

Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board: Well-being assessment

Feedback and advice from the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales,
14th March 2022

1: Summary

- Set out into 14 community profiles with separate documents for each community area (8 for Gwynedd and 6 for Anglesey).
- Each community profile structured against the four dimensions of well-being.
- Based upon a range of qualitative and quantitative sources.
- Section three highlights areas that if further developed would help strengthen the assessment. These relate to: the need for an overarching summary (significant); analysis, future trends, involvement and equality (important). Desirable areas are also included for your consideration.
- Overall we recommend our advice in relation to *significant* and *important* areas outlined below is considered and incorporated into your draft well-being assessment (where possible) and informs 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 draft assessment covers the four dimensions of well-being (social, environment, economy and culture).

It's evident the assessment has drawn upon a wide range of qualitative and quantitative sources. For example, primary engagement via the 'Our Area 2035' exercise and the Place Planning surveys, alongside secondary sources such as the census data (2011) and the National Survey for Wales. It also acknowledges limitations in some of the data, noting gaps in existing data sets and some of the figures being based on 2011 Census data.

The community profiles provide regular comparisons to each respective local authority area and all Wales figures (where possible). For example, it highlights 51% of people in the Bangor area can speak Welsh, which is lower than the Gwynedd percentage of 65%, but higher than Wales on 19%.

There is some reflection on lessons learned, and contextual changes, since the last round of well-being assessments in 2016. For example, it's positive to see recognition of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has had, since the publication of your last assessment. You point out it has "*highlighted the importance of services provided by the voluntary and public sector to our communities, and the importance of the joint-working between them.*" You also recognise the crisis has highlighted issues that already existed in our communities, such as poverty and employment, mental health, second homes and loneliness.

It's good to see the introductions identify the importance of your environment which may offer you "*a greener path out of the Covid-19 pandemic*" and an opportunity to revisit how you use your natural assets to tackle the threats of the climate and nature crises. This will be an important consideration for your PSB.

It is reassuring to hear the findings will be used and updated until the next round of assessments, to inform policy decisions and local plans.

Content

The assessment is broken down into 14 community area profiles which provide well presented, high-level overviews of each area.

A strength of the assessment is that it is user friendly, well presented and easy to read. This will help support public engagement during the consultation stages.

The structure of each profile is consistent across the assessment, providing an overview of well-being in each area in relation to the dimensions of well-being (economic, social, environment and cultural). Positively, this ensures each of the four dimensions are considered in equal measure, while the demographics section provides an overview of key population shifts and Welsh language use across the PSB area.

The local examples presented within the 'Natural Environment' sections add value and local context to each area's profile. For example, it is helpful to read the information on the Morfa Dyffryn National Nature Reserve and Coed-y-Brenin in the Dolgellau profile and Newborough National Nature Reserve and Anglesey Fens in Bro Aberffraw and Bro Rhosyr.

The regular inclusion of quotes and views from residents works well.

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 need for an overarching summary:

Need for an overarching summary

The draft assessment is broken down into 14 community area profiles which provide well presented, high-level overviews of each of the areas.

While this enables the PSB to better understand and scrutinise their local areas in more detail, there is currently no overarching overview or summary of well-being in Gwynedd and Anglesey that brings all of this information together. This would help the PSB (and readers) understand the broader picture across the area as a whole.

We recommend the draft assessment includes an overarching summary that draws on the information and data already presented in each community profile, but goes further and:

- Identifies the key themes of well-being across the whole PSB area
- Brings the information together into a set of broad, overarching headlines for well-being in Gwynedd and Anglesey
- Explores connections between some of the key issues highlighted in the community profiles
- Considers and incorporates some of the key future trends presented within the [Future Trends Report](#)
- Highlights key challenges and opportunities

- Provides some examples of comparison of well-being between the community areas. For example, between urban and rural areas, coastal and more in-land areas, and/or between Gwynedd and Anglesey more broadly?

We recommend this is undertaken in conjunction with our advice below (under 'important areas for consideration').

Including an overarching summary to your draft well-being assessment would enable members of your PSB to have a clearer understanding of the broad challenges to well-being in Gwynedd and Anglesey. It would also be a helpful resource for anyone else who uses the assessment, including organisations and residents.

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. We encourage you to consider these in conjunction with our advice above on the need for an overarching summary. If developed further, the areas below would help strengthen the assessment overall.

Analysis

While the community profiles are helpful in providing a high-level, present day overview of well-being in each area, less evident is interpretation and analysis of what it means (or might mean) for Anglesey and Gwynedd, both now and in the future.

For example, the Caernarfon profile highlights there is a higher than average rate of children aged 4-5 who are obese. Using this example, what are the implications for Caernarfon and the wider area? Is there evidence this trend will continue? If so, how might it affect demand on your healthcare services in the future? And, is this a potential area for the PSB to work collectively and encourage healthier behaviours?

Similarly, the 'tourism' sections of the economy chapters highlight the number of accommodation businesses in the area, but no further information or context is provided. How do the figures presented compare to the past 10-15 years? How does tourism contribute to the economy overall? What's the bigger picture, in relation to both the potential challenges and opportunities for tourism now and in the future, given the area's outstanding natural environment and your identification of a potential "*greener path out of the Covid-19 pandemic*"?

There are also opportunities to include further context on the key underlying causes of the challenges you outline, and to highlight any existing work or initiatives underway in your area to help address them. For example, in discussion of school leavers who are NEET, the Anglesey assessments comment that the percentage is now 4.7% in comparison to 1.1% in 2018 and the Wales average of 1.7%. It would be helpful to outline some of the reasons as to *why* this shift might have taken place, alongside any efforts undertaken locally or regionally to help address this.

With regard to the Welsh language, the assessment highlights 65% of people in Gwynedd can speak Welsh, which has reduced from 76% in 1981. As above, it would be helpful here if further information or interpretation could be provided on some of the reasons why the area has seen this decrease. There is also an opportunity to make the links between the longer-term future trends of the Welsh language in your area and the challenges presented from second homes you highlight in

the 'houses and second homes' sections - this is highlighted as an issue by residents via the Place Planning survey.

It is appreciated a lot of work has gone into developing the draft well-being assessment, and given the time available prior to formal publication and the nature of the layout and presentation of each community profile, further in-depth analysis across all chapters may not be possible. Our recommendation (above) to include an overarching summary is one way to help ensure the well-being assessment provides some further analysis and interpretation of the key data, information and trends presented across the area. This would help strengthen the assessment overall.

Future trends

While the community profiles refer to some longer-term data in the demography chapter on population projections, it's not evident (overall) how future trends have been used, considered and incorporated into the current draft of the assessment.

For your draft assessment, we recommend further work is carried out to consider and incorporate some of the key future trends presented within the [Future Trends Report](#), published in December 2021. This includes some analysis and interpretation of what they might mean for Gwynedd and Anglesey, and could be incorporated into an overarching summary (as per our advice above).

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 discusses the impact of Covid-19 on people's well-being. We encourage you to consider our recent report with Public Health Wales '[Inequality in a future Wales](#)', a helpful resource which highlights 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.

Involvement

The draft assessment states partners of the Public Services Board have "*engaged extensively with communities and taken those outcomes into consideration about the state of well-being of our communities.*"

While the assessment refers to some examples of engagement (e.g, the 'Our Area 2035' exercise in Gwynedd) and includes quotes from residents taken from surveys/consultations, it's not entirely clear from the information presented what engagement methods and activities have been undertaken in Gwynedd and Anglesey specifically to help inform this assessment. For example, has the PSB undertaken any qualitative interviews, focus groups, or outreach work to community groups, residents or wider stakeholders?

Building on the work you have undertaken to date, it would therefore be helpful if further information could be included on this. This could be in the form of a short annex, which would be

helpful for readers and the PSB so lessons can be learned and taken forward, as attention shifts to your well-being plan. We encourage you to include further information on your engagement that:

- Provides a brief overview of the engagement approaches and methods used in both Gwynedd and Anglesey
- Presents a list of stakeholders, organisations and community groups engaged with
- Outlines any work undertaken to help increase accessibility to your engagement activities
- Identifies 'seldom heard voices' you are seeking to involve
- Outlines any strengths and challenges of your engagement work
- Includes some reflection on any ways your work to involve people could be improved going forward.

Using and adopting strong, innovative involvement techniques that go beyond consultation 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 the Co-Production Network for Wales, as it develops.

Equality

As set out, the community profiles reference: age, health, gender and income. We recommend all '[protected characteristics](#)' outlined in the Equality Act are considered. This includes: disability, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. We also encourage you to consider how intersectionality affects people in Gwynedd and Anglesey.

It would be helpful if the 'Population' section of each community profile considers demographics within Gwynedd and Anglesey, and how they may be changing.

The 'Population' sections highlight an ageing population. This will have implications on equality in your area, and disrupt how health and social care, employment and education, and pensions operate. These systems will need to adapt if they are to function in the long-term. As referred to above (under 'future trends') our recent report with Public Health Wales '[Inequality in a future Wales](#)' is a helpful resource for your PSB. It highlights how changing demographics, the future of work and climate change could increase existing inequalities if the impacts on different groups in society are not factored in.

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

- **Integration:** There are opportunities to discuss some themes in a more integrated manner, recognising that many of the issues covered in the draft assessment are inter-connected. For example, 'fuel poverty' is referred to within the economic wellbeing section, but is an area that also relates to social and environmental well-being (health implications of poorly heated homes, sustainable options for insulation and heating etc). Similarly, links could be made between health and the environment, given the assessment highlights 31% of 4-5 year-old children are overweight or obese (higher than the Wales figure of 27%) and feedback from your 2035 survey highlighted how people value their area's environment and proximity to mountains and countryside.
- **Clarity of data:** The draft assessment uses Public Health Wales' standardised scores for adult mental well-being. For example, stating "*Gwynedd's score is 52.9 which is slightly higher than the Wales score of 51.4*". If unfamiliar with this scoring, it's not clear to the reader if this is a positive or negative story for mental well-being in Gwynedd.
- **Structure and information:** While the community profiles provide a helpful, high-level overview of well-being in each area, there is regular repetition of content, particularly in the introductory statement.

Topics and themes

- **The environment:** The assessment highlights agriculture as the main land use in the area, e.g., it accounts for approximately 92% of all land use on Anglesey. Despite this, there is very limited information included on agriculture, it's importance to the area, the potential implications of Brexit and the proposed Sustainable Farming Scheme. Ecosystem resilience is picked up intermittently but not in all profiles, and the 'Carneddau peatland' section shares important narrative about the importance and value of peat, but nothing about the Carneddau peatland itself. Addressing these would help strengthen the assessment, and we also encourage you to make the links to NRW's North West Wales and Marine Area Statements.
- **Brexit:** could be explored further in the assessment, particularly in relation to agriculture, tourism, and the potential impact on small businesses due to changes in imports / exports. The WCPP's briefing: ['The impacts of Covid-19 and Brexit on well-being'](#) is a helpful resource.
- **Regional Economic Framework:** The [North Wales Regional Economic Framework](#) is an important resource for your PSB.
- **Transport:** mentioned in most profiles, and important for improving connectivity in your area. We recommend consideration is given to the three headline priorities and sustainable transport hierarchy within [Llwybr Newydd](#) (the Wales Transport Strategy 2021).
- **Skills for the future:** The assessment covers educational attainment and rates of school leavers who are NEET. It would be strengthened if it further considered skills for the future, how they relate to Gwynedd and Anglesey, 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.
- **Circular economy and consumption:** the report highlights that Gwynedd, for example, has had an increase in the amount of municipal waste in the last six years – but still falls below the Welsh average. The assessment could explore what Wales' [strategy for a circular economy](#) means for the area. PSBs should be seeking ways to understand how a circular economy approach can help them meet a number of well-being priorities.

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](#)