

**SUBJECT: Well-being of Future Generations Act**

**MEETING: Audit Committee**

**DATE: 6<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

**DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED: All**

## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To provide members with a brief overview of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and the progress made to date with implementation.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

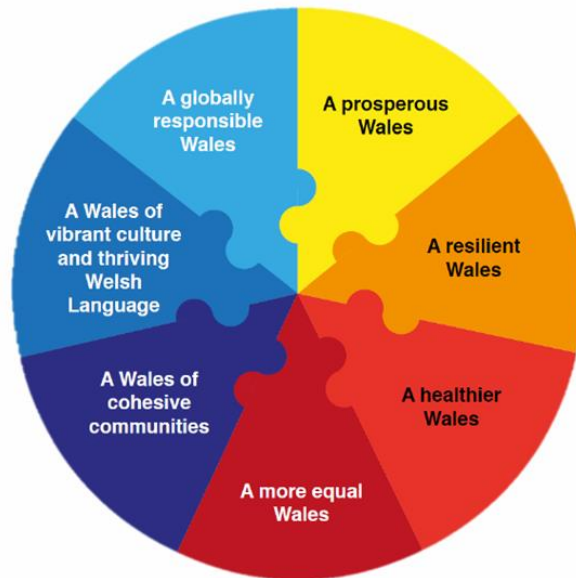
- 2.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is about the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, by taking action in accordance with the sustainable development principle aimed at achieving well-being goals.
- 2.2 The Act became law in April 2016 and applies to the Assembly sponsored public bodies in Wales. It also places obligations upon Monmouthshire Public Service Board. These arrangements are overseen by the recently constituted PSB Select Committee.

## **3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Members are invited to use this information to develop their understanding of The Act and apply it to the work of the committee to ensure that the council has appropriate arrangements in place to discharge its duties in relation to The Act.

## **4 KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The Well-being of Future Generations Act came into force in April 2016. It requires public bodies to carry out *sustainable development*. This means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals.
- 4.2 The sustainable development principle incorporates five ways of working that we are required to take into account. These are: Looking to the *long term* so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs; Taking an *integrated* approach so that public bodies look at all the well-being goals in deciding on their well-being objectives; *Involving* a diversity of the population in the decisions that affect them; Working with others in a *collaborative* way to find shared sustainable solutions and understanding the root causes of issues to *prevent* them from occurring. A diagram showing the architecture of The Act is shown at appendix 1.
- 4.3 The Act also sets out 7 well-being goals which are shown in the diagram on the following page. These well-being goals are indivisible from each other and explain what is meant by well-being in Wales.



4.4 Together, the seven well-being goals and five ways of working provided by the Act are designed to support and deliver a public service that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

4.5 The Act places a well-being duty on individual bodies, such as the council, to:

- set and publish well-being objectives;
- take all reasonable steps to meet those objectives.

It also places a duty on Public Service Boards to:

- assess the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in its area;
- set objectives that are designed to maximise its contribution within its area to achieving those well-being goals;
- take of all reasonable steps to meet those objectives.

4.6 The duties that fall on the PSB are scrutinised by the PSB Select Committee. Members of Audit Committee are able to view previous papers from that committee on the council's website. These include scrutiny of the process for developing the well-being assessment which is a PSB rather than a council responsibility. The remainder of this paper gives a brief overview on activity to date with a focus on the responsibilities of the council. Members wishing to examine the [statutory guidance](#) underpinning The Act can download it from the Welsh Government's website.

4.7 Monmouthshire County Council was an early adopter of The Act as part of a WLGA programme. Following this the Wales Audit Office undertook a light touch review of the council's preparedness. [This study](#) praised the council's ambition and said that some building blocks were in place but that more needed to be done to communicate consistent understanding and embed the elements of The Act. Council officers subsequently shared experiences on a number of national platforms and took the necessary steps to amend processes and embed the act in policy and practice.

4.8 A number of seminars were held for staff and members to increase awareness and understanding. The resources from these, including recordings of sessions and

other tools, are available for members and officers in the [Future Generations area of The Hub](#). This topic was covered for the latest intake of councillors in a session on the 20<sup>th</sup> June.

- 4.9 Officers worked with members to introduce a Future Generations evaluation which needs to accompany all Cabinet and Council papers which require a recommendation to change services. This incorporates the previous sustainable development, equalities and Welsh language assessments.
- 4.10 In August 2016 officers began engaging residents and businesses about the Well-being Assessment. Details on this have previously been considered by PSB scrutiny committee and are not re-stated here. However a copy of the assessment can be downloaded at [www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/our-monmouthshire](http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/our-monmouthshire). A short animation introducing the conclusions from the assessment can be viewed on the council's [YouTube page](#).
- 4.11 Production of the Well-being Assessment, although a responsibility falling on the PSB, has informed the development of the council's own well-being Objectives. These need to be approved by 31 March each year and reviewed on an annual basis. These were approved in March and are:
- Develop opportunities for businesses and communities to form part of a well-connected and thriving county;
  - Provide children and young people with the best possible start in life to help them achieve better outcomes;
  - Maximise the benefits of the natural and built environment for the well-being of current and future generations;
  - Maximise the potential in our communities to improve well-being throughout the life course.
- 4.12 Collectively these support the council's purpose:
- We want to enable the building of sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations.*
- 4.13 The council must demonstrate it has taken into account the sustainable development principle in the setting, taking steps and meeting of its well-being objectives to be compliant with the Act. This will take the form of an annual report each year showing progress towards meeting the objectives.

## **5 REASONS**

- 5.1 To ensure that the Audit Committee can make an informed judgement about the extent to which the authority complies with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

## **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 None

**7 EQUALITY, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no specific implications identified as a result of this report

**7 AUTHOR**

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## Appendix 1

