

Further national milestones to measure our nation's progress

Q1. a) Do you agree with the proposed national milestone for indicator No.2 - Healthy Life Expectancy at birth including the gap between the least and most Deprived?

Yes

b) If yes, but you would like some changes, what would you change about the proposed national milestone?

We would prefer a more concrete idea of what 'an increase' looks like, so that progress can be measured over the next 28 years.

Q2. a) Do you agree with the proposed national milestone for indicator No.3 - Percentage of adults who have fewer than two healthy lifestyle behaviours?

Yes

b) If yes, but you would like some changes, what would you change about the proposed national milestone?

We would appreciate some further evidence to support that the specified 5 healthy lifestyles are all equally important, to avoid focusing on 'easy to achieve' behaviours that may not actually be fully indicative.

Q3. a) Do you agree with the proposed national milestone for indicator No.29 - Mean mental well-being score?

No

c) If no, please provide evidence for what a more suitable national milestone for Wales would be.

This measure is geared toward mental *well-being*, and not mental *health*, which we feel would potentially be of interest.

We feel this topic has historically lacked robust data; the measure must be well evidenced and must be something that measures the issue.

As this measure focuses on the mean score, it does not feel like this indicator properly focuses the measure on those who should be getting the most attention – i.e., those at the bottom end of the score; not those in the middle.

Q4. a) Do you agree with the proposed national milestone for indicator No.10 - Gross Disposable Household Income per Head?

No

c) If no, please provide evidence for what a more suitable national milestone for Wales would be.

This focuses on Household Income, but it has become clear in recent years that households are prioritising well-being and not just money (e.g., people preferring to switch to working from home because of the lifestyle benefits of this) and income is therefore a crude measure of a household's *well-being*.

Page 17 of the consultation document itself implies that income alone is not the priority: *"We are also strengthening our Economic Contract so inclusive growth, fair work, decarbonisation and improved mental health at work are at the heart of everything we do, targeting business support and investment to those who set clear commitments to improving business practices."*

Although limitations are recognised, with inflation and so on, the indicator does not take account of cost of living in a rural area, which necessitates increased travel costs for many of the low paid positions where, for example, home working is not an option.

Q5. a) Do you agree with the proposed national milestone for indicator No. 18 - Income poverty relative to the UK median?

Yes

b) If yes, but you would like some changes, what would you change about the proposed national milestone?

Is further evidence available that the protected groups are more likely to be in poverty than the general population? We question the appropriateness of focusing on reducing poverty among the protected groups and not approaching it more equitably across the full population.

Q6. a) Do you agree with the proposed national milestone for indicator No. 28 - Percentage of people who volunteer?

No

c) If no, please provide evidence for what a more suitable national milestone for Wales would be.

There was a feeling that the indicator wording/question need to be quantified for clarity of what is truly meant by volunteering in this context. For example, contrasting one-off help at a local show or weekly volunteering with a mental health charity.

Similarly, does caring for a relative not count as volunteering, but if you elect to care for a non-family member and receive no recompense, is that volunteering?

There has been insufficient evidence presented to clearly demonstrate what benefits volunteering is intended to provide [to Wales] over and above the reasonable assumption that volunteering is generally a 'good thing.'

How does the evidence ensure that the 'volunteering' category is appropriately geared, and does not include potentially problematic non-paid work, for example when the goodwill of individuals and communities is relied upon to provide essential services, as that could indicate [some organisations'] failure to function?

Q7. a) Do you agree with the proposed national milestone for indicator No. 33 - Percentage of dwellings with adequate energy performance?

Yes

b) If yes, but you would like some changes, what would you change about the proposed national milestone?

The definition of 'adequate' would benefit from being better defined/clarified. This should not be based on the average in the area.

Q8. a) Do you agree with the proposed national milestone for indicator No. 44 – Status of biological diversity in Wales?

Yes

b) If yes, but you would like some changes, what would you change about the proposed national milestone?

It is suggested that some changes need to be made in the way progress towards this indicator is measured. Based on the information provided, the data being used is the abundance of Section 7 species only. This data does not give us a full picture of the status of the diversity of species or the status of ecosystems in Wales. In addition, this list has not been updated for some time and there are many species not on this list which are declining. It would be useful to update the Section 7 list and to include some sort of measure of status of ecosystems, for example mapping the extent and condition of the Section 7 habitats in Wales and then measuring the improvements over time.

Q9. How do you think we should communicate with the people and communities of Wales on the national milestones?

Regular consistent information across all social media and traditional channels, in plain language that makes a clear connection between national measures and public services. For the greatest exposure and ease of understanding, we suggest using as

many different formats as reasonably possible and repeating it over time. Could this data be presented in an easy-to-understand, less textual, format for consumption so that people can easily understand in a meaningful way for the public? We feel it is important to make the language much less corporate, as it does not translate well to encourage conversations between members of the public and non-subject-experts.

It is hard to make connections at the sub-national level when talking about national milestones because much of the data is not available at the local level (we cannot talk about progress being made in Powys if we do not have the data for our residents).

We think Welsh Government should be talking to the 3 million residents of Wales about this and explaining what you/we are aiming to do and what impact this may have on decisions being made [in Wales and in the county]. We feel that in the past some of the communication and engagement on key issues, like climate change, has not been robustly shared with the general public in an accessible way, and has not been pitched at 'person level' to clearly explain *why* big decisions are being made – such as why it affects them, why we think they need to know about it, why it matters, and how they can contribute. As a result of a lack of understanding of relevance to the individual, we have observed that some individuals and communities in Wales may have been resistant and reluctant to adopt activities and policies aimed at achieving national goals.

Q10. We are keen to gather evidence on the potential impacts and opportunities of achieving all the national milestones, and in particular, any dependencies between them. For example, there could be unintended consequences of making progress towards achieving a national milestone on another national milestone, or opportunities to deliver wider benefits between national milestones. Please use this space to provide evidence of these connections and interdependencies.

The interlinks between the different measures would benefit from greater investigation. There are obvious overarching links such as the potential for increases in household income to be achieved at the expense of the environment or mental well-being aspirations. We feel that the connection between volunteering, mental health, healthy behaviours, and biodiversity would be interesting to evidence.

Q11. The Welsh Government would like your views on the effects these proposals would have on the Welsh language, specifically on:

- opportunities for people to use Welsh, and
- on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

PLEASE NOTE that these answers also relate to question 12.

Indicator no. 18: We advocate the continuation of school and club activities to support children to use and develop Welsh language skills outside the home, as we feel this helps to promote equitable access and opportunity. For example, some families may not have access to reliable Wi-Fi at home, and so resources should – wherever possible – be available in appropriately accessible formats, such as hard copies. Robust support systems outside of the home put less pressure on parents, guardians, and carers.

We would expect to see more bilingual literacy support activities as new Welsh medium schools open. As such, we need to ensure staff supporting young people with language skills are themselves supported, for example by increasing the offer of Welsh language courses where there is a need that is not yet fulfilled.

Indicator no. 28: Greater access to Welsh language courses is suggested for those who volunteer. Positive effects could be increased by making Welsh courses free of charge and by tailoring courses/promotion to the voluntary sector as a way of creating, enhancing, and sustaining volunteers' language skills.

Supporting Welsh as a living language will help to celebrate Wales and its culture, as it is suggested that increasing the number of people and volunteers that speak some Welsh may create a better connection to, and engagement with, Wales and its people as well as supporting communities and the wider heritage/history.

We feel it is important to attract bilingual volunteers so that organisations can continue providing services that meet Wales's language needs and aspirations. The specific need for any language skills should be stated when advertising volunteering opportunities; organisations should better demonstrate that 'everyday Welsh' may be sufficient for many roles to better encourage Welsh speakers who may otherwise feel their Welsh language skills are not 'good' enough. For those learning Welsh, volunteering is an opportunity to practice and enhance their language skills.

Social meetings between the generations may improve the language skills of those involved and provide an opportunity to share various aspects of Welsh culture.

Q12. Please also explain how you believe the proposals could be formulated or changed so as to have:

- positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and
- no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language?

Please see the combined answers provided for **question 11**.

Q13. We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

It is proposed that a national outcome of 'living in a home that is safe and accessible for me' would be a beneficial outcome. It is hoped that the answers to such a question would highlight issues around poor housing, along with the number of people who live in dwellings that are not safe or accessible. It may be appropriate to include this with milestone 7.

Responses to consultations may be made public. To keep your response anonymous (including email addresses) tick the box.

Keep my response anonymous: **No**