

Rebecca Evans AC/AM
Y Gweinidog Cyllid a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Finance and Trefnydd



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref RE/39/2019

Rhun ap Iorwerth AM
rhun.apiorwerth@assembly.wales

27 November 2019

Dear Rhun,

During the Oral Assembly Questions debate on 16 October 2019, you made reference to actions by New Zealand and Scottish Governments on well-being, and asked whether any application has been made, or any invitation has been given, to the Welsh Government to join an international well-being alliance.

In 2018, the governments of Scotland, Iceland, and New Zealand established the network of Well-being Economy Governments (WEGo). It is an initiative to enable governments to engage, share and promote innovation in policy making to achieve greater well-being, through their economic, social and environmental agendas. The secretariat of the group is currently hosted by the Scottish Government. The membership of the group has grown organically through existing networks between Scottish, New Zealand and Icelandic governments, and the group would welcome other Governments who share an interest in this area becoming involved. There is currently no formal invitation process to be a member of the group, but Governments who wish to join are expected to commit to meeting the objectives of the group, including participation in annual meetings and Policy Labs to share experience and expertise.

Given the Welsh Government's experience on well-being through the Well-being of Future Generations Act, officials have been engaged in the development of the initiative from its early stages and we have been tracking its development ever since. Welsh Government officials attended the pre-launch event in September 2018 in Scotland but did not attend the launch at the OECD World Forum event in November 2018 in South Korea. The first WEGo Policy Labs took place in May 2019 which brought together a small working group of officials to share experiences with a focus on collaboration to develop practical and scalable solutions. Whilst Welsh Government officials were not present, I was pleased to see that in the OECD paper which was shared with attendees on adopting a well-being approach in central government and that the Well-being of Future Generations Act was highlighted. My understanding is that we have not received a formal invitation from WEGo to become a member given its organic nature, nor have we made a formal approach to join other than our continued engagement with officials from the Scottish and New Zealand government.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

However, having been briefed on the benefits of the network, I will be considering how Welsh Government can be a more active member so that we can share our experience, and of course learn from others.

Our engagement in the WEGo initiative will complement our other international partnerships such as Regions4SD (Regions for Sustainable Development), which brings together places including the Basque region, Catalonia, Rio de Janeiro and Quebec to share learning on implementing the Sustainable Development agenda.

Our discussions with counterparts in the Scottish and New Zealand Governments have been helpful in informing our approach to our 2020-21 budget preparations. My officials continue to work with the Future Generations Commissioner's office on our journey to further embed the principles of the Act in budget planning. Specifically, we are developing a Budget Improvement Plan to be published alongside our 2020-21 Draft Budget that will outline our vision, including short-term and medium-term ambitions, to improve the budget process in line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

With regard to the work in Scotland on their National Performance Framework, the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires Scottish Ministers to determine outcomes for Scotland. Here in Wales, we went further than this, and the National Assembly for Wales agreed the outcomes for Wales through the seven well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. So whilst Scotland's performance framework consists of 11 national outcomes and 81 national indicators, in Wales we have 7 national outcomes (the well-being goals) and 46 national indicators¹ which we report on annually through the Annual Well-being of Wales report - the most recent of which was published in September 2019². Securing the national well-being goals in legislation provides a stronger basis for these outcomes to shape Wales' future, with well-being at its heart.

The suite of national indicators provides a comprehensive measurement of many of the issues that are important to people's well-being, including a range of subjective and objective measures. The national indicators provide a clear focus on outcomes for Wales, our citizens and society - not outputs and inputs - and this is reflected across the 46 indicators. For example, the national indicators measure aspects such as loneliness, mental well-being, healthy behaviors, satisfaction with the local area, and whether people feel they can influence decisions affecting their local areas. These indicators go beyond GDP as a measure of progress because in Wales we are also concerned with the well-being of our environment, our economy, our society and our culture which in turn has an impact on individual well-being.

¹ <https://gov.wales/well-being-wales-progress-reports-against-well-being-goals>

² <https://gov.wales/well-being-wales-2019>

I would be happy for my officials to give you a technical briefing on the above matters if you so wish.

I have also copied this letter to Sophie Howe (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Evans". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear, legible font.

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Cc : Sophie Howe (Future Generations Commissioner for Wales)