

Well-being in Wales

**An overview of what we found when
responding to Public Services
Boards' (PSB) draft assessments of
well-being**



Comisiynydd
Cenedlaethau'r
Dyfodol
Cymru

Future
Generations
Commissioner
for Wales

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Overview of Public Services Boards' (PSB) draft well-being assessments 2022

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1 What the 2022 draft well-being assessments told us about how Public Services Boards (PSBs) have considered policy topics across Wales



Policy - PSBs demonstrated strengths in:

Providing honest reflection on the impact of the pandemic

Every well-being assessment acknowledged the impact of the pandemic on existing inequalities.

A greater understanding of the climate and nature emergencies

PSBs are recognising the need to increase their ambition, exploring how their services can enable a low carbon future and making connections to other aspects of well-being such as housing, health and the economy.

Recognising the important role of green and blue spaces

All assessments reflected on the significant role green and blue spaces play in people's health and well-being, emphasised through the pandemic.

Greater consideration of the wider determinants of health

More than half of assessments explored and discussed the wider determinants of health in detail, looking at issues across all dimensions of well-being.

Better analysis of cultural well-being

We've seen an improvement in PSB's understanding and coverage of cultural well-being. Over half of assessments provided a strong, detailed assessment of culture in their areas.

Making clearer connections to regional growth and city deals

PSBs are making clearer connections to their respective growth and city deals across a range of areas such as energy, the economy and skills.



What the 2022 draft well-being assessments told us about how PSBs have considered policy topics and themes across Wales



Policy - challenges remain in how PSBs consider:

The cost of living crisis

A significant challenge prioritised by some PSBs as a critical issue for their area, where they have focussed on increased rates of fuel poverty and numbers using foodbanks for example.

Climate resilience at the local level

Consideration of future climate risks at the local scale was mixed across Wales.

The impact of COVID-19

The pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities and the challenges facing Wales are stark, recognised by PSBs in all assessments.

Fuel poverty and decarbonisation

Only half of assessments made direct links between housing, fuel poverty, health and decarbonisation.

Skills for the future

While all assessments explored the current picture on education and skills in their areas, only a few considered the future of work and what skills Wales might need in any detail. Very few PSBs made clear links to their respective Regional Skills Partnerships.

Unpaid care

Almost all assessments highlighted concerns relating to unpaid care in Wales, exacerbated by the pandemic. An ageing demographic means Wales is likely to face a crisis in the provision of paid care alongside the challenge of a potential increase in the number of unpaid carers.

Welsh language

While all assessments included a focus on the Welsh language, such as the number of speakers and learners, few explored the longer-term trends and implications for their areas in detail.



Gwent

Integrated the impact of Covid into wider discussions, including the potential impact on schooling, changes to workplaces and working patterns, public transport use/demand, health inequalities, dental health and employment.

The Vale of Glamorgan

Signed a 'Climate Emergency Charter' with actions partners can work together on to take positive action and lead by example.

Cardiff

Outlined the action being taken to become carbon neutral by 2030, including the city's One Planet Strategy and City-wide Action Plan.

Wrexham

Recognised decarbonisation of the economy should be integrated with reducing inequalities, and that the built environment, access to green space and sustainable food all link to wider determinants of health outcomes for residents.

Neath Port Talbot

Shared information on the Connecting Green Infrastructure project, a £2 million strategic green infrastructure project in South West Wales to benefit people, the economy and wildlife.

Gwynedd and Anglesey

Shared information on important nature conservation sites which added value and local context to each of their area's profiles. For example, the Morfa Dyffryn National Nature Reserve, Coed-y-Brenin, Newborough National Nature Reserve and the Anglesey Fens.

Flintshire

Explored the five domains to improve well-being highlighted by the Marmot Review (2020) as the root causes to well-being outcomes for communities. Also outlined their intent to address these areas with their communities to set a path to improve well-being in a holistic way.

Swansea

Have a new 'Diversity Pledge for Culture', a commitment to diversification of audiences, and were the first UK city to sign up to Culture 21 (Agenda 21 for Culture).



Pembrokeshire

'Haverhub' is one of the first local remote working hub pilot schemes (funded by Welsh Government). It has also helped organise food deliveries for vulnerable people and volunteers in the local area, has a range of groups, events and art exhibitions, and offers volunteering opportunities.

Cwm Taf Morgannwg

Highlighted great examples relating to cultural well-being, including the work of Awen's creative team during the pandemic aimed at isolated people, and funding obtained to redevelop the Muni Arts Centre. Also highlighted activity to improve well-being in the area and regular and upcoming events that promote cultural well-being and the Welsh language, such as the 2024 Eisteddfod.

Ceredigion

Explored 'time online and well-being outcomes', 'play' and 'Nurturing creativity' in their assessment, and included good analysis on environmental awareness in their 'youth' chapter, provided engaging case studies (e.g. 'Re-Connecting Nature'), and are identifying publicly owned land to enhance opportunities for people to better enjoy local nature and green spaces.

Powys

Xenzone is a commissioned counselling service seeking to reduce the number of children and young people on the counselling waiting list and increase the number of sessions available.

All PSBs

Considered the cost of living, in terms of housing costs, fuel poverty, income inequality, access to leisure and recreation, and / or food costs.



2 What the 2022 draft well-being assessments tell us about how the PSBs have been working to improve well-being in their areas



Process - PSBs demonstrated strengths in:

Drafting assessments in unprecedented times

PSBs deserve praise for working together to prepare assessments during unprecedented times, and reflecting on challenges such as COVID-19, Brexit, climate change throughout.

Local and regional collaboration

Despite challenges around the pandemic, there are some great examples of collaborative working, particularly in areas where regional approaches are being taken such as Gwent, West Wales and North Wales.

Integration and join-up

Most PSBs have worked hard to explore topics in an integrated manner and make connections across the four dimensions of well-being.

Incorporating future trends

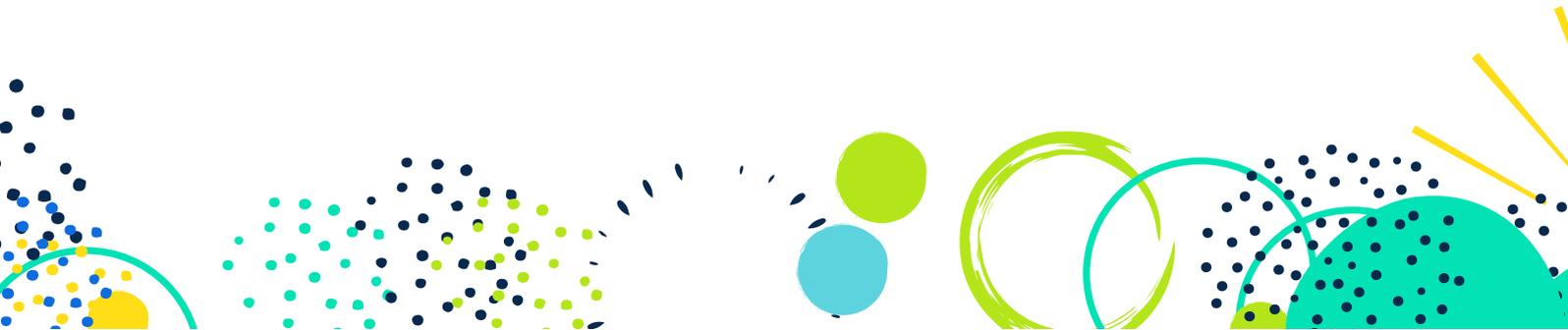
Overall, PSBs are demonstrating they are considering future trends information and setting some of this out in their assessments - a clear improvement on the first round.

Involving residents

Some PSBs have had more success in embedding the views of residents in their assessments. It's critical the learning from these PSBs, particularly those who have been supported by the Co-Production Network, is used and shared to support all PSBs to meaningfully involve people as they develop their well-being plans (objectives and steps).

Good use and interpretation of data

All assessments used a wide range of data sources for their assessment, with most PSBs demonstrating critical engagement with data and evidence, helping them draw meaningful conclusions.



What the 2022 draft wellbeing assessments tell us about how the PSBs have been working to improve well-being in their areas



Process - challenges remain in how PSBs show:

Connection to national policies and strategies

There was a lack of reference and connection to some of Welsh Government's key policies and strategies, such as 'Planning Policy Wales', 'Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021' and 'Beyond Recycling'. This was consistent across the draft well-being assessments and signifies the ongoing challenge between the policy aspirations at a national level, and support to help drive implementation on the ground.

They are embedding longer-term thinking into well-being planning

While there was an improvement on the first round in how PSBs are considering future trends, there's much to do to embed futures thinking into PSB planning. For example, only some assessments explored how existing inequalities may change (and potentially worsen) in the future.

They are building on the collaboration that arose during the pandemic

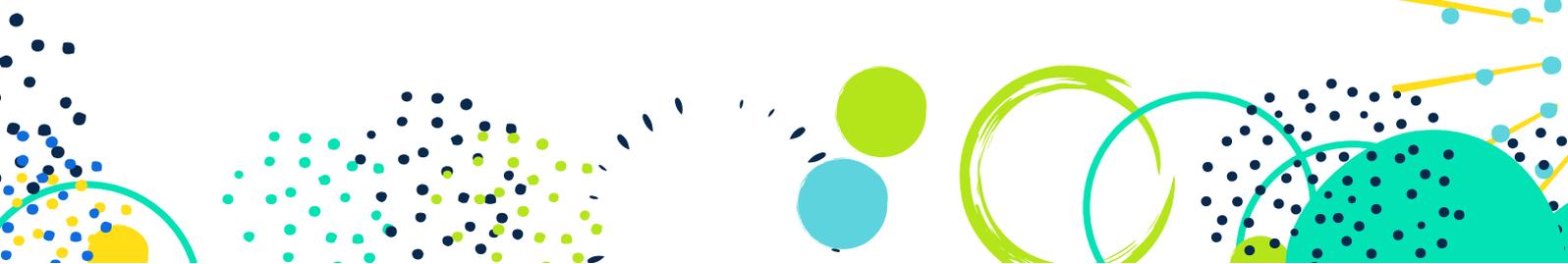
Very few PSBs elaborated on how they might build upon the trust, cross-sector collaboration and initiatives we saw during the pandemic.

Procurement as a key lever for change

While we're aware of some ongoing conversations within public bodies and PSBs to deliver change via fair and local procurement (e.g. by embedding social value metrics), PSBs did not make clear connections to it within their assessments.

They are reflecting diversity across Wales

There was inconsistent reference to some of the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act, limited consideration of intersectionality (and how it affects people in Wales), and evident gaps in feedback, views and evidence from 'seldom heard voices'. Improving on this should form a central basis of involvement plans for PSB's next steps.



The Vale of Glamorgan

Considered the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and how it had affected all areas of well-being in the area, e.g. on businesses, jobs, mental and physical health and intersectional experiences.

North Wales

The 'North Wales Research and Insight Partnership' seeks to support the use of evidence and insight to understand the challenges and opportunities across the region, and co-produce approaches to improve well-being. Wrexham Glyndwr University are a key partner.

Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion

Working regionally the 3 PSBs used an impact / certainty matrix to provide an indicative assessment of the main themes they've identified.

Conwy and Denbighshire

Brought together the information presented across their assessment into summaries aligned to Wales' well-being goals to "help partners and communities see the connections, tensions and opportunities." They also made links to Welsh Government's Programme for Government.

Swansea

The use of case studies demonstrated how organisations and sectors are working together to address key challenges. For example, the community cohesion projects such as 'Together and Tell Me More' which seeks to bring people from different backgrounds together.

Ceredigion

Set out how they applied the five ways of working, e.g. in relation to 'long-term', they highlight 'Horizon Scanning Training' and the use of 'Futures thinking questions' included in their survey.

Gwent

Linked fuel poverty to both health and environmental well-being, in the review of how sustainable energy measures can be harnessed to alleviate this challenge.

Wrexham and Flintshire

Taking an approach to 'citizen analysis' which seeks to use intersectional sampling to expand whose voices are heard, and support citizens to work with data about the climate emergency.



Cwm Taf Morgannwg

Carried out a range of involvement activities to involve residents in their area, e.g. a futures exercise with young people in the area where participants were taken on a journey through various tools starting with “dreaming big” and developing positive “seeds of change” to “spark positive and energetic conversations about a positive future”.

Conwy and Denbighshire

Improved analysis on the well-being gap of people with protected characteristics and people in poverty, and share the work to develop the regional interactive community voice forum for ‘representatives of seldom heard groups’, to ensure broader perspectives are included within their work.

Swansea

Included a ‘Recognising and Respecting Children’s Rights’ feature where they highlighted they were the first local authority in the UK to voluntarily make a public commitment to Children’s Rights.

Wrexham

The ‘Our Wrexham, Our Future’ consultation included powerful quotes from local residents. For example: “I am a refugee from Venezuela, and I’ve been living in Wrexham for 2 years... People here are understanding about other cultures, you feel free to express your traditions and customs... I love that people here in Wrexham are working hard to welcome immigrants. We feel embraced.”

Pembrokeshire

Pursuing their ‘Pembrokeshire 2040’ work to develop a longer-term vision for the county.



3 A snapshot of some of the challenges PSBs highlighted in their 2022 well-being assessments



Conwy & Denbighshire
Approx. 10% of people experiencing hunger.

North Wales (survey)
17% of people classed as lonely, 54% experiencing some feelings of loneliness.

Ceredigion
31.2% of children living in poverty, an increase from 29.1% in 2014/15

Powys
Significant rise in the number of unpaid carers from 25,275 to an estimated 35,918 during the pandemic.

Carmarthenshire
141% increase to Carers Outreach Service between 2019-21.

Neath Port Talbot
66% of adults are overweight or obese.

Cardiff
2nd least affordable city of the UK's Core Cities.

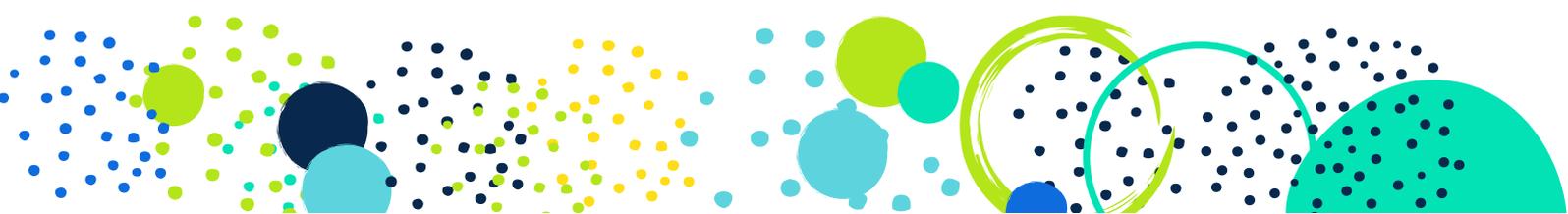
The Vale of Glamorgan
9.8% increase of people 65+ over last five years.

4 2017 v 2022: how the assessments compare



In 2017 we made recommendations to PSBs based on our analysis of their first well-being assessments. Here's how PSBs are faring five years on:

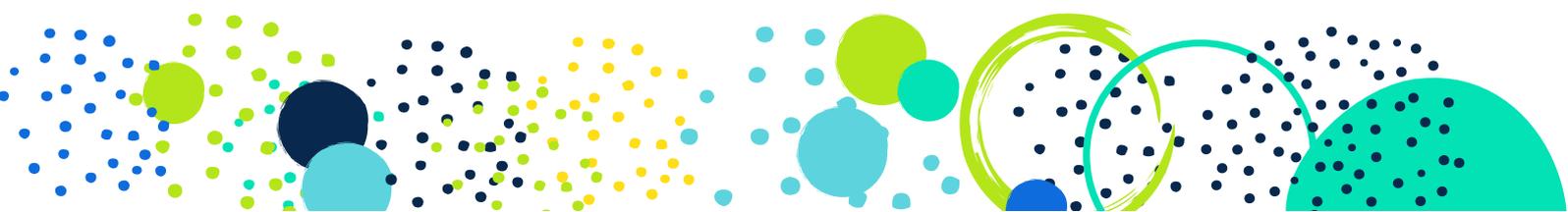
In 2017 we said PSBs should...	In 2022, we're seeing...
<p>Consider whether the way they are chaired and resourced best supports the ethos of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, particularly in respect of facilitating collaboration, integration and involvement.</p>	<p>Many PSBs challenging how they're operating and now working at a regional scale, e.g. West Wales (Carms, Pems, Ceredigion), North Wales cluster and Gwent. Some PSBs are also working in partnership, e.g. Swansea and Neath Port Talbot and Cwm Taf and Bridgend.</p>
<p>Undertake further work to provide a deeper understanding of people's lived experiences.</p>	<p>Few assessments sharing 'lived experiences' but more evidence of intelligent use of data and information, with qualitative findings regularly shared. Many PSBs mention incorporating lived experiences into their well-being plans.</p>
<p>Consider how they can collaborate better on their involvement work.</p>	<p>Most PSBs working hard to engage people, with those supported by the Co-Production Network for Wales showing promising signs of progress.</p>
<p>Ensure assessments are invested in as tools to develop, in order to enhance their understanding of well-being and help them make intelligence-led and evidence-based decisions for current and future generations.</p>	<p>More evidence and appetite of this happening across PSBs, but also acknowledgment of some of the challenges of keeping assessments 'live' over a 5 year period.</p>
<p>Undertake work to 'dig deeper' into data to better understand the causes and effects of key issues and trends.</p>	<p>Most PSBs doing this well, with only two not including some 'response analysis' to the data presented in their draft assessments.</p>



2017 v 2022: how the assessments compare



In 2017 we said PSBs should...	In 2022, we're seeing...
<p>Take a more integrated approach to interpret data across economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being.</p>	<p>The majority of PSBs achieving this, with only one not exploring connections between topics and themes in any detail.</p>
<p>Be supported by Welsh Government and the Future Generations Commissioner to build capacity, expertise and confidence on understanding and using forecasting and future trends information.</p>	<p>A better understanding, use and reference to future trends overall. Welsh Government, Public Health Wales, Natural Resources Wales and the Future Generations Commissioner are working collaboratively to support PSBs in this area.</p>
<p>Evidence how they are identifying and exploring tensions between different policy issues and priorities to enable an honest discussion about new approaches that need to be taken.</p>	<p>PSBs exploring areas such as Brexit, the pandemic, austerity and climate change with honest reflection from many. PSBs are aware of the challenges and their next steps (setting of objectives and steps) will be key.</p>
<p>Show that they are setting objectives and making decisions that reflect how well-being is defined in the Well-being of Future Generations Act, rather than reflecting traditional ideas and ways of doing things.</p>	<p>PSBs demonstrating a good understanding of the Act with assessments showing a better understanding of the range of issues, topics, challenges and opportunities. Success here will largely be determined in the next stage of well-being planning.</p>
<p>Ensure maximising contribution to the well-being goals is driving PSB's discussion, debate and reporting on local well-being rather than just providing broad context.</p>	<p>All assessments setting the broad context at the beginning of their assessments.</p>
<p>Undertake further work to better understand the contexts, issues, challenges and opportunities between and within communities in PSB areas.</p>	<p>A good understanding of national level and local authority level data, but with some differences in how PSBs are comparing levels of data at a community level.</p>



2017 v 2022: how the assessments compare



In 2017 we said PSBs should...	In 2022, we're seeing...
Explain how they are taking account of regional developments, collaboration mechanisms and opportunities.	An improvement, with many now working in partnership or at a regional scale. All PSBs refer to their respective city / growth deals and other regional developments.
Develop mechanisms for gathering and using qualitative place-based data and insights, particularly from the third and private sectors, and fully recognise the value it adds to well-being planning.	The PSBs supported by the Co-Production Network for Wales, in particular, showing promising signs of progress on involvement.
Consider information and evidence from national bodies as part of well-being planning, to make the most of the opportunities to link up wider agendas.	Good evidence of PSBs using information from national bodies such as Natural Resources Wales, Public Health Wales, Sport Wales, as well as a wide range of local, regional, national and international data.
Link well-being plans to other strategies and plans, including those related to other legislation and Local Development Plans.	PSBs making clear links to a wide range of policies and strategies but with some notable gaps in relation to some of Welsh Government's key policies such as Planning Policy Wales, Llwybr Newydd and Beyond Recycling.

