Cross cutting themes

1.1 Introduction

This assessment of well-being in Gwent has considered over 120 issues. While these have been grouped into social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being we know that this is not how people's lives are organised. All these aspects influence our choices and outcomes, and will become more or less important, as we move through our lives. Someone's health may influence the type of work they can do, or how they access cultural events or the countryside. Climate change will affect everyone, whether through having to deal with the consequences or benefiting from the opportunities to decarbonise and reduce emissions. So, throughout this assessment we have tried to identify the links between the issues, but with so many this hasn't always been possible.

However, four broad areas have emerged that will enable us to look at how we respond to the challenges and opportunities identified by the evidence in the assessment. These are:
- Health inequalities and well-being
- Community cohesion
- Environment
- Economy and infrastructure

1.2 Health inequalities and well-being

Good health, being able to see a doctor or dentist when needed and how long you may live differs greatly between our communities in Gwent. Many things can affect someone's health and well-being including their income, their housing, their jobs or the local environment. Similarly, their health can impact on other aspects of their lives, including how and where they travel, their work and social lives and how safe they feel in their community. Health inequalities often reflect the other inequalities present in our communities.

Covid19, and the measures put in place to combat it, have meant that waiting lists and mental health issues have increased and people may have delayed seeking advice and treatment. But the restrictions also encouraged more people to explore the local countryside and connect with their communities, offering some added health and well-being benefits.

The accompanying Population Needs Assessment for Gwent, produced by the Regional Partnership Board has identified a number of priorities around improving services for people with a range of health conditions, and those that care for them. The Regional Partnership Board, set up under the Social Services and Wellbeing Act, seeks to provide person centred care, treatment and support that promotes good health and wellbeing. We need to ensure that we are working collaboratively to maximise our efforts to address the needs of the people and communities of Gwent. As we move to the development of the Well-being Plan and delivery mechanisms these links and synergies will need to be explored in more detail.

1.3 Community cohesion

Feeling part of, and safe in, your community is vital to everyone's well-being. While councils, health services, the police and others, can support communities, it is the people in them that make them welcoming, diverse and thriving places to live. The Safer Gwent Partnership works to, reduce anti-social behaviour, prevent crime and disorder, and improve community safety.

Community activity and volunteering can give people a sense of accomplishment and pride, and having the opportunity to meet others, learn new things and improve the local environment can help people to combat loneliness and isolation. Covid19 has shown how important, positive and resilient our communities can be, with informal networks being set up virtually overnight to support everyone, especially the most vulnerable. It has also shown how important digital inclusivity is, and will continue to be, for people to connect with each other and access many of the services they need. Being able to grow or source food locally and affordably can help to bring people of all ages and cultures together as well helping them connect with nature and keep healthy.

Active community involvement cuts across all stages of the Well-being Plan development and delivery will be vital to ensure that the PSB achieves its objectives.

1.4 Environment

The environment provides the air, water and food we all need to live happy, healthy lives and being able to access nature is known to help both physical and mental health and well-being. During the various lockdowns put in place due to Covid19 people appreciated their local environment, in a way they may not have done before.

The effects of climate change and biodiversity loss can have a damaging impact on people's lives with poor air quality, extreme weather and unstable food and energy prices. Improving our rivers and countryside helps birds and animals but also provides opportunities for community involvement, education and developing new skills. Developing renewable energy schemes and expanding our electric vehicle charging infrastructure will support the local economy, reduce our impacts on the environment and improve air quality. Regional and local partnerships will be working to improve the green spaces, woodland, rivers and lakes, which connect towns and villages across Gwent for the benefit of communities, wildlife and nature.

The move towards more digital and online services will enable more flexible and agile working for some, reducing the need to travel. We need to make our homes and businesses more efficient and this provides opportunities for local green jobs and businesses, as well as providing good quality, affordable homes, food and other services.

1.5 Economy and Infrastructure

A thriving economy, that provides opportunities for decent, well-paid work, is central to well-being, reducing poverty, supporting local towns and markets and reducing some of the

causes of crime and anti-social behaviour. There are a number of initiatives which are looking to develop the region's economy, including Cardiff City Region and the Shared Renewal Fund.

The local economy relies on staff and customers being able to travel around, and out of, the region easily. A reliable, affordable, low carbon transport network, which promotes walking, cycling and public transport allows people to move around, visit friends, cultural events and other tourist attractions, as well as accessing health care, education and training as well as other public services. The Covid19 restrictions also demonstrated how important digital connectivity and skills are and will continue to be in the future.

Enabling everyone to gain the skills and education to secure valuable, decent work for the future is important to a person's sense of well-being, allowing them to contribute to their community and provide for themselves and their loved ones. The Population Needs Assessment has identified providing the right services for children and young people, especially young carers, or those with complex needs as a priority area for their work. Working together will encourage more joined up opportunities for young people from all backgrounds.

Businesses of the future will need to be efficient, work with the environment, and provide the products and services that we use in our day-to-day lives. The changing housing needs will require new and innovative solutions, making them resilient, adaptable and affordable, enabling people to stay in their own homes, while receiving the support they need. This has been identified as an important issue in the PNA, and the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment highlights the need to build housing that is flood and climate resilient.

Climate Change Health inequalities Biodiversity and species loss Widening socio-economic inequalities	Community safety Children and young people Cohesive and empowered communities Covid 19
Health inequalities and well-being **Community cohesion** **Environment** **Economy and infrastructure**	
Future Transport modes and infrastructure Ecological footprint Fouture housing Supportive local economies	Food Skills for the future Flood risk Digital futures