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## **JOHN MENADUE ORATION 2023**

**SOPHIE HOWE  
INAUGURAL FUTURE GENERATIONS COMMISSIONER OF WALES**

**WHEELER CENTRE, MELBOURNE AND ONLINE  
TUESDAY 18 APRIL 2023**

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

### **SLIDE - PREDICTIONS FROM 1923 FOR 2023 - 4 HOUR DAY**

I CAN OFFICIALLY DECLARE THAT YOU NO LONGER HAVE TO WORK HARD – JUST A MERE FOUR HOURS A DAY! RELAX, PUT UP YOUR FEET AND LET ELECTRICITY DO THE WORK - OR AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT THIS EXPERT DECLARED FOR 2023 BACK IN 1923.

### **SLIDE - PREDICTIONS FROM 1923 FOR 2023 - MEN AND WOMEN**

WE SHOULD WORRY! GOD FORBID A MAN WITH CURLY HAIR AND WOMEN WITH SHAVED HEADS AND BLACK TEETH!

### **SLIDE - PREDICTIONS FROM 1923 FOR 2023 - LIVE TO 300**

BUT AT LEAST WE'RE GOING TO LIVE TO BE 300 – WE'LL TAKE THE GOOD WITH THE BAD, RIGHT?

### **SLIDE 5 PREDICTIONS FROM 1923 FOR 2023 - UTENSILS MADE FROM PULP**

MAYBE IT'S SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE UTENSILS MADE FROM PULP?

IT IS ALWAYS INTERESTING TO FIND OUT WHAT OUR ANCESTORS PREDICTED FOR TODAY, WITH THE LIMITED ACCESS TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD WE HAVE NOW.

THESE PREDICTIONS FOR 2023 MAY SOUND BIZARRE, BUT ALL OF THEM HAVE A PARTIAL TRUTH – OR AT LEAST AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHERE THE WORLD WOULD BE TODAY.

#### **SLIDE - 2023 - HOW THE PREDICTIONS PLAYED OUT**

BECAUSE, WE ARE INDEED, LIVING LONGER.

THE WAY WE WORK IS CHANGING, AND HAS CHANGED DRASTICALLY OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS, WITH MORE TO COME AS WE MOVE TO GREEN INDUSTRY. WE HAVE SHORTER WORKING WEEK PILOTS ACROSS THE WORLD WITH MUCH SUCCESS – IT MAY NOT BE FOUR HOURS A DAY, BUT IT'S A BIG CHANGE.

OUR USE OF MATERIALS HAVE CHANGED, AND THE MATERIALS WE USE FOR OUR UTENSILS TOO – WALES' LEGISLATION TO BAN SINGLE USE PLASTICS FOR THINGS LIKE CUTLERY IS COMING INTO FORCE THIS YEAR.

THE WAY WE UNDERSTAND GENDER HAS CHANGED OVER THE PAST DECADE WITH OUR UNDERSTANDING OF GENDER AS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT AND A WIDER UNDERSTANDING OF GENDER FLUIDITY.

#### **SLIDE 7 - GLOBAL RISK REGISTER**

OUR PREDICTIONS FOR THE FUTURE AREN'T QUITE AS BIZARRE OR AMUSING.

THE GLOBAL RISKS REPORT PREDICTS THE MOST LIKELY EVENTS TO CAUSE HAVOC IN OUR WORLD. IN 2006, THE FIRST ITERATION OF THE REPORT, RESEARCHERS FLAGGED THE ACUTE RISK OF AN INFLUENZA PANDEMIC TO OUR POPULATION AND THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON OUR PLANET AND PEOPLE.

THESE ARE FINDINGS THAT APPEAR AGAIN AND AGAIN IN THE ANNUAL REPORT.

A DECADE AGO THE SAME RISKS WERE FLAGGED AND YET, WE WERE BLIND SIGHTED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, AND WE CONTINUE TO BE NONCHALANT IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE;

ALL SYMPTOMS OF SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENTS ACROSS THE WORLD WHO ARE FAILING TO MAKE DECISIONS WITH THE FUTURE IN MIND.

### **SLIDE 8 - BRAIN SCIENCE**

UNFORTUNATELY, WE ARE NOT HARD-WIRED TO THINK TO THE FUTURE.

STUDIES HAVE COME TO LIGHT THAT SHOW WHEN WE THINK OF OURSELVES IN THE FUTURE, OUR BRAINS FIRE UP IN A WAY THAT IT'S MORE SIMILAR TO WHEN WE ARE THINKING ABOUT A STRANGER. THE STUDIES SAY THAT WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR PRESENT SELF, THE MEDIAL PREFRONTAL CORTEX, A PART OF YOUR BRAIN, IS ACTIVATED.

IF YOU THEN THINK ABOUT SOMEONE ELSE, IT 'POWERS DOWN' SOMEWHAT. IF YOU ARE ASKED TO THINK ABOUT SOMEONE YOU DO NOT KNOW OR SOMEONE YOU DO NOT HAVE A CONNECTION WITH, THIS AREA IN YOUR BRAIN IS STIMULATED EVEN LESS.

HOWEVER, IT HAS BEEN FOUND THAT THE MORE DISTANT IN THE FUTURE YOU TRY TO VISUALISE YOURSELF, THE LESS ACTIVATED YOUR MEDIAL PREFRONTAL CORTEX BECOMES. ESSENTIALLY, THE BRAIN BEHAVES AS IF YOUR FUTURE SELF IS SOMEONE YOU DON'T HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH.

MAKES SENSE, RIGHT? I TELL MYSELF IT'S WHY I'M SO BAD AT PLANNING FOR RETIREMENT. BUT THE WORLD IS IN CRISIS - A POLYCRISIS IN FACT, CAUGHT UP IN CONFLICT, POLARISATION FUELLED BY INCREASING WEALTH INEQUALITY, LIFE EXPECTANCY BEGINNING TO PLATEAU AND A PLANET ON THE BRINK OF IRREVERSIBLE DAMAGE.

### **SLIDE ON AUSTRALIA LIFE EXPECTANCY**

SO WHAT LEGACY WILL WE LEAVE BEHIND TO FUTURE GENERATIONS - OUR CHILDREN GRANDCHILDREN AND THE MANY GENERATIONS AHEAD?

### **SLIDE - WORLD POPULATION PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE**

IF WE LOOK 50,000 YEARS TO THE PAST THERE HAVE BEEN AROUND 100 MILLION PEOPLE WHO WERE ALIVE AND ARE NOW DEAD.

CURRENTLY THERE ARE AROUND 8 BILLION PEOPLE LIVING ON PLANET EARTH. BUT IF WE LOOK 50,000 YEARS TO THE FUTURE, BASED ON CURRENT PROJECTIONS, THERE ARE AROUND 6.75 TRILLION PEOPLE WHO ARE YET TO BE BORN.

AND THE LIVES THEY LIVE WILL BE DETERMINED IN NO SMALL PART BY THE DECISIONS WE TAKE TODAY.

BECAUSE MANY OF THE CHALLENGES THEY WILL FACE WE KNOW ABOUT TODAY - JUST AS MANY OF OUR PREDECESSORS KNOWINGLY STORED UP THE PROBLEMS WE NOW FACE.

IN TERMS OF CLIMATE FOR EXAMPLE WE HAVE PUT MORE CARBON INTO THE ATMOSPHERE SINCE THE UN PUBLISHED THEIR FIRST FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN 1992 AND SINCE AL GORE RELEASED THE FIRST VERSION OF *AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH* THAN AT ANY OTHER TIME DURING HUMAN HISTORY.

WE'VE DONE THE DAMAGE KNOWINGLY, OR IF YOU WANT TO PUT IT MORE POLITELY WE HAVE BEEN WILLFULLY BLIND - WILLFULLY IGNORANT - BECAUSE THE ACTION THAT WE NEED TO TAKE IF WE CHOOSE TO SEE IS, WELL, TOO INCONVENIENT.

AND WHEN I SAY WE - OF COURSE OUR INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOURS ALL ADD UP TO THE PROBLEMS WE NOW SEE - BUT LETS BE HONEST, THE 'WE' IS REALLY ABOUT A SMALL NUMBER OF POLITICIANS AND CORPORATE GIANTS WHO HAVE PUT PROFIT OVER PLANET.

AND AS A MUM OF MY OWN FIVE FUTURE GENERATIONS INCLUDING THREE TEENS I'VE GOT INTO A BIT OF HIP HOP RECENTLY AND ACTUALLY IF YOU LISTEN TO SOME OF THE LYRICS THESE KIDS ARE CALLING US OUT.

**SLIDE - LOYALE CARNER**

BRITISH ARTIST LOYALE CARNER HITS THE NAIL ON THE HEAD WHEN HE SAYS "NEVER HAS SO MUCH BEEN LOST BY SO MANY BECAUSE OF THE INDECISION OF SO FEW".

BUT MAYBE OUR YOUNGER GENERATIONS ARE COMING FULL CIRCLE BECAUSE OUR ANCESTORS IN SOME CASES, MOSTLY IN RESPECT OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ALSO ARE MUCH BETTER AT DEPLOYING THE LONGER TERM THINKING WE NEED.

TAKE THE IROQUIS WHO ARE FAMOUS FOR THEIR SEVEN GENERATION THINKING OR THE WISDOM HERE OF ABORGINAL ELDERS.

FOR TOO LONG THE WISDOM OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND OF SMALL NATIONS HAS BEEN FORGOTTEN OR IGNORED.

LOOK TO BHUTAN WHO MEASURE ALL THEIR DECISIONS AGAINST A GROSS HAPPINESS INDEX. WHERE THEY HAVE RECORDED AN AVERAGE GROWTH IN ANNUAL GDP OF 7.5% SINCE THE EARLY 1980S, POVERTY LEVELS HAVE DECLINED FROM 36% TO 10% AND THEY ARE THE ONLY CARBON NEGATIVE COUNTRY IN THE WORLD.

TAKE FINLAND, ICELAND, SCOTLAND AND YOUR NEIGHBOURS NEW ZEALAND WHO ARE ALL MOVING BEYOND GDP TO MEASURE DECISIONS ON THE BASIS OF PLANETARY AND HUMAN WELLBEING.

AND TAKE WALES - KNOWN AS THE LAND OF SONG, OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE, FOR TOM JONES AND GARETH BALE, AS THE ORIGINAL HOME OF YOUR FORMER PRIME MINISTER JULIA GILLARD AND FOR OCCASIONALLY BEATING YOU AT RUGBY.

BUT ALSO WE WERE KNOWN FOR BEING AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE COAL TRADE WHERE IN OUR CAPITAL, THE FIRST £1 MILLION CHEQUE FOR COAL WAS SIGNED.

#### **SLIDE COAL EXCHANGE THEN AND NOW**

BUT NOW WE WANT TO BE KNOWN AS A COUNTRY AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE WELLBEING REVOLUTION - A COUNTRY WHICH PUTS THE WELLBEING OF PEOPLE OF PLANET AND OF OUR FUTURE GENERATIONS AT THE FOREFRONT OF OUR DECISION MAKING.

AND IN 2015 WALES BECAME THE FIRST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD TO LEGISLATE TO DO THAT.

#### **SLIDE - THE ACT**

SO WHAT DOES THAT LEGISLATION DO?

FIRST OF ALL IT REQUIRES ALL OF OUR MAIN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS - OUR LOCAL AUTHORITIES OUR HEALTH BOARDS OUR NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS LIKE OUR PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT AGENCIES AND SIGNIFICANTLY OUR GOVERNMENT TO DEMONSTRATE HOW THEY ARE MEETING TODAY'S NEEDS WITHOUT COMPROMISING THE ABILITY OF FUTURE GENERATIONS TO MEET THEIR OWN NEEDS?

#### **SLIDE - WELLBEING GOALS**

IT THEN SETS OUT SEVEN LONG TERM WELLBEING GOALS, DEVISED IN CONVERSATION WITH THE CITIZENS OF WALES - A NATIONAL CONVERSATION CALLED 'THE WALES WE WANT' WHERE OVER

10,000 CITIZENS GAVE THEIR VIEWS ON THE WALES THEY WANTED TO LEAVE BEHIND TO THEIR CHILDREN, THEIR GRANDCHILDREN AND FUTURE GENERATIONS TO COME.

AND THEY TOLD US THAT THEY WANTED TO PROTECT OUR NATURAL ASSETS FOR THE NEXT GENERATION, THAT FAIRNESS AND COMMUNITY WERE IMPORTANT, THAT OUR LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND HERITAGE WAS SOMETHING THAT WE NEEDED TO PASS ON. AND SO THESE WERE EMBEDDED IN SEVEN LONG TERMS GOALS LINKED BACK TO THE UN SDGS.

NOTE HERE SPECIFICALLY THE GOAL OF A 'MORE PROSPEROUS WALES' AND PICK OUT THE KEY WORDS

- INNOVATIVE
- PRODUCTIVE
- LOW CARBON
- RECOGNISING THE LIMITS OF THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT
- USES RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY AND PROPORTIONATELY, INCLUDING ACTING ON CLIMATE CHANGE
- WHICH DEVELOPS A SKILLED POPULATION
- WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR DECENT WORK

AND THE DUTIES ON ALL THE PUBLIC BODIES COVERED BY THE ACT ARE

- TO SET OBJECTIVES TO MAXIMISE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE GOALS
- TO TAKE ALL REASONABLE STEPS TO DELIVER THESE OBJECTIVES NOT ONLY IN THE WAY THEY DEVELOP POLICY AND SERVICES, BUT IN HOW THEY DEPLOY THEIR BUDGET, HOW THEY PROCURE, HOW THEY PLAN AND DEVELOP ASSETS, MANAGE RISK, AND PLAN THEIR WORKFORCE.

#### **SLIDE - COMMISSIONER GENERAL DUTIES**

SOUNDS DIFFICULT SO FAR?

WELL THE ACT ESTABLISHES AN INDEPENDENT COMMISSIONER TO OVERSEE THE CHANGE. TO ADVISE AND SUPPORT THESE BODIES ON THE STEPS THEY SHOULD TAKE AND TO MONITOR THEIR PROGRESS. THE ROLE OF COACH AND REFEREE IF YOU LIKE AND I CAN TELL YOU THAT IS QUITE A FINE BALANCE TO STRIKE.

## **SLIDE - COMMISSIONER SPECIFIC POWERS**

THE ACT DOES NOT GIVE THE COMMISSIONER THE POWER TO STOP ANYONE DOING ANYTHING OR FORCE ANYONE TO DO ANYTHING BUT INSTEAD ESTABLISHES THE COMMISSIONER AS THE GUARDIAN OF THE INTERESTS OF FUTURE GENERATIONS. THE VOICE OR CONSCIENCE WHO AS I DESCRIBE WILL 'CALL OUT THE MADNESS OF SHORT-TERM DECISION MAKING WHICH DISREGARDS THOSE YET TO BE BORN'.

BUT ALSO IN MY EXPERIENCE TO DEPLOY A RANGE OF TACTICS TO BUILD A MOVEMENT FOR CHANGE IN WALES.

- INSPIRING NEW AND PROGRESSIVE POLICY AND ACTION,
- BEING THE FIGUREHEAD FOR THOSE WHO DARE TO THINK THE IMPOSSIBLE IS POSSIBLE,
- HOLDING THE HANDS OF THE TRIERS BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS THEY EXPERIENCE
- CONVENING POTENTIAL PARTNERS
- BANGING HEADS TOGETHER,
- USING THE PUBLIC PLATFORM TO SPEAK OUT
- USING REVIEW POWERS AND MUCH MORE

BECAUSE ALTHOUGH THIS IS A LAW, ESSENTIALLY IT IS THE BIGGEST CULTURAL CHANGE PROGRAM WALES (AND I'D ARGUE POSSIBLY ANY COUNTRY) HAS EVER SEEN.

AND SO FINALLY THE ACT SETS OUT A TOOLKIT FOR THE WAYS OUR INSTITUTIONS SHOULD CHANGE THE WAYS THEY WORK TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS WITH POWERS FOR THE AUDITOR GENERAL TO AUDIT HOW THESE WAYS OF WORKING ARE BEING APPLIED.

AND HERE YOU CAN SEE THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE ACT

## **SLIDE - WAYS OF WORKING**

FIRSTLY THEY MUST CONSIDER THE LONG TERM. WHAT WOULD THE LONG-TERM IMPACT BE OF THE THINGS THEY DECIDE TO DO?

THEY SHOULD USE FUTURE TRENDS AND SCENARIOS INCLUDING THE FUTURE TRENDS FOR WALES REPORT THAT THE WELSH GOVERNMENT PUBLISHES EVERY TWO YEARS.

THEY MUST SEEK TO PREVENT PROBLEMS FROM OCCURRING OR FROM GETTING WORSE.

AN ATTEMPT TO SHIFT FROM PARKING OUR AMBULANCE AT THE BOTTOM OF A THE RIVER AND PULLING SOMEONE OUT WHEN THEY'RE DROWNING TO GETTING UPSTREAM AND PREVENTING THEM FALLING IN THE RIVER IN THE FIRST PLACE.

THEY MUST INVOLVE CITIZENS IN FINDING SOLUTIONS - NOTE THAT THIS WORD "INVOLVE" IS DIFFERENT TO "CONSULT" OR "ENGAGE" AND TAKES US TO A DEEPER LEVEL BASED ON CO-PRODUCTION.

THEY MUST COLLABORATE. WORK TOGETHER BETWEEN EACH OTHER BUT ALSO WITH THE PRIVATE AND VOLUNTARY SECTORS, WITH HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS AND FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION, RECOGNISING THAT NO ONE BODY CAN MEET THE CHALLENGES OF SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEETING OUR WELLBEING GOALS ALONE.

THE ACT ALSO SETS UP SOME SPECIFIC MECHANISMS FOR THIS TO HAPPEN THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICES BOARDS - A STATUTORY BOARD MADE UP OF ALL THE KEY PUBLIC SERVICES IN EACH LOCAL AUTHORITY AREA OR REGION.

THEY MUST INTEGRATE THEIR ACTION. RECOGNISE THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE GOALS AND POLICY AREAS AND SERVICES. IF WE WANT TO MEET OUR GOAL OF PROSPERITY WE HAVE TO MAKE SURE THAT WE TAKE STEPS TO BOTH PROTECT AGAINST THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE BUT ALSO JOIN THE DOTS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE TO THE GREEN REVOLUTION TO DEVELOP THE HIGH QUALITY GREEN JOBS OF THE FUTURE.

BECAUSE THERE ARE NO JOBS ON A DEAD PLANET BUT THERE ARE HIGH QUALITY JOBS WHICH CAN ADDRESS POVERTY, REDUCE INEQUALITY AND IMPROVE HEALTH, THAT ARE NEEDED TO DELIVER NET ZERO.

WHATEVER POINT, ISSUE OR POLICY YOU START FROM IT IS MAKING THE LONG-TERM CONNECTIONS WHICH DELIVERS THE WELLBEING MAGIC. IF WE TAKE HEALTH FOR EXAMPLE.

IN PREVIOUS TIMES WE MIGHT HAVE SET A GOAL OF A HEALTHIER WALES - WHO DOESN'T WANT A HEALTHIER POPULATION? WE WOULD HAVE QUICKLY SENT THAT TASK OFF TO OUR MUCH LOVED NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE TO DELIVER. MAKES SENSE RIGHT? HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERS HEALTH OF A NATION?

WRONG.

THE BIGGEST DETERMINANTS OF THE HEALTH OF THE NATION ACTUALLY HAVE VERY LITTLE TO DO WITH WHAT THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM ITSELF DOES. IN FACT IN MANY CASES THE SYSTEM ITSELF IS A MAIN CONTRIBUTOR TO THE PROBLEMS WHICH CAUSE ILL HEALTH. TAKE THE FACT THAT IF THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS GLOBALLY WERE A COUNTRY IT WOULD BE THE FIFTH BIGGEST EMITTER IN THE WORLD - BUT THAT'S FOR ANOTHER LECTURE.

**SLIDE - WHO SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH**



BUT IF WE LOOK AT THE WHAT THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION TELLS US ARE THE BIGGEST FACTORS WHICH AFFECT OUR HEALTH THEY'RE ACTUALLY MOSTLY NOTHING TO DO WITH THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM ITSELF.

35 PERCENT OF WHAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE TO LEVELS OF LIFE EXPECTANCY IS ABOUT INCOME SECURITY.

29 PERCENT IS ABOUT LIVING CONDITIONS - THE QUALITY OF OUR HOMES, WHETHER WE LIVE IN AREAS OF HIGH AIR POLLUTION. DO WE HAVE ACCESS TO NATURE? THIS CONCEPT OF US ALL WANTING TO LIVE IN THE LEAFY SUBURBS ACTUALLY HAS SUBSTANCE BECAUSE IT HAS A DIRECT CORRELATION TO OUR HEALTH.

AND WHAT'S REALLY INTERESTING BUT ALSO OBVIOUS IN MANY WAYS IS THAT 19 PERCENT IS ABOUT SOCIAL AND HUMAN CAPITAL. WHAT ARE THE QUALITY OF OUR CONNECTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS? DO WE HAVE PEOPLE WE CAN TURN TO? IS THERE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY IN THE PLACE WE LIVE AND DO WE FEEL WE HAVE AGENCY IN THAT COMMUNITY?

FOR MANY POLITICIANS AND POLICYMAKERS THIS HAS BEEN THE SOFT AND FLUFFY STUFF, THE STUFF THE STATE DOESN'T HAVE A ROLE IN. BUT ACTUALLY FAR FROM BEING SOFT AND FLUFFY IT RELATES BACK TO THE HARDCORE METRIC OF "HOW LONG WILL WE LIVE?"

#### **SLIDE - WELLBEING SWEET SPOT**

AND SO WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO DO WITH THIS APPROACH IS CONNECT THE DOTS AND FIND THE SWEET SPOTS THAT DELIVER WELLBEING. TO RECOGNISE AND RESPOND TO THOSE CONNECTIONS IN OUR POLICY MAKING AND DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES.

IT'S WHY MONMOUTH COUNCIL IN SOUTH WALES BECAME THE FIRST PUBLIC INSTITUTION TO TAKE ON THE RUNNING OF A POST OFFICE TO STOP THAT COMMUNITY FACILITY LEAVING THE AREA AND BREAKING DOWN THAT COMMUNITY'S SPACE TO CONNECT.

IT'S WHY A REPRESENTATIVE FROM OUR ENVIRONMENT AGENCY WHO SITS ON THE BLAENAU GWENT PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD COULD DESCRIBE TO ME WHEN I VISITED THE ROLE HIS ORGANISATION COULD PLAY IN TACKLING ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES.

IT'S THE THING THAT ELUDES GOVERNMENTS PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND ALMOST EVERY ORGANISATION IN THE WORLD - THE REMOVAL OF SILOS AND THE COMING TOGETHER BEYOND BOUNDARIES TO DELIVER WELLBEING FOR ALL.

SO HOW MIGHT THIS PLAY OUT IN A LIVE POLICY ISSUE? LET'S TAKE A PROBLEM WHICH MOST COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD ARE GRAPPLING WITH IN ONE SHAPE OR FORM.

HOW DO WE ENSURE OUR TRANSPORT SYSTEMS ARE FIT FOR THE FUTURE? IN PARTICULAR HOW DO WE REDUCE OUR CARBON EMISSIONS FROM TRANSPORT IN LINE WITH MEETING OUR CLIMATE TARGETS?

AND HERE I FIND THIS APPROACH USING THREE HORIZONS USEFUL.

### **SLIDE – 3 HORIZONS**

HORIZON ONE. WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF WE CARRY ON WITH BUSINESS AS USUAL? WELL WE'D BE ON A DOWNWARD TRAJECTORY - NOT MEETING CLIMATE TARGETS AND SO ON.

HORIZON THREE IS WHERE WE WANT TO BE - THE NEW NORMAL WE WANT TO CREATE. AND THIS IS THE IMPORTANT BIT IN WALES - WE KNOW WHAT THAT IS - NOT THE CASE FOR MOST OTHER COUNTRIES WHERE THERE IS NO CITIZEN DEVELOPED AND LEGALLY AGREED VISION. AND WE KNOW THAT WHENEVER WE'RE SEARCHING FOR POLICY SOLUTIONS WE NEED THOSE SOLUTIONS TO MAXIMISE ALL ASPECTS OF WELLBEING.

AND HORIZON TWO. WHAT ARE THE THINGS WE NEED TO DO TO OR WHAT ARE THE INNOVATIONS IN PLAY THAT WILL GET US TO HORIZON THREE?

AND HERE'S THE TRICK. THE THINGS YOU MIGHT DO TO SOLVE ONE PROBLEM MIGHT NOT BE THE THINGS YOU SHOULD DO IF YOU'RE SEEKING TO IMPROVE WELLBEING OVERALL.

IN FACT THEY MAY JUST TAKE YOU BACK TO REINFORCING BUSINESS AS USUAL.

HORIZON TWO: IF YOU JUST WANTED TO DECARBONISE A TRANSPORT SYSTEM THEN MASS INVESTMENT IN ELECTRIC VEHICLES MIGHT BE THE ANSWER.

THE PROBLEM IS THAT:

- EVS STILL HAVE AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IN THEIR PRODUCTION
- IT MEANS THAT WE ARE ALL STILL SAT IN TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN OUR EVS RATHER THAN OUR PETROL CARS
- WE'RE ALL STILL GETTING FATTER BY DOING SO ADDING TO THE LOOMING OBESITY CRISIS
- WE'RE ALL STILL THERE NOT CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY
- POORER PEOPLE WHO COULDN'T AFFORD PETROL CARS DEFINITELY CAN'T AFFORD EVS EVEN WITH A GRANT

SO WHEN YOU APPLY A HOLISTIC WELLBEING LENSE THEN YOU FIND THAT EVS ARE ACTUALLY NOT THE ANSWER AT ALL.

A MUCH BETTER SOLUTION FOR ENVIRONMENT, EQUALITY, COMMUNITY AND HEALTH IS TO INVEST IN WALKING, CYCLING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

WHICH IS EXACTLY WHAT A HARD FOUGHT BATTLE USING THE FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT MEANS WE ARE DOING IN WALES.

#### **SLIDE - M4**

TRANSPORT BECAME THE FIRST TEST OF THE ACT. SPECIFICALLY GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS TO SPEND AROUND £1.5 BILLION BUILDING A 13-MILE STRETCH OF MOTORWAY TO DEAL WITH A PROBLEM OF CONGESTION ON THE M4 AROUND NEWPORT.

THE FUNDING EQUATED TO THE ENTIRE OF THE WELSH GOVERNMENT'S BORROWING CAPACITY AND THE ROUTE WENT THROUGH A NATURE RESERVE. IT WAS ARGUED THAT IT WAS A NECESSARY PIECE OF INFRASTRUCTURE FOR WALES' ECONOMY.

AS COMMISSIONER I INTERVENED IN THIS DECISION AND ASKED THE GOVERNMENT TO EXPLAIN TO ME HOW THEY HAD APPLIED THE FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

- HOW IT WAS IN LINE WITH THE GOAL OF A PROSPEROUS WALES WHICH TALKS ABOUT PROSPERITY WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF ACTING ON CLIMATE CHANGE?
- HOW IT MET THE GOAL OF A RESILIENT WALES WHEN IT WOULD PERMANENTLY DAMAGE THE BIODIVERSITY OF THE AREA?
- HOW IT WAS IN LINE WITH THE GOAL OF A HEALTHIER WALES WITH RISING LEVELS OF AIR POLLUTION AND OBESITY?
- HOW IT WAS IN LINE WITH THE GOAL OF A MORE EQUAL WALES WHEN 25 PERCENT OF THE LOWEST INCOME FAMILIES IN THE AREA DON'T EVEN OWN A CAR? SO WE'D ESSENTIALLY BE SPENDING THE ENTIRE OF THE BORROWING CAPACITY ON A SCHEME THAT ONLY BENEFITED THE ALREADY BETTER OFF.

THE GOVERNMENT FOUND IT HARD TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS AND CONSEQUENTLY AND AGAINST ALL EXPECTATIONS THE FIRST MINISTER REVERSED THE DECISION, CANCELLED THE ROAD AND SET UP A COMMISSION TO LOOK AT ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS WHICH ALIGNED WITH THE FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

THE GOVERNMENT IS NOW PLANNING TO SPEND HALF THE MONEY IMPROVING PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTES IN THE AREA.

### **SLIDE – TRANSPORT AS AN EXAMPLE OF THREE HORIZONS**

IT DIDN'T STOP THERE. THESE INTERVENTIONS AND MY ONGOING CHALLENGE TO GOVERNMENT ABOUT HOW THEY WERE SPENDING CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT, HOW THEIR POLICIES WERE ACCOUNTING FOR THE LONG TERM AND AND APPLYING WELLBEING HOLISTICALLY LED TO:

- A TOTALLY NEW TRANSPORT STRATEGY PRIORITISING ACTIVE TRAVEL AS A TRANSPORT SOLUTION AND PUTTING PRIVATE CAR USE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE TRANSPORT HIERARCHY
- A SHIFT IN INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT. WE WERE PREVIOUSLY SPENDING TWO THIRDS OF OUR INFRASTRUCTURE BUDGET ON BUILDING ROADS AND IN THE LAST BUDGET ROUND THIS WENT DOWN TO ONE THIRD, WITH NEW INVESTMENT INTO PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND ACTIVE TRAVEL
- A MORATORIUM ON ROAD BUILDING WITH 55 NEW ROAD SCHEMES ACROSS WALES HALTED AND REVIEWED IN LINE WITH THE FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT
- THE ROLLOUT OF A STANDARDISED 20MPH SPEED LIMIT IN ALL RESIDENTIAL AREAS ACROSS WALES
- AND INNOVATIVE TRIALS FROM ELECTRIC BIKE LOAN SCHEMES TO BUSES ON DEMAND TO CLOSING SCHOOL STREETS TO TRAFFIC

SO A MAJOR TRANSFORMATION IN TRANSPORT BUT WHAT ELSE HAS CHANGED?

### **SLIDE - HEALTH**

IN HEALTH WE'RE SEEING ENCOURAGING STEPS TOWARDS JOINED UP PREVENTION:

- DOCTORS ISSUING FREE BIKE HIRE ON PRESCRIPTION
- COMMUNITY WELLBEING HUBS FOCUSING ON TACKLING THE WIDER DETERMINANTS OF PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

- THE FIRST HOSPITAL-BASED SOLAR FARM IN THE UK
- A HOSPITAL SITE WHICH DECIDED NOT TO SELL SURPLUS LAND FOR DEVELOPMENT BUT INSTEAD TO DEVELOP IT FOR THE COMMUNITY WITH FOOD GROWING LAND MANAGEMENT SKILLS PROGRAM SPACE FOR RESTORING AND CONNECTING WITH NATURE

#### **SLIDE - UBI**

AND PERHAPS ONE OF THE BIGGEST STEPS IS THE FIRST GOVERNMENT BACKED PILOT OF UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME IN THE UK.

BACK TO THOSE WIDER DETERMINANTS - WE KNOW THAT POVERTY COSTS THE UK HEALTHCARE SYSTEM £29 BILLION EVERY YEAR.

MY REPORT SAID WALES INTRODUCING A UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME COULD HALVE POVERTY.

JUST A FEW YEARS AGO IT WAS CONSIDERED IMPOSSIBLE, BUT LAST YEAR THE WELSH GOVERNMENT LAUNCHED THEIR FIRST TRIAL, INITIALLY TARGETED TOWARDS YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING THE STATE CARE SYSTEM, WHO ARE NOW RECEIVING AN UNCONDITIONAL INCOME OF £1600 PER MONTH WITH A BIG EVALUATION WRAPPED AROUND IT.

#### **SLIDE – REDUCING WASTE**

WHEN DOES REDUCING WASTE ALSO HELP TO TACKLE LONELINESS?

WHEN A HOLISTIC WELLBEING APPROACH IS APPLIED.

WALES HAS A STRONG TRACK RECORD ON WASTE. WE ARE THIRD IN THE WORLD FOR OUR RATES OF RECYCLING BUT IN LINE WITH OUR WELLBEING GOALS WE HAVE SET AN ASPIRATION TO BE A ZERO WASTE BY 2050.

BUT WE WANT TO DO THAT IN A WAY WHICH ALSO REDUCES POVERTY, BRINGS COMMUNITIES TOGETHER AND SO ON.

#### **SLIDE - BENEFITS OF WELLBEING APPROACH TO WASTE**

SO WE'VE SET UP COMMUNITY REPAIR SHOPS WHERE PEOPLE CAN INTEGRATE WHILST GETTING THEIR PHONE, TELEVISION OR WHATEVER REPAIRED BY VOLUNTEERS. THE LIBRARY OF THINGS - WHERE YOU CAN BORROW ANYTHING FROM A TENT TO A LAWNMOWER. SCHOOL UNIFORM SWAP

SHOPS SO HARD UP PARENTS DON'T NEED TO SPEND HUNDREDS OF POUNDS KITTING THEIR CHILDREN OUT FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR BUT INSTEAD CAN REUSE THE UNIFORM FROM KIDS IN THE YEAR ABOVE FOR THE COST OF A FEW POUNDS, RAISING FUNDS FOR THE SCHOOL AND KEEPING WASTE FROM LANDFILL

#### **SLIDE – EDUCATION**

AND OF COURSE EDUCATION - ARGUABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT LONG TERM INTERVENTION WE CAN MAKE.

A NEW CURRICULUM IN WALES CENTRED AROUND THE WELLBEING GOALS WITH THE AIM TO PREPARE AND EQUIP CHILDREN NOT JUST FOR THE JOBS OF THE FUTURE BUT FOR A LIFE WELL LIVED.

- AMBITIOUS AND CAPABLE LEARNERS - WITH A LUST FOR LIFELONG LEARNING
- ENTERPRISING AND CREATIVE CONTRIBUTORS - RECOGNISING THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATIVITY AS A KEY SKILL FOR THE FUTURE
- HEALTHY AND CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS - RECOGNISING THAT AS A SOCIETY OUR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH IS AS IMPORTANT AS OUR ECONOMIC OUTPUT
- AND FINALLY ETHICAL AND INFORMED CITIZENS - WHAT IF EVERYONE ONE OF US IN THIS ROOM, IN GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC POLICY HAD BEEN THROUGH AN EDUCATION SYSTEM WHICH TAUGHT THEM TO BE ETHICAL AND INFORMED CITIZENS? WOULD WE BE LIVING IN A CLIMATE EMERGENCY? WOULD WE BE SEEING WEALTH INEQUALITY RISING?

I COULD TELL YOU MORE ABOUT THE GOOD THINGS THE CHAMPIONS WHO ARE USING THE ACT TO CHANGE THE WAY THEY PROCURE, THE DOCTORS WHO ARE REFORMING CITY TRANSPORT STRATEGIES, THE ENGINEERS WHO ARE GREENING OUR CITIES AND THE ECONOMIC AGENCIES WHO ARE FOCUSED ON SUSTAINABLE FOOD CHAINS.

BUT I CAN ALSO TELL YOU IT HAS NOT BEEN EASY AND WE STILL HAVE A HUGE AMOUNT OF WORK DO.

IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO HAVE A FRAMEWORK FOR PEOPLE TO FOLLOW EVEN IF IT'S A LEGISLATIVE ONE BECAUSE HUMAN NATURE DOESN'T LIKE CHANGE AND YOU WILL FIND THAT WITHOUT STRONG OVERSIGHT, SUPPORTIVE AND CHALLENGING INTERVENTIONS, THAT THE SYSTEM WON'T ACTUALLY CHANGE WHAT IT DOES. IT WILL JUST USE THE NEW WELLBEING WORDS TO DESCRIBE IT.

A FRAMEWORK WHICH SITS AS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ONE MINISTER OR ONE ORGANISATION HAS A CHANCE OF CHANGING 'A' RULE OF THE GAME BUT WON'T CHANGE THE GAME ITSELF.

WE HAVE LEARNT THE LESSONS HERE. UNLESS IT'S EVERYONE'S BUSINESS AND BECOMES THE OVERARCHING AND UNDERPINNING FRAMEWORK FOR EVERYTHING A COUNTRY DOES THEN IT WILL GET LOST WHENEVER THE NEXT POLITICAL INITIATIVE COMES ALONG.

WE HAVE ALSO LEARNT THAT THIS NEEDS SYSTEM- WIDE REFORM. AT THE BEGINNING OF OUR JOURNEY THIS NEW APPROACH WAS ALL WELL AND GOOD BUT NOTHING ELSE ALIGNED WITH IT.

YES THE ACT WAS AN ALL ENCOMPASSING FRAMEWORK BUT IF YOU LOOKED TO THE VARIOUS STRATEGIES PLANS AND REGULATIONS THEY WERE AT ODDS WITH IT.

- MAKE LONG TERM PLANS WE SAID, AND HERE'S YOUR BUDGET FOR A YEAR
- WORK TOGETHER WE SAID, BUT THE SYSTEMS OF GOVERNANCE WILL STILL HOLD JUST ONE OF YOU ACCOUNTABLE
- PREVENT PROBLEMS WE SAID, BUT WE'RE STILL GOING TO HOLD YOU TO ACCOUNT PRIMARILY AND INTENSIVELY ON SHORT TERM PERFORMANCE MEASURES
- INVOLVE CITIZENS WE SAID, BUT AUSTERITY MEASURES HAVE STRIPPED AWAY ALL THE RESOURCES YOU MIGHT HAVE HAD FOR DOING THIS
- TAKE RISKS AND TRY NEW THINGS WE SAID, BUT WE'LL STILL CRUCIFY YOU IN AUDIT IF YOU GET IT WRONG

SO WE'VE HAD TO REBUILD OR CONSTRUCT FROM SCRATCH NEW WAYS FOR THE WHOLE SYSTEM AND THAT IS STILL A WORK IN PROGRESS.

AND SO THERE ARE A LOT OF BARRIERS AND THIS LINKS TO ONE OF THE OTHER THINGS WE'VE LEARNT - THE NEED TO TURN A PIECE OF LEGISLATION BEYOND ITS PROCESS AND BUREAUCRATIC REQUIREMENTS INTO SOMETHING INSPIRING.

TO FIND THE PEOPLE IN THE SYSTEM - I CALL THEM THE FRUSTRATED CHAMPIONS - WHO FOR A LONG TIME HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SEE THERE'S A BETTER WAY OF DOING THINGS BUT THE SYSTEM HAS FRUSTRATED THEM.

BECAUSE THESE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR SOMETHING LIKE THIS AND WILL BECOME THE FIRST TO USE IT TO DO DIFFERENT THINGS, TO CHALLENGE THE SYSTEM AND WALK A PATH TO THE NEW NORMAL.

THE BEST WAY TO PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE IS TO CREATE IT.

AND FINALLY THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A CHAMPION TO INSPIRE AND LEAD THE CHANGE AND WHO HAS A PLATFORM TO SHOUT OUT WHEN THINGS ARE GOING OFF TRACK - IN OUR CASE A COMMISSIONER BUT COULD BE A COMMISSION.

GOVERNMENTS MARKING THEIR OWN HOMEWORK DOESN'T NECESSARILY END WELL IN TERMS OF OUTCOMES AS YOU'RE RELYING ON THE SYSTEM TO CHALLENGE ITSELF.

BUT INSPIRATION, HOPE AND LEADERSHIP IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT. WE MIGHT GET BETTER AT UNDERSTANDING WHAT THE BIG CHALLENGES AHEAD ARE.

BUT IN A WORLD WHERE THE FUTURE IS OFTEN PRESENTED AS A DYSTOPIA, WE MUST GIVE PEOPLE HOPE AND A VISION OF WHERE WE WANT TO GET TO. OTHERWISE THE CHALLENGES TOO BIG AND TOO HOPELESS AND WE RISK DEFEATISM BECOMING THE NEW DENIALISM.

AND SO WE HAVE SOUGHT TO BUILD A MOVEMENT BEYOND GOVERNMENT WHICH IN ITSELF IS A DRIVER FOR ACTION. IN WALES THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION HAVE EMBRACED THE ACT NOT BECAUSE THEY HAVE TO BUT BECAUSE THEY ARE INSPIRED BY IT.

THEY HAVE SET A PLAN AROUND THE WELLBEING GOALS WITH AN AIM TO BECOME THE MOST SUSTAINABLE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION IN THE WORLD - AND THEY HAVE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE THAT THEY CAN REACH IN A WAY GOVERNMENT NEVER CAN.

AND HERE'S THE FIRST THING IT HAS DELIVERED - EQUAL PAY BETWEEN THE MALE AND FEMALE TEAMS.

#### **SLIDE - FAW EQUAL PAY**

VOLUNTARY SECTOR ORGANISATIONS ARE USING IT AS THEIR FRAMEWORK - TO WORK BEYOND THEIR BOUNDARIES. SO THE NATURE CHARITIES ARE WORKING ON HEALTH PROGRAMS, OR RECOGNISING THAT THEY'RE PREDOMINANTLY WHITE AND SO NEED TO DO MORE TO REACH THE GOAL OF AN EQUAL WALES .

THIS OUTSIDE MOVEMENT IS POWERFUL AND SHOULD BE SEEN AS A KEY PART OF MAKING THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE ACT HAPPEN IN GOVERNMENT ITSELF.

AND OF COURSE YOUNG PEOPLE - INVOLVE THEM, USE THEIR EXPERTISE, USE THEIR STRAIGHT TALKING CHALLENGE TO LEADERS ON HOW THEY ARE ACTING IN THEIR INTERESTS.

WE HAVE LOWERED THE VOTING AGE TO 16 IN WALES, ESTABLISHED A YOUTH PARLIAMENT AND A FUTURE LEADERS ACADEMY SET UP BY MY OFFICE WHO ARE LEADING THE CHARGE ON BEHALF OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN WALES BUT ALSO IN THEIR OWN ORGANISATIONS AND SECTORS.



ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING THINGS THEY'VE DONE IS TO REVERSE MENTOR EXISTING LEADERS - SO 50 OF THEM PAIRED WITH THE MOST SENIOR LEADERS IN WALES FROM THE HEAD OF THE WELSH CIVIL SERVICE, TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF PUBLIC HEALTH WALES, TO THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM OF OUR MAJOR CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES.

THE POWER OF HAVING THESE DIGITAL NATIVES WHO ARE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO HAVE EXPERIENCED CLIMATE ANXIETY AND BE NAVIGATING THE COMPLEX LANDSCAPE OF MISINFORMATION, MENTAL HEALTH, IDENTITY AND INEQUALITY HAVE A THING OR TWO TO TEACH THE CURRENT LEADERS WHO ARE MAKING DECISIONS ON THEIR BEHALF.

AND OUR FINAL LESSON IS: NEVER THINK THAT YOU ARE TOO SMALL. AS INDIVIDUALS OUR ACTIONS ADD UP, AS LEADERS OUR DECISIONS WILL PLAY OUT FOR DECADES AND SOMETIMES CENTURIES TO COME AND AS A SMALL COUNTRY OF JUST OVER 3 MILLION PEOPLE WE ARE INFLUENCING POLICY ON A GLOBAL SCALE.

#### **SLIDE - OTHER COUNTRIES**

WITH MANY COUNTRIES LOOKING TO FOLLOW SUIT. AND PERHAPS MOST EXCITINGLY PROPOSALS FROM THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL ANTOINIO GUTERRES FOR A UN DECLARATION FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS, THE APPOINTMENT OF A SPECIAL ENVOY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS, THE UN EQUIVALENT OF MY ROLE AND REFORMS TO THE UN'S OWN GOVERNANCE INFRASTRUCTURE - ALL INFLUENCED BY WALES.

SO YES YOU CAN THINK BIG - YOU CAN THINK THE IMPOSSIBLE IS POSSIBLE AND YOU CAN BELIEVE THAT WITH A BIT OF BRAVERY LEAVING THE WORLD BETTER THAN WE FOUND IT IS AN ASPIRATION WE CAN COLLECTIVELY ACHIEVE.