



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY PANEL - 6TH NOVEMBER 2014

SUBJECT: WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) BILL

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To make members of the Panel aware of the content of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill, will place a duty on public bodies, including local authorities, to make decisions that leave a positive legacy for our children, and children's children, and to report on how we are complying with the Act from April 2016.
- 2.2 The Act will set 6 well-being goals and require public bodies to set and publish objectives that maximise the organisations contribution to achieving the well-being goals. Each public body is also required to report annually on progress it has made in meeting its well-being objectives.
- 2.3 The Bill also makes provision for Local Service Boards to be put on a statutory basis as Public Service Boards.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Authority's work on sustainable Development supports the following strategies:
- "Living Better, Using Less", Sustainable Development Strategy, 2008.
 - "Caerphilly Delivers" Single Integrated Plan, 2013 – 2017
 - Education for Sustainable Development & Global Citizenship Strategy, 2009.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 On 7 July 2014, the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill was tabled, as the start of its legislative journey through the National Assembly. It is anticipated that it will receive Royal Assent in the Spring of 2015 and the commencement of the Duty will be April 2016.
- 4.2 The Act is in 4 parts:
- Part 1: Introduction and Key Concepts
 - Part 2: Overview of the main provisions
 - Part 3: Establishes the office of Future Generations Commissioner for Wales
 - Part 4: Establishes a Public Services Board for each local authority in Wales

Part 1: Introduction and Key Concepts

- 4.3 **Purpose of the Act.** The general purpose of the Act is to ensure that the governance arrangements of public bodies, including local authorities, for improving the well-being of Wales take the needs of future generations into account. The aim is for public bodies to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wales in accordance with the sustainable development principles

Part 2: Overview of the main provisions

- 4.4 **Well-Being Goals.** The Act sets out 6 well-being goals against which all public bodies must set and publish well-being objectives that are designed to maximise their contribution to the achievement of these well-being goals.
- **A prosperous Wales** - an innovative and productive, low carbon emission, economy that makes more efficient and proportionate use of resources; and which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities for a skilled and well-educated population.
 - **A resilient Wales** – a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change.
 - **A healthier Wales** – a society in which people’s physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.
 - **A more equal Wales** – a society that enables people to fulfill their potential no matter what their background or circumstances.
 - **A Wales of cohesive communities** – attractive, viable, safe and well-connected.
 - **A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language** – a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.
- 4.5 **Sustainable Development Principle.** In applying the sustainable development principle the Act requires that public bodies take into account:
- The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long-term needs.
 - The benefits of taking an integrated approach by considering how: an objective may impact upon each of the well-being goals and the social, economic and environmental aspects and; the impact of the body’s objectives on each other and upon other public bodies’ objectives.
 - The importance of involving those with an interest in the objectives, seeking views and taking them into account.
 - How collaborating with any other person could assist the body to meet its objectives, or assist another body to meet its objectives.
 - How deploying resources to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may contribute to meeting the body’s objective, or another body’s objectives.
- 4.6 **National Indicators and Annual Well-Being Report.** The Welsh Ministers must publish national indicators that may be applied to measuring progress towards the achievement of well-being goals. They must then also report annually on progress towards the goals by reference to the indicators.
- 4.7 **Future Trends Report.** The Welsh Ministers must, within 12 months after the general election, publish a report that contains predictions of likely trends in the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wales; and any related analytical data and information that the Welsh Ministers consider appropriate

- 4.8 **Annual Reports by other public bodies.** Public bodies covered by the act, including local authorities, are required to publish annual reports of the progress they have made in meeting their well-being objectives. At the same time the public body must review its well-being objectives, and if they are no longer considered appropriate they must amend them and include an explanation of reasons for any amendment.

Part 3: Establishes the office of Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

- 4.9 The Act makes provision for Welsh Ministers to appoint a Future Generations Commissioner for Wales. The Commissioner's general duty is to promote the sustainable development principle and to monitor and assess the extent to which well-being objectives set by public bodies are being met.
- 4.10 The Commissioner may make recommendations to public bodies on how steps can be taken to meet well-being objectives in accordance with the SD principle. A public body must take all reasonable steps to follow the course of action set out in the Commissioner's recommendations.

Part 4: Establishes a Public Services Board for each local authority in Wales

- 4.11 **Public Service Boards.** The Act makes provision for the establishment of a public services board for each local authority area in Wales. The board will have the local authority, Local Health Board, the Welsh Fire & Rescue authority and Natural Resources Body for Wales as members. In addition the board must invite ('invited participants') the Welsh Ministers, the chief constable of the police force in that area, the police and crime commissioner for a police area in that area, a person required to provide probation services in relation to the local authority area and a body representing voluntary organisations in the area.
- 4.12 The aim of each public services board is to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area in accordance with the sustainable development principle. Each board is required to publish an assessment of the state of the economic, social and environmental well-being in its area prior to the production of a local well-being plan.
- 4.13 **Local Well-Being Plan.** Each public services board is required to prepare and publish a "local well-being plan", which must include objectives that are designed to maximise the board's contribution within its area to the achievement of the well-being goals. The objectives in the plan may also be well-being objectives published by the board member's individual public body. The public services board must also review and amend its local well-being plan and produce annual progress reports.
- 4.14 Executive arrangements by a local authority must ensure that its overview and scrutiny committee has power to review or scrutinise decisions made, other actions exercised by its public services board and the board's governance arrangements; and to make reports and recommendations to the board with respect to the board's functions or governance arrangements; and to exercise that power in requiring the board or individual members to attend a meeting of the committee and provide it with explanations of such matters as it may specify.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is for information only. No Equalities Impact Assessment has been done on this report, however Sustainable Development and Equalities interact on many levels and work done in one area often supports the other. Creating sustainable communities, employment and transport for example, is of benefit to all the residents of Caerphilly county borough, regardless of their individual circumstances or backgrounds.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Undertaking work to comply with the emerging requirements of the new Bill has been identified as a key priority in the work programme for the SD & Living Environment Team and is included in the work programme for 2014/15.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 There are no consultation responses, which have not been incorporated into this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That the Panel note the content of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 For the reasons set out in the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 There are no current statutory powers however this report is being produced in preparation for the "Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill", which was introduced in July 2014, and will place a statutory duty on local authorities from April 2016.

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