

WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Section 5 – The sustainable development principle

24. [Section 5](#) contains further provisions relating to the application of the sustainable development principle.
25. Public bodies must take all reasonable steps to meet their well-being objectives, as set under section 3(2) of the Act, in accordance with the sustainable development principle.
26. Subsection (2) details the matters that public bodies must take account of in order to discharge this requirement. Subsection (2)(a) relates to long-term thinking. When setting and meeting their well-being objectives, public bodies must balance their need to take action to address current issues (the short term) with the need to safeguard their ability to meet long-term needs. This is especially relevant where their short-term actions may have a detrimental effect in the future.
27. Subsection (2)(b)(i) and (ii) relate to public bodies taking an integrated approach. Within the context of the well-being objectives taking an integrated approach involves public bodies considering how their well-being objectives impact upon all the well-being goals.
28. In order to take an integrated approach a public body also needs to consider how their well-being objectives impact upon each other and in turn the well-being objectives of other public bodies. The public body should also consider how the actions they take to meet one well-being objective may be detrimental to another objective or other objectives being met, including those of any other public bodies subject to the provisions of the Act. This is particularly relevant where the activities of one public body could inhibit the ability of another public body in maximising its contribution to the achievement of the well-being goals.
29. Public bodies must have regard to the importance of engagement, as provided for by subsection (2)(c). This entails involving the people and communities whose well-being they are seeking to improve, as well as those with an interest in the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being.
30. Subsection (2)(d) relates to public bodies taking a collaborative approach. This means public bodies working together, either with other bodies or other parts of their own body, in order to assist in meeting their well-being objectives or the well-being objectives of any other public body subject to the provisions of the Act.
31. Subsection (2)(e) provides for preventative action. In relation to the well-being objectives, this refers to public bodies considering actions which they could allocate resources now, in order to prevent problems from occurring or getting worse.

*These notes refer to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales)
Act 2015 (c.2) which received Royal Assent on 29 April 2015*

32. The statement, prepared under section 7(1) of the Act, must set out how the public body believes it has considered the matters provided for at section 5(2) in setting their well-being objectives and how it intends to consider these matters when meeting their well-being objectives.
33. This statement must also detail how the public body intends to take all reasonable steps to meet its well-being objectives, including how it will govern itself, and how its annual allocation of resources, for example its annual budget, will ensure it meets its well-being objectives.