



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government response to the consultation on the draft local well-being plan for Conwy and Denbighshire PSB, required by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

Thank you for sending us Conwy and Denbighshire PSB's draft Local Well-being Plan as a partner among what is clearly a wide range of stakeholders consulted.

Welsh Government acknowledges that the preparation of a local well-being plan is a significant undertaking, and we recognise the amount of work that has been accomplished. These are the second round of plans, and it is hoped that there will be lessons learned from the first iteration, building on what happened previously.

We have structured our response to the consultation in a similar way as 2018 which is as follows:

- General comments providing an overview of thoughts on the plan;
- More specific comments on the way in which the plan has been prepared, such as observations on the approach the PSB has taken to choosing the objectives;
- A final summary table which identifies the areas we would suggest could benefit from further development. We are adopting a consistent approach to these matters, similar to the local well-being assessments, which have been categorised as follows:
 - Category A – these are significant issues which we hope would be addressed prior to publication of the final plan. They might relate, for example, to compliance with the statutory requirements or major concerns with key elements of the plan
 - Category B – these are issues which, if addressed prior to publication, would strengthen the final plan. While we acknowledge in the time remaining that may not be possible, we think these important matters will add genuine value to the plan and prioritised alongside early development.
 - Category C – these are matters which would strengthen the plan but could be addressed as it continues to develop and evolve.

We will be using the same approach in responding to each of the plans. This time we have also added an accompanying annex which highlights some of the feedback we have received from policy leads within Welsh Government on the specific priorities that you have chosen.

Overall Thoughts

This is a well-considered plan. It is clear that you have given careful consideration to what the key priorities are emerging from the well-being assessment. At the moment, many of the steps are quite high level and read more like objectives, making it unclear what the specific 'action' is or might be. Therefore, the plan could be strengthened by developing specific, measurable and time bound actions to outline how these objectives could be achieved. However, we appreciate you will have been working on this detail during the last few months.

It is good to see recognition and emphasis of the PSB's focus being on areas where working in partnership will have the greatest impact and where collective influence adds value to what is already done as individual organisations – which goes to the heart of what the PSB's role is.

Comments on particular aspects of the draft plan

Structure and Format

The plan is well set out and easy to read. The introduction is a useful 'scene-setter' for those readers who may be unfamiliar with the work of the PSB, describing who the PSB are, and what the well-being plan is. The introduction could include more background on the Well-being of Future Generations Act, setting out what it is and what it does, including the five ways of working and the seven well-being goals; particularly as each of the sections on the objectives ends with a paragraph on how the work will be contributing to the well-being goals, but there has been no previous explanation of what the well-being goals are.

Timescales

It is encouraging that you are giving appropriate consideration to futures work and embedding the need for it in your planning. There is an acknowledgement of further work required over the first year of the plan to ascertain when specific actions will be delivered, and your intention of using co-production and involvement to do this will be a positive move.

When considering timescales, it will be important to strike the right balance between delivering for the short term and doing so in the context of priorities for the longer term. We hope to see in the final plan a strengthening of the objectives and steps set in the context of what the PSB hopes to achieve over the longer term i.e., for future generations. It is also worth noting that there are different understandings of long term in relation to different issues. There are a number of resources available to support you in making better decisions for the long term, including the [Future Trends Report 2021](#) and the [Three Horizons Toolkit](#)

Involvement

The importance you place on involving stakeholders and your local communities in the development of the plan is a key strength and we welcome both the work you have been doing and also the work you have planned over the coming months.

Your reflections on the challenges faced engaging with communities during the pandemic helpfully points to some groups who were under-represented that you will wish to engage with further, improving the depth of consultation with them.

The plan also briefly mentions working with the Coproduction Network for Wales; we would encourage more detail on this, also some information on your work as part of the North Wales Insight Partnership, and finally the ways you intend to work with your communities and stakeholders going forward would all contribute to a more credible plan.

Collaboration

There appears to be a good level of collaboration between the PSB, its partners and other organisations. There is recognition that the PSB's work will focus on areas where collaboratively, it can make a difference and have a long-term impact, without duplicating work that is already taking place.

We would encourage you to look beyond the traditional partners to help you to deliver your objectives; it is important that the people with whom the PSB engages can potentially bring the broadest range of insights, constructive challenge, data and solutions to the PSB. You have already demonstrated this in certain parts of the plan. We would encourage a continuation of this, reaching out to partners with an interest in all the interventions being proposed, such as existing equality networks, youth forums, employability support services and County Voluntary Councils.

Town and community councils are listed as one of the sectors of the community you have engaged with. It would be good to see a demonstration of how you will

continue this as you move into the next cycle of planning. It would be beneficial if the plan considered the role community and town councils in the area could play towards meeting the steps in the plan, particularly those who are under a duty to do so.

Integration and Prevention

There has been a good attempt at integration in the way 'a more equal Wales' connects across the themes and aligns with the root causes you have identified as contributing to disadvantage and inequality. The plan also states that it will seek to tackle deprivation and issues relating to poverty and social, environmental, cultural, and economic inequality across Conwy and Denbighshire, but there is no detail on how this will be done.

Similarly, it is promising that you have identified sustainability and climate change as being at the fore of everything you do rather than being treated as a separate issue and therefore allocated to only one of the objectives. For example, climate change as a risk to the happiness, healthiness and resilience of communities. You could consider taking this a step further by embedding climate change across the different objectives and perhaps demonstrating cross-cutting areas more generally. Examples of where climate change may further impact on the delivery of objectives could be:

- Equality objective: climate change has the potential to exacerbate existing inequalities, so looking at all the well-being objectives from this perspective to understand how to mitigate this risk might be helpful.
- Housing objective: it may be helpful to consider the impacts of climate change on housing and what will be considered 'quality' housing in the future. This will likely be affected by the need to decarbonise and the need to adapt housing to cope with effects of climate change, such as increased heat and flooding. Lower income households may not be able to afford this, so this would tie-in with the equality objective.
- The economy objective notes the need to prepare/provide for green economy jobs, which is good to see. Access to jobs may also be affected by climate change, e.g., the wider risk of disruption to energy, ICT, power and transport infrastructure, as well as to supply chains.

Although prevention has been touched on, in the way you have considered future trends and the associated risks and opportunities, we feel there is scope to be more explicit and elaborate on this. More specifically, it would be useful to explore how the particular actions proposed might prevent problems from getting worse, and what the implications of preventative approaches are on the way the board will operate and deploy resources.

Balance and Comprehensiveness

A more equal PSB area with less deprivation is the overarching single priority area and there is good rationale for this based on the assessment and discussions with partners and communities.

The four objectives below this cover well-being (happier, healthier and more resilient communities); economy; equality and housing. Social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being are weaved throughout these objectives to a degree although this is particularly true of the first one on well-being, where social, economic and environmental factors are all considered. In common with other plans, culture is perhaps less prominent. At present, the steps do not sufficiently consider the positive impact culture and the Welsh language can have across many of the objectives and in helping the PSB to achieve these. This is a missed opportunity in terms of bringing in many of the region's cultural assets as a way of helping to achieve well-being. The Welsh language has been recognised by saying that it will be supported and promoted in all that the PSB does, however you could go a step further by considering how the PSB could meet the aims of Cymraeg 2050 in its plan. You should also consider making a proactive statement regarding how the plan will practically contribute to the implementation of Cymraeg 2050.

Reflective and Critical Approach

There is a good level of reflection in the draft plan, particularly in relation to how the key findings from the assessment have informed the development of its objectives. You have used the assessment to highlight fourteen areas of particular concern for the PSB, with the common theme of 'a more equal Wales' aligning with root causes of deprivation and inequality that have been identified. It is recognised that for longer-term successes in particular, not everything is within the influence of the PSB e.g., the success of the economy is more likely to be influenced by external factors.

In order to strengthen this element of the plan, we would like to see more emphasis being placed on any gaps in the evidence base and how these have impacted or influenced the development of the plan.

Use of evidence

Some broad indicators of success and anticipated outcomes are listed in the summary at the end of the plan, but it would be useful to include more specific and detailed actions alongside these outlining how these outcomes will be achieved over time (a theory of change) and an assessment of the strength of 'what works'

evidence for undertaking such actions. In cases where evidence is missing or weak, it would also be useful to know how you intend to address these gaps in the evidence base in order to inform actions. If this is done, then it will also help to set up a framework for evaluating implementation and impact of actions on achieving the outcomes stated in the plan. Some guidance on adopting a [Theory of Change](#) approach has recently been published and includes links to worked examples, which you may find helpful.

You will be aware that the Welsh Government have recently consulted on the National Milestones which aim to track progress in delivering the Well-being Goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. This will be a useful way of monitoring how the PSB is performing.

Areas for development

Category A
Category B Consider how the steps can be made more specific (see 'Overall comments') A greater emphasis could be placed on prevention (see 'Integration and Prevention') The need for a greater emphasis on culture (see 'Balance and Comprehensiveness')
Category C Consider embedding cross-cutting subjects (e.g., climate change) across the different objectives (see 'Integration and Prevention')

ANNEX

Key theme	Step	Advice from policy leads
<p>Communities are happier, healthier and more resilient in the face of challenges, such as climate change or the rising cost of living.</p>	<p>Give support to sustainable and green transport plans that improve overall air quality, including active and healthy travel schemes that encourage walking and cycling</p>	<p>There's an opportunity for PSB support for active network plans which are being developed; we know that cycling, walking and wheeling are really important ways of improving people's physical and mental well-being. Providing facilities within hospital sites for people to securely leave their bikes to travel to and from treatment or for staff to travel to workplaces would be a positive step for example and planning in active travel routes and access when building new facilities. Many organisations also have a bike loan type scheme which again would be a positive thing to establish or point to if this is already in place. In addition to active travel, ensuring there are public transport links to sites is really important, and we'd expect the PSB to be engaging with Transport for Wales and ourselves early when they have a new site in mind to ensure that this is planned in from the start.</p>
	<p>Decrease carbon emissions and increasing renewable energy capacity.</p>	<p>There is a lot of work currently underway to decrease carbon emissions across the public sector estate. This work of course needs to be done and in partnership, but you could refer to existing work or rephrase the step to explicitly build on existing work, identifying gaps, which would help to reduce the risk of duplication. You could consider how the PSB can add value. What can additionally be achieved on climate work by working together across the PSB? For example, sharing a fleet across the public sector.</p> <p>The Welsh Government Energy Service (WGES) provides technical and commercial support to develop viable community led projects in Wales. WGES offer grants for early development, and capital grants and loans to construct projects. Groups also have the services of a development manager. We also fund Community Energy Wales, a not-for-profit membership organisation that supports and represents community groups working on energy projects in Wales.</p> <p>https://gov.wales/energy-service-public-sector-and-community-groups</p>
	<p>Protect, restore and enhance biodiversity and natural habitats, whilst increasing and encouraging equal access to our countryside assets.</p>	<p>Currently there is a lack of biodiversity focused successes in the 'What could success look like?' table. One is in the 1-5 year column which refers to increased and equal access to countryside assets which is good, but this could also apply to increasing/improving access to green spaces within urban and peri-urban areas too. One initiative that would be relevant is the Local Places for Nature scheme which is designed to specifically target these areas with its aim to create environments that support nature within communities, with the added benefit of including both funding and advice. Also, this is fairly specific outcome so it would be good to include wider success targets such as:</p>

		<p>Nature's contribution to people's lives is properly recognised and its value and importance is fully reflected in decision making.</p> <p>or</p> <p>Opportunities have been identified where actions to help biodiversity directly contribute to people's well-being.</p>
	Support communities to mitigate and cope with the impacts of climate change.	Whilst appreciating that more details will be provided on the steps at a later date, it would be useful to see detail on how the PSB can add value here, e.g., providing more effective coordination of actions, or data gathering.
There is a flourishing economy, supported by a skilled workforce.	Work with partners (including school, colleges and universities) to ensure that people of all ages, including those who are vulnerable or in our care, are resilient and prepared for employment, further education, or training. This includes looking at Green Skills for the future.	The idea of this is great, but there is currently nothing to demonstrate how this will be achieved.
	Provide greater opportunities for quality volunteering, work experience and apprenticeships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeships have a vital role in supporting the recovery of the economy and in supporting those most likely to be negatively impacted in the Welsh labour market. The Welsh Government is committed to increasing the number of apprenticeships undertaken and developing programmes to meet the needs of employers whether in the private or public sectors. • Investment priorities are informed by four Regional Skills Partnerships (RSPs), employer-led bodies of whom local authorities are prominent members. RSPs are a pivotal component of the regional skills landscape, providing labour market intelligence to the Welsh Government and woven into skills and employability plans. The intelligence and recommendations they provide at a regional and sub-regional basis, together with other sources of intelligence, are key to informing policy development, the design of our programmes and deployment of skills funding. RSPs produced three year strategic employment and skills plans which set out regional skills priorities, based upon employer led intelligence.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A network of quality assured training providers work with employers, including local authorities, to understand the training needs and delivery apprenticeships to meet business objectives.
	<p>Working through the regional body, and within the context of the Wales Transport Strategy, we will enable those at a socio-economic disadvantage to access education, employment, services and activities.</p>	<p>We assume by referring to the regional body, you mean the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) for North Wales, which is under a duty to produce a Regional Transport Plan (RTP) which takes into account Local Authorities Local Development Plans and, once in place, Strategic Development Plans (SDPs). PSBs will play a role in working with the CJC in their region to understand where people need to travel to access their services, what the current service provision is for public transport and active travel, and what additional services are required to allow people to use their private cars less and more sustainable forms of transport more, following the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy set out in the Wales Transport Strategy https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-03/llwybr-newydd-wales-transport-strategy-2021-full-strategy_0.pdf (p.19). Guidance will be issued shortly to Local Authorities and CJsCs on how they will be expected to develop these plans in more detail, and there is a requirement for them to engage with the key local stakeholders in their region, which would include PSBs. Transport for Wales will support CJsCs in developing their plans, for example in providing access to their transport models and evidence base.</p>
<p>There is improved access to good quality housing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Welsh Government’s Rapid Rehousing approach to prevent homelessness and ensure that any instances of it are rare, brief, and unrepeatable. • Review the amount of available housing in our county to ensure that there is quality provision that meets the needs of residents, assisting them to lead independent lives in 	<p>It is good to see housing recognised within the well-being plan and cited as being fundamental to addressing inequality. From the work undertaken by the counties it is clear that the importance of affordable housing has been identified as an important consideration across Conwy and Denbighshire. Mention of the Rapid Rehousing plans demonstrates links are in place with current strategy and thinking at the local authorities which is really positive. It is good to see the table on page 19 outlining ‘what success looks like’. This is quite high level and it would be helpful to know what is meant by a “reasonable timeframe” to help those experiencing homelessness into accommodation.</p> <p>The plan provides figures on how many new homes were built in the year ending March 2021, however the report makes no mention of the number of people in temporary accommodation or any effects as a result of the pandemic. Additionally, the number of people in temporary accommodation across the area is actually significant but there is no link made between this and future housing plans. All local authorities are required to undertake a Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA). The LHMA’s are a crucial part of the evidence base for preparing Development Plans and local authorities’ Local Housing Strategies which should also inform the LA homelessness strategy. More information can be found here: https://gov.wales/local-housing-market-assessment-lhma-guidance-local-authorities A series of videos has been produced to help LAs: https://gov.wales/local-housing-market-assessment-lhma-training-videos</p>

	<p>appropriate accommodation for as long as possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tackle barriers related to people's immediate environment, such as green space, that affects their quality of life and civic participation.• Work with our communities to identify and overcome barriers to housing, ensuring equal access to advice and information on available options and routes to housing.• Advocate standards of housing that supports the good health of people and families living in them.	<p>Funding is available to fund a Strategic Coordinator in every LA so that they can link up across housing , social care, mental health and substance misuse (linking with the Area Planning Boards). The aim here is to drive collective responsibility for homelessness from preventing homelessness to large scale capital build programmes to preventing homelessness e.g. social care and education and partner organisations to take an all public service approach in partnership with third sector organisations.</p>
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