

Adrian Crompton

Auditor General for Wales

Sophie Howe

Future Generations Commissioner

29 May 2020

Well-Being of Future Generations – Statutory Reports

Dear Adrian and Sophie,

Thank you for your attendance to the recent meeting of the Public Accounts Committee held on 18 May 2020. It was a very useful introduction and starting point for Senedd consideration of your important statutory reports.

We recognise that the principles of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (hereafter ‘the Act’) underpin all aspects of public life in Wales and the importance of ensuring that all scrutiny by the Senedd should be fully encompassing.

As such we wish to take time to reflect on how the Senedd can effectively undertake this work and will await the formal launch of your reports in the Autumn before taking our scrutiny forward. This will enable us to assess how public bodies in Wales respond to your findings and take into account any feedback from stakeholders, which will shape our thinking.

While the Public Accounts Committee has been asked to lead this work I will ensure all Senedd Committee Chairs are invited to be involved. We want to be clear that this scrutiny will need to involve wider post legislative scrutiny of the Act and ensure that this is undertaken on a regular basis. At present, despite the Act being in place for 5 years there has been no wider post legislative scrutiny to date and only scrutiny of the Future



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Generations Commissioner is undertaken on an annual basis by the Equalities, Local Government and Communities Committee.

We recognise the importance of embedding the Act across the Welsh Public Sector. However, we are concerned that some public bodies do not see this as a priority. Our thinking will give consideration to how the Senedd might undertake post legislative scrutiny of the Act. This will include detailed examination of the barriers to successful implementation described in your reports and how they can be overcome. For example:

- The role of the Welsh Government in providing leadership on the Act's implementation.
- Short-term funding cycles and how these are hindering progress.
- Whether the bodies affected by the Act have sufficient resources to translate the principles of the Act into practice.

We will also focus on the development of clear milestones to measure progress and whether additional public bodies should be designated by Order to be subject to the Act.

The Committee recognises the profound challenges that have been presented to public bodies in Wales by the COVID-19 pandemic. We see the framework of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act as an opportunity to address some of these challenges. In many ways the pandemic has progressed the principles of the Act through increased agile and flexible working, active travel, collaborative working and other positive changes. We hope these positive changes will not be lost as COVID-19 related restrictions ease.

We note that every aspect of public life will need to be considered through a COVID-19 lens as public bodies take forward the recommendations of your reports. This will be a fundamental part of our work in the Autumn.



We look forward to engaging with you later this year in taking forward our scrutiny of the findings of your reports.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Ramsay". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Nick Ramsay MS
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg / We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

