

Meeting of:	Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday, 05 February 2025
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Homes and Safe Communities
Report Title:	Public Services Board (PSB) Project Update: Working with people who live in our communities that experience higher levels of deprivation.
Purpose of Report:	To present an update of the work of the PSB led project where partners are working with people who live in our most deprived communities. This is part of the rolling programme of providing Committees with insights into the work of the Public Services Board.
Report Owner:	Report of the Chief Executive
Responsible Officer:	Tom Bowring, Director of Corporate Resources
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	No specific Ward Member consultation has been undertaken but a meeting with local ward members was held in November to update them on progress with the work.
Policy Framework:	The Public Services Board Well-being Plan 2023-28 was approved by Council in April 2023
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Public Services Board (PSB) second Well-being Plan was published in 2023. Since its publication partners have been working to progress the Well-being Objectives set out in the Plan and the actions aligned to these Objectives. Many of the Objectives and actions are aligned to the work undertaken to tackle inequity in the Vale of Glamorgan, particularly within our most deprived communities. In addition, ‘working with people who live in our communities that experience higher levels of deprivation is one of the three key priority workstreams for the Plan. Since August 2023 a Senior Community Development Officer has led work to engage with the communities and organisations working in the areas to identify possible opportunities for partners and others to act to improve existing inequities and improve well-being for residents. An overview of this work is provided in more detail throughout this report which sets out the key findings to date and next steps including planned workshops on the topics of employment and health. The work of the PSB is reported to the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee. The Committee have requested the work of the PSB is also reported to other Committees whose remits align to elements of its work to broaden the understanding of the PSB’s work amongst a wider range of elected Members. 	

Recommendations

1. That Members note the work undertaken through this project to work with people who live in our communities that experience higher levels of deprivation and provide comments via the Director of Corporate Resources to the PSB.
2. That Members consider if they would like to receive further updates on the work of this project in addition to the progress reported as part of the PSB Annual Report, reported to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee and which is shared with all elected Members.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To enable Members to consider the work with people who live in our communities that experience higher levels of deprivation and feedback any comments to the PSB.
2. To enable Members to be updated on the work of the PSB to work with people who live in our communities that experience higher levels of deprivation in a manner that best satisfies the needs of the Committee.

1. Background

The Public Services Board (PSB)

- 1.0 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 formally established Public Services Boards (PSBs) in each local authority area in Wales. 'Our Vale' is the Vale PSB and in accordance with the Act must contribute to the achievement of the national well-being goals as set out in the legislation. The PSB must do this by:
 - Assessing the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in the local area.
 - Setting local objectives that are designed to maximise the PSB's contribution within the area to achieving the national well-being goals.
 - Taking all reasonable steps to meet these objectives i.e. through a Well-being Plan which must be informed by the Well-being Assessment.
- 1.1 Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee is the designated committee for scrutinising the work of the PSB.
- 1.2 The PSB's Well-being Plan sets out three Well-being Objectives for 2023 – 2028. There are several short and long-term actions which have been taken forward in an integrated way to achieve the three Objectives and to deliver the PSB's 2050 vision.
- 1.3 The PSB's three Well-being Objectives in the 2023-28 Well-being Plan are:
 - **A more resilient and greener Vale** - by understanding and making the changes necessary as individuals, communities and organisations in response to the climate and nature emergencies.
 - **A more active and healthier Vale** - by encouraging and enabling people of all ages to be more active and to promote the benefits of embracing a healthier lifestyle.

- **A more equitable and connected Vale** - by tackling the inequities that exist across the Vale, engaging with our communities and providing better opportunities and support to make a lasting difference.
- 1.4** There is a wide range of work detailed in the 2023-28 Well-being Plan that will contribute to the delivery of the three Objectives and the PSB has identified three priority workstreams where specific and additional shared focus is needed:
1. Responding to the climate and nature emergencies
 2. Working with people who live in our communities that experience higher levels of deprivation
 3. Becoming an Age Friendly Vale
- 1.5** The Welsh Government's statutory guidance Shared Purpose: Shared Future, sets out that PSBs must prepare and publish a progress report on the work undertaken towards meeting the Well-being Objectives on an annual basis. The PSB's [Annual Reports](#) set out the progress made over the year and are scrutinised by the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee. In December 2024 the PSB also considered a [six monthly progress report](#) with regards to PSB activities.

Working with people who live in our communities that experience higher levels of deprivation project

- 1.6** The PSB published its latest [Well-being Assessment](#) in 2022 outlining what life was like for residents across the Vale of Glamorgan. The Assessment enabled the PSB to develop a stronger understanding of what well-being looks like both for the Vale of Glamorgan as a whole, but also what it means for people living in different areas of the Vale of Glamorgan and how these experiences may vary. Although well-being for many in the Vale of Glamorgan was shown to be good, this experience is not consistent. Through the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2019, areas in the east of Barry were measured as more deprived than others; with three areas included in the top 10% most deprived areas in Wales. These areas being Gibbonsdown 2, Court 3 and Buttrills 2.
- 1.7** For these three areas, experiences of well-being is affected by a range of challenges, most notably these include typically lower educational attainment, lower skills levels, lower income levels and higher levels of income and employment related support, poorer health outcomes and higher levels of environmental risk.
- 1.8** The findings from the Assessment informed the Well-being Plan Objectives, actions and key priority workstreams. This resulted in one key priority workstream being 'Working with people who live in our communities that experience higher levels of deprivation.' to collaboratively work to address these differences to ensure all residents have the same opportunities to experience good well-being.

1.9 To develop a deeper understanding of the three areas identified and approaches to engagement the PSB commissioned Grasshopper to undertake an initial community mapping project, highlighting through local insight the key assets within these communities and key challenges they may face. This was followed by the appointment of a Senior Community Development Officer based within the Creative Communities Team of the Vale of Glamorgan Council to develop this work in August 2023.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

2.1 Following the project's presentation at the Homes and Safe Scrutiny Committee on the 10th July 2024, it was recommended that a further update be provided in due course.

2.2 Work has continued to progress with Officers from a number of partner organisations, including a range of Council departments, remaining active members of the PSB's Project Steering Group for this workstream. This cross-partnership approach will ensure alignment across various plans and strategies to maximise impact and avoid duplication as the reach of this work is very cross cutting.

2.3 Following earlier work on the project previously reported to the Committee, including comprehensive engagement with the communities, work has been undertaken to review and analyse the findings of work undertaken up to the summer of 2024. These findings have been shared and considered by the PSB steering group, local elected members, PSB partner organisations including the Council's Strategic Leadership Team.

2.4 The work sits alongside, and feeds into, the wider Vale Placemaking work taking place across the four towns in the Vale; Barry, Penarth, Cowbridge and, Llantwit Major. Placemaking invites people who live, work and socialise in the towns to play a key role in shaping plans for each area. This ensures that the changes made reflect the unique identity of the town and the goals of the community. The project feeds directly into the Barry Placemaking consultation and, due to the geographical location of the three areas, have been included as locations of interests with special focus.

2.5 The project has been branded as a sub-brand of the Placemaking work, named 'Your Place'. This branding highlights its integration with the broader Placemaking efforts while maintaining its distinct identity as a standalone PSB project. The project is titled 'Your Place' with the tagline 'Your Community, Your Say'. The colour schemes used for the town align with the Shop Local branding, and similarly, the 'Your Place' colour schemes align with the Barry Town branding indicating the location of the work.

2.6 Phase 1 of the project took place between August 2023 and July 2024. During this period, engagement was undertaken at 67 sessions where 365 individuals participated at 43 community locations including food pantries, warm spaces,

community groups, local events, religious centres, libraries, youth clubs, community centres, and door-to-door visits in social housing areas. This was complemented with an additional 24 sessions with professional bodies including school headteachers, family engagement officers, food pantry leaders, police officers, business owners, elected officials, faith leaders, and key community figures which has provided exposure to a wide range of people.

- 2.7** Throughout the research period, repeat engagement with some individuals have been recorded due to regular attendance at some venues to build rapport and encourage honest discussion. This commitment of resource and time has provided the project with a more robust and substantial body of evidence. Key findings of the project to date are outlined in the following sections.

Employment and Income

- 2.8** All three LSOAs are in the top 10% most deprived in Wales for both Income and Employment domains within the 2019 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD), with all three areas ranking between 1st and 4th most deprived in the Vale across both domains. For Employment, Buttrills 2 is ranked the most deprived in the Vale, Gibbonsdown 2 is ranked 2nd, and Court 3 is ranked 4th. For Income, Gibbonsdown 2 is ranked the most deprived in the Vale, Court 3 is ranked 2nd, and Buttrills 2 is ranked 3rd. These areas have the highest numbers of people receiving Universal Credit (UC), with the majority of those not in employment. There is a significant income disparity, with Gibbonsdown MSOA having an average income of £27,300 compared to the Vale median of £34,500. The cost of living crisis has had a big impact in these areas and evidence from project engagement has shown it concerns a lot of residents. Whilst discussion around employment has been limited, employment support programmes such as Communities for Work Plus, CELT+, and employability programmes within social housing organisations are in place to address these issues and are well received by those that access them. Engagement findings include:

- A lack of relevant employers in the direct area;
- Limited affordable and timely transport to employment areas;
- Low community morals and generational unemployment and poverty, including both in-work and out-of-work poverty.

Health

- 2.9** The areas of Buttrills 2, Gibbonsdown 2, and Court 3 are among the top 10% most deprived areas in Wales for Health within the WIMD domain, with Buttrills 2 being the most deprived in the Vale and Gibbonsdown 2 and Court 3 ranked 3rd and 4th, respectively. These areas exhibit higher rates of limiting long-term illness, GP-recorded chronic conditions, and mental health issues compared to the Welsh average. Additionally, premature death rates (under the age of 75, per 100,000) in all three areas are higher than the Welsh average. Buttrills 2 in particular is almost 3 times the national average, with Gibbonsdown 2 and Court 3 being almost twice

the national average. According to reports published by Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, smoking, diabetes, and cognitive disorders are all higher than the Wales national average, but these health related issues were not raised by any community members through the project engagement work. It is also important to note that there are three residential homes in Buttrills 2 LSOA (Springbank, College Fields, and Orchard House), accounting for 12% of the LSOA population. Key findings of the project to date include:

- Community concerns about neurodiversity, particularly around younger children;
- Anxiety and mental health concerns;
- Poor relationships with healthcare providers;
- Poor dental hygiene;
- Adult/parental substance addiction.

Housing and Access to Services

2.10 Gibbonsdown 2 and Court 3 are ranked among the top 50% most deprived areas in Wales in terms of access to Services within the WIMD, while Buttrills 2 falls within the top 30-50% deprived range. For the Housing domain, Gibbonsdown 2 is in the top 30-50% most deprived areas in Wales, with Court 3 and Buttrills 2 in the top 50% deprived. Key findings of the project to date indicate:

- Council services such as Communities for Work and Celt+(C4W), libraries, and Housing Community Engagement Officers are viewed as assets;
- Concerns about bus services, with 39% of people engaged with reporting confusion around accessing timetables;
- Fly-tipping.

Education

2.11 Gibbonsdown 2 is in the top 10% most deprived in Wales and is the most deprived LSOA in the Vale for the Education domain in WIMD, while Court 3 and Buttrills 2 are both in the top 20%. These areas have high percentages of residents with no qualifications. There are also reported issues with school attendance and crime in schools. Pencoedtre High School reports internal truancy but this is being addressed. Key findings of the project to date include:

- Primary school engagers are viewed as pillars of the community;
- Community concerns about Pencoedtre High School, including perceived lack of consistency and engagement with parents;
- Poor attendance rates in schools;
- Youth crime driven by perceived lack of youth resources.

Community Safety

2.12 Court 3 is among the top 20% most deprived areas in Wales for Community Safety WIMD domain, Gibbonsdown 2 falls within the top 30%, and Buttrills 2 is in the top 50%. According to South Wales Police published crime reports, the predominant

crime type in these areas is Violence and Sexual Offences, this is followed by Shoplifting, Public Order, and Criminal Damage but these account for a much lower percentage of recorded crimes comparatively. Key findings of the project to date include:

- Substance misuse across young people and adults;
- Youth anti-social behaviour;
- Issues around domestic abuse;
- Arson (particularly associated with fly-tipping);
- A perceived lack of police presence, and confusion about the power of PCSOs.

Physical Environment

2.13 According to WIMD 2019, Court 3 ranks in the top 10% most deprived areas in Wales for the Physical Environment domain, ranking it 3rd most deprived in the Vale. Buttrills 2 and Gibbonsdown 2 are in the top 50% most deprived and are ranked 19th and 11th most deprived in the Vale respectively. Key findings of the project to date include:

- Parks, libraries and the Island highlighted as assets;
- Bulky waste fly-tipping, including lack of knowledge of council collection services and issues of storage space;
- Poor road quality;
- Parking issues, particularly around Holton Road and the Island;
- Residents mentioned dog mess on pavements and parks;
- Increased pests, in particular rats associated with fly tipping and waste areas in flats;
- Dissatisfaction with bin collections.

2.14 Other insights revealed a perceived lack of youth services, a strong sense of community spirit and family focus, and professional concerns about male isolation, lack of trust in services, and static community dynamics.

2.15 Building on the July 2024 update, additional outcomes already being delivered through the work include:

- Support of various primary schools in the areas to establish parent support groups for neurodiversity in various schools, fostering peer-to-peer connections.
- Collaboration with the University Health Board (UHB) Neurodiversity Pathway Community Connector to hold sessions at Oakfield and Holton Road schools.

2.16 In addition to these achievements, there are several significant projects in progress. These include:

- **The Index** - The team is planning to enhance the sign-up process for The Index directory in collaboration with the Regional Partnership Board. These changes aim to provide parents and carers with better access to information about available services. The team intends to synchronise the systems between the Health Board and the Council, transitioning The Index to an opt-out service for anyone entering the neurodevelopmental pathway, rather than requiring a sign-up.
 - **Bulky Waste Fly Tipping service** – Following on from community feedback about fly tipping, a programme is being developed with the Waste and Housing team to deliver a pilot service to address concerns in our deprived areas. This aims to include a collection and storage service to reduce bulky waste fly tipping in communal areas.
 - **Health and Wellbeing hubs** – Discussions with the team in Cardiff and Vale University Health Board around the possibility of introducing health and wellbeing NHS hubs bringing health care directly to our deprived communities under one roof.
 - **Noticeboards** - Work with the housing department is underway to utilise notice boards in our social housing flats to highlight key council services that will benefit our most deprived residents.
 - **Project Zero** - Collaboration with Project Zero and Natural Resources Wales is ongoing to better engage our deprived communities by updating council cost of living and Project Zero webpages and creating a new approach to engaging these communities on issues linked to energy efficiency and climate change.
 - **Holm View** – Work with the newly established Reshaping Assets team and Environment and Housing Services is progressing to support the lease of Holm View going to tender with the opportunity to use the building for community purposes.
- 2.17** This project continues to strengthen connections between partners and organisations across multiple sectors to enhance shared learning, local knowledge and connections. Furthermore, this project has supported wider partnership work, including Age Friendly Vale, Healthy Schools, Project Zero and Food Vale and supports work to achieve all three PSB Well-being Objectives.
- 2.18** After considering and discussing the key findings and issues identified, the PSB steering group has been working to pinpoint the priority areas where the PSB and other partnership organisations are crucial for effectively addressing these challenges. To this end, New Local (the local government think tank of which the Council is a network member) have been engaged to work with the Steering Group to design and facilitate workshops with partner organisations, elected members, and the community. These workshops are focused on the WIMD domains of Health and Employment, and aim to foster a dialogue where partner organisations can

listen to the community and identify opportunities to adapt their services to better meet local needs.

- 2.19** The insights gained from these workshops will be instrumental in shaping the next stage of the project and identifying specific and tangible actions for partners and the project to pursue. Following the workshops the PSB Steering Group will reflect on findings and agree on the subsequent steps required to create comprehensive action plans based on the feedback and ideas generated during these sessions. This collaborative effort is expected to result in more effective and responsive services that align with the community's needs and priorities which are both community and partner organisation led.
- 2.20** Members are requested to note the update provided in this report and its presentation to Committee and provide any feedback via the Director of Corporate Resources to the PSB on the work with people who live in our communities that experience higher levels of deprivation.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is about sustainable development. The Act sets out a 'sustainable development principle' which specifies that the public bodies listed in the Act must act in a manner which seeks to ensure the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In meeting their sustainability duty, each body must set objectives that highlight the work the body will undertake to contribute to meeting the seven Well-being Goals for Wales.
- 3.2** Through the PSB, partners are working together to contribute to the national well-being goals, adopt the five ways of working and improve social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.0** The work with people who live in our highest deprived communities will support work where possible undertaken by PSB partners to deliver against commitments in the Climate and Nature Emergency Charter. Partners continue to work together through the PSB Climate Emergency and Asset Management Group to lead by example, take positive action and reduce our impact on the environment. The PSB's Annual Report and 6 monthly progress monitoring report include details on the range of work undertaken by partners aligned to the climate and nature emergency, highlighting work under the PSB's priority workstream in its Well-being Plan which focuses on 'Responding to the climate and nature emergencies.'
- 4.1** This project recognises the importance of outdoors spaces and environments and how access and protection of these can positively impact well-being. This project

supports work to achieve all three of the PSB's Well-being Objectives, including developing 'a more resilient and greener Vale'.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** Welsh Government have made funding available for the PSB in the form of a regional grant to both Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff PSBs. The regional funding shared equally between the PSBs is being utilised to further develop the PSB evidence base and progress actions linked to the 2023 -28 Well-being Plan.
- 5.2** The project was successful in an application to the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF). The project was awarded £100k for the period 2023/24 – 2024/25. This funding has been used to recruit a Senior Community Development Officer to lead on this agenda. SPF funding for 2025/26 which is a transition year has been utilised to extend the post until March 2026.

Employment

- 5.3** There are no specific employment implications arising as a direct result of this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.4** There are no specific legal considerations arising as a direct result of this report. Actions set out in the Well-being Plan will help to tackle the inequalities linked to deprivation and to increase community participation and engagement. The work of the PSB will contribute to the delivery of a more equal Wales, one of the seven national well-being goals for Wales.

6. Background Papers

The Vale PSB Well-being Plan 2024 – 2028 - valepsb.wales/Documents/Well-being-Plan-2023/Full-Vale-PSB-Well-being-Plan-2023-2028-Eng.pdf

The Vale PSB Annual Report 2023-24 - <https://www.valepsb.wales/en/Our-Progress/Our-Progress.aspx>

Homes and Safe Scrutiny Committee 10th July 2024 - <https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Scrutiny-HSC/2024/24-07-10/PSB-Tackling-Deprivation.pdf>