

Proposed Wellbeing and Sustainable Development (Scotland) Bill

Cycling Scotland submission March 2023

Question 1: Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposed Bill? (Please note, that this question is compulsory.)

- Partially supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

- As is made clear, there are enormous differences in the quality of environment experienced in Scotland affecting people's life chances and health. This proposal acknowledges and helps address this inequity.
- With a common definition, a commissioner and responsibility on public bodies to act in the interest of future generations there is an increased opportunity for, and focus on, meeting our climate goals. The recent news in Wales around road building that will need to prioritise active travel shows the potential within the transport sector to benefit from a similar act and a commissioner.
- Placing further duties on public bodies across Scotland has the potential to build closer partnerships on the theme of sustainability that have long term benefits for future generations. For this to work, public bodies must receive support, including sufficient funding on a long term basis, and be consulted on any changes.
- As this bill has potential to support active travel we recommend that current targets and strategies in this area are considered such as [a reduction of car kilometres by 20%](#) and an increase in cycling under the new [Cycling Framework and Delivery Plan for Active Travel in Scotland 2022-2030](#) when this is finalised. It is important that the new commissioner places [a sustainable travel hierarchy at the centre of their work](#) to encourage more people to switch to active travel modes where possible.

Question 2: Do you think legislation is required, or are there other ways in which the proposed Bill's aims could be achieved more effectively? Please explain the reasons for your response.

- We believe that like in Wales, legislation could help define sustainable development and place this in the centre of decision making. The current Welsh Act also shows links to Sustainable Development Goals and is a common framework to work from.
- The new NPF4 is an opportunity to plan for a more sustainable Scotland and can be used by the new commissioner to advocate for active travel infrastructure and planning that includes place-making principles.

Question 3: Which of the following best expresses your view on whether 'sustainable development' should be defined in legislation?

- Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response, including any views on what the definition should include.

- As examples in the proposed bill have shown, there are different definitions in various strategies even though the term is mentioned in 10% of legislation. It is crucial that the term is well understood to achieve bold actions and currently there is a lot of ambiguity. Sustainable economic growth for example should not include references to cars or road building and we also need to be careful that the term 'sustainable transport' does not include electric vehicles, as these still produce emissions and can result in the same road dangers for people walking, wheeling and cycling.

Question 4: Which of the following best expresses your view on whether 'wellbeing' should be defined in legislation?

- Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response, including any views on what the definition should include.

- We are supportive of this term being included.
- The Carnegie UK definition is useful as it also considers environmental wellbeing, placemaking and the interaction of different kinds of wellbeing.
- We would welcome the inclusion of the ability to travel actively and independently, especially for young people, when aiming for improving our wellbeing for future generations. We know that cycling has a wealth of benefits for wider society, and these also include benefits for other family members.

Question 5: Which of the following best expresses your view on whether there should be a Commissioner for sustainable development and wellbeing?

- Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response, including any views on what the key functions of the proposed Commissioner should be (see pages 19 to 20 of the consultation document), what model of governance could be adopted (see page 22 to 23), and whether the Commissioner could play a role in strengthening existing duties or legislation.

- The role could be similar to the one in Wales with the Commissioner having the power [to conduct reviews into public bodies on future generations needs](#), to research and to advise ministers.

Question 6: What, in your view, should the title of the proposed Commissioner be?

Please explain the reasons for your response.

We note the Future Generations Commissioner in Wales has managed to achieve positive partnership building and has encouraged consideration and expansion of active travel through her work.

Question 7: Which of the following best expresses your view on whether there is a need for duties for public bodies to promote sustainable development and wellbeing in policy development and implementation?

- Fully supportive

Question 10: Any new law can impact on work to protect and enhance the environment, achieve a sustainable economy, and create a strong, healthy, and just society for future generations.

Do you think the proposal could impact in any of these areas? (If you do not have a view then skip to next question)

- Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response, including what you think the impact of the proposal could be, and if there are any ways you think the proposal could avoid negative impacts?

- This proposal could have a positive impact on future generations because of its potential to support us toward net zero and sustainable development goals. The potential outcomes of cleaner air and a reduced number of private vehicles on the roads will benefit all generations and specifically those who are most vulnerable.
- This act has the potential for reducing ageism through intergenerational collaboration. It could be used to begin discussions between generations on the environment, active travel and placemaking.

- If linked to the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy and the 20% reduction in car kilometres goal, this act will have a positive impact on vulnerable road users who will feel safer to walk, wheel and cycle.