

**Torfaen County Borough Council -**  
**The Senedd's Public Accounts Committee Consultation Response**

**1. Awareness and understanding of the Act and its implications.**

We have introduced e-learning modules for staff on the Well-being of Future Generations Act. An online resource has been developed to provide staff with an overview of the legislation, what it means for the Council and what we need to do. There are essential and advanced modules that staff can access depending on their roles. We have also developed a module specifically aimed at project managers. Since the e-learning was introduced in summer 2020, over 800 staff have completed the training.

We also have an established well-being 'assessment' template that is filled in to support change activities / decisions that are made by the Council which outlines how we are considering the Well Being of Future Generations Act in our work.

**2. The resources available to public bodies to implement the Act and how effectively they have been deployed.**

The statutory guidance documents are the main resources that we have used. These are useful.

Megan's Journey has also been a useful communication tool to staff and for using in conversations with our communities.

If further resources were produced they should focus on guidance / support / CPD for officers engaged in the seven core corporate areas identified in the statutory guidance (Corporate planning, Financial planning, Workforce planning, Procurement, Assets, Risk management and Performance Management).

**3. Support provided to public bodies by the Future Generations Commissioner.**

We have a good relationship with the FGC Office – they are helpful and respond to queries in a timely way.

The Office of the FGC were the first to acknowledge that releasing an 800 page report (The Future Generations Report 2020) during Covid-19 wasn't ideal – however it was a statutory requirement. Efforts have been made to make it more accessible – including an executive summary and resources on their website. An overview spreadsheet of recommendations to accompany the report would have been useful – we created an in-house version.

The recommendations are useful, but it might also be helpful if there were fewer, more focused recommendations.

The Simple Changes information was useful, but many of the changes in practice are not that simple to make.

Self-reflection tool has given us some useful insight and reflection time on how we might further embed the Act in our work.

It would be useful if there was more focus on the seven corporate areas identified in the statutory guidance on the Well-being of Future Generations Act as the places where the change needs to happen i.e. Corporate planning, Financial planning, Workforce planning, Procurement, Assets, Risk management and Performance Management. More targeted resources and support for officer groups involved with those activities would be welcome.

We understand that capacity might be an issue, but it would be useful if officers from the FGC Office were able to do more face-to-face briefings with public bodies e.g. speak to scrutiny committees and elected members.

#### **4. The leadership role of the Welsh Government.**

Annual budgeting and short-term funding opportunities make it very challenging to take long-term approaches.

From a practitioner perspective, it would be useful to learn more about the Welsh Government experiences as a public body implementing the requirements of the Act. i.e. peer-to-peer learning.

#### **5. Any other barriers to successful implementation of the Act (e.g. Brexit, COVID, etc.).**

Covid-19 has impacted on Council capacity, with key staff being redeployed on other duties or having a different focus.

Both Brexit and Covid-19 make horizon scanning and long-term thinking more challenging.

#### **6. How to ensure that the Act is implemented successfully in the future.**

Moving away from annual funding cycles that make planning for the longer term challenging should be a priority.

Focus effort on building capacity and support for those 7 core corporate areas identified in the statutory guidance (Corporate planning, Financial planning, Workforce planning, Procurement, Assets, Risk management and Performance Management) – to embedding the 5 ways of working into approaches taken.