

**Senedd Cymru**

**Y Pwyllgor Cydraddoldeb a Chyfiawnder Cymdeithasol**

**Ymchwiliad:** Deddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol (Cymru)

2015 **Ymateb gan:** Un Llais Cymru

**Welsh Parliament**

**Equality and Social Justice Committee**

**Inquiry:** Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

**Evidence from:** One Voice Wales



Dear Members

One Voice Wales welcomes the opportunity to respond to your committee's post-legislative scrutiny of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Here are our observations in answer to the terms of reference of the inquiry:

**1. How far the intended objective of the Act is being achieved;**

We have examples of many Community and Town Councils using the objectives as the basis of their Annual Reports. Annual Reports are a legal requirement. There are 735 Community and Town Councils – however only larger councils those with a precept of over £200,000 are required under Section 4 of the legislation to have in place a wellbeing plan that supports the work of the local Public Service Board. Many Community and Town Councils not bound by the duty contained in the Act carry out a range of actions designed to support the implementation of the wellbeing goals. One of our smaller town councils is on the list of the 100 Future Generations Changemakers as being inspirational for bringing positive change in Wales.

Experience of those who have become directly involved mirrors the more formal assessments of the statutory monitoring bodies Audit Wales and the Future Generations Commissioner as quoted below.

*"The Act is not driving the system-wide change that was intended. In 2020, I called for a review of the Act to explore how barriers to its implementation could be overcome and how Wales could remain at the forefront of actions to improve well-being. Five years on, that recommendation has not been acted on in the way I would have hoped."* (Adrian Crompton, Auditor General for Wales)

**2. 2. Any action which should be taken to improve the effectiveness of the Act and its implementation, including any specific drafting issues;**

Many of the targets have probably been adversely impacted by cutbacks in public spending as well as insufficient collaborative and partnership work and these difficulties require special attention as a matter of priority.

The Commissioner has recently put a process in place to review progress on delivering the key components of the Wellbeing Act against the 50 key indicators and launched at a Future Generations Action Summit in April. This is a welcomed development as the report contains clear recommendations to public bodies on the steps needed to achieve the national well-being goals over the next five years. Public bodies – including Community and Town Councils are invited to submit their response to the recommendations in this report by 31 October 2025. It may then be timely to relaunch the Act.

We support a suggestion which has come forward that all town and community and councils should be encouraged to adopt a scorecard approach in relation to its work in support of the Act - a possible scorecard that could be used for this purpose is attached.

There is a need for increased and improved communication about the Act and its objectives. It would be usefully for the Commissioner to consider outreach meetings with town and community councils to encourage implementation of the wellbeing goals.

All Community and Town Councils and One Voice Wales should be encouraged to upload details of the Act and examples of how it can be implemented at the local level. It would be useful if the Commissioner could prepare a document for this purpose.

### **3. Whether the review and reporting requirements under the Act are being met;**

As noted above only the larger Councils are required to review annually but we are unsure how widespread this is across the sector. One option would be to make it an Audit requirement. There could be a different political landscape after the 2026 Senedd elections which may result in a less sympathetic approach to the delivery of wellbeing goals and targets.

### **4. The effectiveness of guidance made under the Act;**

There is a need to refine guidance for councils with a duty under the Act to align their work with the PSB's local wellbeing plan. However, there is a lack of local council participation in the work of local PSBs and examples of membership of Town and Community Councils on PSBs being terminated. In the light of the Senedd Inquiry on the role, governance and accountability of the local council sector, the published report on democratic health and the recent community boundary reviews may result in fewer Councillors. This would make it increasingly difficult to maintain significant engagement with the local PSBs having regard to the general workload of Councils and their staff. Unfortunately, PSBs have either loosely engaged with or failed to engage with our sector. Relevant Councils need adequate support from the Welsh Government which should include grant funding.

In order for PSBs to engaged effectively with our sector, more specific guidance is needed. Communities can be usefully engaged at an early stage, thus addressing an early finding of Audit Wales that PSBs were not doing so. Those Councils presently subject to the Act should be directly developing a response to Well-being Plans because they have had some influence in developing those Plan's objectives. Besides demonstrating compliance in the Annual Report, they could support a PSB Well-being Plan with a supplementary plan, or combine with a Placemaking or Place Plan to create a Community Plan. This would require extensive changes to SFPF 4. *(The Act requires public services boards to involve community and town councils in the process of improving the well-being of their areas, regardless of whether the duty in section 40(1) of the Act applies to those councils. All community and town councils are classed as "other partners" of public services boards and must be consulted by those boards on the assessment of local well-being and subsequently on the local well-being plan. They will also have the opportunity of engaging with the public services board when invited to do so)*

Another positive way forward would be to share best practice – evidence will be available in responses received to the delivery on the 50 key indicators in the Commissioner's 2025 Report – see 2 above. The review report will provide an analysis of progress in meeting the key indicators, identify solutions as well as an assessment as to how the targets have been implemented. This should be shared widely.

One Voice Wales is also of the view that Community and Town Councils should have more flexible powers and that Welsh Government should:

- Through a new Local Government (Community and Town Councils) Act introduce measures to reform the laws governing the administration of Community and Town

councils, which will include new powers setting out a clear purpose for the sector and to deliver place-based local services.

- Promote use of the General Power of Competence and remove barriers to the use of this 'right to innovate'.
- Introduce a duty to ensure community and town involvement in public service board scrutiny processes.

**5. How far the Act has been legally binding and enforceable;**

Unsure – but as noted above making it an Audit requirement would be one option.

**6. How far the Act has represented, and will continue to represent, value for money;**

It is difficult to disagree with the wellbeing goals of the Act and taking these into consideration when making decisions should ensure better decision-making by requiring public bodies to consider the long-term impact of their actions on the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales, present and future, thereby contributing to value for money. This is achieved through a sustainable development principle and "five ways of working," promoting integration, collaboration, and involvement of diverse stakeholders in the decision-making process.

Focusing more specifically on the next generation would be a way forward given the present demands on resources and the urgency identified in responding to climate change and inequalities. This means being more specific about timeframes, partnerships, themes, pathways as described in the Future Generations Commissioner Report 2025. It would also make the process more understandable and relevant to communities and assist in restoring faith in public institutions. Trust in public institutions is in decline and needs to be restored and to achieve the targets there needs to be more engagement and support from people generally - which it would do if they were more directly engaged at local level. Whilst the Act and Guidance are aimed at Public Sector Leaders, local engagement would provide an ideal platform for the Community and Town Councils to develop initiatives in line with the Act.

Yours sincerely

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### Llandough Community Council Score Card vs Future Generations Indicators

	Score 0-10 <b>0 = No not know 1 = Not achieved 2 = Achieved</b>	
<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Comment</b>
01. Healthy babies	0	What is the target? Where do we get information for Llandough?
02. Healthy life expectancy	0	What is the target? Where do we get information for Llandough?
03. Healthy lifestyle (adults)	0	What is the target?
04. Air quality	0	What was our start point? What is the target
05. Healthy lifestyle (children)	0	What is the target?
06. Young children developing the right skills	0	What is the target?
07. School leavers with skills and qualifications	2	Assume pupils from Llandough school have right skills for next phase of education. Info. from school?
08. Adults with qualifications	0	What is the target? Census information?
09. Productivity	0	Not applicable?
10. Disposable household income	0	What is the target? Census information?
11. Innovative businesses	0	Not applicable?
12. Renewable energy	0	Number of homes with solar panels and/or number of households with green energy suppliers?
13. Healthy soils	0	What was our start point? What is the target
14. Global footprint	0	What does this mean - how does it apply?
15. Waste not recycled	0	Information from VoG?
16. Fair pay	0	What does this mean - how does it apply?
17. Pay difference	0	What does this mean - how does it apply?
18. People living in poverty	0	Census information?
19. People living in material deprivation	0	What is the target? Census information?
20. Pay set by collective bargaining	0	Not applicable?

21. People in work	0	What is the target? Census information?
22. People not in education, employment and training	0	Census information?
23. People feeling involved	2	Community Engagement Survey results?
24. Satisfaction with access to facilities and services	2	Community Engagement Survey results?
25. Feeling safe	2	Community Engagement Survey results?
26. People satisfied with where they live	2	Community Engagement Survey results?
27. Sense of community	2	Community Engagement Survey results?
28. Volunteering	0	Target? How to measure?
29. Mental well-being	0	Target? How to measure?
30. Loneliness	2	Coffee mornings/Community Engagement Survey results
31. Hazard-free homes	0	Target? How to measure? Fire fighters home visit survey?
32. Reducing flood risk to homes and businesses	2	Mitigated at Canon Walk? Planning application comments?
33. Energy efficiency of homes	0	Target? Survey required? Insulation, energy generation, etc..
34. Homelessness	0	Census information?
35. Participation in arts, culture and heritage	0	How do we measure?
36. People speaking Welsh every day	0	Target? How do we measure?
37. People able to speak Welsh	0	Target? New question for next Community Engagement Survey?
38. Participation in sporting activities	0	Target? How do we measure?
39. Professional standards in heritage collections	0	Not applicable?
40. Looking after our cultural heritage	0	Historical sites in Llandough - church?
41. Greenhouse gas emissions	0	Target? How do we measure?

42. Greenhouse gas emissions from global goods and services	0	Target? How do we measure?
43. Healthy ecosystems	0	Definition?
44. Biological diversity	0	Definition?
45. Water quality	2	Welsh water?
46. Active global citizenship	0	Definition?
47. Confidence in the justice system	2	Community Engagement Survey results?
48. Journeys by walking, cycling or public transport	2	Community Engagement Survey results/Active Travel VoG?
49. Housing costs	0	Definition?
50. People digitally included	2	Community Engagement Survey results?
Total Score	24	
Maximum possible score	100	
<b>% vs Max possible score</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>%</b>