



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Our ref JH/3178/21

Adrian Crompton  
Auditor General for Wales  
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8 October 2021

Dear Adrian,

**Response to the Report of Audit Wales ‘So, what’s different? Findings from the Auditor General’s Sustainable Development Principle Examinations’**

Thank you to you and your team for their valuable work in examining the 44 public bodies subject to the well-being duty under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015), and for providing a report to the Senedd on the key findings from this work. This was the first reporting period in which these examinations were done and they have provided useful insight into how public bodies are embracing the opportunities provided by the legislation to do things differently.

I am pleased your report found public bodies can demonstrate they are applying the sustainable development principle, but I acknowledge more can be done. We are committed to working with public bodies as a family of bodies subject to Act to continually improve how these ways of working are brought to life in our work.

As agreed between our officials, we delayed our formal response to your report to take into account the work of the Public Accounts Committee and its inquiry into the barriers to the implementation of the WFG Act.

Within our response to the Public Accounts Committee we have provided our response to Recommendation 7 which captures the same issues highlighted in recommendation 2 of your report on whether additional public bodies should be added to those subject to the well-being duty in the Act. This confirms we will review the list of public bodies subject to the Act by summer 2022. We will ensure officials engage with you and your team as this work

progresses, and take into account the observations from your report in this work, and any implications on your work.

Your report, and that of the Commissioner through the Future Generations Report, will continue to frame and shape the conversation about the next phase of implementation of the Act and will continue to be a reference point on those areas we need to tackle to realise the benefits of the legislation. I agree with the report's conclusions that the Act has the potential to provide a common purpose and consistent culture, and its role in helping address the major challenges Wales' faces. As part of our work on the Future Trends Report we are running dedicated sessions with Public Service Boards on how to consider those likely future trends as part of their well-being assessment process. We will build on these workshops following the publication of the report to allow the long-term way of working to be embedded further in those public bodies subject to the Act. We are working with the Future Generations Commissioner, Public Health Wales and Natural Resources Wales to support this.

Your report recommends that the Senedd and the Welsh Government to give post-legislative consideration of the Act to explore how we overcome barriers to implementation, and how Wales can remain at the forefront of well-being. We are committed to ensuring the Act remains a driving force for change in Wales. However, given the breadth and depth of the observations from the three reports, we consider our focus should be on addressing these barriers and improving awareness and application of the Act by public bodies over the next few years. We will, however, engage with the Senedd should it wish to give post-legislative consideration to the Act and review this position in 2023 informed by our ongoing implementation of the WFG Act and with engagement of the national stakeholder forum and the Future Generations Commissioner.

The recommendation to ensure Wales remains at the forefront of actions on well-being is one I wholeheartedly agree with. We are proud the Welsh Government led the way in legislating for the future through the Act. Earlier this year I established a Well-being of Future Generations National Stakeholder Forum to support national implementation of the Act, which had the explicit remit to support activities to address the barriers to implementation. Last year the Welsh Government joined the Well-being Economy Government (WEGo) network alongside Scotland, New Zealand, Iceland and Finland who all share similar aspirations for advancing the well-being agenda in their respective nations. We continue to engage with our counterparts to share ideas and practice to embed well-being into the workings of Government so we remain at the forefront of actions to improve it. The recent announcement from the United Nations Secretary General to put in place new mechanisms for future generations within the UN agenda illustrates we are providing leadership on the well-being of future generations.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Hutt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Jane Hutt AS/MS**

Y Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Social Justice