

Y Pwyllgor Cydraddoldeb a Chyfiawnder Cymdeithasol | Equality and Social Justice Committee

Ymateb gan: Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili| Evidence from: Caerphilly County Borough Council

Caerphilly County Borough Council is pleased to provide this submission for use by the Senedd Equality and Social Justice Committee's Post-Legislative Review of the Well-being of Future Generations Act

The Well-being of Future Generations Act has been a keystone of the work of the council, providing a framework for how we plan and deliver services to our communities. The following are some examples of this in action.

Corporate Planning

- 1.1 The Council's Well-being Objectives were developed using the Sustainable Development Principle. The principles were used from the very beginning of the process ensuring the five ways of working were considered at each stage. The templates used, at workshops with Cabinet, Leadership and officers and throughout the development of each of the well-being objectives, included a section on the five ways of working where we explain how each informed the objective.
- 1.2 In the Corporate Plan we explain why we chose each objective (our Well-being Statement) and indicated how each objective links to the National Well-being Goals.
- 1.3 The process of developing out latest Corporate Plan began with an analysis of the research that emerged from the Well-being Assessment carried out by Policy colleagues in support of the Gwent Public Service Board's Well-being Plan. An extensive consultation process was carried out during the development of the Gwent PSB regional plan to identify what mattered to citizens across Gwent. More local research, data gathering and consultation feedback was used to better understand five specific community areas in Caerphilly county borough.
- 1.4 The Council's own well-being objectives considered all of the information that emerged from this extensive involvement exercise to ensure we did not duplicate and could focus on what 'additionality' we could provide. The Local Delivery Group, a sub-group of the Gwent PSB and mirroring its composition, considered how it could deliver the Gwent Well-being Plan at a local level. Its agreed priority areas are: Decarbonisation, Housing, Town Centre Regeneration and Employment. Further information is below.
- 1.5 The political commitments set out by the administration for the next five years were explored in detail during several Cabinet workshops which helped confirm the long-term vision in more detail. Officers then held consultations called 'the Caerphilly Conversation' to ask residents 'what mattered to them' in during the Autumn of 2022. This was both an online and face to face consultation, held in libraires and community places across the borough. Those initial 'What Matters' conversations

were then followed up with further consultation with residents that took place as part of the Council's budget setting process. Workshops were held with the Council's Leadership Team and Management Network. Individual workshops were then held for each draft well-being objective with a range of officers from a wide range of services through which actions, resources and potential ways of measuring success were identified. The emerging Plan was then presented to our partners through the Local Delivery Group to see how our draft objectives may impact their goals and to gain their feedback.

- 1.6 The Gwent PSB agreed to work towards becoming a 'Marmot Region' in 2022. The 'Building a Fairer Gwent report, written by the Institute of Health Equity detailed what health inequity looks like in Gwent and made a number of recommendations. The Gwent PSB formally recognised that inequality and inequity exists in our communities (for example in healthy life expectancy) and committed to take steps to address them at a collaborative level. Future Corporate Plans will consider the recommendations and the work of the Gwent PSB around this agenda going forward.

Regeneration Activities to Support a Sustainable Future

The following are some examples of council regeneration projects, some of which are supported by the Shared Prosperity Fund. More detailed information is available if requested.

Economic and Regeneration Strategy

- 2.1 The council has developed a new long term Economic and Regeneration Strategy incorporating a longer-term approach to cover the next 10 years, which aligns to the placemaking plans currently being developed for a number of our key town centres. Building on a 'Foundation for Success' this new strategy is intended to 'Nurture Future Success' and guide economic growth to 2035 in a post covid world and is cognisant of cost-of-living crisis and the external impacts on the local economy. It will help to coordinate the actions of multiple stakeholders with an interest in promoting and developing the economic well-being of the residents and businesses of the county borough.
- 2.2 The strategy is structured around a vision for the county borough with actions driven through three interconnected themes:
 - People
 - Place
 - ProsperityWith each theme is guided by the overarching objectives of sustainability and connectivity and complements the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 2.3 The council acknowledges that a long-term economic regeneration strategy is critical to ensure it can promote sustainable growth and development by addressing the underlying economic challenges, attract investment, and create job opportunities with the aim of improving the quality of life for residents. By focusing on long-term goals, the authority can plan and implement infrastructure projects, support local businesses, and enhance public services in a coordinated manner. The strategy provides a framework for informing actions whilst allowing the flexibility to adapt to changing economic conditions and the mitigation of potential risks.
- 2.4 The strategy includes an action plan and delivery strategy that provide targeted interventions for improvements to the county borough up to 2035 and has been

prepared following extensive data analysis and stakeholder dialogue to explore the current challenges and future opportunities for Caerphilly County Borough whilst supporting the authority's emerging Place Shaping Plan through its Place theme and within the context of the wider national, regional and local policies.

- 2.5 The county borough has an array of assets, such as its landscape features and cultural sites such as Caerphilly Castle. It is centrally located within the Cardiff Capital Region with strong links to the M4 and the South Wales Metro and is well placed to take advantage of regional growth and development.
- 2.6 The county borough does, however, have significant challenges, including some embedded generational challenges and areas of significant deprivation, especially in the north of the county borough, which perform poorly in terms of education, employment, health and access to services. Connectivity within the county borough and east/west across the Valleys is inefficient and does not enable some parts of the community to have sufficient access to employment, education and services.

- 2.7 The following ambitions have been identified under each of the themes:

People

- Communities are connected, celebrated and valued by residents.
- The workforce is skilled, engaged and motivated.
- People are inspired to learn and engage with education and training to realise their potential.

Place

- Caerphilly is an attractive place to live, visit and work.
- Towns and villages are well connected with strong links within the Borough and the wider region.
- The town centres are vibrant and diverse hubs of activity.
- Caerphilly's landscape is protected and supports recreation and leisure activities.

Prosperity

- The economy is strong and resilient, underpinned by a robust manufacturing sector and vibrant towns.
- Technological innovation and new ways of working are encouraged and actively supported.
- Centres of employment are connected to local communities with a choice of safe, reliable and sustainable transport options.
- Caerphilly contributes to CCR's economic success through growth in Med Tech, The challenges identified are significant and wide ranging and cannot be overcome through the authority acting in isolation alone. It will require a coalition of stakeholder actions to work in harmony over the long-term working in the context of the strategic framework to achieve the overarching objective of Nurturing Future Success.
- There is a recognition of the limitations of the authority's influence and control but by coalescing around regional and national objectives and policies the tools that the authority has with regards to planning, land ownership, transport infrastructure, supply chain spend, educational delivery and regeneration experience there is no reason that the challenges can be met head on and change can be delivered with a resourced and willing authority.
- Pharmaceuticals and Advanced Manufacturing sectors.

- 2.8 The challenges identified are significant and wide ranging and cannot be overcome through the authority acting in isolation alone. It will require a coalition of stakeholder actions to work in harmony over the long-term working in the context of the strategic framework to achieve the overarching objective of Nurturing Future Success.

Placemaking Plans

- 3.1 In April 2025 the Council signed up to the Placemaking Charter. This recommitted the council to work it had already begun ensuring that the county borough's towns supported the communities that live there.
- 3.2 The Council has been developing placemaking plans for a number of its principal town centres to support the area-based masterplans. These masterplans set out the development and regeneration opportunities across a geographic boundary. The first placemaking plan developed for the county borough was the Caerphilly Town 2035 Placemaking Plan, followed by the Greater Blackwood and the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area Masterplans. These plans identify key opportunity areas for intervention and a number of underutilised or empty properties.
- 3.3 The Placemaking plans are frameworks to inform regeneration activity in support of the Welsh Government's "Town Centre First" principle, adopted by the Welsh Government, prioritising the health and vibrancy of town centres in decisions related to the location of new commercial, retail, education, health, leisure, and public service facilities.

Arts Development

- 4.1 Arts Development works closely with community groups on several levels. We devise projects that meet wellbeing needs of local people and use creativity to bring people together and collaborate on work that has meaning to their lives. For example, The Future Generation Commission recently held up our work in care homes as a model of good practice. We also give opportunities for people that want to be creative and have created several jobs through an apprentice scheme. These apprentices help fill the gap in provision through dance, drama, literature and music and assisted them become self employed practitioners. We advise and assist community groups, schools and individuals with project development, funding and collaboration that benefits people within the county. We partner with the health board and other creative agencies to have maximum impact.

Caerphilly Leisure and Wellbeing Hub

- 5.1 The council is building a new leisure and wellbeing hub in Caerphilly. The development is supported through a range of funding streams including the Levelling Up Fund, the Community Infrastructure Levy and Welsh Government.
- 5.2 The Caerphilly Leisure and Wellbeing Hub will be a new, financially sustainable and accessible facility for the people of Caerphilly county borough and beyond. The new facility will be a vital community asset that will act as a catalyst for improved health and wellbeing, enhanced community resilience and ultimately improved living standards and increased life expectancy. It will replace the ageing Caerphilly Leisure Centre and will offer:
- A six-lane community swimming pool with pool pod access, learner pool, leisure pool with flumes and interactive water features.
 - Express wellness spa including spa pool and heat treatments.

- Children's adventure soft play integrated with sensory components.
- Tag Active Arena
- 4 court multi – purpose sports hall.
- 2 squash courts.
- 110-station fitness suite.
- Multi-purpose community room (for multi-agency working, community events, children's parties etc.).
- Future studio/group exercise studio, cycling studio, Innerva suite and consultation rooms.
- Village changing rooms,
- Café providing community space.

Local Delivery Group

- 5.1 The Caerphilly Local Delivery Group (LDG) was created as part of the establishment of the Gwent PSB. The Gwent PSB recognised that, while there were issues that should be addressed at a regional level, there would also be those that would be best dealt with at a local level. As a result, the LDGs, one in each of the local authority areas were set up, with membership that reflected that of the Gwent PSB but at a more local level.
- 5.2 The Caerphilly LDG held a workshop in the summer of 2023 to consider the priorities in the Gwent Well-being Plan and what additional local activity could provide. The session was attended by public bodies, third sector organisation, community councils and interested individuals. The information from this session, the wider consultation that had taken place around the draft Well-being Plan, and further conversations with partners the LDG agreed to work on the following areas:
- Decarbonisation
 - Employability
 - Town Centres
 - Housing
- Action plans have been developed in three of the four areas, with the fourth under development. The LDG receives regular updates on progress, with partners suggesting further links, activities and opportunities. The most recent success has been the adoption of the Caerphilly Net Zero 2050 Strategy.
- 5.3 The Caerphilly LDG Net Zero 2050 Strategy is a collaborative response to the climate emergency, crafted to fulfil the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act's legislative purpose: improving the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales. It does so by embedding the Act's five ways of working—long-term thinking, prevention, integration, collaboration, and involvement—into every aspect of its design. The strategy's cross-cutting themes, such as digital innovation, education, and finance, are not treated in isolation but woven through each chapter, ensuring integrated, future-proofed decision-making. Digital innovation and education were in particular chosen, because although they are not reporting streams used in Carbon Budget 2, it was vital to ensure that the next generation, and the methods by which their information is received, was at the forefront of this Strategy. Its long-term vision is underpinned by measurable indicators and annual progress reviews, reflecting a commitment to prevention and accountability. At every stage of the project, listening, and listening to those who listen, was paramount.

- 5.4 Each thematic chapter—ranging from energy and transport to land use and organisational behaviour—demonstrates how the strategy supports the Act’s seven well-being goals. For example, the “Spaces We Live and Work In” chapter promotes energy-efficient, and better insulated housing and retrofitting, directly contributing to a resilient and healthier Wales. The “Ways We Move” section champions active travel and low-emission transport, aligning with a globally responsible Wales and reducing inequalities in access to mobility, and ensuring Wales is healthier in our travel choices. Meanwhile, the strategy’s emphasis on green skills and workforce transition, and the importance of the financial bottom-line that our businesses need to consider in “The Organisations We Work In” supports a prosperous Wales, ensuring that economic transformation is inclusive and just.
- 5.5 What sets this strategy apart is its deep, co-productive engagement and genuine partnership ethos. Developed through two-hour focus groups and one-hour semi-structured interviews, the strategy draws on rich, qualitative data from a diverse and high-calibre group of consultees—including senior public sector leaders, Welsh speakers, elected members, educators, business owners, community organisers, and young people. This engagement ensured that the strategy reflects both strategic insight and lived experience. Moreover, the document itself is a collaborative product of multiple public sector bodies within the Gwent Public Services Board, including local authorities, health boards, emergency services, and Natural Resources Wales. These partners are not only co-authors but also exemplars, showcasing best practices and shared accountability throughout the strategy. This collective ownership ensures that the strategy is not just a climate plan, but a shared well-being mission for Caerphilly’s future generations. The Strategy aims to be an engaged, and engaging piece, demonstrating the listening throughout with quotes from residents and businesses. It aims to invite Public Sector decision-makers to be the change they want to see.