

Committee: **Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **15th April 2021**

Report Subject: **Gwent Regional Well-being Assessment**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Nigel Daniels, Leader / Executive Member
Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by: **Andrew Parker, Blaenau Gwent County Borough
Council**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
		01.04.21			15.04.21			PSB SSG PSB

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the statutory requirements for consultation on the assessment of local well-being and highlight options for how the Public Services Board (PSB) Scrutiny Committee can fulfil their role as a statutory consultee.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 All PSBs in Wales have a statutory requirement to prepare and publish an assessment of the local economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in its area. The assessment must then be used to prepare a well-being plan no later than a year after the assessment is agreed by the PSB.
- 2.2 The last Well-being Assessment (WBA) was carried out during 2016-17 and published in July 2017. The current Blaenau Gwent We Want Well-being Plan 2018-23 was then published in July 2018, using evidence from the WBA. The next Well-being Plan is due to be published in 2023, so the WBA will be published in 2022.
- 2.3 The guidance places an expectation that each WBA will use a broad range of evidence sources to help assess the state of well-being, e.g. census and statistical data; academic research; and qualitative evidence which captures people's opinions and perceptions as well as giving context to quantitative data (the story behind the data).
- 2.4 During 2020 the G10 and Gwent Strategic Well-being Action Group (GSWAG) agreed to set up a regional Gwent PSB from September 2021, including a transitional period until March 2022 to allow each local authority area time to prepare their own local arrangements to feed into the regional PSB from a local level.
- 2.5

As a result of this move to a regional PSB, the next WBA in 2022 and Well-being Plan in 2023 will be carried out a regional level (Gwent), with consideration of local well-being (at local authority level and below). Each local authority area is involved in the WBA planning process, ensuring local data, similarities and differences between areas are highlighted.

2.6

During 2016-17, 'The Blaenau Gwent We Want' engagement programme was implemented to provide an opportunity for local people to share their views on shaping the Blaenau Gwent WBA. The Blaenau Gwent PSB's Engagement sub-group will support the Gwent PSB in the delivery of a regional consistent approach to engagement being delivered at a local level during 2021 to 2022 recognising involvement as key to informing the regional assessment and subsequent plan.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

Option 1

That Members of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee consider and accept the report and appendices as provided prior to it being submitted to the Public Services Board, and

Agree to receive a further report on the movement to a regional PSB as part of the forward work programme.

Option 2

That Members of the Public Services Board Scrutiny Committee consider and provide specific comment for consideration by the Public Services Board before approval.

Agree to receive a further report on the movement to a regional PSB as part of the forward work programme.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

This report is in-line with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

The regional grant funding allocation from Welsh Government will support the development of common data and systems for the Well-Being Assessment. Blaenau Gwent Council Policy Team is overseeing the application and implementation of the funding for 2021/22 on behalf of all regional partners.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

Failure to produce a WBA and carry out a statutory consultation on the draft WBA would lead to the PSB not complying with the collective duties set out in the well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

5.3 **Legal**

The programme has been developed in line with the 5 Ways of Working and other requirements stated in Well-being of Future Generations Act.

5.4 **Human Resources**

The draft assessment is being developed collaboratively with representatives from all Gwent local authority areas being actively involved in both an analytical and public engagement perspective.

Progress against the overall plan is reported to the PSB via a PSB Strategic Support Group, which in turn is supported by the PSB Engagement Sub-Group.

The council's Policy, Partnerships and Engagement Team is responsible for the operational delivery of the assessment and overseeing the implementation of the formal consultation for the assessment in Blaenau Gwent.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

The GSWAG Well-being Assessment Sub Group (Chaired by NRW) is currently progressing the work towards development of a Gwent WBA. The principles set out below have been agreed by G10.

- Focus on a regional, integrated picture of Well-being, while still respecting and reflecting local and community differences and nuances by answering a series of jointly agreed questions
- Apply the sustainable development principles; long term, integration, involvement, collaboration and prevention
- Explore the differences, similarities and interconnectedness of well-being within, between, and outside our areas and communities
- Reflect that we are not starting from scratch, broaden and build on good practice and our current regional and local understanding of well-being and use the evidence we have and considerations of what we might do differently as a starting point
- Use evidence to challenge existing perspectives and approaches and explore contentious issues
- Use a wide range of qualitative and quantitative information including data, academic research, evidence and people's views, presented using a digital platform which allows users to view the content in various ways (e.g. regionally, locally, by theme, by well-being goal)
- Maintain a strong community element and involve thought leaders, public, private and third sector partners and residents
- Assess data on agreed geographical footprints where available (directly comparable across the five LA areas)
- Go further than simply presenting data, making meaningful sense of that data and answering the "so what?" questions
- Consider well-being in Gwent in light of changing contextual circumstances and understand the implications of emerging challenges (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic, green recovery, EU Transition)

- Take an asset-based approach to build upon and identify the strengths of both individuals and communities in relation to need
- Focus on the short, medium and long term and identify future trends and potential disruptors
- Keep data, evidence and thinking up to date and current
- Be compiled collaboratively with fair and equal division of responsibilities across all public bodies.

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

The well-being assessment process, supported by local engagement and involvement processes, are crucial in ensuring that an effective well-being plan is developed to improve local well-being for the area of Blaenau Gwent.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

The GSWAG Engagement Sub Group comprises representatives from the five local authorities, the two Community Voluntary Council's, Gwent Police, the Regional Partnership Board, and the VAWDASV Board. Principles for the engagement stages of the Gwent Well-being Assessment and Plan have been agreed, appended to this report.

The group are developing a common set of questions, and associated framework, to undertake the community engagement element of the local assessment of well-being in a consistent manner. It is fully expected that replies will be coloured by current experiences of the pandemic.

Questioning styles will recognise the short, medium and long-term and resources to support questioning frameworks will, as well as recognising PSB activity over the past 3 years, consider the recovery of communities and differences in the economy, environment, societal changes and cultural changes caused by the pandemic.

The GSWAG Well-being Engagement Sub Group (Chaired by Caerphilly County Borough Council) principles are provided at Appendix 1.

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

The Gwent WBA will outline future trends information and feedback from public engagement on what people consider would make the area a better place for the future.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The WBA process will focus on a situational analysis which will support the Gwent PSB to prioritise which issues it will focus on as part of its Well-being Plan. Following the prioritisation further work will be considered to understand the appropriate approaches to tackling the issues identified locally.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The WBA will be developed using a collaborative approach with involvement from the five Gwent local authority areas as well as a variety of PSB partner organisations.

6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***

The WBA follows an approach of considering the evidence gathered under well-being and sustainable development pillars: economic, social, cultural and environment issues.

6.8 ***EqlA***

The engagement approach is built on the national principles for public engagement. There are number of established forums which support engagement covered by the protected characteristics. A full EqlA will be carried out.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

The PSB and SSG monitor progress through its strategic work programme performance management arrangements.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- **Appendix A – Gwent PSB Well-being Assessment Engagement Principles**

APPENDIX A

Gwent PSB WBA Engagement Principles

Our approach will place our citizens and communities at the heart of the process to ensure that their views are gathered and recognised to shape the future well-being plan. This will consider the challenging times facing them, recognising that our previous processes may not be feasible or appropriate due to the on-going and legacy consequences of COVID-19. To mitigate this the group will look to gather and utilise the plethora of information and intelligence gathered during the pandemic to develop the Gwent well-being plan.

1. Develop an inclusive and rich engagement process, utilising a range of channels, that enables people to be involved, ensuring groups with protected characteristics, community areas, businesses and others with an interest in the well-being of the area are engaged. Employing the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales and the Children and Young People's National Participation Standards.
2. Commit to a co-production approach building the involvement principle into the process from the outset and maintaining dialogue with those persons, community groups and organisations with an interest in the well-being of the area.
3. Each area will ask the same set of questions to allow the aggregation of data to the Gwent level; but with recognition of local differences and the need for additional questioning, if appropriate. This common approach will be flexible enough to accommodate local differences and community level issues.
4. Understand that the development of the well-being assessment and plan build on the work of the previous assessments and plans. Community priorities are unlikely to have changed a great deal since the last assessment; we will review the existing priorities with communities and community areas and ensure the community voice feeds into the development of the Gwent well-being plan.
5. Engagement will begin with how local PSB priorities have been tackled, any successes and outstanding actions.
6. Initiate community conversations about the short, medium- and long-term challenges and opportunities, including what's good about your community/how communities can support wellbeing. Recognising that the current pandemic will inevitably feature in responses.
7. To make best use of engagement feedback, maximise resources and avoid duplication the group will work with Regional Partnership Board, VAWDASV and Substance Misuse partners to streamline needs assessment processes as far as possible.
8. Maintain flows of information and intelligence with the other working groups: Assessment, Governance.