of working and supporting the sharing of information, which will benefit the public.

In other cases, I am seeing public bodies go further again – sharing assets and estates, delivering services together.

Delivering differently

The [Valleys Taskforce](#) is helping facilitate a joined-up approach using community hubs to develop a new generation of health and care centres; expanding them further to develop new models of community learning, childcare provision, parenting support, family learning and community access to facilities built around the school day.

Cylch Caron Integrated Resource Centre is a strategic health, housing and social services project in rural Ceredigion. The development includes a new Health Centre with GP practice, pharmacy, outpatient clinics, community nursing and social care.

It will also provide 34 extra care flats with communal facilities and services, and six step-up/step-down units for intermediate care and rehabilitation. The scheme is funded with capital grants from Welsh Government, Ceredigion County Council, Hywel Dda University.

In some cases, public bodies have identified the need to expand their networks to understand a problem better or work in a more preventative way. Collaboration is closely linked to involvement, and there is an opportunity for more Public Services Boards and public bodies to be collaborating with less obvious partners - the more 'unusual suspects'.

For instance, most of the 19 Public Services Boards include leaders from the local authority, health board, Natural Resources Wales and fire and rescue service for the area; along with other invited members like the Police, Police and Crime Commissioner, Public Health Wales, the National Probation Service, voluntary sector organisations, local businesses, higher and further education and others.



However, there are inconsistencies regarding engagement of the boards with, for example, national public bodies, town and community councils, the private sector, further and higher education and housing. While the situation has improved, the Auditor General for Wales [found in 2018](#) that only 11% of Town and Community Councils indicated that they had a good working relationship with their Public Services Boards and almost a third of town and community council respondents indicated they did not understand the role of Public Services Boards.

Town and community councils, national public bodies (such as Sport Wales and the Arts Council of Wales) and private sector organisations have a significant amount they could bring to the work of public bodies and Public Services Boards. While ensuring a representative of town and community councils is invited to join the board is relatively straightforward and should be actioned by all boards, Public Services Boards and public bodies should seek ways of collaborating more effectively and integrating their work with others to meet their well-being objectives. For example:

[Snowdonia National Park Authority](#), are seeking to build on their cultural offer and increase the number of Welsh speakers and learners in the area. They work with a broad range of voluntary, private and public organisations to celebrate, strengthen and support language and culture.

Through schemes like “[Bwrlwm Eryri](#)”, they have enabled people receiving mental health treatment, the elderly, people receiving treatment for substance misuse and other groups, to participate in arts activities in the outdoors and at heritage sites, including visual arts, poetry and music.

Collaborating with a broader range of partners can enhance the ability of public bodies and Public Services Boards to think more holistically and identify more innovative, [integrated](#), [preventative](#) and cross-sectoral solutions. [Collaboration](#) is also positive in helping public bodies understand each other’s sectors and perspectives.

Having a broader range of skills will be vital for our public servant [workforce](#) of the future and will help us to reimagine public services for future generations. Spending time in different organisations and sectors can give people broader knowledge, experience and build networks that enable better collaboration. For example, these programmes aimed at creating leaders for the future:

In [Pembrokeshire](#), the Public Services Board have identified the high numbers of young people leaving the area and the ageing population trends over time. As a starting point, all Public Services Board partners agreed to collaborate in hosting work placements. They’ve launched a booklet 'An employer guide to work experience in Pembrokeshire: all ages' and are adding representatives from the Youth Forum to the collaborative group to ensure the programme is tailored to what young people want and need.

[Academi Wales \(Welsh Government\)](#) have established a graduate scheme that offers people a series of work placements in a range of public sector organisations. The programme brings together different sectors to offer a combination of academic qualification and short-term projects, providing leadership development in different contexts.



I appreciate some organisations face barriers to [collaboration](#). Small organisations, such as the national public bodies covered by the Act and the voluntary sector, raise with me and the Auditor General for Wales how they find it difficult to engage with complex governance structures, struggling to find the resources to support partnerships and collaborative working. Still, the culture and the way we work as a public sector must change to meet the aspirations of the Act. We cannot afford to be protectionist about our work; we need to be collaborating far more to solve complex problems facing future generations and delivering on the concept of ‘One Welsh Public Service’.

An obvious way to address this would be for there to be a greater focus on sharing staff through joint appointments, a greater use of secondments and placements, as well as putting a requirement in place for anyone aspiring to enter a leadership position in Welsh public services to have experience of other sectors and different types of public services.

STEP Programme

The Permanent Secretary has introduced ‘Short Term Experience Placements’ (STEP) within Welsh Government to provide opportunities for staff to shadow people and work within different departments in government or in several other public, private and voluntary organisations. The idea is to open government to different working experiences, approaches and ideas, plus build their networks and contacts. My own office has worked with a colleague from government taking part in STEP, who has helped my team develop a guide to sustainable conferences and meetings, which will be jointly published by Welsh Government and my team.

The Act has provided public bodies and Public Services Boards with a renewed focus on meaningful involvement. Some are finding new ways of involving people on an ongoing basis, but most are still only involving at a particular point in time

When I became Future Generations Commissioner for Wales in 2016, the default way of involving people was through a traditional paper or electronic consultation survey. Often, this was too late to influence the decision of the public body anyway.

Involvement, as defined in the Act, requires organisations to be open to influence from citizens and stakeholders, moving to a culture of ‘working with’ rather than ‘doing to’. In contrast to consultation, involvement approaches work with people at earlier stages, such as helping to identify issues and potential solutions and being supported to remain involved right throughout design, implementation and evaluation processes.

While this is not completely embedded across public bodies and Public Services Boards yet, I am seeing different methods to get people involved in the work of public bodies and Public Services Boards, beyond consultation surveys.

For example, Public Services Boards found new ways of involving people through their well-being assessments, featured in my report on assessments published in July 2017:



It is particularly encouraging to see how Public Services Boards are increasingly involving children and young people in their work, providing a voice to future generations. For example:

How Public Services Boards involve children and young people

- The [Blaenau Gwent We Want](#) is a continuous conversation between the members of the board and the people of Blaenau Gwent. As part of their well-being objective to look after and protect their natural environment, the Public Services Board held a Children's Grand Council where pupils imagined 2050 and wrote what was being done about climate change and gave their call to action.
- [Wrexham Senedd yr Ifanc](#) have been working with the Children's Commissioner for Wales and their Public Services Board to identify what is important for local children and young people. 1,350 young people took part in a consultation designed by the Senedd yr Ifanc on what life skills were important to them. This is helping the board shape their projects and helping Welsh Government with the new Curriculum for Wales.
- [Pembrokeshire Public Services Board](#) invited their youth forum into Public Services Board meetings to provide views on their well-being objectives and proposed steps they were taking to meet them. Being given a young person's perspective has resulted in the board partners introducing work placement opportunities across their organisations for young people and those at risk of unemployment.

Public bodies have experimented with innovative methods of involving people through cultural well-being, using cultural professionals or tools as catalysts for change – contributing to several well-being goals. For example:

Minecraft and town planning

[Brecon Beacons National Park Authority](#) have [piloted a project](#) to produce a virtual model of the town, Hay on Wye, in Microsoft's online game Minecraft. This has the aim of involving the local community in producing a plan through gaming for the development of the town.

'It's art, but it's not' project

A [partnership project](#) between Trivallis Housing Association, Valleys Kids and Artes Mundi, has been working with [Rhondda Cynon Taf Council](#) and the community of Trebanog since 2016. Using a school as a hub, people have come to learn how to throw pots, make models and dens, play games, share food, build a pizza oven, bake bread and pizza, learn to rap, spend time together and deliver bread to the wider community. An important part of the activities has been working with visiting artists to think about the community of Trebanog and how it can come together to make decisions.



Ideas, People, Places

The Arts Council for Wales has introduced a four year project to try out new models of regeneration, placemaking and collaboration through the arts. Seven consortia were empowered to work with their communities to re-imagine their environment creatively. In doing so, they commissioned projects in their own area – learning a lot along the way about people, places and structures.

Positively, some public bodies are going even further, finding ways of directly involving people in delivering services. For example:

Ffrind I Mi

Aneurin Bevan Health Board have established the 'Ffrind I Mi' (Friend to Me) project, an intergenerational and volunteering project, aimed at helping anyone who feels lonely to reconnect with their community, matching people based on their interests and helping volunteers connect with local opportunities to meet other people and improve their area.

Young Ambassadors

The Sport Wales "Young Ambassadors" programme, run in collaboration with Youth Sport Trust, Local Authorities and the National Lottery, is a leadership programme for young people to help develop a healthier nation. The Ambassadors aim to increase local opportunities for other children and young people to take part in sport and physical activity, feed views into national strategy and public body delivery, plus develop the skills and aspirations of the Ambassadors themselves. 95% of those who gave their feedback on the programme said it had helped them become a positive role model.



© Ffrind I Mi

These examples show how the Act is bringing about change. Public bodies and Public Services Boards could be being clearer how the **involvement** they are doing differs to what they have done before, how it has shaped their well-being objectives and steps, and how people are involved continuously in their work.

Despite these good examples, other public bodies and Public Services Boards are still struggling to involve people at an early point in time, involve them on an ongoing basis and involve a broad range of people representative of their population.

"Public bodies are often not creating opportunities for citizens to be involved in the early stages of design through to evaluation and they need to do more to involve the full diversity of the population."

Auditor General for Wales (2020)



© YACymru



This means people are often being asked their view on a narrow topic, with public bodies then missing the point about what matters to people. This links to my recommendations to government that they should be placing well-being and kindness at the centre of public policy and, as such, asking the public how every proposal impacts on each of the well-being goals – rather than producing ‘question and answer’ consultation papers. (See my advice to Welsh Government in Chapter 2).

At worse, people are being involved too late in the process. Members of the public have raised concerns about how involved they feel in things that affect them - it is identified as a consistent theme in letters I receive. In my focus on local development planning, I see that people feel they have been involved after decisions are made. People have also raised concerns about the consultation process of some public bodies, which they felt is not always carried out adequately or, in some cases, seen as tokenistic.

“In fact, when we spoke to consultants about alternatives the reply was that they had just been asked to consult on a new road from M4 to A48 and we received no response to alternatives put forward... The views of the community and correct procedure have been completely ignored during the consultation [...] The manner in which inhabitants found out that their houses, homes and businesses would be ‘casualties’ was nothing less than disgraceful and caused a great deal of stress in the village.”

A member of the public, from correspondence (May 2018)

Unfortunately, *involving* people from the start is still not seen as ‘business as usual’ by several public bodies, which impacts on how adequately they can apply the other ways of working and meet their well-being objectives.

For example, the Auditor General for Wales recently examined progress on the [Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) and found that public bodies could have a clearer view of services in their area and demand for services if they involved victims, survivors and a wider range of people in reviewing and developing services. Less than half of the public bodies the Auditor General surveyed had involved victims and survivors of abuse when producing their local delivery strategy. One of the main findings of the report is that “victims and survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence are often let down by an inconsistent, complex and fragmented system”, which could be alleviated by involving them in finding easier ways to access and navigate services.

Public bodies and Public Services Boards need to move towards setting their work programmes by listening to a broader range of people, *involving* them throughout the decision-making process from defining a problem to delivery and evaluation, being open to real change as a result – like the system in Scotland:



Scottish Community Empowerment Act

The Scottish Community Empowerment Act (2015) is often described as leading legislation, as it gives a right to members of the public to make participation requests to their public bodies. It places a related requirement on public bodies to promote and facilitate the participation of members of the public in decisions and activities of the authority, including in the allocation of its resources.

Participation requests can come from any community group, who feel they have an idea or opportunity that they want to explore, they want to be involved or contribute, they have knowledge, skills or experience that can help in the decision-making process. Public bodies must acknowledge and assess the request, inform other relevant bodies of the request, then work with the requestor to build a plan of how they can be involved.

Services should be designed through co-commissioning, involving potential users of the service and professionals together. 'Weighted decision-making' can allow the public to have a fair proportion of the final decision; for example:

Young Commissioners

In *Cwm Taf*, officers developing a new substance misuse strategy and tendering for new providers of services to help involved young people throughout the process. The professionals gave a weighting of the final decision to the young people to represent their views in the result.



Furthermore, public bodies should be using participatory budgeting techniques and allocating a percentage of budget spend towards this, thereby helping to improve the [procurement](#) of services for wider well-being – one of the corporate areas of change identified in the Act.

Dundee Decides

A top-sliced £1.2 million was given directly into the hands of the public [in Dundee](#) to decide how it should be spent in their area. Each of the eight wards were given up to £150,000 to spend on improvements to their natural and built environments.

After initial ideas were thrown in, people voted on their favourite ideas to create action, which includes things like new play equipment, tree planting, improving cycle paths, and installing nature trails.

“Madame Mayor, I have an idea.”

Paris has been running a [large-scale participatory budgeting project](#), with at least 5% of the city's budget allocated to the public providing ideas for change. The mayor encouraging the scheme says: “I trust the Parisians: this city they know better than anyone, I want them to help us to shape it, to grow it.”

In order to improve involvement, public bodies will need to adapt their culture to ensure their workforce has the necessary skills, structures, time and resources to involve the public effectively and ‘walk in their shoes’. This links to my recommendation that Welsh Government and public services place kindness at the heart of public policy.



A Family Friendly Cardiff?

In 2006, as a young Councillor in Cardiff, with two young children and a third on the way, I was asked to lead a [Task and Finish Group on how family-friendly our capital city really is](#). To make sure our group understood the good and bad parts of parenting in the city, I decided to help us see things from a different perspective.

As well as attending parent and toddler groups and commissioning research with over 400 parents of children under the age of eight, I supplied each member of the Task and Finish Group with an electronic baby – who cried loudly and needed feeding, changing or burping at regular intervals. The group were tasked with taking a trip on public transport to the city centre and using retail and leisure facilities with their ‘new family member’.

The issues encountered from walking in the shoes of parents living and visiting the capital included: access issues for pushchairs on buses, trains and in many shopping areas, the need to address community safety issues in the city centre and the need for improved baby changing, feeding and toilet facilities.

As a result of that Task and Finish Group many years ago, the St David’s 2 shopping centre was planned and built with far more family-friendly facilities (such as baby changing, play areas and widened access) than were previously scoped. Furthermore, the Breastfeeding Premise scheme was taken up by far more retail facilities.

[Involvement](#) is a clear element of the sustainable development principle, and public bodies should find new methods to reach people.

Welsh Government should help by undertaking a review of the statutory guidance of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, to build in a specific mechanism for the public to be involved in the work of public bodies – using learning from the [Scottish Community Empowerment Act](#).

The governance, decision-making processes and scrutiny of public bodies and Public Services Boards could be more diverse and involve a wider range of people

Linked to how public bodies are involving people in their work, there is a need for a broader range of people in decision-making positions in Wales. Stronger, more diverse scrutiny of public bodies on their implementation of the Act would provide faster progress towards the well-being goals.

Linked to the sections in this report on 'A More Equal Wales' and 'Skills for the Future', it is clear that a challenge remains in how a more diverse range of people are involved in political and civic participation in Wales. Analysis by the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) suggests that in the May 2017 local elections in Wales:

- 34% of candidates were women;
- 98% of candidates were white;
- 94% of candidates were heterosexual;
- 15% of candidates were disabled;
- 21% of candidates had an illness or disability that affected their everyday lives;
- 47% of county and 55% of community councillors elected in the 2017 local elections were aged 60 years or older.



The proportion of female Assembly Members remained the same at 41.7% (25 female Assembly Members) between 2011 and 2016 elections.

[Welsh Government reported](#) that, encouragingly, the number of women filling public appointments in Wales has increased; currently 63.5% of public appointments or reappointments in 2018-19 are women.

However, there are low proportions of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people (3.0%) and people declaring disability (5.1%) appointed to boards in Wales (2018/19 proportions).

It is important we understand what young people and future generations want in terms of participation in decision-making. The Welsh Youth Parliament has provided an important platform for young people to scrutinise policy and debate Wales' future. Other public bodies have youth forums and similar across Wales, but these vary in role and status.

The attitudes and beliefs of children, young people and generations are often very different to the prevalent voice of power. As shown by the international 'school strikes' for climate action, the newest generation to come of age, 'Generation Z', is keen to make change happen.

“One thing we heard again and again was Gen Z felt the other generations over-thought a lot of things and took too long. So, they are going to say, ‘Let’s just try it, let’s get out there, let’s do it and maybe cut out a lot of the deep, long processes.’”

David Stilman (Author and World Economic Forum contributor, 2018)

Yet, in 2017-18, [61% of new public appointments and re-appointments](#) made by the Welsh Government were to people over the age of 55.

As I have advised in my section on [“A More Equal Wales” in Chapter 3](#), we need a concerted national effort to ensure decision-makers are more diverse, taking account of all protected characteristics and representative of a wider set of views and experiences. I have also made a recommendation to Welsh Government, public bodies and Public Services Boards within [my section on “Skills for the Future” in Chapter 5](#), that they should be setting proactive measures for improving diversity through well-being objectives and steps. These measures should include setting challenging targets for recruitment; ensuring people of different ethnic minorities are visible and represented in their organisation.

Creating a programme with the civil service and within public body workforce planning to encourage diversity and inclusivity would be one way of increasing the voices we hear. In particular, this should have a focus on recruiting and placing staff with lived experiences of particular issues. For example, care leavers being given opportunities to work in teams developing policy for children in care, people from rural communities encouraged to working on farming and land use policy and artists working on cultural policy. The backgrounds and personal experiences of the workforce should be given increased prominence in policy-making and service delivery roles.

“We need to find better ways to engage with citizens a lot more. This means, active participants. This could be on things like citizen juries and panels.”

Participant of Disability Wales Conference (Nov 2019)



Scrutiny of the work of public bodies can take many forms and should involve a wide range of people. In respect of the Act, public bodies should be held accountable on how far they used the five ways of working in their actions. For example, decision-makers should be held to account in Senior Management Team meetings, board meetings and scrutiny meetings (or equivalents) on the amount and quality of public involvement undertaken in relation to the work being discussed.

Public bodies and Public Services Boards should be using my [Future Generations Framework for Scrutiny](#), produced in collaboration with several public bodies, board members and councillors. The framework contains a series of prompts to help anyone keen to ask questions about how a decision has been made – a member of the public, the media, a manager, elected officials and board members.

involving people in decision-making

Organisations like Social Care Wales have established their Board to include a mix of professionals in social care, service users and carers, so that they provide a balanced perspective on proposals, actions taken and decision-making for the organisation.

The scrutiny mechanisms and decision-making processes of public bodies and Public Services Boards should be embodying the aspirations of the Act, becoming as diverse and inclusive as possible. As a first step, public bodies should invite children and young people on to every public board.

Public bodies could be doing more to involve their workforce in contributing to meeting their well-being objectives and the national well-being goals, placing well-being and kindness at the centre of public policy

Public services in Wales are around 400,000 people strong - a significant resource. Public bodies could be using their workforce far more to build a movement of change by placing kindness at the centre of public policy. They should be recognising the role of their workforce as community members, as well as employees, repurposing their workforce, so staff are more creative, flexible and adaptive to change and using their knowledge and skills in contributing to the well-being goals.

The recent COVID-19 crisis showed the power of people when others need help. From low-level street support groups to public services repurposing where possible, we have seen the ways public services have collaborated with businesses and academics to speed up the production of essential equipment. We have also seen a significant shift for many to digital, remote working, along with public services collaborating to ensure the NHS staff are supported with free travel, food deliveries and discounts. Although in difficult circumstances, the crisis showed that public servants act in a way that is compassionate and common sense.

Volunteering is a powerful tool to support communities and to develop the public service workforce. If leaders of public services proactively offered their staff as volunteers within communities, the benefits could be far-reaching regarding the seven well-being goals. Many organisations offer staff time to do volunteering. However, I am advocating a more purposeful approach to recognising people at all levels of the workforce as members of the community,



able to help organisations to meet their well-being objectives and the national well-being goals by placing kindness and well-being at the heart of government and public policy.

As I have set out in my section on "Skills for the Future" in Chapter 5, we need to move beyond teaching our children, young people and adults traditional skills and move towards skills for humanity to ensure we have a workforce fit for future challenges:

“At times of vulnerability and weakness, just the time at which most of us experience public services, our need for a kind, human and emotionally astute response is always greatest. A tap of a smartphone may be sufficient if you are buying a ticket or ordering groceries, but it is unlikely to be sufficient if you are reporting a crime, worried about a child, or uncertain what to do next.”

[Carnegie Trust \(2018\)](#)

Public bodies who have dedicated time and resources to developing their organisation's corporate approach to the Act are showing positive signs of change, as I have outlined in my findings and advice above.

However, I believe the wider [workforce](#) should understand the national mission of the Act and why Wales is at the forefront of improving well-being for future generations, what this means in practice and their role to play.

For example, some public bodies and Public Services Boards recognised the power of their staff as community members within their well-being statement and well-being plans, by setting steps around corporate volunteering, developing skills and improving the health and well-being of their communities, starting with their staff.

'Be the Change'

[Public Health Wales](#) resourced a 'Health & Sustainability Hub' to develop resources, training and encourage culture change within the organisation and across the wider health public sector.

The Hub have produced a number of resources referenced throughout this report. For example, the 'Be the Change' e-guides provide sustainable steps which we can all take to 'Be the Change' to achieve Wales' well-being goals. The guides are on themes of Welsh and global concern, including sustainable travel, reducing energy and waste, organising sustainable meetings and events, Fairtrade, and reducing plastics.

[Workforce planning](#) is an important element of the Act. Different skills will be required to meet the challenges of the future - as set out in my section on 'Skills for the Future' in Chapter 5. I have recommended to Welsh Government that they lead the way in developing a long-term vision for public services in Wales, providing long-term [workforce planning](#) and practical changes to meet current and future demands.

It is encouraging to see that several public bodies have invested in providing induction training to Board members, senior leaders and managers on the Act and its relevance to their work.

Some public bodies have also begun to look long-term, collaborate with others and actively mould the workforce opportunities of the future.



The role of the public sector in Wales

Recommendations

Please refer to the chapter on Setting Good Objectives in Chapter 4, but in setting their objectives all public bodies and boards covered by the Well-being of Future Generations Act (including Welsh Government) should always:

- Undertake horizon scanning exercises to think, plan and resource for the long-term future with others in collaboration – public, private, voluntary sector and members of their community. Welsh Government should help by establishing a targeted resource to help public bodies build capacity in long-term thinking, planning and futures techniques.
- Use the first part of the ‘double test’ to identify ‘what’ they should do to maximise contributions to the well-being goals.
- Set a long-term vision. Consider what success looks like for that objective in five, ten, fifteen, twenty and twenty-five years; and identify appropriate milestones and measures – considering the national milestones set by Welsh Government.
- Move towards better involving people throughout the decision-making process from defining a problem to delivery and evaluation, being open to real change as a result. Welsh Government should help by undertaking a review of the statutory guidance of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, to build in a specific mechanism for the public to be involved in the work of public bodies – learning from the Scottish Community Empowerment Act.



In considering their steps, all public bodies and boards covered by the Well-being of Future Generations Act (including Welsh Government) should:

- Test everything they do according to the Act's 'double test' of the 'what' and the 'how'.
- Collaborate with others and involve people to find the problems they need to prevent, understanding whether they fall into primary, secondary or tertiary prevention; using evidence to identify the best possible preventative interventions that maximise contribution to their objectives.
- Public Services Boards and public bodies should be seeking ways of more effectively collaborating and integrating their work with others such as town and community councils and national public bodies; and identifying opportunities with others such as registered social landlords, the private sector, trade union representatives and further and higher education in delivering their well-being objectives and steps.
- Set out much clearer steps to meeting their well-being objectives – reflecting what contribution each department will be taking to these steps.
- Clearly align financial planning and decisions across the seven corporate areas of change to the achievement of their well-being objectives. The vision provided by well-being objectives should provide a longer-term plan of funding and corporate plans/well-being statements should set out how spending plans will seek to finance their steps.
- Provide evidence in their well-being statements/plans/corporate plans and annual reports on how applying the Act to the corporate areas of change is informing the steps they are taking to maximise their contribution to the goals.



In testing and demonstrating how they are applying the Act, all public bodies and boards covered by the Well-being of Future Generations Act (including Welsh Government) should:

- Ensure they move beyond paper-based exercises, increase staff understanding and provide constructive challenge to show how the Five Ways of Working have been applied, specifically how contribution goals and objectives can be maximised.
- Build challenge from other departments, experts and stakeholders into their internal decision-making processes.
- Develop their corporate centre and processes in line with the requirements of the Act, but also encourage innovation and culture change. All public bodies should be using and demonstrating use of resources like the Future Generations Frameworks, designed to help public bodies consider their proposal or decisions in the context of the Act. - see resources.
- Adopt the definition of stages of prevention and preventive spend and allocate spending accordingly within financial planning and risk management.



In supporting cultural change, all public bodies and boards covered by the Well-being of Future Generations Act (including Welsh Government) should:

- Starting with Welsh Government, adopt a model of well-being budgets. While our legislation requires us to look at the whole budget, a positive place to start this transition would be with ‘new money’.
- Galvanize efforts and building a movement of change placing well-being and kindness at the centre of public policy.
- Involve their workforce in meeting their well-being objectives; start with their own actions, their teams, departments and whole organisations; to meet the national well-being goals.
- Put in place arrangements to ensure staff understand how and why the Act should be applied.
- Support opportunities to collaborate, second staff to other organisations and make joint appointments.
- Take action to diversify their workforce and put in place arrangements to draw on their lived experiences. (For more detail please see Chapter 2 recommendations to Welsh Government on the ‘Real Life Fast Track’).
- Ensure scrutiny committees, boards, and Audit and Risk Committees have received training on the Act and are using the Future Generations Framework for Scrutiny (See resources.)
- Ensure that they have mechanisms in place to involve children and young people in their decision making processes.
- In the same way that public bodies seek to appoint people with expertise on finance, risk, governance and human resources; an appropriate number (at least one for every board) of public appointments should be made where specific expertise and detailed understanding of the needs of future generations is a specific requirement.
- Be brave in calling out behaviour in partnership environment which does not embody the Five Ways of Working; and should be supported by Welsh Government, the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales and other appropriate agencies to address this.



In measuring their progress, all public bodies and boards covered by the Well-being of Future Generations Act (including Welsh Government) should:

- Starting with action from Welsh Government, public bodies should align their corporate planning, performance management and reporting with the requirements of the Act, encouraging planning that focuses on long-term and prevention.
- When set, use Welsh Government national milestones to define appropriate success measures for achieving well-being objectives and steps in five, ten, fifteen and twenty five years' time.
- Consider a similar method to the setting of national milestones, to define appropriate success measures for achieving well-being objectives and steps in five, ten, fifteen and twenty five years' time.
- Find ways of measuring the success of initiatives based on well-being to encourage integration, preventative thinking and collaboration.
- Invest in building a movement of change, identifying and breaking down barriers to implementation and promoting wide understanding of how each part of their organisation contributes to the national mission of the Act - improving the well-being of future generations.



Resources - General

Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

- [Art of the Possible Journeys towards the Well-Being Goals and Involvement](#): I worked with a range of people to produce the [Simple Changes](#) and journeys towards the well-being goals and involvement
- [Self-reflection tool](#): A series of scoring and questioning to help organisations reflect on progress towards their well-being objectives
- [Future Generations Framework for Projects](#)
- [Future Generations Framework for Service Design](#) (produced in collaboration with Welsh Government)
- [Future Generations Framework for Scrutiny](#)
- [Well-being in Wales: The journey so far](#) : You can read my analysis of the initial well-being objectives set by public bodies and my advice to them on reporting progress in this report, published in May 2018
- [Progress towards the Well-being of Future Generations Act](#): My overall findings on progress so far are in this report, published in December 2019

Other

- [Audit Wales Good Practice Exchange](#): Audit Wales have hosted several webinars, seminars and events to help public bodies implement the Act



Resources - General

Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

- [Three Horizons Toolkit](#): to help you think and plan long-term

Other

- [Implementing the Sustainable Development Principle](#): Public Health Wales and Kingston University have produced a report on the five ways of working
- [Futures for Wales Report \(2018\)](#): In partnership with Public Health Wales, this report identifies tools and approaches for long-term planning
- [Forum for the Future](#)
- [World Economic Forum annual Global Risk Report](#)
- [International Futures Forum](#)
- [What Works Well-being: Wellbeing evidence at the heart of policy](#)
- [Public Health Wales: Making a Difference \(2016\)](#)
- [Public Health Wales: Making a Difference: Housing and Health a case for investment \(2019\)](#)
- [Co-Production Network Wales](#)
- [National Principles for Public Engagement Wales](#)
- [Data Cymru](#)





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