

# Future Generations Bill Seminar

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## Examples of practices

<p>High-level decision-making framework being developed at Bridgend College. Target date July 2014 (approved February 2014). Able to share September onwards. <i>Chris Long or Andrew Gibbs, Bridgend College.</i></p>	<p>One single strategy, plan and performance report. Agreed want organisational integrated mechanisms (including reports). Using trajectories. <i>Dr Sharon Hopkins, Cardiff and the Value University Health Board.</i></p>
<p>Now focusing on reporting on key outcomes in Business Improvement Plans. <i>John Cook, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.</i></p>	<p>Business Impact Assessment combined with Equality Impact Assessment for all new policies to aid reporting. <i>Cheryl Davies, Estyn.</i></p>
<p>Sustainability considered in all decisions going to Committee (mandatory checklist). Training for report writing staff in how to build in environmental / social / economic sustainability and the relevance of their work area to delivering these. Scrutiny review of inspiration and benefit from National Park. <i>Clare Parsons, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.</i></p>	<p>We webcast all our meetings (over 18,000 citizens have viewed over 18 months) and this adds to our openness and transparency and gives an opportunity for us to present data and report on a regular basis. <i>Julie James, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.</i></p>
<p>Well-developed, multi-layered engagement process established, including with equality groups and very much an on-going conversation already happening – challenge from this to fundamentally change the focus of discussions. <i>Joanna Davies, Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board.</i></p>	<p>Reducing use of resources – fuel, water, utilities. Increasing recycling. Focusing on alternative ways of delivering services to ensure future viability and sustainability (employment contracts and patterns). <i>Shân Morris, North Wales Fire and Rescue Service.</i></p>
<p>We are working closely with Welsh Government DFES on a new planning process that simplifies reporting requirements. <i>Karen Phillips, Coleg y Cymoedd.</i></p>	<p>Patagonia’s Footprint Chronicles. Clearly stating the good and bad of what’s happening. <i>Andy Middleton, TYF.</i></p>
<p>Infographics. Written with citizens. Use of social media (beginning). <i>Rhian Huws Williams, Care Council for Wales.</i></p>	<p>Golden thread from SIP to Council Plan to service plans – down the organisation and back up through reporting. <i>Kate Adamson, Wrexham County Borough Council.</i></p>
<p>Beginning to create a planning / reporting framework. <i>Jackie Joyce, Wales Audit Office.</i></p>	<p>Creation of challenge panels drawn from representative from across the organisation to ‘challenge’ the data sets that we check. <i>Tanya Nash, City and County of Swansea.</i></p>
<p>Alignment of Business / Priority Planning with sustainable development. Alignment of SIP and council reporting. <i>Lesley Lawson, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.</i></p>	<p>Recent re-organisation of section is allowing for a fresh focus on our reporting mechanism and content gathering. <i>Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.</i></p>

## Opportunities that delegates discussed

- Partnership focus for sustainable development is key.
- Beginning to question the relevance of reports in some areas with the recipient. 'So what is this report being used for?'
- Beginning to reduce complexity.
- Evolutional Granular Resource Economics. Mapping the detail of flows and places as well as value.
- More integration with third parties.
- The WAO and GPX can look across the whole of the Welsh public sector and promote joint working and shared learning on integrated reporting.
- Opportunity to simplify reporting, reduce duplication.
- Reduced public expenditure places even more onus to deliver optimum outputs / outcomes from any spending. SD bill can get buy in from all re. importance of sustainability agenda.
- Well-developed policies and strategies but how well-embedded across the whole organisation?
- Good community engagement mechanisms in place, but are we only hitting those who want to engage?
- Sustainable Carmarthenshire work and reporting. LSB approach to measuring key indicators and challenging performance amongst LSB partners. Currently focused on more environmental measure but could be extended further.
- Benchmarking performance within back office functions. Cost improvement programmes.
- An opportunity to build sustainable development into our core values and objectives. No historic data to compare to so setting our baseline could be easy! *Paul Subacchi, Natural Resources Wales.*
- We are in the process of developing a sustainability strategy. Looking at the concept of how we can become 'very good' instead of 'less bad'.
- Quality of life indicators – some progress. LSB Carmarthenshire 20 outcomes but not left to be judged against outcomes. Trust.
- Narrative description of value, some £s but not all.
- Reporting could be at least at 2 levels: Individual organisations reporting on how they are contributing to the sustainable development goals, as part of their Annual Reports (NHS). Partner organisations via the LSB incorporating the sustainable development goals into their SIPs and reporting mechanisms.

# Challenges that delegates discussed

Challenges that delegate discussed can be grouped into key themes:

- **Compliance and processes**
- **Measuring value**
- **Consistency**
- **Communicating with stakeholders**
- **Communicating and working with colleagues**
- **Leadership**
- **Finance**

## Compliance and processes

The level of current compliance reporting and future need resulting from pending legislation is having a serious impact on capacity to deliver.

Stifled by historic report producing. Time taken away from day job!

Reporting in relation to compliance, not reality – absence of 'RIO (Rio Convention)' thinking.

Too many system requirements that do not add value.

Compliance with legislation drives us (WAO) and the bodies we audit away from integrated reporting focused on outcomes.

Officers understand that some indicators of performance are not an indication of 'what matters' – but funding for service delivery is prioritised around indicators. No indicator = no funding = self perpetuated this problem. It's about priority planning at a service level.

As individuals we are good at thinking about future. As organisations we aren't – processes are geared to short and mid term.

Annual cycle and lag time. Retrospective.

Lack of flexibility.

Permission. Owners of reporting regime.

Current mechanisms often look at a single issue in isolation. If sustainable development is a COP then mechanisms should be integrated.

Annual Improvement and separate report. Local authority – very lengthy report, report on all services. Separate report for outcome agreements.

Are the regulators behind this / us?

## Measuring value

Not enough on impact. Too much on activity – output, some outcomes. Not enough on analysis.

Not outcomes based.

Not yet describing and measuring 'combined' value. Reports not routinely speaking to citizens.

We haven't reviewed the effectiveness of various groups across the college and need to do so.

Continuing reporting requirements. Lack of national cohesion. Resources being used on low / no value work (perceived). Supporting managers to navigate various differing priorities.

Let's not focus on short-term measures but long-term outcomes. Don't use indicators as a stick!

We measure what we can do (easily) rather than measuring what we need to.

A lot of information about what has happened.

Existing reporting mechanisms not great for reporting on sustainable development but annual reporting / monitoring progress on SIPs is helping. SIPs are meant to be outcome-focused on social, economic and environmental factors. But we're in the early days...

Cost – Benefit Model. A) Spend B) Benefit. Issue needs tackling.

## Consistency

Goal posts keep shifting – no consistency so no wonder public are confused!

Need fundamental new approach to this and reporting – not as well as what we have, a new start! Change other reporting requirements to focus on contribution to long-term goals. Need to streamline requirements across different public sector organisations.

Legacy systems without integration – financial and business.

A lot of change and a lack of clear strategy as we are a new organisation.

Tension between delivering sustainable outcomes, which predominantly have long lead times between effort and investment and results and clamour to justify existence (on both Politicians and Senior Public Sector officers) in the short term.

Meeting competing legislature duties / compliance drives massive duplication and complexity. Meeting expectations for clarity of public reports.

Current reporting mechanisms are really diverse and reflect the diversity of the organisations. How can the reporting best reflect and embrace this diversity?

## Communicating with stakeholders

Annual Improvement Reports – do they need the needs of the ‘readers’. Do we fully understand what citizens want to know about local government in their community / locality. Do we make enough of an effort to get feedback and measure impact?

Annual Report and Accounts not particularly customer-focused.

Re-education of colleagues and stakeholders of the new urgency, content and approach is a challenge.

Demonstrating the organisation’s contribution to the citizens’ priorities for sustainable development.

Disconnect between reports for different audiences – duplication of effort. Need to define users of public reports and their requirements.

But social media needs to make sure information is clear and comprehensive and fair. Just putting it on twitter isn’t the whole solution.

Audience. Statutory report accessible? Understandable?

The current mechanisms are not helpful for the public, but better join-up of reporting (e.g. SIP, Corporate Plan / Annual Improvement, Annual Delivery Report) plus a report that’s easier to understand may improve matters. But...how many members of the public care? E.g. national survey for Wales showed general satisfaction with public services so unless you’re personally affected, people don’t care.

Reports produced for Wales Audit Office / auditors, not real people.

People interested in single issues – social media works, collation does not.

Linking reporting strongly with public engagement, participation and co-production will have great value and meaning.

Abertawe Bro Morgannwg learnt from the third sector. Social Media. Care Council – connecting with public.

Is there a good example in local government of clear public service reports to the public?

Reporting – not a great deal of interest to public. Focused on statutory requirements, not on what matters. Respond to auditors.

Disconnect between reporting and public.

Multiple reporting requirements. Confusing for citizens. New duty?

Ask citizens – so what? Housing Association with residents. Danger of wider gulf.

## Communicating and working with colleagues

Do the team that do the reporting have the sustainable development knowledge?

A number of interested parties to bring together i.e. finance, performance management, existing reporting mechanisms. Lack of organisational confidence regarding what sustainable development means for them. – too far removed from day-to-day or don't realise they're already doing it. What does Future Generations mean in practical terms? Some see it as a tick-box exercise.

Lack of data in NHS Wales outcomes of Hospital Services (some way behind NHS England). Emphasis on financial colleagues.

Process driven silo approach. Financial restraints. Compliance.

Current reporting mechanisms are getting better at providing information for future challenges (a symptom of the current climate?) but it's still against instinct for people to look ahead, especially long-term. People at all levels of the organisation are busy day-to-day. Better analytical capacity would help, using data and information to convey relevant messages.

The success of valuably embedding the duties of this Bill will be hugely down to people. It'll be a culture change and this required an element of risk, honesty, engagement will all and a big dose of making some mistakes. This Bill is about making connections and recalling why we work for the public sector. Not everyone will find this easy.

Work to build a culture.

## Leadership

Political overlay is key.

Once clear sustainable development goals are agreed for Wales, and translated into what needs to be delivered at organisational and local service board level, the current reporting mechanisms should be able to be adapted to enable effective reporting.

Talk to each other. Standardise reporting. User friendly language. Something like the Value Wales Community Benefit Tool.

Local authorities seem to be quite advanced in many ways with reporting performance (maybe doing the wrong things right but mechanisms are there!) Uncertain of other public organisations, particularly in the context of reviewing SIPs, putting LSBs on statutory footing...'performance' means different things to different groups.

Leadership issue. Honest discussion needed with citizens about choices. Demographics / budget. Consistent signed-off approach.

Whole system – government and so on. Focus on results.

## Finance

Problems of ensuring that we can continue to provide services with decreasing finances in light of potential and more unpredictable increase in demand generated by climate change / ageing population etc.

Need better focus on what we have to do / have the resources left to do.

Financial performance / improvement performance is more in the spotlight due to cuts in budgets.

Local Health Boards are now required to develop 3 Year Integrated Plans. Future-proofing of services is currently a key theme across the NHS, largely as a response to the current economic situation and UK-wide recruitment problems, as well as increased demand on healthcare services. How we will have to report on implementation? Not yet sure.