

By email

11/09/17

Advice from the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales to Carmarthenshire PSB

Dear Carmarthenshire Public Services Board and supporting officers,

Thank you for seeking my advice on how you might take steps to meet your draft well-being objectives, which currently are:

- **Healthy Habits:** People have a good quality of life and make good choices about their lives and their environment.
- **Early intervention:** People have the right help at the right time, as and when they need it.
- **Strong Connections:** Strongly connected people, places and organisations, that are able to adapt to change.
- **Prosperous people and places:** Maximise opportunities for both people and places in urban and rural parts of the county.

You have also agreed exploratory themes for action, including identifying and understanding trigger points in people's lives; engaging and inspiring people, enhancing their understanding and motivations; ensuring shared ownership, co-creating services; and adding value, every action by the Public Services Board (PSB) must add value.

My team have found talking to you regularly and meeting with some of you last week has given them an understanding of how you work together as a PSB; the method you have taken to well-being planning and your intentions to deliver the objectives and take steps in a different way. As they will have discussed with you, I was keen that my advice would be useful to you and the context within which you work, so I hope you have also found these regular touch-points helpful and that they have given you some guidance along the way.

I also wanted my response to your well-being assessment to be 'feed-forward', rather than 'feedback', helping you to consider how to approach continuous assessment and well-being planning. I have recently published '[Well-being in Wales: Planning today for a better tomorrow](#)', which highlights key findings and recommendations for PSBs on the key areas of change needed to make better decisions for future generations. I am drawing on these reports in providing my advice to you.

As you know, in setting draft objectives and taking steps to meet them, PSBs must use the five ways of working to challenge business as usual and maximise their contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals. My advice is intended to help you consider how you might do this effectively and how you could demonstrate through your well-being plan that you have used the five ways of working to shape your steps.

Therefore, my advice is both about adopting different ways of working and specific to the draft objectives you have identified from your assessments to focus on, plus seeking to connect you with others who may be able to help. As my team have explained, the purpose of this advice is not to give you my opinion on your well-being objectives or your draft plan. These are determined and owned by you, as a collective PSB.

Adopting different ways of working to take steps to meet your draft objectives:

For each of your draft objectives and the steps you are setting, I would like to understand what this means for Carmarthenshire and how this is different to what you have done before. The draft plan you have shared with us begins to explain why you have chosen to take this step and I would encourage you to build on this, making it clear what the step could mean for the future of communities. Achieving the ambitions of this Act is about the 'what' and the 'how' i.e. what are you doing to contribute to our shared vision of the seven national well-being goals? The goals acknowledge that sustainable development connects the environment in which we live, the economy in which we work, the society in which we enjoy and the cultures in which we share, to people and their quality of life, so what are you going to do differently together? And, how you are applying the sustainable development principle to shape your actions for Carmarthenshire?

To do this, it is important that PSBs demonstrate clearly how the five ways of working have been used to challenge current thinking and form your plan. I would advise that you strengthen this in your draft and show your thinking more clearly, in the context of Carmarthenshire, rather than in general terms. The questions below hopefully help you to demonstrate you are challenging yourselves to think differently. The ways of working are not cross-cutting themes, but behaviours to help you to maximise your contribution to the seven well-being goals.

As such, setting objectives and steps is not business as usual. In the past, we have drawn out themes and priorities and written plans that show what we are doing anyway. Even now, despite the evidence in the assessments showing a range of alarming trends, it seems PSBs are only engaging in safe and non-contentious territory. To adapt your ways of working requires a fundamentally different approach and you need to give yourselves the time and space as a PSB to question whether current approaches to public service delivery are fit for the future and explore key pressures and tensions in delivery for each of your objectives.

The exploratory themes for action you have agreed are encouraging in that respect and I would encourage you set aside meetings or create PSB sessions to look at these and the five ways of working as you go about planning your actions and delivering the plan. It is important that you have an honest discussion about the tensions between policy issues and current practice within your organisations in relation to each objective. This should

then drive your discussions on how you can take new approaches together in the steps you will take to meet your objectives and maximise contribution to the seven national well-being goals.

I would advise that you will need to demonstrate how your PSB has considered the following in relation to each of your objectives:

- **Long-term:** What do you understand about the long-term trends, opportunities, risks and likely scenarios for this issue? What are they and have you explored their impact on your steps? Are there current gaps in your data or understanding? What fore-sighting or future trends information do you need to understand this issue better? What capacity, confidence and expertise do you need to fill gaps in knowledge? To inform the action you take, you will need to adequately map and consider the future trends for each of your objectives. My office is working with others to build capacity in this area and, as your support team are aware, Welsh Government have been adding to the 'Future Trends' report resources, which you should make most use of by accessing available through Objective Connect or by contacting David Thomas. [The Oxford Martin 'Now for the long-term'](#) report shows global and national future trends that we all need to react to in carrying out sustainable development.
- **Prevention:** In considering this issue, do you have an understanding of what you are trying to prevent? What are the root causes of the issue and when would be the best point to intervene? Are you clear on whether it is primary prevention i.e. seeking to prevent something before it has even occurred; secondary prevention i.e. preventing something from getting worse; or tertiary prevention i.e. softening the impact of something that has ongoing effects; that is needed? This is the difference between encouraging someone to wear a bicycle helmet (primary prevention of head-injury); putting someone in the recovery position if they have fallen from their bike (secondary prevention of the injury worsening) and counselling after the accident (tertiary prevention to help ongoing injuries from worsening).

Many PSBs haven't used their assessments to fully understand both the current situation and the scale and nature of the response required. At the moment, it is not clear how services and resourcing will change in Carmarthenshire to be more preventative. I appreciate you might not know the full picture yet, but I want to see all PSBs exploring how they break cycles and dig deeper into data to see the implicit messages in the data to better understand the causes and effects of key issues and trends to inform your steps.

- **Collaboration:** It is important that the people who sit around the PSB table can bring the best range of insights, constructive challenge, data and solutions to the PSB. Have you got the right people around the table, at the right level to make decisions around this issue? Who else might you need to be collaborating with to better understand this? As recommended in my report on the Well-being Assessments, now is a timely opportunity to review the invited membership of the PSB and consider who are the 'unusual' suspects that you may need to work with to take steps to meet this objective?

In delivering the steps, how might your organisations collaborate? You will need to demonstrate how your PSB is considering the steps that need to be taken together and across organisational boundaries in order to effectively meet your objectives. This could include co-locating staff, breaking down traditional structures, arranging job-swaps and secondments and, importantly, pooling resources. I will want to see how you have considered these benefits and how the steps you will take move you towards achieving this collaboration.

- **Integration:** For each objective, how are you going to move away from just doing something that meets the objective, and instead, demonstrate that you are taking steps which maximise your contribution to each of the goals? Instead of looking at this issue in a traditional and general sense, have you looked at the definition for each of the goals to widen your understanding of well-being for this issue and the opportunities which might exist for meeting these goals through each of your objectives? How well do you understand the contribution your organisation makes at the moment to this objective? And do you understand how different is the contribution you will need to make going forward for this objective?

How can you plot what's going on elsewhere in your organisations, the strategies and plans at a regional or a national level, to connect with others on achieving this objective? Your draft plan includes links between the different individual organisation's well-being objectives, but have you yet acknowledged the barriers or tensions that have arisen and what steps can you (or others) take to remove them? Who else is needed around the PSB table to help you interconnect decision-making and improve well-being for this issue?

- **Involvement:** My feedback to your well-being assessment acknowledged the hard work and impressive range of people you involved and I know you have tried to continue this over the last few months. I want to see a demonstrated continued focus on this for all PSBs. How are you taking steps to understand the lived experiences of people in your area and how is this shaping your actions? How are you actively seeking better ways of involving people in decision-making? How can you collaborate with members of the community in meeting these steps? As with the Social Care Wales Board, what options are there for involving people with lived experience on Boards and partnership groups?

This advice should be taken by all PSBs, but I appreciate every PSB has taken a different approach to drafting their well-being objectives and will be going about delivering their well-being plan in the context that is right for them. Your support team have worked hard to help you achieve this impressive level of progress in drafting your objectives and steps and, as I found across Wales in responding to well-being assessments, I know research capacity is an identified issue. I am interested to hear that a Research and Innovation Hub will be set up in Carmarthenshire to help you consider evidence and share practice. I hear that you are considering how to measure progress against the plan and want to make sure you're measuring the right things. Could this be a step for you as a PSB and a role for this Hub? A similar Innovation Hub is being piloted in Cardiff PSB currently and the Gwent PSBs are undertaking a few joint projects that might of interest in that respect.

As my report on the well-being assessments suggested, it is important that we move away from seeing PSBs as a local authority-led committee meeting, with PSBs building a mutual understanding and respect of each other's professions. The PSB should be about a new way of working, not driven by any one organisation's culture or way of working. The Chair of the PSB, how and where meetings are held and how the PSB is supported can all shift mindsets and allow for healthier challenge to 'business as usual'.

Your leadership at PSB should also be permeating into the your organisations at all levels. As leaders, I am sure that you are part of many partnership structures, meetings and initiatives. Using the PSB to integrate your work and seeking to set objectives and steps that make sense to the people of Carmarthenshire is of most importance. As such, it is important that you communicate the decisions and communications of the PSB to your own organisations and use the well-being plan to challenge current practices within your own departments. I have been hearing that this particularly applies to middle management, who are perhaps struggling to compromise current frameworks with the Act. I have a role to recognise and mitigate barriers, but so do you – as senior leaders, in challenging your managers to work differently and be 'safe to fail'.

In order to truly own this plan and ensure the steps you take are understood and undertaken by the member bodies of the PSB, you may want to consider closer working arrangements, a multi-agency virtual team with a senior leader or more formal secondments and co-location. There are several resources that may be of use, such as [Designing Multi-Agency Partnerships: Leading Culture Change](#). This will require you, people in positions of leadership, to play your part and be brave in driving the changes needed. I hope you continue to lead an intelligence-based approach to finding different solutions to how things have been previously done.

Advice on how you might take steps to meet your draft objectives:

You have drawn on your assessment findings and used the professional knowledge of your services to draft your objectives and steps. As I said feedback to the assessment, I think interpreting these in the context of Carmarthenshire would be helpful to explain why the objective is so important for you i.e. show your workings. This is implicit in your plan at the moment, so I would advise you show what local evidence you have used (or will you use) to understand the specific areas of successful preventative interventions? What local services will be impacted if you redirect investment? For example, what will 'improving access to the natural environment' mean specifically for Carmarthenshire? Are there long term trends for particular communities that you believe will get worse if you don't take action? Which communities would benefit and how? What can you do differently that contributes to each of the seven goals? I suggest you work together to make this more explicit in your well-being planning or state why you don't have the answers yet and what you're going to do about it. I understand you will be continuing to work on this throughout the next year or so, and my advice is intended to give you ideas, information and contacts that might help.

- ***Healthy Habits: People have a good quality of life, and make healthy choices about their lives and environment.***

The draft steps you have set out include co-ordinated campaigning, improving access to the natural environment, developing social prescribing as mainstream, protection of the environment, addressing climate change and supporting a cultural behaviour change programme across the county. As an area of outstanding natural beauty with rivers, lakes, beaches, woodlands and farm land, I can understand why this draft objective is both about personal and environmental health. The natural environment is an asset for us all in Wales and, as your assessment identifies, with 60% of Carmarthenshire's population living in rural areas and the remaining 40% living within 400m of natural or semi-natural green space, it is an asset that should be valued, utilised and protected in your county. Many of the people in Carmarthenshire rely on their environment for income, basic needs and recreation and resources, like water and timber, are used by people across Wales. How have you considered the long-term impact of extreme weather events on these resources? How can you use scenarios to imagine what preventative action you could take to protect agriculture, water supplies and transportation in the event of extreme weather?

As your assessment identifies, flooding affects people's health long after the event and the most vulnerable in society are worst affected. Extreme weather affected Carmarthen last year on more than one occasion and across the country, [expected annual damage to residential properties is estimated to be £22 million](#). Understanding the different ways extreme weather could impact on different communities is crucial to prevention. What initiatives could be put in place to protect businesses in Carmarthen? [One example of investment in flood defences is the Lower Swansea Vale](#), a £6.7m project which provides protection to 284 businesses and industrial premises employing more than 10,000 people. In the future, extreme weather is likely to cause droughts in the summer, meaning a shortage of water, declining bio-diversity and a knock-on effect for agriculture – one of the pillars of economic well-being in your area. How can you plan for the worst-case scenario and what preventative actions can you take now? What can you do, as Chief Executive, Chair or Leader, now to mitigate the effects of our loss of environment and be more globally responsible?

Your own roles in protecting the environment for future generations will need to be clear in the steps you will take to meet this objective. [Zero Carbon Britain's recent 'Making it Happen'](#) report sets out what responsibilities we all have to future generations to act on climate change now. This will include how you plan, design and locate future developments (as part of your Local Development Plan), buildings, infrastructure and other public and community spaces. Together, you also have a large amount of public sector estate and a say in how public buildings are designed and refurbished. Having a consideration of how 'green' these buildings are, both in terms of energy efficiency and sustainable construction, is a quick win for you as a PSB. The [Wildlife Trust in Wales report into green infrastructure](#) outlines how green infrastructure delivers a wide range of proven, tangible, and cost-effective economic, social and environmental benefits. The [Design Commission for Wales](#) also has case studies and resources on design that focuses on users, maximises energy efficiency and has been shown to significantly improve patient recovery in health.

[The Welsh Government recently published](#) carbon emission levels subdivided by Local Authority. Although the public sector only accounts for a relatively small amount of Wales' emissions, you are uniquely placed to influence

emissions far more widely in areas such as transport, energy, land use and procurement. The Welsh Government also released a [Call for Evidence](#) to explore the most effective mechanisms for achieving a carbon neutral public sector by 2030 and I wrote to you urging you to consider and contribute before the deadline of 13th September. I will be hosting an event in November, in partnership with Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales to: explore how the public service in Wales can involve people in collaborating and integrating their work, to take greater account of the long-term carbon implications of their activities, and help prevent the effects of climate change becoming even worse.

Involving people in this not only has a positive effect on protecting the environment, but also gets them physically active and connecting with nature. [NESTA has a guide](#) to working with communities to tackle climate change, including the 'Big Green Challenge', where participants changed their lifestyles to reduce their carbon footprint. Projects such as '[Rainscape](#)' through [Dwr Cymru](#) suggest ways that we can all mitigate the effects of floods, and an extreme example includes the [Isle of Eigg in Scotland](#), where the community are having a positive impact on their environment by introducing renewable community energy schemes, building sustainable businesses and improving biodiversity. There will be differences across Carmarthenshire that need to be interpreted and explored, which will involve empowering people and staff spending more time on the ground. I am encouraged to hear that you are engaging with Town and Community Councils, building on the work of Llanelli Town Council and 'The Llanelli we want', and that they are informing the drafting of objectives and steps. Working with community councils, the third sector and other networks can help you to understand how best to engage people and encourage behaviour change.

Nearly a third of children in Carmarthenshire are overweight or obese, with health trends set to worsen over the long term across Wales. Most people told you that they connected their well-being to physical health and access to the environment, so I would advise you to listen and design initiatives together to encourage enjoyment of the outdoors. One of your draft steps is around social prescribing, which recognises that health is about the social, environmental, economic and cultural well-being of us all. Methods of social prescribing cover a huge range of things, but it is growing and I am encouraged to see it being recognised as a preventative approach. This [study, on social prescribing in Bristol](#), provides information on different models and gives some insight into the improvements in mental and general physical health. The recent BBC documentary, '[The doctor who gave up drugs](#)', showed several examples of how alternative approaches to prescribing pills can have a more holistic, long-lasting positive impact on someone's life – with people getting physically fitter and healthier mentally without the reliance on prescriptions. As I'm sure you've recognised there are opportunities for you to work with organisations such as the National Trust and Wildlife Trusts to develop a county-wide approach.

One of your draft steps is about encouraging behaviour change in your population which often 'sticks' when people are involved in wider social and cultural activities together; for example, the [Nudged 'Behaviour Change is a Team Sport'](#) report found getting people together increased exercise patterns. How can the rich cultural activities encourage children and adults to live healthier lives? How might people take part in cultural activities to help manage their health? This is an opportunity to improve access to cultural activities and promote

heritage, use of the Welsh language and encourage people to get together around a local cause, such as their environment. The [Natural Resources Wales' 'Actif Woods'](#) project is an example of getting people outside, protecting their environment and enjoying the positive effects on health and well-being.

Other PSBs looking at social / green prescribing and improving health include Conwy / Denbighshire, Monmouthshire and Powys PSBs.

- *Early intervention: People have the right help at the right time, as and when they need it.*

It is encouraging to see that you have recognised the challenges people can face at certain 'trigger points' in their lives and are seeking to prevent these issues from occurring. Our services are often not set up in a way that adequately spots signs of a worsening situation and effectively intervenes at the right time. The five ways of working are intended to challenge how we currently do things and provide a different lens as a whole public service for dealing with problems. Involving people is central to challenging the system because only by understanding the lived experiences of people can we design services that are fit for current and future generations. The case studies [contained in this report by Locality](#) demonstrate the financial and social costs of not taking this holistic and preventative approach to people's lives and dealing with people in neat, 'service-user boxes'.

As public services, we often focus on treating the symptoms of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), such as mental illness, substance misuse and domestic abuse, rather than tackling the root causes. I thought the life cycle approach you took to your well-being assessment was positive in showing the public services which people need throughout their lives. But what can we do to impact that over the long-term and become more preventative? I expect to see this intelligence being explored and used over the coming year to inform your steps. Providing the right support at the right time will mean better integration of services, co-locating teams, pooling resources and working in a way that makes sense for that community. In the steps you take, it is important to review the local initiatives that focus on mental health, substance misuse, criminal justice, housing, services and others to ensure they are preventative, joined up and actively seeking to better situations for families and for future parents to stop the cycle continuing to the next generation.

Understanding what you are seeking to prevent is at the centre of the steps you take to meet this draft objective. As your assessment outlines, the early days of a child's life and their family environment is crucial to their well-being throughout life. [Late intervention services for young people are estimated to cost England and Wales £17bn per year](#). Enabling people to have a healthy start in life is not just down to you, but the families that children grow up in and the communities they live in, as well as the families they then start of their own. Public Health Wales' work on the [First 1000 days](#) is clear in the impact we can have on the start of a child's life. In considering what steps you might take, the [New Economics Foundation work](#) on investing in children might be helpful, which highlights the need to address both material well-being and external circumstances – such as housing, poverty, and schooling – as well as psychosocial well-being and inner resources.

Over a quarter of adults and one in ten children in Carmarthenshire have a mental health issue. Approximately 50% of people with enduring mental health problems display symptoms by the time they are 14 years old, and many at a much younger age. How can you collaborate to recognise symptoms of illness at a younger age? What can be done to prevent the problems at later life? How might services need to change or universal services be adapted to have prevention at their core? [Cardiff have trialled mental health lessons for children](#) and a new report from Respublica and Barnado's, '[Making young minds matter](#)', highlights early interventions (such as in-school counselling in Wales) that can have a positive impact on mental health.

How can you involve the 'unusual suspects' in taking steps to meet this objective? Many families are reluctant to approach a statutory service in times of need, so how can you enable people to help themselves? How will the third sector be empowered to help? This links to your objective below about stronger connections and resilience. Other PSBs have focused on similar objectives, such as Cwm Taf, Blaenau Gwent and Bridgend. I am part of the [Good Practice Exchange Wales webinar on understanding ACEs on the 7th November](#), which may be helpful to you in considering your steps for this objective.

- ***Strong Connections: Strongly connected people, places and organisations, that are able to adapt to change.***

The community cohesion, vibrant culture and thriving traditions are an asset to Carmarthenshire. The steps you have identified build on your exploratory themes to promote volunteering, co-locate services, upskill communities and co-produce initiatives. This objective links to your other three objectives and I would reiterate that understanding the differences between communities and place are central to the steps you take to deliver this ambition. This will mean truly understanding the assets, opportunities and barriers of people's lived experiences and setting the context of what it means to live in a particular community. Most people will only get involved in something that directly impacts them, their family or the place where they spend time and, often, this can lead to much bigger outcomes. Putting the power in the hands of people who know their area best often has unexpected positive results, shown by the work that '[Nurture Development](#)' do around [Asset Based Community Development](#) and the [Centre for Regeneration Excellence Wales](#)' '[Deep Place](#)' study in [Tredegar](#) shows how an understanding of place can have multiple benefits on well-being.

This deeper understanding will not only help align services, but encourage you to consider how you contribute to a more equal Carmarthenshire. You may not know who the potential community leaders and connectors are in some areas, so if you are committed to this, re-purpose your resources to do more work in communities, to begin to know a place as the people who live there know it. No doubt that doing this will help you in understanding how tackling inequality might be approached on a place-basis, and give you an understanding of the environment in that locality too. Again, involving 'unusual suspects' in the work of the PSB, schools, colleges, the Town and Community Councils and the third sector play an important role in connecting people. In some areas, community organisations have been funded to act as community coordinators for older people – linking them with local

activities and services in their area and helping them to stay active and well. [WCVA produced wider information](#) on how the third sector play a role in contributing to the Act including resources on the seven well-being goals.

For each of your objectives, I would like to understand the rationale behind your steps. You have begun to explain this in relation to your assessment findings, but it is important you show how the five ways of working have shaped your thinking in considering how you contribute to the seven goals. For instance, is developing volunteering opportunities a preventative measure against social isolation and a way of creating community cohesion and resilience? You have clearly thought about how to involve people in your assessment and your well-being planning, and I know you are currently thinking about how best to engage the people of Carmarthenshire better. I would advise each of your organisations to commit to the National Participation Standards and [Participation Cymru](#) can support your officers in gaining the skills vital for effective and meaningful involvement. [Co-production Network Wales](#) could help you to identify and engage community leaders, contact the Director, Mark John-Williams for further advice.

The 'Carms News' is a good way of getting information out to communities but how have you considered how people might want to get involved in the future, and how this could be used to promote meaningful engagement supported by a range of communication channels? What sort of changes might you need to make to your organisational systems and policies to enable people to get more involved in communities and shape local services? Currently, research shows that children aged between five and 16 years spend an average of six and a half hours a day in front of a screen; [28% of young people use social media](#) as their primary news source; [43% of 'millennials' are driven to make financial donations through social channels](#); and [according to the 2017 ONS survey](#), 87% of all adults in Wales were recent internet users (meaning they had used the internet in the last three months). Although some people are currently offline, and there is clearly a need for a tailored approach, there is a real opportunity to engage with people that is most convenient to them and is part of their daily life, not an additional chore. "[Monmouthshire Made Open](#)" is an example of an online platform that has anticipated how people might contribute to improving their area in the future, with opportunities to share ideas, ask the community, start a project and seek volunteers or resources. Matthew Gatehouse, working with Monmouthshire PSB, would be able to share their learning with you on establishing this website.

Loneliness and social isolation affect people of all ages, particularly in rural communities. But as your assessment shows, older people particularly value feeling connected to their communities. [Research by Ageing Well Wales](#) has shown that loneliness in older people is closely linked to poor mental and physical health, how can you maximise the benefits of increased involvement to improve the health of older people in your area? There are some good examples of projects that seek to bring people together to learn new skills, socialise and build their resilience in later life, like [Men's Sheds Cymru](#), happening across Wales that the PSB could encourage and support. [Solva Care](#) also demonstrates innovative initiatives that focus on the needs of the community first and integrate services to improve well-being.

There is a real opportunity here for you to think about how you maximise your contribution to the national goals, as you have acknowledged through the draft step of promoting cohesive and bilingual communities. The heritage, language, traditions, natural environment of Carmarthenshire are all things people are passionate about. [The Arts Council for Wales' strategy, which](#) outlines some of the benefits involvement in creative activity can have on the health, cohesion and skills of the population. The [Cultural Commissioning Programme, funded by Arts Council England](#) seeks to help commissioners of public services understand how they can improve outcomes by integrating arts and cultural activities into a range of services, including mental health and well-being, older people and place-based commissioning. Collaborating with the national public bodies subject to the Act, such as Sport Wales, Arts Council for Wales, National Museum and National Library of Wales, may be able to help you see how your steps to meet this objective could maximise contribution to each of the goals. The Welsh Language Commissioner's team are also considering how they best help PSBs to consider the role they can play in growing the Welsh language, as set out in '[Cymraeg 2050](#)'. Please let my team know if you would like to connect with relevant individuals in these organisations.

You will not be surprised to note that other Public Services Boards are also considering setting objectives around engagement, developing / sustaining strong social networks, fostering belonging and shaping services. In particular, you may wish to share ideas with Vale of Glamorgan; Ceredigion; Newport and Powys PSBs, who have supplied me with similar draft objectives.

- *[Prosperous people and places: Maximise opportunities for both people and places in urban and rural parts of the county.](#)*

As leaders of public services in Carmarthenshire, with strong regional connections to Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion, involvement in the Swansea Bay City Deal and three town centres, the PSB should recognise the influence it has on opportunities offered to people and on influencing other organisations to take action. Your well-being assessment identified that young people want to see more apprenticeships and training opportunities, with half of them suggesting there were no suitable opportunities for them in the area. You identified that many young people leave for opportunities elsewhere - [a trend being seen across Wales](#). Income is generally low and the main professions are agriculture, forestry and fishing, repair of motor vehicles and construction.

Many people in Carmarthenshire use their cars to commute a fair distance to work, which is having an impact on air quality, their physical health and their time. It is encouraging to see draft steps on improving digital infrastructure, which can provide real opportunities for rural communities, as the future of work is unlikely to require commuting by car. Neighbouring PSBs are also considering how they can influence digital infrastructure for your areas and I would advise you come together to create a case for better access.

Other rural communities in Japan and Canada have seen a recent upsurge of younger people staying in their place of birth, both with improved technologies but also by celebrating the way of life and introducing sustainable tourism. [This World Economic Forum article](#) suggests that some of the answer may lie in bottom-up community

initiatives, where young people take a sense of pride and ownership in telling others about their heritage and environment, starting small scale businesses that benefit from visiting tourists.

The future of employment and how we see 'work' is changing. Jobs that exist now were unheard of when I left school and it will be the same for our children; the [Future of Work report](#) predicts that 65 percent of the children who are now starting school will find themselves working jobs as adults that don't even exist yet. The 6-11-year olds that you spoke to for the well-being assessment identified careers in gaming, you-tube and internet companies. [And, according to McKinsey](#), technology could automate 45 percent of the tasks people are currently paid to do. What action can you take now, as public service providers, to encourage learning and jobs in the foundational economy, around local care, retail and food industries, which are jobs less likely to be automated in future and good for the local economy? A [recent report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#) highlights the value of the social economy in creating jobs, strengthening skills and employability. How have you considered these long term trends in setting your steps and enabling people to adapt their skills for future earning?

The [Prince's Trust recent Results for Life report](#) explored how teamwork, communication and confidence are as valuable to young people as good grades entering the workplace. The changing patterns of work over the long-term should also be forcing us to consider how life skills could be more important in the future than qualifications. A [World Economic Forum blog](#) recently considered, asking 'what is the meaning of work?' Indeed, the [Future of Work report](#) suggests that creativity, connectivity, communication and problem-solving will be far more important than specific knowledge, with more project-based work in the future – rather than set employment.

It is positive to hear how involved Coleg Sir Gar and Trinity St David's are in the PSB, how can you work together to encourage life skills in Carmarthenshire fit for the future? How are you collaborating with businesses currently to create opportunities? What social responsibilities have the private sector adopted in Llanelli, Carmarthenshire and Ammaford? How are businesses coming together to drive positive, long-term change and does the PSB have any influence over this? What opportunities can be offered to budding community enterprises through the PSB collaborating with the private sector and education providers?

It is encouraging to see you have considered your own responsibilities in meeting this objective as large public sector employers and purchasers. You should continue to do this in the context of the seven well-being goals. For instance, how can your procurement procedures be the maximum of what you can do to contribute to a globally responsible Carmarthenshire, and how can you work across the PSB to achieve this? Can your organisational policies seek to help sustainable local businesses, cutting down on transporting goods, rather than focussing on cost alone? [Forum for the Future](#) have published reports on this and my office are working with [Value Wales](#) to pilot new approaches to procurement in the context of the Act. How can you champion equality? How can your organisations seek to grow the Welsh language in the area? Alun Davies AM [announced funding for growing bilingual small businesses](#) recently to increase visibility of Welsh in our communities. In seeking to enable

entrepreneurship and growth, how about introducing initiatives that stipulate people set up sustainable enterprises that maximise their contribution to the seven goals?

Other PSBs drafting similar objectives and steps include Powys; Cardiff; Monmouthshire; and Caerphilly.

I hope you have found this advice helpful in moving forward towards publishing a well-being plan for formal consultation. Please get in touch with my team if you want further contact details for any of the organisations and reports mentioned in this letter.

I am also learning the best ways to advise, support and monitor how public bodies are seeking to apply the five ways of working and maximise their contribution to the seven well-being goals, so I would welcome any feedback from you, supporting officers and the Carmarthenshire PSB Scrutiny Committee on how I have chosen to approach this statutory duty and the advice I have given.

I look forward to receiving your draft well-being plan and please keep in touch with me and my team.

Kind regards,



Sophie Howe