



Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

2015 anaw 2

PART 2

IMPROVING WELL-BEING

Sustainable development and well-being duty on public bodies

2 Sustainable development

In this Act, “sustainable development” means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle (see section 5), aimed at achieving the well-being goals (see section 4).

3 Well-being duty on public bodies

- (1) Each public body must carry out sustainable development.
- (2) The action a public body takes in carrying out sustainable development must include—
 - (a) setting and publishing objectives (“well-being objectives”) that are designed to maximise its contribution to achieving each of the well-being goals, and
 - (b) taking all reasonable steps (in exercising its functions) to meet those objectives.
- (3) A public body that exercises functions in relation to the whole of Wales may set objectives relating to Wales or any part of Wales.
- (4) A public body that exercises functions in relation only to a part of Wales may set objectives relating to that part or any part of it.

4 The well-being goals

The well-being goals are listed and described in Table 1—

TABLE 1

Goal	Description of the goal
A prosperous Wales.	An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.
A resilient Wales.	A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).
A healthier Wales.	A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.
A more equal Wales.	A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).
A Wales of cohesive communities.	Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.
A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.	A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.
A globally responsible Wales.	A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

5 The sustainable development principle

- (1) In this Act, any reference to a public body doing something “in accordance with the sustainable development principle” means that the body must act 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.
- (2) In order to act in that manner, a public body must take account of the following things—
- (a) the importance of balancing short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long term needs, especially where things done to meet short term needs may have detrimental long term effect;
 - (b) the need to take an integrated approach, by considering how—
 - (i) the body’s well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals;
 - (ii) the body’s well-being objectives impact upon each other or upon other public bodies’ objectives, in particular where steps taken by the body may contribute to meeting one objective but may be detrimental to meeting another;
 - (c) the importance of involving other persons with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and of ensuring those persons reflect the diversity of the population of—
 - (i) Wales (where the body exercises functions in relation to the whole of Wales), or
 - (ii) the part of Wales in relation to which the body exercises functions;
 - (d) how acting in collaboration with any other person (or how different parts of the body acting together) could assist the body to meet its well-being objectives, or assist another body to meet its objectives;
 - (e) how deploying resources to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may contribute to meeting the body’s well-being objectives, or another body’s objectives.

6 Meaning of “public body”

- (1) For the purposes of this Part and Part 3 of this Act, each of the following persons is a “public body”—
- (a) the Welsh Ministers;
 - (b) a local authority;
 - (c) a Local Health Board;
 - (d) the following NHS Trusts—
 - (i) Public Health Wales;
 - (ii) Velindre;
 - (e) a National Park authority for a National Park in Wales;
 - (f) a Welsh fire and rescue authority;
 - (g) the Natural Resources Body for Wales;
 - (h) the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales;
 - (i) the Arts Council of Wales;
 - (j) the Sports Council for Wales;
 - (k) the National Library of Wales;

- (l) the National Museum of Wales.
- (2) Section 52 enables the Welsh Ministers to amend the meaning of a “public body”.
- (3) Chapter 1 of Part 4 provides for persons who are listed as public bodies in subsection (1) (as well as certain other persons who exercise functions of a public nature) to be either members, invited participants or other partners of the public services boards established under that Part.

Well-being objectives

7 Statements about well-being objectives

- (1) When publishing the well-being objectives (including well-being objectives revised under section 8 or 9) a public body must also publish a statement—
 - (a) explaining why the body considers that meeting the objectives will contribute to the achievement of the well-being goals;
 - (b) explaining why the public body considers it has set well-being objectives in accordance with the sustainable development principle, including how the body proposes to involve other persons with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and ensure that those persons reflect the diversity of the population of—
 - (i) Wales (where the body exercises functions in relation to the whole of Wales), or
 - (ii) the part of Wales in relation to which the body exercises functions;
 - (c) setting out the steps the public body proposes to take to meet those objectives in accordance with the principle (including how it proposes to govern itself, how it will keep the steps under review and how it proposes to ensure that resources are allocated annually for the purpose of taking such steps);
 - (d) specifying the periods of time within which the body expects to meet the objectives;
 - (e) providing such other information as the body considers appropriate about taking the steps and meeting the objectives.
- (2) The well-being objectives of a public body that is also a member of a public services board may be included in that board’s local well-being plan (see Chapters 1 and 2 of Part 4).

8 Welsh Ministers’ well-being objectives

- (1) The Welsh Ministers’ well-being objectives must be set and published—
 - (a) no later than 6 months after the date on which the first general election is held following the commencement of this section, and
 - (b) no later than 6 months after the date of each subsequent general election.
- (2) The Welsh Ministers’ well-being objectives must be set for the period—
 - (a) beginning with the day specified for that purpose in the statement published under section 7(1), and
 - (b) ending with the day of the next ordinary general election under section 3 of the [Government of Wales Act 2006 \(c.32\)](#).

- (3) If the well-being goals are amended, the Welsh Ministers must review their well-being objectives.
- (4) If, on a review under subsection (3), the Welsh Ministers determine that one or more of their well-being objectives are no longer appropriate, they must revise the objective or objectives concerned.
- (5) The Welsh Ministers may at any other time review and revise their well-being objectives.
- (6) Well-being objectives revised under subsection (4) or (5) must be set for the remainder of the period referred to in subsection (2).
- (7) Where the Welsh Ministers revise their well-being objectives under subsection (4) or (5), they must publish them as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- (8) In setting or revising their well-being objectives, the Welsh Ministers must take into account the Commissioner's report under section 23.
- (9) In subsection (1), "general election" means—
 - (a) the poll held at an ordinary general election under section 3 of the [Government of Wales Act 2006 \(c.32\)](#), or
 - (b) the poll held at an extraordinary general election under section 5 of that Act.

9 Other public bodies' well-being objectives

- (1) In this section references to a public body do not include the Welsh Ministers.
- (2) A public body's well-being objectives must be set and published—
 - (a) no later than the beginning of the financial year following the commencement of this section, and
 - (b) at such subsequent times as the body considers appropriate.
- (3) If the well-being goals are amended, a public body must review its well-being objectives.
- (4) If, on a review under subsection (3), a public body determines that one or more of its well-being objectives are no longer appropriate, it must revise the objective or objectives concerned.
- (5) A public body may at any other time review and revise its well-being objectives.
- (6) Where a public body revises its well-being objectives under subsection (3) or (4), it must publish them as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- (7) In setting or revising its well-being objectives, a public body must take into account the Commissioner's report under section 23.

Measuring performance towards achieving the goals

10 National indicators and annual well-being report

- (1) The Welsh Ministers must—

- (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the well-being goals, and
 - (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly.
- (2) A national indicator—
 - (a) must be expressed as a value or characteristic that can be measured quantitatively or qualitatively against a particular outcome;
 - (b) may be measured over such period of time as the Welsh Ministers consider appropriate;
 - (c) may be measurable in relation to Wales or any part of Wales.
- (3) The Welsh Ministers must set milestones in relation to the national indicators which the Welsh Ministers consider would assist in measuring whether progress is being made towards the achievement of the well-being goals.
- (4) In setting a milestone the Welsh Ministers must specify—
 - (a) the criteria for determining whether the milestone has been achieved (by reference to the value or characteristic by which the indicator is measured), and
 - (b) the time by which the milestone is to be achieved.
- (5) If the well-being goals are amended, the Welsh Ministers must review the national indicators and milestones.
- (6) If, on a review under subsection (5), the Welsh Ministers determine that one or more of the national indicators or milestones are no longer appropriate, they must revise it or them.
- (7) The Welsh Ministers may at any other time review and revise the national indicators and milestones.
- (8) Where the Welsh Ministers revise the national indicators and milestones under subsection (6) or (7), they must as soon as reasonably practicable—
 - (a) publish the indicators and milestones as revised, and
 - (b) lay a copy of them before the National Assembly.
- (9) Before publishing national indicators and milestones (including indicators and milestones revised under subsection (6) or (7)), the Welsh Ministers must consult—
 - (a) the Commissioner;
 - (b) the other public bodies;
 - (c) such other persons as they consider appropriate.
- (10) The Welsh Ministers must, in respect of each financial year beginning after the date on which national indicators are published under subsection (1), publish a report (an “annual well-being report”) on the progress made towards the achievement of the well-being goals by reference to the national indicators and milestones.
- (11) An annual well-being report under subsection (10) must specify the periods of time to which the measurement of each indicator relates.

11 Future trends report

- (1) The Welsh Ministers must, during the period of 12 months beginning with the date of a general election, publish a report (a “future trends report”) that contains—

- (a) predictions of likely future trends in the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, and
 - (b) any related analytical data and information that the Welsh Ministers consider appropriate.
- (2) In preparing a future trends report the Welsh Ministers must—
 - (a) take account of any action taken by the United Nations in relation to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and assess the potential impact of that action on the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, and
 - (b) take account of the report containing an assessment of the risks for the United Kingdom of the current and predicted impact of climate change most recently sent to the Welsh Ministers under section 56(6) of the [Climate Change Act 2008 \(c.27\)](#).
- (3) In subsection (2)(a), “UN Sustainable Development Goals” means the draft goals proposed in the report of the United Nations Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (UN document reference A/68/970) referred to in UN resolution 68/309 which was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 September 2014.
- (4) In subsection (1), the reference to the date of a general election is to the date on which an ordinary general election is held under section 3 of the [Government of Wales Act 2006 \(c.32\)](#) (or would be apart from section 5(5) of that Act).

12 Annual reports by the Welsh Ministers

- (1) The Welsh Ministers must—
 - (a) publish, in respect of each financial year, a report of the progress they have made towards meeting their well-being objectives, and
 - (b) lay a copy of the report before the National Assembly.
- (2) In preparing a report under this section, the Welsh Ministers must review their well-being objectives.
- (3) If, on a review under subsection (2), the Welsh Ministers determine that one or more of their well-being objectives are no longer appropriate, they must revise the objective or objectives concerned and publish the revised objective or objectives as soon as practicable.
- (4) Where the Welsh Ministers revise one or more of their objectives under subsection (3), the report must include an explanation of the revision and the reasons for making it.
- (5) A report under this section must be published and laid before the National Assembly as soon as reasonably practicable following the end of the financial year to which the report relates.

13 Annual reports by other public bodies

- (1) Schedule 1 makes provision requiring each public body other than the Welsh Ministers to publish annual reports of the progress it has made in meeting its well-being objectives.
- (2) In preparing a report under Schedule 1, or under a provision amended by that Schedule, a public body must review its well-being objectives.

- (3) If, on a review under subsection (2), a public body determines that one or more of its well-being objectives are no longer appropriate, it must revise the objective or objectives concerned and publish the revised objective or objectives as soon as practicable.
- (4) Where a public body revises one or more of its objectives under subsection (3), the report must include an explanation of the revision and the reasons for making it.

Guidance

14 Guidance

- (1) The Welsh Ministers must issue guidance to other public bodies about the exercise of functions under this Part.
- (2) In exercising a function under this Part, a public body must take such guidance into account.

Role of the Auditor General for Wales

15 The sustainable development principle: Auditor General's examinations

- (1) The Auditor General for Wales may carry out examinations of public bodies for the purposes of assessing the extent to which a body has acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when—
 - (a) setting well-being objectives, and
 - (b) taking steps to meet those objectives.
- (2) The Auditor General must carry out such an examination of each public body at least once during the period mentioned in subsection (6).
- (3) Before the end of the period mentioned in subsection (6), the Auditor General must report on the results of the examinations carried out under subsection (1) during that period to the National Assembly.
- (4) The Auditor General must lay any report prepared under subsection (3) before the National Assembly.
- (5) In carrying out an examination under subsection (1), the Auditor General must—
 - (a) take into account any advice or assistance given to the public body, or any review of and recommendations made to the body, by the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales (see Part 3), and
 - (b) consult the Commissioner.
- (6) The period referred to in subsections (2) and (3)—
 - (a) begins on the date falling one year before the date on which an ordinary general election is to be held under section 3 of the Government of Wales Act 2006, and
 - (b) ends on the date falling one day and one year before the date on which the next such election is to be held.

Promotion of sustainable development

16 Promotion of sustainable development

For section 79 of the [Government of Wales Act 2006 \(c.32\)](#) (sustainable development) substitute—

“79 Sustainable development

- (1) The Welsh Ministers must, in the exercise of their functions, make appropriate arrangements to promote sustainable development.
- (2) After each financial year the Welsh Ministers must publish a report containing a statement of the arrangements made in pursuance of subsection (1) that had effect during that financial year and must lay a copy of the report before the Assembly.
- (3) The arrangements referred to in subsection (1) may be made by the Welsh Ministers exercising their functions under section (2) of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (duty of Welsh public bodies to set objectives and take steps to meet them in accordance with the sustainable development principle).”.