

## Ceredigion Public Services Board: Well-being Assessment

Feedback and advice from the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales,  
28<sup>th</sup> January 2022

### 1: Summary

- A strong, comprehensive well-being assessment.
- User-friendly and well presented. The stages of life structure works well and is helpful for encouraging inter-generational thinking.
- Good integration of the four dimensions of well-being across all age groups.
- Good use and mix of data and information (quantitative and qualitative) throughout.
- Inclusion of case studies is a strength.
- Section 3 (below) highlights some areas that if further developed, would help to strengthen the assessment. These relate to: future trends, skills for the future, the Welsh Language, involvement, equality and maximising contribution to Wales' well-being goals.
- Section 3 also outlines other (desirable) areas for consideration within the assessment.

### 2: Evidence of good practice in the well-being assessment

#### Process and methodology

A regional, collaborative approach is a strong feature of the work you have undertaken, enabling identification of cross-boundary well-being issues across the three PSB areas.

You have considered a wide range of local, regional and national sources, including future trends, and demonstrate a good use and mixture of types of data and information available (quantitative and qualitative), with feedback from your engagement work incorporated.

You move beyond simply presenting data and information, and explore what it may mean for your local area. For example, you highlight Ceredigion's ageing population which you link to the significant strain on your public services and local labour market: *'These demographic changes have important consequences for the working age population, the resulting impact on the economy and specifically the funding for local public services. Furthermore, it is expected that the ageing population will place further strain on our local health services.'* Likewise, you do the same on Brexit.

It's positive to see reflection on the first well-being assessment. For example, the table on page 7 of the appendices highlights how the approach has improved upon/responded to the first round of assessments. You also mentioned this in our recent meeting (25<sup>th</sup> January 2022), explaining how you have taken on board the key points from the first round.

The stages of life structure helps identify some interrelationships between the well-being goals and themes. For example, exploring Welsh Language and culture across life stages; considering the relationship between deprivation, housing quality and health. And the section on 'youth' which explores young people, digital and physical connectivity, environmental awareness and well-being.

The methodology section and 5 ways of working table are very helpful. For example, *'Horizon Scanning Training aided a better understanding around the future and explored factors that could give rise to possible future characteristics and events'* and *'Futures thinking questions included in the survey- based on each of the 7 National Well-being Goals.'*

The use of the impact / certainty matrix helped identify the themes you will prioritise, and those where you will scenario plan and/or do further research. Data gathering included an Enterprise and Innovation Project Group workshop with representatives from the private sector, to gain their unique views on well-being in the workplace and the local economy.

There is a confidence in your understanding of the key issues in your area. For example, *'The key challenges facing the local economy are well-documented and can be summarised as the need to attract new businesses and grow existing businesses, create more and higher paid job opportunities, provide opportunities for younger people to remain in the county, and increase average earnings of the County in comparison to Wales as a whole.'*

It's positive to hear *'The assessment was 'engagement led' to ensure that the views of our citizens were the main drivers for producing the document, placing them at the heart of the next Well-being Plan.'*

It's great to hear Ceredigion Association of Voluntary Organisations (CAVO) have been instrumental in the production of this Assessment. For example, they have *'provided vital local and community based data which has helped enrich and complement the findings...'*

It's good to see the 'Developing understanding' section of the 'Next Steps' chapter, and it was helpful to hear about your next steps in our recent meeting (25<sup>th</sup> January) where you discussed timings and the workshop in February aimed at further exploring the areas prioritised via the impact / certainty matrix.

### **Content**

The Ceredigion context chapter is excellent, and covers a wide range of areas. There is also a good section on the impacts of Covid, e.g. *'In assessing well-being, there is a trade-off between the short-term COVID-19 impact and the longer-term future trends that existed prior the pandemic.'*

It is helpful for the reader a summary of themes after each chapter is included, and to see you clearly set out data gaps / limitations (p.34 of the appendix). The assessment is clear in its analysis, linking facts and figures to the implications on residents. For example, in discussion of the ratio of house prices to work-place earnings: *"This means that it can be very difficult for residents to buy... particularly for young people trying to get on the property ladder.... This was consistently mentioned as one of the biggest challenge[s] in the future in the written comments and stakeholder events."*

Your analysis usefully ties quantitative to qualitative insights, and outlines existing efforts undertaken within the PSB. For example, analysis (p123-124) discusses that a significant priority (79% of respondents) said supporting local businesses would improve local economic success. The report then discusses local context, impact of the pandemic and grants issued to small businesses.

The inclusion of short case studies throughout the assessment is very helpful, such as the 'Syrian Refugees re-settled in Ceredigion' and the 'Ceredigion Museum – Adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic' case studies.

There is much to be commended on your work on the environment. For example, the 'People and the environment' section clearly highlights the connections between the environment and health, and the associated benefits. The section on environmental awareness in the 'youth' chapter is strong. The Re-Connecting Nature case study is excellent, and it's good to hear green health and

access to nature has gained traction within the PSB in recent years, where you're working to identify publicly owned land in Ceredigion that would enhance opportunities for people to better enjoy local nature and green spaces.

Positive to see your reference to the study by WWF and the University of York which found that Ceredigion has the lowest carbon footprint in the UK, with almost 10% of residents having solar panels installed on their homes. Your area also has the second highest annual recycling/composting rates, just 0.1% behind Pembrokeshire. You also cite your growing 'green economy' focusing on low carbon emissions, efficient use of resources and being socially inclusive.

The economy has grown at a faster rate than across Wales over the last five years and the survival rates of businesses in Ceredigion is consistently above the national average and some of the highest amongst all areas in Wales. This is one of the County's strengths and unique selling points along with a strong knowledge sector, higher than average economic growth in recent years and higher than average skills and qualifications levels.

It's very positive to see the assessment explore 'time online and well-being outcomes', 'play' (making links to the outdoor environment), and the 'Nurturing creativity' section in adulthood. And there is a good overview of the importance of cultural heritage in the area, including food culture, the Eisteddfodd, and young farmers clubs for example.

It's positive to hear Flying Start has proved to be highly effective for families in your most deprived areas, the Breastfeeding Network holds weekly groups and the latest data from the Child Measurement Programme shows the proportion of children aged 4 to 5 overweight or obese has decreased from 30.1% during 2014-15 to 21.9% during 2018-19, which is lower than the national average for Wales at 26.9%.

The Counselling and Emotional Well-being Support case study is excellent, where a new online counselling and emotional well-being support service for young people in mid-West Wales has been launched by Hywel Dda UHB. Young people aged 11-18 will be able to access online counselling through their mobile device, 365 days a year. They will be able to seek support or advice on any topic they wish, from coping with exam stress or bullying, seeking help for eating issues and body image, dealing with suicidal thoughts or handling sexual abuse.

### 3: Areas that could be further developed

#### Important areas for consideration

The draft well-being assessment is comprehensive and clearly presented. Building on the extensive work already undertaken, below are areas which, if developed further, would help strengthen the assessment overall.

#### Building on your use of future trends information

It's positive to see how the assessment has considered future trends information, particularly the 'Future trends affecting Ceredigion' section which highlight some of the trends you've said are most relevant for your area.

This section also includes some interpretation of what they might mean for your area. For example, on population change, *'The impact of these changes will be far reaching...For example, affecting the ability of the workforce to meet the skills demands of the local economy, and in*

*protecting the strong cultural traditions of the county.* It's also good to see the examples provided under the 'Long-term' section of the 5 ways of working table, e.g. 'Horizon Scanning Training' and the incorporation of futures thinking questions in your survey.

To build on these strengths, it would be helpful if additional insight could be provided to understand how the PSB will continue to consider and embed future trends information as its focus shifts to the well-being plan, and the setting of objectives and steps. This information would be helpful, as collaborative working focussed on the 'long-term' is a challenging but effective means of helping deliver change.

Consideration of the potential implications on inequality is also necessary when making decisions to tackle future trends. Our recent report with Public Health Wales ['Inequality in a future Wales'](#) highlights that the future of work, changing demographics and climate change could increase existing inequalities if the impacts on different groups in society are not factored in.

Building on the information already set out, we therefore encourage you to involve the people and communities you consider to be the most affected by the trends you've highlighted as most relevant for your area. This is to ensure their voices are being heard. A better understanding of their concerns and priorities for action will help you plan your next steps.

#### The future of work and skills for the future

Changing demographics and the future of work are significant areas for Ceredigion. For example, the assessment highlights the pattern of young people leaving the county and that these trends have potentially serious consequences for your future economy and cultural heritage.

Elsewhere in the assessment (section 7.7), you highlight that providing opportunities for younger people to remain in the county and attracting new business and growing existing businesses are two key challenges facing the local economy. Linked to this, young people in your area identified connectivity, employment opportunities and affordability of housing as three areas that would make the biggest difference to their future in Ceredigion.

The world is changing, and these changes are having profound implications to the future of work, community and well-being. Nationally in Wales, skills planning is lacking long-term thinking, focused on reacting to skills gaps rather than proactively preparing and planning for the skills of the future and meeting the well-being goals for Wales.

As attention shifts towards your well-being plan, we encourage the PSB to build on its use of future trends information and consider the skills needed for the future, how they relate to your area, and the significance they may hold in respect of other areas of well-being, such as the use of Welsh, the environment and culture. This is to help ensure the well-being objectives and steps you set are responding to the future of work and changing demographics, and not just responding to the short-term economic industries and opportunities of today.

Collaborating and involving a wider set of people to review and design your well-being objectives is one way to help achieve this. For example, schools (pupils, governors, headteachers), Further and Higher Education institutions; local business; community groups; Regional Skills Partnerships and others.

There are also resource available that may also help you in this area. A summary analysis of our recent report with New Economics Foundation on 'Skills and training for a prosperous, green and equal recovery' can be found [here](#). The report finds there are significant skills gaps in green industries across Wales which must be addressed. And our recent '[Inequality in a future Wales](#)' report looks at inequality in relation to trends on the future of work, demographic change and climate change. It highlights inequality could increase as a result of each trend if the impacts on different groups in society are not factored in.

### Welsh language

There is much to commend on how you have weaved the use and importance of the Welsh Language through the assessment. It is a strong and consistent thread throughout the assessment. As you state it is '*seen as the bedrock of Ceredigion's sense of community.*'

The assessment highlights that at the time of the last census in 2011, the proportion of Welsh speakers in Ceredigion fell under 50% for the first time in its history. It is helpful that you include an explanation on this decline, broadly attributed to population mobility and migration patterns.

That aside, you have a positive story to tell. For example, you state 50% of young people considered being able to use the Welsh Language as one of three things they value the most, compared to 44% of other ages. When asked what type of support would need to be put in place to enhance culture and achieve vibrant communities within Ceredigion, the most common response was '*opportunities to learn and improve my (Welsh) skills.*'

The percentage of residents using Welsh every day in Ceredigion has also increased over recent years, from 43% in 2016, to 45% in 2021. As you state, it could be argued that increasing the day-to-day use of Welsh could be far more influential to language growth than the numbers that speak it. It's also good to see you refer to the provision of opportunities for people to learn and improve their Welsh language skills in the future trends page.

In moving to setting objectives and steps within your well-being plan, clear links should be made to Ceredigion's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the local authority's promotion strategy. Together with our comments above on the future of work, we also encourage you to make the links between the Welsh Language and skills, the economy and future of work.

### Involvement

It's great to hear the assessment was 'engagement led' to ensure the views of your citizens were the main drivers for producing your assessment.

The assessment concisely sets out the types of methods and approaches you have taken, including: a regional well-being survey, virtual stakeholder events, a well-being school survey and a web-based engagement platform called 'Dweud eich Dweud / Have Your Say Ceredigion'. Helpfully, the appendices also include further information on your approach, as well as dates of your events and a list of stakeholders engaged in the assessment.

To build on these strengths, the assessment could include some additional insight and reflection on what you feel worked well, and the areas where you feel you could (potentially) improve, as you move to the well-being plan.

For example, while the assessment mentions *'engaging with hard-to-reach groups and those with protected characteristics through mapping exercise'*, are you clear on whose voices are not being heard through your engagement that could be prioritised for the plan? And, are there opportunities to incorporate more lived experiences in your assessment, or design of your well-being plan, enabling residents in your area to tell their story more fully? These could be in relation to the areas you've prioritised via the use of the impact / certainty matrix for example.

Using and adopting strong, innovative involvement techniques that go beyond engagement and move more towards co-production is important for all PSBs. To help inform the next stages of the well-being planning process, the Co-production Network for Wales is producing advice and guidance based on the way in which involvement and co-production has been embedded in the well-being process so far. We encourage your PSB teams and coordinators to help shape this guidance with Co-Production Network for Wales as it develops.

### Equality

You have highlighted your ageing population in the assessment. As referred to above, future trends will have implications on equality in your area and disrupt how health and social care, employment and education, and pensions operate. For example, it is likely demands for unpaid care could increase which may disproportionately affect people who find themselves having to reduce their working hours and undertake sandwich caring - for children and older relatives.

Our 'Inequality in a future Wales' report explores future trends in relation to demographic change, the future of work and climate change, and is a helpful resource for considering the potential implications for inequality in these areas.

The assessment could acknowledge how intersectionality affects people in your area. For example, what's it like to be young and migrant in Ceredigion? Immigration status can result in significant inequalities. Women are mentioned primarily around domestic violence and pregnancy, but other areas could be explored such as the gender pay gap and unpaid care as referred to above. We also recommend ensuring all 'protected characteristics' outlined in the Equality Act are considered within your assessment. For example, we could see no reference to the LGBTQ+ community.

### **Maximising the PSB's contribution to Wales' well-being goals**

Understanding the full definition of Wales' well-being goals can help ensure the assessment is considering the wide range of topics and themes of well-being within your area.

The table below sets out areas that could be explored further within the assessment, and/or taken into consideration for the well-being plan. It is appreciated that it may not be possible for all the information below to be fully considered / incorporated in your assessment. Instead, you may wish to choose some areas to compliment the extensive work you have already undertaken:

<b>Brexit and agriculture</b>	Good to see Brexit referenced and your honest reflection on the uncertainty on what the implications are for your area. While not mentioned, the potential implications of the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) will also be significant for your area.
<b>Regional Economic Framework</b>	Good to see reference to the Growing Mid Wales partnership. The <a href="#">Mid Wales Regional Economic Framework</a> will be an important resource for your PSB.

<b>Regional Skills Partnership</b>	Not clear if the links have been made with your local Regional Skills Partnerships. Your assessment will be a significant resource for them. Similarly, their strategies and priorities will be key for your PSB.
<b>Llwybr Newydd: Wales's Transport Strategy</b>	<p>Transport and connectivity are areas that appear regularly through the assessment, and via feedback from residents. Connectivity is also one of the three themes identified by young people in terms of what would make the most difference to their future.</p> <p><a href="#">Llwybr Newydd</a> (the Wales Transport Strategy 2021) is not referenced in the assessment, and we recommend you consider any progress or challenges in your area against its three headline priorities and the sustainable transport hierarchy it sets out.</p>
<b>The foundational economy and fair and local supply chains</b>	<p>Positive to see analysis of the local economy and its strengths and unique selling points such as new business start-ups having some of the best survival rates across Wales. Are there any links to be made with <a href="#">the Foundational Economy Challenge Fund</a>?</p> <p>Supply chains are also not explored in the assessment. They are a key lever for change and some analysis of your local supply chains would strengthen the assessment.</p>
<b>Circular economy and consumption</b>	Waste appears primarily in the assessment as a key concern for young people but PSBs should be seeking ways to understand how a circular economy approach can help them meet a number of well-being priorities. The assessment could further explore what Wales' <a href="#">strategy for a circular economy means</a> for your area, e.g. helping communities share items, food waste, electric fleet etc.

### Other areas for consideration (desirable)

These are areas you might wish to amend / update to strengthen the assessment overall:

- **Environment and climate change:** The 'Environmental issues' chapter, and other regular sections on the environment are strong and covered well across age groups. The concerns of young people on the environment are also evident. As explained in our recent meeting (25<sup>th</sup> January), it was unclear from reading the assessment if the following documents and strategies for Wales had been fully considered: the [State of Natural Resources Report for Wales](#) (2020), Area Statements, [Net Zero Wales](#) and the [Climate Change Risk Assessment \(CCRA3\) summary for Wales](#). We were reassured in the meeting that they have been, but are included above for your reference.
- **Collaboration:** Building on the collaborative approach taken to developing the assessment in the region, it would be beneficial if the assessment identified *who* all the partners were and *how* the collaboration was managed. This information would help for future learning, as cross-sector collaboration is a challenging but often effective means of delivering social change.
- **Wales' well-being goals:** Table 2.8, sets out the assessment in relation to the 7 well-being goals, and it's helpful to see it included. Going further, are there any overarching headlines identified from the table? Does it reveal any gaps or interconnections? And, is a 'Resilient Wales' being used in relation to social well-being, in some instances?
- **Minor:** Page 34 ends with an incomplete sentence, and suggests some text is missing.

#### 4: Resources to help inform your next steps

Below are resources that can help inform your next steps, as you move from well-being assessment to well-being plan:

- Chapter 4 of the Future Generations Report: [‘Setting Good Well-being Objectives’](#)
- The [‘Future Generations Framework for Projects’](#)
- [Case studies](#) of how the Act is being implemented on the ground in Wales
- Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales: [Resources](#)