

Work-based Learning Project BMPF7010



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‘Third Sector Organisations and the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015’

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1.0 Abbreviations List

CAVS	Carmarthenshire Association Voluntary Services
CCC	Carmarthenshire County Council
NEF	New Economics Foundation
OFGC	Office of Future Generations Commissioner
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PSB	Public Service Board
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TSSW	Third Sector Support Wales
WBFGA	Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015
WCVA	Wales Council for Voluntary Action
WG	Welsh Government

2.0 Project Proposal

How do we as a Local Authority enhance the support given to third sector organisations in delivering the authority's well-being goals, and maximising contributions to well-being?

The context and justification

The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) (WBFGA) was first integrated into society here in Wales in 2015 and since then specified bodies have been working hard to try and adhere and work towards the 7 well-being goals the act provides. All together the goals are set to improve the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being in Wales. From a Local Authority's perspective, they are one of the bodies that are made to work towards the goals, but I started to wonder about third sector organisations and where they stood in being a part of the act. In a recent study I conducted which looked at social enterprises in the county and how we could continue to support them following on from COVID-19, not many knew much, if anything at all about the act which led me to this proposal. Having worked for over a year in the Community Bureau in Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC) I work first hand with third sector groups, and it seems to me that their ethos' align perfectly with that of the act, but that they were not as closely linked with it as public sector bodies. With Carmarthenshire County Council working on recovery plans across the authority, it seems now more than ever we need to be focusing on well-being in the county, and I believe finding out how we can continue to work with each other, no matter what group or sector to maximise contributions to well-being will be beneficial to everybody.

The intended impact

The aim of this project is to find out how we as a Local Authority can enhance the support given to third sector organisations across the county in working towards well-being. This by taking inspiration from national support such as The Welsh Government's Third Sector Scheme Wales and the Wales Council for Voluntary Action's 2022-2027 Strategic Plan focusing on equality for third sector groups in achieving well-being. More specifically, enhancing support to groups in delivering CCC's own well-being goals, which focus on starting, living, and ageing well in a healthy, safe and prosperous environment (Carmarthenshire County Council, 2022). The aims are to find out what support is currently available to these groups in delivering well-being goals, finding out what barriers or constraints face them, and understand what exactly it means to work towards the act. Through conducting this research, we may be able to take forward recommendations to

groups that we work with that will enhance the services they provide as well as enhance delivery of the council's own well-being goals. By developing this work, the aim is to continue positive working relationships and maximise our contributions to well-being across Carmarthenshire.

The outlined intention

This research activity will focus on what it means to work towards the well-being act and CCC's own well-being goals and evaluate what support is currently available to third sector organisations. I intend to get different people's perspectives on the subject so that we get a broad picture of the landscape and get a better understanding of the ways in which well-being affects us all. To do this, I have decided to use three different research methods to gather the most varied data. The first, an interview which focuses on verbal data and is known as one of the major approaches in collecting data in qualitative research (Brinkman and Kvale, 2018, p.5). I will interview leads of some of the third sector organisations that we work alongside, to get their thoughts and opinions on the act and how they see it from groups' perspectives. I will also conduct an interview with a member of staff from within the authority that deals with the act from a local body's perspective. Also, if possible, I will interview someone outside the authority that to gather more of an official and corporate response to the subject. My second chosen method is a survey, which according to many is one of the most effective and trustworthy methods (Question Pro, 2022) especially as I aim to use an online survey. The aim with this is to send it out to other Local Authorities in Wales using 'Microsoft Forms' to gather more data on current processes that other authorities are operating and compare to ours. And lastly, I will carry out a Focus group which is said to be an effective method to use to gather shared experiences and opinions from similar individuals (GOV, 2022), in this instance members of staff in our authority, to discuss and evaluate all the collated data and come up with ideas and recommendations as to how we can enhance the support given to third sector organisations regarding delivering the well-being act alongside us as the public sector.

Ethics and Insider Research

I will need to make sure that I carry out ethical research, therefore I will comply fully with the ethics form I produce and get approved as well as the UWTSD Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice and the UWTSD Research Data Management Policy. For all the participants of this research activity, I will describe the main research procedures as well as

the context around the activity and what the aims are. For interviewee participants, they will receive an email explaining the nature of the research and the proposed outcomes and in the e-mail, I will explain that it is voluntary to participate and that no names will be shared, only positions/job roles. I will also give a summary of these details at the beginning of the interview, so everyone is clear from the outset. For the survey, to ensure full disclosure, I will ask for email confirmation that participants are accepting the invite as well as clicking the link and completing the form itself, respondents will have then consented to taking part. All names appear anonymously on forms, so people will not be visible to each other. Lastly, for staff part of the focus group, I will send out an e-mail describing the nature of the research activity, what it entails and what would be expected of them if they were happy to participate and expect a response as to whether they will participate or not. This could also be done by them accepting the online invitation to join the meeting as more than likely the group will be carried out online via Microsoft Teams. Only I as the researcher will have access to all names of participants. When it comes to writing my findings, I will be referring to interviewees as Group 1, Group 2 etc so readers are aware what stakeholder we are referring to without disclosing their actual name. For individuals I have interviewed from within the authority and outside, I will use a job role/title where they have agreed. If they do not wish to note that, we will agree on a generic reference. I will ask participants to try and avoid disclosing other people's names or information about individuals or groups that have not been a part of the research and have not given consent.

In this instance I would be recognised possibly as an insider researcher as I am studying and researching areas that are within my work department and environment (Costley, Elliot, Gibs, 2010, pp.3). Also, although the Bureau works within the local authority, in parts of this research I will be looking at the act from the council's perspective, in contrast to third sector groups that we in the Bureau deal with, so I will have to be cautious when comparing to not cause conflict. I will continue to work professionally and avoid making any biased assumptions or decisions.

The expected learning outcomes

As part of my learning, there are generic outcomes that I am aiming to achieve from undergoing this module, these are to design a substantial, methodologically sound work-based study, analyse and critically evaluate relevant research data and recommend future based actions. In addition to these, to assure success in this project, I also have six individual learning outcomes that are relevant to my research activity. They are:

- Define and understand what the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 is and what its goals are
- Define and understand what third sector organisations are and what support is currently available to them in aid of delivering the WBFGA.
- Identify and review Carmarthenshire County Council's own well-being goals.
- Identify and review some of the challenges and barriers that face third sector groups when it comes to delivering well-being goals.
- Research and analyse primary and secondary data, focusing on different perspectives of the key topic and concerns.
- Develop ideas and initiatives as to how we can continue to support third sector groups in the county.
- Collaborate with the Authority in working towards the WBFGA as well its own local goals and maximise contribution to well-being in Carmarthenshire.

3.0 Introduction

Wales is the first country in the world to create an independent office and act that focuses solely on protecting Wales now, and in years to come for our future generations. Brought into play in 2015, the act has placed a duty on public bodies to improve the well-being of residents, in all areas across Wales. We as a Local Authority, Carmarthenshire County Council are one of those bodies that must adhere to the act and implement its sustainable ways of working into everything that we do. Part of my current role see's me work alongside third sector groups, supporting them in securing funding for their projects and having only been in the role a year and a half, I cannot help but notice how much they do for people of their communities and how much they are contributing to well-being. From that, I wish to understand more about the sector itself and how it works alongside us as the public sector. I also want to find out what we do locally as a local authority to work towards the act and contribute to these new ways of working. Being bound by the act means that bodies must create local well-being plans and I believe through speaking with the sector directly, as well as people within the authority that work with the act, we can find ways to ensure that there is positive collaboration between all sectors in the county. The main aim of the project is to further enhance the support that we give third sector groups across the county, specifically in delivering well-being. To do this, I must find out what support is available currently to the sector in delivering well-being and what barriers are there restricting them from progressing further.

As well as the module learning outcomes, I have also designed 6 personal outcomes to achieve over the course of the research activity. This is to further enhance my work, and to also have things to refer to, assuring a good structure to the project. To begin, I want to define and understand what exactly the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 (WBFGA) is and learn more about the 7 goals it has in place. This is to gain a better understanding of what groups and authorities are working with when it comes to delivering the act. I also want to define and understand the third sector, and its organisations and find out what support if any is available to them in delivering the act. By doing this, I can compare with any ideas that come to light through the research and to any future recommendations that we put in place. To understand where the gaps in support lay, I need to understand what some of the challenges and barriers are that face third sector groups, only then can I try and overcome some of those obstacles. The data will be gathered through carrying out both interviews and a survey with a range of people from different organisations with the intention of gathering different perspectives of the works going on in

our communities. In terms of conducting a focus group, this will be used to develop ideas and initiatives as to how we can continue to support third sector groups across the county. As the Bureau deal with these third sector groups day in day out, it seems wise that they are heavily involved in these ideas and ultimately decisions. My final output summarises the whole aim of the project which is to collaborate with the authority in working towards the well-being act as well as its own local goals and maximise contributions to well-being in Carmarthenshire.

4.0 Literature Review

4.1 The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales)

The basis of this research activity relates a significant amount to the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) (WBFGA). The act was brought into play in Wales in 2015 and duty was put on listed public bodies such as Local Authorities and Health Boards to improve social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being in Wales. Research into the act is somewhat limited due to it being a rather new legislation and only recently have other countries such as Scotland and Gibraltar decided to take future generations legislation through their parliament. However, The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales at that time, Sophie Howe, who as of early 2023 is to be replaced by Derek Walker and the commissioner's office provided regular reports and resources for all public bodies to refer to, as well as inspire communities by showcasing actions taken place across Wales. The most recent report was published in 2020 which predominantly focused on the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery plans beyond it. The Commissioner at the time stated how now more than ever a solid and sustainable plan was so relevant, and effects on our future generations could be detrimental without these plans in place (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, 2020). These plans all revolve around the 7 well-being goals created by the act, which are illustrated in Figure 1, which all public bodies must work sustainably towards.



Figure 1: The Well-being Goals (Welsh Government, 2015)

To further support public bodies, the commissioner's office has also published 'The Future Generations Framework', guidance which enables public bodies to deliver projects and infrastructure fit for future generations. Developed alongside New Economics Foundation (NEF) Consulting, this framework helps translate the legalities of the act, into more understandable elements, allowing for public bodies to develop refined and robust projects that articulate the aim of the act (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, 2022). It is interesting to note that in the framework's guidance, it states how it can be used across a variety of projects and developed by not only public bodies but also individuals and most importantly community groups (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, 2022) which would form part of the third sector.

So much work has been done to adhere to the objectives of the act, such as there being an increase in the number of people who say they can speak Welsh, an increase in people feeling that they can influence decisions in their local area and greenhouse gas emissions decreasing nearly a third since the 1990's (Welsh Government, 2021). Yet there is so much more to be done, but how do we know how well public bodies are doing in delivering the act? The 46 National Well-being Indicators seen in Figure 2 were set by Welsh Ministers at the Senedd in 2016 and were designed to represent the outcomes of Wales, and more specifically measure the seven well-being goals (Welsh Government, 2021). The indicators relate to data such as percentages of births, levels of nitrogen oxide in the air, gross disposable household income and amount of waste generated (Welsh Government, 2021).

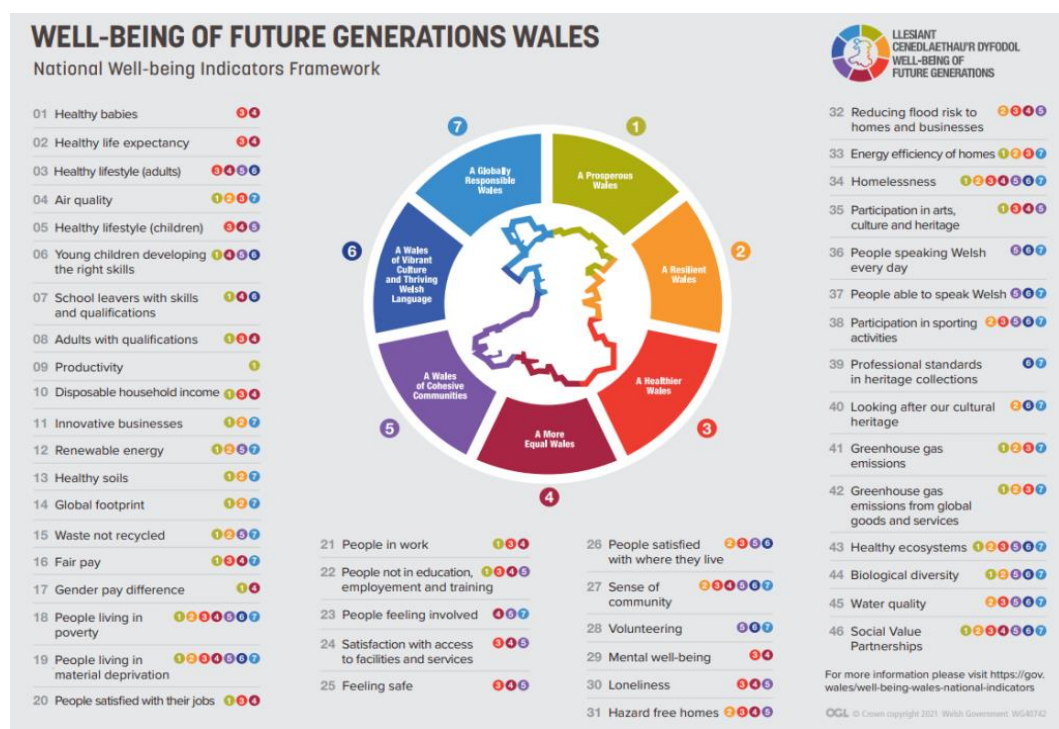


Figure 2: 46 National Well-being Indicators Framework (Welsh Government, 2021).

Data is updated continuously throughout the year, as and when it becomes available, making the indicators very useful and relevant information. To further enhance the knowledge, we have on the well-being goals' progression, annual reports are published, and the most recent 'Well-being of Wales: 2021' provides update of progression for the fifth time. With a great emphasis on life past the pandemic, the report illustrates the importance of reaching the goals, the assessments of the long-term progress towards the goals and how the indicators are a reference for all, not individual organisations (Welsh Government, 2021).

Providing a similar framework as the well-being act, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) provide tools for countries worldwide to help tackle societal issues. They provide 17 goals to work towards, some of which include quality education, gender equality, clean water systems, zero hunger and climate action (United Nations, 2022). Praising the legislative framework the well-being act provides, the United Nations have openly recognised how it compliments that of the SDG's, leading them to say, "What Wales are doing today, we hope the world will do tomorrow" (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, 2020).

For those working in public services or policy making it has been recognised that events such as COVID-19, mass floods, industrial revolution, and climate change to name a few have made it difficult for them to make decisions to suit the need and demand of its people at the time, while bearing in mind its effects on future generations (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, 2021). Therefore, the act has put in place the Sustainable Development Principle (Figure 3) which tells organisations how to go about meeting their duty under the act. For the sake of our future generations, public bodies must consider five things when making decisions: collaboration, integration, involvement, long-term and prevention (Futures Division of the Welsh Government, 2021).

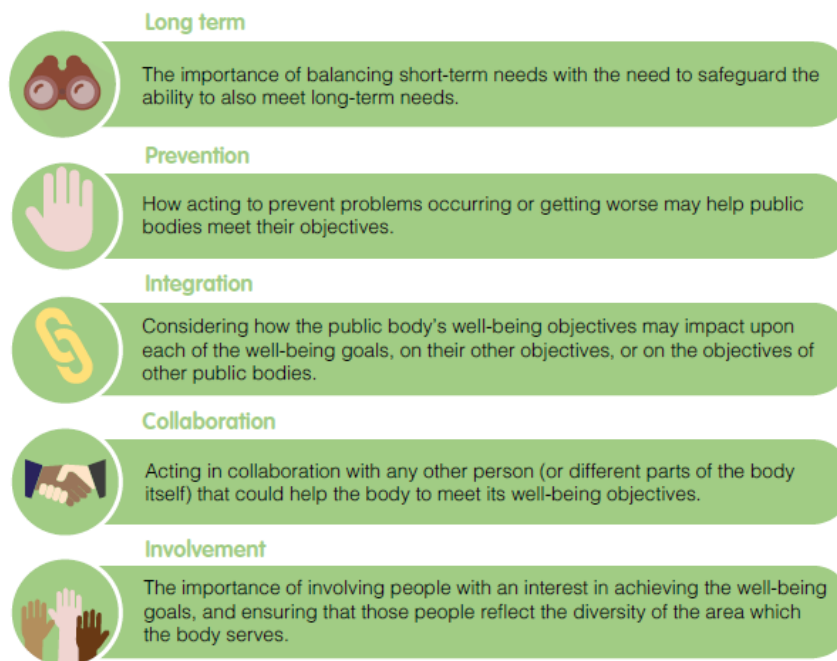


Figure 3: Sustainable Development Principle – 5 Ways of Working (Welsh Government 2015).

In accordance with the sustainable development principles, public bodies must also provide a Local Well-being plan. Carmarthenshire's County Council's Corporate Strategy 2018-2023 sets out its own goals and objectives for the county in delivering the act and maximising well-being. Categorised into four subgroups, 'start well,' 'live well,' 'age well' and 'in a healthy, safe and prosperous environment' the council's goals are set to reflect everyone in the county and are maximised by being appointed a lead officer for each group, and departments being given their own objectives to work towards (Carmarthenshire County Council, 2021). The Council's Well-being objectives are like Improvement Objectives which are set by The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 act, and as an authority we tend to combine the two when referring to corporate strategies. Further presented in its plan '*Moving Forward in Carmarthenshire: the next 5 years*' the authority's aspirations have been clearly identified in aid of delivering projects and programmes seeking to continuously improve the economic, environmental, social and culture well-being of Carmarthenshire.

4.2 The Third Sector

Although focusing on the well-being act, this research specifically looks at it alongside third sector organisations. These organisations such as social enterprises, voluntary organisations, self-help groups, and charities to name only a few, share similar characteristics such as being independent, non-governmental bodies, driven and motivated to supporting societal issues, and being committed to reinvesting their surpluses into their social objectives (Welsh Government, 2021). The Welsh Government's Third Sector Scheme Wales is made under Section 74 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 and was made with the intent to support and promote the interests of relevant voluntary organisations, otherwise third sector organisations. Engagement with the third sector it seems is key to informing policy development and helping enhance the third sector (Welsh Government, 2021). Along with the WBFGA which seems to be at the heart of major policy decisions and sustainable growth in Wales, together it could be said that they are able to shape services to meet the needs of the people of Wales.

The Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA), governing body for the voluntary sector strongly believes that although only public bodies are bound by the act, the well-being goals would not be achieved without the support of other sectors such as the third sector (WCVA, 2022). In their 2020-2021 Annual Report, one of the goals listed was to help voluntary or third sector organisations truly improve the well-being of Wales, building on what they were already doing, this by several proactive actions. These included creating manifestos detailing the difference partnership working could make to communities in Wales, creating a Health and Social Care Transformation Project supporting the well-being needs of the people in Wales and enabling many funds to support communities in tackling social issues (WCVA, 2021).

Arguably one of the most detrimental outcomes of this was increasing its high-level engagement with Welsh Government (WG) and producing a Memorandum of Understanding between both the WCVA and WG, highlighting how both parties share the belief that third sector organisations will play a detrimental part in achieving the well-being goals under the act. The memorandum further reflects both parties' commitment to working together and be better placed to work towards and achieve the well-being goals (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, 2020). Its key aims can be seen in Figure 4.

AIMS OF THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

- To support dialogue and communication between voluntary organisations and the Future Generations Commissioner
- To support the Future Generations Commissioner to engage with voluntary organisations on specific priorities
- To increase knowledge and understanding in WCVA and the voluntary sector about the Wellbeing Goals, the Sustainable Development principles and how they can use those to improve delivery of their charitable objectives
- To increase knowledge and understanding in the Commissioner's office and across sectors on why the contribution of voluntary organisations matters and how it can be supported
- To be better placed to take opportunities to collaborate to support the Wellbeing Goals.

Figure 4: Memorandum of Understanding (WCVA, 2019).

COVID-19 really showed what could be done when communities came together to help each other, and more specifically what groups such as social enterprises, charitable organisations and so on could do. This was highlighted in Social Enterprise UK's 2021 Report 'No Going Back – The State of Social Enterprise Survey, which showcased the commitment and drive these groups have in supporting our communities. Their methodological approach inspired me as the researcher for this project, as it spoke with real people, from organisations and communities to get a genuine understanding of the current landscape. It is a matter of course, that for some groups it was an uplifting time, but a very difficult time for many others. In a recent study looking at how to support social enterprises beyond the pandemic, many groups it seemed lost members of staff, had to reduce their operating hours, with some even having to close completely (Rees, 2021). Whilst we don't know exactly the full extent the pandemic has had on the third sector; it has been said that many people's perspectives have changed in relation to the way people and communities should work together to change and build things (Cwmpas, formerly known as Wales Co-operative Centre, 2020) and many are much more open to this way of collaborating.

In a recent report by Cwmpas, 'Transforming Wales Through Social Enterprise' focuses on the sector, the challenges that face it and most importantly its plan for the coming years. It highlights how Wales is currently playing an active part in the global phenomenon that is the social enterprise movement, challenging past economic models to build a more sustainable one (Wales Co-operative Centre, 2020). In 2020, the report showed that the Welsh Social Enterprise sector has grown to more than 2,000 enterprises, employing 55,000 people and

contributing £3bn to the economy (Wales Co-operative Centre, 2020). Providing vital services, jobs, volunteering opportunities amongst other things, this shows the importance of the third sector, across communities and for our economy.

In other countries, some argue that there has been an even bigger change to the economy, one that has put societal issue first. The American economist Milton Friedmans believed that the social responsibility of a business was solely to increase its profit (Eggers and Macmillan, 2013, p.3) and it can be said that the twentieth century's focus was on specialised and specific sectors. Now in the twenty first century, there is a grey line between boundaries, and new sectors have been created by the overlapping of traditional ones to face societal problems (Eggers and Macmillan, 2013, p.4). This has meant that instead of trading in profit, organisations now trade in social impact, which has become a form of currency with real value. This is otherwise known to some as the 'solution economy'. This is economic activity targeted at solving social problems, which challenge businesses, governments, and social enterprises to think about others, how they can work together to reach as many stakeholders as possible and tackle social problems (PBS News Hour, 2013). It is a relatively new phenomenon, whereby problem solvers such as social entrepreneurs have been finding new ways to tackle old problems, which would have usually been the domain of the government. In a landscape where ethics and social responsibility are a major concern for people (Grieshaber, 2021) social value is about encouraging selfless actions taken to improving people's lives and addressing real life social issues. As well as improving the lives of communities' current residences, social value is also about improving the environment we live in to ensure healthier lives for future generations. Therefore, it seems this research is extremely relevant and there is certainly a gap for continuing similar activities, to understand more about how we can ensure the desired lives for future generations.

5.0 Methodology

5.1 Philosophical Background

Race, gender, social class, religion, sexual orientation is just some of many characteristics that provide us with different experiences and push us into living the way we do, or think the way we do. Past experiences as well as their philosophical background can affect the way a person thinks, therefore effecting the way they would undertake research. Both ontology and epistemology influence the methodology and the methods that a researcher decides to use, making up the research paradigm. Although both ontology and epistemology tend to emerge together, it's said that ontology is the study of being, focusing on 'what is' whereas epistemology tries to understand 'what it means to know' (Crotty, 1998, p.10).

As this research is mainly concerned with people in real life situations, it takes the subjective position in ontology which is considered independently of experiences and the interpretivism position in epistemology. Interpretivists such as I, acknowledge that knowledge and reality are influenced by people in a certain environment, so can be considered a much more subjective approach rather than objective (Dr Nicole Brown, 2022). Often referred to as the theory of knowledge, epistemology is the branch of philosophy concerned with knowledge, specifically human knowledge. Focusing on the meanings that people bring to situations, interpretivism in research enhances our knowledge and insight into individuals and why they act the way that they do (Stainton, 2022). Therefore, this project took on the interpretivist approach, as with the positive approach, it has been said that the data it produces is not as flexible and doesn't give the opportunity for participants to share their beliefs or experiences (Stainton, 2022).

5.2 Qualitative Methodology

It has been said that qualitative researchers empathize and identify the people in which they are studying to understand how they feel and see things (Taylor and Bogdan and DeVault, 2015, p.8). This aligns with the interpretivism approach of researching and explains the use of a qualitative methodology for this project. Qualitative research can be determined through a variety of key features, as well as there being numerous ways of approaching it. It is intended to gather experiences of people in the real world whilst they try to explain 'social phenomena' from inside experiences. The expansion of the use of qualitative research in modern literature can be traced back to the 19th century where German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey and other philosophers used the term '*verstehen*' to describe an individual's first-

person perspective on his or her own experience, culture, history, and society (Lapan and Quartaroli and Riemer, 2012, p.5). From there philosopher Edmund Husserl, arguably one of the most influential philosophers of the 20th century, founded the term phenomenology. Phenomenology is one of many types of qualitative research methodologies that examines the lived experiences of humans, varying from content such as judgements, perceptions, and emotions. This activity will consist of collecting qualitative data based on meanings and understandings, so people's 'lived experiences,' otherwise phenomenological research. This seeks to understand the feelings that arise as people experience phenomena in their everyday lives (Hiller, 2016, p.115). In relation to this research activity, this would be the experiences of a range of people who are all working towards well-being, how they feel past experiences have led them to where they are currently, and specifically individuals' experiences of working with CCC as a local authority. Rather than try and offer us a theory, Manen explains how phenomenology attempts to demonstrate insightful descriptions of the way we as humans experience the world (Manen, 2016, p.4).

In the broader sense, qualitative methodology refers to descriptive data. That could be people's behaviour, thoughts, and feelings. Unlike a quantitative methodology that may collect deductive data and compare against hypotheses or theories, a qualitative methodology develops concepts and insights from patterns and themes in inductive data (Taylor and Bogdan and DeVault, 2015, p.7). Therefore, a qualitative methodology is better suited for this activity, as it will allow me as the researcher to understand people and concepts from their own experiences and references. Many suggest that when following a qualitative methodology, researchers must be open to change as you are dealing with people in a social context (Lapan and Quartaroli and Riemer, 2012, p.7) and we do not know what we are looking for until we have been in their setting and learn how they view their experiences (Taylor and Bogdan and DeVault, 2015, p.8).

5.3 Qualitative Methods

Understanding more about the qualitative methodology, which is the overall approach to this research, it is important to also understand that to collect the qualitative data, certain tools otherwise known as methods are used (Lapan and Quartaroli and Riemer, 2012, p.7). Qualitative methods make it easier to understand what people think and perceive due to their communicative and descriptive manner. This is because they are designed in a way that helps reveal the behaviour and perception of a specific target audience with reference to a particular topic (Question Pro, 2022). For this reason, I will choose ideographic methods

that demonstrate a naturalistic approach of data collection to suit the research activity. Referring to my learning outcomes, to be able to define what exactly the well-being act and its goals are, I need to speak with someone who has experience dealing with it. Similarly, to understand how third sector organisations in the county perceive the act, I will need to speak with them directly.

To gather the most suitable data, I will carry out interviews with third sector groups, members of staff from within the authority that have experience dealing with well-being, and an individual from outside the authority that works directly with the act. An interview is a qualitative research method used to study the experiences, views, or beliefs of an individual on a specific subject or topic. In past activities I have used questionnaires as a method, but it seemed that may have only provided me with basic knowledge of the topic, whereas using interviews would provide me with deeper understanding and meaning of the subject. More specifically for the purpose of this activity I will conduct semi-structured interviews which combine elements of both structured and unstructured interviews while allowing a more flexible approach for participants to respond (Marketing 91, 2022). For collecting the third sector groups' data, I as the interviewer and researcher will prepare set questions in the form of an interview schedule and then replicate that schedule, using the same questions for each interviewee, assuring continuity. I have considered using a structured interview but using closed-ended questions would restrict and limit the amount of detail participants may provide and potentially give more quantitative data rather than qualitative. For all interviewee's I will send out an email explaining the nature of the research and the proposed outcomes. In the e-mail I will explain that it is voluntary to participate and that no names will be shared, only a job title, if agreed upon. A summary of these details will also be stated at the beginning of the interview, and I will ensure participants know they can withdraw at any point.

Although thought of as both a quantitative and qualitative method, by using open ended questions to collect data in an inductive form, surveys can be used to explore a substantive area of research (Gill and Johnson, 2010, p.97). A survey can be used across many platforms to test theories, carry out market research and most importantly to myself, understand people's attitudes towards things (Business Research Methodology, 2022). Therefore, I have chosen to use this method to reach out to other local authorities across Wales to understand what they do in their areas to support third sector groups in delivering the well-being act and their own authority's goals. It could then also be used to compare ideas and initiatives from the respondents and use it to support notions from findings from

the interviews. As the researcher I will create a survey using Microsoft Forms, beginning by notifying all participants that their responses will remain completely anonymous and that as well as a confirmation email, clicking the link and undertaking the survey, they will consent to taking part. An advantage of using a survey is that they can be conducted rather quickly and more specifically for this project, using a mail survey will mean that I can reach out to other authorities in Wales. Using any face fronting method such as observations would most likely be more expensive, time consuming and unrealistic for this activity.

The whole aim of the project is to see how we as a local authority can enhance the support that is given to third sector groups. To do this I will need to collate the data from the interviews and survey and discuss the key themes that arise to conclude on the research question. To do this, I feel the most appropriate method to use a focus group. This is where a group of participants discuss a particular topic, getting more detailed as the discussion goes on, with the aim of planning or implementing ideas linked to the topic (American University Washington, 2022). The group will consist of staff members from within the authority that work first hand with third sector groups as well as policy making, and work directly linked to the act. Some argue that a focus group does not always showcase the opinion of all the members of the group, some may be more assertive than others therefore it is not a representative method (Ken Pro, 2012). But in this instance, I argue that participants will already be used to discussing questions and sharing ideas with each other in their day-to-day work, so the focus group will be a good method to use as they provide a range of shared knowledge and experiences from similar individuals (GOV.UK, 2020). For staff within the authority, I will describe in an email the nature of the research activity, what it entails and what will be expected of them if they were happy to participate and by sending their responses via email, I will be assuring the group is ethically approved.

5.4 Ethics and Insider Research

It has to be considered when discussing the ethics of this activity, that I may be considered as an insider researcher. This type of research is known to many as research that is undertaken within an organisation where the researcher is already a member (Fleming, 2018). In this instance, I as the researcher am employed by my organisation, the council. Many believe being an insider researcher can affect a work-based project negatively due to the fact there could be conflict of interest when the researcher finds themselves in-between participants and the line between the researchers' roles is tainted (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). Others argue that having an idea and understanding of the language and identity of those

and that are around them would possibly enhance the work carried out alongside the known topic. In terms of this research activity, I feel that understanding the current landscape has helped me in choosing my methods and participants, to best suit the proposed activity. As per my ethics form, I pledge to work professionally and avoid making any biased assumptions or decisions when it comes to reporting on the collected data.

6.0 Findings

6.1 Project Activity

Using previous research activities as a basis and agreeing with my line manager (Appendix 2) on a productive work-based project, the main aim was to find ways in which we could enhance the way we support third sector organisations in contributing to well-being across the county. Referring to the projects aims, I wanted to understand what the third sector was and taking the epistemological approach to research meant this was finding out how organisations came to be and how the sector is defined. I began firstly with some secondary research, reading through the acts' reports, through well-being plans and third sector case studies. I then went on to conduct my own primary research to try and understand more about the topic across Wales, and Carmarthenshire specifically. The first of my three research methods, I began with interviewing five of our third sector groups we work with across the county. We have in the Bureau what we call our Key Account Management groups, which are our well established and top tier organisations. I decided to use this list as a rationale behind what groups I would ask to participate. I had chosen the five groups I wished to interview and tried to get groups that covered various areas across the county, hopefully getting a general idea of the landscape of Carmarthenshire's groups. I chose to use an interview so that I could gather a better understanding of the groups' true feelings and opinions on the subject. I used semi-structured interviews, allowing a more flexible approach for the respondents to respond, yet using the same schedule for each group meant continuity in my research. I also interviewed a member of staff within policy in CCC to get alternative information to the groups', that of using the act daily but from a local authority's perspective. I used the programme 'Teams' to conduct the interviews, a programme I use daily in my job and a programme I knew had become popular and well-known with organisations due to the pandemic. Within 'Teams' you can use the transcript feature, which allows you to record the interview, and it gives you the text or transcript once you have stopped recording. This made it easier for me to record the findings and be able to relate back to the answers the respondent had given. I made sure groups were aware of this before taking part, and that they were comfortable with the feature on. Only by talking directly to them did I feel we could improve or enhance the support provided to them. Generally, the process of interviewing went well, and I gained valuable feedback from groups, but I had some difficulty when it came to my other interviews. Initially I was going to be speaking with a representative from the third sector, the WCVA but time went on and there were problems in finding a suitable date and time, in turn resulting in no response at all. I knew I still wanted someone that worked outside of the authority and would provide more of a strategic perspective than the groups themselves. I was able to get in contact with

a member of the Office of Future Generations Commissioners (OFGC) team and they agreed to an interview which was very insightful and provided key information about the act that didn't come to light through my initial primary research.

The next step was to find out what other local authorities did in terms of support for third sector activity in their areas and I aimed to do this by carrying out an online survey. There are 22 local authorities in Wales, so firstly I gathered the other 21 authorities, and contacted them briefly explaining the outline of the project and asked for an appropriate contact that would be best suited to help with the work. I then created an online survey using 'Microsoft Forms' that was accessible to all, and available through a link which I sent along with a formal email detailing the project, the ethics, and the consent. I assured all participants knew what the main research topic was and assured them that their participation was voluntary and if they did decide to participate that their identity would remain anonymous. The survey consisted of 18 questions, and I tried to use a variety of question-and-answer styles to make it as interactive and engaging as possible and provide me with the best answers. Unfortunately, I did not get a good response rate to the survey I sent out to other local authorities. I did include three research methods in this project, to try and gather as much information as I could, with the expectation that the survey might not be as informing. Trying firstly to get a relevant contact to speak with in the authority proved difficult and for most of them, I had to send my email and query to the council's customer services. In some cases, I had a response, and my enquiry was forwarded to the relevant person. In other instances, I got a response, but the survey was not taken up, and majority no response at all. This was a shame as I did want to be able to compare what we did to others, and that could have provided some inspiration and ideas on improving our processes. The one thing it did bring to light, is that we in Carmarthenshire are the only authority to have the Bureau function, which is a dedicated team that works directly with third sector groups and supports them specifically with funding for their projects. Without even speaking with other authorities, I knew that we were unique and seemed that we would evidently be giving our third sector groups more direct support by having our function. So, it may have been that their take on what support should be given would vary to us as we provide a much more robust support system already.

To conclude my research, I brought key members of staff from within the authority together to be able to discuss information that had been captured through other methods in the project, as well as their own thoughts and opinions on the topic through a focus group. This

allowed for me to delve deeper into some of the points arisen throughout the project, gather staff's first-hand experiences and come up with a list of recommendations to implement to answer the project proposal and enhance the support given to third sector organisations in delivering well-being. One of the difficulties was trying to get a date and time that suited everyone as there were staff members from different departments. Also, due to the pandemic, working arrangements have changed within the authority and we have adopted a hybrid way of working, meaning you work partly at home and in the office. So, there was very limited times, if any at all where people would be in an office at any given time. For this reason, I had to conduct it online via Teams. When referring to a focus group, one of the positives is that people interact better and you can learn a lot from people's body language, so upon reflecting I do feel I would have missed out on some of these interactions by not holding it in person. With that being said, I do feel the meeting still went well, and participants still engaged well, comparing opinions and experiences.

6.2 The Third Sector

As a Local Authority, we form part of the public sector, along with health boards, emergency services, public transport, and schools. There is also the business sector, and most influential to this research activity the third sector. Otherwise referred to as the voluntary sector, third sector organisations operate not-for-profit, rather they aim to create social impact (Reach Volunteering, 2022). These organisations are committed and driven to reinvesting any surpluses to further enhance and deliver their social aims and objectives. Mention of third sector involvement in the delivery of public services can be traced back to the 1800's and despite the development of the welfare state in the twentieth century, third sector involvement continued (Rees and Mullins, 2016, p.7). As of May 2022, there were 43,853 voluntary organisations registered on the Third Sector Support Wales database (WCVA, 2022). In Carmarthenshire, it was recorded that we had 2,709 organisations, the third highest authority out of the 22 across Wales (WCVA, 2022).

From Local Authority's perspectives, it has been said that they have noticed reduced pressures of delivering services to communities, and reliance has turned to third sector organisations in aiding them (Auditor General for Wales, 2017). The Bevan Foundation agree that third sector groups are now part of the wider welfare state and are an established part of people's day to day lives, supporting them in services they rely on (Sefydliad Bevan Foundation, 2022). In recognising the great work these groups do in delivering vital services, the WG introduced the Code of Practice for Funding the Third Sector, part of the Third Sector Scheme. Made under Section 74 of the Government of Wales Act 2006, Welsh Ministers set out this scheme proposing how they would support, promote and fund the sector to show their appreciation and value for the work and services the sector provide (Welsh Government, 2021).

An alternative approach is to view the third sector as a process not a sector of its own, rather communicative forms between public and private sectors that allow for third sector organisations to form and run the way that they do (Taylor, 2010, p.15). Either way, it has been said that service delivery from third sector organisations can be integrated into public services, part of a mixed economy (Smith and Phillips, 2011, p.11) or simply independently, and it has been said that many communities in Wales benefit from partnership services (Welsh Government, 2022). The Bureau's role within CCC sheds light on this sort of partnership. Within the Bureau, we operate from within the public sector, but help and deliver projects from third sector groups. Working closely with these groups, we have the

rewarding job of supporting people within our communities to tackle social problems such as food poverty and period dignity. Government-third sector relationships are recognised, and the Welsh Government have a statutory duty to support the sector. The Third Sector Support Wales (TSSW) partnership consists of 19 local county voluntary councils and the WCVA and the duty is highlighted in the Third Sector Scheme annual report. Designed to deliver great partnership working between the government and the third sector, it in turn will support processes and projects that will lead to better public services, and stronger and more resilient communities (Welsh Government, 2021) which align to at-least one of the well-being goals. It has been said that the seven wellbeing goals set out in the WBFGA cannot be achieved by just one sector alone. Rather, understanding how each works, and its strengths and weaknesses will in time create sustainable wellbeing (Holtom and Lloyd-Jones, 2020, p.13.)

6.3 Defining and Understanding Well-being

We speak of the well-being goals and the aim of the well-being act, but what exactly is well-being? Otherwise known as social welfare or social value, well-being simply put is how we as individuals, communities or nations are doing. Berkley Well-being Institute describe well-being as a sense of health and vitality that you get from your emotions, your thoughts, your actions and various experiences (Berkley Well-being Institute, 2022). This can be known as subjective well-being, whether as experiences from more traditional policy areas such as the economy, health and education (What Works Wellbeing, 2022) can be known as objective well-being. As humans we can feel both positive and negative emotions but when we have well-being, we feel happy, healthy and socially connected (Berkley Well-being Institute, 2022). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory focuses on what makes humans happy and acknowledges the layers of human need and how they fit together to affect overall well-being (Verywellmind, 2022). But how do we begin to measure what well-being means to different people and how do we interpret that information? Measuring well-being is a controversial matter, with some arguing that by measuring how often or for how long we experience either positive or negative emotions we can report on well-being (What Works Wellbeing, 2022). Others say that we can answer questions on our happiness or life satisfaction to gauge it (Richardson and Schokkaert, 2018) but psychologists feel this too is not reliable as our emotions fluctuate and the two do not coincide (Richardson and Schokkaert, 2018). The Measuring National Wellbeing Programme at the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS) has asked people from across the nation what matters to them and reports on societal and

personal well-being in the UK. Although there are over 40 individual indicators, upon reporting the measures, these are divided into 10 broad dimensions, those of which are the environment, personal well-being, our relationship, health, what we do, where we live, personal finance, economy, education and skills and governance (What Works Wellbeing, 2022). An alternative approach to measuring these types of indicators is using tools such as the Social Value Portal, which aims to help organisations procure, measure, manage and report social value (Social Value Portal, 2022). Using the National TOM's – Themes, Outcomes and Measures framework, which has evolved into a social value measurement standard across the UK, it assures continuity in delivering excellence in measuring and reporting social value (Social Value Portal, 2022).

6.4 Delivering Well-being

As mentioned previously, the act's principle focuses on seven key well-being goals, which if worked towards, will have a positive impact on people living in Wales now and in the future. This requires public bodies to consider all aspects of well-being in decision making, communicate effectively with businesses and communities and recognise our environment and resources (WCVA, 2020). Because the third sector is not bound to the act like public bodies, I worried when first starting this project that there was nothing directly for the sector to support them, which is why as part of the project aims, I wanted to find out what exactly was available, to be able to give our groups the best advice possible. I wondered at the beginning of this project if the third sector were more aligned to the act than any other sector and whether they were delivering it already, as in my opinion the ethos of majority of the sectors' groups were that of well-being. When speaking directly with the member of the OFGC team they agreed and said that they often see community organisations not national ones, that are on the ground that are implementing the act, whether they are explicitly doing so. Through the work they do with residents they are helping to increase well-being locally. Having said that, it should be recognised that sometimes they are doing this in partnership with public bodies to assist them in delivering well-being.

Integrated solutions are important and crucial it seems to address problems that public bodies are trying to solve. Data sets can provide some information, but direct contact and evidence of experiences provide the better insights to understand clearer (ways of working, p14). Many would agree that the third sector are the best sector to gather first hand

experiences, and the WCVA believe that their local and specialist knowledge should be seen as a great resource to allow more collaborative work (WCVA, 2023). In a detailed report created by the WCVA for the third sector, they have mentioned ways in which the sector has and can continue to contribute to delivering well-being, and each goal individually. Examples of these are prioritising local suppliers to keep money in the local economy, to make a more prosperous Wales (WCVA, 2020). Ensuring all marketing and communication resources are accessible to all to ensure a more equal Wales. It could even be helping their local Public Sector Board (PSB) in shaping local services, to make a Wales of cohesive communities. Reports like these are great support for third sector groups to understand how they can help contribute to well-being in their areas and demonstrating this specifically by using 'real life' case studies. It is believed that the third sector do well in involving the people they support in delivering well-being and capture experiences and insights positively (WCVA, 2023).

I was reassured that direct support is always on hand to third sector groups in delivering well-being and that from OFGC team member. I was given examples by the Commissioner's Office of some great written resource packs that really promote the act alongside the third sector, and again showcase it through organisations' lived experiences. These include the 'WCVA: Guide to the Act for Third Sector Organisations' and the 'Future Generations Project Framework.' They also stated that they are happy for groups to contact them directly if they have the capacity, and this was confirmed for me when speaking with our authority's policy officer who had experience of working with a 'change maker' from the commissioner's office. These are officers who are responsible for different geographical areas or responsible over delivering a specific well-being goal.

On the other hand, there are barriers that face the sector in being able to deliver wellbeing. It's difficult to directly link the goals and the sectors work given that organisations within the third or voluntary sector operate independently of the Welsh Government so do not articulate their work specifically in relation to the WBFGA (WCVA, 2020). This was made clearer by speaking with the OFGC team member who emphasised that the third sector are not in receipt of WG funding and therefore, as mentioned they are not accountable to the government and are essentially independent to legislation and policy. One of the main challenges that face the third sector in terms of delivery generally is funding. The sector as a whole depends heavily on external funding and that can sometimes mean that organisations have to revert or amend original plans and schemes as there are no means to

fulfil them. In a report by the Auditor General back in 2017, it concluded that local authorities were not always making the best use of the sector nor were they doing enough to ensure they were securing value for money (Auditor General for Wales, 2017). It also indicated that the better performing authorities would be looking to undertake reviews of their third sector funding and expenditure (Auditor General for Wales). This is interesting as I have learnt that we as an authority have and continue to do a lot of work around this, with a designated officer reviewing and researching the sector across our county, focusing on expenditure, duplication of work and areas for growth.

However, the OFGC team member made an interesting point about how bidding for and securing external funding may be detrimental to the third sector, confirming they saw this as one of the main processes that support the third sector in delivering the act. This could be since the act is embedded into so many policies that when applying for funding, groups would need to be answering questions such as *'How will you deliver on well-being goals?'* *'Which of the seven goals will you be delivering on and how?'* This integrates the work the organisation will be aiming to achieve through the funding, while from the offset aligning it to that of the act. Similarly, when groups apply for funding with us in the Bureau, we always push for sustainable projects, which promote Welsh language, equality and collaboration, and these strategies have been a focus for years. Similarly, CCC's Policy Officer explained that upon receiving local council's well-being reports, they want to see how they're maximising the contributions to the five ways of working and to the local well-being objectives, which means again groups must take the act into consideration through all that they do to assure data and experiences are provided to be able to feedback on.

To challenge this, many have raised concerns over the fact that the third sector does not tend to measure its values or impacts as well as they possibly should, and so the sectors contribution to wellbeing is not fully recognised or valued (WCVA, 2020). When speaking with our Policy Officer, they felt that more could be done to showcase the great work currently being undertaken in our communities. From my perspective, working with third sector groups and being aware of the great work they do, I would see the benefits of promoting these groups, referring to them in other departments and linking into those would benefit from them. On the contrary, it was interesting to hear the OFGC team member say that they felt that the third sector are rigorous in reporting and collecting data but that it depends on who they are reporting to and whether that information is shared with other stakeholders. Due to organisations having to bid for external funding, it might be that we as

a local authority don't see that report or get examples of the work provided as it would lie with an external funder. Therefore, creating local well-being plans and local well-being objectives are detrimental to finding out and reporting on issues that face people of communities in specific areas.

6.5 Carmarthenshire County Council's Well-being Objectives

As a body subject to the act, the Council is required to and has set its own well-being goals that maximise our contribution to national goals, set out in a plan. This Plan outlines how we will work in partnership to address some of the key issues affecting the well-being of the citizens and communities of the County. Our well-being objectives are listed and displayed on the corporate website as well as more detailed and confidential matters listed and documented in Business Plans and Departmental Plans. Further to this, in The Council's Corporate Strategy 2018-2023, which was last updated in April 2021, all its 13 well-being objectives are laid out, with an in-depth analysis of each objective, what it means, and how we aim to achieve it.

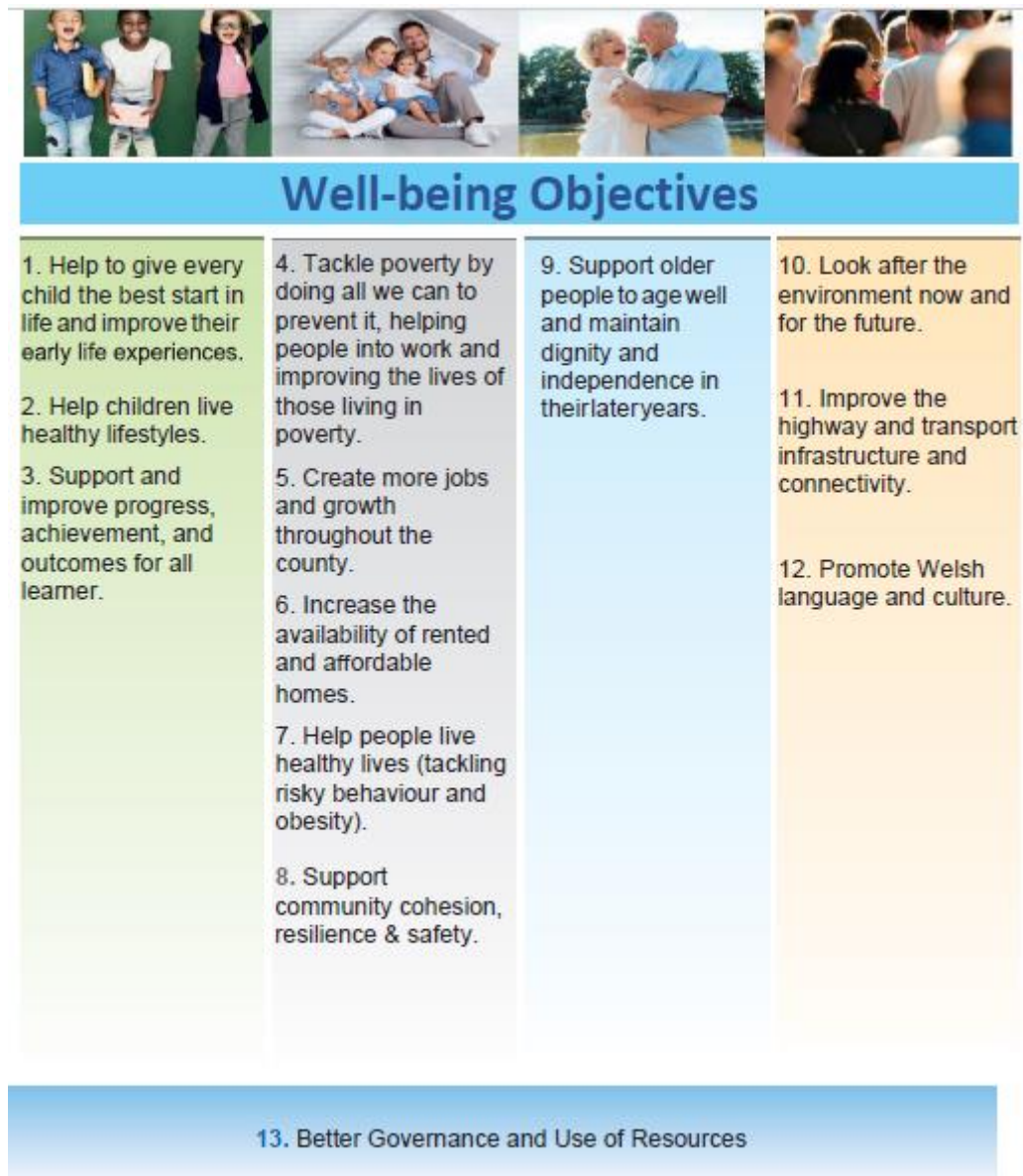


Figure 5: CCC Well-being Objectives (Carmarthenshire County Council, 2022)

The council's vision for well-being as seen in figure 6, splits its 13 objectives into four categories. 'Start Well' which includes objectives 1,2 and 3, 'Live Well' which is objectives 4,5,6,7 and 8, 'Age Well' which is objectives 9 and 'Healthy, Safe and Prosperous Environment' which includes objectives 10,11, and 12. The final objective, 13 relates to the general sense of better governance and use of resources.

The council has outlined steps and plans to deliver each of its well-being objectives. These are supported by actions and targets set out in individual Service Business Plans and the breakdown of this can be seen below in Figure 6. The plans behind each well-being objective are monitored quarterly and scrutinised and then the authority reports annually on its progress.

Lead Officer			WBO 1	WBO 2	WBO 3	WBO 4	WBO 5	WBO 6	WBO 7	WBO 8	WBO 9	WBO 10	WBO 11	WBO 12	WBO 13
Supporting Officer		✓													
CEX	Admin & Law														✓
	People Mgt				✓	✓		✓							✓
	Regeneration				✓	✓						✓			✓
	ICT & Corp Policy			✓	✓	✓				✓				✓	✓
CS	Financial Services														✓
	Revenues & Financial Compliance				✓										✓
Communities	Head of Adult Social Care			✓					✓	✓	✓				
	Regional Collaboration		✓							✓	✓				
	Integrated Services								✓	✓	✓				
	Homes & Safer Comm.				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				
	Leisure		✓						✓			✓		✓	
E&CS	Edu & Inclusion		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓					
	Curr & Wellbeing		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							✓	
	Access to Education		✓	✓	✓		✓								
	Children		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓					
ENV	Property				✓		✓	✓				✓			✓
	Planning			✓			✓	✓	✓			✓			✓
	Trans.& Highways		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Waste & Env.			✓							✓	✓			✓

Figure 6: CCC Service Business Plans (Carmarthenshire County Council, 2022)

As well as researching into the act's goals, I also as part of the project's objectives wanted to review CCC's own well-being goals. I was glad to see that the councils' goals cover a great

range of people from all ages, and this is very inclusive and important. As stated in the name, the well-being of future generations act focuses primarily on creating a better environment and future for generations to come, but creating goals suited to elderly people as well as young, assures a better life for everyone across the whole of the county. I think goal 1, 2 and 3 are very important and detrimental to adhering to the act as ensuring a better start of life for children, will hopefully give them the skills and confidence to go on to live healthy and prosperous lives later in life. In October 2022, it was stated that 35.6% of households in Carmarthenshire were living in poverty (Carmarthenshire County Council, 2022) which is why its assuring to see that poverty has been on the council's agenda since 2018 and will continue to be one of the main goals on the plan until 2023, and there is no doubt it will continue to be a goal if not enhanced further through all the authority's work. Working in the community bureau, goal 8 linked to a lot of our work with community cohesion and resilience forming the basis of a lot of our applications and monitoring processes when assessing and awarding grants to community groups. This links almost perfectly with the national goals and in my opinion may be the most influential of all the goals. I can appreciate that a few of the national goals have been adapted by CCC to be more specific and work better for our communities which is important for residents to see I think, so they know effort has been made to adhere to their needs. But I also think its powerful to include some of the more generic national goals such as looking after the environment now and in the future and promoting Welsh language and culture because it shows that we are working in unison, as a county as well as looking after our local residents, creating a better Wales all together.

The council also review its goals through a well-being assessment and use it to further enhance their understanding of their communities. Undertaking a Local Well-being Assessment is a statutory requirement under the act and is based on data, feedback and evidence. The assessment provides the evidence base for the local well-being plan, which determines what the council will do over the coming 5 years to improve the well-being of its people. The Carmarthenshire Well-being Assessment outlines what well-being looks like in the County and what Carmarthenshire's residents and communities want well-being to look like in the future by carrying out surveys with residents of the county. There was one undertaken in 2017 and another is currently being undertaken in 2022, with the aim of using that to formulate Carmarthenshire's Well-being Plan 2023-28, being published in May 2023. Part of that plan will incorporate liaising with and reporting to the local PSB. Public Sector Boards are set up under the well-being act and improve joint working across all public services in each local authority area in Wales and are a detrimental part in the delivery of local well-being plans. Statutory members of a PSB are local authority's, local health

boards, fire and rescue authority's and Natural Resources Wales. In addition to these who are bound to the act, other people are invited to attend such as Welsh Ministers, police and crime commissioners, probation services, the arts, and of course the voluntary or third sector (Welsh Government, 2023).

Carmarthenshire Association of Voluntary Services (CAVS) represent the third sector from a volunteering aspect and are trying to assist with the promotion of well-being, more specifically alongside the PSB as they are the only third sector representative on our local board. Whilst speaking with our Policy Officer, it seems that representation is an element we are currently trying to improve on. That is, how do we increase the representation of the third sector on our PSB and strengthen our voice back to the community which the third sector can do. The most important thing the officer believes, is for the PSB to know exactly what the sector is doing in terms of well-being and that will only come through strong collaboration. They also need to know about what some of the larger councils in the county are doing locally and strengthen those relationships. It may be difficult sometimes, as the OFGC team member stated, because often there is slight cultural differences between PSB's and the third sector. PSB's tend to act quite formal, and it's said that maybe more needs to be done to get to know groups that represent the third sector, making meetings more engaging and productive.

Through further discussions with our Policy Officer, I now know that 8 lead Councils in Carmarthenshire which are subject to the act represent the county, demonstrating the projects and work that goes on in their areas that lead to and increase well-being. These 8 Councils are called upon on to report because of their financial threshold of £400,000 (for a period of three years) and they also have a responsibility under the 'Local Government & Elections Act' in terms of preparing composite annual reports. They create very detailed reports to show evidence, need, and key findings and those are then used by CCC to report on a larger scale to WG and the Commissioner's Office. Some may argue that there are some geographical areas that wouldn't naturally be a larger council, especially in some of the rural areas of our county, but it was good to hear from the Policy Officer that they are looking to strengthen the support that the 8 larger councils provide to the smaller councils. They have a liaison forum to do this, which is accessible to all 74 Town and Community Councils, and it seems the smaller councils have now started to feed into the 8 larger ones which is great to hear. Upon reporting, support is given to the council's in finding out where the opportunities lie for them to maximise their contribution to not only the well-being goals

but also the five ways of working, in turn allowing them to plan for the next few years, aligning with our authority's well-being plan and assessment.

6.6 Carmarthenshire's Third Sector Organisations

Working in the Bureau, I've had to reflect on the great work groups we work with in Carmarthenshire have done, and it made me question whether they knew how much they were contributing to well-being in their areas. Therefore, as part of this project I needed to speak with groups directly to find out more about where they felt they stood in relation to the act. As previously mentioned, I interviewed 5 of our key account groups, and for the purpose of this part of the project will refer to them as Group 1, Group 2 and so on. I thought it was interesting to note that all the groups I spoke with were established well before the act had been put in place so all groups would have had to adapt to learning about and working alongside the act.

Delivering the Well-being Act

It was encouraging to hear that all the groups I spoke with had a good understanding of the act, what it means and its main objectives. I thought it was positive that Group 1 felt a sort of comfort knowing that the act was there to reference to, especially with the difficult times ahead regarding the cost-of-living crisis and the effect of this on our communities. The demands on their organisation are going to be a lot stronger in the months to come, and they felt they will need to rely more heavily on the act and following specific goals to assist with the decisions that have got to be made down the line for the sake of the people of the group and its communities. Similarly Group 2 described the act as being aimed at various strands of organising their work, and again as a handy tool to use when preparing their work and projects. It was interesting to hear Group 3 refer to the act as being introduced to make changes locally, driving the combination of services for the ultimate benefit of people, which linked with earlier points made in this research about integrated services and partnership working, and for me as part of this project it was comforting to know groups were linking it with their own local area and people rather than just seeing it as a national act.

When I asked groups how they used the act in day-to-day operations, I was glad to hear that each group had something different to say (Appendix 3) and it's encouraging to know that the act is utilised in various ways across the county. This idea is highlighted by the WCVA, stating that third sector's contribution to service delivery varies, ranging from services commissioned by the public sector, services defined by the voluntary sector and funded by

the public sector, or delivery of services jointly (Holtom and Lloyd-Jones, 2020). Group 3 made a point that although their models are based on the act, they are still their own organisations with their own plans and aims, and they felt they could make imminent decisions and put those into action and disseminate immediately. Whereas we as an authority must seek authorisation from higher management, possibly allow things to go through a legal process and so possibly don't have that immediate connection with beneficiaries as third sector groups do. Group 2 would agree, stating *"to be honest, we can act on and get things done much quicker."* In a similar notion, some say groups like these are able to build relationships in different ways, and Group 4 felt that the way they run their groups and activities allows them to see what works for those people, learn more about what they need and ultimately get them to continue to participate. An example of this, is an exercise that Group 5 recently conducted, where they went out to their communities via a survey, to find out exactly what they wanted and what they did not want from a new space the group were offering people. Generally, groups felt that their contributions to well-being varied to us as a local authority predominantly due to them being within the body of community itself and having a closer more direct relationship with individuals in the community, mainly through their volunteers. They understand exactly what's needed within their community to better their lives, and lives of others, and have a strong drive to change things locally for the better. This seemed to be a common theme across all the interviews I carried out when asking them about how the third sector delivered well-being. That of the third sector ultimately being the real voice of people in local communities. The OFGC team member would agree saying that *"they can be real experts in a very specific locality or with a specific service user group"* which is where I think groups can really influence our local well-being objectives.

Local Well-being Plans

I thought it was important to learn more about the groups alongside CCC's own goals as we can ultimately support them further in delivering these. Four out of the five groups said that they were aware that CCC had their own local well-being goals, which was good, but I didn't feel they were able to elaborate much on what they were or also where they would go to get more information on a local level. Having said that, Group 1 felt that third sector groups like themselves play an important role in assisting the development of local goals, that due to them knowing what people's needs are on the ground. To contradict, Group 4 stated that they were not aware of the local well-being plan and goals, but they did provide constructive feedback and mentioned that they would like to be involved in the conversations around how

we can improve our individual communities. Could more be done to assure our groups' experiences and opinions are what are reflected in our local well-being plan? Interestingly our Policy Officer did feel that we have room to improve as a local authority to appreciate the work that's being done by other organisations and reflect more on the partnership context and bring examples of those into our corporate work. They felt that we possibly don't have that constant conversation with our communities in terms of well-being, but we must assure that information is relayed appropriately. The OFGC team member mentioned that they had recently been working with public bodies, with a focus on understanding how they can work better with their voluntary sector partners locally, so it does seem to be a matter that needs improving on nationally as well as locally. The 'Transforming Wales: Through Social Enterprise' report emphasises this need, with its vision by 2030 to build a wider movement of socially responsible groups and create a sustainable business model to deliver solutions to challenges in Wales (Wales Co-operative Centre, 2020).

Sharing Experiences and Utilising Information

I wanted to see how much groups had in the way of resources and how we could best utilise information that was currently available. All groups stated that reporting on activities they carry out would be no problem for them, they do it day to day internally anyway and felt that it would only benefit them and the authority to share ideas, compare experiences and give feedback. The OFGC team member mentioned that highlighting best practice examples to include case studies around the third sector delivering the act have been successful with them internally and our Policy Officer would favour that, stating that they felt that case studies were one of the best forms to refer to the good work being done by third sector groups. Knowing what I do now about the issues around the sector reporting effectively, it feels right to highlight this and look at how we can enhance the way we promote the sector and their work. Social Business Wales' report is insightful, mentioning how establishing and mapping the value of the sector is an important part of the strategies towards promoting the sector (Wales Co-operative Centre, 2020). Group 5 made some great comments about the need for digital resources as now more than ever digital is at the forefront of organisation's operations. Interestingly, Group 2 felt that they have been somewhat inundated over the last few years with information and reading tools, a lot of that due to the effects of the coronavirus pandemic, and that maybe some alternatives would be to create more innovative resources such as small videos that could relay any new information. I think it also depends on the organisation and what they do as Group 4 mentioned that visual resources such as infographics or posters would be better utilised in their establishment, and

easier for their beneficiaries to understand as they work directly with young people and children. Groups also raised a good point, that as an organisation it is also their responsibility to distribute information to their staff to assure, they are up to date too, and so the more accessible and inviting the resources, the better for everyone. A good suggestion that arose from Group 1 and Group 2 specifically was encouraging more conversation and engagement between the third sector groups collectively, allowing time to reflect and demonstrate best practice. A lot of time and resources could be saved in distributing information to groups of organisations rather than individuals, and it was felt that it could be useful to speak and learn from others. Groups may vary in projects, or numbers but ultimately, it's a service to better its local community.

Responsibility and Power

Having touched upon how we work alongside the third sector, I thought it would be interesting to find out different people's opinions on who's responsibility it is to enhance their delivery of well-being. Majority of the groups felt a lot of responsibility lay on themselves to find out information about what they should be doing to enhance well-being and services in their areas. This to me was re-assuring that the organisations we have and work with are independent and proactive. Both the Policy Officer and the OFGC team member would agree with this, but furthermore said that we all have a role to play in making each other aware of our responsibilities and for third sector groups, their contribution to maximising well-being. The Future Generations Commissioners Office believe they have a large role and are acting as the experts in delivering the act. They also believe that public bodies, specifically through PSB's play a mobilizing role. CCC's Policy Officer would agree with this having recently been part of a seminar with the PSB and the local CVC, it was brought to light that further communication needs to happen between us as a local authority and the third sector, specifically making sure that there is enough of the sector represented on the PSB, when it comes to decisions that really matter and that affect them. Referring to the acts 5 ways of working, the collaboration element it seems is key for organisations from all sectors to raise awareness of the act and ways to contribute to them. Some comments were also made about power. Group 2 highlighted that in their experience, they truly believed that people saw their group, and other third sector groups as more relatable and less intimidating than possibly the local authority. The fact the local authority is such a large establishment compared to some third sector groups, Group 4 made a point that trying to keep up with everything they do is difficult for smaller groups, and sometimes overwhelming so they would very much appreciate tightening any gaps in communication. Similarly, trust is a really

important factor and with groups working on some sensitive issues in the community, our Policy Officer did believe that the third sector are stronger in consulting with people on specific issues, building a long-term relationship and feeding back to people. Whereas we as such a large public body tend to consult but not explain to people why certain decisions have been made based on that information. This was interesting as the OFGC team member also commented on how as authorities we must carry out exercises such as mapping exercises and audit, and as useful as it can be in some instances, it also has a tendency to reproduce power imbalances. They suggested the best thing in this instance would be to break down any barriers and simply to go out and speak to people or groups directly and build strong relationships this way.

6.7 Focus Group Findings

All members of the focus group conducted were CCC staff and had either links to third sector groups or well-being, that to get both perspectives. It was evident from the beginning that similar points were addressed in all my interviews and research generally and so it was easier to gather what the key issues were and what could be improved on, which was positive. Everyone agreed that generally, further focus of the third sector and a deeper understanding of what they do would be useful across the authority and with staff. A lot of focus is given as an authority to report on what we do, keep staff up to date with internal processes and on-going projects, when maybe the same could be done for the third sector, as they are embedded within all our communities. It was great to hear from this group, that work was going to be undertaken to home in on the work of the PSB and through our annual Carmarthenshire event, look at raising the profile of third sector groups and their representation on the board. This in time will hopefully give the third sector confidence in being able to speak up for what they want and feel and make the public sector organisations much more aware of what it is the third sector want and can contribute to the PSB.

Sharing information was a key theme that arose. Case studies and lived experiences are great to promote the sector, and it was said that we need to think of innovative ways to do this. Everyone agreed that it would be most useful to bring a more interactive way of working to the PSB and well-being assessment, possibly through to going out to speak with the public directly and get real life stories and experiences from them. Only then will other members of the public feel like they can relate and rely on the PSB and authority to listen to them and act on findings. Furthermore, it was suggested that cross county working partnerships could be useful to enhance regional contributions to well-being and learn more

about others' best practice and possibly utilising groups' strengths from all over. Having said this, an insightful comment was raised around data protection there and how careful we would have to be with sharing other people's information, often a big block to using this type of information.

The group discussed the possible positive impacts it may have if we as a local authority would use third sector groups' skills and projects to fill in any gaps that we might have as an authority in achieving goals and targets. More specifically to that, some great comments were made about linking the authority's budget and the third sector in our county. It could be that we save budget as an authority, utilising current provisions that third sector groups provide already, not only helping ourselves but the beneficiaries too by providing current and reliable services.

The subject of power did arise in the focus group, aligning with comments in the rest of the research, highlighting specifically how much we must be respectful and mindful of the differences in the sectors when communicating and working with others. It was raised that we can't assume we know what the sector wants and that it would be the same as us in the authority. But ultimately all points led back to communication, and the group agreeing that a constant conversation needs to be had between both sectors to be kept up to date with relevant information and continue to improve our partnership working. The purpose of the focus group was to talk through some of the key findings and was re-assured that they agreed with the key outcomes and definitely helped in shaping and finalising key recommendations to take forward.

7.0 Recommendations

- Update our third sector distribution list as a matter of urgency to assure that all relevant groups will be communicated with effectively.
- Encourage local authority staff and members to enhance their knowledge in understanding more about the third sector and how its groups operate.
- Encourage third sector groups to collaborate more on a sectoral basis, complementing work on a geographical basis, through CAVS, articulating a common message on key issues.
- Organise a face-to-face networking event between all our Key Account third sector organisations.
- Suggest that the third sector help public bodies by sharing experiences and insights of how likely trends are or what communities are saying and doing.
- On a local level, we need to be seen to be showcasing third sector groups' positive contributions to well-being more often through different channels such as social media.
- Continue to reflect more efficiently on that partnership context and bring in examples to our corporate work, demonstrating where the voluntary sector can and has made an impact.
- Include latest news stories about changes in policies and commissioned guidance resources, shared by the OFGC and WG in our monthly third sector newsletter.
- Create or source innovative resources to share with groups such as videos and infographics to communicate new information.
- Encourage more participation from the third sector to be a part of the local PSB, being involved in decision making and democratic processes.

8.0 Conclusion

I believe I answered and achieved all my proposed outcomes for this project and have managed to create some realistic and relevant recommendations to assist some of the issues addressed in the research. My initial secondary research allowed me to understand more about the act and its goals and what it means to be part of the third sector. This research was combined and created the contextual analysis behind the two main areas of the project. Considering I work with third sector groups, undertaking this project allowed me to learn more about how the sector functions as a whole and more specifically the variations of ways it can deliver its services either solely by themselves or in unison alongside the public sector. I also found out more about why the third sector is not part of the bodies bound by the act, and that predominantly due to the fact that they aren't in receipt of government funding in an ongoing statutory way. Also reading various reports on the act made me understand how unique we are here in Wales to have the act in place and acknowledge all the work that has already been done to try and achieve the goals, with projects getting acknowledged by other countries looking at similar models. Understanding the fundamentals around both elements then meant I was able to question certain aspects deeper, such as the barriers that face the sector in delivering the act. Obtaining finance was the main barrier it seemed for the sector, and managing important policy developments in regard to procurement for the sector. Although these seemed like national issues, carrying out my primary research then allowed me to follow these issues up on a local level, here in Carmarthenshire.

I found that the interviewing process went well and enjoyed speaking with various people that provided insightful information about their take and experiences in dealing with the act. I believe that I interviewed the right people, to provide me with different perspectives, that either being part of the third sector, part of the local authority or part of the OFGC. The fact that all my interviewees discussed the same key themes made it slightly easier for me to come to conclusions as to what we needed to focus on first and foremost. The key elements arisen throughout the research were partnership working, decision making and promotion. The other was communication which I believe was the most important and influential element that arose throughout the whole project. Without good, punctual communication, trust is not achieved between bodies and relationships can't progress to be positive working ones, and key decisions will not be made together. As mentioned previously, I was disappointed that I did not get responses from the survey as I wanted to compare processes and ideas with other authorities. But I feel I have gathered the necessary information by speaking with the people I did, and it made me realise that matters are unique to different areas, so the focus should be on the people and issues of our

authority and that speaking with other authorities and undertaking their processes might not have worked for us.

I notice outside of work, that when I mention the third sector to people, I have to explain to those people what it is and provide examples, so I do believe strongly that improving general awareness of the sector is important and necessary before trying to implement anything drastic. That could be internally amongst staff as highlighted during the focus group and also externally among the public in our local communities. It seems above anything we need to think more innovatively about how we engage with groups and how useful the information we disseminate is, whilst also assuring to be respectful of the differences in sectors.

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10 Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethics Form

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically. A researcher may not be covered by the University's insurance if ethical approval has not been obtained prior to commencement.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications". As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the "principal researcher".

Ethical approval is not required for routine audits, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal educational requirements, and literary or artistic criticism.

Please read the notes for guidance before completing ALL sections of the form.

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity.
Please see Checklist for details of process for different categories of application.

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Abigail Jayne Rees			
2	Tick all boxes that apply:	Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
	Undergraduate Student	☐	Taught Postgraduate Student	☐	Postgraduate Research Student
					☒

3	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	University of Wales Trinity St David
4	Campus:	Carmarthen UWTSD

5	E-mail address:	AJaRees@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
6	Contact Telephone Number:	07931 638081
	<i>For students:</i>	
7	Student Number:	1917154
8	Programme of Study:	Work-based Learning Project (Major)
9	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Lowri Harris

SECTION B: Approval for Research Activity

1	Has the research activity received approval in principle? (please check the Guidance Notes as to the appropriate approval process for different levels of research by different categories of individual)	YES	☐	NO	☒
					Date
2	If Yes, please indicate source of approval (and date where known): Approval in principle must be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval	Research Degrees Committee	☐		
		Institute Research Committee	☐		
		Other (write in)	☒	WAPPAR Representative	

SECTION C: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

	Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, location-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines. You may add rows to this table if needed.
1	UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice ☒
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy ☒
3	<i>CCC Behaviour Standards in the Workplace Guidance</i> ☒

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

If there are external collaborators then you should gain consent from the contact persons to share their personal data with the university. If there are no external collaborators then leave this section blank and continue to section E.

1	Institution	N/A				
2	Contact person name					
3	Contact person e-mail address					
4	Is your research externally funded?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
5	Are you in receipt of a KESS scholarship?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
6	Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?	Voluntary	YES	☐	NO	☐
7		Employed	YES	☐	NO	☐
8	Is the research being undertaken within an existing UWTSD Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership (APLP)?	If YES then the permission question below does not need to be answered.	YES	☐	NO	☐
9	Has permission to undertake the research has been provided by the partner organisation?	(If YES attach copy) If NO the application cannot continue	YES	☐	NO	☐

Where research activity is carried out in collaboration with an external organisation

10	Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?	YES	☐	NO	☐
	If Yes, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation (this may be a copy of an email if appropriate).				

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	Third Sector Organisations and the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015		
2	Proposed start date:	July 2022	Proposed end date:	March 2022
	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words per section) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the points below: <i>Purpose of Research Activity</i> <i>Proposed Research Question</i> <i>Aims of Research Activity</i> <i>Objectives of Research Activity</i> Demonstrate, briefly, how <u>Existing Research</u> has informed the proposed activity and explain <i>What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge</i> <i>How it addresses an area of importance.</i>			
3	Purpose of Research Activity The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (WBFGA) was brought into play around 2015 and was put in place to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, for future generations. To do this, 7 national well-being goals were put in place and all listed bodies, which included Local Authorities were required to set their own goals and objectives to improve well-being in their communities. In a recent research project with some of Carmarthenshire's Social Enterprises, it came to light that not many knew about or worked towards the goals the act has in place. Reflecting on that, this project will focus on whether or not the same support and advice is given to third sector organisations around the act as there is given to public sector organisations. As a result of this, I aim to enhance the support we give our third sector groups here in Carmarthenshire.			

	The Community Bureau has been established and worked within Carmarthenshire County Council for many years and aims to provide advice and support to third sector organisations such as social enterprises and charities by seeking out and administering grants and funding to aid them in sustaining or establishing community help projects. Even though a well-established community Bureau is in place, there seem to be issues in third sector organisations gaining full information on the WBFGA and more specifically the county's well-being goals. By carrying out this research activity, it will enhance our knowledge on what works well for third sector organisations such as social enterprises and acknowledge areas of our working relationships that need improving. (this box should expand as you type)
4	Research Question How do we as a Local Authority enhance the support given to third sector organisations in delivering the authority's well-being goals, and maximising contributions to well-being? (this box should expand as you type)
5	Aims of Research Activity The aim of this project is to find out how we as a Local Authority can enhance the support given to third sector organisations across the county when it comes to work aligned with the well-being of future generations act and more specifically in delivering Carmarthenshire County Council's well-being goals. The aims are: • to find out what support is currently available to third sector groups in delivering well-being goals • find out what the main barriers or constraints are that face these organisations • understand exactly what it means to work towards the act This aims to continue positive working relationships and maximise our contributions to well-being in Carmarthenshire. (this box should expand as you type)

6	Objectives of Research Activity • Define and understand what the WBFGA and its goals are. • Define and understand what third sector organisations are and what support is currently available to them in aid of delivering well-being goals. • Identify and review Carmarthenshire County Council's own well-being goals. • Identify and review some of the challenges and barriers that face these organisations. • Research and analyse primary and secondary data, focusing on different perspectives of the key topic and concerns. • Develop ideas and initiatives as to how we can continue to support third sector groups in the county. • Collaborate with the Authority in working towards the WBFGA as well its own local goals and maximise contribution to well-being in Carmarthenshire. (this box should expand as you type)
	Proposed methods (maximum 600 words) Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed. You do not need to justify the methods here, but should instead describe how you intend to collect the data necessary for you to complete your project.
7	Methodology Often referred to as the theory of knowledge, epistemology is the branch of philosophy concerned with knowledge, specifically human knowledge. It aims to get as close as possible to participants being studied. Interpretivism, a branch of epistemology focuses on gaining knowledge and insight into individuals and why they act the way that they do. Unlike a positivist's approach to research, I will start by collating the data and information I require and then try to understand and determine a concept about the data. I as the researcher believed in the subjective position in ontology which is considered independently of experiences. This research activity will consist of collecting qualitative data based on meanings and understandings on social and experiential levels – 'lived experience.' In this case it will be the experience of chosen groups or individuals that represent third sector organisation's in the county, staff from within the authority that work closely with these groups and individuals that work specifically within the boundaries of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and its goals. Methods Originating in social and behavioural science, qualitative methods make it easier to understand what people think and perceive. This is due to their communicative and descriptive manner.

	I have discussed how it will be qualitative data that I will collate and will choose ideographic methods that demonstrate a naturalistic approach of data collection to suit the research activity. The first method I will use will be interviews. Unlike questionnaires, interviews require social interaction, which aligns with my chosen methodology. More specifically I will be carrying out structured interviews, which allow for me to ask the same groups the same things and gather an overall picture of the landscape. Secondly, I will look at carrying out a small survey. This will be used to compare ideas and initiatives from the respondents and use it to support notions from findings from the interviews. And lastly, I will also carry out a focus group and analyse key themes arisen by individuals in their interviews as well as response from the survey. It will be used to gather thoughts and opinions of those taking part in how to address some of the main things that had arisen in the interviews, and strategically look at what are the main concerns, if any, how to address them and how to work towards the aims and objectives of the research activity. (this box should expand as you type)
	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
8	The research will take place in Wales, specifically in Carmarthenshire. Due to the variation of proposed participants and the on-going rising cases of COVID-19, research will be conducted online not in person. (this box should expand as you type)
	Research activity outside of the UK If research activity will take place overseas, you are responsible for ensuring that local ethical considerations are complied with and that the relevant permissions are sought. Specify any local guidelines (e.g. from local professional associations/learned societies/universities) that exist and whether these involve any ethical stipulations beyond those usual in the UK (provide details of any licenses or permissions required). Also specify whether there are any specific ethical issues raised by the local context in which the research activity is taking place, for example, particular cultural

	and/or legal sensitivities or vulnerabilities of participants. If you live in the country where you will do the research then please state this.
9	<i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

10	Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents <u>NOT</u> publicly available?	NO	☐
		YES	☒
11	If Yes, please provide details here of how you will gain access to specific documentation that is not in the public domain and that this is in accordance with the current data protection law of the country in question and that of England and Wales. There could be use of documents from the authority such as policies and frameworks or reports that are not in the public domain. As an employee, I can gain access to these and will use screen shots (if necessary), blanking out any specific personal information/ names/ department heads of services and photos, to ensure it is in accordance with the current data protection law. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

	Does your research relate to one or more of the seven aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015?	YES	NO
12	A prosperous Wales	☒	☐
13	A resilient Wales	☒	☐
14	A healthier Wales	☒	☐
15	A more equal Wales	☒	☐
16	A Wales of cohesive communities	☒	☐
17	A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	☒	☐
18	A globally responsible Wales	☒	☐
19	If YES to any of the above, please give details:		
	The aims and objectives of this activity consists of research directly linked to the aims of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, as it is looking at how third sector organisations in our local authority work towards the goals. Therefore, each of the seven aims are very relevant.		

	All seven goals aim to improve the social, economic, environmental and well-being of Wales. One of my objectives is to define and understand what the act and its goals are, so I will be looking at each of the 7 goals as listed above to understand what exactly they are and how they are meant to be achieved. In terms of the participants and their connection to the act, that's what the activity is about, finding out what support is currently available to third sector organisations in aid of delivering the WBFGA and these 7 goals. When defining what a third sector group is, it seems that their objectives are to solve social, environmental and economic issues within communities, striking a balance between social objectives and financial goals. That links with the general ethos of the act and the relevance to each of the individual goals is therefore very prominent. Third sector organisations would provide many individuals with the opportunity to develop a range of skills and help communities become well-educated in an economy which generates employment opportunities, as well as volunteering opportunities and training. From experience, our authority have supported many groups and projects that help to maintain a biodiverse natural environment, through growing projects, recycling goods and sustainability studies. Projects these groups carry out could refer to poverty, disadvantaged individuals, deprivation, and the work done enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances, usually through activities such as setting up community hubs, getting volunteers to carry out key services, enhancing existing facilities, to name a few things. We should all be thinking in a globally responsible way and I think the research activity and work being studied ties all of the goals together. Understanding the goals and the act itself shows responsibility, then learning and working towards them shows determination and the want to adhere to the act. (this box should expand as you type)
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SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
1	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☒	☐
2	Use of interviews?	☒	☐
3	Use of focus groups?	☒	☐
4	Use of participant diaries?	☐	☒
5	Use of video or audio recording?	☐	☒
6	Use of computer-generated log files?	☐	☒
7	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☐	☒
8	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
9	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒

10	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒
11	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☒
12	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☒
13	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☒
14	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☒
15	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☒
16	Procedures that may have a negative impact on the environment?	☐	☒
17	Other primary data collection methods. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) below.	☐	☒
	Details of any other primary data collection method: (this box should expand as you type)		

If NO to every question, then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and **may** be exempt from **some** of the following sections (please refer to Guidance Notes).

If YES to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

SECTION G: Intended Participants

If there are no participants then do not complete this section, but go directly to section H.

	Who are the intended participants:	YES	NO
1	Students or staff at the University?	☐	☒
2	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☒	☐
3	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
4	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	☒
5	Prisoners?	☐	☒
6	Young offenders?	☐	☒

7	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
8	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒
9	Others. Please indicate the participants below, and specifically any group who may be unable to give consent.	☐	☒
	Details of any other participant groups: (this box should expand as you type)		

	Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
10	How many participants are expected?	14-35 (depending on number of responses) (this box should expand as you type)
11	Who will the participants be?	X 5 Third sector groups' leaders (interviews) X1 external figure linked with the third sector (interviews) X1 internal figure that works with the act (interviews) X6 Bureau staff members (focus group) X1-22 other Local Authorities (survey) (this box should expand as you type)
12	How will you identify the participants?	Inside the Bureau we have our Key Account Management Groups which are our main social enterprises and businesses. I will identify 5 of these, 5 of which I have worked with and know to ask them to take part in my interview process. Where some may decline, I will have a reserve list of participants to ask. I will aim to reach out to somebody that works externally, within the context of the third sector to gather inside knowledge from a respective organisations perspective. I will research possible candidates first. There are officers outside the Bureau but within Carmarthenshire County Council that work on the authority's well-being goals as well as deal with queries in relation to the national WBFGA so I will speak with them direct through work. I currently work in the Bureau so will identify my 6 other colleagues that work within the Bureau who will form my Focus Group. Collating a list of all other local authorities within Wales, I will reach out to all finding the most appropriate contact with the aim of getting a response. (this box should expand as you type)

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
13	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☒	☐	☐
14	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
15	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☒	☐	☐
16	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☐	☐	☒
17	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☒	☐	☐
18	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
19	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☐	☐	☒
20	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☒	☐	☐
21	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☒	☐	☐
22	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
	(this box should expand as you type)			

	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
24	Will participants be paid?	☐	☒	☐
25	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☐	☒	☐
26	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☒	☐
27	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☒	☐
28	If YES to any question, please provide full details			
	(this box should expand as you type)			

SECTION H: Anticipated Risks

	Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them.
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	If you have completed a full risk assessment (for example as required by a laboratory, or external research collaborator) you may append that to this form.		
1	Full risk assessment completed and appended?	Yes	☐
		No	☒
2	Risks to participants For example: sector-specific health & safety, emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information		
	Risk to participants: Identification of person's name because of answers. Disclosing information about colleagues. Disclosing information about a past experience, or information not in the public domain. Also, there could be disclosure of information regarding finances in regards to groups funds, grant amounts that are available etc.	How you will mitigate the risk to participants: As the researcher I will redact any names and simply put a generic title/job role as a brief description. I will ask participants to try and avoid disclosing other people names or information about individuals or groups that have not been a part of the research and have not given consent. I will then proofread the essay to ensure all names are not mentioned to give any identification. If any issues arise, I will seek advice from the GDPR specialist within the LA and let participants know that the interview can stop at any time and offer them direction to the organisations well-being service if needed.	
3	If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities		
	No such issues are anticipated, and any arising will be dealt with using company policies and codes of practice. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
4	Risks to the investigator For example: personal health & safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest		
	Risk to the investigator:	How you will mitigate the risk to the investigator:	

	There could be a slight conflict of interest as I will be collecting opinions and feelings from groups that have worked with my current colleagues and there could be conflict depending on the responses. Some may consider me being an 'insider researcher' a problem, again conflict of interest could be an issue or biased assumptions made or recorded. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	I will work professionally and avoid making biased decisions and assumptions, as well as assuring to explain fully what the activity is aiming to do, that it is part of my own personal study and that it will not be used against anyone. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
5	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection	
	Risk to the University: Data protection issues within the research activity	How you will mitigate the risk to the University: I will make sure to complete the ethics form and get it approved, assuring the research is of the upmost standard and adheres to all of the institution's protocols.
6	Environmental risks For example: accidental spillage of pollutants, damage to local ecosystems	
	Risk to the environment: There are no anticipated risks direct to the environment by carrying out this research activity. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>	How you will mitigate the risk to environment: <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

	Disclosure and Barring Service			
	If the research activity involves children or vulnerable adults, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate must be obtained before any contact with such participants.	YES	NO	N/A

7	Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?	☐	☐	☒
8	If YES, please give the certificate number. If the certificate number is not available please write "Pending"; in this case any ethical approval will be subject to providing the appropriate certificate number.			

SECTION I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

1	Feedback What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when?
	All participants for all methods will get a full explanation of what the activity is and aims to do and what is expected from them if they participate in the research. From the type of research that's being proposed it may be that solutions and ideas are proposed on how we continue the support given to groups, so they will need to be fed back to head of staff to take forward and possibly implement. This will be done in a professional and correct manner, assuring that no names are given out, rather it will be the outcomes themselves fed back, and if necessary, a very general referral e.g 'a staff member of the Local Authority' or 'an organiser of a community/social group.' I will make sure to give thanks to all participants whether that be at the end of the interview, as part of the form survey and at the end of the focus group. I will not give feedback about other people's opinions and views, but I will when drawing the group to a close, reiterate the purpose of the research and how they will have contributed. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
2	Informed consent Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation.
	For bureau staff within the LA I will send out an e-mail describing the nature of the research activity, what it entails and what would be expected of them if they were happy to participate. I would ask that the members of staff I reach out to would reply via e-mail declaring that they are happy to be a part of the focus group. For organisations and their representatives, I would also send out an email explaining the nature of the research and the proposed outcomes. In the e-mail I will explain that it is voluntary to

	participate and that no names will be shared. I will also give a brief summary of these details at the beginning of the interview so everyone is clear. For the survey and the use of Microsoft Forms, I would need an email to say they are accepting the invitation and then by clicking the link and completing the form itself, they would be agreeing to participating. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>
3	Confidentiality / Anonymity Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case.
	Only myself as the researcher will have access to all names of participants. For the interviews, I will be conducting them all separately, so groups will not know of the other people taking part. When it comes to writing my findings I will be referring to interviewee's as 'Organisation 1, organisation 2 etc so readers are aware what stakeholder we are referring to without disclosing their actual name. For the survey, I will be using Microsoft Forms, and participants firstly will not see others who have taken part and secondly their names will not appear on the form, again they will just be numbered. But as the researcher I will know that the survey is sent to Local authorities so again when writing my findings this is how I will refer to them, not their actual name. With the focus group, individuals' names will not be used, rather it will be their position which will be the same for all, which is Bureau officer. It is important that I can differentiate in the research which group I am referring to as I have such a variety of people that are all at different angles of the act, and by using job titles they will be better identified. If the participant decides they do not want their job title recorded, then we will agree on a generic reference. I will use the BCC option for emails, so no named or identifiable groups are together. Microsoft Forms has an anonymous setting and when proofreading my research, I will assure no names are mentioned. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>

SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

	Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 “GDPR” and the Data Protection Act 2018 “DPA”)?	YES	NO
1	“Personal data” means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (‘data subject’). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person. Any video or audio recordings of participants is considered to be personal data.	YES ☐	☐
	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
2	Because of the variety of participants and research methods, I will be asking consent to use a generic job title so it is easier to depict who I am referring to when analysing the data. Although names will not be provided, they may be identified indirectly. Location data may also arise, when groups are referring to work, they’ve done across the county. Participants for the survey vary from outside Carmarthenshire so it may be that location data is used here too. (this box should expand as you type)		
	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
3	“Special category data” means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects’ – (a) racial or ethnic origin, (b) political opinions, (c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) physical or mental health or condition, (f) sexual life, (g) genetics, (h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),	☐	NO ☐
	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected:		
4	(this box should expand as you type)		

	Will data from the research activity (collected data, drafts of the thesis, or materials for publication) be stored in any of the following ways?	YES	NO
5	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	☐	☒
6	University computers?	☐	☒
7	Private company computers?	☒	☐
8	Home or other personal computers?	☐	☒

9	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	☐	☒
10	"Cloud" storage or websites?	☒	☐
11	Other – specify:	☐	☐
12	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of backup procedures, password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation:		
	My private company computer is password locked, meaning only myself can log on to the computer in the first instance. As well as my log in, I have my own email and password which act as a log in to 'sharepoint' which is a type of 'cloud' storage online website, so only I have access to this. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		

Data Protection			
	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
13	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☒	☐
14	Sharing of data with others at the University outside of the immediate research team?	☐	☒
15	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☒
16	Export of data outside the UK or importing of data from outside the UK?	☐	☒
17	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☐	☒
18	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☒	☐
19	Use of data management system?	☒	☐
20	Data archiving?	☒	☐
21	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018) (and any international equivalents, where appropriate):		
	I as the researcher will be using the Local Authority's database which is used for normal storage purposes, they are Council File Plan and SharePoint cloud storage. These are restricted and are only accessible to the appropriate people. I will be asking participants for consent to undertake the research, so they are aware of what they are participating in, although I am keeping names anonymous, I will be using job roles and will make sure they are aware of this and consent to it. I will be using Microsoft Forms for the survey but when groups or individuals complete it, they cannot see others' names or contributions. Similarly, any e-mails that potentially get sent out together, I will assure that email addresses are blocked from others seeing by using the 'BCC' option on Outlook. There will be data collected that may allow identification of individuals, but I will be asking consent, so individuals are fully aware, and the data is being used for specified activities and used for the		

	purpose of this work I am carrying out. It will only be myself that knows and sees this data as when it comes to analysis, names will be blurred or crossed out. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
22	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		
	Myself as the principal researcher as well as the university/module supervisor. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
23	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:		
	Myself as the principal researcher. <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
24	Give details of data storage arrangements, including security measures in place to protect the data, where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form. Will data be archived – if so how and if not why not.		
	Data generated by this research will be stored on company computers which are password-protected. The data will not be completely anonymous as I will be sharing job roles, but this is only after I ask for consent from participants, so nothing will be shown without their permission. If they decide against a job title being shown, I will have to revert to using a very generic reference that gives no direct link to the participant. Although I will make sure they know that it will only be used for the needs of this activity, it will not be published elsewhere. Although, due to the nature of the research, I will be curating recommendations based on the response, and these will be able to be passed on the Bureau officers to implement. It might be that these recommendations would need to be seen and approved by higher officers in the authority to begin, but again it will just be the recommendations, no identifiable data will be incorporated in these. <i>(is box should expand as you type)</i>		
25	Please indicate if your data will be stored in the UWTSD Research Data Repository (see https://researchdata.uwtsd.ac.uk/). If so please explain. <i>(Most relevant to academic staff)</i>		
	N/A <i>(this box should expand as you type)</i>		
26	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	YES	☒
27	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	YES	☒

SECTION K: Declaration

	The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants. In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/
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1	Signature of applicant:	A.J.Rees	Date: 10.07.22
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For STUDENT Submissions:

2	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Lowri Harris	Date: 12.07.22
3	Signature:	<i>Lowri Harris and Sarah Loxdale</i>	

For STAFF Submissions:

4	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:		Date:
5	Signature:		

Checklist: Please complete the checklist below to ensure that you have completed the form according to the guidelines and attached any required documentation:

☒	I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.
☒	I have completed ALL RELEVANT sections of the form in full.
☒	I confirm that the research activity has received approval in principle
☐	I have attached a copy of final/interim approval from external organisation (where appropriate)
☐	I have attached a full risk assessment (where appropriate) <i>ONLY TICK IF YOU HAVE ATTACHED A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT</i>
☒	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice.
☒	I understand that before commencing data collection all documents aimed at respondents (including information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires, interview schedules etc.) must be confirmed by the DoS/Supervisor, module tutor or Academic Director.

RESEARCH STUDENTS AND STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk , with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name.

You will be informed of the outcome of your claim by email; therefore it is important that you check your University and personal email accounts regularly.

STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.

This form is available electronically from the Academic Office web pages:
<https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>

Appendix 2: Approval from Line Manager

Hello Abi,

Following our discussions regarding your WBL project idea, I would like to confirm that I really like the concept, pleased that your ethics form has been approved by your university and I can now confirm that I am happy for you to proceed with the project as part of your Master's Degree.

Good luck!

Regards,
Jon

Jonathan Hancock
Rheolwr Bwro | Bureau Manager
Tîm Datblygu Economaidd | Economic Development Team

01269 590216

[sirgar.llyw.cymru | carmarthenshire.gov.wales](mailto:sirgar.llyw.cymru@carmarthenshire.gov.wales)
Mae croeso i chi gysylltu â ni yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg
You are welcome to contact us in Welsh or English

Appendix 3: Third Sector Groups Delivering the Act

"It's mainly through when we are applying for funding etcetera that we really use the act and knowing we need to make sure that our plans for growth and future business align with that of the act".

"That's what we're looking at mostly from the act, is improving the lifestyle of everybody".

"Whether we apply for pots of funding, whether we create business plans, or whether we deliver training, it is all underpinned by the resilience model".

"Everything is underpinned by well-being, the positive promotion of wellness in our families and young people".

"So many of our policies and goals align with the act and knowing that the act is there for reference is a huge benefit".

“We fulfil some of the goals of the act by promoting a healthy lifestyle, encourage community-based activities and promote the use of the Welsh language”

<i>Communication</i>	<i>Collaboration</i>	<i>Engagement</i>
<i>Trust</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Power</i>
<i>Support</i>	<i>Interaction</i>	<i>Relationships</i>
<i>Relatable</i>	<i>Development</i>	<i>Resilience</i>
<i>Participation</i>	<i>Communities</i>	<i>Change</i>