

By email

19th January 2022

Dear Jenny,

Re: Invitation from the Equality and Social Justice Committee for annual scrutiny session

Thank you for your invitation to the annual scrutiny session of my work.

Your letter explained that the session would focus on: “scrutiny of your annual report, recent report on retrofitting, your work on Universal Basic income, and proposals for a four-day working week.”

As a submission, I am including in this letter links to the Report Summaries for my [‘Homes fit for the Future: The Retrofit Challenge’](#), [‘A Future Fit For Wales, a basic income for all’](#) as requested. I will publish on the 14th of February my report on A Shorter Working Week.

I thought you would also be interested in the summary report of my [‘Inequality in a Future Wales: Areas for action in work, climate and demographic change’](#) report produced in collaboration with Public Health Wales and Cardiff University; and my [Skills & \(Re\)Training for a Prosperous, Green & Equal Recovery](#) Executive Summary.

You can find the full versions of these reports on my website.

I attach pages 9 to 13 of my annual report which include a useful summary of achievements to date and changes on the ground across Wales thanks to the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

I wanted to flag that capacity and my level of resources is an issue for the delivery of my powers and duties as was recognised by public bodies and the then PAC Committee in their report on the implementation to the Act. This is a particular challenge for my exercise of power rather than the discharge of my core duties. This year, as we move towards need based budgeting, I have asked Welsh Government for increased resources to help me offer more support to public bodies and those who can help achieve the well-being goals as set out in the Act and to implement PAC's recommendations.

If this increase is not agreed, my baseline funding will mean that I will have to reject even more requests for advice and assistance and cut back almost entirely the advice I give on policy as I focus my limited resources to my core duties to promote the sustainable development principle in general and monitor and assess the extent to which well-being objectives are being met.

You also asked for an overview of my work since the production of my annual report which covers the annual period up to April 2021, which will be the subject of my next annual report, and I can give you a flavour of my latest work / achievements since April 2021:

Programme for Government:

- We've published a Manifesto for the Future to help shape a new Programme for Government.
- We've commented on the publication of the programme and of the new WG objectives.
- We've monitored and assessed the progress in the implementation of my Future Generations Report and Manifesto for the Future.
- I have assessed that 51% of the commitments in the Programme for Government are directly aligned to recommendations included in my Future Generations Report.

National policy including my areas of focus:

- We've influenced and advised on the development of a new national transport strategy and on the Roads Review.
- We've set out a plan for funding the [housing retrofit challenge](#) which is referenced within one of the priorities in the [work programme of the Senedd Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure](#) for the 6th term.
- We've provided advice which has contributed to the declaration of a nature emergency in Wales, of new decarbonisation targets and welcomed the establishment of a new climate ministry.
- We've influenced a review of GCSE's in Wales, reflecting our challenge that the examination system needs to be redesigned in line with the WFG Act and long term trends.
- We've published a report on [Inequality in the Future](#) mentioned above.
- We've provided statutory responses to the well-being indicators and milestones published by Welsh Government.
- We've provided advice to the Welsh Government on the Net Zero Plan.
- We've commissioned and published a report from leading think-tank Autonomy on Universal Basic Income (UBI) and how it might work in the Welsh context. It includes a poll showing that 69% of people in Wales would support trialling a UBI. The report outlines an initial model for a UBI which would halve poverty in Wales if rolled out nationally. A second more comprehensive model could eradicate poverty almost entirely.
- We commissioned research on a shorter working week approach in Wales which we will be publishing mid-February.

Public bodies:

- We've started implementing recommendations from the then Public Accounts Committee by creating a whole team to act as a point of contact for each public body, building on my relationship with public bodies.
- Between April 2021 and January 2022, we have received a total of 324 requests for support. 105 of those came from public bodies, 50 of which have been completed with 28 more currently in progress.
 - Since May 2018, we've received 372 (as of 17/1/22) requests for support (many of which are substantial and ongoing) from public bodies and 715 more from other organisations (this includes public organisations not specifically listed in the Act, academia, voluntary sector organisations, private sector and more).

- We worked in collaboration with Public Health Wales, Natural Resources Wales and Welsh Government to run a series of workshops with Public Services Boards (PSB) to explore key future that could be driving change in the long-term, and how futures thinking techniques can help them evaluate what they may mean for their well-being assessments.
- We've started reviewing well-being assessments from across Wales and providing advice on the approach to each PSB.
- We published the report and recommendations for our first section 20 review on procurement and will shortly commence a second statutory review. We'd like to see Welsh Government adopt our recommendation for a Centre of Excellence to transform procurement in Wales. We are disappointed by their reluctance to do so thus far.

Leadership Academy:

- Working with and for young people, we've recruited 35 brilliant new young future leaders to be our champions, who are even more diverse than last year's cohort, across Wales within my Future Generations Leadership Academy. I'm developing this even further by funding Young Co-Creators with my partnership with Democracy Box.
- Over 30 public and voluntary sector chief executives signed up to be reversed mentored by our young leaders and I'm pleased that this year we have some private sector CEOs too.
- We've created an alumni network for our Academy Graduates to help them join public body advisory boards or public speaking engagements to promote future generations in Wales and at global level, including at Welsh Government Future Generations Stakeholder Forum, Ireland-Wales Inter-ministerial forum, COP26 and the UN Youth Environment Assembly. Four public bodies have requested that engagement with the academy be used to inform their own outreach initiatives for young people in Wales.

International Promotion:

- We have succeeded in our advocacy to the United Nations Secretary-General to adopt a future generations approach within the UN System, including the creation of a UN special Envoy for Future Generations and a UN Summit on Future Generations.
- We have supported the development and progress of legislation for the Well-being of Future Generations in the UK parliament and Scottish Government. I am providing advice to the Republic of Ireland's Foreign Ministry also considering adopting a Future Generations Act as we inspired the Irish Foreign Minister in particular, with our Future Generations Leadership Academy at the Ireland-Wales Inter-ministerial forum in 2021.
- We have shared learning on the Act with the Office of the Prime Minister of Finland, the German Chancellery and the European Parliament.
- We have successfully delivered on our second-year partnership agreement with the Welsh Government's International Relations team to support Welsh Government Overseas Offices to promote the Act to their national stakeholders and to an international audience.

- We've raised the profile of Wales and the Act at hundreds of conferences and events including at COP26, and World Expo Summit. From Finland to India, the Well-being of Future Generations Act is influencing global discussions.

Communication and promotion in Wales and beyond:

- We've worked with more people, networks and organisations to highlight different views perspectives and experiences within our work – supporting the movement for change across Wales to build the Wales we want. For example, WeALL Cymru, Third Sector Partnership Council, Siarter Catrefi, Wales Environment Link, UBILabs Cymru, Climate Cymru, Race Alliance Wales, Disability Wales, Chwarae Teg and WEN Wales.
- We've appeared before 2 Senedd committees (30th September 2021 – Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure; 29th November 2021 – Petitions Committee), and we've seen our work reflected in their recommendations, particularly the Public Accounts Committee inquiry into the implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.
- We've achieved hundreds of pieces of media coverage from all over the world and significantly increase our social media profile.

Private Sector:

- We have engaged with key stakeholders from the private sector, including all the main business networks, plus Business Wales, to understand how to further mobilise business to align their actions to the Act. We have captured key gaps in the Welsh Government's approach to business on the act in our programme for government report.

Walking the Talk - Promotion of the sustainable principle in our own work:

- We've continued to work with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, including photographers and writers, from across Wales and with my Poet in Residence partnership, Taylor Edmonds performed When I Speak of Bravery, her poem celebrating Betty Campbell - Wales' first Black head-teacher - at the unveiling of her statue in Cardiff. I have continued our regular paid partnerships which support us to further collaborate with new and under-represented voices, this year through activities such as International Women's Day, the campaign for a Universal Basic Income and Black History Month.
- We introduced a guaranteed interview scheme in April 2021 whereby Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic candidates applying for any of our posts would be guaranteed an interview if they met the essential job criteria.
- We have increased the diversity of our workforce, employing 16% of colleagues from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds and launched our own Race Equality Action Plan.
- We've updated our procurement policies so that we can take account of value for money together with wider benefits to the 4 dimensions of well-being and learn more from our prospective suppliers on how they contribute to the well-being goals.

- We've continued to involve a wide range of stakeholders and lived experience in all our policy work. Cross-sector involvement has shaped both the initial focus and our recommendations for example informing our focus on a care led recovery and the priorities for the culture sector.
 - We have added additional involvement and equalities resource to our team this year enabling us to strengthen our relationship with a wide range of third sector and community organisations, seldom heard groups, businesses and international stakeholders.
 - Our piloting of the Points of Contact model for managing our Public Stakeholder relationships has further strengthened our involvement approach.
 - Our Future Leadership Academy and partnership with Democracy Box are building on our involvement of young people throughout our work.

I look forward to the evidence session.

Yours sincerely,



Sophie Howe

Future Generations Commissioner for Wales