Future Scenarios Event 20th September 2016

Cultural and Wellbeing Workshop

Three workshop sessions were held to explore data from the Local Government Data Unit – Wales (August 2016) "Understanding local well-being Summary assessment for the Gwent region" to inform Future Generations Well-being Assessments, with the following pointers emerging from the group discussion based around questions posed on the data:

1. **What do you think the data is telling us about what the future holds for the use of the Welsh language in the Caerphilly county borough?**

    - It was commented that we "must not be complacent"
    - It was observed that children in Welsh medium schools do not use the language outside of school "with young people often not speaking Welsh in the home"
    - It was noted there are pockets in the Caerphilly county borough with no Welsh medium schools such as in Risca, and Bedwas, and observed parents may be reluctant for their 3-4 year old child to travel some distance by bus to access provision in other areas of the county borough
    - It was suggested that parents of young children should be surveyed to see if they wanted to send their children to a Welsh medium school. This would indicate demand in mapping Welsh medium school provision accordingly
    - Capacity at Welsh schools was notes as an issue, with it commented a new Welsh comprehensive is needed
    - It was commented that we are – "seeing renewed enthusiasm for the Welsh language" – but "need for more Welsh schools as hard to learn Welsh as an adult", and the provision of Welsh schools is seen as key to increasing the number of Welsh speakers
    - Some participants thought that Welsh schools are "better schools"
    - A need was identified for greater provision to be linked to Welsh medium schools "for parents to learn Welsh together with their children." An example was given of parents and teachers evenings, where teachers for speed tend to speak to parents who are learning Welsh in English
    - While investment in Welsh medium education was noted, the lack of investment in using the language socially/in community settings was observed with it commented that "investment is being wasted through lack of support"
    - The challenge for the Welsh Language in South Wales is for the language to be used as a first language/speakers to use it automatically, like in West Wales
    - It was observed that children going through Welsh medium education, often do not use the language later on in life/work and - "need opportunities to learn." The following observations were made on the opportunity *not* being there to develop Welsh language in the community:
        - "Not every-day occurrence to speak Welsh in community settings"

- "Not much opportunity to get jobs using the Welsh language in local communities"
- "People need to be immersed in the Welsh language to grow confident in using it."
- "Welsh speakers tend to default to English – it can be challenging for Welsh language speakers to feel comfortable for speaking Welsh"

- The positive migrant impact was noted in stimulating greater use of the Welsh language with children under 10 years being able to pick up new language skills much more quickly
- It was noted that people with dementia are likely to revert to speaking Welsh if Welsh was their first language. The importance of singing songs in Welsh was stressed for care homes, and mainstream arts should also be adapted for people with dementia to access
- It was commented that native Welsh language speakers often do not write to the Council in Welsh
- It was felt that the Welsh Language Standards and Measures will go a-long way in encouraging/promoting the use of Welsh
- In promoting use of Welsh language it was noted that Welsh subtitles should appear on films in local cinemas, and audio description of films and performance should be available in the Welsh language
- The Welsh Government Welsh language target of one million Welsh speakers by 2050 was noted
- More resources were identified as needed for the Third Sector to translate their material into Welsh.

2. **Do you know of any more data that is available on the use of the Welsh language in the Caerphilly county borough that we need to incorporate?**

- Noted in the Council Housing Department there is a Welsh speaking officer under taking administrative tasks bilingually, which is a useful way of gaining data
- Availability of Common Housing Register data, and Careers Wales data on ethnicity
- Importance of utilising valuable data from Menter Iaith Caerffili Welsh Language Profile was noted

3. **What do you think the data is telling us about the numbers of people considering themselves as "non-Welsh" in the Caerphilly county borough?**

- Identity is subjectively determined. For example a person could be born in England, but having lived in Wales a long time, may identify as "Welsh". Conversely it was noted that a person born in Wales may not identify as "Welsh"
- It was observed that "the Welsh culture is strong" – with a strong sense of pride that people identify as Welsh in the county borough
- It was queried "what is English culture?"
- It was commented how people migrating into the community are often keen to learn Welsh with it observed the "best Welsh

speakers are often Polish young people who have learnt in schools."

- It was suggested that there is a "need to talk more about Welsh history in English median schools." It was also commented that the Welsh National Anthem and other traditional Welsh songs should be taught in English median schools.

4. **Do you know of any more data that is available to gauge how people identify themselves as "Welsh" in Caerphilly county borough that we need to incorporate?**

- Community centres/village halls will run activities, with localised data available. Unfortunately data on cultural activities, including attendance and participation is not been collated comprehensively across Public Services and the Third Sector, and the Community Sector. Arts Council Wales Arts Service/Youth Service is not capturing the whole picture. It was commented that "more data is needed on heritage sites"
- Arts Council Wales Omnibus Survey 2015 data available, but limitation does not include libraries and museums
- RSA Heritage Index 2016 data for Wales available
- Supporting People data on arts based work with homelessness people within the Caerphilly county borough available

TOP 3 PRIORITIES/ISSUES

1. **Funding** - significant cuts faced to run key entertainment venues. Too much pressure on getting numbers through door and meeting targets instead of looking at what is needed
2. **More opportunities needed to speak Welsh in community settings**
3. **Improved joined-up working needed across all sectors**

5. **What do you think the data is telling us about the numbers of people who agree they can influence decision making in the Caerphilly county borough?**

- One person commented that although the Local Government Data Unit - Wales shows that 23% of people in the Caerphilly county borough, compared to 21% in Wales as a whole felt they could "influence decisions affecting their local area" that this was still "shockingly poor". It was suggested that this could be improved through greater co-production around decision making bringing Public Services, the Third Sector and local communities and people together
- It was commented that the results would have proved interesting if collated post Brexit
- Non-attendance at engagement events - Why? What are the barriers?
- The following positive comments were made about the extent of consultation and engagement in the Caerphilly borough:

- "Other areas are amazed at all the engagement and consultation work that we (CCBC) do e.g. Compact Agreement, Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee"
- "Caerphilly is the best authority to engage with in the Gwent region"
- "The holistic approach of the disability led Access Group in Caerphilly is good, and is a great example of joined up working between staff from the council and other key organisations. There is nothing like it in Blaenau Gwent"

- It was commented it could be hard to get young people involved in communities.
- The work of Communities Voices, and Communities First was noted as good at getting local people involved in decision making – but long term funding was needed for these interventions and initiatives

6. **Do you know of any more data that is available to gauge numbers of people who think they can influence local decision making in the Caerphilly borough?**

- It was commented that by 2040 things will be different as priorities change, with things slip down the list

7. **What do you think the data is telling us about the numbers of people who lack internet access in the Caerphilly county borough?**
- One person commented that the Caerphilly county borough was the first to have broadband at all exchanges, although another person commented that the north of borough had poor internet infrastructure. Consequently there is a need to check that the necessary infrastructure is in place to enable internet access to all households
- The importance of not being complacent was noted, with a lot of work still needed to be done in facilitating internet access for households
- It was felt that among people with disabilities that internet access would be lower
- Lower levels of literacy was seen as hindering households having internet access
- It was queried – "How many people actually want internet access" with some people preferring "face to face contact rather than doing things on line."
- With the high levels of deprivation within the county borough it was thought that internet / pc / technology could be "classed as a luxury" and not affordable
- It was queried "Why are our deprived areas still deprived?" Reference was made to the Lansbury Park Estate, which is ranked as the most deprived place in Wales in the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014 despite all the initiatives. However, it was observed while we may label the Estate as deprived, the people who live there do not necessarily identify with this

8.   Is there any future data we should be considering on internet access in the Caerphilly county borough?

- None raised
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TOP 3 PRIORITIES/ISSUES
1. Funding (lack of)
2. Opportunities

9.   The Local Government Data Unit Wales note there are limited measures available at a national level to support an assessment of cultural wellbeing - is there any local evidence we could be including in our assessment of local wellbeing?

- Suggested that we could collect data from Maxime Cinema in Blackwood, given its success in providing affordable access to main stream films. The cinema provides 5 screens with prices at £2.50, and receives no public funding
- In addressing funding issues for the arts the importance of collecting data demonstrating its worth was noted. The example was given of giving audiences a health and well-being survey following attending events, which for example would look at any impact on loneliness and isolation through attending theatres, cinemas, arts events in the borough
- A vibrant choir scene was noted in the county borough
- It was noted that 50% funding cuts were facing Blackwood Miners Institute, and the Winding House over the next 4-years.
- In the future it was commented there may be less employment around, with people having "more time on their hands" so will need to come up with cultural infrastructure not based on Council funding to occupy peoples' time.
- Importance of using Caerphilly Theatre and Arts Service Annual Report 2015 data was noted

TOP 3 PRIORITIES/ISSUES
1. **Funding** – tackling discretionary nature of funding with importance of Third Sector working together around provision with the Public Sector