

From: [Karsten Brußk](#)
To: [NDE](#)
Subject: DCC: Draft NDF consultation response
Date: 25 November 2019 10:37:51
Attachments: [Denbighshire NDF Response Form \(November 2019\).pdf](#)

Good morning.

Please find attached the finalised draft NDF consultation response from Denbighshire County Council.

This document supersedes the previously submitted (DCC Officer) response form (see email 15/11/2019 – 09:26).

Happy to assist with any query.

Thanks

Karsten

Karsten Brußk MRTPI

Cyngor Sir Ddinbych

Swyddog Cynllunio

Gwasanaethau Cynllunio a Gwarchod y

Cyhoedd

Caledfryn, Dinbych

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Ysgrifennwch ataf yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg.

Ni fydd unrhyw oedi wrth ymateb i ohebiaeth a dderbyniwyd yn Gymraeg.

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Please write to me in Welsh or English.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh. There will be no delay in responding to correspondence received in Welsh.

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Mae'r wybodaeth a gynhwysir yn yr e-bost hwn ac unrhyw ffeiliau a drosglwyddir gydag o wedi eu bwriadu yn unig ar gyfer pwy bynnag y cyfeirir ef ato neu atynt. Os ydych wedi derbyn yr e-bost hwn drwy gamgymeriad, hysbyswch yr anfonwr ar unwaith os gwelwch yn dda. Mae cynnwys yr e-bost yn cynrychioli barn yr unigolyn(ion) a enwir uchod ac nid yw o angenrheidrwydd yn cynrychioli barn Cyngor Sir Ddinbych. Serch hynny, fel Corff Cyhoeddus, efallai y bydd angen i Gyngor Sir Ddinbych ddatgelu'r e-bost hwn [neu unrhyw ymateb iddo] dan ddarpariaethau deddfwriaethol.

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Consultation Response Form

| | |
|---|--|
| Your name | Lead Member for Planning, Public Protection and Safer Communities at Denbighshire County Council |
| Your address | PO Box 62 Ruthin LL15 9AZ |
| Preferred contact details (email/phone/post) | Denbighshire County Council Planning and Public Protection Services Phone: 01824 706916 Email: planningpolicy@denbighshire.gov.uk |
| Organisation (if applicable) | Denbighshire County Council |

1. NDF Outcomes (chapter 3)

The NDF has proposed 11 Outcomes as an ambition of where we want to be in 20 years' time.

- Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree the 11 Outcomes are a realistic vision for the NDF?

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | <i>Don't know</i> | <i>No opinion</i> |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- To what extent do you agree with the 11 Outcomes as ambitions for the NDF?

| Agree with all of them | Agree with most of them | Agree with some of them | Agree with none of them | <i>Don't know</i> | <i>No opinion</i> |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- If you disagree with any of the 11 Outcomes, please tell us why:

The 11 NDF outcomes comply with national planning principles and the sustainable placemaking outcomes, as set out in Planning Policy Wales. They also reflect the thrust of legislative texts and support objectives from other national strategies and governmental programmes.

There is however no information on how Welsh Government is going to monitor progress towards achieving any of them or the implementation of NDF policies in support of individual outcomes. It would be beneficial to demonstrate in greater detail how the draft NDF outcomes are supported by the spatial strategy and 33 policies. In its current form, the draft NDF outcomes are presented as bold political statements in an individual chapter.

2. Spatial Strategy (policies 1 - 4)

The NDF **spatial strategy** is a guiding framework for where large-scale change and nationally important developments will be focused over the next 20 years.

- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the spatial strategy and key principles for development in...

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | <i>Don't know</i> | <i>No opinion</i> |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Urban areas (Policies 1, 2 & 3) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rural areas (Policy 4) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- If you have any comments on the spatial strategy or key principles for development in urban and rural areas, please tell us:

National policy on supporting urban centres, town centre regeneration and diversification of rural areas is already comprehensively set out in Planning Policy Wales and accompanying Technical Advice Notes. Policy 3 puts a greater focus on the role of public bodies in revitalising declining town centres which is welcomed by Denbighshire County Council.

Unlike the Wales Spatial Plan, the draft NDF is generally silent on what sustainable growth should look like in different areas of Wales. There is not much information beyond addressing housing need and the provision of public services. For example, if the NDF was to rely on other national strategies or programmes to deliver vital infrastructure in town centres, it should be referred to in the supporting text or in a list of links at the end of the document.

Policy 4 'Supporting Rural Communities' falls short in providing any information on Welsh Government's objective to support and diversify rural areas. The policy is greatly dependent on lower tier plans but without providing any details on how to address the future of challenges in rural areas. This is very disappointing for Denbighshire because the local authority is largely rural in nature. What role will traditionally small market towns play in the development of Wales? Is Welsh Government committed to support these areas at the same level as the identified growth areas?

3. Affordable Housing (policy 5)

The NDF sets out the approach for providing affordable housing, encouraging local authorities, social landlords, and small and medium-sized construction and building enterprises to build more homes.

- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the approach to increasing affordable housing?

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | <i>Don't know</i> | <i>No opinion</i> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- If you disagree, in what other ways can the NDF approach the delivery of affordable housing?

Whilst increasing the delivery of affordable housing is generally supported by Denbighshire County Council, it must be kept in mind that success does largely depend on the availability of Welsh Government funding and the great commitment of registered social landlords. Both are subject to decisions that are made outside any control of Strategic Development Plans / Local Development Plans.

The NDF sets out figures on housing need and affordable homes in the supporting text of individual policies, for example p. 30 It is imperative that Welsh Government clarifies the relation between these figures and the housing requirements for individual Local Development Plans. Denbighshire is in the North Wales region which would be required to deliver 51% of the additional homes to be affordable between 2018/19 and 2022/23. Welsh Government does not provide any supporting evidence on viability and deliverability, or has announced additional funding programmes.

What is the point of providing housing need figures for the period 2018/19 to 2038, see page 30? The NDF is not expected to be published before Autumn 2020 and the NDF plan period runs until 2040. It is also understood that the finalised document will be based on the updated 2017 Household Projections which are published towards the end of 2019.

4. Mobile Action Zones (policy 6)

- To what extent do you agree or disagree the identification of mobile action zones will be effective in encouraging better mobile coverage?

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | <i>Don't know</i> | <i>No opinion</i> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- If you disagree, in what other ways can the NDF improve mobile phone coverage in the areas which currently have limited access?

The Council supports Welsh Government's effort to increase the mobile coverage and broadband speed in Wales.

There is however no information or evidence on the definition of 'Mobile Action Zones' (MAZ) in the NDF or supporting documentation. What are the constituent criteria for a MAZ? Will local authorities be consulted on extent and site boundaries?

It is understood from discussions with Welsh Government that the delivery of the required infrastructure strongly depends on private infrastructure providers. Considering the policy's deficiencies, it is currently not much more than a political statement.

It is recommended to map potentially required grid infrastructure in conjunction with mobile action zones so that the provision of new infrastructure can be streamlined and coordinated to avoid unnecessary adverse effects on local communities.

5. Low Emission Vehicles (policy 7)

- To what extent do you agree or disagree that policy 7 will enable and encourage the roll-out of charging infrastructure for ultra-low emission vehicles?

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | <i>Don't know</i> | <i>No opinion</i> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- If you disagree, in what other ways can the NDF enable and encourage the roll-out of charging infrastructure for ultra-low emission vehicles?

It is proposed to either change Building Regulations or introduce new legislation to set out the following requirements on developers:

- Installation of electric vehicle charging points in new developments, including number and positions; and
- New development incorporates adequate electricity infrastructure, including a sufficient level of voltage.

Additional design details and guidance would be welcomed. Clarification is also required on how developments could overcome the hurdle of insufficient voltage is provided on site. Planning conditions cannot address this basic problem in some parts of Wales.

6. Green Infrastructure (policies 8 & 9)

- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the approach to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity and ecological networks?

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | <i>Don't know</i> | <i>No opinion</i> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7. Renewable Energy and District Heat Networks (policies 10-15)

- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the NDF's policies to lower carbon emissions in Wales using...

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | <i>Don't know</i> | <i>No opinion</i> |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Large scale wind and solar developments | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| District heat networks | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- If you disagree with the NDF's approaches to green infrastructure, renewable energy or district heat networks, what alternative approaches should we consider to help Wales to enhance its biodiversity and transition to a low carbon economy?

Policies 8 and 9: Whilst policy thrust is welcomed and supported by Denbighshire County Council, both policies basically depend on Welsh Government (and Natural Resources Wales) actions before being operational. If Welsh Government were to identify an ecological network or land to be covered by the national forest it should share these information with the Council. We are currently in the process of reviewing the Local Development Plan, and according to the draft NDF policies, should reflect these sites in the local plan.

Policies 10 to 13: The Council generally supports Welsh Government in increasing the production of renewable energy. However, there are reservation over the

designation of Wales Energy Priority Areas without providing detailed maps with local boundaries and missing background information, especially for site no. 15. It is also observed that policies 10 to 13 are differently worded from other policies, namely criteria-based. Would it be a better idea to address these matters in Planning Policy Wales and accompanying Technical Advice Notes?

Additional points on draft policies 10 to 13:

- Wales Energy Priority Areas map should be OS-based with local authority areas;
- Policy 10: clarification is sought on what is meant by 'local social, economic and environmental benefits have been maximised...' (definition of 'have been maximised', objectors might use criteria to make renewable projects unviable);
- Policy 11: what defines 'no unacceptable adverse effects';
- Should policies 10, 11 and 13 include de-forestation as an unacceptable adverse effect, in light of draft policy 9?

8. The Regions (policy 16)

- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the principle of developing Strategic Development Plans prepared at a regional scale?

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | <i>Don't know</i> | <i>No opinion</i> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

The NDF identifies three overall regions of Wales, each with their own distinct opportunities and challenges. These are North Wales, Mid and South West Wales, and South East Wales.

9. North Wales (policies 17-22)

We have identified Wrexham and Deeside as the main focus of development in North Wales. A new green belt will be created to manage the form of growth. A number of coastal towns are identified as having key regional roles, while we support growth and development at Holyhead Port. We will support improved transport infrastructure in the region, including a North Wales Metro, and support better

connectivity with England. North West Wales is recognised as having potential to supply low-carbon energy on a strategic scale.

- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed policies and approach for the North Region?

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | <i>Don't know</i> | <i>No opinion</i> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10. Mid and South West Wales (policies 23-26)

Swansea Bay and Llanelli is the main urban area within the region and is our preferred location for growth. We also identify a number of rural and market towns, and the four Haven Towns in Pembrokeshire, as being regionally important. The haven Waterway is nationally important and its development is supported. We support proposals for a Swansea Bay Metro.

- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed policies and approach for the Mid and South West Region?

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | <i>Don't know</i> | <i>No opinion</i> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

11. South East Wales (policies 27-33)

In South East Wales we are proposing to enhance Cardiff's role as the capital and secure more sustainable growth in Newport and the Valleys. A green belt around Newport and eastern parts of the region will support the spatial strategy and focus development on existing cities and towns. Transport Orientated Development, using locations benefitting from mainline railway and Metro stations, will shape the approach to development across the region. There is support for the growth and development of Cardiff Airport.

- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed policies and approach for the South East Region?

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know | No opinion |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

If you have any comments about the NDF's approach or policies to the three regions, please tell us. If you have any alternatives, please explain them and tell us why you think they would be better.

Introduction: Welsh Government charged Cardiff University with conducting research into the potential number of Welsh regions: 'Identification of Regional Areas for the National Development Framework - Final Report to Welsh Government'.

The recommendation was 'Four regions are ultimately proposed (Figure 20)' (Paragraph 9.4) and 'Based on this research, it is difficult to justify such a large Central Wales region as identified in the WSP, particularly to the North and South. As previously noted, the connection between Ceredigion and Powys is not consistently strong. Pembrokeshire as a separate region would also be difficult to justify, as no regional maps produced for this research and only one sub-regional map suggest Pembrokeshire as a separate region.' (Paragraph 10.3) Neither of these research recommendations has been carried forward into the draft NDF. This suggest that political considerations outweigh (scientific) research / credible evidence.

North Wales region: The principle of regional development in Wales, including the introduction of Strategic Development Plans (SDPs), is welcomed and supported. There is however a strong objection to making the production of SDPs mandatory for every Local Planning Authority. It should be for Denbighshire County Council and its neighbouring local authorities to decide whether, how, and what matters are part of the regional plan. Will Welsh Government provide additional funding to support the production of SDPs?

Policy 17: All six North Wales local authorities work jointly on addressing socio-economic disparities throughout the region. For example, the North Wales Growth Deal address economic growth and infrastructure provisions in the entire region. It is

disappointing to see that Welsh Government strongly focusses regional growth and investment in the most eastern part of North Wales. Strategically important growth, centred on Wrexham and Deeside, should not adversely affect growth in other areas of North Wales.

Policy 18: This policy identifies the coastal arc from Caernafon to Deeside as the focus for managed growth; including Rhyl and Prestatyn in Denbighshire. Clarification is sought on how and what managed growth in the north of Denbighshire means? How does this approach align with Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales policy on directing development away from areas of flood risk? What is Welsh Government's evidence to focus regional growth primarily along the North Wales Coast? What will be the benefits from focussing national investments in the coastal area for the market towns and rural areas of Denbighshire?

Policy 19: Considering the spatial constraints derived from geography, nature protection and flood risk, why has the area around Deeside and Wrexham been designed as a national growth centre and been highlighted as a major focal point for 'green belt' designations. This could become an additional factor in (artificially) reducing the amount of developable land in the east of North Wales. The concept of 'green belts' contains the element of longevity that goes beyond the review circles of Local Development Plans, Strategic Development Plans, and National Development Framework.

Policy 21: The Council generally supports any improvement works to the transport infrastructure in North Wales. It is however queried why Welsh Government highlights the links to North West England but does not put forward any proposal for connections between North Wales and South Wales.

Policy 22: The supporting text highlights Denbighshire as an important provider of limestone for the industry. It must however be noted that quarry in Denbigh is the only active quarry not located in a designated area for landscape protection, namely the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

12. Integrated Sustainability Appraisal

As part of the consultation process, an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) was conducted to assess the social, economic and environmental impacts of a plan. The report identified a number of monitoring indicators, including health, equalities, Welsh language, the impact on rural communities, children's rights, climate change and economic development.

- Do you have any comments on the findings of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Report? Please outline any further alternative monitoring indicators you consider would strengthen the ISA.

No comment.

13. Habitats Regulations Assessment

As part of the development of the NDF, a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) was undertaken. The purpose of the HRA process is to identify, assess and address any 'significant effects' of the plan on sites such as Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas for birds.

- Do you have any comments on the Habitats Regulations Assessment report?

No comment

14. Welsh Language

We would like to know your views on the effects that the NDF would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

- What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

NDF Outcome #4 specifically sets out Welsh Government ambition 'We aim to have a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 – an increase of almost 80% on current levels.' In addition, NDF p.70 and p.71 contain a comprehensive table that assesses the relationship between the NDF's policy and the 'Outcomes' it sets out to achieve. There are a number of policies, for example P3 and P17, which appear to comply with the NDF Outcome to support places with a thriving Welsh language. However, neither of these policies contain specific reference to the Welsh language or culture. Considering the importance of the Welsh language and culture for local communities in Denbighshire, it is disappointing that Welsh Government did not include an individual policy on Welsh language in the NDF. This new policy should highlight the importance of the Welsh language for the production and content of lower tier plans and the decision-making process in Development Management. How will Welsh Government monitor any progress towards achieving Outcome #4? Are there any suggested monitoring actions should the NDF fail to deliver on the Welsh Government target?

Please note that Denbighshire County Council have great concern about the survival

of the Welsh language if it was not treated as a priority within the NDF. National policy on safeguarding the Welsh language has to be included in the NDF and in every plan put forward.

Please also explain how you believe the proposed NDF could be formulated or changed so as to have:

- I. positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and
- II. no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Welsh Government should consider the introduction of an individual policy on Welsh language and culture as both are strongly linked to planning, for example, highlighting the importance and contribution of nationally significant places and historic buildings for regional growth and locational decisions.

15. Further comments

- Are there any further comments that you would like to make on the NDF, or any alternative proposals you feel we should consider?

Strategic Development Plans

Please note that the former Cabinet Secretary Lesley Griffiths wrote a letter, dated 13th December 2017, which invited Denbighshire County Council (DCC) to consider producing a SPG with its neighbouring authorities. The invitation was not taken up in North Wales.

Councillors are concerned about the loss of influence and participation in, for example, defining housing growth requirements and broad spatial distribution, regionally important employment sites and addressing the need of Gypsy and Travellers.

Consultation Material

The Council is disappointed about the availability of insufficient information on Wales Energy Priority Areas. It would have been of great assistance if the site boundary for Priority Area #15 were made available. The maps contained in the NDF and ARUP's background reports do not show any County boundaries. The ARUP report also lacks information on solar energy for Priority Area #15.

It is felt that the consultation response form is leading and missing off the crucial

elements of the NDF. For example, question7 'To what extent do you agree or disagree with the NDF's policies to lower carbon emissions in Wales using (1) Large scale wind and solar developments, and (2) District heat networks. If you disagree with the NDF's approaches to green infrastructure, renewable energy or district heat networks, what alternative approaches should we consider to help Wales to enhance its biodiversity and transition to a low carbon economy?' Whilst there is no disagreement over the need to lower carbon emissions, the crucial NDF element is the designation of 'Wales Energy Priority Areas' in parts of Wales and the definition of policy criteria for assessing pertinent proposals. This is not covered anywhere in the questions.

Denbighshire County Council 'Climate and Ecological Emergency'

On July 2nd 2019, Denbighshire County Council passed the motion to immediately:

- Declare a climate and ecological emergency;
- Commit to making the authority net carbon zero by 2030; and to
- Call on the Welsh Government and UK Government to provide assistance and resources to enable us to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance biodiversity.

Members seek assurance that Welsh Government will support the Council by ensuring the National Development Framework and resources contributes towards the stated objectives.

16. Are you...?

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Providing your own personal response | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Submitting a response on behalf of an organisation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Responses to the consultation will be shared with the National Assembly for Wales and are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|