



Letter to John Griffiths AM (Chair)
National Assembly for Wales
Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear Chair

INQUIRY INTO PUBLIC SERVICES BOARDS - VALE OF GLAMORGAN EVIDENCE

Thank you for your letter dated 13th June requesting further information regarding the work of the Vale of Glamorgan Public Services Board. Please find below our responses to the questions raised in your letter and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

RESOURCES AND CAPACITY:

How does your work impact on the capacity of partner organisations to deliver on the Well-being of Future Generations Act within their own organisations? What if anything, will have to give?

To better understand the work of all partners, and to understand how each partner could contribute to the delivery of the PSBs draft Well-being Objectives we worked with Gwenallt and Whitear consultants in 2017 to develop a Self-Assessment tool. Developed in partnership, the tool enabled partners to reflect on how they could deliver the draft Well-being Objectives and in-turn gain a greater understanding of their organisational capacity to deliver the Well-being of Future Generations Act. This work has further enabled partners to identify areas for joint work and examples of good practice. Going forward, it will be a challenge for all partners to think through the lens of the PSB's Well-being Plan and align their work in the Vale to the work of the PSB where appropriate.

There is a recognition that across the various partners there are considerable resources in terms of expertise, skills and knowledge. It will be necessary to redirect some of this capacity to the delivery of the Well-being Plan priorities. There is a need to embed the Plan as core business for every partner. An exercise has been undertaken to map the PSB's objectives against individual organisation objectives and one of our tasks moving forward will be to recognise the synergies and bring this work together. However we must also recognise that many partners work across different geographical areas and therefore not

all of their organisational priorities will be significant issues for the Vale of Glamorgan or the Vale PSB.

What is the level of engagement from regional and national partners on PSBs, and what barriers exist to sustaining that engagement?

There is a good engagement from regional and national partners with the work of the PSB. In taking forward the Well-being Plan, the four statutory partners - three of whom work regionally - are each leading on a well-being objective and this is ensuring a shared responsibility in our delivery. Although each of the statutory partners is leading on a well-being objective, different partners are leading on different activities and the involvement of regional and national partners will be essential to take these activities forward.

It is recognised that there is a difficulty for a number of the regional and national bodies in fully engaging with the work of the PSB; this is often due to these partners being involved in multiple PSBs and partnerships. However the more that we can align PSB work to the work of the different organisations the more successful we will be in keeping partners engaged. In considering how we deliver our Well-being Plan we are also exploring opportunities for regional work and how we align with other partnerships e.g. the City Deal and the Regional Partnership Board to avoid duplication.

A further difficulty is the distinction in 'status' between partners. Statutory partners are very much taking a lead in taking the Plan forward. It will be necessary for the PSB to undertake more work to ensure that all those who sit on the PSB are actively involved.

Are there things that you would do differently now in terms of resource and capacity if you'd known two years ago?

Although all partners have been engaged in the work of the PSB from the start the Council has always taken a lead in co-ordinating work and ensuring the publication of the Well-being Assessment and the Well-being Plan. As we move into the next stage of work for the PSB we are taking a more collaborative approach and trying to spread this work to ensure a broader insight in to how we work. There is also a recognition that the Council can no longer continue to resource the PSB at the same level that it has been. This is work in progress and is part of the development of the PSB as an effective partnership. The approach taken by the Council when the PSB was formed was a pragmatic one to ensure that we delivered on our duties under the Well-being of Future Generations Act and to build good working relationships across the PSB which will make us stronger in the long term - and makes the difficult conversations easier.

GOOD PRACTICE AND INNOVATION:

How have you been working differently, using more innovative and creative means to develop your work programme?

The PSB has made a conscious effort to be more innovative and creative in its work. The development of the Well-being Plan involved all partners in the drafting of the Plan and our engagement and consultation activities; this was a

much more inclusive way of working than was previously adopted under the old Local Service Board.

As a way of testing the draft objectives and developing the draft well-being plan we developed a self-assessment tool with the assistance of Gwenallt and Whitear consultants. The tool was developed in partnership and enabled partners to reflect on how they would deliver the objectives by answering co-produced questions around leadership, policy, actions, resources and impact. This work will be revisited and further developed as part of our performance management arrangements.

We continue to look to further embed different ways of working and thinking in our work. On Tuesday 22nd May the Well-being Plan was formally launched at the HeARTh Gallery and University Hospital Llandough; this was an inclusive event attended by children from a local nursery and participants from the Hospital's Elderfit class. We are keen to illustrate how the plan is of relevance to people of all ages and our launch event was a part of this. In addition, to ensure the accessibility of the Plan and to continue our conversations, the PSB has launched a new website www.valepsb.wales/home and a twitter account [@VOGPSB](https://twitter.com/VOGPSB). Both will help the PSB to promote its work and further develop the Board as an identifiable brand.

A further example of how the PSB are embracing innovative and creative approaches to its work is a PSB walk on the 25th June. The catalyst for this has been to show support for Len Richards, the Chief Executive of Cardiff and Vale University Hospital Board who is raising money for charity by walking Offa's Dyke. We wanted to show our support but also recognised it as an opportunity for board members to spend some time together, outside of a meeting room, to enjoy the beauty of the Vale and to further build on our relationships.

The PSB will also be taking part in the Healthy Boards work with Academi Wales and recognises the importance of investing time in the development of the partnership. We are also looking to build more workshop elements into our meetings to help stimulate discussion and debate. This will help us take a much more integrated and collaborative approach to tackling local priorities and to developing sustainable solutions.

Have you engaged and consulted differently with stakeholders and the public?

In undertaking engagement and consultation activities to inform the development of our Well-being Plan, efforts were made to engage with people of all ages and, building on our Well-being Assessment, to have an on-going conversation about what people think about life in the Vale. In organising our activities we recognised the value of going to groups and attending events organised by others and grasping many different opportunities to engage, for example, a Communities First Halloween party, a supermarket on a Saturday morning, Community Council meetings, the Vale 50+ Strategy Forum and Vale pupil voice events.

Learning from our assessment, our engagement and consultation activities become more fun and interesting as confidence and knowledge grew and these formed an integral part of the development of the Plan. Our activities have also

influenced how our PSS meetings are conducted, with efforts made to ensure all partners have participated in the development of the Plan.

As mentioned, we are keen to continue and build on the conversations we started through the assessment and the Plan and ensure we inform people of work being undertaken and provide an opportunity for people to engage with this work. In addition to our website and social media accounts we will continue to look develop new and innovative approaches to our conversations.

Our Consultation and Engagement Feedback Log gives further information about the activities undertaken to inform the Plan.

In recognition of the importance of engagement one of our Well-being objectives is 'Enable people to get involved, participate in their local communities and shape local services'. South Wales Fire and Rescue Service will be leading on this objective but all partners will be involved in activities which include development of a toolkit, researching best practice, promoting volunteering and co-production.

To what extent are you sharing information across regions presently?

As part of the 14 week statutory consultation period on the draft Well-being Plan the Future Generations Commissioner was required to provide the PSS with advice on how the PSS might take steps to meet its well-being objectives. The 'feedforward' report provided by the Commissioner identified possible areas for regional or joint working across PSS areas. As we move forward with the implementation of the Plan we will look back to this advice to identify where the PSS can work regionally in its delivery.

Officers from PSS organisations continue to attend and contribute to the PSS co-ordinators network facilitated by Welsh Government and the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner. The network provides a good opportunity for officers from PSBs across Wales to come together and discuss progress and any issues arising in the development and delivery of Well-being Plans.

Funding has been made available to the PSS from Welsh Government for the past three years on a regional basis and the criteria attached to this funding has meant that it has primarily been directed towards the assessment and engagement work. In our region this funding is shared across Cardiff and Vale PSS and we will continue to work together to share ideas and where appropriate undertake joint activities. The PSS continues to use the 'Let's Talk' banner for its engagement activities and this was developed with the Cardiff PSS and the Cardiff and Vale Regional Partnership Board when work was undertaken jointly across the region for the Well-being Assessments and the Population Needs Assessment. We have found it useful to continue with the branding as we continue our conversations about what is important to people living in the Vale.

Are there processes and opportunities to share good practice and innovation with other PSBs?

As mentioned, officers who support the PSS regularly attend the PSS Co-ordinators network and also attend meetings of the Sustainable Development Co-ordinators Cymru (SDCC) where PSS related issues are also discussed. At these meetings PSBs regularly share good practice and learning about what

has worked for their partnerships. Officers supporting the PSB attend Welsh Government drop in sessions when there is an opportunity to provide updates on the work being undertaken or to raise any concerns. This learning is often collated and shared on a national level through Welsh Government bulletins. Other than these networks and processes the sharing of good practice and innovation is largely dependent on those partners who sit across multiple PSB areas recognising and sharing this practice with each of the PSBs on which they sit. The sharing of good practice is something both Welsh Government and the Future Generations Commissioner are keen to promote and as we work through the different aspects of the Plan we will be keen to learn from and/or work with other PSBs.

Will PSBs achieve the positive impact anticipated when the Act was passed?

We are confident that in the Vale of Glamorgan that we have the right plan, that it has been developed collaboratively and that it has been informed by a robust well-being assessment. There is a commitment from partners to work together and to make a real difference in the Vale. Our challenge now is to bring the full resource of our organisations in to the work of the PSB and to recognise the potential for change.

Do you have any concerns with regard to the future delivery of the plans that you've developed?

There are potentially a number of barriers which may affect the delivery of our Well-being Plan, the first of these has been mentioned above. There is a lack of dedicated resource and capacity to support PSBs going forward and an expectation to date that the local authority will pick up most of the burden. There are also some concerns regarding discussions around local government re-organisation which may make some feel that the local well-being plan is redundant before it has a chance to really make a difference.

In taking forward the Well-being Plan to implementation the distinction between statutory partners and invited participants could become a stumbling block for the Plan. The PSB will need to undertake more work to ensure that all members are actively involved. As mentioned previously the PSB has expressed an interest in working with Academi Wales on the Healthy Behaviours work that has been offered as part of the PSB support from Welsh Government, and we are optimistic that this will help further develop the team approach that is needed to effectively deliver the Well-being Plan for the Vale.

Further Evidence requested on - The relationship between your PSB and your local Regional Partnership Board established in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2016.

In parallel to the work of the PSB, where possible, we have aligned work on the Social Services and Well-being Act; in particular work to deliver the Population Needs Assessment and Area Plan. A joined up approach to engagement to inform the Well-being Plan and Area Plan under the 'Let's Talk' banner was adopted. There have been many positive outcomes as a result of this work; however, due to the both assessments and plans being undertaken during the same timeframes, but with different requirements (such as different

geographical areas, scope and approval mechanisms), there was some confusion around how the work fitted together.

As part of the work being undertaken around the implementation of the Plan an exercise has been undertaken to identify similar priorities between the Area Plan and the Well-being Plan as well as neighbouring Well-being Plans to help identify opportunities for joint working and alignment of activities.

In conclusion I hope that the above information provides further clarity regarding the work of the Vale PSB and I would like to take the opportunity to emphasise the point I made when providing evidence to the Committee. We are now entering stage three in the development of the PSB and this is perhaps the most exciting and challenging stage for partners. We have gathered our evidence and published our Well-being Assessment, we have used this information to develop our Well-being Plan and we must now deliver on the commitments made. However the work of the PSB, if it is to truly make a difference will be more focused on long term change and not quick wins. The five ways of working will help us to take this work forward but it will take time for us to deliver our vision and achieve our objectives.

I would like to thank you again for the opportunity to submit evidence to the inquiry into Public Services Boards and look forward to reading the report of your findings.

Huw Isaac, Head of Performance and Development,
Vale of Glamorgan Council, Vale of Glamorgan Public
Services Board

13 June 2018

Dear Huw

Inquiry into public services boards

Thank you for attending our meeting on 7 June to give evidence in connection with our inquiry into public services boards.

At the meeting you agreed to provide answers to the questions that were not reached during the evidence session. The questions are as follows:

Resources and capacity

- How does your work impact on the capacity of partner organisations to deliver on the Well-being of Future Generations Act within their own organisations? What, if anything, will have to give?
- What is the level of engagement from regional and national partners on PSBs, and what barriers exist to sustaining that engagement?
- Are there things that you would do differently now in terms of resource and capacity if you'd known two years ago?

Good practice and innovation

- How have you been working differently, using more innovative and creative means to develop your work programme?
- Have you engaged and consulted differently with stakeholders and the public?



- To what extent are you sharing information across regions presently?
- Are there processes and opportunities to share good practice and innovation with other PSBs?
- Will PSBs achieve the positive impact anticipated when the Act was passed?
- Do you have any concerns with regard to the future delivery of the plans that you've developed?

Following the evidence session, the Committee also requested further information on:

- the relationship between your PSB and your local Regional Partnership Board established in the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2016.

I should be grateful if you would respond by **5 July** in time to inform the next stage of our inquiry.

Yours sincerely



John Griffiths AM
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

