

SUBJECT: Gwent Public Services Board - Regional and Local Area Well-being Assessment

MEETING: Public Services Select Committee

DATE: 8th February 2022

DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide Public Services Select Committee with the consultation draft of the Public Services Board (PSB) well-being assessment which is made up of an assessment of well-being for Gwent as a whole, Monmouthshire as a whole and five local areas within Monmouthshire centred around Abergavenny, Monmouth, the heart of Monmouthshire, Chepstow, and Severnside.
- 1.2 To provide the committee with an update on the consultation process and next steps for the well-being assessment and developing the next Well-being Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To scrutinise the draft Gwent, Monmouthshire and five local areas with Monmouthshire well-being assessment (linked in appendix 1) and provide any feedback as part of the consultation process.
- 2.2 To examine the issues highlighted in appendix 2 and whether these accurately reflect the most significant themes emerging from the analysis.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Public services are facing a range of complex challenges including climate change, income and health inequalities and access to housing and transport. These are complex things and we need to work together, and with our communities to think far more about some of the solutions and the long-term impact of the decisions we make.
- 3.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets out a requirement for each Public Services Board (PSB) to prepare and publish an assessment of the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in its area no later than a year before it publishes its local well-being plan. This means that the first Gwent Well-Being Assessment must be published by 5th May 2022.
- 3.3 The development of a regional Gwent PSB provides the catalyst for a Gwent-wide, well-being assessment and well-being plan that maintains local accountability and ensures that public services are working collaboratively on the biggest issues that affect the well-being of our communities. As part of the planning, officers from across public bodies as part of the PSB in Gwent have developed an integrated and collaborative approach to drafting the Well-being Assessment.
- 3.4 Each local authority area had responsibility for undertaking their local community area assessment that integrates with the regional Gwent assessment. Assessing the well-being of each community is intended to ensure that the differences between the various communities within the board's area are analysed. In addition to assessing well-being in the specified five local areas in Monmouthshire, an assessment of well-being has also been undertaken at the County level. This is in recognition of Monmouthshire being geographically large compared to other areas in the region. It is semi-rural and is often perceived as green and affluent. However, headline statistics can fail to shine a light on the differences within and between communities. In

addition, some data is only available at a county level and can't easily be broken down into the five areas.

- 3.5 The draft well-being assessment is made up of a Gwent-wide assessment and local area assessments. These are available for the committee to review as shown in Appendix 1:
- An assessment of well-being for Gwent as a whole. An executive summary of the draft assessment has also been produced.
 - Monmouthshire as a whole. A summary of the assessment will also be available
 - Five local areas within Monmouthshire: Abergavenny and surrounding area; Monmouth and surrounding area; the heart of Monmouthshire which includes Usk and Raglan; Chepstow and the Lower Wye Valley and Severnside which includes Caldicot and Magor.

A summary of the key emerging issues from the Monmouthshire assessment is provided in appendix 2

- 3.6 The assessments build on existing individual area Well-being Assessments in Gwent and the previous assessment in Monmouthshire which were completed in May 2017. They are structured around the four areas of well-being – social, economic, environmental and cultural. The assessment uses a wide range of qualitative and quantitative information including data, academic research, evidence and people's views (engagement) to help understand well-being in Gwent, Monmouthshire and communities within the county. The assessment takes an asset-based approach, rather than focussing purely on need, to build upon and identify the strengths of both individuals and communities and also identify problems and challenges that need to be addressed. The assessment begins to review future trends and potential disruptions, whether positive or negative so that we can maximise the well-being of future generations.
- 3.7 The community engagement on the assessment has been undertaken using a consistent framework across Gwent and a common set of questions. This has allowed the engagement response to be aggregated up to Gwent information as well as providing insight at a local community area level to inform well-being planning. The engagement feedback is still being analysed and will be factored into the Gwent assessment during the consultation process to inform the final version. The engagement in Monmouthshire was built on the previous 'Our Monmouthshire' engagement exercise to seek views on well-being in the county. A range of different engagement methods were used including an online survey, young people's workshops and stalls at a community event. Appendix 3 provides a summary of the engagement feedback from Monmouthshire, this will be integrated into the final version of the Monmouthshire and five local area assessments.
- 3.8 The draft Gwent well-being assessment was reviewed and agreed for consultation by the Gwent PSB in December 2021. This is currently being consulted on with a range of partners, organisations and those with an interest in well-being in the area, in line with the requirements set out in the guidance for the Act. The Monmouthshire and local areas assessments are being consulted on with local partners, organisations and communities in Monmouthshire, further information is available on <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/our-monmouthshire/>
- 3.9 The Public Services Select Committee is a statutory consultee under the Well-being of Future Generations Act. As part of the statutory consultation process, the draft of the Gwent Assessment will be received by each local authority overview and scrutiny committee, along with the corresponding local area assessments.
- 3.10 The timeline of establishing a regional PSB, the ongoing COVID pandemic and the requirement to complete the first regional assessment and supporting engagement activity has presented a range of challenges in preparing the assessment. This assessment is a starting point for the Gwent PSB, Well-Being Plan and supporting activities. The data and assessment will be developed, with further amendments through the consultation process, and in the next phase (known as the Response Analysis). Developments will include: incorporating the engagement information into each chapter, information from Welsh Government's Future Trends report (which was released in December 2021) and further work on the local community area assessments.

- 3.11 The consultation process will include expert officers, that is staff within member organisations with responsibility for services that deliver on, or who have knowledge of, economic, environmental, social and cultural factors. In effect, to 'sense check' the headlines in the assessment and consider their views as it moves through to Response Analysis
- 3.12 The timeline for completion of the final Well-being Assessment is included at appendix 4. Thereafter a new Gwent Well-being Plan will be developed by 2023 in line with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act. This will set overarching well-being objectives which will be met by regional and local activity. There are likely also to be local actions, reflecting the differences in needs for well-being across different areas in Gwent, which will be particular to a locality and determined by more local evidence in the well-being assessment.
- 3.13 The Programme Board in Monmouthshire (Local Delivery Partnerships) will be tasked with contributing to the regional actions as well as delivering any specific local activity. The Board will lead Monmouthshire's role in local delivery of regional actions as well as delivering activity specific to Monmouthshire, ensuring the well-being needs of Monmouthshire are prioritised locally and integrated with regional delivery as appropriate. The existing Monmouthshire Well-being Plan sets the objectives and steps for partnership working for the PSB up until 2023. There is a need to continue to focus on the delivery of these to ensure we do not lose focus between now and the publication of the regional plan. This plan will continue to be delivered by local partnership arrangements in Monmouthshire.

4. REASONS:

- 4.1 To provide an updated assessment of the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of our county and region and meet the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the associated legislative requirements set out in the underpinning statutory guidance.
- 4.2 To ensure scrutiny from overview and scrutiny committees in Gwent of the Public Service Board Draft Well-being Assessment through the consultation process.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Welsh Government grant funding has been made available annually to Public Services Boards to use regionally in Gwent to build strategic capacity and capability to support the preparation of the well-being assessments as well as consolidate work on the well-being plans. Funding of up to £77,727 is confirmed for the 2021/22 financial year and is being used to support the assessment process.
- 5.2 The production of the assessment involves a wider range of partners in Gwent and Monmouthshire. The development of the assessment in Monmouthshire and relevant contribution to the Gwent Assessment is being led by a project team of officers from Monmouthshire Council.

6. EQUALITY AND WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING and CORPORATE PARENTING):

- 6.1 This report is for information only and reports on the draft local assessment of well-being. It provides an assessment of a range of well-being issues related to these responsibilities.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (The Act) puts a well-being duty on specified public bodies to act jointly via Public Services Boards (PSB) to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of their area by contributing to the achievement of the well-being goals. Public services boards' contribution to the achievement of the goals must include:

- assessing the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in their areas;
- setting local objectives that are designed to maximise their contribution within their areas to achieving those goals;
- the taking of all reasonable steps by statutory members of boards (in exercising their functions) to meet those objectives

7.2 The Monmouthshire Public Service Board, a statutory board under the Act, was established to fulfil this role in Monmouthshire and subsequently developed a Monmouthshire Well-being Assessment and agreed a Monmouthshire Well-being Plan and objectives that board members are working on for 2018-2023. In July 2021 the proposal to merge the five Public Services Boards in Gwent into one Gwent-wide PSB was presented to the Public Services Select Committee and the Public Services Boards subsequently merged with the Gwent Public Services Board established on 1st October 2021. The development of a regional approach provided the catalyst for developing a Gwent-wide, well-being assessment and well-being plan that maintains local accountability.

7.3 The guidance for well-being assessment states that the use of evidence and analysis should usefully be divided into two main components:

- Situation Analysis – painting a broad picture of well-being within the board’s area so that potential priorities for the area can be identified (the assessment of local well-being, being undertaken and consulted on now).
- Response Analysis – the detailed analysis of individual issues and themes to inform the development of the Local Well-being Plan (this will be developed with the PSB over the Spring/Summer 2022)

7.4 In preparing and publishing the assessment (situation analysis) of the state the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area the board must:

- Set out the communities that comprise the area;
- Analyse the state of well-being in each community and the whole area
- Analyse the state of well-being of the people in the area;
- Include predictions of future trends of the area;
- Refer to the National Indicators;
- Take into account several statutory reviews and assessments when preparing their assessment.

8. **AUTHORS:**

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Appendix 1 - Gwent and Monmouthshire local area Draft Wellbeing Assessment Documents

Gwent

Gwent Well-being Assessment – <https://www.gwentpsb.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Draft-Gwent-Well-being-Assessment-Dec-2021.pdf>

Gwent Well-being Assessment executive summary - <https://www.gwentpsb.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/02-Appendix-1-Executive-Summary-Gwent-Well-being-Assessment-7th-Dec-PSB-meeting.pdf>

Monmouthshire

Monmouthshire Well-being Assessment (including 5 local areas) – Attached to the agenda

A summary of the Monmouthshire Well-being Assessment will also be available. Further information is available on <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/our-monmouthshire/>

Appendix 2 – Monmouthshire Well-being Assessment key emerging issues

Economic

- Monmouthshire has a competitive economy with excellent potential for growth. There is however, a low rate of business start-ups compared to the capital region and Wales as a whole. The growth of remote working and people's desire to live in rural areas presents an opportunity to encourage entrepreneurs to start new businesses in Monmouthshire rather than neighbouring cities like Bristol.
- There is a slow uptake of employment sites in the county alongside issues of poor broadband speed which could be interconnected with the low rates of business start-ups. The potential growth in co-working spaces could offer start-ups a low risk option to locate in the county.
- The below-average wages on offer in the county, coupled with high property prices, make it difficult for young people and future generations to live and work locally.
- We are seeing an outward of migration of young people, driven by employment and higher education opportunities elsewhere, which are not available in the county.

Social

- There is a lack of affordable housing in the county. This will be exacerbated by the National Development Framework which could limit development of new homes in Monmouthshire reducing our ability to tackle homelessness. In the short-term this is compounded by the level of phosphates in rivers which has resulted in a block on new developments.
- There are significant income inequalities within communities with wealth sitting alongside relative poverty on a scale not seen in other parts of Wales. Research suggests that gaps between rich and poor within a community have negative repercussions for a whole range of things from educational attainment to physical health.
- Monmouthshire enjoys high levels of social capital. Large numbers of people volunteer which helps build connections and is a major contributor to well-being. There is an opportunity to capitalise on the energy we have seen in communities during the pandemic but also a risk that as the pension age changes and people retire later, the number of active volunteers could decline.
- We have an ageing population, while this has many advantages it will create additional pressure on health and social care. With high property prices and limits on development it will be difficult to attract the workforce needed to meet the needs of residents.
- Both adult and children's social care are facing acute pressures with escalating demand, increasing complexity and workforce shortages all contributing. While there is pressure to free-up hospital beds, the care system does not have the capacity to accommodate this, meaning that more resources will be drawn into the acute settings to meet short term needs rather than being directed towards a sustainable long term model of provision.
- There are significant differences in life expectancy and action is required to address health inequalities and ensure a range of programmes are in place to increase the opportunities people have to live health

lives and reduce health harming behaviours such as high alcohol consumption, smoking and diet. [is this captured in the population needs assessment?]

- Children, particularly the most vulnerable, whose learning has been disrupted by the pandemic may be at a disadvantage as they enter the workforce or higher education, and other aspects of their well-being may have been affected.
- There are good levels of educational attainment in the county but some groups, such as those eligible for free school meals and vulnerable children are not achieving at the same level as the wider population and the gap is not narrowing. There are also differences in attainment between different communities, where pupils are attending the same school.
- One in four adults and one in ten children experiencing mental health issues. This is exacerbated by loneliness and the challenges many have faced during the pandemic placing pressure on stretched services such as CAHMS. Resources such as Melo, to help people manage their own mental health and well-being offer an opportunity to address this but will only be part of the solution.
- We are seeing increasing levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in the county and concerns about the level of substance misuse amongst younger people.

Cultural

- The county has good levels of sports participation compared to other parts of Wales but still levels of exercise are still too low and obesity is increasing which has implications for health.
- There is an increasing opportunity to use Monmouthshire's culture, heritage and landscape to capitalise on potential of UK holiday market with less people travelling abroad which also has positive impacts on the climate by reducing the number of people flying.
- The pandemic has reduced visits to cultural attractions which play an important role in well-being, such as museums and theatres which will impact on their viability.

Environmental

- Monmouthshire has a high carbon footprint per head of population.
- The rural nature of Monmouthshire means that transport is a significant contributor to the county's carbon emissions with some areas also experiencing poor air quality. There is high car ownership and the rural nature of the county means active travel is not an option for many people, while many people do not have a driveway which, along with affordability, will slow the adoption of electric vehicles. There needs to be a move away from private cars to more active travel, public transport and low emission vehicles in order to reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality.
- The impacts of climate change are becoming apparent in Monmouthshire, particularly flooding which has impacted many communities in recent years. This is likely to get worse as the build-up of greenhouses gases continue to impact on global weather patterns.
- Water quality in many parts of Monmouthshire is under threat due to a combination of sewage releases into watercourses and run off from agriculture.

- There is an opportunity to capitalise in growth of the sharing economy to reduce consumption and waste which will also increase ability of people on low incomes to borrow rather than buy.
- Tree disease is a significant threat to the landscape and biodiversity of Monmouthshire, with large areas of ash and larch having to be felled meaning many more trees need to be planted to sequester carbon. There are opportunities through work with community groups, the Welsh Government and the Queens Green Canopy to increase tree coverage in the county.
- Like elsewhere in Wales, biodiversity is declining due to threats and pressures on species and habitats.

Appendix 3 – Monmouthshire Well-being Assessment engagement feedback summary

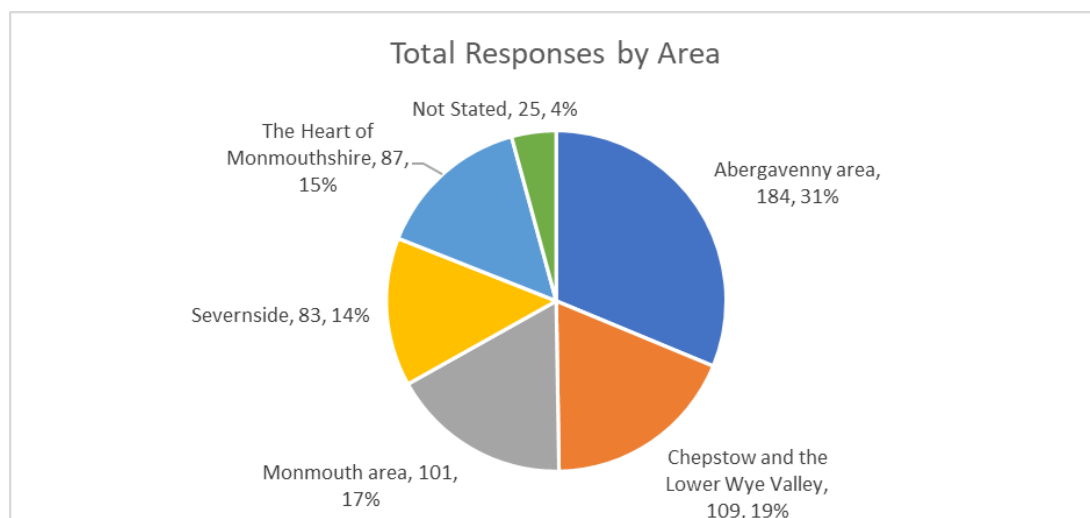
Involvement is a key principle of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. The engagement as part of the well-being assessment, which in Monmouthshire was built on the previous 'Our Monmouthshire' engagement, helps us understand people's views on well-being in the county to consider this alongside the data and evidence available.

The community engagement has been undertaken using a consistent framework across Gwent and a common set of questions. As well as asking whether the current Monmouthshire well-being plan objectives remain important, we wanted to understand more about residents views on current well-being and to draw on the strengths and assets of the County. We asked the questions:

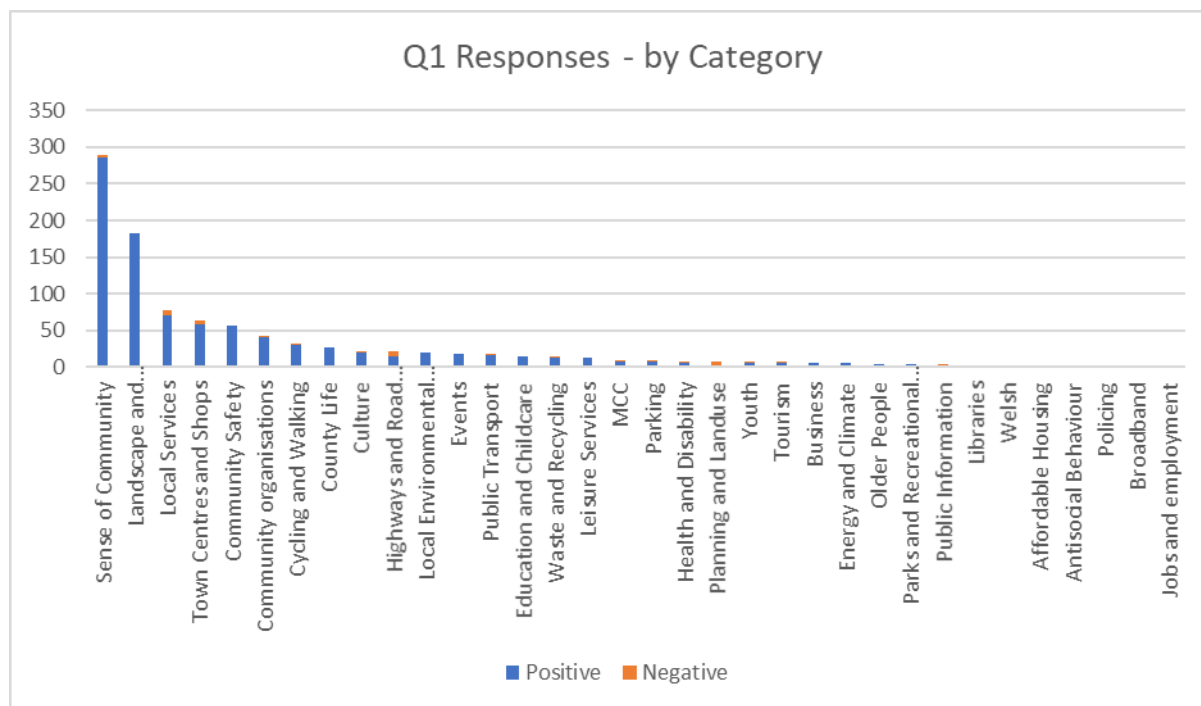
- What is special / good about your community / where you live?
- What would make it a better place?
- What things are important to you and your family? e.g. places, services, facilities, community groups/activities, how safe do you feel in your community. How can we support and care for older people in the future?
- What would you like your community to look like in the future?
- How could your community work with us to make that happen?

A total of 589 responses were received from Monmouthshire residents. To make it easier to analyse the many diverse comments that were received to the open-ended questions that we asked, comments were grouped into categories or themes. A summary of the responses across Monmouthshire to some of the questions is provided. The well-being issues raised in response to the engagement also reveal some variation by location, with some issues being more prevalent in some areas than others. A more detailed analysis of the engagement feedback will be integrated into the final version of the Monmouthshire well-being assessment and will include a further breakdown of responses by the 5 local areas.

The following chart shows a breakdown of the 589 respondents by area:

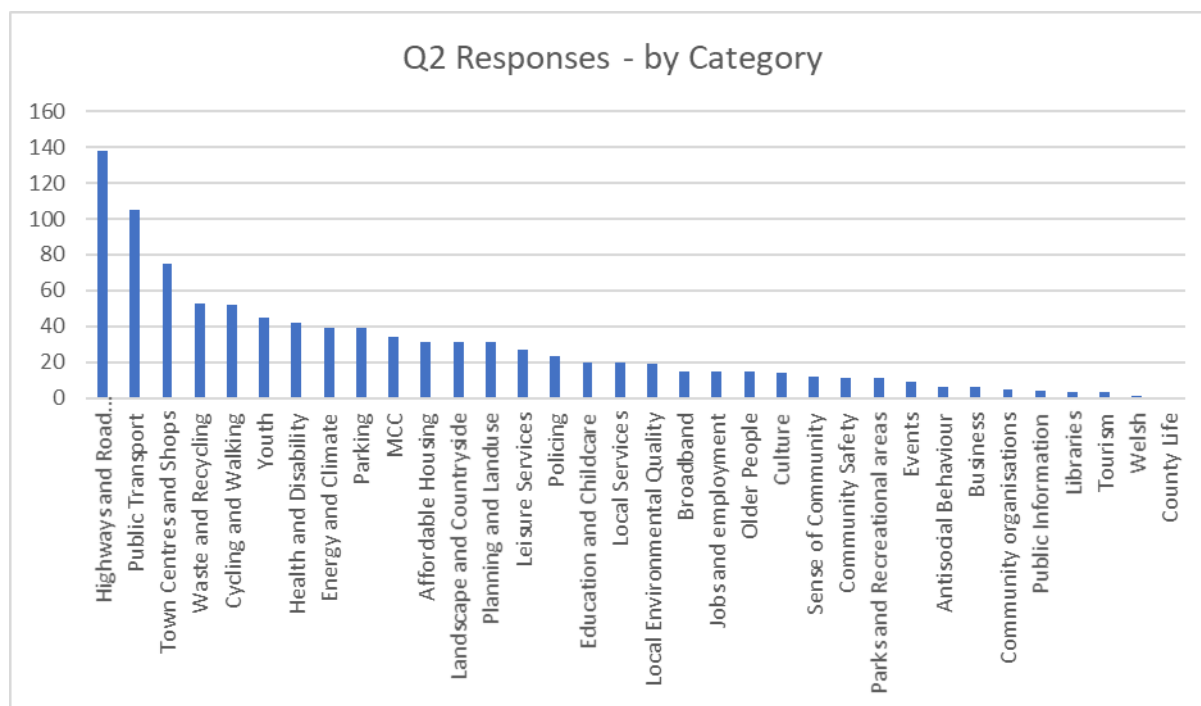


Question 1 - What is special / good about your community / where you live?



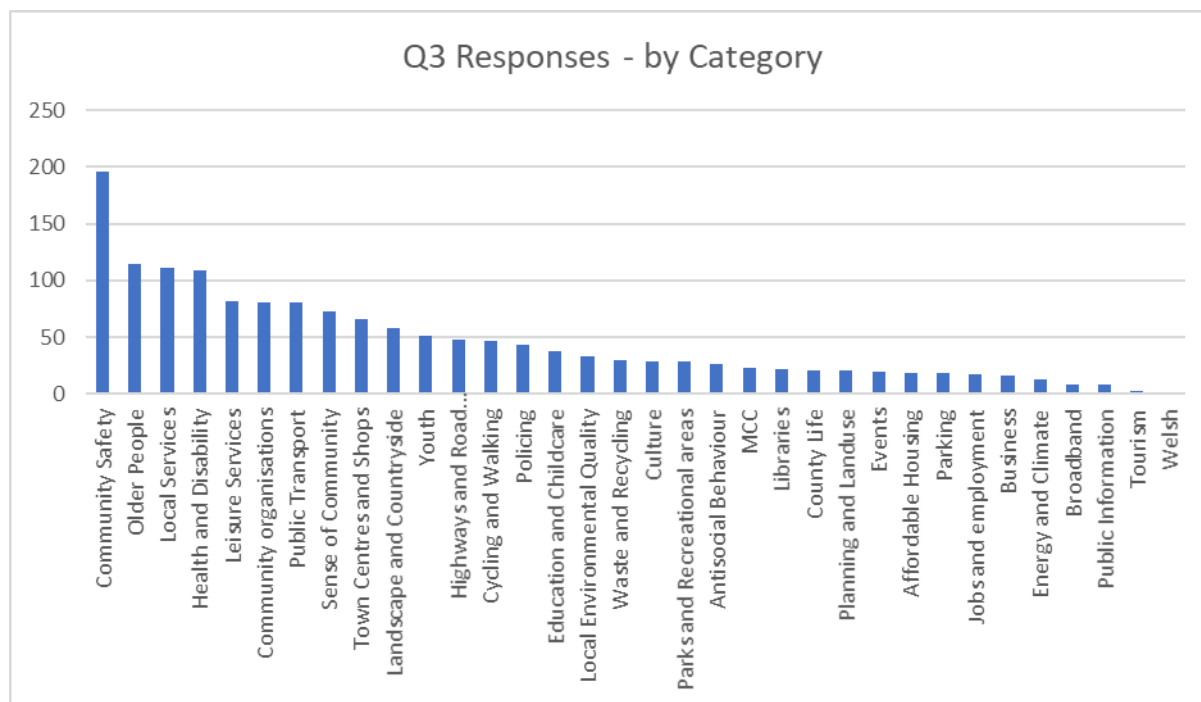
Many comments highlighted the Sense of Community, which would include comments on neighbourliness, and community spirit and comments on Landscape and Countryside, with many references to natural beauty and green spaces. Local Services, Community Safety and Town Centres and Shops were also amongst the most commented themes. Whilst the vast majority of comments were positive, there was some concerns raised in the comments including on areas such Highways and Road networks, Local Services, Planning and Landuse, and Town Centres and Shops.

Question 2 - What would make it a better place?



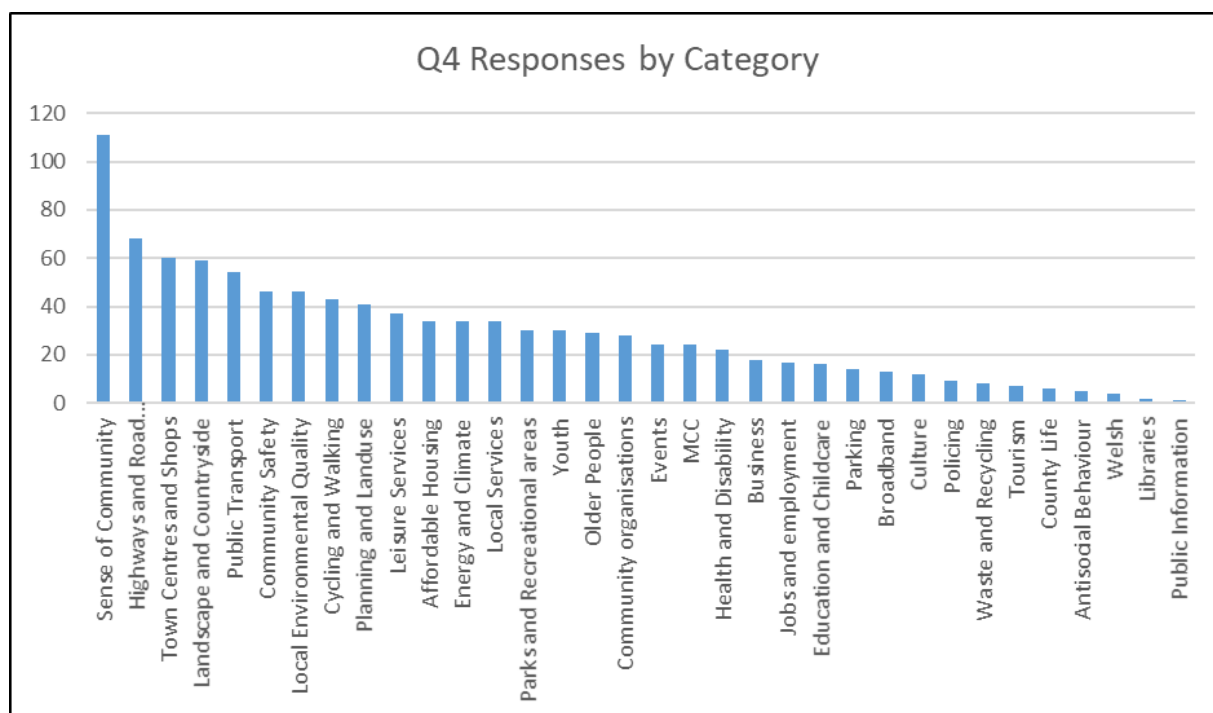
Responses covered a wide range of categories. Some of the areas with a higher number of responses included Highways and Road Networks, including traffic and speeding, public transport with many references to bus and/or train services and Town Centre and Shops, particularly having a greater variety of shops.

Question 3- What things are important to you and your family?



Many of the responses focussed on the examples provided in the question including places, local services, local facilities, community groups/activities, safety and support and care for older people.

Question 4 - What would you like your community to look like in the future?



Many comments related to a sense of community, with respondents desire for friendly communities, with people looking out for each other. Highways and Road Networks were raised frequently, including traffic, along with vehicle pollution and speeding. Landscape and Countryside was also raised often, common themes included a desire for more greenspace and areas to walk and cycle. Town Centres and Shops were amongst the highest

category of responses, many respondents were keen to see a thriving high street with a high variety of shops that encourages people to shop locally.

Appendix 4 – Well-being Assessment Timeline

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May
Consultation draft completed	■						
Mature consultation draft sign off by PSB (7 th)		■					
Formal consultation		■	■	■			
Expert/officer test data analysis		■	■	■			
Scrutiny			■	■			
Collate/assess consultation responses			■	■			
Amend in light of consultation				■	■		
PSB sign off (10 th)					■		
Proofing/translation/design						■	■
Publish Assessment of Well-being - 5 th May							■

