

Pembrokeshire Public Services Board: Well-being assessment

Feedback and advice from the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales,
21st February 2022

1: Summary

- A strong, clearly laid out well-being assessment that demonstrates integration across themes and chapters.
- All four dimensions of well-being (social, economic, environment and culture) covered.
- Good use and mixture of types of data and information (quantitative and qualitative).
- Collaborative working across the region a key feature.
- Honest reflection on data, information and challenges, such as the impact of Covid-19.
- Section 3 (below) highlights some areas that if further developed, would help to strengthen the assessment. These relate to: future trends, involvement, equality, the Welsh language, environment, inclusion of case studies and maximising your 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

The general methodology section in the assessment (and appendix 1) is helpful in outlining the collaborative approach taken with your colleagues in Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion PSBs. By doing so, you shared resources and expertise, built capacity, and provided a consistent approach across the region.

Integration is strong across the assessment, which is something the assessment states was a key aim following feedback to the structure of the first round of assessments. For example, in the economy chapter, you highlight links to other themes within the assessment, including (but not limited to) demographics, poverty, health, the environment and your historic and cultural heritage. The Welsh language is also, for example, referred to throughout the assessment, including links made between the potential impact of second homes on its longer-term sustainability.

It is positive to see acknowledgement of the impact of the pandemic, where you state: *"The world is a very different place to what it looked like when we produced our first Well-being Assessment five years ago, and the pandemic has fundamentally changed the way we think, work, operate and plan for the future."* We also acknowledge the honest caution around some of the data used, given the pandemic and timings of the 2021 census data.

There is a good mix and variety of information throughout, including quantitative data and information, supplemented with a clear, consistent narrative and some qualitative information from your engagement work and surveys. It is also good to see a range of sources and reports have been used.

It is helpful to understand your review of community areas and decision to go from Upper Super Output Areas (USOAs) to 'Mid Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs)', meaning this assessment identifies 16 community areas. We also note you will include a separate report on the MSOA profiles in the final assessment.

Along with Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion, it is good to hear how regional working has enabled you to identify cross-boundary well-being issues across the three PSB areas, such as climate change, child poverty and housing affordability. It is also positive to see the use of the impact/certainty matrix which has helped identify the themes you will prioritise, and those where you will scenario plan and/or do further research.

The 5 ways of working table is very helpful in demonstrating how the PSB has applied the sustainable development principle. For example, under Integration, you state: *"Planned collective visioning session for PSB partners looking at what kind of place we want Pembrokeshire to be in the year 2040; will support greater integration and alignment between the PSB's objectives and the objectives of individual partner organisations, creating a sense of shared purpose and direction."*

The 'Outcomes from the survey' in each of the main themed chapters works well, complimenting the quantitative data and narrative.

Content

The assessment uses plain, user-friendly text that is easy to follow. The summary of key findings is also very helpful in providing an 'at a glance' overview of well-being in Pembrokeshire.

There is honest reflection on the feedback from the first round of assessments, which has informed your decision to move away from the 'stage of life' structure to help improve integration. The structure of the current draft assessment is clearly laid out and works well.

It is positive to see the assessment move beyond just presenting data and information and include some interpretation on what it might mean for the area. For example, on Pembrokeshire's ageing population, you highlight *"Age structure and profile is an important consideration for provision of services in the county as it has a clear impact on how many people are in paid employment, the general population health, the number of younger people requiring school places, as well as the number of people with protected characteristics living in an area."*

The chapter dedicated to the impact of Covid-19 in Pembrokeshire is a strong addition to the assessment. It looks at the impact of the pandemic across a range of areas, from mental health and the way we work, to housing and the environment. For example, it highlights the gap between mental well-being in women and men increased from 9.9% to 14.1%, with women experiencing a greater decline in their mental health than men.

Similarly, you outline the main impact of Brexit and Covid-19 on community cohesion in Mid and South-West Wales. For example, how Brexit has increased insecurity around human rights and how the pandemic has increased exclusion of more vulnerable and isolated members of the community. It is reassuring to hear there have been some positive outcomes in relation to extremism in the area, with the creation of your local county of Sanctuary movement, the help provided to refugees and asylum seekers, and training held for professionals by Small Steps.

Incorporating the views of people via your survey and engagement work in each section of your 'big themes' works well. Future trends and projections are also included.

There is very honest reflection on Pembrokeshire County Council's membership not reflecting the communities it serves. For example, you highlight over 80% of members are men, 40% are aged between 55 and 64 (very few are aged under 45), and the Council has never had a councillor from a

Black, Asian and minority ethnic background. We also note the inclusion of information looking at the engagement of young people in the May 2021 elections.

There is a strong focus on poverty and the assessment highlights it as a cross-cutting issue, where you state: *“the Council is already exploring opportunities to create a whole-Pembrokeshire partnership response to the problem, and the PSB meeting on 25 January 2022 has been set aside to have a specific focus on the matter.”*

The ‘Sector Focus’ areas add strength to the assessment, in looking a little deeper at areas such as retail and town centres, energy, tourism, the public sector etc. It’s also reassuring to see the links you have made to your Regional Skills Partnership and the recently published Regional Economic Framework, highlighting the priorities and opportunities from both.

The assessment highlights 64% of carers identified a worsening of their mental health during the pandemic. While a significant and ongoing challenge, it is encouraging to hear about all young carers on the local authority’s register being provided with a voucher enabling them to purchase additional data, music or a book, in order to support their wellbeing (at the end of Carers week in June 2020, and repeated for Christmas 2020, along with a hamper and gifts). You also highlight 20 young carers were provided with laptops to support them to undertake education, connect with young carers services and maintain friendships.

The assessment highlights the impact of second homes, and your recognition of how it has resulted in many local people being unable to afford buying or renting in their home town or immediate locality. You have also made the links to the sustainability of the Welsh language, highlighting affected communities have been negatively depleted in terms of Welsh language proficiency and use.

In contrast with the rest of Wales, it is positive to hear recent significant investment in Welsh medium language education has meant that Welsh language skills have expanded rather than staying stable or contracting.

The assessment highlights strong examples of good practice and local initiatives in the area. For example:

- Hafan Cymru’s support in response to the impacts of the pandemic on young people witnessing domestic abuse in the home, setting up a Children and Young People’s Wellbeing Project in the area for those in the 5 - 18 age group.
- ‘Haverhub’ in Haverfordwest, one of the first local remote working hubs in a pilot scheme funded by Welsh Government as part of the development a remote working strategy. In the culture chapter, it also states it helped organise food deliveries for vulnerable people and volunteers in the local area, now has a range of groups, events and art exhibitions to help the community thrive, and continue to offer volunteering opportunities.
- The partnership approach taken to establish the Pembrokeshire Hub and your efforts to establish it as a permanent element of community infrastructure and embed its principles into everyday working to promote the wellbeing, independence and social inclusion of people across the county. We note Pembrokeshire has one of the highest rates of volunteers in Wales (31.2%), which you say is likely to have increased as a direct consequence of the pandemic and the establishment of the Hub.

3: Areas that could be further developed

Important areas for consideration

Building on the extensive work already undertaken for your well-being assessment, below are areas we consider to be important for your consideration. If developed further, they would help strengthen the assessment overall.

Future trends

It is reassuring to see the draft assessment include a 'Future trends and projections' section at the end of some of the key theme chapters. Where you have done this, it includes looking across a range of areas and making links between the themes. For example, in the future trends section of the economy chapter, clear links are made between the future of Pembrokeshire's economy and environmental trends and a changing climate.

This also includes some interpretation of what these trends might mean for Pembrokeshire. For example, in the education and learning chapter, you highlight education and learning is a complex area that will need to respond to demographic change, and state: *"Without co-ordinated initiatives to attract younger people and their dependents, it is likely that the number of school aged children within Pembrokeshire will continue to fall."*

Building on this, the assessment would be strengthened if future trends could be considered, referenced and applied more consistently through the report, with clear links made to the [2021 future trends report](#). For example, the health and social care section is light on detail, could provide a bit more analysis and interpretation of what future trends might mean for Pembrokeshire. And while the housing chapter does look ahead, and discusses the theme in a cross-cutting way, there is no section or area on future trends specifically, in contrast to other chapters. This is also the case in the environment chapter.

Please note, we acknowledge in the 'Next Steps' chapter it states you will be including more futures information and it is reassuring to hear from recent correspondence of your proposed 'Pembrokeshire 2040' work, where you're intending to develop a longer-term vision for the county. This will help demonstrate the PSB's intent to consider and embed future information into its next steps, including the setting of objectives and steps and development of a well-being plan.

Futures techniques are effective tools for engaging with others and prompting constructive discussion in a way that can help develop plans that deliver meaningful change. In addition to the 2021 future trends report, other resources for the PSB to consider are our office's [Three Horizons toolkit](#) and the UK Government Office for Science's helpful [guide on futures thinking and foresight](#). In their feedback to PSBs, NRW are offering to run Three Horizons workshop to help support the incorporation of future trends into the well-being planning process, and this may be a good opportunity to link with your 2040 visioning work.

Involvement

From the information presented, it's clear the PSB has undertaken a variety of engagement methods and worked with a range of stakeholders. We note your engagement included:

- Developing a joint regional engagement survey, available in English, Welsh and translated into Arabic, Polish, Romanian and Easy Read.
- A separate, joint regional young people's engagement survey.

- A virtual ideas white board set up at www.haveyoursay.pembrokeshire.gov.uk
- A joint regional engagement session toolkit, which could be used for facilitated sessions or self-run sessions with / by local groups.

The 'Community Engagement Activity' summary report (included as an appendix) is particularly helpful in giving a detailed overview of the work you've undertaken to involve the residents of Pembrokeshire (and across the region) in the drafting of your well-being assessment. It summarises insight in areas ranging from volunteering, developments local people would like to be part of (e.g., climate change), what people value and their concerns etc. In the assessment itself, the 'Outcomes from the survey' section included in each of the main themed chapters works well, which includes clear narrative and quantitative data from your survey responses.

This is rich information for the PSB to consider as its attention shifts to the well-being plan, and it is reassuring the assessment states: *"The views of our citizens and stakeholders are central to developing our understanding of well-being and what really matters to people."*

To build on these strengths, the assessment and/or the engagement summary report would benefit from including some additional insight and reflection on what you feel worked well, and the areas you feel you could (potentially) improve, as you move to the well-being plan. For example, 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, or the case studies you're intending to include.

There may also be opportunities to include more quotes and examples of feedback from residents in the 'outcomes from the survey' section around some of the headlines you outline, as you have done in the housing chapter (p114-115). For example, in the health and social care chapter, respondents highlighted three things they value most highly in relation to their physical health and / or mental well-being. Connecting these with quotes from local residents would benefit the assessment.

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 and the network for Wales, as it develops.

Equality

There is a lot to be commended on your work on understanding equality in your area. For example, the assessment includes a chapter dedicated to poverty and highlights it as a cross-cutting issue; you highlight the research undertaken to look at community cohesion across the region, which included focus groups with representatives ranging from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, EU (non-Welsh) citizens to Syrian Refugees, LGBTQ+ people and disabled people; and you highlight, for example, how younger LGBTQ+ people are more likely to experience mental health issues than non LGBTQ+ young people, often as a result of bullying and not feeling able to talk openly about their issues.

Your analysis and understanding of your area's diversity is honest, highlighting unreliable/outdated data and limitations on data from the national survey. What is positive is that you have recognised these limitations, and still attempted to provide some context and explanation. For example, you

state: "We do not have reliable figures for the number of people in the Trans community. However, we are aware of a local support group and members of it have attended our equalities forum (this includes membership of a wide range of public and third sector organisations)." It is also refreshing the assessment highlights democratic representation within the Council is not diverse, focussing on this within the 'Elections' sub-chapter.

Building on your work in this area, we recommend ensuring all ['protected characteristics' outlined in the Equality Act](#) are considered within the assessment.

In the chapter on Covid-19, you highlight how it has exacerbated the inequalities experienced by the population, with a significant impact on those living in poverty. The assessment also identifies inequalities in health trends and the potential implications of an ageing population (a future trend).

Consideration of the potential implications on inequality is necessary when making decisions to tackle future trends, and this will be important for your Pembrokeshire 2040 work. We note you have referenced our recent report with Public Health Wales '[Inequality in a future Wales](#)'. This is a helpful resource and highlights how 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.

For reference, the next stage of this work is being undertaken in collaboration with FLiNT (Futures Literature Through Narrative). Authors will work with communities most likely to be affected by climate change to ensure their voices are heard, and then shape policy solutions that work for both people (inequalities) and planet (climate change). This work also aims to help develop capability and capacity building for everyone, and the key findings and methodology of the work will be shared with PSBs in due course.

Welsh language

The Welsh language is referred to throughout the assessment, and not only in the 'Welsh language' section of the culture and leisure chapter. For example, it is excellent to see the assessment highlight the impact of second homes where you have also made the links to the sustainability of the Welsh language, highlighting the affected communities have been negatively depleted in terms of Welsh language proficiency and use.

The assessment highlights the percentage of people in 2019 who could speak Welsh in the county reduced from previous years, and that numbers are lower than the neighbouring counties of Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire. Despite this, it is positive to hear that in contrast with the rest of Wales, recent significant investment in Welsh medium language education has meant that Welsh language skills have expanded rather than staying stable or contracting.

In moving to setting objectives and steps within your well-being plan, clear links should be made to your relevant Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and your local authority's promotional strategy. Your regional collaboration with Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion will also be important in this area.

Environment

The environment and climate change chapter is comprehensive. It is particularly helpful to see it refer to the State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR), including reference to the three areas of transformation change it identifies (food, transport and energy) with further detail provided on

p145. It also highlights the UK Climate Change Committee's third report (CCRA3) for Wales and the key areas of focus from NRW's South West Wales and Marine Area Statements.

While it highlights Pembrokeshire has the least tree cover regionally at 10% (Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire have 15% and 17% respectively), there is much to be celebrated in the area. For example, Pembrokeshire has the highest recycling rates and number of blue flag beaches and green coast awards in Wales. You also highlight the presence of the National Park as having a positive impact on the well-being of young people in the county, with many citing it as the best thing about Pembrokeshire.

Building on the extensive information included within the environment and climate change chapter, it would benefit from a 'Future trends and projections' section. This would help bring together the information already presented across the chapter, but go further by making clearer links to some of the key data and information presented in the most recent Future Trends report. This, combined with some interpretation on what it might mean for Pembrokeshire, both now and in the longer-term, would strengthen the assessment overall.

We also note the environment is discussed within the economy chapter which is a strength of the assessment. It also acknowledges the significant changes to agriculture anticipated in the coming years in the 'sector focus', and shares Pembrokeshire Food Park as an example of how the Council and partners are investing in projects to increase the value of agricultural produce from Pembrokeshire, retaining this value within the county to enable local businesses to thrive.

Inclusion of case studies

The 'Next Steps' chapter includes reference to the "*Inclusion of appropriate case studies*". There are examples of good practice and local initiatives throughout the assessment. For example, 'Haverhub' in Haverfordwest is one of the first local remote working hubs that also played a role in organising food deliveries for vulnerable people and volunteers, has a range of groups, events and exhibitions and offers volunteering opportunities.

Presenting initiatives like this as case studies would help showcase the strong examples in your area and provide variety to the strong text and content of the assessment.

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 two areas that could be explored further within the assessment, and/or taken into consideration for the well-being plan:

Llwybr Newydd: Wales's Transport Strategy	Good transport links highlighted in survey responses and identified as a critical issues for the area. We recommend links are made to the three headline priorities and sustainable transport hierarchy within Llwybr Newydd (the Wales Transport Strategy 2021).
The foundational economy and fair and local supply chains	Could be explored in more detail, with links potentially made to the Foundational Economy Challenge Fund . Local supply chains are a key lever for change and have the potential to leverage significant social change, e.g. reducing emissions, increasing local spend and supporting SMEs etc. Some consideration and analysis would strengthen the assessment.

Other areas for consideration (desirable)

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

- **Data and information sources:** The assessment often includes sentences such as “A report by the Welsh Government in 2019...” and “An article published by the Senedd in May 2021...”. It would be helpful if hyperlinks to these documents could be incorporated into the assessment, or alternatively the title of each report could be included.
- **Housing and the climate:** Important links made but this section could go further and consider housing in relation to other areas such as local materials and the need for adaptation to a changing climate.
- **Food:** could be explored in greater detail given it emerges as a strong theme from the regional survey by local people, with 80% of survey respondents saying they would consider using locally sourced food. There is also reference to food festivals in your culture chapter and it's identified as a key area for transformation in SoNaRR.
- **Community safety:** The assessment states (p169) “In February 2021 it was agreed that the PSB would receive regular updates around community safety and cohesion from the Community Safety Partnership.” Is there any information or update that could be included here? No further information or context is provided, though we note a survey is referred to on page 180 which could be linked to.
- **Safe, cohesive and resilient communities:** this chapter could make links to the information presented in the economy chapter (including the ‘sector focus’) on retail and town centres, as well as the Foundational Economy.
- **Minor:** there are several occasions where the ‘Error! Reference Source not found’ message appears where the assessment tries to link to a report or data source.

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](#)