

Engagement

- Improving our engagement with our communities, utilising existing networks and being more innovative including the promotion of volunteering.

Why is this an area of focus for the PSB?

The PSB recognises the importance of ensuring all our residents are engaged with and feel part of our communities in order to increase their sense of belonging to the local area and satisfaction with life in general. Significant engagement was undertaken as part of the well-being assessment and Population Needs Assessment and this has highlighted to partners the need to be more innovative and joined up when engaging with our local communities to build our knowledge and understanding and is an area where collective action can make a real impact. **Involvement** is also one of 5 ways of working included within the Well-being of Future Generations Act which outlines how public services



Involvement

The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

across Wales must work to improve well-being and achieve the national well-being goals.

Linked to engaging with our communities are the effects being engaged in community life can have on well-being. The effects of volunteering on a person's well-being cannot be underestimated in terms of improving mental well-being, tackling social exclusion and providing a sense of purpose. In addition volunteering can help provide people with a huge variety of skills which can enhance career prospects. The PSB therefore recognise an opportunity with regards to increasing volunteering. The PSB have also posed the question of how we, as employers, can help our staff become more involved within their own communities as volunteers.

To help determine the areas of focus for the PSB we have considered the well-being assessment in detail at a number of PSB workshops, consulted on the four areas and undertaken a prioritisation matrix exercise. The exercise was undertaken to consider the findings of the well-being assessment both in terms of the data/ research indicating a need and what our residents told us, alongside how tackling the issue would contribute towards achieving the well-being goals, whether there was a

significant policy driver around the issue and whether the issue was one that required a collaborative approach from the PSB. The importance

of volunteering scored highly through the exercise in addition to tackling social exclusion and ensuring communities are inclusive.



'I have to make an effort to keep in touch with friends and I volunteer, both of which contribute to my physical and mental well-being. It is worth the effort and I like to be busy'

let's talk
amser siarad

Female/ 75+/ Eastern Vale

Findings from the assessment

- **Having a say in decisions** is very important to Vale residents, despite this, few believe that they are actually able to influence decisions.
- **‘Having a say in decisions that affect me’ was identified as being important to children and young people** through the 2016 School Super Survey with 71% of primary school pupils and 85% of secondary school pupils stating that it is fairly or very important ‘to have a say in decisions that affect me’. Through the same survey, 23% of secondary schools pupils said that adults and decision makers never value their views, ideas and opinions. 46% felt they sometimes did, 25% felt they often did and 7% felt they always did.
- **Age and social isolation** were concerns raised regarding future social well-being in the Let’s Talk Survey responses and by 2035 it is predicted that approximately double the number of females aged 65+ will be living alone compared to males.
- Figures from Glamorgan Voluntary Service estimate that the **monetary value of volunteering** in the Vale of Glamorgan for 2015/16 was £36,903,499 and demonstrates the significant contribution that volunteers make to their local communities. It is also important to consider that this figure only captures volunteer hours undertaken through more formal channels and does not capture the vast amount of informal volunteering undertaken in the Vale.
- Residents in the Western Vale were more **likely to volunteer** followed by the Eastern Vale. Those from Barry were much less likely to undertake voluntary or community work. Those in managerial and professional occupations were also more likely to volunteer than those in unskilled or manual jobs.
- The percentage of people who report volunteering formally in the Vale of Glamorgan is broadly in line with the Welsh average. However, when considering those who report **volunteering informally** the Vale showed one of the highest percentages across Wales. The most common types of help given are doing errands, caring for children, keeping in touch with a housebound person, providing transport and giving advice. At least half a million people in Wales do one of these activities in a year.

Example links to our other areas of focus

- Engaging with our residents can help educate people on the importance of **protecting our environment** and volunteering opportunities can include activities relating to maintaining a high quality environment for all to enjoy.
- **Inequalities** exist in the level of engagement with our communities and work needs to be undertaken to engage with harder to reach group including those in more deprived areas.
- Building trust can help engage parents and young children to involve them activities aimed **at giving children a good start in life** and to access support related to a range of issues which may **prevent ACE’s**

What our self-assessment told us?

PSB partners are undertaking a self-assessment exercise to consider each organisation’s current position against each of the four areas of focus with regards to policy, leadership, activities, resources and impact. The aim is to help identify where we can work together more effectively, learn from best practice and identify where gaps and duplication may exist. The assessment can also be used as a baseline assessment to monitor progress during the course of the Well-being Plan alongside other performance management arrangements. For the engagement theme it is recognised that policy and leadership around engagement is often good although resource and other factors can often be a restraint to activities. This is an area where we can be more joined up and there is often a lack of feedback to those who have been engaged with once the initial activity has taken place.