



Cardiff Public Services Board: Well-being Assessment

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

1: Summary

- Structured according to the PSB's existing well-being objectives, with separate documents detailing its evidence base.
- Uses a range of quantitative data to provide insight into the current status and performance of Cardiff against its well-being objectives.
- Good consideration of inequality and impact of the pandemic, recognising how it has exacerbated existing inequalities.
- Section 3 (below) highlights areas that if further developed would help strengthen the assessment. These relate to: cultural well-being (*significant*); future trends, involvement, equality and analysis (*important*). Desirable areas are also included for your consideration.
- Overall, we recommend our advice in relation to the *significant* and *important* areas is considered and incorporated (where possible) into the draft well-being assessment. Our feedback is also intended to help inform your PSB's next steps as attention shifts to developing well-being objectives and steps for the well-being plan.

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

Process and methodology

The structure of the documents, separating the statistical figures from the overarching assessment, means the research and key findings are easy to read and navigate. An excess of graphs, tables and data can detract from a narrative, but the assessment does this well. The list of sources at the end of the report in the appendices is also a useful reference point, clearly presenting the data sets and publications used to inform the assessment.

The assessment draws upon a wide range of quantitative data to identify trends in the area. This is often complimented with information from the 'Ask Cardiff survey', helping with the overall narrative of life and well-being in Cardiff. For example, despite significant budgetary cuts, nearly 73% of Cardiff's surveyed residents in 2020 reported being either very or fairly satisfied with the quality of public services in Cardiff, a figure which has stayed broadly consistent since 2014.

A strength of the assessment is that comparisons are made between the different areas within the area. For example, the assessment regularly discusses well-being disparities within different areas, particularly in relation to the 'Southern Arc', which has higher rates of health deprivation. On the ageing population, for example, it states "*The Cardiff North locality has both the highest percentage and number of people aged 75+, at 20%*". Figures from comparisons like these will be particularly helpful for the PSB as it begins to develop its next well-being plan for Cardiff.

Content

The 'Summary of key issues' provided at the end of each chapter is helpful, and clearly highlights the key headlines with supporting text and narrative. This makes it easier for the reader and residents who are responding to the consultation to consider whether the assessment reflects their experiences of well-being in Cardiff.

It is good to see honest reflection within the assessment. For example, it regularly outlines where the city is performing well, but also where there are clear challenges, such as inequalities. This is also true in relation to the impact of the pandemic. For example, you highlight it is *“expected that long-term conditions will have worsened for many people over the course of the pandemic”*. You also make the links to the pandemic exacerbating existing inequalities by stating *“long-term health and well-being consequences of the Covid-19 economic crisis are also likely to be unequally distributed, exacerbating health inequalities for individuals from poorer and disadvantaged backgrounds, ethnic minority groups and deprived communities.”*

A strength of the assessment is its consideration of equality. In discussion of Covid-19, it recognises the diverse population of Cardiff and comments that those from an ethnic minority background are more likely to suffer negative health and financial outcomes from the pandemic. Similarly, the assessment discusses income inequality and how this links to health inequality, with particular references made to the southern arc of the city.

It is reassuring to note in the assessment the action Cardiff is taking to become carbon neutral by 2030, including the city's One Planet Strategy and City-wide Action Plan. It's also great to hear a large majority (87.1%) of Cardiff residents are concerned about the Climate Emergency and feel that more action is needed, and how valuable the city's public spaces and parks were to residents for accessing green space and nature during lockdown. We also note the 'Statutory reviews and assessments' appendix highlights some of the key reports and strategies for Wales on the environment and climate.

It is good that in some cases the assessment explores the implications of data trends on public services. For example, the assessment comments that *“a declining school-aged population will demand a review of school catchment areas.”* Likewise in discussion of the ageing population, the assessment recognises there will need to be *“an additional 3,051 units of older persons' accommodation”*.

3: Areas that could be further developed

Significant area for consideration

To build on the information set out in your draft well-being assessment, we encourage you to further consider and address the importance of cultural well-being in more detail:

Cultural well-being

Cardiff is a significant cultural centre, home to huge number of providers of arts, culture, heritage activities and sport, as well as being home to a wealth of natural and cultural heritage sites.

While the assessment touches on the importance Cardiff's cultural scene plays in the city's economic success, the analysis and information on cultural well-being is very limited. As set out, it simply outlines the city leads Wales in the percentage of its residents participating in cultural life and highlights a marked difference between participation in the most and least deprived areas of Cardiff, with the latter being far more likely to attend a cultural activity. The associated appendix does provide some additional information, but only in relation to levels of funding.

To strengthen your draft assessment, we recommend the [‘Cultural well-being’ briefing](#) prepared by the Wales Centre for Public Policy for PSBs in 2021 is considered in more detail. This provides a clear

working definition of cultural well-being and sets out specific recommendations that support this area of well-being. The '[Vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language](#)' chapter of our Future Generations Report is also a helpful resource, setting out the key findings and recommendations in relation to culture and the Welsh language in Wales.

To give one example, there is a clear opportunity within the assessment to share information on how the £12m awarded to cultural organisations and individuals in Cardiff (via Welsh Government's Cultural Recovery Fund) was used to improve well-being within the city (this is referred to in the appendix). Supplementing the quantitative data with examples like this would help tell a richer story on cultural well-being in Cardiff and significantly strengthen the assessment.

Looking ahead to your well-being plan, there are cross-cutting opportunities for your PSB to use cultural activities, or a cultural well-being 'lens', to drive well-being improvements in other key areas of well-being such as health, equality, city centre regeneration and economic development. Fostering cultural well-being through participatory activities can also develop social capital and a sense of place and togetherness.

In conjunction with our advice (below) on involvement, we also encourage the PSB to actively involve arts and culture representatives in its work to ensure their voices are being heard in your discussions and decision-making.

Important areas for consideration

Building on the 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

While the draft assessment refers to some longer-term data in the demography chapter on population projections, it is not evident (overall) how future trends have been used, considered and incorporated into the current draft of the assessment. However, we acknowledge the 'Summary of Statutory Reviews and Assessments' appendix states the Future Trends Report "*will be taken into account in the final version of Cardiff's well-being assessment*", which is reassuring to hear.

For your draft assessment, we recommend further work is carried out to consider and incorporate some of the key trends presented within the [Future Trends Report](#), published in December 2021. This includes some analysis and interpretation of what they might mean for Cardiff - particularly significant given some of the striking data you present in relation to areas such as inequality, demographics and the climate and nature emergency. Clear links can also be made between your 'modernising public services' well-being objective and the 'Public Finances' and 'Public Sector Demand & Digital' chapters of the future trends report.

With regard to your well-being plan, and the setting of objectives and steps, it would also be helpful to understand how the PSB intends to consider and embed future trends information. Collaborative working focussed on the 'long-term' is challenging but 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 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. We encourage your PSB to take up this offer if you haven't already. Our Three Horizons toolkit is available [here](#).

It is positive the draft assessment highlights how the pandemic has exposed existing inequalities. Consideration of the potential implications on inequality is necessary when making decisions to tackle future trends. Our recent report with Public Health Wales '[Inequality in a future Wales](#)' 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.

In conjunction with our advice (below) on involvement, we also encourage you to consider how different people and population groups living in your communities may be differently affected by future trends, and actively involve those people to ensure their voices are being heard in your discussions and decision-making. A better understanding of their concerns and priorities for action will help you plan your next steps.

Involving the people of Cardiff

Aside from including some statistics from the 'Ask Cardiff 2020 Survey', it is not evident from the information presented how the residents of Cardiff have been actively involved in the shaping of the draft assessment.

Using and adopting strong, innovative involvement techniques that go beyond consultation and move more towards co-production is important for all PSBs. From the information presented, it is unclear what involvement approaches and techniques have been trialled or adopted by the PSB, aside from the survey. For example, has the PSB undertaken any specific involvement activities to inform the assessment, such as qualitative interviews, focus groups, or outreach to community groups, residents or wider stakeholders? If these have been undertaken, it would be helpful if they were included and referred to.

Overall, the assessment relies heavily on quantitative data and highlights a range of significant challenges facing the city. Less evident is the inclusion of qualitative information to compliment this, such as the views and experiences of residents.

To highlight one example, the draft assessment outlines the significant negative impact on mental health and well-being of children and young people from the pandemic, stating: *"There has been a significant rise in Children and Young People presenting with emotional and mental health issues, with a rise in in-patient admissions and referrals to both Child Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and Children's Services."* Complimenting this narrative with insight and views from young people and parents living in the city would help the PSB gain greater insight into people's lived experiences, and strengthen the assessment overall.

As your attention shifts to the well-being plan, we encourage you to consider how the PSB can incorporate more views, experiences and lived experience into its design, enabling residents in the city to tell their story more fully.

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.

Please note, this advice mirrors our feedback to your 2017 well-being assessment on the need for greater evidence of engagement and involvement activities undertaken to inform the assessment.

Equality

It is positive the assessment recognises the diversity of Cardiff's population and provides some analysis of gender and ethnicity gaps in the labour market across the city. It also highlights how the pandemic has exposed existing inequalities, recognising longer-term health and well-being consequences are likely to exacerbate health inequalities for individuals from poorer and disadvantaged backgrounds, ethnic minority groups and deprived communities.

To build on this, it would be helpful if the assessment:

- Ensures all '[protected characteristics](#)' outlined in the Equality Act are considered.
- Considers the needs and challenges faced by people seeking asylum, given Cardiff is one of four dispersal areas in Wales and the sole initial accommodation site in Wales.
- Provides further breakdown of demographics. For example, it is useful the draft assessment recognises over 15% of the population belong to an ethnic minority group, but this is not broken down in relation to wards.
- Acknowledges how intersectionality affects people in the city. For example, what it is like to be young and migrant in Cardiff?

Analysis

There is a tendency in the assessment to present data and information without going further and providing some interpretation of what it means (or might mean) for Cardiff, both now and in the future.

For example, the 'Cardiff grows in a resilient way' chapter highlights there is insufficient evidence, staff resource or understanding to assess the condition of half of its 16 protected conservation sites. And of those features which can be assessed, 5 out of 13 are in an 'unfavourable condition', reinforcing the point you make that "*biodiversity loss is accelerating at an unprecedented rate*".

Using this example, what are the implications for Cardiff, both now and in the future? How might it relate to the role of the PSB and Cardiff's One Planet Strategy? How might it relate to managing the environmental impacts of growth and adaptation to climate change? And, what are the links to the importance of the city's accessible natural green space, given there is only 11ha of accessible natural greenspace per 1,000 population in Cardiff (second lowest in Wales), but its significance was reinforced during the pandemic?

There are also opportunities to include further context on the key underlying causes of the challenges you outline, and highlight any existing work or initiatives underway in the city to help tackle them. For example, in discussion of educational attainment gap (13%) between those in receipt of free school meals, and those who are not, it would be helpful to outline some of the reasons why "*the gap has narrowed in recent years*", together with any examples of best practice that could be shared within the assessment – these would be of real value to other public bodies and PSBs.



Similarly, it would be helpful in some instances if the analysis provided further information and context to explain why some issues are as stated. For example, in the 'healthy lifestyle' section the assessment highlights (positively) that Cardiff has the third lowest percentage of adults that are obese. As above, it would be helpful if some information or examples could be shared on *why* this is the case, and if possible, *what* local activities or initiatives have enabled this. For example, has it been driven by one of the PSB partners? Sharing examples of best practice is regularly highlighted by PSB Coordinators as beneficial, and well-being assessments provide an opportunity for you to do this.

With the time available to finalise your draft assessment, it is appreciated this additional analysis will not be possible across all chapters. However, going further in your analysis and interpretation in some key areas would strengthen the assessment.

Other areas for consideration (desirable)

These are areas you might wish to amend / update to strengthen the assessment overall. It also includes areas where further links could be made 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 work you have already undertaken:

Structure and information

- **Summary of key issues:** While the 'summary of key issues' provides a useful overview of key issues affecting residents, some summaries contain new information. For clarity, it would be helpful if the structure was more consistent, to help outline whether these sections are summaries, conclusions, recommendations or next steps.
- **Integration and join-up:** Some themes within the assessment such as air quality are discussed in an inter-connected manner, and there are other themes where this could be further developed. For example, housing is presented primarily in relation to economic well-being (affordability) but cuts across environmental, social and cultural well-being. Similarly, clear links could be made between poverty and environmental well-being, including access to nature, while further discussion of tourism could cover economic, environmental and cultural well-being.
- **Stakeholder list:** the list of sources at the end of the assessment is a helpful way of identifying where the data has come from. In conjunction with our advice above on involvement, it would be beneficial if the assessment included a list of stakeholders consulted as part of the research, or an overview of how the survey was distributed.
- **Reflection on progress:** It would be beneficial to see examples of how progress in some areas has changed since publication of the last well-being assessment.

Topics and themes

- **Skills for the future:** The assessment covers educational attainment and highlights the most prominent growth sectors in Cardiff. It would be strengthened if it further considered skills for the future, how they relate to Cardiff, and their significance to well-being. Summary analysis of our recent report on skills for a prosperous, green and equal recovery is [here](#). It finds there are significant skills gaps in green industries in Wales which must be addressed.



- **Brexit:** Not referred to within the assessment but likely to have a significant impact for Cardiff and its residents, e.g., EU citizens residing in the city, the ability of businesses to import and export goods, and sectors such as tourism and the creative industries that have relied on free movement of people. The WCPP's briefing: '[The impacts of Covid-19 and Brexit on well-being](#)' is a helpful resource on this.
- **Transport:** Given the strong focus on transport and air quality in the assessment, we recommend clear links are made to the three headline priorities and sustainable transport hierarchy within [Llwybr Newydd](#) (the Wales Transport Strategy 2021). Cardiff's positive work to improve active travel could also be explored in more detail.
- **Cardiff Capital Region:** The Cardiff Capital Region Industrial and Economic Plan (2019) is cited in the appendix. There may be opportunities to consider and reference the [associated strategies](#) and [funds](#) in greater detail. The South East Wales Regional Economic Framework was recently published and is also an [important resource](#) for Cardiff.
- **Circular economy and consumption:** You highlight Cardiff is the worst performing local authority in Wales for sustainable waste management (though it outperforms all major UK cities). The assessment could explore what Wales' [strategy for a circular economy](#) means for Cardiff, e.g. helping communities share items, food waste, electric fleet etc. PSBs should be seeking ways to understand how a circular economy approach can help them meet a number of well-being priorities.
- **Foundational economy:** Could be explored in more detail, with links potentially made to [the Foundational Economy Challenge Fund](#). Fair and local supply chains are also a key lever for change with the potential to leverage significant social change, and some consideration and analysis would strengthen the assessment.
- **Play and connection to nature:** The 'Cardiff is a great place to grow up' chapter would be strengthened if the importance of play, connection to nature and sport and culture were further considered. Clear links can be made here with your sections on health and well-being, mental health and cycling and walking.
- **Older people:** The 'Cardiff is a great place to grow older' chapter provides a helpful overview. It could also capture the strengths and assets older people bring to their communities, such as volunteering, knowledge and skill sharing, sense of community etc.

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](#)