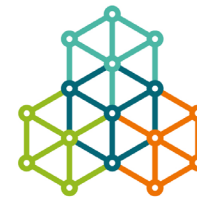


Protecting the interests of future generations, and foresight

10 April 2018



**The
Policy
Project**

Responsive today,
shaping tomorrow

Round table speakers on protecting the interests of future generations, and foresight



On 10 April 2018, the Policy Project co-hosted a round-table with the Institute for Governance and Policy Studies at Victoria University on protecting the interests of future generations, and foresight. The lead speaker was **Marie Brousseau-Navarro**, the Director of Policy, Legislation and Innovation at the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner in Wales. During her recent visit to New Zealand, she addressed a round table of public servants about the steps that Wales has taken toward sustainability and protecting the interests of future generations. This has included introducing legislation called *The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* and setting up a Commissioner to act as a guardian of future generations.

The second speaker was **Grant Fletcher**, Director of Strategy at Inland Revenue. He shared a New Zealand case study about Inland Revenue's current Strategic Futures Work Programme.



The third speaker was **Dr Stephanie Pride**, co-head of StratEDGY Strategic Foresight. She presented a case study on Secondary Futures, a New Zealand government-funded experimental model for engaging with citizens on the future of schooling between 2004 and 2009.

The Welsh context for sustainability and focus on future generations

1997

Devolution of power in Wales

The Welsh devolution referendum was held in September 1997. The referendum results led to the *Government of Wales Act 1998*. This Act brought into being the National Assembly for Wales in 1999.

The National Assembly for Wales comprises 60 members, elected on a five-year cycle. The United Kingdom devolved powers to the National Assembly in 20 areas, including environment, housing, education, health services, local government and primary industries.



2006

New powers granted

The *Government of Wales Act 2006* reformed the Welsh parliament and gave it greater powers for creating its own legislation. This paved the way for Wales to make more aspirational decisions about how its resources would be used and how society would be run.

2011

The Commissioner for Sustainable Futures

In April 2011, Peter Davies became Wales' first Commissioner for Sustainable Futures. The role was created to provide independent advice and external leadership after the defunding and closure of the Sustainable Development Commission.

2012



In 2012, the United Nations Development Group began 'The World We Want' – a global conversation on how best to deliver their next sustainable development agenda. A series of online discussions and public meetings around the world enabled the participation of nearly two million people. Leaders and representatives from civil, academic, public and private sectors came together to discuss what they saw as necessary for the future. The meetings provided a forum for the voices of many marginalised groups.

A national conversation and new legislation

2014

The Wales We Want



Inspired by the work of the United Nations Development Group, the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty in 2013 announced the launch of a similar initiative. It would sit within the context of the United Nations' global conversation and the international movement toward sustainability.

“We need to understand how the long term trends – demographic, technological, and environmental – will affect our long term goals.”

A national conversation called ‘The Wales We Want’ began in February 2014. For a year, the people of Wales discussed what kind of country they wanted to leave for future generations.

Welsh celebrities and leaders promoted the initiative, and around 7000 people across Wales participated. A response template was widely distributed to encourage feedback from citizens.

The Wales We Want

www.cynnalcyrmru.com/project/the-wales-we-want

2015

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

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act set a new direction for sustainable development in Wales. The Welsh National Assembly governs a total of 44 public bodies, who are now required by the Act to practice sustainable development. The Act also put a duty on Welsh ministers to create national wellbeing indicators.

The public bodies included health boards, environmental agencies, social services, the national library and museum, arts and sports councils, and the local government of all 22 counties. The private sector was not bound by the Act, but some firms joined voluntarily.

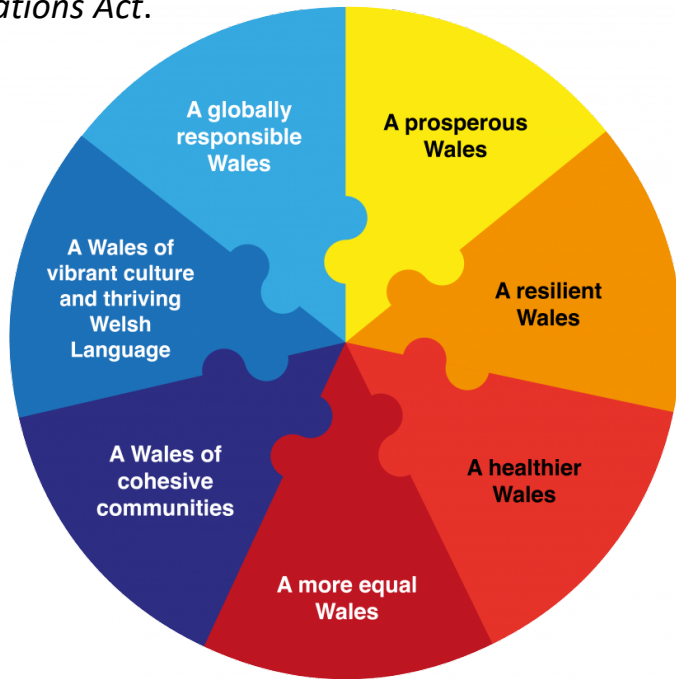
The need to collaborate across public services is also set out in the Act, as it imposes higher levels of collaboration across the public service in the form of Public Service Boards. Although the police force is not devolved to Wales, some representatives are members of the Public Service Board, such as the Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner.



The aspirations of the Future Generations Act

The seven national wellbeing goals

Marie explained that one of the outputs from 'The Wales We Want' conversation was a set of **seven wellbeing goals**. These goals were used in *The Well-being of Future Generations Act*.



The Act requires public bodies to work toward all of these national goals. They are each responsible for deciding how they will reach those goals by setting their own range of 'wellbeing objectives'. Public bodies must then take all reasonable steps toward meeting them.

The sustainable development principle

The Act also includes a 'sustainable development principle' that guides organisations on how to meet their new responsibilities. It is now the duty of all public bodies to consider the impact of their decisions on future generations.

The Act lists **five ways of working** that public bodies need to demonstrate:



Long term: balancing short-term needs with long term

Prevention: preventing problems from occurring or worsening



Integration: considering how their wellbeing objectives may impact on their wellbeing goals

Collaboration: working with others



Involvement: involving diverse people with an interest in achieving the wellbeing goals

The Office of the Future Generations Commissioner

2016

The Future Generations Commissioner

The Act established the role of the Future Generations Commissioner. Sophie Howe was appointed to the role in early 2016, along with an office of 12 supporting staff.



Sophie Howe
The first Future Generations Commissioner of Wales

The Commissioner role was created under the Act to “promote the sustainable development principle, in particular to act as a guardian of the ability of future generations to meet their needs and encourage public bodies to take greater account of the long-term impact of the things they do.”

Other roles of the Commissioner’s office include:

- carrying out research and giving advice to public bodies
- monitoring and assessing how the wellbeing objectives are being met, and making recommendations to help public bodies do better
- publishing a Future Generations Report.

The six priority areas

After a year-long exercise, the Commissioner’s Office came up with six priority areas on which they would focus their attention:

Creating the right infrastructure for future generations

1. Housing stock
2. Energy generation and efficiency
3. Transport planning

Equipping people for the future

4. Skills for the future
5. Adverse childhood experiences
6. Alternative models for improving health and wellbeing

See the link below for more detail on the work of the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner.

The Future Generations Commission
www.futuregenerations.wales



The Commissioner's strategic objectives

To support and challenge public bodies and Public Services Boards to deliver the wide range of changes imposed on them by the world-leading Welsh legislation, the Commissioner wants to:

Be a guardian for future generations – demonstrating the risks they face and challenging short-term policy-making. This will include producing the first Future Generations Report by 2020, setting out how public bodies can think and plan for the future.

Build strong effective partnerships and develop a movement for change within the public sector, where people champion the Welsh approach to sustainable development.

Challenge public bodies to take action on the biggest threats facing Wales, offering support by building insight into the best ways of tackling the challenges, and highlighting opportunities to act.

Challenge 'business as usual' within the public sector, supporting improvements in assessing and planning for wellbeing.

Support and challenge those who set performance frameworks and those who independently review them to develop an integrated, long-term approach to effectively assess and challenge public bodies on their contribution to the *Well-being of Future Generations Act*.

Champion effective public involvement and engagement, challenging ourselves and others to better understand the needs of communities and people.

Put the Sustainable Development principle and the Five Ways of Working at the heart of all we do. This means working collaboratively and taking a partnership approach to delivering work.

Share learning with other nations – promote the Welsh approach while learning from others – supporting and challenging progress on sustainable development.

2017

The Future Trends Report 2017

The Welsh Government released their first Future Trends Report in 2017. The reports are released within the five-year electoral cycle, on the year before a National Assembly election. This enables political parties to incorporate the sustainable development goals into their manifestos.

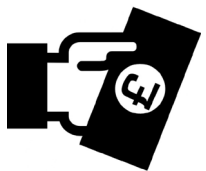
The first Future Trends Report in 2017 identifies the main areas of wellbeing in Wales that could be affected by a range of future trends:



Social



Environmental



Economic



Cultural

Part A of the report presents these trends under six themes:

- Population
- Health
- Economy and infrastructure
- Climate change
- Land use and natural resources
- Society and culture.



Part B discusses the influencing factors and interactions between these trends. A pack of data slides accompanies the report to give more detailed information on how these trends impact Wales and how they have been analysed. The report can be found in the link below.

The Future Trends Report 2017

www.gov.wales/statistics-and-research/future-trends/?lang=en



Welsh experience with foresight

Marie described the way in which collaborative processes have been evolving between the Welsh government bodies. It is not efficient or practical to have all organisations working separately toward the same goals, when these could be agreed and pursued collectively. The new way of working has motivated public bodies to pool their funding and resources. A new culture of collaboration and joint effort is taking off in Wales.



Comisiynydd
**Cenedlaethau'r
Dyfodol**
Cymru

**Future
Generations**
Commissioner
for Wales

Marie's lessons for New Zealand

- Come up with a vision. Wales had a national conversation for two years.
- Bring in key people with high public profile to make the conversation visible.
- Use big open questions to get buy-in, such as “What is the biggest challenge facing future generations?”
- Put the vision in law so it doesn't need to be re-debated, and you can just get on with achieving it.
- Don't let the organisational budget shortages be an excuse for not thinking in the long term.
- Before writing policy, talk to the people who represent the four pillars: economic, cultural, social and environmental.
- To assist organisations to set wellbeing objectives and plan how to achieve them.
 - Apply the five ways of working: long term, prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement (see page 4).
 - Provide everyone with access to relevant data.
 - Help people think about the interactions between positive and negative elements.

New Zealand case study 1: Inland Revenue's foresight approach

2017

Te Kāhu Mataroa: Strategic Futures Programme

Grant Fletcher talked about the role of New Zealand's Inland Revenue Department – it is about more than tax. They also manage student loans, child support and Kiwisaver; they help people grow their lives.

Inland Revenue's Strategy Group takes their stewardship role of understanding the distant horizon seriously. They work to understand future trends, what those trends mean and what to do about them. Their mantra is "What, So What, So What Now?"

The Strategic Futures Work Programme – or Te Kāhu Mataroa – has been in place for three and a half years. Named after the Kāhu (the harrier hawk that scans the terrain ahead as it flies), it encourages a long-term view using a repeatable, fit-for-purpose futures scanning process.



STRATEGIC FUTURES WORK PROGRAMME

"Our stewardship role requires us to understand the distant horizon and bring the outside in, make sense of it, and then to act on it."

Challenges to the public sector's current approach to the future

- There is a focus on immediate problems and linear solutions.
- Many outdated assumptions underpin current business and social models.
- Organisations prefer certainty and focus on current operational demands, rather than basing strategic conversations on uncertainty.
- There is a failure to build collective insight to tackle pressing or emerging problems.
- It is easy to forget the critical question: Who are we serving and how are their needs changing?

New Zealand case study 1: Inland Revenue's eight drivers of change

Part of Inland Revenue's futures scanning involves looking at the impacts of eight powerful drivers of global change:

Population growth

The global population will grow to 8 billion by 2026, with increasing competition for resources. Can New Zealand supply some of these needs?

Demographic transition

Most developed countries have ageing populations. Now there are 5 people in the New Zealand workforce for every person over 65. In 2050 there will be 2.5 to every 1.

Maturing digital ecosystem

Clouds, social networks, mobile and big data have created a maturing digital ecosystem. This is transforming every other sector. Work can be done anywhere. More professions will be automated.

Climate change

Disruption to people and food supply through severe weather, and increased pests and disease. Infrastructure costs from extreme weather will rise. There are opportunities for new energy sources.

Urbanisation

By 2030 there will be over 40 megacities of more than 10 million. These megacities drive global economies. New Zealand's population is less than half of one megacity.

Power shift

There is a global economic and power shift from west to east. This creates new markets closer to New Zealand, but also the risk of increased conflict.

Empowered individuals

The digital world empowers citizens to connect directly with each other instead of through institutions, and to use new forms of exchange.

Disruptive technology

Technology will keep changing the game for all industries. 3D printing is disrupting manufacturing. Drones may deliver goods instead of drivers.

Inland Revenue has identified which elements of these drivers are of most importance to their business, and their implication for their future service delivery. Grant encouraged all in attendance to join the Strategic Futures Group and to continue engaging on integrating long-term thinking into our strategic thinking and planning. And most importantly – **to act on it.**

2004–2009

Alignment with international work

Just as the United Nation's sustainability movement provided a context for the future generations work in Wales, the OECD's 'Schooling for Tomorrow' project helped to provided a context for the exploration of the future of schooling in New Zealand.

Ministers, officials and the sector all perceived the need to talk about the long-term future of education. The OECD's international project on the future of schooling provided a vehicle for the Ministry of Education to establish 'Secondary Futures', to explore different ways of engaging with citizens about the future of schooling in New Zealand

Turning consultation into conversation

Rather than consulting the public on issues that were pre-defined by the government, Secondary Futures enabled New Zealanders to define the questions that would frame the conversation. To identify the right questions, the project talked to people, checked, distilled and rechecked.



The design of Secondary Futures

Secondary Futures was innovative in four aspects of its design: **Purpose, Modality, Form, and Authorising environment.**

1. Purpose

Secondary Futures was charged with enabling a broad-ranging discussion with New Zealanders about how secondary schooling could make more students more successful 20 years from now, and creating a guiding vision for the future of secondary education from this discussion.

2. Modality

Secondary Futures was iterative and open-ended, rather than aiming at the delivery of a specific product to a specific timeframe. It was inclusive, and incorporated voices that are not traditionally heard in policy conversations. It had a focus on building futures literacy across varied, diverse communities in order to enable them to participate in the conversation. It was relational and transformative rather than transactional.

New Zealand case study 2: Secondary Futures

3. Form

Secondary Futures comprised three bodies: the Guardians, the Touchstone Group and Secretariat.

The Guardians of Secondary Futures

Four independent, trusted New Zealanders became the public face of Secondary Futures. They were chosen for their ability to oversee the integrity of the project, and to inspire public trust and participation.

From left, Guardians Ian Taylor, Bernice Mene, Gillian Heald and Mason Durie.



The Touchstone Group

Made up of representatives from main education stakeholders, the Touchstone Group was a forum to help the Guardians debate and test issues. Members played an important role in making sure their own organisations were involved in contributing to the future vision.

The Secretariat

A small team of four to five carried out the daily work of the project. It was separate from the Ministry of Education, but able to draw on its corporate resources.

4. Authorising environment

Secondary Futures was funded but not driven by government, so that a richer debate with the public might take place. The project was given permission to:

- engage widely across all sectors
- share information with all political parties
- be free from usual reporting requirements.

Achievements of Secondary Futures

Stephanie described the achievements that were made under Secondary Futures. The project created a safe place for debate, and empowered people across all sectors and levels of the system to engage. Other achievements include that:

- some of the ‘imagined futures’ have already come into being
- it gave participants the confidence to start making future-informed changes in the parts of the system under their influence – not waiting for permission, or someone else to start
- parts of the emerging vision were used as inputs to legislative change and the context for the development of the New Zealand Curriculum.