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Well-being of Future Generations: An examination of 'Arts and cultural offer within Tŷ Pawb' – **Wrexham County Borough Council**

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This document is also available in Welsh.

The team who delivered the work comprised Jeremy Evans, Alan Hughes and Charlotte Owen under the direction of Huw Rees.

Contents

The Council has acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle in developing the step to develop and deliver an ambitious arts and cultural offer within Tŷ Pawb and there are opportunities to further embed the five ways of working.

Summary report

Summary	4
Why we undertook the Examination	4

Detailed Report

Part One – Examination Findings	6
The Council has considered the long-term benefits in setting this step and recognises the need to develop appropriate outcome measures	6
Consideration of prevention is fundamental to the actions the Council is taking to deliver this step	7
The Council has considered how Tŷ Pawb contributes to the national well-being goals and the Council's well-being objectives but could take a more systematic approach to integrating with other public bodies	8
The Council is collaborating with a range of partners in planning and delivering this step	8
The Council has involved stakeholders in the design and delivery of Tŷ Pawb	9
Part Two: Council's response	11

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Positive Indicators of the Five Ways of Working	12
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Summary report

Summary

Why we undertook the Examination

- 1 In accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the Act) the Auditor General for Wales (the Auditor General) is statutorily required to examine public bodies to assess the extent to which they have acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when:
 - a. setting their well-being objectives; and
 - b. taking steps to meet them.

The Act defines the sustainable development principle as acting in a manner: '...which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'

- 2 The Auditor General must provide a report on his examinations to the National Assembly for Wales at least a year before each Assembly election. The first such report must be published by 2020, before the 2021 Assembly election.
- 3 During 2018-19 the Auditor General is undertaking examinations across the 44 bodies covered by the Act to inform his report to the National Assembly.
- 4 In May 2018, the Auditor General published his report, 'Reflecting on Year One – How have public bodies responded to the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015)'. He concluded that, public bodies support the principles of the Act and are taking steps to change how they work.
- 5 In developing our approach to undertaking the examinations during 2018-19 we engaged with a range of stakeholders including through our pilot work during 2017-18. We also worked closely with the Future Generations Commissioner.
- 6 As the preliminary work in year one included a consideration of how public bodies had set their well-being objectives the principal focus of this work is the way in which public bodies are taking steps to meet their well-being objectives.
- 7 The findings in this report are based on fieldwork that we undertook during the period November 2018 to January 2019.
- 8 This report sets out our findings from our examination of a step the Council is taking to meet its well-being objectives, namely to: develop and deliver an ambitious arts and cultural offer within Tŷ Pawb, Wrexham's new arts and culture hub. The aim is for the hub to play a central role in reinvigorating and celebrating a sense of identity and pride in Wrexham; enable access to creative community and develop confidence, connectedness and well-being.
- 9 It also sets out the Council's initial response to our findings.

What we examined

- 10 In order to act in accordance with the sustainable development principle public bodies must take account of the following 'ways of working':

Exhibit 1: the 'five ways of working'

The table below sets out the 'five ways of working' as defined in the Welsh Government's 'Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 The Essentials'¹ document.

The Five Ways of Working
Long-term The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.
Prevention How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.
Integration Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
Collaboration Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.
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.

- 11 Our examination found that: **The Council has acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle in setting the step to develop and deliver an ambitious arts and cultural offer within Tŷ Pawb and there are opportunities to further embed the five ways of working.**

¹ Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 The Essentials, Welsh Government (2015)

Detailed report

Part 1 – Examination findings

The Council has acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle in setting the step to develop and deliver an ambitious arts and cultural offer within Tŷ Pawb and there are opportunities to further embed the five ways of working

The Council has considered the long-term benefits in setting this step and recognises the need to develop appropriate outcome measures

What we looked for

- 12 We looked for evidence of:
- a thorough understanding of current and long-term needs and the associated challenges and opportunities;
 - planning over an appropriate timescale;
 - resources allocated to ensure long-term benefits; and
 - appropriate monitoring and review.
- 13 Our examination was also informed by the positive indicators for the 'long-term' that we have identified and used as part of this examination.²

What we found

- 14 We identified the following strengths:
- the Council recognises the short- and long-term potential benefits Tŷ Pawb could have on the arts, wellbeing and town centre regeneration; and
 - Tŷ Pawb's business plan demonstrates recognition of the need to become financially sustainable and less reliant on Council and grant funding.
- 15 We identified the following opportunities for improvement:

² See Appendix 1

- the Council continues to refine Tŷ Pawb's outcome measures but needs to consider how to collect and monitor data that will demonstrate delivery of the long-term benefits of Tŷ Pawb; and
- the Council needs to assure itself that the expectation for the facility to become self-financing does not frustrate the Council's longer-term goals.

Consideration of prevention is fundamental to the actions the Council is taking to deliver this step

What we looked for

- 16 We looked for evidence of:
- a thorough understanding of the nature and type of problem the step could help prevent from occurring or getting worse;
 - resources allocated to ensure preventative benefits will be delivered; and
 - monitoring and review of how effectively the step is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse.
- 17 Our examination was also informed by the positive indicators for 'prevention' that we have identified and used as part of this examination.³

What we found

- 18 We identified the following strengths:
- the Council understands the social and cultural problems Tŷ Pawb is aimed at preventing, including the decline of both the arts and the market culture in Wrexham;
 - the Council recognises how art and culture could help improve well-being and contribute to more cohesive and resilient communities; and
 - Tŷ Pawb also contributes to the Council's wider town centre regeneration plan, which aims to prevent further decline of Wrexham town centre.
- 19 We identified the following opportunity for improvement:
- the Council should consider what measures it can use to evidence how Tŷ Pawb is contributing to the 'prevention' agenda and the broader regeneration of Wrexham town centre.

³ See Appendix 1

The Council has considered how Tŷ Pawb contributes to the national well-being goals and the Council's well-being objectives but could take a more systematic approach to integrating with other public bodies

What we looked for

- 20 We looked for evidence of consideration of:
- how this step could contribute to the seven national well-being goals;
 - how delivery of this step will impact on the Council's well-being objectives and wider priorities; and
 - how delivery of this step will impact on other public bodies' well-being objectives.
- 21 Our examination was also informed by the positive indicators for 'integration' that we have identified and used as part of this examination.⁴

What we found

- 22 We identified the following strengths:
- Tŷ Pawb is linked to more than one of the Council's well-being objectives;
 - officers can demonstrate how Tŷ Pawb contributes to the national well-being goals and the Council Plan sets out the ways Tŷ Pawb is contributing to the sustainable development principle; and
 - Tŷ Pawb is working with other Council departments, such as Education and Social Services, to achieve well-being objectives and provide access to cultural activities and volunteering opportunities.
- 23 We identified the following opportunity for improvement:
- Although the Council has worked with several public bodies to identify how Tŷ Pawb can impact positively on their aims and objectives, the Council needs to identify all the opportunities for Tŷ Pawb to contribute to/integrate with other public bodies' well-being objectives. This will enable more collaboration/integration and further improve the offer at the facility.

The Council is collaborating with a range of partners in planning and delivering this step

What we looked for

- 24 We looked for evidence that the Council:

⁴ See Appendix 1

- has considered how it could work with others to deliver the step (to meet its well-being objectives, or assist another body to meet its well-being objectives);
 - is collaborating effectively to deliver the step; and
 - is monitoring and reviewing whether the collaboration is helping it, or its stakeholders meet well-being objectives.
- 25 Our examination was also informed by the positive indicators for ‘collaboration’ that we have identified and used as part of this examination.⁵

What we found

- 26 We identified the following strengths:
- there was a lot of engagement with local stakeholders prior to developing Tŷ Pawb;
 - the facilities and events at Tŷ Pawb have been promoted to a cross-section of the community including local colleges, schools, the business community and residents of a local care home; and
 - Tŷ Pawb has strengthened the local arts provision and complements courses and facilities at the local college and University.
- 27 We identified the following opportunities for improvement:
- once the Council has identified commonality in well-being objectives with other providers of public services, it should consider collaborative arrangements with those other providers, for example Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board; and
- the Council needs to maintain the strong links it has developed with partners and ensure there is a formal process for them to provide ongoing feedback on Tŷ Pawb.

The Council has involved stakeholders in the design and delivery of Tŷ Pawb

What we looked for

- 28 We looked for evidence that the Council has:
- identified who it needs to involve in designing and delivering the step;
 - effectively involved key stakeholders in designing and delivering the step;
 - used the results of involvement to shape the development and delivery of the step; and
 - sought to learn lessons and improve its approach to involvement.

⁵ See Appendix 1

29 Our Examination was also informed by the positive indicators for 'involvement' that we have identified and used as part of this examination.⁶

What we found

30 We identified the following strengths:

- the Council involved residents, market traders and the local arts community in the initial consultation for Tŷ Pawb and they continue to be involved in developing exhibition and activity ideas; and
- an Advisory Board consisting of local people helps ensure there is ongoing local involvement in the strategic and operational development of Tŷ Pawb.

31 We identified the following opportunities for improvement:

- there is scope for elected members to have greater involvement attending and promoting events at Tŷ Pawb; and
- the Advisory Board provides useful oversight and Tŷ Pawb should continue to take forward the ideas and recommendations of the Board.

⁶ See Appendix 1

Part Two: Council's response

- 32 Following the conclusion of our fieldwork we presented our findings to officers of the Council at a workshop in March 2019. At this workshop the Council began to consider its response to our findings and as a result of discussions at the workshop, and further reflection on our findings, the Council has developed the following actions under specific themes.

Long-term and Prevention
Review and refine the data is currently available and identify what additional information is needed to evidence progress towards achieving outcomes / impact in the longer term.
Review the best model to take Tŷ Pawb forward that will allow the facility to become self-financing and contribute to achieving the Council's longer-term goals.
Integration
Use performance monitoring information to demonstrate progress to date and liaise with potential partners to identify mutual benefits.
Collaboration
Increase collaboration by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talking with other bodies through operational contacts to promote the Tŷ Pawb facility; and • liaising with the Public Services Board and Lead members promote the Tŷ Pawb facility.
Collect evaluation forms from users to obtain views of users of the facilities.
Record footfall at various events to record and capture attendance.
Involvement
Engage with Councillors to enable them to act as ambassadors for Tŷ Pawb.
Corporate
Develop a system to provide assurance at a corporate level if the Council is considering the five ways of working in the actions to deliver the well-being objectives.
Develop a process to take the learning and embed it across the Council.

- 33 We will continue to monitor the Council's progress in implementing these actions, and the extent to which they address the issues we have identified in our findings.

Appendix 1

Positive Indicators of the Five Ways of Working

The table below sets out 'positive indicators' for each of the five ways of working that we have identified and will use to help inform our assessments of the extent to which bodies may be applying the sustainable development principle (SDP). We do not intend to use the indicators as a 'checklist'. They should be viewed as 'indicators' that will help us to form conclusions, rather than 'determinants' of the extent to which a body is acting in accordance with the SDP in taking steps to meet its wellbeing objectives.

Exhibit 1: Positive indicators of the five ways of working

What would show a body is fully applying the long-term way of working?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a clear understanding of what 'long-term' means in the context of the Act.• They have designed the step to deliver the well-being objective(s) and contribute to their long-term vision.• They have designed the step to deliver short or medium-term benefits, which are balanced with the impact over the long-term (within the project context).• They have designed the step based on a sophisticated understanding of current and future need and pressures, including analysis of future trends.• Consequently, there is a comprehensive understanding of current and future risks and opportunities.• Resources have been allocated to ensure long-term as well as short-term benefits are delivered.• There is a focus on delivering outcomes, with milestones/progression steps identified where outcomes will be delivered over the long-term.• They are open to new ways of doing things which could help deliver benefits over the longer term.• They value intelligence and pursue evidence-based approaches.
What would show a body is fully applying the preventative way of working?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The body seeks to understand the root causes of problems so that negative cycles and intergenerational challenges can be tackled.• The body sees challenges from a system-wide perspective, recognising and valuing the long-term benefits that they can deliver for people and places.• The body allocates resources to preventative action that is likely to contribute to better outcomes and use of resources over the longer-term, even where this may limit the ability to meet some short-term needs.• There are decision-making and accountability arrangements that recognise the value of preventative action and accept short-term reductions in performance and resources in the pursuit of anticipated improvements in outcomes and use of resources.

What would show a body is taking an 'integrated' approach?

- Individuals at all levels understand their contribution to the delivery of the vision and well-being objectives.
- Individuals at all levels understand what different parts of the organisation do and proactively seek opportunities to work across organisational boundaries. This is replicated in their work with other public bodies.
- Individuals at all levels recognise the cross-organisation dependencies of achieving the ambition and objectives.
- There is an open culture where information is shared.
- There is a well-developed understanding of how the well-being objectives and steps to meet them impact on other public sector bodies.
- Individuals proactively work across organisational boundaries to maximise their contribution across the well-being goals and minimise negative impacts.
- Governance, structures and processes support this, as do behaviours.

What would show a body is collaborating effectively?

- The body is focused on place, community and outcomes rather than organisational boundaries.
- The body has a good understanding of partners' objectives and their responsibilities, which helps to drive collaborative activity.
- The body has positive and mature relationships with stakeholders, where information is shared in an open and transparent way.
- The body recognises and values the contributions that all partners can make.
- The body seeks to establish shared processes and ways of working, where appropriate.

What would show a body is involving people effectively?

- Having an understanding of who needs to be involved and why.
- Reflecting on how well the needs and challenges facing those people are currently understood.
- Working co-productively, working with stakeholders to design and deliver.
- Seeing the views of stakeholders as a vital source of information that will help deliver better outcomes.
- Ensuring that the full diversity of stakeholders is represented and they are able to take part.
- Having mature and trusting relationships with its stakeholders where there is ongoing dialogue and information is shared in an open and transparent way.
- Ensure stakeholders understand the impact of their contribution.
- Seek feedback from key stakeholders which is used to help learn and improve.

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