

Gwent Area Public Services Board Terms of Reference

Prepared with reference to the Welsh Government Statutory guidance: SPSF 3 Collective Role (Public Services Boards) “Shared Purpose Shared Future” and Schedule 3 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Status

1. The Gwent Area Public Services Board (hereafter the Gwent Public Services Board, or, the Board) is a statutory board established by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
2. The former five local Public Services Boards, covering the geographical local authority areas of Blaenau Gwent CBC, Caerphilly CBC, Newport CC, Monmouthshire CC and Torfaen CBC, have agreed to merge under Section 47(1) of the Act to assist them in delivering the well-being goals for Wales.

Purpose

3. The purpose of the Board is to improve the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of the combined area, referred to as ‘Gwent’.
4. In pursuing this purpose, the Board will contribute to the national well-being goals and its Vision Statement.
 - A prosperous Wales
 - A resilient Wales
 - A healthier Wales
 - A more equal Wales
 - A Wales of cohesive communities
 - A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
 - A globally responsible Wales

VISION STATEMENT

The shared long-term vision of all partners for the Gwent area is for sustainable communities, supported by actions that enhance the quality of life for all. This means we need to make sure that when making decisions, we take into account the impact they could have on people living their lives in Wales in the future.

Main Tasks

5. The Board has four main tasks:
 - To prepare and publish an assessment of the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of the Gwent area.
 - To prepare and publish a Local Well-being Plan for the Gwent area setting out well-being objectives and the steps it proposes to take to meet them.

- To take all reasonable steps to meet the objectives they have set.
- To prepare and publish an annual report that sets out the Board's progress in meeting the well-being objectives.

Principles and Values

6. Sustainable development is the overriding principle of the Board's activities. This means acting in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
7. The Board will operate with mutual respect and challenge, in the spirit of collaborating to improve the well-being of the area. Members will seek to be at the forefront of planning, will be inquisitive of new approaches, and will act to bring their combined resources to bear to make any changes in partnership delivery that are needed to secure the well-being of future generations.
8. This means working in ways that take into account:
 - **Long term:** The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.
 - **Prevention:** Understanding the root causes of issues that affect well-being and acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse.
 - **Integration:** Considering how the Board's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
 - **Collaboration:** Acting in collaboration with any other person that could help the Board to meet its well-being objectives.
 - **Involvement:** The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.
9. In addition, the Board, will strive to work in accordance with:
 - The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
 - The National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales
 - The National Standards for Children and Young People's Participation
 - Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2010
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Public Sector Equality Duty

Membership

Statutory Members

10. The statutory members of the Board are:
 - **Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council** (Leader and Chief Executive)
 - **Caerphilly County Borough Council** (Leader and Chief Executive)
 - **Newport City Council** (Leader and Chief Executive)

- **Monmouthshire County Council** (Leader and Chief Executive)
 - **Torfaen County Borough Council** (Leader and Chief Executive)
 - **Aneurin Bevan University Health Board** (The Chair and Chief Executive)
 - **South Wales Fire and Rescue Service** (The Chair and Chief Officer)
 - **Natural Resources Wales** (Chief Executive)
11. Individuals may be designated to represent any of the named persons above. Council Leaders may only designate another member of the Council's Cabinet to represent them.
12. Any designated representatives should have the authority to make decisions and commit resources on behalf of their organisation.

Invited Participants

13. The following statutory invitees are invited to participate in the board's activity:
- The Chief Constable of Gwent Police
 - The Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner
 - National Probation Service for Wales
 - Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations
 - Torfaen Voluntary Association
 - The Welsh Ministers
14. The following non-statutory invitees, exercising functions of a public nature, are invited to participate in the board's activity:
- Local Director of Public Health and Strategic Partnerships
 - A representative of the Registered Social Landlords in the region
 - A representative from the tertiary academic sector
 - A representative (Chair or Vice-Chair) from the Gwent Strategic Well-being Action Group
15. Invited participants are not required to accept their invitation.
16. Invited participants are not members of the Board. They are entitled to make representations to the board about the assessments of local well-being and local well-being plan, take part in Board meetings and provide other advice and assistance.
17. Invited participants will be asked to join the Board via a letter from the Chair setting out the reasons for the invitation and the expectations upon the invitee.
18. Having joined the Board, invited participants will participate in meetings in the same way as statutory members.

Observer

19. The Board will invite the Chair (as an alternate Vice-Chair) of the Regional Scrutiny Committee to attend Board meetings as an observer.

Other partners

20. The Board will work with key partners either directly, or through Local Delivery Groups, who exercise functions of a public nature and who; have a material interest in the well-being of the area; deliver important public services; and are involved in the in the preparation, implementation and delivery of the work of the board.
21. These partners will include, but are not limited to:
 - Community Health Councils
 - Community Councils
 - Registered Social Landlords
 - Tertiary Colleges
 - National Park Authorities
 - Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
 - Further or Higher Education institutions
 - Arts Council of Wales
 - Sports Council for Wales
 - National Library of Wales
 - National Museum of Wales

Quorum

22. The quorum of a public services board meeting is all its statutory members.

Decision Making

23. Members will appoint a Chair and Vice Chair from the statutory members or the invited participants, to hold office for two years.
24. Board decisions, for example the agreement of the assessment of local well-being and the local well-being plan, are only valid when made jointly and unanimously by all statutory members and with all statutory members in attendance.
25. Other Board decisions will be agreed by consensus but may be taken by vote carried by a simple majority.
26. In the event of a disagreement between members it is the responsibility of the Chair to mediate an agreement and to ensure that this is presented to the next available meeting of the Board or to a special meeting if required.

Mandatory Meetings

27. The Board will hold a “mandatory meeting” chaired by one of the constituent local authorities, no later than 60 days after each subsequent ordinary election of councillors.
28. At this meeting the Board will:
 - a) Nominate a Chair and Vice-chair
 - b) Determine when and how often it meets
 - c) Review and agree its terms of reference

Ordinary Meetings

29. Ordinary meetings of the Board will take place, as a minimum, every three calendar months at a time and venue to be agreed by the members. Members may attend virtually.
30. Each meeting may consider, but not be limited to, the following agenda items:
 - Welcome and apologies
 - Declarations of interest
 - Minutes of the last meeting
 - Progress on well-being objectives
 - Forward work plan
 - Public questions and communication

Minutes of meetings, and relevant reports, will be on the Gwent Public Services Board’s website.

Sub-groups

31. The Board is able to establish sub-groups to support it in undertaking its functions and the board can authorise sub-groups to exercise a limited number of functions.
32. Each sub-group of a public services board must include at least one statutory member of the board, who can choose an appropriate representative to attend to contribute to the work of the sub-group. The sub-group can include any invited participant or other partner.
33. Sub-groups’ functions will be guided by these PSB terms of reference.
34. Sub-groups cannot be authorised to:
 - (a) invite persons to participate in the board’s activity
 - (b) set, review or revise the board’s local objectives
 - (c) prepare or publish an assessment of well-being
 - (d) consult on an assessment of well-being or to prepare a draft of an assessment for the purposes of consulting

- (e) prepare or publish a local well-being plan
- (f) consult on a local well-being plan or to prepare a draft of a local well-being plan for the purposes of consulting
- (g) review or amend a local well-being plan or to publish an amended local wellbeing plan
- (h) consult on an amendment to a local well-being plan
- (i) agree that the board merges or collaborates with another public services board

35. The matters above require all statutory members to act jointly and so must be taken by the Board itself.
36. Whilst sub-groups cannot themselves be authorised to finalise and approve the assessment of local well-being, or the local well-being plan, it is expected that they will play an important role in researching and developing those products in draft.
37. The aims of each sub-group will be determined by the Board when the sub-group is established.
38. Each sub-group will prepare terms of reference and the Chair of the sub-group will submit them to the Board for approval.
39. The following sub-group is currently established:

Gwent Strategic Well-being Action Group. The aim of this sub-group is:

- To act as the officer support group to the Board
- To prepare the local assessment of well-being and Gwent Well-being Plan
- To ensure that regional activity that contributes to the Board's well-being objectives is delivered in collaboration
- To liaise with Welsh Government and the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner on behalf of the Board
- Facilitate the relationship, continuity and reporting between regional activity and the work of the Local Delivery Groups
- Provide evidence to the Regional Scrutiny Committee
- To ensure that the work of the partnership is open and transparent and that it's activity and performance is available on the Gwent Public Services Board's website
- To prepare an annual report on behalf of the Gwent Public Services Board

41. The following sub-groups will be established to operate in each geographical local authority area:

Local Delivery Groups. The aim of each of the five sub-groups is:

- To ensure the delivery of local actions that contribute to the Board's well-being objectives
 - To contribute to any regional activity that contributes to the Board's well-being objectives
 - To involve local communities, local community areas and any person or group with an interest in the well-being of the area covered by the partnership
 - To take forward any actions of a local nature set out in the Gwent Well-being Plan
 - To report as requested through local democratic scrutiny arrangements
 - To report as requested to the Regional Scrutiny Committee
 - To report on activity to the Gwent Public Services Board as required
 - To ensure that the work of the partnership is open and transparent and that its activity and performance is available on the Gwent Public Services Board's website
 - Continue to deliver 2018-23 Local Well-being Plans
42. Local Delivery Groups will comprise senior officer representatives of the statutory and invited partners of the Board who will have the ability to take decisions and direct resources within the area they operate.
43. The Gwent Public Services Board will ensure the continued effectiveness and operation of Local Delivery Groups and will hold themselves to mutual regional account should the performance of a Local Delivery Group fall below expectations.

Support

44. Administrative support for the Board will be provided by one of the five local authorities on a two-year cycle, timed with the two-year cycle of the Chair and Vice-Chair. Where the Chair is the Leader of one of the local authorities the administrative support will be provided by that local authority. This includes:
- Ensuring the Board is established and meets regularly
 - Preparing the agenda and commissioning papers for meetings
 - Inviting participants and managing attendance
 - Ensuring the Gwent Public Services Board website is current, open and transparent
 - Work on the annual report
 - Preparation of evidence for Regional Scrutiny
45. Ensuring that the functions of the Board are properly resourced is the responsibility of all members equally. Members may provide advice, assistance, and other 'in kind' resources to the board for instance in the form of analytical or professional expertise.

46. Invited participants and other partners may also provide advice, assistance, and other 'in kind' resources to the Board for instance in the form of analytical or professional expertise.

Wider Engagement

47. The Board's citizen focus means it will engage in a purposeful relationship with the people and communities in the area, including children and young people, Welsh-speakers and those with protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010), in all aspects of its work. The Board will also take account of people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and will ensure those persons reflect the diversity of the population of the Gwent area. It will abide by the National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales and the National Standards for Children and Young People's Participation.
- The Board encourages dialogue with persons and bodies who have an interest in the well-being of the area and will consider any questions raised through the administrative support to the Board. Contact is facilitated by the Public Services Board website and meeting papers will be published on the website one week in advance.
 - Interested parties can be invited to make presentations to the Board on any items that are being considered. The Board will take care, however, to ensure the propriety and impartiality of processes and be alive to the risks of any perception arising that a particular group is being afforded excessive access to, or influence over the Board's deliberations.
 - The Board will take additional steps outside of meetings to ensure that the public voice is heard and helps to shape both the well-being assessment and well-being plan. This is expected to include consultation exercises and opportunities for people to raise and debate ideas through online and offline engagement arrangements.
 - The Board will seek advice and guidance from the Future Generations Commissioner as and when appropriate.
 - The Board is subject to scrutiny through the Regional Scrutiny Committee and this process provides a further route for public engagement. The Board will ensure the scrutiny committee has adequate engagement with a wide range of relevant stakeholders who can help hold PSBs to account.

Performance and Reporting

48. The Board will adopt a robust performance management framework and will ensure that it is measuring outcomes and progress towards its well-being objectives. The performance will be examined at each meeting and progress will be publicly available on the Gwent PSB website.
49. The Board will prepare and publish a report no later than 14 months after the publication of its first local well-being plan. This will enable the board to report on the full year's activity.

50. Subsequently, an annual report will be published no later than one year after the publication of each previous report.
51. In the year following an ordinary local government election, when a new local well-being plan is being prepared and published, there is no requirement to also produce an annual report.
52. The Annual Report will set out the steps taken since the publication of the Board's most recent local well-being plan to meet the objectives set out in the plan. It can also include any other information the Board thinks would be appropriate.
53. A copy of the Annual Report will be sent to the Welsh Ministers, the Future Generations Commissioner, the Auditor General for Wales and to the Regional Scrutiny Committee

Regional Scrutiny

54. The role of scrutiny is to provide challenge and support to secure continuous improvement for the Board.
55. In order to assure democratic accountability, there is a requirement for a designated local government scrutiny committee to scrutinise the work of the Public Services Board. The scrutiny will be provided by a Regional Scrutiny Committee to be supported by one of the constituent local authorities.
56. Welsh Ministers have a power to refer a plan to the scrutiny committee if it is not considered sufficient; for example, due to an adverse report by the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales or a concern statutory duties are not being met.
57. The Regional Scrutiny Committee can require any member of the board to give evidence, but only in respect of the exercise of joint functions conferred on them as a member of the Board.
58. The Regional Scrutiny Committee must send a copy of any report or recommendation it makes to the Welsh Ministers, the Commissioner and the Auditor General for Wales.

Review and Amendment

59. While the Board must review these terms of reference at the mandatory meeting, the Board may review, and agree to amend it at any time providing all statutory members agree.

Agreed: 1st October 2021

Amended:

Amended:

Amended: