



Report of the Director of Place

Poverty Reduction Policy Development Committee - 27 September 2021

Fairness in Green Health

Purpose:	To consider the options in relation to the next steps of developing a Fairness in Green Health policy.
Policy Framework:	Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Environment Act (Wales) 2016
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) It is recommended that a Poverty Reduction Policy Development Committee consider the options outlined in this report and agree the next steps in relation to the draft Fairness in Green Health Policy 2) Following the decision as to the way forward a further report will be brought back to the PDC prior to any draft policy being submitted to Cabinet.
Report Author:	Paul Meller
Finance Officer:	Paul Roach
Legal Officer:	Craig Davies
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 In September 2019, the Poverty Reduction Policy Development Committee (PDC) resolved to develop a Fairness in Green Health Policy (formerly known as a Green Health Policy).
- 1.2 A draft policy was developed by a working group made up from members of the Poverty Reduction Policy Development Committee.

- 1.3 The draft policy was informed by research and the wide evidence base about the benefits of the natural environment and its impact in terms of tackling health and wellbeing inequalities, presentations by external speakers such as Natural Resources Wales and ongoing discussions with the committee.
- 1.4 The main aim of the policy is to promote the provision of high quality green infrastructure and natural greenspace in deprived neighbourhoods, in order to improve health and wellbeing inequalities and increase resilience to climate change.
- 1.5 The draft policy suggests that the Council can promote fairness in green health in a number of ways and through a wide range of activities e.g tree planting, managing hedgerows and verges, improving the quality of and access to parks, wildlife and nature reserves, ensuring that there are sustainable youdrainage systems, and taking action to lower air pollution.

2 Existing Council Policies

- 2.1 In terms of considering the next steps in relation to the development of this draft policy, it is necessary to consider how it fits with existing Council polices. A review of existing Council policies suggests, that most of the aims of the new policy are being, or could be delivered via the following:
 - Countywide Green Infrastructure Strategy,
 - Public Service Board's Working with Nature Action Plan,
 - Council's Corporate Plan i.e. the poverty and biodiversity priorities and objectives
 - Local Natural Recovery Action Plan (not yet published),
 - Section 6 Biodiversity Plan,
 - Tree Policy (due to go to PDC later this year),
 - Climate Change Action Plan.
- 2.2 This raises a number of questions about whether the policy should be adopted as a stand-alone policy, integrated as an objective into existing strategies and plans, or adopted as a short hybrid policy which is delivered and reported through existing plans and strategies.
- 2.3 Regardless of which option is agreed, a caveat is that green fairness needs to be **one** of a series of criteria on which projects / interventions are judged including connectivity, application / suitability of intervention (i.e. what is the intervention trying to solve, such as flooding or air pollution issues), suitability of Green Infrastructure interventions etc. Likewise Green Infrastructure intentions should also follow the 5 principles of Green Infrastructure – multifunctional, adapted to climate change, biodiversity, health and wellbeing and smart and sustainable.

3. Options

3.1 The Poverty Reduction Committee (PDC) is asked to consider three options in relation to the further development of a Fairness in Green Health policy;

(i) Stand-alone policy

A stand-alone policy could be adopted corporately with specific actions and high visibility. However a challenge to a stand-alone policy is that there are no identified resources in terms of delivery, monitoring and reporting.

(ii) Integrated as an objective into existing strategies and plans

Existing delivery, monitoring and reporting mechanisms could be used. However as it would not be a stand-alone policy there would be less visibility from a Poverty perspective. This issue / assumption could be overcome if green fairness was monitored / reported through the Climate Change Strategy and Nature Programme Board and the Well-being Objective on Biodiversity and/ or if Fairness in Green Health was made one if the requirements of the Integrated Impact Assessment process.

(iii) Hybrid policy

A short stand-alone policy stating the Council's intent to be delivered through existing strategies, which would avoid additional reporting and double handling. However this option will still require some resource both initially for development and through future governance

4. Integrated Assessment Implications

4.1 The Council is subject to the public sector duties relating to equality and socio-economic inequalities as prescribed by the Equality Act 2010 , the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 4.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.
- 4.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.
- 4.4 An IIA Screening / Full IIA would be completed prior to a draft policy report going to Corporate Briefing.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, it may lead to decisions being taken at a later date that may have costs attached. Any such costs will need to be managed within departmental resources at that time with due regard to the Council's medium term financial plan.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Council must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 as well as its duties under the Equality Act (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 .

Appendices:

Appendix A Draft Fairness in Green Health Policy