



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY PANEL - 6TH NOVEMBER 2014

**SUBJECT: WLGA EARLY ADOPTERS PROGRAMME FOR THE WELL-BEING OF
FUTURE GENERATIONS BILL**

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To make members of the Panel aware of the WLGA “early adopter” programme for the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill, and what involvement in the programme will entail.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill, will place a duty on 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 Bill from April 2016.
- 2.2 The WLGA have developed an “early adopters” programme for local authorities to start to work towards the requirements of the Bill immediately. The support from WLGA is free and will also include an opportunity to help to shape the guidance to support implementation of the Bill.
- 2.3 On the 21st August 2014, the Corporate Management Team approved a recommendation for Caerphilly to join the WLGA early adopters programme.

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.

The 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. It is designed to provide local authorities with a renewed sense of purpose on the sustainability agenda, and requires us all to think differently and plan over a longer period of time. The Bill requires us to plan so that we recognise challenges before they arise and grasp opportunities as they occur.

- 4.2 The duty will require local authorities to report on how they are complying with the Bill from April 2016. However the WLGA are developing an “early adopters” programme for local authorities to start to work towards the requirements of the Bill immediately.
- 4.3 On the 21st August 2014, the Corporate Management Team approved a recommendation for Caerphilly to join the WLGA early adopters programme. Caerphilly is one of eleven local authorities and three national parks to join the programme.

Support provided by the WLGA

- 4.4 The aim of the support provided by the WLGA is to help participants to take some initial steps to position their authority to respond to the Bill’s requirements. Over time, this should help authorities to develop new ways of working that maximise the benefits of an SD approach.
- 4.5 Caerphilly will receive the following support, which will help to enable us to put in place processes and procedures in line with the requirements of the new Bill:
- a diagnostic self-assessment tool to help an authority to establish its current position and priorities in relation to requirements of the Bill and the ‘building blocks’
 - participation in a webinar series that will help an authority to develop in-house expertise in vital areas (to cover foresighting and the production of ward-based scenarios; integrated reporting; building SD into the budget setting process)
 - links to working groups on integrated reporting and indicator development
 - invitations to free events on policy specific issues such as climate change adaptation and flood and water issues
 - exchange of good practice information between participating authorities
 - networking with other early adopters to share best practice and offer peer-to-peer assistance
 - access to a wide range of support materials via the WLGA website, which is being revamped to provide additional resources.
- 4.6 Importantly, as an early adopter there will also be an opportunity to help to shape the guidance to support implementation of the Bill. This will include an opportunity for local authorities to engage with the WG, WAO and WLGA to shape the guidance covering the reporting, monitoring and requirements of the Bill.

Current situation in Caerphilly

- 4.7 Caerphilly is considered to be one of the leading authorities in Wales on its approach to SD. It is over seventeen years since the Council first approved a sustainable development policy, and set out the five principles of sustainable development that should guide all the actions of the Authority.

Involvement in the early adopters programme would allow the Authority to continue to be at the leading edge of SD in Wales. It would provide a framework for the review of existing structures and process to ensure that they are fit for purpose as guidance and legislation in this area moves forward.

Time and resource implications

- 4.8 Reviewing processes, structures and reporting in line with the emerging requirements of the new Bill has been identified as a key priority in the work programme for the Team Leader for SD & Living Environment and the Education for Sustainable Development Officer for 2014/15. Involvement in the programme will provide support and access to materials to aid this work
- 4.9 It is however a requirement of the programme that there is commitment from senior officers and Members to the process. This would include involvement in the initial self-assessment process and supporting and taking forward work on this agenda as it progresses.

Next steps

- 4.10 The first part of the programme involves senior officer from the authority completing an on line diagnostic questionnaire that will help to establish the starting point for each of the early adopter authorities. The self-assessment questionnaire is structured around the ten building blocks that WLGA believe need to be in place to respond effectively to the new legislation. Twelve senior officers were nominated by CMT to complete the questionnaire.
- 4.11 The responses to the questionnaire will be analysed by the WLGA and a report produced that will identify the current situation and potential areas for action. Following this it is proposed to hold a workshop for those who completed the questionnaire to receive feedback on the results, and to identify a “critical path of actions”. This will then form the basis for the work of the authority as part of the programme.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 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. There is no financial cost for the support provided by the WLGA.

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. It is a requirement of the programme that there is commitment from senior officers and Members to the process. This would include involvement in supporting and taking forward work on this agenda as it progresses.

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 Corporate Management Team decision to join the WLGA programme as an “early adopter” for 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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