



## **Public Accounts Committee**

### **Barriers to the successful Implementation of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

#### **Response from One Newport Public Services Board (PSB)**

##### **1. Awareness and understanding of the Act and its implications.**

1.1. Awareness of the Act is good across all partners of the Public Services Board in Newport.

##### **2. The resources available to public bodies to implement the Act and how effectively they have been deployed.**

2.1. In the current financial climate, it is difficult to source funding which is a barrier to undertaking PSB work. Despite this many successful projects have taken place in Newport led by the PSB.

2.2. Annual budget cycles, annual budget settlements and having to spend funding in the same year are also barriers and make it challenging to bring long-term preventative change for current and future generations.

2.3. In addition, grant funding is often allocated with short notice and on a short-term basis. Applying for funding is time consuming and not always successful and the short-term nature is also a barrier to making long term preventative change. It can also be a barrier to recruiting quality candidates when posts are restricted to fixed short-term periods and can also affect the well-being of the people we employ with short-term contracts and lack of employment stability.

2.4. Finally, the lack of dedicated PSB funding is also a barrier which limits the impact of the PSB. The allocation of shared resource to RPBs has galvanised multiagency, cross-sector collaboration and a similar approach for the PSB would enable the PSB to fulfil its full potential.

##### **3. Support provided to public bodies by the Future Generations Commissioner.**

3.1. The Future Generation Commissioner's Office provide extensive support both through the Public Services Board Co-ordinators Meetings and providing written reports and toolkits via the website.

3.2. It can be difficult to navigate the amount information that is available and can divert you from getting on with the work of implementing the Act. Targeted and concise summaries would be appreciated to enable partners to access the more detailed content that is available.

3.3. The Commissioners office also provided bespoke advice to PSBs whilst they were developing their Well-being Assessment and Well-being Plan. As part of this process, once the PSB has agreed their draft Well-being Objectives the Act states that the Commissioner has 14 weeks to provide written advice relating to these objectives. The 14-week timescale feels like an unnecessary delay in an already tight timescale to develop the Well-being Plan.

3.4. Whilst it is acknowledged that implementing the Act is a journey, it would also be helpful for the Commissioner to highlight what the priorities are and where to focus effort. The Commissioner's recent report has gone some way towards that by defining a set out "*Areas of Focus*" to work on. This will be useful for reviewing the current well-being plan and when writing the next iteration of the plan for 2023-28.

#### **4. The leadership role of the Welsh Government.**

4.1. Good support and leadership is provided through our Welsh Government PSB member and they are fully involved in the work of the PSB.

4.2. Appropriate support is also provided by Audit Wales.

#### **5. Any other barriers to successful implementation of the Act (e.g. Brexit, COVID, etc.).**

5.1. The different lifecycle of plans can be a barrier to implementation of the Act. If these lifecycles were similar it would give PSBs and partner organisations an opportunity to align objectives and priorities. In Newport we are looking at aligning the next iteration of the Local Development Plan and the Well-being Plan so they work towards joint objectives and support each other for the benefit of the local area.

5.2. Some of the portfolios and services that contribute to the Act and well-being are not devolved so are directly responsible to Parliament. For example Community Safety Partnership.

#### **6. How to ensure that the Act is implemented successfully in the future.**

6.1. All new legislation / strategies / plans / approaches should be integrated in to the Act in a consistent manner. It is not enough to quote the Act in the Introduction. It must be intrinsic in the way the strategy / plan is developed.

6.2. The Act needs to be continually promoted but not in isolation.