Number: **WG18829**

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Consultation – summary of responses

A Sustainable Wales
Better Choices for a Better Future

Consultation on proposals for a Sustainable
Development Bill

Date of issue: **May 2013**

Overview

This document provides a summary of the responses received by the Welsh Government to the White Paper on the Sustainable Development Bill.

Audience

Local Authorities, Local Service Boards, Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies, Local Health Boards, NHS Trusts, National Park Authorities, Fire and Rescue Authorities, Higher Education Institutions, Further Education Corporations, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, Registered Social Landlords, Town and Community Councils, third sector organisations and representative bodies.

Action required

None – for information only.

Further information

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This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at
www.wales.gov.uk/consultations

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Section 1

Background

1. The Welsh Government's White Paper setting out proposals for a Sustainable Development Bill was launched at Blaenavon Heritage Primary School on 3rd December 2012 for a thirteen week consultation period, concluding on 4th March 2013.

2. The White Paper set out the proposed approach to delivering the Programme for Government commitments to legislate to make sustainable development the central organising principle of the public service in Wales and the establishment of a sustainable development body. The White Paper also included the Welsh Government's proposal to put integrated planning on a statutory footing in the Sustainable Development Bill.

3. The White Paper consultation built upon earlier engagement which included the publication of a discussion document and an event in December 2011 to gather the views of stakeholders on initial ideas; and a consultation in May 2012 on 'Proposals for a Sustainable Development Bill' which outlined the different options for the approach to the Bill. The latter generated 3927 responses (including 3749 campaign responses), which directly informed the development of the approach outlined in the White Paper.

4. For ease of reference, details of the approach proposed in the White Paper under each chapter are set out under the relevant questions in Section 2.

5. The consultation on the White Paper was issued electronically to a wide range of stakeholders and was also made available on the Welsh Government website. Approximately 5000 organisations and individuals received bulletins from the Welsh Government referring to the White Paper between December 2012 and March 2013.

6. Five questions were set out in a pro forma style document providing an online form for ease of return.

7. Opportunities to engage further with stakeholders were sought during the consultation period. The key Welsh Government led events were:

- 29th January 2013 - Evening introductory briefing, Llandudno Junction
- 30th January 2013 – Day workshop session, Llandudno Junction
- 13th February 2013 – Day workshop session, Llandrindod Wells
- 5th February 2013 – Evening introductory briefing, Cardiff.
- 6th February 2013 – Day workshop session, Cardiff.

8. Around 190 people attended these sessions, with delegates coming from a cross section of sectors, including those working in health, education, Fire Service, the Police, transport, planning, Local Authorities and council

members, as well as members of the public. A summary of the views collected at both the evening briefing and day workshop sessions can be found in Annex A.

9.   In addition, the White Paper proposals were outlined at a number of other sectoral and organisational events such as the Finance Leadership Network event in February.

Detail of responses

10.   Welsh Government received 473 responses to the consultation.

11.   177 responses were received from members of the public sending a standard response on behalf of Welsh Language campaign group Cymdeithas yr Iaith. 142 responses were received from members of the public sending a response on behalf of Friends of the Earth Cymru. Both of these email campaign messages can be read in their entirety at Annex C. The remaining 154 responses were received from a wide variety of organisations and private individuals, mostly in the public sector but also in the private and third sector. Annex D contains a sectoral breakdown of substantive respondents.

Table 1 – Breakdown of respondents		
Category	**Number**	**% of total**
Third Sector	47	31%
Local Authorities/Community & Town Councils	32	21%
Government Agency / Other Public Sector	22	14%
Professional Bodies and Associations	22	14%
Members of the Public	15	10%
Businesses	10	6%
Academic Bodies	6	4%

12.   18 of the responses to the consultation were received from organisations and individuals outside of Wales. The views brought out by these respondents were generally positive, and showed very little difference to those from respondents within Wales.

13.   Respondents were asked to assign themselves to one of eight broad categories. The above table shows a breakdown of respondents. A full list can be found in Annex D. Copies of non-confidential responses received in their original format and language will be published on the consultation pages of our website. This can be found at http://www.wales.gov.uk/sustainabledevelopment.

14.   During the period of consultation, the Minister for Local Government also wrote to Local Service Board members, inviting their views on a discussion paper on what this could mean in practice. Responses to this paper are summarised at Annex B.

15.   We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who responded to the consultation and attended the consultation events for their contribution.

16.   Most respondents provided a response on each of the four main questions asked, with many providing supporting evidence and information relating to the key issues raised in the White Paper.

17.   Several key themes emerged from the written responses in response to each question. These are reflected in the summary for each question, as set out in Section Two.

Next Steps

18.   The consultation responses and the discussions at the workshops will inform the development of the Sustainable Development Bill, which is intended to be introduced to the National Assembly for Wales in autumn 2013.

Section two

Question 1

What are your views on the proposals for a new duty to embed sustainable development as the central organising principle of selected organisations in Wales?

Overview

1.   Chapter 2 of the White Paper set out proposals to introduce a new sustainable development duty on the public service in Wales, to make sustainable development the central organising principle of organisations. This included:

- An overview of what sustainable development as a central organising principle means.

- The nature of the duty.

- Key principles to be reflected in the duty.

- Engagement and involvement.

- Defining sustainable development.

- The requirement for organisations to clearly set out the outcomes they are working towards.

- The requirement for the duty to apply to strategic decision making processes.

- Reporting and evidence.

- The organisations subject to the duty.

2.   The following are the main themes that were apparent in the responses to this question.

General comments about the overall approach

3.   There was general support for the flexible approach outlined in the White Paper, ensuring flexibility around each type of organisation's individual processes. Many respondents urged that the proposals do not add disproportionate burden on organisations, in particular cost and bureaucratic burden.

4.   Several respondents made suggestions about the role of guidance; that it is important that the guidance has a practical focus, and it helps organisations understand their role beyond delivering services in the short term.

5.   Many respondents highlighted the importance of the duty, and in particular the approach to outcomes, acting as a framework for other legislation.

6.   Respondents also suggested that the Welsh Government has a leadership role and as part of this there should be a consistent approach across the organisation in relation to sustainable development. For example, it was acknowledged that longer term planning can be a challenge to organisations which need to also be reactive to short term priorities from their service users and the Welsh Government.

7.   It was widely suggested that there will need to be a period of transition to allow capacity to be developed in organisations subject to the duty. The need for training for organisations to adapt and develop expertise was highlighted, particularly in relation to elected members in local authorities.

8.   Several respondents commented on the existing arrangements for collaboration at the local level, in support of using Local Service Boards (LSBs) to develop shared outcomes. It was noted that Single Integrated Plans could be more explicit in the Bill, to recognise the central role that LSBs will play in providing leadership and coherence. LSB members were given an opportunity to comment on more detailed proposals relating to integrated planning through a discussion paper that was issued in addition to the White Paper. A summary of responses to this discussion paper is at Annex B.

Key Themes

Nature of the Duty

9.   There were several comments about the strength of the duty in terms of how it is described in the White Paper. Many respondents felt that 'consideration of economic, social and environmental wellbeing' was relatively weak. Suggestions for the text of the legislation included that organisations should be required to 'promote' or 'contribute to', or 'achieve' sustainable development.

10.   There was concern that the duty will be viewed as equal to other duties, whereas it should be seen as overarching.

11.   Many respondents were concerned about the balance of the 'pillars' of sustainable development, with some concerned that consideration of environmental issues will not be strong enough, and some concern that the economic pillar will be weakest.

Defining Sustainable Development and Wellbeing

12.   Many respondents had concerns over the use of the terms 'sustainable development' and 'wellbeing', with many seeking further clarification between the two. There were concerns that wellbeing was replacing sustainable development as an objective.

13.   Many organisations were of the view that there should be a definition of sustainable development in the Bill, and views were expressed about the need to ensure this definition should be clear and consistently used in other legislation. However there was no consensus on what this definition should be, with

respondents suggesting the Brundtland definition, the definition used in 'One Wales: One Planet' (and the White Paper) and a range of other proposals. Other suggestions for the definition included greater reference to the international impacts of decisions taken in Wales, reference to culture and Welsh language and reference to use of resources and the concept of environmental limits.

14.   Concern was expressed about the use of the term wellbeing, in particular that its meaning is not clear and is focussed on the 'social pillar' of sustainable development.

Outcomes

15.   The approach to outcomes set out in the White Paper was generally supported, with a number of comments about how this might work in practice particularly in relation to the range of organisations to be covered by the Bill.

16.   The flexibility for organisations to set their own outcomes was generally welcomed. It was suggested that further work is needed to develop a shared understanding and language around outcomes, with some concern that the proposals were too vague and unenforceable.

17.   There were a number of comments about the nature of the outcomes that will be developed. These included suggestions that there should be a mechanism to ensure that the outcomes deliver sustainable development and reflect the goal of a sustainable Wales, but that they should also be meaningful for communities and service users. They must deliver in the short term but also contribute to long term wellbeing. The proposed alignment to the United Nations 'The Future We Want' outcomes document was welcomed.

18.   Several respondents suggested there should be an 'overarching outcomes framework' to bring together outcomes being developed in other areas of the Welsh Government. It was also acknowledged that the outcomes developed through the Single Integrated Planning process are a good basis for the proposed approach.

19.   There were several comments suggesting that measurement of progress toward outcomes should be an essential part of the approach, not merely an expectation. Suggestions included that progress could be demonstrated through indicators, and that there should be a means for the outcomes to be challenged. Gathering data to demonstrate the progress toward outcomes may be a challenge.

Strategic Decision Making Processes

20.   The proposals in relation to strategic decision making processes set out in the White Paper were generally supported, with comments and suggestions about how the approach would influence organisations' existing processes.

21.   Many respondents urged that the duty is clear about the level(s) at which it will apply, with concern that it needs to apply throughout decision making

processes. Some respondents felt that applying the duty to processes rather than to specified plans will be key to ensuring that SD is fully considered, whereas others questioned whether an approach taken at a 'high level' would filter down to middle management and operational decisions. Leadership will be needed to ensure that the approach is embedded at all levels.

22.　There was support for embedding the duty in existing processes, as it was felt that many organisations are already under pressure to make different assessments as part of taking decisions. It was highlighted that the change in behaviour needed may pose a long term challenge for some organisations and should be a key element of the support offered.

23.　Several respondents suggested there should be clarity and direction on the balance between possible competing aspects of sustainable development, and how organisations should balance short term pressures with long term elements of sustainable development. Respondents were of the view that guidance should play a role in providing this clarity.

24.　Many respondents suggested that budget and procurement decisions should be captured by the duty, as they are perceived to be crucial in how organisations make key decisions. Some respondents suggested that these areas are of particular importance because they have acted as barriers to sustainable development in the past.

Reporting

25.　There was considerable support for transparency and accountability to be a central part of the duty, with comments about how this should work in practice and the key challenges for organisations.

26.　It was suggested that reporting should focus on progress toward outcomes and the role that decisions have played in this. Many respondents suggested that the shift from assessments focused on processes to an outcomes-focussed approach will be a challenge for many organisations.

27.　The proposal to use existing reporting mechanisms was supported, but respondents questioned whether these mechanisms are adequate and the implications of the different processes and timescales that currently exist. There was also a lack of clarity about whether reporting on associated performance measures will affect funding from the Welsh Government.

28.　It was acknowledged that it will take time to develop appropriate measures of progress, and there is a risk that performance indicators become more important than outcomes. It was noted by some respondents that environmental impacts are more easily monitored using quantitative measures but understanding social and economic impacts may be more of a challenge. Several respondents suggested that integrated reporting should be a recommended approach.

The organisations subject to the duty

29.   There was general support for the list of organisations that will be subject to the duty.

30.   Several organisations suggested that although the duty will directly affect public service organisations, those in other sectors could also voluntarily commit to supporting the principles. This was mentioned in relation to the Third and private sectors.

31.   Many organisations suggested that it is not appropriate for Town and Community Councils to be included in the list, because of the nature of their functions and concerns over lack of capacity. It was suggested that they could be required to act in accordance with the duty but not be subject to the duty.

32.   Clarity was requested on how public service organisations should operate partnerships with organisations that are not subject to the duty, particularly in the case of local authorities.

Question 2

What are your views on the proposals for an independent sustainable development body?

Overview

33.   Chapter 3 of the White Paper set out proposals for an independent sustainable development body for Wales. This included the role and functions of the body, the focus on providing support for organisations, links with the Auditor General for Wales and other Commissioners, and the need for cross-sector collaboration and sharing expertise.

34.   The majority of respondents supported the need for a body and the proposed approach for its development, although most respondents questioned elements of the proposals.

35.   Those respondents that disagreed with the proposals for the body and the Commissioner, suggested the following reasons:

  - Whether they would be a good use of resources.
  - The proposed role overlaps with the existing role of several organisations.
  - The approach may lead to organisations subject to the duty believing that the body delivers sustainable development in Wales, and they do not need to change their approach.

Key Themes

Role and functions

36.   In general, there was support for the proposed purpose of the body and Commissioner to focus on supporting organisations to embed sustainable development as their central organising principle.

37.   Many respondents agreed that the focus of the body should be on facilitating information exchange, and provision of support to the public service and wider civil society.

38.   However, many respondents felt that the body should have an additional role in relation to accountability and scrutiny in order to be effective in its role as an advocate for future generations. It was felt that a stronger challenge function could also reduce the likelihood of judicial review.

39.   There was general agreement that the body should be a source of expertise and could undertake research to support the embedding of sustainable development across the public service. There should be clearly defined routes of access to a range of expertise.

40. Several respondents suggested that the level of support for organisations should be proportionate to the different organisations subject to the duty. Some respondents questioned how the body will manage the different levels of support needed by different organisations.

41. Respondents emphasised the importance of the advisory panel representing all sectors, with many suggesting various 'topic' based representatives as well as sectoral representatives. Several respondents highlighted the 'social' focus of existing Commissioners, and commented that the advisory panel should equally represent the different elements of sustainable development.

42. The proposal for the body to produce a report on progress on sustainable development in Wales every five years was generally supported, as it would be beneficial for forward thinking policy development.

43. Many respondents supported the body having a close working relationship with the Auditor General for Wales. Clarity was requested on how this would work in practice and whether the body would have a role in issuing constructive challenge.

44. There was support for the development of a clear work programme for the body to deliver against. There was also the suggestion that key stakeholders should be involved in its development.

Resources available for the body

45. There were a range of views about the resource that should be available for the body and the Commissioner.

46. Some respondents felt that the remit and ambition of the body should be as broad as possible and that it is essential that it's established on a statutory basis to give it sufficient authority.

47. Some respondents suggested resources would need to be taken away from other organisations and that it might receive too much resource for just an advisory role. There was concern about possible conflict between the proposed support role and a 'critical friend' role, and about how effective the body could be given the wide range of organisations that will be subject to the duty. Many respondents emphasised the need for the body to be an example of effective use of public funds.

48. However many respondents acknowledged that limited resources would mean that there should be more focus on enabling collaborative learning and building on existing support, rather than on support for individual organisations. The body should not try to do too much too soon.

Independence

49.   Many respondents raised concerns about the independence of the body and the Commissioner.

50.   Respondents were concerned that the approval of the work programme by the Welsh Government would stifle the independence of the body.

51.   It was suggested that more independence is needed to enable the body to hold the Welsh Government to account, with suggestions that an alternative approach could be based on the Welsh Government's relationship with the Wales Audit Office.

52.   Several respondents also suggested that there should be complete transparency in the appointments process.

Cross-sector collaboration and sharing expertise

53.   Many respondents requested more clarity on how the body and Commissioner would work with other organisations, including support, advisory and regulatory bodies.

54.   This was raised particularly in connection with organisations that currently perform a support role, either on sustainable development issues (Cynnal Cymru, Business in the Community and Natural Resources Wales were named) or to the public service (Welsh Local Government Association and Public Service Management Wales were named).

55.   Respondents also suggested that the Commissioner should have links with the private sector and with other commissioners.

Question 3

What are your views on the proposed phasing and implementation of the duty, including the timing of the establishment of the independent sustainable development body?

Overview

56. Chapter 4 of the White Paper set out proposals for the implementation of the duty, in particular the proposed phasing of the application of the duty to organisations and the approach to establishing the sustainable development body.

57. The vast majority of respondents who answered this question were in favour of the proposed strategy for phasing the implementation across a three year period. Respondents were largely in agreement that this would give organisations under the duty time to prepare, whilst allowing auditing bodies and the new sustainable development body time to develop capacity. It was generally agreed that the strategy proposed will allow implementation to be much more achievable.

58. Some respondents, whilst supporting the approach of phasing implementation, were willing for the duty to be implemented on them sooner than stated in the White Paper, as they felt they were already well prepared for the duty. A number of local authorities expressed particular interest in this, as they were conscious of the need to retain the momentum and impetus being built up by the development of the SD Bill, rather than having to wait until 2016 when attention may have faded slightly.

Key Themes

Sharing best practice/Training needs

59. Several respondents added that it would be crucially important for all organisations coming under the duty to communicate effectively, in order to share best practice and offer advice on any challenges they have experienced.

60. Many respondents felt that adequate training would be needed in the time running up to implementation, and during the first stages of the duty coming into effect. Respondents added that this would give staff within organisations under the duty a chance to communicate and share their ideas and perceptions of sustainable development, helping to develop and embed the organisational culture change required.

Introduction of the sustainable development body

61. Many respondents raised concerns with the implementation plan for the new sustainable development body. Respondents often stated that the body would need to be introduced before the 2015 date stated in the White Paper, as it was felt that the body would need up to a year to develop internally and build the

capacity and systems that would be able to cope with the requirements of the first tranche of organisations coming under the duty in 2015.

62.   Respondents also argued that organisations will need most support and guidance to embed the new duty in the months preceding the implementation date, and for the organisations coming under the duty in 2015 this means they will have a requirement for the body to be fully functional in 2014.

63.   Some respondents also had some concerns as to whether the body will have adequate resources and capacity to provide the necessary level of support for all of the organisations under the duty. They felt that the required scale of the body in relation to the number of organisations coming under the duty was being overlooked in the White Paper.

Early accountability

64.   Some respondents expressed concern that the first two years after the duty comes into force are likely to be challenging for auditing and reporting, both for the organisations under the duty and the Auditor General for Wales. It was suggested by several respondents that a 'light touch' audit is used in the first year of implementation, to allow both sides to adapt and develop their capacity and understanding of what is required.

Question 4

What are your views on the proposals to improve the accountability framework for sustainable development in Wales?

Overview

65. Chapter 5 of the White Paper set out proposals to ensure that the organisations subject to the duty are fully accountable. This focussed on embedding scrutiny within existing frameworks, largely through arrangements with the Auditor General for Wales (AGW).

66. The majority of respondents were supportive of the proposed approach to accountability, with questions about the detail of implementation and the role of the sustainable development body.

67. Those respondents that did not agree suggested that auditing will not ensure that organisations are fully compliant with the principles of sustainable development or measure whether sustainable development is being delivered. Some respondents also suggested that the AGW approach will not ensure compliance and the sustainable development body should have a stronger role in relation to accountability.

Key Themes

Accountability

68. The proposed approach to embed accountability in existing processes was supported because it will be conducive to sustainable development being the central organising principle of organisations. The burden on organisations should be proportionate in terms of effort and cost.

69. Several respondents requested clarity on what would be subject to scrutiny. Comments included that accountability should be about embedding and delivery not just processes, and that the approach should allow for challenge of decisions and enable consideration of alternative approaches.

70. Some respondents were concerned that audit processes would not capture the degree to which outcomes had been achieved and clarity was requested on the balance of scrutiny on outcomes and on decision making processes, and how the approach will work where decisions have long term impacts. It was suggested that organisations will need to draw on evidence that reflects the full range of elements of sustainable development to demonstrate compliance.

71. The need for audit to cover both compliance and performance was highlighted, and that the approach should be sufficiently flexible to enable this.

72. Further clarity was suggested on the role of indicators, and respondents suggested the need for national sustainable development indicators to be measurable at the local level.

73.   Respondents suggested that the approach should also allow flexibility in relation to the organisations' varying levels of maturity in relation to sustainable development. Organisations will need sufficient time to implement changes in response to the duty.

74.   Clarification was requested on the consequences of unsatisfactory progress and non-compliance. It is expected that the Guidance will provide detail.

75.   Several respondents requested clarity on where in organisations the responsibility for compliance would be reflected, and how this responsibility might be apportioned between partner organisations in the case of non-compliance.

The Auditor General for Wales

76.   There was general support for the responsibility for accountability to lie with the AGW because the organisation has the most skilled resource available and this approach would reduce burden on the organisations subject to the duty.

77.   However many respondents were concerned about the capacity of the AGW to undertake this additional function and whether the organisation has sufficient knowledge and expertise in relation to sustainable development.

78.   It was acknowledged that as this role would be different to much of the AGW's existing work, significant training and support would need to be in place. Some respondents suggested that current arrangements are well suited to audit of compliance, but less strong on audit of performance and improvement. Clarity was also requested on how often audits on the sustainable development duty will be undertaken.

79.   Many respondents supported the proposal for a strong and clear relationship between the AGW and the sustainable development body, agreeing that it will be essential on agreeing the most effective approach to accountability.

Other arrangements

80.   Many respondents emphasised the importance of a consistent approach to accountability across all of the organisations subject to the duty. The approach should be centrally coordinated and ensure that assessment is equal and proportionate.

81.   It is important that a consistent approach is developed in relation to those organisations that are not audited by the AGW. For Higher Educations Institutions, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales was highlighted as having an extensive and embedded role in monitoring activity. For Registered Social Landlords, it was suggested that the existing approach to regulation could be adapted and strengthened in relation to sustainable development.

82.   Several respondents suggested there should be more clarity on the role of internal scrutiny in different organisations. The role of the inspection bodies was also questioned.

83.   Respondents suggested that there is scope for Local Authority Scrutiny Committees to assess how the sustainable development duty is being delivered by different organisations in their area. In addition there could be a similar role for Local Service Boards.

Question 5

We have asked four specific questions. Do you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, for example with regards the implementation of the proposals?

84.   The wide ranging nature of responses to this question means that it is not feasible to reflect all of the issues raised. Welsh Government officials are looking closely at responses to this section to examine and analyse other areas, in order to build a truly effective Sustainable Development Bill.

85.   Whilst this part of the consultation was by its very nature covering a very wide range of topics, there were some common issues raised by a large number of respondents.

86.   Many respondents mentioned the need for education for younger generations and 'on the job' training within organisations implementing the new duty. Respondents felt that younger generations would be of huge importance, as they are the 'decision makers of tomorrow'. A number of academic bodies in particular felt that as part of the SD Bill it would be important to fully recognise the need to educate young people so that they are completely familiar with sustainable development and how it can be applied when they reach the workplace. Many respondents cited Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) as a key area to build on, with some adding that ESDGC should be protected as a key part of the Welsh curriculum. Respondents also felt that it will be important for people in all areas of organisations under the duty to be given access to adequate training for sustainable development, as without this the duty may not effectively cascade through organisations.

87.   Another issue that was brought out by a number of different respondents was regarding the Single Integrated Plans (SIPs), and their inclusion as part of the Sustainable Development Bill. Whilst respondents were generally in favour of SIPs, agreeing that integration and collaboration were vital for sustainable development, many felt that there was little clarity and not enough detail about how they would be impacted by the duty, and what would be required of SIPs once they are included under the duty. Further comments on SIPs are included in the summary of responses to the Local Service Board discussion paper at Annex B.

88.   Several respondents emphasised the need for the private sector to be influenced by the duty alongside the public sector. Some respondents made the point that the proposals will help to ensure the public sector will become more sustainable, but that this will have an insignificant effect on the wider sustainable development agenda in Wales unless the private sector is also brought on board with the proposals.

89.   Many respondents made it clear that they were in general support of the proposals, but have stressed that the Welsh Government must show strong leadership by setting an example in following the new duty. Respondents also stated that Welsh Government needs to show effective communication with all

stakeholders, to ensure that everyone has consistent understanding of the duty and the implementation programme.

ANNEX A – Summary of responses from consultation events

A series of consultation events were held in Llandudno, Cardiff and Llandrindod Wells with around 190 people attending. Delegates from a cross section of sectors attended, including those working in health, education, Fire Service , the Police, transport, planning, Local Authorities, and council members. Events were also attended by individuals and representatives of organisation who would not be subject to the proposals in the White Paper, but had an interest in the development of the Bill, and the implications for the delivery of public services.

The events gave an overview of the proposals in the White Paper as well as a series of group table-based discussions and workshops around the main themes of the proposals. Discussions focused on four main areas;

- The benefits organisations themselves would see by considering economic, social, environmental and the longer term in their decision making processes and the how that would improve the public services they deliver.

- The change needed within organisations.

- The wider implications of the proposals.

- The support organisations would need to implement the duty.

These group sessions provided an opportunity for attendees to raise any questions or concerns about the Bill.

With the diversity of attendees at the events, the discussions raised a number of issues and further questions on the proposals. A summary of the statements and questions recorded at the event are listed below.

Benefits

- Recognition that there is a lot of work already happening in Wales and the Bill is being seen as formalising this in legislation.

- Earlier consideration of the three pillars but there is a perceived push to consider economic issues over social and environmental considerations. Economic consideration seen as taking priority because of the phrasing "economic, social, environmental and longer-term".

- Seen as adding value – public services will make better, more balanced decisions, and these will be more outcome focused.

- Drives longer-term thinking.

- Better transparency because of scrutiny.

- Opportunity to look at funding and budgeting mechanisms and cycles Our use of finance/budgeting – end year expenditure doesn't happen in private business – sustainable use of money, carry over/forward investment - central government needs to lead by example – more awareness of Silk commission.

- Best value based on good decision making over lowest cost.

- Aids/ make easier collaborative working.

- Potential to bring together various impact assessments.

- Opportunity to influence the big issues and priorities in Wales in a more sustainable way.

- The challenges of the political cycle with the need to look 50 years ahead, with milestones – look forward by a generation or two

- The need for decisions not being taken in isolation and for there to be a greater element of challenge.

- Driving waste and duplication out of the system.

- Align everything to wellbeing, as sustainable development is complicated.

- The role of resilience in sustainable development.

Changes for organisations in how they work

- Evidence and research informs corporate plans, outcomes and the decision making process.

- Better sharing of good and bad practice.

- Consistency of approach across organisations.

- Funding – change the frameworks and horizons.

- Limited resources should force collaboration and co-production.

- More training and skills-building to share learning wider.

- Are organisations ready and set up for this?

- Better communication and the language around sustainable development.

- Evidencing that sustainable development principles are used to inform decisions.

- It is about governance arrangements within organisations.

- Need to get the buy-in of council and board members.

Implications of the proposals

- Better use of impact assessments and integration tools.

- Welsh Government has to be an exemplar.

- Shared budgets and shared outcomes when working collaboratively.
- Opportunity to challenge traditional cycles – political and financial and processes, governance and how corporate planning is done.
- Being allowed to make and learn from mistakes.

- Need a shared vision.

- Very complex to get it right even for quite simple organisations but once cracked it works.

- A lot of hard work & negotiation early on to get long term clarity – bravery.

- If you achieve it the public will know – articulate to public to see benefits and support them.

- Sustainable development is only one priority amongst lots of other priorities on organisations from Welsh Government etc – back to corporate identity.

- Bill –Welsh Government recognises that there is a problem and this is reaction to put it right – culture change – uphill but this approach allows for flexibility.

- Needs huge amount of determination to bring about change.

- Be bold and learn from mistakes.

- Public sector very introverted – need to harness the energy of Third Sector etc – co-production.

- Public sector driven, public sector smaller in future, Local Authorities to act as facilitators for Third Sector

Support

- Clarity about roles and responsibilities.

- Leadership.

- Financial support to implement changes.

- Training, mentoring and case studies (good and bad) and an organisational toolkit.

- The sustainable development body has to have a real purpose and facilitate change within organisations – a real two-way dialogue. It also needs to drive change and report to Welsh Government on a long -term vision/ strategy for Wales, with a flexible route map.

- A Commissioner has to be an influencer of policy.

- Body; disseminate good practice, challenge Welsh Government – not reactive and responding but proactive – instigate local area groups/cluster groups, benchmark.

- Change cultures and how to provide services – impact on others; departments and other organisations.

- Body should act as the link between public services and Welsh Government to unblock obstacles to sustainable working.

- There needs to be a strong relationship between the Commissioner/ sustainable development body and the AGW/WAO. The expectations of the AGW/WAO needs to be set out in the guidance.

- Keep the guidance simple.

- More consistency and better understanding within the organisation if long term visions broken down into manageable projects – better organisation identity.

- Sustainable development is huge – need to capture creativity and innovation. Provide sustainable development examples for organisations.

- Give organisations an opportunity to embed before WAO stick.

- Organisations able to set out their own criteria for embedding – framework

- Body to proactively support the lower performers – bench marked against better performers based on delivery of their outcomes.

ANNEX B - Provisions relating to Integrated Planning: summary of responses to the Local Service Board discussion paper

1.   The White Paper set out in broad terms the Welsh Government's commitment to explore options for putting integrated planning on a clear statutory footing in the Sustainable Development Bill. During the period of consultation on the White Paper, the Minister for Local Government wrote to Local Service Board members, inviting their views on a discussion paper on what this could mean in practice. This Annex summarises the responses.

Background

2.   By April 2013 all areas of Wales will have in place a Single Integrated Plan (SIP). The SIP integrates and replaces four statutory plans: the Children and Young People Plans, Health Social Care and Well-being Strategies, Community Safety Plans and Community Strategies. They are also the means for discharging the statutory child poverty duty, as well as duties relating to childcare and play sufficiency and participation by children and young people.

3.   The current arrangements for integrated planning are based on a range of separate pieces of legislation. The intention is that the provisions in the Sustainable Development Bill will consolidate the legislative status of Local Service Boards (who lead on the development of SIPs) and SIPs. One of the principal effects of this will be to clarifying the scope of SIPs so that they encompass the full social, economic and environmental outcomes for an area over the long term. This puts them firmly within a Welsh sustainable development context.

Analysis of responses

Breakdown of respondents	
Category	Number
Local service board	13
Local authority	1
Police	3
Health board	1
Government agency / Other Public Sector	1
Professional bodies or associations	2
Housing association	1

General

4.   Two respondents (an LSB and a housing association) were opposed to the main thrust of the proposals. A small number were strongly in favour while most were generally supportive but had comments on specific proposals.

Local service boards

5.   There was general support for the core membership as proposed although there was a perception that the proposed mechanism for enabling Welsh Government and the Third Sector to be members of LSBs gave them a secondary status. There were a number of requests to add named organisations: WCVA, Welsh Government, Housing Associations, Further and Higher Education. There was consensus that LSBs should be empowered to co-opt additional members at their discretion.

6.   Some representations suggested that if LSBs are put on statutory footing it should be done with a light touch: experience to date has shown that co-operation and leadership are more important than formalised structures

Alignment of planning cycle with electoral cycle

7.   There was general support but some concerns that it would be wrong to only take account of electoral planning cycles for local authorities – other organisations have different planning cycles, these should be accommodated or aligned. One respondent suggested that integrated planning should primarily be aligned with the Welsh Government electoral cycle as it provides most of the funding for LSB members.

Role of Local Authorities in convening LSBs

8.   General consensus that this is logical but some comments on resourcing.

Single Needs Assessment / Outcomes Based approach

9.   Consensus in support of this.

Well-being Plan

10.   The name "Well-being plan" prompted a number of responses. Some supported the name while others thought it could be confusing or misleading, given associations with health. Some requested that plans should be given local titles.

11.   There was general consensus that there should be an integrated plan, and widespread support for simplification of the planning and partnership landscape with a clear role for Welsh Government to facilitate this.

Scrutiny

12.   There was general consensus that the scrutiny proposals were proportionate but that any arrangements should align with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011. There were some suggestions that LSB scrutiny should not just be undertaken by elected members.

Role of the Auditor General for Wales

13.   Most respondents supported a role for the Auditor General for Wales (AGW) in auditing Well-being Plans and the governance arrangements of LSBs. This would be a natural extension of the AGW's powers under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and should promote a consistency of approach across all public services in terms of commonality or complementary performance measurement frameworks and improvement regimes.

14.   Respondents suggested there is need for further clarity in terms of the wider audit, inspection and regulatory regime. There remains a risk of burden and duplication with regards the roles of CSSIW and Estyn given their historic role in the former statutory plans, as well as their ongoing role relating to the social care and lifelong learning outcomes within the new Well-being Plans.

Powers of Welsh Ministers

15.   A number of respondents asked for clarity as to the criteria Welsh Government will use when considering plans. There was some wariness about the Welsh Government setting outcomes and a strong emphasis that integrated plans should reflect local needs and outcomes.

16.   There were mixed views on Welsh Government powers to direct one or more LSBs to work together, some fully supportive, others qualified (for example, there should be evidence to support such a requirement, LSBs should be consulted). Clarity was also sought as to how such joint working might align with other regional groups e.g. regional delivery boards.

ANNEX C – Campaign responses

<u>Cymdeithas yr Iaith – 177 responses</u> (all received in Welsh)

Dear Minister of the Environment,

The Sustainable Development Bill is an opportunity for Wales to show leadership on issues that benefit everyone.

We believe that a genuine opportunity exists to be even more innovative in including the Welsh language as part of the definition of sustainability.

I support a Bill that will:

- Make the Welsh language part of the legal definition of sustainability.
- Ensure that the Sustainable Development Body and Commissioner embody these principles by operating through the medium of the Welsh language.
- Places a responsibility on organisations to consider the Welsh language as a factor in decision making and ensure that the Commissioner communicates in Welsh.
- Give a power for communities and individuals to challenge decisions that are likely to undermine the Welsh Language.
- Ensure that wider and stronger powers are placed on the new body to encourage behaviour change to ensure a sustainable future.

Please consider these points when discussing responses to the consultation on the White Paper and in preparation for the Sustainable Development Bill.

<u>Friends of the Earth Cymru – 142 responses</u> (received in English and Welsh)

Dear Environment Minister

A strong bill will be good news for us all - guarding the planet for future generations, sustaining the Welsh language, improving our quality of life and creating green jobs.

I support a bill that will:

- Clearly define sustainable development, taking account of Wales' international impact and respecting environmental limits
- Place a strong duty on public bodies to carry out their work with the objective of achieving sustainable development
- Create a strong and independent Sustainable Development Commissioner who will be a champion for present and future generations

Please take these views into account in considering consultation responses to the White Paper and preparing the Sustainable Development Bill.

ANNEX D – Table of responses

Sector	Name
Academic Bodies (4%)	Bridgend College Bangor University Cardiff Metropolitan University Cardiff University University of Glamorgan University of Dundee
Businesses (6%)	Acclimatise BSW Timber Dwr Cymru Welsh Water Ecostudio Evocati Limited Llanhennock Property Management National Grid Scottish Power Renewables Valero Energy Ltd Wales & West Housing
Government Agency/Other Public Sector (14%)	Amgueddfa Cymru (National Museum Wales) Auditor General for Wales Brecon Beacons National Park Authority Cardiff & Vale University Health Board Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB Cynnal Cymru - Sustain Wales Design Commission for Wales Environment Agency Wales & Countryside Council for Wales Higher Education Funding Council for Wales Higher Education Wales Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales National Assembly for Wales National Library of Wales Natural Resources Wales NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership Procurement Services Public Health Wales Snowdonia National Park Sustainable Development Co-ordinators Cymru The Higher Education Academy Town and Country Planning Association Wales Heads of Environmental Health Welsh Language Commissioner
Local Authorities/ Community & Town Councils (21%)	Aberdare and district Chamber of Trade and Commerce Abergele Town Council Bridgend Environmental Working Group Caerphilly County Borough Council Cardiff Council Carmarthenshire County Council Ceredigion County Council Ceredigion County Council/ Ceredigion LSB

	City and County of Swansea Conwy County Borough Council Conwy County Council and Denbighshire County Council LSB Denbigh Town Council Denbighshire County Council Gwynedd Council Individual (Swansea council) Isle of Anglesey County Council Llanfrynach Community Council, Powys Merthyr Tydfil Local Service Board & Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service Mold Town Council Monmouthshire County Council North Wales Association of Town & larger Community Councils One Voice Wales Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Pembrokeshire County Council Powys County Council Powys Local Service Board Rhondda Cynon Taf Community Borough Council Torfaen County Borough Council Vale of Glamorgan Council Vale of Glamorgan LSB Wrexham County Borough Council
Members of the Public (10%)	15 Private Individuals
Professional Bodies and Associations (14%)	ACCA Cymru/Wales Accounting for Sustainability Wales Forum (A4SW) Association of Welsh RIGS Groups Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Country Land & Business Association Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges Farmers' Union of Wales HEA Wales ESDGC Group Institute for Archaeologists Institution of Civil Engineers Wales Cymru Landscape Institute Wales North East Wales Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites Group RICS Wales Royal Society of Architects in Wales RTPI The Law Society UK Environmental Law Association Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru University and College Union Welsh Further Education Purchasing Consortium Welsh Local Government Association

Third Sector (31%)	Alliance of Welsh National Park Societies
	Bat Conservation Trust
	Brecon Beacons Park Society
	Campaign for National Parks
	Canal and River Trust
	Cardiff Civic Society
	Cardiff Partnership
	Cardiff Transition
	Christian Aid in Wales
	Community Housing Cymru
	Constructing Excellence Wales
	CPRW
	Cyfanfyd
	Cylch - Community Resource Cymru
	Cymdeithas yr Iaith
	Diverse Cymru
	Dyfodol i'r Iaith
	End Child Poverty Network Cymru
	Environment Network for Pembrokeshire
	Equality and Human Rights Commission in Wales
	Friends of Pembrokeshire National Park
	Friends of the Earth Cymru
	GeoConservation UK
	Institute of Historic Building Conservation
	Intergenerational Foundation
	National Federation of Women's Institutes – Wales
	Neath Port Talbot CVS
	Oxfam Cymru
	Pembrokeshire Local Action Network for Enterprise & Development
	Permaculture Cymru
	RenewableUK Cymru
	RSPB Cymru
	Soil Association
	Stop Climate Chaos Cymru
	Sustainable Wales
	Swansea Environmental Forum Executive Committee
	The National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
	UK National Commission for UNESCO
	Vincent Wildlife Trust
	Wales Africa Community Links
	Wales Council for Voluntary Action
	Wales Environment Link
	Wales International Development Hub & Welsh Centre for International Affairs
	Wildlife Trusts Wales
	WWF Cymru
	Ymddiriedolaeth Genedlaethol/National Trust