

**PRESS RELEASE: LONG TERM PLANS WITHIN WELSH GOVERNMENT
ESSENTIAL TO IMPROVE LIVES IN WALES, July 18, 2016**

Welsh Government must focus on planning for the long term, setting the standard for involving people in the decisions that affect them if they are serious about improving lives, says Future Generations Commissioner Sophie Howe. Ms Howe says major changes are needed in the way public services are developed and delivered as she sets out the big challenges for developing better policies to build the Wales we all want.

In a letter to the First Minister following a statement to the Senedd last week, she highlights the areas within his manifesto where the new Well-being of Future Generations Act can and should be used to make a significant difference and issued a challenge to the Government to set the tone for the rest of the public sector in demonstrating how they will meet the requirements of the Act.

These are:

- Early Years – a joined-up approach to existing programmes and the new pledge to deliver 30 additional hours of childcare
- National Infrastructure Commission and the City Region Deals
- Integrated Transport System including the Metro System and proposals for the M4 relief road
- Curriculum review
- Preventative healthcare
- Climate change
- Procurement

Ms Howe has also written to Ken Skates, Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure to seek information on how the Government intend to ensure the Act is taken into account as the M4 Scheme progresses. With strong views and evidence both for and against the proposals, the Commissioner's is not currently making a stance for or against the Scheme itself, but wants to see how the Future Generations legislation has been applied in respect of these proposals.

A new Programme for Government is expected in the Autumn. In her letter to Mr Jones, Ms Howe outlines a number of key issues and ways in which the new Well-being of Future Generations Act must be used to develop the programmes and policies within it – based on the principles within the Act of planning for long-term well-being, preventing things from happening or getting worse, joining things up, working together and most importantly involving the people affected.

She says:

“Following Brexit, the First Minister described the Well-being of Future Generations Act as a call to arms – I will be providing supportive challenge to ensure the well-being goals and ways of working set out in this ground-breaking Act are used to transform pledges into joined-up, cross-departmental Government programmes and policies that make real improvements to people's lives.

“Doing this properly means more than engaging with the usual suspects. Genuine involvement is always challenging but I believe the recent events make a strong case for taking a fundamental look at how we involve and engage people and how the realities of their lives can inform the way we design and deliver policy.

“Public bodies will be required to involve those most affected, putting them at the heart of the decision-making process. IPSOS MORI revealed only 13% of the public felt that they had a stake in the services they received. This portrays a public for whom decisions are made and ‘done to’ them.

“In my first few weeks as Commissioner I have been visiting public bodies and meeting people across Wales and they have highlighted better involvement of people as a key theme for the improved delivery of services and outcomes.”

“There is a golden opportunity for Welsh Government to deliver on their commitment to the well-being of future generations by demonstrating strong leadership through the Programme for Government, setting an example to other public bodies, not because they are required to but because it will lead to better outcomes now and for future generations.”

Examples of key challenges and policy areas where the Programme for Government can demonstrate implementation of the Act can be found in Annex 1.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Letter sent from Sophie Howe to First Minister Carwyn Jones + Annex 1
(Cardiff Executive PSB Papers 14.1b)

Letter sent from Sophie Howe to Ken Skates AM (Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure) **(Cardiff Executive PSB Papers 14.1c)**

The delivery of policies and programmes set out in the Programme for Government will be covered by the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It will make the public bodies listed in the Act think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach.

To make sure we are all working towards the same vision, the Act puts in place seven well-being goals.

- 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
- A globally responsible Wales