

Describe the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and consider how it might aspire to improve the social and cultural well-being of Wales

In this assignment a thorough examination of the key features of the Wales Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 will be given. This will include how the Act impacts the improvement of social and cultural well-being of individuals throughout Wales. A consideration will be undertaken as to how local Counties will respond to the Act. Also, the Counties objectives and goals shall be noted on regards to the Act. Authoritative figures organisations, adjacent to the act shall be mentioned. Then finally, the aspirations of wales as outlined by the Welsh Governments Future Generations Bill.

The Wales Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 (WWFGA) was implemented with a purpose of creating a better Wales for individuals to live in, now and in the foreseeable future. A Future Generations Commissioner for Wales was appointed to ensure public bodies aim to achieve numerous wellbeing goals. The reasoning for the law was to ensure that public bodies in Wales must consider the current population and those in the future when making key decisions. However, Wales is facing numerous challenges such as, individuals with inferior health and lack of employment, climate change and poverty. To enable these detriments to be rectified the population must collaborate to make a sufficient impact. Importantly, public bodies such as the NHS, county councils, emergency services, educational settings, the refuse collection and GP surgeries must join forces to also create a better future. Public bodies and enterprises are encouraged to abide by a sustainability related development.

It is to be included within the actions of public bodies, the depositing and broadcasting of wellbeing objectives to exploit its involvement. Also to attain all of the desired wellbeing goals, and the insurance of productively reaching those objectives (Davies, 2016). The act has seven goals to aspire towards for all public bodies involved (Gov.wales, 2016). Examples of these are:-

- A Globally responsible Wales,
- A prosperous Wales,
- A resilient Wales,
- A healthier Wales,
- A more equal Wales,
- A Wales of cohesive communities,
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

The goals of the WWFGA aim to ensure an increase of sustainable occupations within Wales, while also eliminating poverty. In preparation for natural disasters, the correct provisions and mindfulness regarding the environment and individuals globally. A large aspiration is to ensure healthcare is readily available and overall health is at a satisfactory level. Equality is an important factor irrespective of an individual's background, also the harmony of communities inhabiting favourably with one and other. Also, cultural opportunities and the flourishing of the welsh language is a strongly desired attribute (Gov.wales, 2016). The need for this act arose as the realisation of a disadvantaged welsh future became strongly apparent. If Wales does not become more thoughtful and sustainable now future generations may face the consequences.

“To tackle these, we need to work together. To give our children and grandchildren a good quality of life we need to think about how the decisions we make now will impact them” (Cynnalcyrmru.com, 2016).

Respecting these goals, a Future Generations Commissioner (FGCW, 2018) is elected to ensure public bodies are maintaining the wellbeing goals (Gov.wales, 2016). However, they can deliver counsel towards public services and bodies to inspire them to reach goals successfully. The Commissioners uphold the welfares of Wales future cohorts and may research into sustainable development within Wales. Reviews from public bodies on their decisions that affect the future and therefore presenting commendations. From this an annual report is written to demonstrate as to whether Wales is accomplishing their goals or not. An Advisory Panel made up of the Chief Medical Officer for Wales, additional Welsh Commissioners, TUC, Welsh business and a delegate of Natural Resources Wales, stand alongside to support the Future Generations Commissioner (Gov.wales, 2015).

A key feature of the WWFGA is the focus upon Sustainable Development, in which focuses on refining the way individuals attain social, environmental, cultural and economic well-being. Organisations are guided to successfully perform their duty under the act due to the Sustainable Development Principle being formed. Public Bodies must ensure that they take five important things into account, to evade repetition of previous mistakes and to combat the long-term challenges that affect Wales today. These five principles include the long-term, prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement (Gov.wales, 2015).

However, short-term needs must most importantly also be equalised to safeguard Wales long-term needs. Prevention is better than cure, to avert future problems public bodies need to meet their goals, even if to prevent problems from getting severer. Considerations on how the public bodies objectives may influence the seven wellbeing goals, their own objectives or those of other organisations. Also, for the collaboration of other individuals that shall aid public bodies to sustain the wellbeing objectives. Then, the involvement of individuals who

have compassion for the wellbeing goals, also safeguarding the diversity of which public bodies perform (Your.caerphilly.gov.uk, 2018).

Transparency of the act is also imperative. A wellbeing statement is essential and public bodies must publish this. The bodies also need to ensure that individuals with compassion for achieving the goals are involved and that they replicate diversity in their region. An annual report is an obligation to publish, therefore presenting the advancements that have been fashioned on regards to undergoing their objectives. Public bodies must also publish and respond to the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales. However, if the body ceases to follow a commissioner's recommendation, it needs to be explained as to why this is and what substitute arrangements will be taken. Then an Auditor General for Wales (Audit.wales, 2005) shall possibly perform examinations of the specified public bodies under the act, therefore working alongside the Wales Future Generations Commissioner (Gov.wales, 2015).

Furthermore, Welsh Ministers implement National Indicators and Milestones to provide information, as to whether progression towards wellbeing goals are confirmed (beta.gov.wales, 2018). An indicator is a characteristic or value that is calculated either qualitatively or quantitatively counter to a specific outcome. This indicator could be assessed over a length of time in which Welsh Ministers consider adequate. The indicator may perhaps be calculated on regards to any area of Wales or as an entirety. Milestones are also essential as they portray the expectations of which the indicators must show throughout specific stages in the future (Wcva.org.uk, 2018). Ministers are enabled by the act to modify and evaluate the milestones and national indicators, to make certain they are applicable and recent.

Ministers should also publish a Future Trends Report to demonstrate the challenges individuals in Wales will be fronting. Also, to give a distinct image of the direction Wales is bearing. This report is obliged to be published within a year of an Assembly election (Assembly.wales, 2016). The United Nations goals on sustainability must also be considered while Ministers prepare the report.

The act has launched Public Service Boards (PSBs) which represent every resident authority zone within Wales. PSB members must comprise of the Local Health Board, Local Authority, Natural Resources body for Wales and the Welsh Fire and Rescue Authority. Additionally, to these members every PSB must invite certain individuals to contribute to the Board. If these individuals have accepted their invitation they become known as invited participants. These participants consist of Certain Probation Services, Police and Crime Commissioners, Welsh Ministers, Chief Constable for area and a representative of an appropriate voluntary organisation (Gov.wales, 2015).

PSBs may also invite individuals who execute communal functions. Every PSB focuses on the improvement of the social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing of its

capacity. They do this by assessing the status of the above stated and appointing objectives that are intended to accelerate the PSBs influence on the wellbeing goals. This must be performed in harmony with the sustainable development principle. Also, a Local Wellbeing Plan must be published to show its objectives and the stages that will be taken to obtain them. This must include, how the PSBs objectives shall impact their resident area and aid the achievement of the well-being goals. An annual review shall then be carried out to present the progress that every PSB has made (WLGA, 2015).

The WFGA has inspired the Public Bodies to become more determined, resourceful and audacious. The reviewed progress of the act shows that public bodies are working inversely in corresponding areas, but still need to present that they are incorporating the act further systemically. Wales aims to create long-term resolutions to key withstanding issues for example poor air quality and low-quality jobs. Ms Howe states in a BBC interview: -

“Decisions must not just focus on creating new jobs, but also to take into account the effect on communities, health, transport links and the environment” (BBC News, 2018).

Within the practice of the act so far, PSBs have been established for each local authority within Wales. Regarding commissioners, they shall continue to monitor the way in which public bodies are creating changes and how they are following the act. Although, commissioners do not have the authority to make things happen or even to stop things from occurring. They can however, carry out reviews and ensure recommendations are put forward. The law appears to be empowering the public. It is also down to the services themselves to adhere to the act and take charge of its responsibilities (BBC News, 2018). The act itself has created a massive change in Wales attitude towards the present moment, but also for the future generations that shall inhabit it.

Looking at inspiration and impact the act may have in Wales, the Wellbeing plan for Pembrokeshire should be acknowledged. Pembrokeshire’s PSB has issued a plan which focuses on improving wellbeing of communities and individuals throughout the county. The wellbeing plan inspires to show how private and public associates shall work with one another to progress the cultural, social, economic and environmental wellbeing in Pembrokeshire. The County’s PSB, acknowledged four important areas to work on to ensure that Pembrokeshire becomes a healthier and improved area for everybody. This includes, being more resourceful as communities, protecting the environment, combatting rurality, living and working within Pembrokeshire (Pembrokeshire.gov.uk, 2018). This alone shall create a massive impact for the County and its inhabitants. The statutory requirement of the act is to log the findings using a wellbeing assessment which shall then be utilised by the PSB is to plan the next point of action (Pembrokeshire.gov.uk, 2017). Public Service Board member and Chief Executive of Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Tegryn Jones states: -

“Our collective influence can add value above and beyond what we do as individuals. What we do today has an impact tomorrow and we need to deliver for both current and future generations” (Pembrokeshire.gov.uk, 2018).

Pembrokeshire is not the only County that is thinking of the future generations, Carmarthenshire is also implementing strategies to safeguard Wales future. Carmarthenshire differs from Pembrokeshire as it is mainly rural and is heavily reliant on ecosystem services, in which keeps the county sustainable. The services are out of reach for some individuals and connectivity is lacking, causing implications on wellbeing. On regards to climate change, actions are necessary to harvest the positives rather than reinforcing the negative effects. However, poverty remains an area for concern as figures show that 35% of households are living in paucity. This results in impaired quality of life and can have a negative effect on life expectancy. The act is aspiring to improve such issues as lost opportunities for example, traditions, celebrating the language and heritage of the area. However, not every individual is able to even attend these important cultural activities, causing more social inequalities. Unfortunately, individuals with disabilities are less likely to be employed, as opposed to able bodied individuals. Carmarthenshire's natural environment holds the key to positive psychological and physical health. Which enables its residents to recognise the importance of the natural environment's present times, future and even on a global scale. With the communities banding together, the County aspires to build a resilient and empowered future for its residents (Thecarmarthenshirewewant.wales, 2018).

The Welsh Government's vision is focused on ensuring that:-

“In 2050, Wales will be the best place to live, learn, work and do business. This means finding distinctively Welsh solutions, drawing on the strength of our local communities and building on our Welsh values” (Gov.wales, 2014).

The long-term goal is that welsh residents are naturally more bilingual, happier and healthier. It is aspired that the economy will prosper, and a more resilient environment shall be created. In 2014, Wales encountered challenges that were complicated and needed to be addressed. A priority would have been to focus on the decreasing biodiversity and implement interventions, to achieve this. This led to the formulation of the Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. It became a global challenge and Wales worked alongside the United Nations, to set international Sustainable Development goals” (Gov.wales, 2014).

To conclude this assignment, all features of the Wales Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 have been stated. The impacts the act has had is generally all-round positive. Including the focus of creating more employment opportunities. The act has become known on a global scale, ensuring everyone works together to create a better future. The act has indeed created improvements for the social and cultural well-being of Wales. It seems to be hoped that life

expectancy shall increase, and wellbeing as a whole shall improve. The success of the Future Generations Act will be arbitrated on today's actions, in which presently is too soon to tell.

(Wordcount 2256)

Reference List:

- Assembly.wales. (2016). Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill. [online] Available at: <http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/pri-ld9831%20-%20well-being%20of%20future%20generations%20%28wales%29%20bill/pri-ld9831-e.pdf> [Accessed 8 Dec. 2018].
- Audit.wales. (2005). | Wales Audit Office. [online] Available at: <http://www.audit.wales/about-us/auditor-general-wales> [Accessed 8 Dec. 2018].
- BBC News. (2018). 'Be more adventurous to change lives'. [online] Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-44073725> [Accessed 10 Dec. 2018].
- beta.gov.wales. (2018). Cabinet members and ministers | beta.gov.wales. [online] Available at: <https://beta.gov.wales/cabinet-members-and-ministers> [Accessed 8 Dec. 2018].
- CynnalCymru.com. (2016). Well-being of Future Generations Act | Cynnal Cymru. [online] Available at: <http://www.cynnalcymru.com/well-being-act/> [Accessed 8 Dec. 2018].
- Davies, H. (2016). The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: Duties or aspirations?. *Environmental Law Review*, [online] 18(1), pp.44-46. Available at: <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/doi/pdf/10.1177/1461452916631889> [Accessed 7 Dec. 2018].
- Gov.wales. (2014). The Wales We Want By 2050. [online] Available at: <https://gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/140218-wales-we-want-en.pdf> [Accessed 10 Dec. 2018].
- Gov.wales. (2015). Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 The Essentials. [online] Available at: <https://gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-en.pdf> [Accessed 7 Dec. 2018].
- Gov.wales. (2016). A Guide to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. [online] Available at: <https://gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/160401-wfg-easy-read-en.pdf> [Accessed 3 Dec. 2018].
- Gov.wales. (2016). A guide for young people - Well-being of Future Generations Act. [online] Available at: <https://gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/160401-wfg-accessible-guide-for-young-people-en.pdf> [Accessed 7 Dec. 2018].
- Pembrokeshire.gov.uk. (2017). Well-being Assessment. [online] Available at: <https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/public-services-board/well-being-assessment> [Accessed 10 Dec. 2018].
- Pembrokeshire.gov.uk. (2018). Well-being plan for Pembrokeshire. [online] Available at: <https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/newsroom/well-being-plan-for-pembrokeshire> [Accessed 10 Dec. 2018].
- TheCarmarthenshireWewant.wales. (2018). Carmarthenshire Well-Being Assessment 2017. [online] Available at: <http://www.thecarmarthenshirewewant.wales/media/8178/psb-wellbeing-assessment.pdf> [Accessed 10 Dec. 2018].

The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales. (2018). Future Generations Commissioner for Wales – The Future Generations Commissioner for Wales. [online] Available at: <https://futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-commissioner/> [Accessed 8 Dec. 2018].

Wcva.org.uk. (2018). The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act - Milestones. [online] Available at: [https://www.wcva.org.uk/what-we-do/the-future-generations-\(wales\)-act-all-you-need-to-know/act-milestones](https://www.wcva.org.uk/what-we-do/the-future-generations-(wales)-act-all-you-need-to-know/act-milestones) [Accessed 8 Dec. 2018].

Welsh Local Government Association. (2015). Local Authorities and Public Service Boards. [online] Available at: <https://www.wlga.wales/local-authorities-and-public-service-boards-1> [Accessed 8 Dec. 2018].

Your.caerphilly.gov.uk. (2018). 5 ways of working. [online] Available at: <https://your.caerphilly.gov.uk/publicservicesboard/content/5-ways-working> [Accessed 8 Dec. 2018].