

My Ref: T: Scrutiny/PRAP/Comm Papers/Correspondence

Date: 10 December 2015

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Dear Ms Germain,

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – Scrutiny implications.

Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee: 1 December 2015

As Chair of Cardiff's Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee thank you for the time you committed to facilitating scrutiny of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Committee feel you may find Member's observations, debated at the Way Forward, a useful outcome of the scrutiny to feed into the ongoing development of guidance for the Act. Therefore I set out below our key observations and concerns for your consideration.

The Council considers its own approach to Local Service Board (LSB) Partnership work is relatively advanced and will be a good starting point in tackling the statutory requirements of the Act. The Council is currently implementing a scrutiny improvement project and will ensure the Terms of Reference of all five of its scrutiny committees address the statutory requirements of this Act. However, the Committee wishes to emphasise that we would benefit from greater clarity of expectation between national and local scrutiny arrangements for holding to account the statutory Public Service Board.

Whilst it is clear that the role of the Future Generations Commissioner and the role of Scrutiny are not intended to overlap, both will play a critical friend role. We would therefore benefit from clear guidance as to how the Future Generations Commissioner will interact with local Scrutiny functions.

Members endorse the importance of making legislation relevant to the population. They agree that successful decision making embraces long term planning, needs to be more outcomes focussed, and take the community along with you. However they wish to highlight the risk of focussing on vehicles to achieve the Act rather than actual outcomes. Everything the Council does will need to sit within the framework of the Act. The Committee therefore feels the Council will need to improve how it communicates its well-being goals, and that a clear set of partnership objectives will be critical. Members are keen to establish whether there will be new Key

Performance Indicators to assist them in their monitoring role, and whether these will be in addition to existing KPI's.

In line with the Council's response to the recent consultation, we embrace the spirit of the Act and the aspiration to put in place mechanisms to hold Public Service Boards to account locally rather than nationally. However, practically we feel there are resource considerations that could impact on the achievability of the Government's vision. Members are concerned that with the escalation in statutory scrutiny responsibility there is no resource earmarked for the role and responsibility it places upon Scrutiny.

Finally, in the spirit of local consultation at an early planning stage of decision making, and to prepare for the intention of the Act, we feel Scrutiny stakeholders across Wales would welcome an opportunity to shape the guidance. We note there have been well attended consultation events with Local Service Board stakeholders and would urge that you harness existing experience of partnership scrutiny in a similar vein.

Once again, my sincere thanks for attending the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Howells', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

COUNCILLOR NIGEL HOWELLS
CHAIR, POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

cc: Members of the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee;
Rachel Jones, Policy, Partnerships and Citizen Focus Manager;
Marie Rosenthal, Director Governance and Legal Services;
Gareth Newell, Head of the Cabinet Office;
Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Business Manager;