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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Hywel Dda  
University Health Board

Ein cyf/Our ref:

CEO4261

Gofynnwch am/Please ask for:

[REDACTED]

Rhif Ffôn /Telephone:

[REDACTED]

Dyddiad/Date:

27 November 2020

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Nick Ramsay MS  
Chair  
Public Accounts Committee  
Senedd Cymru/Welsh Parliament

Email: [SeneddPAC@Assemblv Wales](mailto:SeneddPAC@Assemblv Wales)

Dear Mr Ramsay

## Re: Barriers to the successful Implementation of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Hywel Dda University Health Board (the Health Board) welcomes the opportunity to provide a response to the inquiry as requested in the letter received dated 12<sup>th</sup> October 2020. The response has been set out to address the key areas of interest.

### 1. Awareness of the Act and its implications

There has been regular communication by the Future Generations Commissioner (the Commissioner) to the Chief Executive of the Health Board, in particular in relation to sharing information on resources to support implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the Act). The Health Board recognises the importance of raising awareness of the Act and its implications and whilst the published resources have been helpful, it has on occasions been challenging to keep up to date with the volume of information, which is being made available. This can make it difficult for the Board and lead officers to evaluate how the organisation can effectively utilise resources; for example, journey checkers, recently published horizon scanning and annual report with recommendations.

It is important for public bodies, especially those with statutory responsibilities, to be aware of the Act and what it means. As the first country to develop legislation for future generations, there are opportunities to increase celebration of this and promote the well-being goals in their simplest form. However, the multifaceted nature of the Act brings added complexity and therefore makes it difficult to convey a single clear message about the purpose of the Act and what it means for individuals, communities, organisations and their staff.

This can be illustrated by:

- 7 national well-being goals;
- 5 ways of working;
- 7 corporate areas of change;
- Public Service Board well-being objective; and ,
- Organisational well-being objectives; for example, the Health Board's well-being objectives.

For the legislation to be forward thinking for our future generations, planting the “seed” at curriculum level would be a positive investment.

It is also important for the general public to be aware and know what is being done to support the national well-being goals so they understand the significance of their personal actions. An example of this within the Health Board is a simple message shared by our midwifery team, encouraging new parents to invest in 10 climate change actions. The Health Board is developing similar “strap lines” that aim to create cultural change in the population and shift in mind-set.

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

At an individual organisation level, there have been no additional financial resources made available to implement the Act, and the expectation is that this is part of our core business responsibilities. Work to implement the Act has been absorbed into existing roles, which have been broadened to encompass the associated reporting responsibilities.

No significant funding to implement the Act has been routed via Public Service Boards (PSBs). Funding generally comes via the Regional Partnership Board for health and social care programmes or other partnerships; for example, the Dyfed Area Planning Board for substance misuse partnership arrangements. PSBs in the Hywel Dda region received a small amount of funding, which has been used to work collaboratively to support the development of a web-based tool for gathering data and information to inform well-being assessments. At a PSB level, the joint work has been very effective and the limited funding provided has been used to create added value from the regional collaboration approach.

There have been a number of helpful resources provided to organisations to aid in the implementation of the Act, but as mentioned in the response to Q1, the volume of documents can be challenging to evaluate. The Commissioner has provided a website, regular newsletters and a variety of publications/resources e.g. Framework for Scrutiny, Framework for Project Management, 80 Simple Changes, Self-Reflection Tool.

## **3. The support provided to public bodies by the Commissioner**

Interactions with the Commissioner have in the main centred on attendance at workshops and events that the Commissioner's office convene. The Health Board has been asked to respond to a number of requests to provide information; for example, measuring progress against the 80 simple changes, completing self-assessments, responding to a specific procurement review.

The Health Board would welcome the opportunity of exploring how the Commissioner could provide support to the Board (Executive Directors and Independent Members), to increase awareness of the Act, but also to support the Board in understanding how they can apply the duties of the Act within their corporate decision making, scrutiny and assurance roles.

There are also opportunities to create peer support and communications systems to aid sharing of good practice, especially between sector specific organisation e.g. with other Health Boards.

It would be helpful in striking a balance between support and enforcement to focus on a smaller number of priorities on an annual basis and work with public bodies to support them to review their current experiences and future aspirations. A proactive relationship management approach between the Commissioners Officer and named bodies would also be helpful.

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

We are seeing greater reference to the Act within Welsh Government policy documents and guidance, which is helpful, but it would benefit from providing a clear expression of what applying the Act would mean.

A number of Welsh Government funding streams continue to be time-limited in nature, which can hinder long-term planning and a drive towards prevention. Whilst the Integrated Medium Term Planning (IMTP) guidance does include a section on the Act, it would be of benefit if this was included as a cross-cutting theme. IMTP monitoring is not focused on the Act, but on specifics relating to aspects of health care delivery; for example, waiting times etc.

The recent Welsh Government review of Strategic Partnerships highlighted the plethora of partnership arrangements that exist across policy areas. This in itself is challenging to navigate as organisations are working with different statutory partners for different areas of work; for example, workforce and community safety.

#### **5. Other potential barriers (e.g. Brexit, COVID, etc.)**

The Act should not be deprioritised in the face of Brexit, COVID and other national priorities, but should look to promote best practice examples of how the public sector is working differently in light of the current climate.

‘Understanding of the Act’ continues to be a barrier. Getting and ‘pitching’ the right amount of information to support awareness and embedding of the Act is crucial.

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

To ensure the Act is implemented successfully, there is a need for more engagement at a local level, increasing awareness of the Act amongst the public – what does it mean to them – for example in schools, with parents and community groups, highlighting that we all have a part to play not just the public sector. Harnessing this opportunity through passionate communities and using their connections and relationships provide a chance to mobilise, at pace, the skills and capacity needed to create great change.

The private sector also have a role to play in contributing to the well-being goals through, for example, ethical business practices and supporting local employment. Public bodies can also encourage those that they commission to demonstrate how they are implementing the Act. The Future Generations Commissioner can encourage organisations not subject to the Act to support the principles of the Act, but may need to be simplified to make it “can do” rather than “too hard”.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Moore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Steve Moore**  
**Chief Executive**

**Closing Comments: Extract from a blog #futuregen**  
**by Ros Jervis, Director of Public Health, Hywel Dda University Health Board**  
<https://janedavidson.wales/latest-posts/futuregen-contributions-voices-of-hope-for-wales-the-responsible-agencies>

If I had one ask...

From a personal and professional perspective, one key consideration I had in terms of my desire to move and to come and live and work in West Wales was the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WFGA).

I have been a professional public health practitioner for many years now and find, especially in my leadership roles, that I am having to deal with the constant challenge of seeking a fairer balance between a focus on the short-term pressures and potential gains versus the long-term benefits and better outcomes for the future. Short-termism is hard; it is frustrating and a very real challenge for me professionally.

The WFGA gave me hope for a brighter future and fresh energy to face this challenge.

Our aspirations as a Welsh Health Board to move to a social model of health, where we seek to take action on a broader range of factors that influence health and well-being with our communities at the heart of positive change feels right but also very ambitious – why is this?

And why then, even with key legislative drivers such as the WFGA, is change still taking an age to happen?

My ask would be for support, either through effective legislation or good policy, for the practical drive we need to enable asset-based, community-inspired change.

How could policy provide us with meaningful and practical tools that would help us bring about a transformational shift in our dialogue and empower our communities to mobilise their assets to create social movements for change? West Wales is naturally rich in its green and blue environmental resources, which are free to everyone. Harnessing this opportunity through passionate communities and using their connections and relationships really does provide us with the chance to mobilise, at pace, the skills and capacity needed to create great change. This is my ask – how do we make it happen?