Bwrdd Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus
Ceredigion
Public Services Board

Caru·Love
Ceredigion

CEREDIGION LOCAL WELL-BEING PLAN

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

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Foreword

Welcome to the 2020-21 Ceredigion Local Well-being Plan Annual Report. This report highlights the steps taken by the Ceredigion Public Services Board (PSB) to meet the aims set out in our Local Well-being Plan for Ceredigion. It outlines the work that PSB partners have delivered in order to meet our collective 'well-being duty' to improve the economic, environmental, cultural and social well-being of people and communities in Ceredigion.

In light of the challenges experienced over the last 12 months, and as a direct consequence of Coronavirus, we have striven to apply the 'Covid-lens' to all discussions and actions over the last period. This has proved vital as partners have worked tirelessly on an individual and collective basis to address the challenges posed. Each partner organisation has clearly demonstrated their commitment and support to the well-being of residents, businesses and the communities of Ceredigion and as we cautiously move positively into recovery, the application of the 'Covid-lens' is proving increasingly important in order to appropriately and safely guide us all along the path into the future.

Over the last year we have taken the opportunity to review our priorities and work stream's in order to ensure that we focus our attention and efforts on the key themes across the County. Priorities have been re-set and actions over the last 12 months have quite rightly focused on where our collective influence adds value above and beyond what we already do as individual organisations.

Over the last year we have experienced a completely different way of working and this has provided a renewed focus on the importance of partnership working and the co-production of solutions. The fierce challenges have seen all partners collaborating and ever closer ties have led to the increasing practical implementation of established mechanisms to work together for the benefit of all. Flexibility has been key, both in terms of the strategic context and the practical interventions which have been necessitated by the pandemic.

In 2020-21a targeted approach based on key actions has resulted in positive outcomes which are directly linked to the well-being of individuals, businesses and community groups across Ceredigion. Throughout this year there has been an investment of time and effort in the adaptation of new working practices whilst always striving to involve more people and communities in this journey of improving their well-being.

In light of the continued challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic, once again this year's Annual Report is more concise but our journey quite rightly continues to address our Well-being Aims and to implement our vision for the economic, environmental, social and cultural future of Ceredigion.

We wish to acknowledge the commitment and support that partners have demonstrated and thank them for their continued recognition of the importance of working collectively for the mutual benefit of enhancing the well-being of people and communities in Ceredigion.

Cllr Ellen ap Gwynn, Chair of Ceredigion Public Services Board

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 gives a legally-binding common purpose of seven Well-being Goals and five Ways of Working designed to support and deliver a public service that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

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.

Seven National Well-being Goals

COVID-19 Statement

As a direct consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic the implementation of the Project Group actions have been reviewed. Following the initial suspension of meetings during the early part of 2020-21 Project Groups have, in an appropriately phased approach, been brought back on-line with the positive engagement of partners via remote meeting solutions. This followed a very challenging first 4 months of 2020/21 where-by members of staff from across partner organisations were re-deployed and mutual aid activated during the emergency response.

The first PSB meeting of 2020-21 was held in July 2020 through virtual means. Discussions at this point were rightly dominated by the impact of COVID-19 that led the Board to consider in detail appropriate responses to the challenges posed. It was agreed to encourage each Project Group to undertake a full review of its priorities and outline its forward action plan.

The first Project Group to re-commence its work was the Understanding our Communities Project Group, with its membership directly drawing on the expertise of personnel involved in the direct design and delivery of support services to assist communities. All partners demonstrated a keen commitment to the work and wished to positively contribute to assist. During 2020-21 this Project Group has strived to ensure that voices have been heard, guidance has been developed and that solutions have been implemented. Working in partnership with strong participation from the 3rd sector during 2020-21 the emphasis of the group has been firmly placed on the importance of community engagement, the co-production of solutions and the increasingly vital importance of harnessing the strength of volunteer capacity to build sustained resilience across and between partners.

From September 2020 onwards other Project Group meetings re-started. The Climate Change and Natural Resources, Co-location and Integration of Front–line Services, Resilience Training and Enterprise and Innovation Project Groups have now recommenced meetings. The Social and Green Prescribing Project Group, under the Chairmanship of the Director of Public Health for Hywel Dda University Health Board, has not met since the beginning of 2020, when it held its regional symposium at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Lampeter. The workshops at this partnership event identified a number of key areas of focus however, due to capacity considerations and emergency priorities the group has only been able to maintain a watching brief on developments within the sector via the information platform, Basecamp. Ideas from within Ceredigion, the West Wales region and indeed the whole of Wales continue to be shared between partners with a view to continuing with this vital work which will assist greatly during the recovery phase.

The hosting of partnership meetings through virtual means has resulted in increased representation and participation from the majority of partners. Each Project Group has

completed a full review of their priorities and outlined their new Action Plans for 2020/21. This review enabled each Project Group to firmly place their priorities and Action Plan through the COVID lens. This has been a very positive development as partners have built upon relationships which had been formed over previous years and organisations have contributed to the co-production of the new Action Plans. Partners have also demonstrated further commitment to individual tasks through a direct implementation role via Task and Finish Groups. This is particularly the case with Understanding our Communities Project Group and Climate Change and Natural Resources Project Group. More detail on the work of the Task and Finish Groups along with the priorities of each individual Project Group can be found in Section 3.

Delivering the Local Well-being Plan

The Local Well-being plan, agreed by Ceredigion Services Board on the 16th April 2018 is delivered through Project Groups, comprising of relevant officers from across the PSB partners. These Project Groups draw upon the skills and expertise of individuals with relevant specialist knowledge and strive to represent the diversity of our communities across Ceredigion.

Climate Change and Natural Resources Project Group

Create environmentally responsible and safe communities that can adapt and respond to the effects of climate change.

Support communities to enhance their relationship with the natural environment and prepare for extreme weather events.

Reviewed Priorities

A key objective of this Project Group is to support communities and enhance their relationship with the natural environment, thus preparing them for extreme weather events. This aim was identified as a priority by the PSB as it is widely understood that climate change is an acknowledged threat to our long term future, likewise the impact of modern life on our natural assets.

For 2020/21the co-produced actions for this Project Group were as follows:

- Preparation of a funding bid for submission to NRW and the implementation of agreed actions.
- Group members to share good practice and actively support Project Group discussions.
- Consideration of pilot projects and other support programmes.

Key actions undertaken in 2020/21

1. **Re-connecting to Nature**

In December 2020 Resources for Change (R4C) Ltd. were appointed by Ceredigion County Council, acting on behalf of the Climate Change and Natural Resources Project Group, to identify publicly owned land in the county that is accessible and promotes biodiversity and health and well-being.

Key elements of the report:

- The purpose of this report was to identify ways to enhance biodiversity, and to increase the opportunities for connections between people and nature.
- The work has produced a long list of publicly owned sites that meet or have potential to meet SINC (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) criteria as well as accessible sites that will enhance opportunities for people to better understand and enjoy local nature and green spaces and improve their health and well-being.
- Along with the compilation of a long-list of over 170 publicly owned sites with ecological / community enhancement potential, seven potential thematic projects have been identified that will enable direct access to nature. These themes include 57 sites which are geographically dispersed across the County.

- Opportunities have been identified to include tree planting, gardening, walking and cycling, litter picking, creation of wildlife refuges and community art projects. There is potential for access for all through path improvements and consideration of locations very close to or within communities. Habitats range from coastal, meadow, woodland and those within urban spaces.

These sites are:

- ABERAERON: **Key Theme:** Creation & Restoration of Semi-natural Grassland
- ABERYSTWYTH: **Key Theme:** Community Wildlife Projects
- CARDIGAN: **Key Theme:** Afon Teifi and Pollinators
- LAMPETER: **Key Theme:** Woodland and Freshwater Wildlife
- LLANDYSUL: **Key Theme:** Creation & Restoration of Semi-natural Grassland
- LLANILAR: **Key Theme:** Circular Wildlife Walk
- NEW QUAY TO LLANARTH: **Key Theme:** Coastal scrublands and water quality

Potential funding sources as at March 2021 have been outlined for the above themed projects which will provide a key focus for the future Action Plan for this Project Group as well as creating links with the other Project Groups.

"…….a Task & Finish Group has been established to support the process of developing and driving forward potential key actions identified by this commissioned report across publically owned sites."

2. **Love Where you Live Campaign**

The campaign was launched on the 25th of January, 2021 with three calls to action for community groups, or individuals. The initial Facebook post has been viewed over 1000 times and traffic to the platform continues to increase.

"……full details of this campaign for individuals and community groups can be found at Love Where You Live."

Key elements of the campaign include:

From your Garden: To support groups to plant at home and look at community planting as restrictions lift.

- Shared links with "Adam yn yr Ardd" - bilingual gardening video blog, with videos which are aimed at Welsh learners.
- Linked with local small business "Harvst" who produce smart greenhouses and have a strong ethos of encouraging food growing.
- Linked in with the Botanical Gardens in Carmarthen – Blog about supporting Bees.
- Supported community groups across Ceredigion to plant seeds/ plants for the National Day of Reflection.

- Developing plans with several community food growing schemes – hoping to form a network in Ceredigion.

From your Heart: Initially linked to walking, with the idea of painting stones to put out in local communities for people to find while they are walking.

- Actions to 'love' your local area, linked with "Naturehood", a community project from Earthwatch Europe, working to reverse wildlife decline.
- Translation of factsheets detailing ideas for people to support their local environment :
    - Creating a wildlife passageway
    - Making leaf and log piles
    - Making a wildlife pond and using flowers as pollinators
- Blog focused on Red Squirrels in Ceredigion.
- Shared local action like the mural for Earth hour in Cardigan.
- Working with local groups to support their community work e.g. Caru Aber.
- Looking at how the campaign can be used further to support communities as restrictions are lifted.

From your Front Door: People were asked to share positive experiences of walks within the community. Sharing details of where they walk and the different things that they see.

- Local press articles to raise awareness of the campaign and encourage people to submit their walking routes and photos.
- Walks from Caru Cererdigion shared.
- Links with Walking for Wellbeing Ceredigion to promote their virtual walks. Opportunities identified to join community walks, provide Volunteer leader training and Peer support for the future.
- Working with Cered and local care home residents to develop bilingual fact sheets of native plants and birds for people to identify while they are walking and gardening. Guides are also being considered for sensory gardens incorporating herbs and scented plants.

This project has focused on building relationships with community groups who are developing different community growing projects – these are also being highlighted as part of national gardening week and details of useful links can be seen below:

"…….*useful links providing additional information are available at :*

Community Growing

Adam yn yr Ardd

National Day of Reflection

From Your Front Door "

Sharing of good practice and increasing the knowledge base

These elements are essential in order to underpin the work of this Project Group and therefore during 2020/21 a small Research Task Group was established.

The focus of this Task Group included the involvement of Partners in a Climate Resilience Pilot Project funded by NRW with a particular focus on the production of embedded Community Resilience Plans. This work was about Climate Resilience **-** planning for a different future as a result of climate change that we are already tied into and aimed to provide an overview of climate impacts and risks to the Town and to outline the priorities for organisations, community groups and individuals to work on to build resilience.

Consideration has also been given by this Project Group to key strategies developed by partners and the direct consideration of student participation in initiatives in order to enhance future activities.

> *"…….a Task & Finish Group has been established to consider research opportunities, harnessing the skills of under-graduate and post-graduate students via the provision of opportunities for direct involvement in key project areas."*

Proposed actions for the future

The forward action plan for this Project Group will continue to focus on the proposals within the Re-connecting Nature scoping report, the continuation and further development of community based actions focused on the sharing of good practice with the Love Where you Live Campaign and the continued linking of project actions with the key strategies of partner organisations.

The emphasis will be placed on maintaining a keen eye on the recovery plans as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Understanding Our Communities Project Group

Create conditions for communities to support individuals from all backgrounds to live fulfilling, independent lives.

Develop and sustain social networks, and cultural and linguistic opportunities in order to enhance well-being and maintain independence.

Reviewed Priorities

As previously mentioned, the Understanding Our Communities Project Group was the first to recommence following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the vital sharing of information between communities and public services during a period when responding swiftly to support those most vulnerable within our communities was paramount. This was particularly important as the rural nature of Ceredigion, sparsity of settlements and challenges including digital exclusion and isolation had the potential to be negatively amplified by the impact of COVID-19. A review of the current priorities was undertaken to ensure that the work of the Project Group met the needs of both communities and partner organisations in light of the pandemic, whilst recognising that the work programme should remain flexible to respond to changes in circumstance as appropriate.

For 2020/21, the co-produced actions for this Project Group were as follows:

- Identify geographical communities and communities of interest – Data and community assets.
- Develop programme of engagement with communities and agree clear purpose and message to communicate the vision and encourage participation – Engagement and Communication.
- Work with communities to understand their assets – including buildings, people, skills, activities, events and services – Data and community assets.
- Support communities to work as Community Service Boards – Co-production.

Key Actions Undertaken in 2020/2021

1. **Data and Community Assets**

The Project Group have continued to gather reports and results from recent community engagement exercises. As a result of COVID-19 restrictions, some exercises and projects were placed on hold temporarily such as the Place Plans, whilst engagement opportunities had to be reconsidered with a focus on digital consultation as opposed to face to face. Community consultations have included those conducted by Cered in Aberaeron and Lampeter, Rural Futures in Llandysul and New Quay, Cynnal y Cardi in Lampeter and Llangrannog, and CAVO in Llandysul, Cardigan and Penparcau. Gathering feedback and reports from exercises such as the Place Plans and community engagement allows for greater understanding of need and identification of potential areas for future work.

In readiness for the next Assessment of Local Well-being which will be conducted in 2021/2022, a Task & Finish Group of the Project Group has been established to support the process of developing the draft engagement and communication plan. With PSB organisations reaching far into communities, the expertise of the Project Group will prove invaluable in identifying key stakeholders and events through which engagement on the Assessment of Local Well-being can be carried out. This process will prove imperative in reaching those communities disadvantaged, marginalised and seldom heard and ensuring that their voices are heard and needs accounted for. Project Group members will also take part in a facilitated workshop in order to collate their thoughts and expertise via polls, virtual white boards and discussion around well-being themes in the context of understanding our communities.

"…….a Task & Finish Group has been established to support the process of developing the draft engagement and communication plan for the next Assessment of Local Well-being."

2. Engagement and Communication

Developments regarding Writemedia and Engagement HQ continue to be reported to the Project Group with the aim of utilising these digital engagement platforms as a repository for engagement reports. The development of Engagement HQ has remained challenging due to partner capacity during COVID-19, but it is hoped that the platform can be utilised in the future as a tool for continuous engagement in order to minimise community consultation exercises. Discussions have been held by the Project Group on how Engagement HQ can be utilised to support a Participatory Budgeting approach in New Quay, following the success of a similar project funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner across 3 areas of the county. This will build on the work of Severn Wye under the Rural Futures Programme in the area, who have been supporting the community to map local assets, identify issues associated with rural living and offer ideas based on good practice to help inform solutions. The Project Group also continues to explore links with Understanding Welsh Places as a community data source, and consider how it might link in with and inform the Assessment of Local Well-being.

Effective communication remains vital to the Project Group's work, and never was this been more crucial than during the onset of the pandemic. CAVO scheduled weekly meetings with Local Support Group organisers, with any feedback, challenges and areas of good practice reported back to members at Project Group meetings. A mapping exercise was conducted with the aim of geographically capturing the coverage of support providers across Ceredigion, including food banks, community support groups, town & community councils and YFC groups. This exercise proved vital in identifying any areas of the county not covered by any support networks, which allowed for implementing mechanisms to support communities where there was less coverage in provision. As the Stay At Home message become clear and alternative means of communication implemented, it was crucial to the Project Group that vital

messaging continued to reach those who were digitally excluded within the county. With this in mind, a live Communication Plan document was formulated and hosted on the Project Group's MS Teams site which referenced various avenues of communication and areas of good practice for reaching communities both online and offline. The Project Group also received a presentation by Radio Aber, who are focussing on facilitating messaging between communities and public services through a variety of means including phone-ins and advertising.

"A mapping exercise was conducted with the aim of geographically capturing the coverage of support providers across Ceredigion, including food banks, community support groups, town & community councils and YFC groups. This exercise proved vital in identifying any areas of the county not covered by any support networks."

3. COVID-19 Recovery

In advance of the initial easing of lockdown, a sub-group of the Project Group was established to assist and advise on the safe reopening of community venues. A multi-agency panel of experts was established and continues to meet weekly to discuss enquiries, monitor challenges and share information. A number of virtual briefing sessions have been held with community venue representatives, which have been well attended. Risk assessment templates, cleaning advice, track & trace procedures as well as the latest guidance from Welsh Government and WCVA continues to be offered online and via the live briefing sessions during which community venue representatives are encouraged to ask the panel questions relating to their specific activities / venues. The Panel has proved successful in informing and influencing national decisions based on local need.

"…..a sub-group has been established to assist and advise on the safe reopening of community venues. A multi-agency panel of experts was established and continue to meet weekly to discuss enquiries, monitor challenges and share information."

The Project Group also continue to be informed by various pieces of research looking to identify the impact of the pandemic on communities. The Project Group received a presentation on Prosiect Fory – A collaborative project between Bro360 and Radio Beca based on a 3 question survey to establish how communities interact, and identify the positives and negatives brought about by the pandemic. A representative for Project Fory will be further invited to provide an update to the Project Group in the coming months, which will inform the work of the group moving forwards and ensure that any positive examples of good practice are retained.

A study by Aberystwyth Business School on the impact of COVID-19 specific to the residents and businesses of rural Ceredigion will also assist in informing any work to better support communities as recovery continues.

4. Co-production

As previously mentioned, the Project Group are keen to explore the potential link between Participatory Budgeting as a starting point for co-production. Discussions have already been held with Severn Wye regarding piloting the Participatory Budgeting approach to build on the action plans and needs assessment conducted in New Quay through the Rural Futures Programme, and to ensure that key funds are distributed to communities. Progress on the COVID-19 Volunteer Recovery Grant is also reported on at Project Group meetings, which will promote opportunities for communities to develop skills and awareness around first aid, confidence building and mental health, as well as support the process of implementing community contingency plans. The project will also look to celebrate the act of volunteering, and the health benefits involved. The establishment of the Connect to Ceredigion platform where communities can make connections, share information and exchange volunteering offers, as well as the Connect to Kindness campaign which encourages residents to informally support each other through acts of kindness will assist in reinforcing this messaging. The Project Group also continues to promote the Dewis Cymru and Infoengine directories, whereby individuals can explore advice and a range of services available across Wales and their specific area.

> *"…piloting the Participatory Budgeting approach to build on the action plans and needs assessment conducted in New Quay through the Rural Futures Programme, and to ensure that key funds are distributed to communities."*

Proposed Action for the Future

The Project Group will continue to build on the work as outlined above where appropriate during the year to come, whilst remaining flexible and responsive to community needs as necessary. It is hoped that the work on the Place Plans will be in a position to continue, and that the Project Group can support working with communities and key officers to establish Task Forces to co-design and deliver solutions to meet needs identified in the process moving forwards.

Discussions will continue around implementing the Participatory Budgeting approach in New Quay to build on the findings established as part of the Rural Futures Programme, which will aim to support the community in addressing solutions to the issues associated with living in rural areas. The Understanding Our Communities Task& Finish Group will also continue to support the Assessment of Local Well-being process,

The Project Group will continue to strengthen links, explore opportunities for continuous engagement and encourage co-productive ways of working with communities and partners both locally and regionally. It is anticipated that Engagement HQ will prove an invaluable tool in implementing continuous engagement into our day to day work, and ensure that relevant information with regards to securing and delivering on any funding or grant schemes is already available as part of a central repository in order to avoid

consultation fatigue. With this in mind, the Project Group will assist in testing the site and continue to work in partnership to ensure it is delivered and managed to its maximum potential.

The Project Group also propose to develop and deliver an engagement skills programme for PSB partner workforce which will include co-production techniques, making every contact count.

"….continue to strengthen links, explore opportunities for continuous engagement and encourage co-productive ways of working with communities."

Co-location and Integration of Front-line Services Project Group

Enable every child to have the best start in life.

Support parental preparedness through early intervention, overcome inequalities and promote holistic learning.

Reviewed Priorities

The key objectives of this Project Group are firmly placed in the requirement for Ceredigion PSB to prevent continued inequality and the lack of universal services to support children. This work is now based upon a through-age model of support which harnesses the opportunities for practical, hands-on collaboration which is firmly aimed at improving the lifetime outcomes for all. In order to achieve these objectives collaboration and intervention is required. The work is being delivered initially through PSB partners with a long term action to ensure that universal services are well-resourced, accessible and used by all.

Key actions undertaken in 2020/21

For 2020/21the co-produced actions for this Project Group were as follows:

- To focus on programmes, strategies and policies aimed at the co-production of an integrated system for Early Years.
- Support the integrated establishment of the Well-being hubs.
- Consider and research potential hybrid models for the delivery of services for communities.

Creating the environment to enable each and every child to receive the best start in life is essential and in order to strive towards achieving this objective the work of this Project Group has supported the Pathfinder Pilot Project. Evaluation of local provision undertaken by Wavehill Consultancy has provided the foundation for continued pilot provision and has also linked this work to the key objectives of the Regional Early Years Strategy.

Harnessing the expertise of partners and evaluating the response of both service providers and service users has been key and this has enabled services to be provided in a seamless manner across Ceredigion. The requirement for the seamless provision of support services became even more important as COVID-19 struck and partners have work collaboratively to ensure the continued provision of support, all be it in a slightly amended model which was adapted to reflect the challenges posed by lock-down. The importance of maintaining contact and providing support has underpinned all aspects of the work and the experience gained over this period is now being harnessed to inform future provision.

The challenges of COVID-19 directly affected the provision of childcare across the County with places being lost as providers struggled to maintain provision. Support services were channelled to address this challenge in order to ensure the availability of provision as we enter the recovery phase. The public and private partnership working for the provision of childcare services is essential in order to ensure the availability of universal services for the benefit of families in the County.

The second aim of this Project Group has centred on the design and establishment of Well-being Hubs and this has been based upon the innovative Integrated Service Delivery Model advocated by Ceredigion County Council. Partner consultation has contributed to the design of the first Well-being Hub located at Lampeter Leisure Centre and the aim is firmly focused on the development of integrated facilities for the benefit of individuals and communities. Through the adoption of a model based on ensuring maximum flexibility a range of public-facing services will be able to be provided for the benefit of all. Additional partner consultation has commenced with a view to embedding the model within service based solutions advocated by partners. PSB partners are actively considering the opportunities which are being provided by the Well-being Centre for the provision of extended services and they are also considering the concept of a "hub and spoke" model which would enable the hub to reach out to surrounding communities. Opportunities cross the boundaries of public, private and 3rd sector community provision of services for the benefit of all via truly community based hubs.

"…partner consultation has informed the design of the first Well-being Centre at Lampeter and links are being considered under the Volunteering Resilience Fund with a direct focus on community services."

<u>Proposed Actions for the future</u>

As we move into the recovery phase this Project Group is increasingly aware of priorities being identified and the strategic direction being outlined by Welsh Government with regards to the establishment of community based hubs. The Project Group will aim to develop knowledge and understanding around the Welsh Government's ambition and will seek to co-produce solutions across Ceredigion.

"…ambition is to see about 30% of the workforce in Wales staying at or near home in the long term. The Welsh Government said it wanted to give workers "more flexibility to work remotely" and claimed this could "drive regeneration and economic activity in communities".

The Project Group will further consider the potential and scope of new solutions and will progress discussions with partners and incorporate a mapping of partner assets to support community based working hubs.

Enterprise & Innovation Project Group

Enable communities to become prosperous, sustainable and connected by supporting the transformation of economic prospects.

Improve physical and digital infrastructure to support economic development, including suitable and affordable homes.

Reviewed Priorities

Given the rural nature of Ceredigion and its geographic isolation from large economic centres out of necessity the County is heavily dependent upon public sector employment. Increased opportunities are required to extend this employment base in order to decrease the risk posed to the long term prosperity of the County. This Project Group's objectives are firmly placed in the identification of solutions which will decrease this risk and expand the employment base via interventions and initiatives which are aimed at developing the foundational economy and improve the infrastructure. With the direct involvement of partners from the public, private and 3rd sector, solutions will be designed to reflect their perspectives and drive to create innovative and sustainable businesses which harness the skills and expertise of local people.

The Project Group has been heavily involved in the shaping of the Economic Strategy 2020-35 and this was agreed at Cabinet in March 2021. This vitally important document has helped to inform the areas which need to be focused on in 2021/22.

When the Project Group re-convened in the first quarter of 2021 their first task was to undertake a collective review of priorities. The Project Group considered the following priorities:

- Data analysis Task-Group - What does the data mean for enterprise and innovation?
- Business diversification and co-location Task Group – Should this underpin the required business development model?
- Enterprise Intervention – Do we understand the range and potential impacts of the existing interventions?
- Sector specific task group – Should we periodically consider the requirements of individual sectors?
- Place focus – How do we shape the future of town centres, what is important to their future vitality?

Also in 2020/21 Ceredigion were requested by Welsh Government to lead in Mid Wales on a project aimed at Creating Wealth in the Foundational Economy through progressive procurement approaches. This has seen an extensive range of partners sharing information and knowledge across key sectors with the objective of enhancing the opportunities available across the region to expand the business platform and retain wealth locally.

This work is being undertaken by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (C.L.E.S) with the specific aims:-

- To **effect systemic change in local economies** across Wales:
    - by working with **anchor institutions** in selected Welsh **Public Service Board areas** to introduce and embed the **community wealth building** concept in these areas
    - and disseminate policy and practice lessons across Wales;
- With a specific focus on **progressive procurement approaches**

Key actions undertaken in 2020/21

For a large proportion of 2020/21the actions for this Project Group were suspended as its members battled to address the challenges of COVID-19. Members worked with businesses to rapidly deliver the support of Welsh Government initiatives. These were urgently designed to assist the survival of the local private sector. Priority was given to providing the support structures necessary to enable businesses and individuals to survive beyond the pandemic.

The voice of the private sector is key to this group and during these challenging times it has proved very difficult to sustain private sector input but this matter is now being addressed by the group as they move to progress specific areas of work.

With the easing of restrictions and following detailed consideration, the Project Group has now agreed that their future focus will be placed on two key elements namely, support interventions and place focus embracing the changing nature and product offering on the high street and within market towns.

> *"… Task and Finish Groups established to review the interventions aimed at expanding the employment infrastructure, to harness the ambitions of the private sector and to further define Place focus – How do we shape the future of town centres, what is important to their future vitality their research and development activity across the County."*

Complementary to this work a number of workshops have been undertaken as part of the procurement project – 'Creating Wealth in the Foundational Economy' and these have considered five key sectors namely:

- Enhancing Opportunities for Local SME's
- Construction and Retrofit
- Food Procurement
- Support for Generative Suppliers
- New Business Start-up.

The aims of this project have also been reviewed against the challenges posed by COVID-19 and the following key amendments have been made to the project plan:

- In light of COVID-19 the work now includes a specific focus on **supporting local businesses which are at risk or vulnerable** due to the pandemic and supporting the growth of **local employment opportunities**.
- We are also examining some aspects of **national agencies pan-Wales spend** (e.g. Wales NHS food-related spend).

> *"… workshop sessions held to map the value of key individual sectors and to identify further opportunities to decrease the loss of wealth from local communities."*

This Project Group is very aware of the changing landscape of our market towns and wish to focus their work on the identification of new approaches and product offerings. Emphasis will be placed on research and development and the design of innovative solutions. Encouraging skills development is seen as being key to the long term future of businesses in the area and harnessing the latent potential of the Foundational Economy is seen as a key driver in this work.

Given the sectoral emphasis of the work which has been undertaken to date it is deemed feasible to expect an increasing contribution to the economy in the coming years.

Resilience Training Project Group

Enable people to create and grasp opportunities and meet challenges throughout their lives.

Improve vocational and life skills, build confidence and enable people to respond positively to change.

Reviewed Priorities:

With the Guiding Principles of Community Resilience and Individual Resilience underpinning the 6 Well-being Aims of the Local Well-being Plan, ensuring that our public sector employees are equipped with the skills and capabilities to overcome transitions, challenges and face change has never been more imperative in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Never before has our resilience on both a community and individual level been challenged in such a broad and multifaceted way, with employees having to adapt to an entirely new way of working and communicating almost overnight. The Resilience Training Project Group had a crucial part to play in ensuring that staff within our PSB organisations felt confident in the level of well-being support provided within their respective workplaces, and equipped with the skills necessary to manage in line with the circumstances imposed. A review of the current priorities was undertaken to ensure that the work of the Project Group met the needs of partner organisations in light of the pandemic, whilst recognising that the work programme should remain flexible to respond to changes in circumstance as appropriate.

For 2020/21, the co-produced actions for this Project Group were as follows:

- Establish a register of resources for all PSB organisations.
- Identify any gaps in training & need based on findings of resource spreadsheet.
- Develop shared training for PSB organisations based on gaps & need.

Key Actions Undertaken 2020/2021:

1. **Resilience Training Resource Register**

The primary focus of the Project Group during this time was to fully review examples of relevant training focussing on building resilience currently being offered to staff across all partner organisations. As previously mentioned, this exercise was of particular importance following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic where organisations have been responding swiftly to ensure the continued well-being of their staff. One of the main challenges where a repository of organisational Resilience Training has been attempted previously has been around cementing a definition with regards to what constitutes Resilience Training, and the consequent recognition of examples appropriate for inclusion within this resource. With such a broad range of support outlets being offered across organisations including helpline services and support groups, it was crucial that the agreed definition outlined that any sessions acknowledged as training

should be structured in such a way to include the provision of information and actionable strategies, with a clear focus on prevention and / or support that could ultimately be shared across organisations if required. With this in mind, the Project Group agreed on the following definition of Resilience Training within organisations.

"In the context of this Project Group, references to (any form of well-being and / or resilience) training will focus on proactive sessions offering employees opportunities to hear how to improve their well-being, equipping them with the knowledge to help respond to daily challenges in a prepared and functional manner, as well as learn of what support mechanisms there are both within the organisation and wider should they be required."

The primary aim of building a catalogue of resources was to help facilitate shared learning opportunities, prevent duplication, as well as identify future needs of employees across organisations. In order to achieve this, a Resilience Training Register in the format of an Excel spreadsheet was created and uploaded centrally on to the Project Group's MS Teams site. The Teams site was established following the onset of the pandemic to facilitate improved communication between meetings and as a repository for the Group's documentation including report templates and live documentation. The central repository allowed partners the freedom to populate the Resilience Training Register with opportunities already available to PSB employees through their organisation as and when convenient. The Register outlines crucial details such as training content, potential costs, evaluation details as well as who the training is suitable for. Project Group members continue to update the Register where necessary to ensure the live document is kept up to date, and is reflective of an ever changing picture.

2. Identifying Gaps & Need

A piece of research is in progress by Aberystwyth University in partnership with the Resilience Training PSB Project Group, which aims to explore public service staff's understanding of well-being and resilience, their experiences of any resources or training received to assist in building resilience, and to establish how individuals may be supported further in developing resilience and enhance well-being. As mentioned previously, staff have had to respond to change and uncertainly on an unprecedented level during the past year and so the research also looked to ascertain how public service employees' experience of COVID-19 has impacted on capacity for resilience. Information was collated via Focus Group sessions that have been conducted with 3 PSB organisations, with additional sessions planned for 21-22. Some early discourses suggest that the findings prove invaluable in informing the progress of the Project Group moving forwards to ensure that need as identified by employees is met. A further project aiming to consider the use of restorative spaces within the NHS, as well creating nature based breakout rooms which will provide an insight into resilience is also underway. Whilst recruitment has proved challenging during the pandemic, it is hoped that should there be potential to promote this project further, that any findings could be reported back to the Project Group and inform next steps in the future.

The Project Group continue to monitor whether there is scope to share organisational training with communities and volunteers, and ensure that linkages are made with the

Understanding Our Communities PSB Project Groups where appropriate. CAVO received funding by Welsh Government focussing on supporting volunteering activity during the recovery phase, and were keen to establish whether there was scope to offer local communities the chance to develop skills and awareness specifically with regards to first aid training, mental health awareness and confidence building awareness. Project Group members were encouraged to contact CAVO should groups or organisations wish to apply to become part of a portfolio of providers who can deliver sessions for volunteers in communities across Ceredigion. The Project Group will continue to scope and identify opportunities to work collaboratively with the Understanding Our Communities PSB Project Group in the future to share resources as appropriate.

As previously mentioned, the primary aim of establishing the shared Resilience Training Register was to help facilitate shared learning opportunities, prevent duplication, as well as identify future need of employees across organisations. As Project Group members continue to populate the Resilience Training Register, consideration will be given to any gaps that become apparent once a full picture has been achieved whilst also reflecting upon the findings of the Focus Group research which will further highlight areas for focus moving forwards.

"A piece of research is in progress in partnership with the Resilience Training PSB Project Group, which aims to explore public service staff's understanding of well-being and resilience, their experiences of any resources or training received to assist in building resilience, and to establish how individuals may be supported further in develop resilience and enhance well-being."

3. Develop Shared Training for PSB Organisations

Due to the urgency of the response required in ensuring the well-being of employees during the past year, members of the Project Group and wider PSB will consider whether opportunities for developing shared training for PSB organisations is still feasible at this time. The findings of these discussions as well as the avenues highlighted above will assist in informing the direction of the Project Group moving forward.

Proposed Action for the Future:

The Project Group will continue to build upon the work already established, aiming to ensure that the Resilience Training Register reflects an up to date picture of the opportunities offered to staff across each PSB organisation. Specifically, and once a full picture of opportunities has been achieved, the Project Group will reflect upon whether there are opportunities to share training programmes across organisations or with our community groups as appropriate. Should an appetite remain for the development of a shared training programme across PSB organisations, the Project Group will consider the gaps in need identified as part of the mapping process and respond accordingly to ensure that the appropriate support is offered to PSB employees in line with demand.

The Project Group will continue to support the Focus Group research, and scope opportunities for further sessions to be conducted with PSB organisations who have not yet participated. The findings of the Focus Group research will assist in identifying the issues of pressing concern to public service staff, and allow for discussions to take place on how best to meet these needs with COVID-19 recovery in mind. As the recovery phase progresses, the Project Group's Action Plan moving forwards will remain flexible to ensure fluidity of response in line with the unpredictable nature of the pandemic. With well-being in mind, the Project Group will also support the Assessment of Local Wellbeing process, by means of participation in a facilitated engagement workshop involving discussions and short polls, as well as a follow up session involving providing feedback on the draft assessment following consultation.

The Project Group have continued to receive updates with regards to the developments around Canolfan Tir Glas at University of Wales Trinity Saint David Lampeter Campus. In light of the pandemic, the University along with partners are in the process of reimagining the future potential of Lampeter and the role of the University in supporting an integrated vision for the town. Canolfan Tir Glas aims to promote the local food industry, local sustainability, resilience and enterprise within a rural context and will focus on strengthening the economic infrastructure of Lampeter. These updates will remain on the Project Group agenda, and opportunities to support and link in with this area of work will be considered as necessary.

"Should an appetite remain for the development of a shared training programme across PSB organisations, the Project Group will consider the gaps in need identified as part of the mapping process and respond accordingly."

Social and Green Prescribing Project Group

Enable people to live active, happy and healthy lives.

Support physical and mental health and improve well-being through promoting healthy behaviours.

This Project Group has not met during 2020/21 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Partners have however attempted to keep up to date with developments as far as practically possible throughout the period by creating links via national platforms such as Basecamp.

Ceredigion Public Services Board Sub-Groups

In addition to the 6 Project Groups there are Sub-groups that report to the Ceredigion PSB. Detailed below is a summary of the work of the Poverty Sub-Group, the Refugee Resettlement Sub-group and the Bilingual Futures Forum.

Ceredigion PSB Poverty Sub-group: Tackling Hardship Strategy 2020-22

The Tackling Hardship Strategy 2020-22 was published in August 2020 as a successor to the Ceredigion Combatting Poverty Strategy 2016-20. The Strategy and accompanying Action Plan provides a partnership response to the impact of Covid-19 on Ceredigion. It is monitored by Ceredigion PSB Poverty Sub-group which meets four times per year. Matters relating to Child Poverty are scrutinised by the Children & Young People Services Provider Forum that meets one week before the PSB Poverty Sub-group in order that issues can be escalated immediately.

The Tackling Hardship Strategy 2020-22 has three key objectives as noted below and the Action Plan has 65 actions which are delivered by a range of PSB partners:

Three key objectives of Ceredigion Tackling Hardship Strategy 2020-22
To develop a **shared understanding** with partner agencies of the evolving impact of COVID-19 on hardship in Ceredigion through the collation and analysis of data.
To co-ordinate and **consolidate collaborative efforts** with partner agencies in order to promote and take advantage of all available help and assistance.
To **identify gaps** in support and evolving hardship needs in order to develop early effective intervention that will strengthen individual and community resilience as we adjust to the impact of COVID-19.

The Action Plan is divided into 3 separate pillars for implementation and these are namely:

Three pillars of the Tackling Hardship Strategy action plan
Pillar 1 – help for those who are experiencing financial hardship
Pillar 2 – help for those experiencing exhaustion, stress and anxiety
Pillar 3 – making sure that people can access services

A data dashboard has been developed to help us monitor population indicators that we anticipate will be influenced by the delivery of both the Tackling Hardship Strategy 2020-22 and Ceredigion Economic Strategy 2020-35 and this helps to ensure alignment between the actions of these two important strategies.

PSB Refugees Resettlement Sub-Group

Ceredigion PSB pledged to resettle 50 refugees fleeing the Syrian conflict by March 2020. This signified our contribution to the UK Government's pledge to resettle 20,000 refugees under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. Ceredigion's commitment was met in November 2019 and the UK Government met its commitment in February 2021.

Following this The Home Office immediately reaffirmed their commitment to the resettlement of refugees through the development of the UK Resettlement Scheme and Ceredigion PSB has pledged to resettle 2 families per year for as long the Home Office maintain current levels of funding for the scheme. The PSB Refugees Resettlement Sub-group meets three times a year to support the resettlement process and to monitor the progress of integration by those who have arrived in Ceredigion under the scheme.

As a direct consequence of Covid-19 the Refugee resettlement was put on hold during 2020/21. The 10 families currently living here continued to be supported by the Red Cross support service that the Council commissions. Ongoing virtual support was provided by telephone, video calls and WhatsApp. Laptops were purchased for the families so that they could continue their English lessons on-line; they also joined online conversational English sessions with volunteers, virtual coffee mornings with Aberystwyth University and 'Zymraeg' (Zumba through the medium of Welsh) with the National Learn Welsh Centre.

The families took part in the Census 2021 and were grateful for the targeted help offered to them from the census officer. In April 2020, the Syrian Dinner project, a social enterprise company set up by directly by Syrian members, provided free hot meals to

Bronglais Hospital staff. When asked to explain why they had made the donation, one of the women replied as follows:

> *"Ever since we arrived in the UK, we have been warmly welcomed. Everyone in the community has been helping us and supporting us. We felt that they are our family and this country is our second home. As there is the pandemic, I thought of how can we pay back the lovely people who have helped us and supported us. As we are already doing the Syrian project I thought the best way is by making food to NHS staff. We made rice with vegetables, stuffed vine leaves. We made sure that the food has lots of vegetables so that it is light and healthy. We are delighted that people appreciated our food. The NHS staff deserve a lot and we are showing them that we are grateful to all their hard work. We are all staying home and following the Corona virus guidelines at home and when going out. Me and my children are doing school work and lots of fun activities at home. I miss our weekly gathering for Iftar in Ramadan. We used to share our meals with the Muslim community in Aberystwyth every Sunday."*

This is just one example of how the work of this Sub-group is having a positive impact on the lives of people who have settled within our communities. This work is set to continue as the Sub-group strives to maintain its continued successful achievement, based on current funding arrangements to resettle 2 refugee families per year in Ceredigion.

Ceredigion Bilingual Futures Forum

One of the core values of the Local Well-being plan is its commitment to ensuring that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language when providing services to the public. It has also recognised that there is a responsibility to work hard to promote and facilitate the use of Welsh, making it easier for people to use their Welsh language skills in their everyday lives. During 2020/21 evidence has been gathered from an extensive range of partners of the Ceredigion Bilingual Futures Forum on the following four key areas:

- Opportunities to use Welsh during lock-down.
- The challenges or barriers.
- Planning for the adaptation period, together with the long-term recovery phase.
- To consider what we can do better to increase the opportunities to use the Welsh Language.

Given the effect which COVID-19 has had it has been recognised that the crisis has changed our lives in dramatic ways. This has included our relationships with other people in our communities, families, homes and workplaces; and this in turn has had a detrimental effect on opportunities to use the Welsh language in a social setting. The lock-down period came upon us suddenly, and digital solutions were put in place quickly. However, the lack of cultural socialisation has been identified as having an impact on our use of the Welsh language whereby many people may now not see, hear or speak Welsh for long periods of time. Organisations have had to take a radical rethink

about the ways in which they operate and deliver services to the public over the last year.

Following the collection of the evidence from partners the report entitled "Opportunities to Use Welsh during Lock-Down" was considered by the PSB as it presented a golden opportunity to share some of the new opportunities that have arisen from the pandemic, seeking to raise awareness of the importance of putting the Welsh Language at the centre of any new developments.

Other Presentations and Considerations

In addition to the projects, initiatives and strategies noted within this report Ceredigion PSB members have also considered and discussed the following during 2020/21:

- Operation Dawns Glaw Initiative – Mid & West Wales Fire and Rescue Service
- Opportunities to Use Welsh during Lock-Down Report – Ceredigion County Council
- Newcastle Emlyn Climate Resilience Project Report – National Resources Wales
- Joint response by Ceredigion PSB to the Welsh Government consultation on "Re-balancing Care and Support"