

Dear Sir/Madam

## **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – Pembrokeshire County Council**

I am writing to you to inform you about the strategies in place regarding the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. It has come to my attention as an Education Studies student from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David's that there is only one specific plan in place to ensure that the Well-Being Future Generations Act 2015 is being followed within Pembrokeshire. During this letter you will read of some possible suggestions and adaptations to the current plan and other linked initiatives that can be made to better follow the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. I urge you to take a moment to read my letter and make a decision whether it is of use to the Pembrokeshire County Council to take this letter into consideration and make adaptations to the Well Being plan to better enforce the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 and make a positive difference to the future generations of Pembrokeshire.

Following on from the passing of the Act in 2015 the Pembrokeshire Public Service Board was set up and states that there are 8 integrated projects that can be focused on to follow the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. The Well Being plan was implemented in Pembrokeshire after the passing of the act which sets out how the Public Service Boards will help and work with people to improve the lives of people today and in the future. My question to you is, is there enough being done in Pembrokeshire to follow the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015? Or is there more that can be put in place to make the plan more successful?

As stated in the previous paragraph it has come to my attention that there are not many strategies in place in Pembrokeshire that have been developed to follow the aims of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. The Well-Being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 aims to get individuals to work in a sustainable way and improve social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act states that public bodies must take into consideration the impact of their decision on future generations. With many recent plans I worry that this is not being done. Such as the closure of the Withybush General Hospital being an example of the act not being followed closely enough with a first glance at the plans. The WBFG Act (Wales) 2015 also states that they need to tackle long term issues such as poverty and health inequalities. Is Pembrokeshire County Council really taking the initiative to end child poverty and health inequalities?

After the Well-being Assessment, which was statutory under the WBFG Act (Wales) 2015, three main points were picked out by the people who participated in the assessment. These being: having enough money for essentials, good health and good relationships. It is hard to set out specific plans to ensure people have good health and relationships as this can be down to personal choice, as (Rippe 2014) explains life style choices are down to the individual and due to this it can be difficult to create policies to protect people's health. More campaigns need to be created to create awareness of the risks of a sedentary lifestyle. As stated on the Pembrokeshire County Council website there is the Life hub; Health and Well-being in Pembroke Dock Library which provides leaflets and posters on potential health risks from certain lifestyles and other issues relating to health. Council figures

estimated that 23% of people in Pembrokeshire live with health related illness. So clearly this is an issue that needs addressing with regards to creating awareness to people of their lifestyle choices on their health. However, none of this is advertised anywhere so no awareness is being created about this vital part of the Well-being plan in Pembrokeshire. Therefore, without this advertisement of the facilities available and the chances for people to receive more information the aim of improving people's health is not being fulfilled to the highest standard.

Furthermore, another issue raised in the initial well-being assessment was the factor of rurality. As Pembrokeshire is largely rural with a number of small villages connected by nothing but single track roads it is important to keep the county connected. This could be done via bus or train routes as well as options for elderly clubs across the smaller more rural areas to ensure Pembrokeshire is an inclusive county and keeping everyone connected. For example from looking at all bus routes on the Pembrokeshire County Council website, there is no bus or any mode of public transport running from Lawrenny to the nearest towns of Pembroke Dock or Tenby other than the primary school bus which also shuffles secondary school children to the nearest public bus stop in the next village over in Cresselly. Therefore, anyone living within beyond Cresselly towards Lawrenny and Landshipping is left without any mode of public transport which can be a major issue in connecting communities and access to services which would affect well-being of future generations within that area. With no current sign of any plans for improved bus routes this might be an important factor to consider to better follow the Well-being plan that followed the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.

Additionally, another point that could be expanded on from the Well-being plan in Pembrokeshire is the role of leadership being explored more. As the Well-being commissioner (2017) advocates, you should work to move closer with regards to working agreements across all of the involved organisations, such as a multi-agency virtual team with a senior leader organising lower levels of the agency. There are also many resources that can be used, for example designing Multi-Agency Partnerships, leading Culture Changes and Stepping up, which is a framework for the public sector's leadership on sustainability in Pembrokeshire. The commissioner goes on to state that Pembrokeshire County Council needs people in positions of leadership, to play their part in pushing forward more changes to improve the lives of future generations in Pembrokeshire, which would ultimately be following the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.

From recent research the Voices for Equality group set up in Pembrokeshire in 2014 as a link between the people and the organisations that make decisions affecting the population of Pembrokeshire is an excellent idea. This would keep the people informed of current decisions that may affect them and the future generations to come. However, if this group was introduced into schools it would be more successful and impactful as children can give their valued opinions on decisions that would be affecting their future the most. As Article 5 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child states that every child has the right to help make decisions as they grow up. The group aims to meet four times a year. I'd like to suggest meeting more regularly or in smaller more regular groups to include more people and aim to reach wider communities. For instance, have Voices for Equality groups

within smaller communities and have a bigger annual meeting including all the included communities allowing for more people to get involved. (Red Lodge 2010) states that it is vital to have that two way communication flow in public meetings to ensure everyone is informed and can voice their opinions and any concerns they may have. This allows any conflict to be addressed and all parties informed of any decisions that can affect individuals in the future.

To conclude, this letter has suggested and pointed out many adaptations that can be made to the Well Being Plan in Pembrokeshire to ensure that Pembrokeshire County Council can follow the Well being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and I hope that you can take these into consideration. Such as creating a better link between the people of Pembrokeshire and the organisations making the decisions that can affect the future generation. The main aim of this letter was to encourage you, the council and public service board of Pembrokeshire, to include the population of Pembrokeshire more and to develop a stronger link within the county, whether this be throughout school groups, giving children a say in their future. Which they are entitled to under the UNCRC rights. As well as integrating the governing organisations more with the general public through the Voices of Equality group set up in 2014.

Yours Faithfully

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