



17 January 2023

Dear Sophie,

The Welsh Government's response to the section 20 review by the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales

I would like to thank you and your team for the work on the section 20 review and the collaborative approach you have taken with Welsh Government. The report provides a timely and welcome opportunity for us to take stock, reflect on what we have achieved so far, and to help us seize new opportunities to deepen the understanding and application of the sustainable development principle at the heart of how Welsh Government works.

The report highlights the significant progress we have made in embedding the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 in how we work and recognises the progressive nature of this legislation and our maturity as an organisation leading the change, while also identifying areas where we can improve. We have considered and accepted the recommendation made to Welsh Government in the review's report and will be taking steps to follow the course of action set out in the recommendations. I have enclosed a summary of this position in Annex A.

Our response to your recommendation accepts the need to better communicate the actions we are taking to improve how we act in accordance with the sustainable development principle. This is consistent with our position prior to the review, and our shared agreement early in the review.

In parallel with our collaborative engagement with your team on the section 20 review we therefore took the opportunity to develop this plan enabling us to draw from the review. We will therefore shortly be publishing a prototype *Well-being Future Generations Continuous Learning and Improvement Plan 2023-25* setting out the improvement actions we will take over this period to deepen the understanding and application of the sustainable development principle at the heart of how Welsh Government works.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

We believe our approach will also send an important signal to the public bodies that the Well-being of Future Generations agenda requires continuous improvement and reflection.

As we are required to publish our response to your recommendation, we will publish this letter on our website (<https://gov.wales/well-being-future-generations>).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Hutt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line above the first few letters.

Jane Hutt AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Cyfiawnder Cymdeithasol
Minister for Social Justice

Copied to the Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee

Annex A: The Welsh Government's response to recommendation made to it by the Commissioner under section 20 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFG Act), a public body must take all reasonable steps to follow the course of action set out in a recommendation made to it by the Commissioner under the section 20 review power, unless the public body is satisfied that there is good reason for it not to follow the recommendation or it decides on an alternative course of action. A public body must publish its response to a recommendation.

Section 20 review report by the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales (December 2022)

Recommendation

Welsh Government should continue to take action to continually improve how the Well-being of Future Generations Act drives its work to support Welsh Ministers deliver their well-being objectives, act in accordance with the sustainable development principle and, by doing so, maximise their contribution to the national well-being goals. In doing so, Welsh Government should publish a plan, setting out the improvements they will make, which address the findings and areas of improvement outlined in this Section 20 Report.

This should include timescales for the delivery of actions and arrangements for reporting annually, monitoring, and reviewing progress, and how it will collaborate with others (including the Commissioner's office) to ensure that Welsh Government can remain at the forefront of the well-being of future generations agenda. Welsh Government should work openly with the Commissioner to monitor the progress of this plan. Welsh Government should report on the progress of this plan alongside their annual report.

The Welsh Government response

Welsh Government **accepts** this recommendation.

The steps we will be taking to follow the course of action in this recommendation are as follows:

- publish a *Well-being of Future Generations Continuous Learning and Improvement Plan (WFG CLIP)* by February 2023 focused on deepening the understanding and application of the sustainable development principle in how Welsh Government works. This will set out the actions we will take over the period 2023-2025.
- provide separate commentary to the Commissioner on the areas of improvement identified in the section 20 report and, where relevant, indicate which parts of the WFG CLIP address these areas of improvement.
- embed the elements that focus on the operation of the Welsh Government civil service within WG2025, which is the three-year programme for organisational development and a platform for the conversation with the workforce on the changes and improvements we need to make.
- discuss the elements of the WFG CLIP that focus on enabling others with the Well-being of Future Generations National Stakeholder Forum to understand what opportunities there are to work with others to deepen the understanding and application of the WFG Act.

- continue to use the Welsh Government Performance Framework to measure the application of the sustainable development principle within the Welsh Government, looking for opportunities for new data to support the picture of performance.
- provide an annual update on progress of the actions in the WFG CLIP.
- identify those actions which will require collaboration with others, including which of these where we may seek the advice and support of the Future Generations Commissioner.
- take opportunities to implement 'quick win' actions such as reviewing and revising the Board Champion arrangements, the assurance analysis through the Internal Control Questionnaire and improve futures capacity and capability.
- include the ongoing implementation of the WFG CLIP as a standing item in our quarterly meetings between Welsh Government and the office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales.