

Swansea's Assessment of Local Well-being 2022

Annex 3: About the Assessment

This note sets out the background to Swansea Public Service Board's second assessment of local well-being for 2022. It notes the requirements of the legislation, the main aspects of our approach and changes from the first assessment in 2017, a summary of engagement and involvement undertaken to support the assessment to date, and our overall process of evidence gathering.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act') aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It will make national government, local government, local health boards and other specified public bodies in Wales think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach.

To make sure that Welsh government and public bodies are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place seven well-being goals:

- **A prosperous Wales:** An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work
- **A resilient Wales:** A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example, climate 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 fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances)
- **A Wales of cohesive communities:** Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities
- **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
- **A globally responsible Wales:** A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

The Act requires public bodies to do things in pursuit of the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales in a way that accords with the sustainable development principle, i.e. acting in a manner which seeks to "ensure that the needs of the present are

met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". The Act also:

- requires public bodies to report on such action;
- established a Commissioner for Future Generations to advise and assist public bodies in doing things in accordance with this Act;
- established public services boards in local authority areas;
- makes provision requiring those boards to plan and take action in pursuit of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in their area; and for connected purposes.

Requirement for an Assessment of Local Well-being

The Act¹ specifies that each Public Services Board in Wales must prepare and publish a local well-being plan every five years setting out its local objectives and the steps it proposes to take to meet them. The plan must be published no later than one year after the date of the local government elections.

Before that however, each board must "prepare and publish an assessment of the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in its area", no later than one year before the date on which a local well-being plan is to be published.

Section 37 (3) of the Act provides further clarification around what is required in the assessment, in that it must –

- (a) set out which community areas comprise the area of the board;
- (b) include an analysis of the state of well-being in each community area and in the area as a whole;
- (c) include an analysis of the state of well-being of the people in the area;
- (d) include any further analysis that the board carries out by reference to criteria set and applied by it for the purpose of assessing economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in the area or in any community situated in the area;
- (e) include predictions of likely future trends in the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of the area;
- (f) include any other related analytical data and information that the board considers appropriate.

Subsequent sections of Chapter 2 of the Act outline:

- additional points of reference for the assessment, e.g. national indicators, a future trends report;
- the requirement to identify and assess community areas;
- suggested categories of persons that the analysis may consider;
- requirements for consultation on the draft assessment; and
- a set of other local and national assessments and reviews to be considered.

This assessment aims to provide an accurate analysis of the state of well-being in Swansea as a whole and in each community, and the findings and analysis will have an impact in choosing the objectives to be set out in the local well-being plan. The board must explain in

¹ The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 - www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2015/2/contents/enacted

their local well-being plan how their local objectives and any steps they propose to take have been set with regard to any matters mentioned in the assessment.

Welsh Government's original guidance for Public Service Boards around preparing the assessments were made available on a statutory² and non-statutory³ basis. Welsh Government and the Future Generations Commissioner's office supplemented the original guidance with an 'Expectations' document for Boards earlier in 2021.

What is well-being?

The concept of 'well-being' is undeniably complex, and there are many descriptions and possible interpretations of the term. People will have different views of what well-being means to them personally and for their communities.

However, for the purposes of the Act and its accompanying guidance, Welsh Government most clearly defines well-being within the following extracts from "Shared Purpose; Shared Future (SPSF) 1 Core Guidance, section 2 – the fundamentals":

17. Sustainable development is about acknowledging that there are many things that determine a person's quality of life (their well-being), and that these all can broadly be categorised as environmental, economic, social and cultural factors. These are captured in the well-being goals. This means that improving the quality of our environment, our economy and society and culture can improve the well-being of individuals and that of Wales as a whole.

20. It is important to recognise the difference between the well-being of Wales, and the well-being of individuals. Sustainable development connects the environment in which we live, the economy in which we work, the society in which we enjoy and the cultures that we share, to people and their quality of life.

On this basis well-being could be defined (in short) as the environmental, economic, social and cultural factors which determine a person's quality of life. However, whilst this is useful as a form of working definition, the relationship between well-being and quality of life – whilst it is correlated – isn't direct or straightforward.

Well-being is sometimes defined or explained by public authorities on the basis of how it is measured; at a national level for example, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) introduced an assessment of UK progress against a set of 43 national well-being indicators⁴, including aspects of health, natural environment, personal finances and crime. This indicator dashboard was last published in 2019; however, ONS continue to regularly monitor personal well-being via estimates of *life satisfaction*, *feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile*, *happiness* and *anxiety* at national to local authority level.

The Welsh Government also developed an initial set of 46 national indicators around well-being in Wales, as required by section 10(1) of the Act, covering the economic, social, environmental and cultural aspects of well-being, for the purpose of measuring progress

² Shared Purpose: Shared Future Chapter 3: Collective role (public services boards) – statutory guidance for well-being assessments: <https://gov.wales/well-being-future-generations-public-services-boards-guidance>

³ 'Non-statutory' Guidance from Welsh Government on the use of evidence and analysis: <https://gov.wales/public-services-boards-guidance-use-evidence-and-analysis>

⁴ Measuring National Well-being: Domains and Measures (Office for National Statistics): www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/measuringnationalwellbeingdomainsandmeasures

towards the achievement of the national well-being goals⁵. In December 2021, Welsh Government published an initial set of eight national milestones with consultation on a second wave of milestones due later in 2022. Some amendments to the national indicators were also made in December 2021, which now total 50. Assessments of Local Well-being are required to have regard to the national indicators as far as possible.

Background in Swansea

From 2013, the annual strategic needs assessment provided the evidence base for Swansea's Single Integrated Plan – the One Swansea Plan – under the previous Welsh Government framework (*'Shared Purpose, Shared Delivery'*). These assessments were produced by Swansea Local Service Board (LSB), the predecessor body to the Public Services Board. The needs assessments provided analysis against six population outcomes, identified and agreed by Swansea LSB as the basis for the One Swansea Plan.

However, the 2015 Act created a new framework for public bodies in Wales to improve the well-being of their areas; by assessing the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being, and later by setting local objectives and taking steps to meet those objectives. The core purpose of the first (2017) assessment was to provide the evidence base for Swansea's first Well-being Plan, developed in the year following the assessment's publication (2018).

The legislative and guidance framework remains in place; therefore this 2022 Assessment of Local Well-being will inform Swansea PSB's Well-being Plan in 2023.

Swansea Public Services Board (PSB)

Swansea Public Services Board is a partnership of public service agencies who work together to improve local services. It supersedes the former Local Service Board (LSB), and includes the statutory partners Swansea Council, Swansea Bay University Health Board, Natural Resources Wales and Mid and West Wales Fire & Rescue Service; together with regional and local partners such as Swansea Council for Voluntary Service (SCVS), South Wales Police and the local universities.

The Public Services Board (PSB) in Swansea has provided staff resource to contribute to the development of this Assessment of Local Well-being including researchers and analysts from different organisations involved in the Board.

Work on this assessment has been co-ordinated by an Assessment Editorial Group, consisting of representatives of the statutory partners, the voluntary sector and individual 'strand leads' who have brought together the evidence within each dimension of well-being. Initially, our approach was developed via a broad Research Forum; then later by four individual dimension-based task groups to develop the evidence base for each aspect of well-being.

⁵ Well-being of Future Generations National indicators (Welsh Government):
<https://gov.wales/wellbeing-wales-national-indicators>

Overall approach

Driver diagrams for Swansea's population outcomes were first developed for local use as part of the One Swansea Plan 2015, and provided the structure for evidence and indicators used in the following annual strategic needs assessment. This approach was followed for the initial Assessment of Local Well-being in 2017 and in the Well-being Plan in 2018.

However, for the purposes of this assessment, we have not continued with the driver diagram approach. It is clear from analysis of the first round of well-being assessments in Wales that this approach wasn't generally followed elsewhere and that most PSB areas structured their initial assessments on the basis of the four dimensions of well-being. This change also represents a move away from the original LSB-based structure, which was initially rolled forward (subject to modest changes) during the transition to Swansea PSB. In addition, the latest Welsh Government and Future Generations Commissioner's *Expectations* document suggested that "The assessment covers the four dimensions of well-being (i.e. economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being)".

Within the four dimensions, a number of topic areas were identified as the basis for our analysis of well-being. Whilst the choice of topics within each dimension is largely subjective, these were developed following extensive discussion with the partner colleagues involved.

'Community Areas'

The Act states that the assessment must "set out which community areas comprise the area of the board". These areas should be large enough to show differences and have a sense of identity but be larger than electoral wards. In line with the availability of published statistics, 'multiple LSOAs' (Lower Super Output Areas) are suggested in the guidance.

For the first assessment in 2017, the PSB came to the view that the local GP cluster or Primary and Community Network (PCN) Areas (mostly used in the health sector) provided a basis for the most suitable overall approach for Swansea.

However, as some of these areas are quite large, both in terms of population and area, it was agreed that the 'Bay' area was split into 'Bay East' and 'Bay West' Community Areas (which increased the number of areas in Swansea to six). A listing and map of these areas by LSOA, together with summary key statistics, is included in Annex 4. These areas have again formed the basis of our Community Areas in this assessment.

The Act also states that an assessment must "...include an analysis of the state of well-being in each community area". The evidence compiled around each well-being dimension and topic in the assessment seeks to bring out this local evidence, as far as it is available.

Evidence sourced through engagement and involvement

One of the main messages from the Act and guidance is that data and information sourced through citizen and community engagement should be a key part of any assessment of local well-being.

The Assessment is based primarily on statistical and research based evidence but a context of lived experience is essential to provide a balanced meaningful assessment. This involvement aims to ensure gaps are identified, seldom heard voices considered and the perspective of citizens is central by supplementing technical detail with vignettes of experience reflecting reality on the ground.

However, in part due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was limited resource and capacity available from partners. Throughout the preparation of the assessment, Swansea experienced high infection rates placing many services under exceptional pressure. In addition, working at home and measures to minimise contact with the public were in place at many organisations so constraining involvement activity.

The primary purpose of the Assessment is to provide a balanced evidence base to inform the development of the Local Well-being Plan and involvement is a key way to achieve this. The Co-production Network for Wales have also identified that the focus of the Assessment is on engagement as part of the overall evidence base, whilst the Local Well-being Plan process will provide a more co-productive opportunity.

Easy read and accessible resources are being employed wherever possible throughout the process with priority placed on ensuring that a summary of the Assessment's evidence base is accessible to everybody involved in developing the Local Well-being Plan – as the key purpose of the Assessment.

Further information regarding our approach to engagement in the Assessment, the various phases involved, the well-being survey undertaken in autumn 2021, and key results and analysis from that survey, is available in Annex 1. Public survey responses and other information obtained from the well-being survey is also included within the main assessment document.

Evidence gathering

To begin to progress the detailed evidence gathering required to compile the assessment, an Editorial Group and Research Forum was established, which facilitated the coming together of four individual dimension-based task groups, consisting of analysts and subject matter experts from PSB member organisations. Their overall role has been to collate and analyse relevant evidence around each of the four dimensions of well-being.

Within each group, a range of colleagues from the partnership have written content around specific topics, at both a 'key' and 'associated' topic level within each strand or dimension. At a 'key topic' level, generally between five and ten topics have been initially identified per dimension. With a number of key topic areas being very broad in scope, in several cases a further layer of 'associated topics' have been identified to assist the evidence gathering process with content initially compiled by different writers in many cases.

To assist both those individually contributing content to the assessment (potentially from a variety of sources) and those bringing together the final document, templates were created for use by those working on the assessment – with the aim of providing a common format

and a coherent structure for analysis across diverse subject areas and to bring together the different sources of evidence compiled for each topic.

The 'evidence template' formed the basis of content within the current assessment document. In summary, the following aspects have been considered and included for each key topic, as far as possible:

- Evidence: list of main sources
- Strengths and assets: for Swansea as a whole and people and communities within; key services and projects that support the topic
- Changes over time: focusing on change since the 2017 assessment and generally
- Comparisons with other places: elsewhere in Wales and/or UK
- Differences within Swansea: by community area, other geography or people group
- Perceptions and perspectives: research reports, surveys, public engagement evidence / stories
- Future prospects: future trends, what is likely to happen if current trends continue
- Integration: clearest links and impacts between topic and others across dimensions
- What improvement would look like
- About the evidence: including strengths and limitations of sources, evidence gaps
- Conclusions and key messages: what the topic evidence tells us about well-being.

Annex 3 – Version 1.0

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