



NETHERWOOD  
SUSTAINABLE FUTURES  
Sustainable Development &  
Climate Change Consultancy

# **FINAL REPORT**

## **THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS REPORT FOR THE WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT**

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## BACKGROUND ON AUTHORS

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Having worked in Environment and Sustainable Development for over 25 years, Richard Pitts brings not only an extensive personal knowledge and understanding of Welsh organisations, both within the Public and Non Governmental sectors, but practical experience of project management in a variety of contexts, including sustainable food and agriculture and community engagement in SD at the grass-roots level. He is currently assisting in the design and delivery of guidance and training for Officers and Members in support of the WLGA's Sustainable Development Framework.

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1.1 SCOPE OF THE WORK

Ministers in the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) are required under section 79(1) of the Government of Wales Act 2006, to have a Scheme setting out how they propose, in the exercise of their functions, to promote sustainable development. Ministers are required to keep the Sustainable Development Scheme under review, and may from time to time remake or revise it. Ministers also have a duty, in the year following an ordinary general election, to publish a report containing an assessment of how effective their proposals (as set out in the scheme and implemented) have been in promoting sustainable development. As required by the Act, this report contributes to the process of reviewing the effectiveness of the Sustainable Development Scheme. The report is one of a small suite of projects that are also contributing to a wider analysis of the sustainable development achievements of, and challenges for, WAG. The other reports are:

- The Wales Audit Office (WAO) study on embedding Sustainable Development principles in decision-making within the Welsh Assembly Government.
- HRH the Prince of Wales' Accounting for Sustainability project on helping the public and private sector account more accurately for the wider social and environmental costs of their activities. The Welsh Assembly Government has been chosen as one of a number of case studies to inform its report.
- The Cynnal Cymru study canvassing stakeholder suggestions for key challenges and opportunities for action on SD.

To avoid duplication, the work outlined in this report, commissioned by WAG has, "a clear focus on the outward-facing aspect of how well the vision set out in the SD Scheme has been achieved, both through the Action Plan and through broader mainstreaming activity within the public sector more generally" (WAG Effectiveness Tender 2007).

In tackling the terms of reference of the review three features became apparent. Firstly the focus of the analysis should be on the delivery of sustainable development by WAG and its key partners. Secondly, areas of progress or examples of good practice should be acknowledged and thirdly, barriers to delivery should be identified.

As well as the previous Effectiveness Review, conducted in 2003, our report has drawn upon two other major pieces of work: These are the Davidoff Report (2003) on *External Perceptions of the First Sustainable Development Scheme of the National Assembly for Wales* and Williams and Thomas (2004) *Sustainable development in Wales - Understanding effective governance*.

Thus, the report focuses on how to improve further and future delivery of sustainable development in Wales, making a number of recommendations on governance for sustainable development and suggestions for effective partnership and change management to encourage more effective delivery on the ground.

The report is a collaborative effort between Cardiff University (Dr. Andrew Flynn and Professor Terry Marsden), Netherwood Sustainable Futures (Dr. Alan Netherwood) and Richard Pitts Associates (Richard Pitts).

## **1.2 METHODOLOGY**

Identifying and understanding the factors that facilitate or constrain more sustainable forms of development in Wales involved a methodology that consisted of two main components - a policy evaluation and set of key person interviews. These two approaches to data collection have been selected in order to provide a comprehensive account of how WAG has tackled SD in its work and of how its work on SD is perceived by its key partners.

The first stage of the research was a review of the content of policy documents and other associated policy advice. Documents are a key source of communication between WAG and its partners. Documentary analysis provides insights into the messages that WAG is disseminating to its partners. Texts can convey meanings of SD, priorities, the value of partnership working, the relative importance of SD when compared to other imperatives such as economic development, and how SD relates to other key terms such as wellbeing and climate change. A broad range of documents was reviewed, including remit letters, compacts and policy agreements, and strategic policy documents.

A criteria based method of assessment was developed that allowed a large number of documents to be analysed and then expressed in a matrix format, so more easily conveying messages from what are often complex and lengthy documents. The evaluatory criteria in the matrix were developed to meet the terms of reference of the project brief and so concentrated on the following themes:

- Communicating the need for change.
- The language of SD.
- Enlisting partners in policy delivery.
- Models of change.
- Consistency of message.
- Strategic practice .

The second form of data collection was key person interviews. Interviews were an essential component of the work. This is because individual's perceptions of the relationships between their organisation and WAG are important to uncover since this will have such a large part to play in shaping the nature of the relationship, and of how receptive partner organisations are to WAG's SD agenda. Interview themes covered SD messages, mechanisms for change and the nature of SD change in Wales. Interviews were conducted amongst a wide array of organisations formally involved in the delivery of SD in Wales.

## **1.3 KEY FINDINGS**

The sustainable development agenda is fast changing and the wealth of data that we have collected means that we cannot hope to do full justice to the messages and perceptions that we have uncovered. To aid the analysis of the situation we developed a model that portrays the processes that deliver sustainable development and of the outcomes that may emerge. The model draws upon two key parameters that are central to the project brief. The first variable explores the extent to which documents, or other forms of communication (such as speeches or budget settlements) produced by WAG provide strong and consistent messages,

or weak and inconsistent messages, on sustainable development. The second variable, explores the way in which individuals (or organisations) may find the messages that they receive from WAG reinforced, contested or marginalised as a result of the networks within which they operate. This results in the following typology:

- **Partnership** – a virtuous cycle of achievement, promoting multiple goal delivery.
- **Uncertainty** – reliance on informal meetings and forms of communication, and, perhaps, most sympathetic to localistic SD outcomes.
- **Disengaged** – continuous cycle of underachievement, resulting in ad hoc SD gains.
- **Direction** – reliance on formal texts and monitoring, best able to achieve targeted outcomes.

The model vividly illustrates that there is not one set of relationships that WAG is engaged in or one model to deliver sustainable development. Rather, there are multiple relationships in which WAG is involved and multiple ways in which sustainable development can be delivered by WAG and its partners. This model informs our conclusions and provides a challenge to WAG of how best to ‘govern’ on SD to achieve tangible change.

This work has sought to assess how effective WAG has been in achieving the vision of the scheme with its external stakeholders to achieve more sustainable delivery on the ground. While there is enthusiasm and willingness among WAG’s partners to progress this agenda, on the evidence of this research, progress between 2003 and 2008 on addressing the weaknesses identified by CAG and others in previous reviews has been slow. In many cases, the SD Scheme has become weaker in its influence and interpretation by key delivery agents. Much of this is down to the weak and inconsistent messaging, tokenism, lack of co-ordination, limited understanding, weaknesses in corporate working and bounded horizons from WAG.

Much more progress is needed in interpreting the crunch issues, communicating the scale of the challenge that SD presents, integrating SD into policy, providing the structures, processes, monitoring, accountability, target setting and reporting required to progress SD in Wales. Until this is done there will continue to be limited evidence of delivery on the ground. Approaches to partnership working also need to change to seriously consider how SD can be progressed. Rather than reinforce the message of previous work that WAG were “over-controlling” of others, there seems to have been a shift towards a desire for leadership and prescription on SD where appropriate.

The findings and recommendations that arise from our analysis are based on six broad thematic challenges. A number of the recommendations support one another, whilst others reflect the concerns of WAG’s partners that WAG should confirm its commitment to SD and show that it recognises the nature of the SD challenge at a corporate level (rather than instances of innovative silos). The six themes and the highest priority recommendations are shown below, however, we strongly recommend that WAG note all of the recommendations contained in the body of the report in their consideration of the Scheme.

### **Articulate what sustainable development looks like**

There is a clear appetite for an articulation of sustainable development at the national level – with clear goals, outcomes and targets which the different sectors can understand and align their activity to. At present, though, there are some clear gaps in the direction of travel and the role of WAG in helping to determine the direction of change.

1. Utilise the enthusiasm across Wales to create a routemap for sustainable development which sets out what a Sustainable Wales would look like with clear emphasis on how we will get there.
2. Engage sub-national actors in the articulation of SD and of the role that they can play in delivering sustainable outcomes by:
  - Developing clear goals, outcomes and targets which the different sectors can understand;
  - Creating conditions for them to align their activity to the routemap;
  - Enabling them to articulate this locally and drive implementation on the ground.

### **Acknowledge risks, conflicts, incentives and trade-offs**

There are some difficult choices to be made in order to pursue sustainable development at the expense of business as usual paradigms. For partners, the important issues are to explore the risks, trade-offs, conflicts and incentives with a clear evidence base, in discussions which are of 'high value' and for the choices to be clearly communicated to partners and the community.

3. Concentrate efforts on the 'wicked' and difficult issues and policy conflicts, for example between economic development, transport and ecological limits.
4. Communicate the SD choices on offer and the pace of change required to partners and the general public.

### **Provide a consistent and meaningful message**

There is clear evidence that the current messaging from WAG is not helping key partners progress SD in their work.

5. Articulate in ways meaningful to partners the costs and benefits of inaction/action on SD, especially regarding climate change.
6. Provide meaningful and consistent messages on SD in guidelines, policy development and other networking opportunities with partners, especially local government.

### **Challenge existing partnership approaches**

There is a strong commitment to partnership working and a consensus that WAG should provide the leadership and direction for SD in Wales with an overarching vision, but also seek to properly devolve responsibility to other key actors to debate, vision and map what SD looks like in their area of specialism and develop mechanisms for change.

7. Challenge business as usual mindsets to explore more sustainable practical solutions and remove barriers to change, whether institutional, financial or political.

### **Ensure effective engagement and delivery**

There is a widespread willingness amongst partners to engage with WAG on the difficulties that SD presents. There is also a clear belief that some key partners were still not engaged in debating or delivering on sustainable development and until they are they remain potential obstacles to more sustainable approaches.

8. To raise the profile of SD and demonstrate the difference that can be made when targets, funding, monitoring and review are combined (e.g. hypothecate funding for SD delivery for local government).
9. Promote innovation through such initiatives as: whole life costing; a Wales SD innovation fund which provides seed money for experimentation and long term funding for successful multi- sectoral projects and initiatives.
10. Provide a challenge for Ministerial portfolios and WAG Divisions to identify their high SD impact activity and propose and deliver more sustainable outcomes.

### **Measure tangible change**

There was frustration and difficulty expressed by interviewees at the lack of progress in establishing successful and established mechanisms to measure SD progress in Wales. Progress on alternative indicators such as the Ecological Footprint and ISEW aside, it was felt current work on the Quality of Life Indicators, and the current Performance Management Framework in the public sector, were not fit for purpose to place Wales' journey towards SD into perspective.

11. Set clear national targets for SD at a strategic level, and establish and maintain a simple SD indicator set of well-being (or happiness!) and communicate this to the public and partners.
12. Ensure targets and measurements are simple and meaningful (i.e. provide information on whether we are moving towards or away from sustainable development).
13. Ensure that there are clear lines of financial accountability, scrutiny and reporting so that it is possible to:
  - a) Communicate to internal and external stakeholders the tangible changes to policy and practice as a result of a more sustainable approach;
  - b) Demonstrate that flagship projects have sustainable outcomes and not, for instance, simply that they utilise sustainable inputs or processes;
  - c) Raise the profile of SD scrutiny via the Sustainability Committee, Sustainable Development Commission and inspectorates.

This research raises some important questions regarding governance for sustainable development, especially in relation to the recommendations made in the analysis. Which approach to governance should WAG adopt to create the conditions for sustainable outcomes on the ground? The analysis provides some clear expectations of WAG and other partners and suggests many pre-requisites and needs for successful engagement and delivery. These pre-requisites are currently absent in many policy and service delivery contexts in Wales.

This work suggests that SD Governance is not a 'one size fits all approach'. There are a number of choices of approach for WAG to consider in developing its thinking on delivering its statutory commitments to partnerships and SD: whether to be direct and prescriptive in its relationship with key actors, to develop meaningful partnerships for 'multiple goal' delivery, or to provide the conditions for SD delivery by other actors in a more 'organic' or bottom up approach. All activity or approaches to Governance should be moving actors out of the 'Disengaged' quartile of the model.



Further work should focus on applying the best methods to deliver outcomes for SD in different areas of high impact policy, drawing on the advice and expertise of key players, including senior decision makers and change agents, individuals with technical ‘know how’ and the ‘customer’ from whichever sector or community.

WAG’s key challenge for a new SD Scheme therefore is not only to focus on outcomes but to create the conditions for delivery and bring key actors along with them. The approach has to be more sophisticated and nuanced than it has been, to build on the appetite, enthusiasm and expertise on offer in Wales.

## **2. METHODOLOGY TO DELIVER OUTPUTS AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORKS**

Data collection has focused on the means to evaluate effectiveness of the SD Scheme and Action Plan in implementing sustainable development. The research plan has been outward-facing, examining the achievements of the Action Plan and through broader mainstreaming activity within the public sector, business and voluntary sectors more generally. The methodology consisted of two main components - a policy evaluation and set of key person interviews. These two approaches to data collection have been selected in order to provide a comprehensive account of how WAG has tackled SD in its work and of how WAG’s work on SD is perceived by its key partners.

### **2.1 POLICY EVALUATION**

The first stage of the research was a review of the content of policy documents and other associated policy advice. A documentary analysis provides the opportunity to identify the general progress of WAG in tackling its SD commitments and also helping to focus on key policy areas and relationships for the subsequent key person interviews. Perhaps more importantly, though, from the perspective of the review, documents are a key source of communication between WAG and its partners. Documentary analysis provides insights into the messages that WAG is disseminating to its partners. Documents can convey meanings of SD, priorities, the value of partnership working, the relative importance of SD when compared to other imperatives such as economic development, and how SD relates to other key terms such as wellbeing and climate change. Documents also provide a record of change over time of the current scheme.

In conjunction with the project Reference Group, a comprehensive list of 65 documents was identified for review. Documents were selected across all WAG divisions, including remit letters, compacts and policy agreements, as key levers and mechanisms which WAG use to convey their aims and objectives. The analysis determined to what extent the SD principles, indicators, Action Plan objectives and aspirations of working with others have been included in policy development. These documents are one of the main interfaces with external bodies, and are one of the key tools to have influencing strategic policy and work on the ground throughout Wales. The review provided insights into how messages have changed over time, sectoral variations and the opportunities for lesson learning on the communication of SD between those drafting key documents. The SD commitments and language of change helped

to focus on key policy areas and relationships and to shape the subsequent key person interviews (see below).

A matrix was used to analyse the documents shown in Appendix 1. The benefit of a matrix-based approach is that the evaluatory criteria and scoring are transparent, and it is possible to summarise a large number of documents in a matrix format so more easily conveying messages from what are often complex and lengthy documents. The evaluatory criteria in the matrix were developed to meet the terms of reference of the project brief and so concentrated on the following themes:

- a) How documents communicated the need for change and action on SD, and to what extent they challenged existing models and arrangements, and whether they had clear implications for action by partners to deliver change.
- b) Whether the documents utilised other terms or concepts to communicate the change and challenge of SD, challenged existing models and arrangements, and provided implications for action by partners to deliver change.
- c) How the documents identified partners in policy delivery and the extent to which they provided meaningful, relevant and clear explanations of roles and responsibilities for SD.
- d) To what extent documents provided an explanation of what partners should do differently to act as a change agents in moving towards more sustainable outcomes or maintain business as usual paradigms.
- e) Whether there were clear, inconsistent, weak or no targets, indicators and monitoring for SD, and whether there was an indication of the direction of travel and a routemap towards SD.
- f) How effectively the documents linked with other strategies and initiatives both within and outside WAG to achieve sustainable outcomes.

## **2.2 KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS**

The second form of data collection was key person interviews. A total of 31 people were interviewed. Interviewees were identified and selected in conjunction with the Reference Group to provide insights into the delivery, policy and partnerships for SD. Interviews were conducted amongst a wide range of officers from organisations formally involved in the delivery of SD in Wales. The interviews proved to be an essential component of the work. This is because individual's perceptions of the relationship between their organisation and WAG are important to uncover since this will have such a large part to play in shaping the nature of the relationship, and of how receptive partner organisations are to WAG's SD agenda. We have recognised that the individuals that we have interviewed have a stake in the successful delivery of SD and engaging in a future SD Scheme. We have, therefore, sought to consistently critically reflect upon the messages that we have received from interviewees.

The majority of the interviews were conducted face-to-face and in the premises of the person being interviewed. All interviews were recorded and interviewees were promised that their views would be kept confidential. Interviews could last up to 90 minutes, though most lasted for about one hour. Interviewees were extremely generous with their time and their insights. The interviews yielded high quality data on how WAG's partner organisations perceive the SD messages that are communicated to them. It is essential to understand the nature of these perceptions, how strongly they are felt and how widely held some of the perceptions may be as these perceptions will in turn shape actions and behaviour. No matter how well drafted a policy document may be if it does not provide what is perceived to be a relevant message on SD to a partner organisation on SD it is likely to quickly become marginal. The enthusiasm of interviews for the promotion of SD in Wales, and the lucidity with which their views were expressed means that they are a rich source of data and we have made extensive use of the material in presenting our findings.

Interviews were undertaken between December 2007 and February 2008. The interviews aimed to capture the individual's perceptions of the relationships between their organisation and WAG and of how receptive partner organisations were to WAG's SD agenda. Discussions with Interviewees helped to identify barriers, solutions and bad and good practice on Sustainable Development. A list of organisations interviewed is included in Appendix 2. The interviews were semi-structured, and the themes were developed based upon our documentary analysis and review of previous work on SD in Wales, and concentrated on the following themes:

**The message:**

- a) Awareness of the SD duty and WAG's effectiveness in communicating SD.
- b) How SD is conveyed in key documents that influence their strategy and operations.
- c) How the SD duty has influenced their organisation's approach to SD.
- d) The gaps in high-level policy to achieve SD.
- e) Communication of the pace of change required for SD.
- f) The relationship between climate change and SD.

**The mechanisms:**

- a) The tools, levers and mechanisms in place (and missing) to create change towards SD.
- b) Understanding of the direction of travel, appropriate measurement tools and targets.
- c) WAG's use of financial mechanisms to progress SD.
- d) Influence on professional groups and bodies to drive change.

**Action and change:**

- a) Capacity building for SD in their organisation and sector.
- b) Barriers to progressing SD and solutions.
- c) Good practice in their organisation and sector.
- d) Influence of organisational/professional groups and networks.
- e) Who is absent from the discussion and delivery.
- f) Examples of what WAG are doing well, not doing well and need to change.

An opportunity was taken to ask about key strategic drivers for SD in visits to local authorities and national parks by the Welsh Local Government Association in their work on the Sustainable Development Framework between November 2007 and February 2008. Dr. Alan

Netherwood was involved in discussions with key policy, performance and SD officers in 19 Council's and 3 National Parks. This research has fed into the analysis.

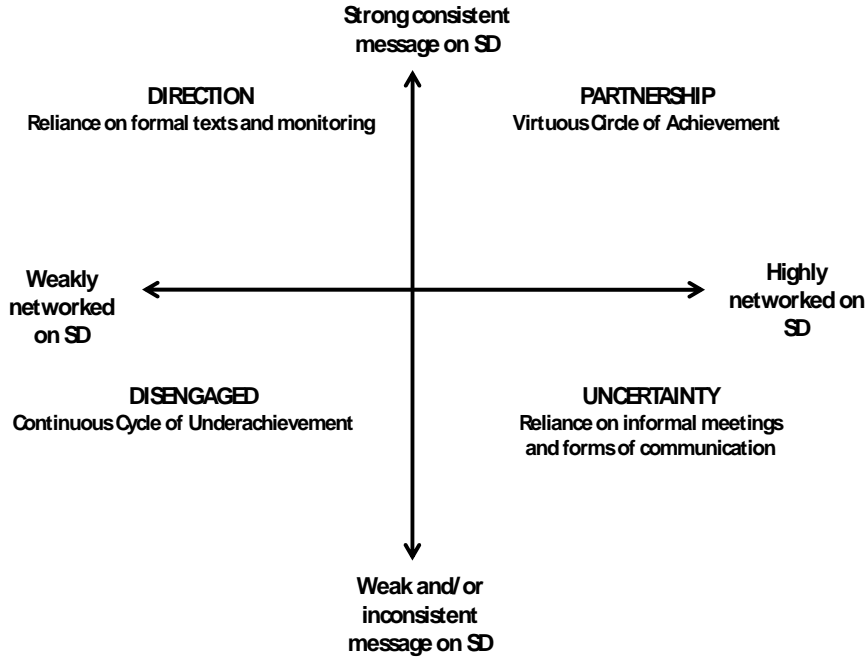
## **2.3 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK**

In order to portray a vast and complex amount of information, and perceptions of that information, we have sought to develop a simplified model of the processes that deliver sustainable development and of the outcomes that may emerge (See Figure 1).

Whilst the model is necessarily a simplification of a complex reality, it does vividly illustrate that there is not one set relationships that WAG is engaged in or one model to deliver sustainable development. Rather there are multiple relationships in which WAG is involved and multiple ways in which sustainable development can be delivered by WAG and its partners. The challenge is to develop nuanced forms of partnership engagement for different policy challenges to maximise the opportunities for successfully realising sustainable outcomes.

The model draws upon two key parameters that are central to the project brief. The first variable explores the extent to which documents, or other forms of communication (such as speeches or budget settlements) produced by WAG provide strong and consistent messages, or weak and inconsistent messages, on sustainable development. The second variable, explores the way in which individuals (or organisations) may find the messages that they receive from WAG reinforced, contested or marginalised as a result of the networks within which they operate. It would be naïve to assume that communications between WAG and its partners work on a 'transmit and receive' basis, as there will be much interference in between. The degree to which that interference may subvert WAG's messages will partly depend upon the messages that individuals receive from the peer groups within which they operate. These networks may operate within organisations, between organisations or be a combination of the two. Nevertheless, the socialisation of individuals into group or network norms will have an important role to play in the ways in which WAG messages are received in practice. Our second variable, therefore, explores the extent to which individuals may operate in highly networked situations that can reinforce sophisticated messages on sustainable development or weak sustainable development networks that marginalise the issue.

### **Figure 1: Delivering Sustainable Development**



Within the model we can distinguish four types of SD governance that relate to each of the quadrants.

**Direction:** this implies a traditional and formal pattern of governance in which there is reliance upon formal texts and monitoring to ensure partner conformity with WAG SD goals. Although individuals (organisations) receive strong and consistent messages on SD they are not embedded in social relations that reinforce the message. Both within and between organisations there is little sharing of best practice (or of benchmarking) since cooperative relationships do not exist. Organisations do not mainstream sustainability but rather have to rely upon the efforts of individuals for the formulation and delivery of sustainability strategies. To those both inside and outside the organisation the approach to sustainable development can appear to be inconsistent.

**Partnership:** this is the model of governance to which many would aspire, in which strong and consistent messages on SD are reinforced by dense networks in which organisations and individuals operate. This in turn, encourages government, in partnership with organisations, to produce policies that deepen still further commitments to SD. Amongst partners there is a sophisticated understanding of SD, and mainstreaming so that thinking on SD is part of organisational culture rather than the preserve of enthusiastic individuals. Those within the organisation will also recognise the value of partnership working in which collaboration with others can realise mutual benefits, so fortifying and legitimating networks.

**Uncertainty:** although individuals may work within networks that are confident in their articulation of SD individually and collectively such organisations are likely to be marked by the wide variations in their commitment to SD. At worst, it may result in a piecemeal rather than systematic engagement with sustainability. Sustainability initiatives may be opportunistic rather than strategic. This is because a consistent SD message is not being received. For those who work within such organisations or seek to partner with them there can be a sense of frustration at missed opportunities or blinkered thinking. At best, it can result in organisations or individuals seeking to work out their own, original approach to SD; developing solutions that are believed to be appropriate to their own circumstances but do not directly contribute to a wider collective benefit. Since these organisations are likely to perceive themselves to be somewhat distant from WAG's SD orbit they will only be receiving a weak or inconsistent message on SD from WAG and there will be uncertainty as to how they may respond to any messages that they do hear.

**Disengaged:** here we confront organisations and individuals for whom there is a poor understanding of SD. Although organisations or individuals may recognise the language of SD they are doubly disengaged from debates; first, because messages in WAG documents are not engaging the organisation and second, there is no peer pressure from networks to improve on SD performance. Organisations can appear directionless on SD, with no leadership and any SD activities ad hoc and not engaging the organisation at a corporate level. The lack of resources and capacity devoted to SD within the organisation undermines efforts to develop SD learning.

### **3. ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

A number of clear themes emerged from both the documentary and interview material, and provide evidence that there is great enthusiasm from partners, expertise on offer and a

willingness to work with WAG in improved ways to deliver SD in Wales. At the same time, the research shows that many of the pre-requisites for effective partnership working to deliver the aspirations of the Scheme need to be developed for significant progress to be made.

A framework has been provided in the following section to illustrate these themes with examples from the documentary review and interviews. The themes are:

**3.1 ARTICULATE WHAT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT LOOKS LIKE**

**3.2 ACKNOWLEDGE RISKS, CONFLICTS, INCENTIVES AND TRADE-OFFS**

**3.3 PROVIDE A CONSISTENT AND MEANINGFUL MESSAGE**

**3.4 CHALLENGE EXISTING PARTNERSHIP APPROACHES**

**3.5 ENSURE EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY**

**3.6 MEASURE TANGIBLE CHANGE**

In a final section, we explore how the findings link to previous work on the effectiveness of the Scheme, and provide a case study of the governance challenge for key aspects of the planning system in encouraging SD.

Many of these themes are interlinked, and consistent issues emerge throughout, however, this framework is useful to identify areas to improve on and to this end, each section ends with a number of recommendations to improve the conditions for SD partnership working and delivery. These need to be prioritised and acted upon to ensure that the SD principles in the Scheme are effectively delivered with key agencies, organisations and communities in Wales.

**3.1 ARTICULATE WHAT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT LOOKS LIKE**

This section illustrates how there is a clear appetite for an articulation of sustainable development at the national level – with clear goals, outcomes and targets which the different sectors can understand and align their activity to. It also shows that there is a willingness to engage with WAG across policy areas in a meaningful discussion on the routemap to achieve these goals. There is great enthusiasm to make this work in practice, but there are some clear gaps in the direction of travel and the role of WAG in helping to determine this.

*(On lack of destination) – “I don’t think there’s been an articulation of where we are now, or where we want to be. But I think there’s an assumption that through interpretation of what’s presented in different strategies, there’s some vague, shared understanding of the nature of the journey we’re undertaking. I don’t think that there’s a shared understanding of the destination – I don’t think in terms of a starting point...you know, the idea of a critique of where we are now. I don’t think there’s a consensus.” (Local Government)*

*(On the vision and roadmap) “What we need to do is provide a road map and some really clear and evocative ideas of the future that are different to what we’ve got now. We need to communicate what should change and why.” (Business Sector)*

*(On visioning) “Replace the Vision Statement at the beginning of [the Scheme] with some attempt to outline what a sustainable Wales might actually look like; what are the characteristics of a sustainable society in Wales? And therefore, what is it we’re trying to*

*deliver on? What is it we're trying to achieve? Because at the moment we have no sense [of that]."* (Voluntary Sector)

There is currently a lack of focus and co-ordination of sustainable development goals in many policy areas with few meaningful targets and few examples of clear routemaps for partners to align their activity to. Interviewees frequently referred to routemaps in the context of a clear vision of the destination and a set of clear steps to get there, taking into account the changes that would be required in policy and practice, with targets and timescales. Planning is a good example where the process, partnerships and policy is fragmented, with mixed messages and little definition of national sustainable development outcomes, despite Planning Policy Wales (2002) and Companion Guide (2006). Clearer direction from WAG and engagement with partners on the policy goals for sustainable development would be helpful in this area, with key interviewees suggesting a refresh of PPW to align a piecemeal policy framework to SD. (See also section 3.8 case study on Land Use Planning and the Delivery of Sustainable Development where these significant themes are pursued further.)

Interviewees often found that WAG don't understand the challenge of SD themselves in particular policy areas and a more open dialogue would help to clarify the problems and solutions for all players. This may help to plug the implementation gap between policy and delivery on ground.

*(On WAG's understanding) "How much discussion, debate and development do they do themselves on this? Exactly how important is it?"* (Education)

Waste is a good example of the type of direction and leadership on SD that has been called for by partner organisations. The Environment Strategy was also often cited as a good example of a clear, outcome based articulation of what was needed with indicators to measure progress.

There is a perception that the Scheme and Action Plans of WAG have not provided the leadership and clarity of direction that will challenge the status quo and change business as usual thinking towards SD. The Scheme's presence is valued as a statement of intent by Government but the Action Plan is seen as concentrating on 'low hanging fruit' and avoiding the 'wicked' and difficult issues and policy conflicts, for example between economic development, transport and ecological limits - a criticism picked up in earlier studies by CAG, Joseph Rowntree and Flynn and Marsden.

There is a strong desire for WAG, with the help of others, to create a routemap for sustainable development which sets out what a Sustainable Wales would look like with clear emphasis on how we will get there.

*(On routemaps) – "we haven't got clear route maps which we can all see how we contribute to and there's an end that we're working towards."* (Local government)

One recurring theme was the need to place different sectors' role in the context of SD. Education was a good example, where there was no recognition in high level documents of key mechanisms and dialogue with WAG to provide education professionals with a clear line of sight between the goal of sustainable development and their strategy and service delivery. An SD document equivalent to "Wales; A Learning Country" was deemed essential to drive activity.



A key theme emerging from the interviews and documentary analysis was the lack of articulation of the scale and pace of change that was required for sustainable development and the challenge that this represents. There was a clear desire for WAG “to start some fires, pose some specific challenges and force the issue with key public sector ‘actors’” (interview), and a need “for ministers to challenge existing orthodoxies and articulate what should happen in a more sustainable world” (interview).

*(On urgency and pace of change) “In a sense it doesn’t matter how many documents that WAG produces, it comes back to one of the issues that I’ve tortured myself with over the years in doing all this SD work: ‘How bad has it got to get before we actually start doing something about this?’ (Environment)*

The interviewees felt that “WAG should be brave about SD” and that if the choices between sustainable versus traditional outcomes were articulated and evidenced well enough, both internally and externally, then partners and deliverers would be ready for it. This was felt to be also true of the public;

*(On the public) “Please consider setting up an education programme for Welsh people about what sustainable development really means, without fear, because I think if you patronize people they’ll soon suss it. Give them the facts and they can work it out.” (Community Sector)*

There was agreement across sectors that WAG should play a key role at a political level in communicating the inter-relationships and connections between issues within the context of SD and that people were ready for more sophisticated political discourse on the trade-offs, choices and links between single issues. There was a real sense of the lack of politicisation of SD, and that this would be required to enable change within society and government. A new Scheme was seen as an ideal opportunity to refresh and re-invigorate the debate. One SD practitioner suggested that we,

*“...had spent 8 years trying to tool ourselves up for SD, with very mixed results – what we need now is extra pressure from public engagement with the issues.”*

The documentary analysis showed a clear lack of defining what changes are required of partners to work towards more sustainable outcomes, and this was a strong and consistent theme that came up in the interviews. The challenge to business as usual paradigms is not there. Interviewees consistently requested more prescription of what is required to achieve sustainable outcomes and by when.

This was borne out in discussions with local authorities and national parks about the lack of political engagement in SD within their organisations and partnerships (Community Strategy and LSB processes). Local politicians were very often motivated by single issues, while at an officer level, the SD challenges were recognised but not articulated to politicians or communities. There is an opportunity here for WAG to create the conditions for this type of political discourse with a strong and challenging SD Scheme and guidance to local authorities in the preparation of their own strategic frameworks and partnerships.

*(On directing Unitary Authorities) – “give them clear parameters of what it is you want them to achieve and in the timescale and then they can come up with how they’re going to do that locally themselves.” (Local Government)*

*“I think if we’re serious about sustainability – and we have to be, there’s no doubt about that – then I think some quite far-reaching decisions have to be made at national level which local authorities have to abide by.” (Local Government)*

Partners often see WAG as the key change agent to facilitate more sustainable outcomes, holding the key policy, financial and regulatory tools to enable them to deliver on the ground. Clear definition of outcomes by WAG and more prescribed action by partners to deliver on sustainable development is missing from many key documents and dialogue with partners. Examples of where SD outcomes are missing are in guidelines and dialogue on school places, the whole Making the Connections and Delivering Beyond the Boundaries debate, and guidance on Health, Social Care and Well-Being and Children and Young Persons Strategies. A Winning Wales and World of Opportunity also failed to provide a clear link between WAG’s aspirations for SD and the global impacts of its activities. This has been addressed, to some extent, by the International Sustainable Development Framework, but this activity needs to link across WAG’s activities.

A good example of more prescription and direction from WAG is in the National Park Policy Statement and remit letter, setting out clear links between SD and the outputs expected from National Parks. This was arrived at through discussion with WNPA, but the direction is clear. Similarly, the remit letters to EAW and CCW have shown clear progress in setting out what is expected in terms of mainstreaming, and outcomes. However, there is still a variable picture of prescription in remit letters as discussed in earlier work from WWF Cymru (2004), within AGSBs such as the National Museum Wales and the Welsh Language Board.

The preferred model of governance that was most often suggested, was one where WAG provide the conditions for themselves and others understand and articulate what SD looks like in a particular policy areas. We have a lengthier discussion of this important issue in Section 4. In some cases WAG would be seen to be the ones to prescribe what is required from partners to achieve SD outcomes, in others, such as in the Regional Transport Plan process others are better at identifying local solutions and prescribing actions and responsibilities. WAG should create conditions for this articulation but drive and co-ordinate SD thinking at a national level.

Partners are placing a huge amount of faith in WAG and its intentions to get serious about SD – this comes with having placed this responsibility upon itself as a potential world leader. Discussions showed that partners can identify the problems of unsustainable development. What they need is reassurance that government is looking for the answers and taking the issue seriously.

The following table suggests what WAG can do to provide leadership on sustainable development and bring other organisations along with them.

#### **ARTICULATE WHAT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT LOOKS LIKE**

- a) Utilise the enthusiasm across Wales to create a routemap for sustainable development that sets out what a Sustainable Wales would look like with clear emphasis on how we will get there.

- b) Engage sub-national actors in the articulation of SD and of the role that they can play in delivering sustainable outcomes by:
  - Developing clear goals, outcomes and targets which the different sectors can understand;
  - Creating conditions for them to align their activity to the routemap;
  - Enabling them to articulate of this locally and drive implementation on the ground.
- c) Increase understanding in WAG of SD and SD goals, targeting those involved in partnerships and policy development and guidance. Place policy development in the context of SD.
- d) Develop policy which is outcome based articulating what is needed with indicators to measure progress.

### **3.2 ACKNOWLEDGE RISKS, CONFLICTS, INCENTIVES AND TRADE-OFFS**

This section illustrate the need to develop the SD debate in Wales to acknowledge that there are some difficult choices to be made in order to pursue sustainable development at the expense of business as usual paradigms. For partners, the important issues are to explore the risks, trade-offs, conflicts and incentives with a clear evidence base, in discussions which are of 'high value' and for the choices to be clearly communicated to partners and the community. Interviewees from a number of sectors felt that the incentives and benefits of SD versus unsustainable activity are not well understood or communicated well enough. There should be a clear definition of the "offer" to businesses and organisations and clarity and certainty of direction.

In the areas of economic development and business in particular, the incentives of change towards SD have not been communicated by Government. A good example of this is the need to develop some rational understanding of the potential economic impacts of climate change, post Stern Review. This was seen as an area where WAG should show leadership and clear direction on the costs and benefits of inaction/action on SD. The economic costs and benefits of action/inaction on SD should be understood and communicated. They are a powerful lever and opportunity to engage stakeholders.

Another area where there was felt to be a weakness was not acknowledging that SD meant trade-offs and in some cases policy conflict. There was a strong emphasis on the trade offs and relationships between economic growth and SD throughout the interviews and a desire to explore how both could be achieved at the same time. The Wales: A Vibrant Economy document and Wales Spatial Plan process came under intense criticism for not exploring these issues fully. This is another area where WAG could show direction and leadership, by fully exploring and evidencing the tensions between economic growth, ecological limits and social change.

Again, interviewees felt that WAG needed to be brave in leading an "honest and open debate" about the difficult political challenges and choices to electorate and partners, and discuss these within the context of SD. There is a desire to:

*“Move away from the single issue stuff like recycling to making the links between issues like recycling and jobs, social welfare and the economy.” (Voluntary Sector)*

It was also felt that WAG needed to acknowledge and tackle the tensions between long term pressures and short term delivery cycles head on in guidance and messaging. The Wales Spatial Plan ought to have been a clear opportunity to do this – however, the interviews and the documentary review of interim statements and the Plan itself show that while WSP process acknowledges the threats and constraints on development, there is no articulation of what a more sustainable approach is or might achieve. This does not live up to the billing of being a physical embodiment of the SD Scheme, and is perceived to be an economic development strategy process.

Climate change was consistently seen to offer organisations, individuals and businesses a way into the sustainable development debate. It can be used to illustrate the conflicts, trade-offs and difficult decisions, with clear impacts on the economy, environment and communities. It makes the SD debate real.

Using the language of risk related to sustainable development was seen as an area of potential especially in local government, business and communities. There was feeling that clearly linking SD to the management of risk in organisations, and the risks to community well-being and business practice would help to make the SD debate meaningful. Whether related to climate change, demographic change, health problems, peak oil or economic change, the risk approach was felt to be one that would resonate with policy makers, businesses managers and communities and funders. Risk registers at all levels were suggested, to drive strategic thinking, business planning and community action, in for example development of the Transition Towns initiative.

However, equally, many interviewees felt that the benefits of SD also needed to be articulated to drive change and that WAG could provide clearer information on this to its partners and the community:

*“WAG should provide more advice and link it to SD, for example procure organic food, because it helps to achieve more sustainable development, and this is why” (Agriculture)*

This approach presents some risks to WAG itself, but a more prescriptive approach may help to engage key players and individuals in meaningful debate and decision making which leads to SD outcomes.

Many of the issues highlighted in this section clearly link with the SD principles within the Scheme around consideration of risks, uncertainties, costs and benefits, and environmental limits. However both the interviews and documentary analysis show that there is still a lack of appreciation and articulation of trade-offs and difficult choices that SD presents us with within its partnership working.

The conversation between WAG and its partners is still not felt to be sophisticated enough around the balance needed to achieve sustainable development, especially in the face of a predominant economic development focused policy landscape. However, there is an appetite by partners to consider this meaningfully to inform development on the ground. Climate change presents an opportunity to place sustainable development and these issues in context, but there is still a lot of progress to be made in this area, in developing capacity and the evidence base to explore these issues.

The following table sets out a number of recommendations of what WAG should do to provide for meaningful and informed debate and action on sustainable development.

### **ACKNOWLEDGE RISKS, CONFLICTS, INCENTIVES AND TRADE-OFFS**

- a) Concentrate on the ‘wicked’ and difficult issues and policy conflicts, for example between economic development, transport and ecological limits.
- b) Articulate the SD choices on offer, the risks of inaction and the pace of change required to partners and the general public.
- c) Highlight the connections and trade-offs between policy choices – not single issues.
- d) Be prescriptive about what is required from funded bodies and partner organisations to achieve SD.
- e) Be more prescriptive about why more sustainable choices have been made and encourage others to do likewise.
- f) Articulate the costs and benefits of inaction/action on SD, especially regarding climate change.
- g) Focus on major areas of unsustainable action and spend in Wales as priorities starting with economic development and transport (high-hanging fruit) and refresh Planning Policy Wales - create the conditions for SD rather than continued unsustainable development.

### **3.3 PROVIDE A CONSISTENT AND MEANINGFUL MESSAGE**

This section provides an overview of the messages that WAG provide on SD to partners within Wales. As has been discussed in the methodology chapter, the policy documents, remit letters, funding discussions and political discourse from WAG provide a powerful steer to, and response from partner organisations. There is clear evidence that the current messaging from WAG is not helping key partners progress SD in their work. A new Scheme will need to address this issue, as empty and fragmented messaging is having a detrimental effect on understanding and response from key actors and change agents in Wales.

There was overwhelming evidence from the interviews and documentary analysis that WAG provide inconsistent or in many cases, no *meaningful* messages on SD in their policy, guidelines and financial arrangements. Some examples of this are in relation to Community Strategies, School Places Guidelines, and Making the Connections, Delivering Beyond the Boundaries and the Transport Grant. It was felt that the One Wales document was a missed opportunity, and that it should have emphasised the SD Scheme and its importance in underpinning all activity – not just the environmental objectives of Government.

The documentary review and interviews showed a number of patterns emerging from a range of policy and guidance which contributes to confusion and ignorance on how SD relates to particular policy areas, sectors and partnerships:

- Use of SD in a standard list of cross-cutting themes This confusion is exacerbated by the issue of whether SD should be given 'primacy' over the other issues such as equality, social justice, bilingualism etc as these are obviously important parts of SD;
- Tokenistic use of sustainable development with no meaningful explanation of what this entails;
- Confusing terminology related to environmental sustainability, longevity and robustness;
- A limited number of defined action/processes responsibilities related to SD and a weak messaging on the need for change.

As one interviewee argued *"The empty messaging has to stop"* (AGSB).

This dilution of the SD message from WAG predominantly leads to inaction on sustainable development and no clear articulation of more sustainable outcomes at a delivery level. SD remains peripheral to the priorities of many partner organisations due to this inconsistency and lack of direction. This makes SD activity within the partner organisations and within their partnerships difficult to establish and maintain.

Reference to the SD Scheme was felt to be inconsistent and in many cases meaningless in the family of documents that have huge influence over the way local government and the public sector operates in Wales. Providing a strong SD message and thread through guidance and development of the Wales Spatial Plan, Community Strategies, Children and Young Peoples, Plan and Health and Well Being Strategies would have complimented the strong and meaningful messages on SD in Local Development Plan guidance. This guidance provides clear requirements of actors, a process, targets and monitoring for SD.

Another pattern that emerged from the documentary review and interviews was around the weakening of the SD message in Community Strategy Guidance and consultation between 2001 and 2007 and a failure to reinforce the SD message in the Planning Policy Wales Companion Guide in 2006, after strong SD messages in the original PPW in 2002. This weakening of profile of the SD Scheme was picked up in a range of policy areas. In the Health Sector the NHS Toolkit was praised for its emphasis on SD, but an absence of SD links in many other documents, consultations and guidelines through the modernisation agenda was seen as a lost opportunity e.g. Connecting the NHS Workforce and Healthcare Standards Guidance. The weak SD messages in WSP processes have culminated in a family of Interim Statements and a level of SD dialogue that were often criticised by interviewees, both involved and peripheral to the process. The absence of SD outcomes in policy development around the Welsh Language also raises some important questions about engagement with Welsh speaking communities.

One clear finding from the interviews was the lack of direction on SD coming out of a number of key directorates within WAG. Economic Development, Transport and Agriculture were felt to be largely untouched by the SD agenda, yet were perceived to be the two key areas where many of the SD challenges lay, and the most progress and influence could be made.

*(On transport partnerships) “I cannot think of one meeting in the last five years with Officials from Transport Division where the SD scheme has been cited as a reason for them doing particular activities.” (Local Government)*

Interviewees suggested that until these players were engaged properly in the agenda, SD would remain peripheral to an increasingly strong economic development paradigm within Wales, reflected in the WSP process and Wales: A Vibrant Economy document and Wales Transport Plan Connecting the Nation discussions. WEFO also came in for much criticism, in not supporting projects which exemplified SD and having inadequate processes and mechanisms to ensure supported projects delivered SD. There is a perception that the SD message is stronger in the new Framework’s for Convergence Funding and that this is a clear opportunity for WEFO to demonstrate its support for innovation on SD through this funding mechanism.

Education was seen as another directorate where despite successes on ESDGC on the curriculum side – SD hardly featured in policy and financial discussions. In this sector there was clear appetite for guidance for both institutions and professionals of what was expected of them in relation to eco-efficiency, school meals, and nutritional standards. It was also felt that WAG could give a clearer and measurable steer on the government estate, driving construction standards and making SD the norm. Statisticians and economists were seen as two key sets of officials not yet convinced by SD and this was perceived to have a detrimental effect on partnership working and the evidence base.

*(On WAG not acting as an exemplar) – “They have policies and they’re not following them in-house. I mean this is my own personal view. They are not being exemplars. They are not being leaders yet they’re telling us to do it. I’ve talked to Assembly staff who have said ‘we’ve written this policy, taken a decision and ignored the policy’. Well that just sends the wrong messages, doesn’t it? If they’re telling us to do it and to help them achieve their purposes they need to make sure that SD underpins all of their work and it is taken into account in every decision they make. Then that will send the ripple effects out to other unitary authorities and that will help us. I’ve been very disappointed in dealing with them, personally.” (Local Government)*

Agriculture was another key policy area where interviewees felt SD had had limited influence on the policy or discourse coming out of WAG. The Rural Development Plan process and document, Organic Farming Policy and Farming for the Future were seen as documents which failed to make a connection between what was proposed and more sustainable outcomes. The inter-relationships between agriculture and other policy areas were often missed in the messaging and partnership working, with too strong an emphasis on the economic perspective, and an ignorance of the level of public understanding around organics. This was an area where it was felt more internal capacity building on SD could have made a difference.

SD is still perceived to be peripheral to financial frameworks, with little scrutiny of budget heads for SD outputs (e.g. Transport) and a long-term financial strategy for SD was felt to be missing across policy areas. The SD scheme is not perceived to be effectively influencing financial arrangements between WAG and stakeholders – if this was done well, stakeholders felt that this would be a key component to drive change. A good example is in an AGSB where a different approach to financial systems might enable a business case to be developed for micro-generation, with a longer payback period.

The role of Ministers and officials in messaging was a consistent theme addressed in the interviews. The potential role of Jane Davidson was seen as very positive, but it was felt that all ministers needed to provide a strong and co-ordinated message in their addresses to stakeholder organisations and the public. At present this is not happening – as illustrated by the following perception from the business community of one Minister’s presentation:

*(On messaging) – “He spent the first twenty minutes talking about the loss of steel and coal as part of our history. Now that would be fine if he’d gone on to talk about the future being sustainable technologies and products and services with a lower carbon economy.” (Business Sector)*

A lack of integrated thinking across WAG and its partnerships on SD is contributing to confusion. Mixed, messy and inconsistent messages are being received through guidance. Senior officials came in for particular criticism for being ‘off message’ in public fora, one notable example being a senior official’s presentation at a futures conference on climate change, where an interviewee argued that the speaker had a:

*“Kind of flippancy... he was talking about loss of life. ‘Oh we’ll be so wealthy in Wales, we can pay for climate change. No kind of recognition of the international context, or... it flies in the face of key WAG policies like the SD scheme and Wales for Africa. I don’t understand how people at his level can get up and be able to say that.” (Community Sector)*

There is a perceived reticence for corporate working on SD within WAG, leading to what partners believe to be ignorance of SD in key directorates. A new Scheme needs to address this perception by, perhaps, concentrating on some of the more difficult areas of policy, engaging more effectively with these directorates and officials and involving partners in the discussions.

The clear implication of the documentary review and interviews are that in future, messaging both in the documents and in dialogue with partners needs to be centred around the following issues:

- Contextualisation of SD implications for action;
- The incentives and benefits of sustainable action;
- Articulation of the need to change and risks associated with business as usual;
- Targets, indicators and monitoring arrangements

The principles in the Scheme of integrating SD into all WAG activity, including policy and financial mechanisms still needs to be taken to a far greater level, before the message gets through to external partners that WAG are serious about delivering on their SD duty, and in turn affecting change on the ground.

The following table suggests what partner organisations would like to see from WAG in terms of its interface with them and other players on SD.

**PROVIDE A CONSISTENT AND MEANINGFUL MESSAGE**

- a) Ensure policy is linked across WAG divisions giving an integrated, clear and consistent message within WAG through better corporate working.



- b) Provide meaningful and consistent messages on SD in guidelines, policy development and other networking opportunities with partners – especially local government.
- c) Articulate the change required for SD in all messaging.
- d) Articulate in ways meaningful to partners the costs and benefits of inaction/action on SD, especially regarding climate change.
- e) Identify opportunities in each WAG division to reinforce the SD message in a meaningful way and use them. Do not miss opportunities.
- f) Challenge economists, statisticians, transport and agriculture professionals in WAG to deliver SD message to partners.
- g) Ensure ministers and senior officials are on message on SD.

### **3.4 CHALLENGE EXISTING PARTNERSHIP APPROACHES**

This section provides an overview of the complex relationships that WAG has with others on SD, and identifies some consistent cross-sectoral themes around levels of governance, the value of partnership working and many of the key principles of working with others set out in the Scheme.

There was strong consensus that WAG should provide the leadership and direction for SD in Wales with an overarching vision, but properly devolve responsibility to other key actors or groups to debate, vision, and map SD and develop mechanisms for change - where it was appropriate. Interviewees also suggested that partnerships should be examined to see whether they were fit for purpose to deliver SD and whether alternative approaches were necessary. There were a number of elements identified which were deemed essential to achieve the required change within partnerships:

- Challenge business as usual mindsets to explore more sustainable practical solutions and remove barriers to change, whether institutional, financial or political.
- An open dialogue to acknowledge conflict and address problems whether organisational, sectoral or governmental. This would help WAG to begin to understand the problems themselves.
- WAG regularly restating the need to challenge existing approach activity towards SD in a meaningful way throughout its partnership work. A consistent need to challenge the status quo is absent from much of the documentary evidence, and was identified as a key issue in interviews.
- Training on SD for those involved in decision making would be beneficial. Examples of where there would have been benefits in taking a more proactive approach to SD training were in the Wales Spatial Plan process and in WEFO funding processes.
- A move away from the incrementalist 'it will happen eventually' approach to one of fundamental examination of partnership approaches to achieve major shifts towards sustainability.

*(On understanding) “Delegating ill defined SD aims out to untrained groups and fora, dominated by business as usual mindsets – It’s unsurprising that SD isn’t happening.” (Voluntary Sector)*

There were a number of criticisms of WAG’s current approach to partnership work on SD across the policy landscape, these included:

- The lack of clear reference to SD goals in the majority of consultation documents and the tokenistic reference to the SD scheme along with other cross-cutting issues.
- The avoidance of difficult questions and policy conflicts in both documentary consultations and through the policy gateway process e.g. The absence of SD goals in Wales: A Vibrant Economy and the limited dialogue on CO<sub>2</sub> reductions as part of the Transport Strategy discussions.
- Conservatism and risk aversion of officials is very apparent in partnerships and policy discussions, this makes debate about alternative SD approaches difficult. A cultural shift is needed.
- Partners being ‘tied’ to dialogue with a sponsoring division within WAG and being discouraged to make connections themselves across Divisions.
- Opposing views over levels of inclusion i.e. trying to be too inclusive of partners in some discussions, rendering action and change difficult - e.g. climate change communication discussions - and in others, especially involving the third sector, by excluding partners from discussions.

*(On inclusivity) “Let’s just get on and get all of the bits in the jigsaw to work together. Let’s not worry about who we’re going to upset if we don’t advertise this or involve so-and-so. They are the basic elements of the jigsaw. Get on and as long as you’ve got the capacity to lock in others of the partnership then there shouldn’t be a problem. That’s a mindset of civil service because they are procedurally driven.” (Business)*

Or an alternative view from the Voluntary Sector:

*“I’d favour consolidation and taking everyone with us over a slower time period than the opposite, moving on, leaving people behind but achieving partial results more quickly.”*

Other criticisms of the quality of partnership work between WAG and others on SD were:

- Missing involvement of key organisations in discussions, or a difficult relationship around inclusion – e.g. local government and academia in climate change discussions (now addressed via the Climate Change Commission).
- The perception that once a consultation is finished there is no open process to see how policy decisions are made in order to achieve SD. A lack of articulation of why one approach is more sustainable than another is absent.
- A lack of response from WAG officials on consultations, it is seen as a one way process rather than a discussion and proper use of expertise in Wales. Waste and Business Environment Action Plans were seen as inclusive processes which could be learnt from.

*(On consultations and feedback) “I think it’s like the same old thing isn’t it especially with consultations or whatever, you make the effort to respond and you don’t get any feedback of what happened after that. It’s like well, so what happens now. You can feel that you’re saying*

*the same thing over and over again and to what extent is it getting listened to” (Community Sector).*

These criticisms present WAG with some particular challenges about including the right players to achieve a meaningful outcome. Many felt that consultations were “stage managed” and “tokenistic” on SD with the direction of travel already decided. Many discussions were seen as being of questionable value:

*“So the ability to get together and share views and look at the Welsh dimension is there. I personally think we don’t make enough of that – we don’t make enough of it at local government level, and I think that criticism would be equally valid of the Welsh Assembly. I don’t think the two sides come together often enough, and when they do, I think it’s – this is going to sound a bit harsh – it’s a bit sort of lower value.” (Local Government)*

One major area of disappointment for local government interviewees was the lack of reference to SD goals, objectives and policy in the documents post Beecham Review – on Delivering the Connections and Beyond Boundaries and development of Local Service Boards. These documents consistently failed to place public service delivery in the context of delivering the SD duty, and references to SD are very weak. This is a missed opportunity by WAG to establish SD at the heart of new structures, partnerships and performance management for public service. The role of the Local Government division in consistency of messaging on SD and confusion around SD was a regular feature of interviews. Beecham’s messages about using a citizen model, building capacity, partnership, challenge, and efficiency could equally be applied to the sustainable development challenge.

The Voluntary Sector was receiving a mixed message on SD. The SD Scheme was seen as a very valuable tool to licence political debate around SD and provide a context for much of its campaign work. The establishment of Cynnal Cymru in providing a forum for civic engagement and debate on SD was seen as valuable and its outputs such as the Sustain Wales website were seen as real progress. However, there was little evidence from either the interviews or documentary review that SD was having much influence on the voluntary sector’s partnership and delivery arrangements with WAG. The Voluntary Sector Scheme was seen to be more about the rules of engagement rather than providing a basis to change existing practice for more sustainable outcomes. Involvement of the voluntary sector in the Climate Change Commission was seen as good model of engagement.

There is however a challenge to WAG in identifying which areas a stronger lead is required, and in which others, a practitioner or community focused, bottom up approach is more appropriate. One interviewee provided a succinct summary of the tension between devolving responsibilities to partners as part of ‘Team Wales’ and the need of strong leadership to encourage partner working towards SD:

*“The Assembly needs to be clear about what it can do, what it has control over and who is best to act on SD – more thinking needs to go into this” (Voluntary Sector).*

Whichever approach, this should be acknowledged explicitly to avoid confusion, replication of activity and the ‘wriggle room’ that has led to inaction on SD in many policy areas in Wales.

Common elements for successful partnership working emerged from interviews across the sectors. It was felt that the following was required to achieve consensus and the change required to really shift the SD debate from rhetoric to reality:

- Find the space to debate SD in the particular context in which organisations operate, so as to achieve a vision with WAG, of what they are trying to achieve, and in doing so addressing political, organisational and financial conflicts head on.
- To discuss whether existing mechanisms were fit for purpose to achieve SD aims and suggest and develop new mechanisms if appropriate.
- Identify perverse incentives for unsustainable action and act on major factors that continue to drive unsustainable development.
- To develop a map of how to work towards SD with responsibilities and timetables.
- To report progress within the sector and to WAG to achieved the changes required for SD outcomes.

Having the space and time to discuss SD meaningfully came up frequently. The debate on waste and its target led approach was often cited as good example of honest, open debate, with good working relationships between officials and a clear direction of travel. The dynamic between WAG and local government on this was praised. Transport was an area where this approach was not evident, where tensions exist, and due to the complex and fragmentary nature of WAG's approach to engaging with planners and deliverers, the space and time to debate and achieve SD has not been apparent at a national level. Even though the Regional Transport Plan debates have been more SD focused, there is still perceived to be a gap at the national level.

It is felt that the time and space is limited for effective and innovative partnership work on SD due to business as usual demands – often required by WAG. Interviewees felt that WAG and partners needed to be pro-active in encouraging the SD debate in professional arenas where policy was being developed, otherwise business as usual approaches would prevail. This is a huge challenge for the SD scheme in informing and influencing well established partnerships and mechanisms, which by their very nature are conservative, low risk and complex political organisations. A clear understanding on the SD challenges for these areas – transport, education, economy, agriculture, finance (and others) needs to be developed, and it is acknowledged by interviewees that this will be difficult but essential if the SD duty is to be implemented properly.

A cultural change is required among sectors and particularly policy developers and professional groups – away from a 'yes, but...' and 'can't do' approach. There is a requirement to move away from risk averse culture, especially in the public sector, to create the space to innovate, to provide professional and technical groups with training and opportunity to explore alternative more sustainable policy approaches. WAG need to provide clear direction and support to enable this. Key policy people were seen to still need to be given the SD tools 'to think outside the box' in their given specialism.

There seems to be a contrast between the existing approaches to engagement with partners as discussed earlier in this section, and the desire for a different dynamic to identify SD objectives and work towards their implementation. A revised SD scheme would need to pro-actively address this issue. The appetite to work on this is huge – this enthusiasm needs to be utilised.

To many of these actors the Scheme does little more than provide them with licence to pursue their particular SD objectives or opportunities, however, the Scheme's precise contents are not considered particularly important or indeed even familiar to the majority of these individuals who are achieving significant progress towards SD within their roles. The research

identifies a disparate range of activities and responses that is emerging in response to a vacuum of leadership from WAG. Those making significant progress on SD seem to think that this in spite of WAG's machinations – and this is clearly an area where WAG need to make progress, in aligning activity with other key players, working in partnership, and developing relationships and synergies. As Gillian Bristow and her colleagues have pointed out:

*"Whilst there have been some successes ... it is clear that the partnership approach has not yet transformed the governance of Wales." (Bristow et al 2003, p66)*

So partners want a level of leadership from WAG and value partnership work which, despite the few notable examples highlighted, isn't evident or present across the sectors. Some suggested that setting up sectoral fora to achieve this alignment with an SD vision and routemap might provide a consistent framework to engage with WAG divisions. There is perhaps a role for SDC in setting up this framework for discussions and mapping and Cynnal Cymru to facilitate the civic society's contribution.

The SD principles of working with partners in new ways to achieve SD and involving partners in decision-making have been examined in this section. What is clear is that the criticisms need to be addressed in further work on the Scheme and SD action planning – there is a real risk of alienation of key players if a weak, unfocused SD Scheme is developed. A strong desire for meaningful debate on SD in Wales should be seen as a real opportunity, and the expertise needs to be harnessed effectively and inclusively and at the same time, there is still major progress needed on delivering on the SD principle related to education and training.

The following table shows a number of recommendations on how partnership working on SD could be improved. This is explored further in Section 4.

#### **CHALLENGE EXISTING PARTNERSHIP APPROACHES**

- a) Identify and acknowledge who is best to lead on delivery of SD in sectors and in particular communities of interest.
- b) Devolve responsibility to other key actors to groups, develop mechanisms for change - where it is appropriate.
- c) Challenge business as usual mindsets to explore more sustainable practical solutions and remove barriers to change, whether institutional, financial or political.
- d) Have an open dialogue to acknowledge conflict and address problems whether organisational, sectoral or governmental.
- e) Ensure those co-ordinating partnerships are trained in SD and its objectives.
- f) Provide meaningful feedback on consultations and provide clarity in arriving at preferred options in the context of SD.
- g) Ensure engagement in partnerships and dialogue on SD is of high value – utilising the expertise on offer and building on the enthusiasm.

- h) Identify whether existing mechanisms are fit for purpose to achieve SD and develop new mechanisms if appropriate.
- i) Identify perverse incentives for unsustainable action with partners and act on them.

### 3.5 ENSURE EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

This section highlights the challenge of engaging effectively and meaningfully with other partners on SD, in what is in effect, a change management programme for Wales. Interviewees acknowledged the difficulty that this presents us with but there is a strong willingness for this engagement to be of high value.

Interviewees clearly felt that there were still, after 8 years of the SD Scheme, some key partners still not engaged in debating or delivering on sustainable development. Welsh Assembly Government and local government politicians, community councils, communities and business were all identified as still missing from discussions and action planning to deliver on the ground, and creating the conditions for change. Key change agents both in major policy areas and local communities are still unconvinced or not engaged and are obstacles to more sustainable approaches.

For the business community, there was a disappointment that WAG had not developed a closer relationship on the SD scheme so far.

*“What you’re not doing well is creating effective space to bring the business and Government together to they can deliver effective community solutions for sustainable development. On business - I think from a business perspective, I’m not sure I’ve seen much other beyond EMS’s.” (Business)*

There was also a desire for WAG to spell out the competitive advantage for business to take on SD. WWF Cymru’s initiative One Planet Wales and Arena Network’s Sustainable Development Management System were singled out as good practice in engaging some of Wales’ larger companies in SD policy and delivery. The Green Jobs Strategy was also seen as a positive step, with moves towards a single business innovation grant with clear environmental outcomes being of great benefit, but it was felt the partnership mechanisms need to be developed. CBI representation on the Climate Change Commission was also seen as providing valuable input from the business perspective, potentially informing the business community of other sectors ‘activity. Suggestions for progress included:

- A high level meeting of business leaders to engage in SD and use their influence across the business community, chaired by the Sustainable Development Commission;
- A leadership Council for SD for senior officials across the sectors to drive change and linkages between the business, public and other sectors;
- To understand market trends and articulate economic costs and benefits of SD;
- Engage with innovative businesses on SD and develop clusters with FHE institutions;
- WAG providing a clear lead on developing CSR within Welsh organisations and sectors business community not just EMS (although progress on this has been very positive);

- Devising ways of selling SD as part of Climate Change through impacts on finance and economy.

Use of links between key players came up regularly in interviews. It was felt that a network of champions on SD, at a very senior level on Boards and Committees would have massive influence on public spend and policy development. Efforts in engaging these players at a number of Leadership events since the Scheme's inception were praised – but there was criticism that there was no effective mechanism to keep them engaged and develop them as change agents afterwards.

*“I think there ought to be some sort of forum between public, private, local government, WAG, about what's the best way of delivering – I'm talking about delivering now rather than creating policy.” (NGO)*

Many thought that high level SD messages are lost a layer down in organisations, where CEOs were bought into the idea, but their senior management teams had little understanding or value for sustainable development – at a level of great influence, financially, politically and strategically. Also a number of key senior fora in Wales such as ADEW were still relatively disengaged from thinking about sustainable development. WAG were seen as key change agents in this respect, as the body to continually challenge senior officials both within and outside WAG to work on sustainable outcomes. This disengagement is still a key organisational barrier, and despite efforts from PSMW and others to build capacity at this level, there was still a big job to do.

There is clearly an issue about building capacity across Wales, to discuss and articulate what SD will look like within different community and organisational contexts and to challenge existing approaches and to change them. A wide range of support organisations funded both directly and indirectly by WAG to help to support these changes. While many are quite rightly focused on particular sectors (Envirowise in the public sector, the WLGA SD Framework), there is an extremely 'noisy' picture on SD support for practitioners. This needs addressing, as despite support being available, there is still quite clearly a skills gap, and a need for different networks to share their experience and good practice. The conditions need to be created to focus this support.

Another key message is that WAG need to include deliverers in thinking about the consequences of setting SD policy goals before policy is set – to ensure effective delivery mechanisms at a ground level. While the zero carbon commitment was welcomed across the sectors, this clear political direction needed some clearer thinking, with the help of practitioners about what this actually meant – so the message would carry greater weight among relevant stakeholder groups. A good example of engaging deliverers in the SD debate in one local authority (Caerphilly) is the Head teacher's Charter for SD – here key decision makers and deliverers are engaged in both the philosophy and practical implementation issues of SD. This example is an excellent application of the more 'uncertain' or 'localistic' quartile of the model which, whilst engaging effectively with the highly networked professionals concerned it has arrived at an individual interpretation of SD in the absence of clear messaging from WAG. This type of approach should be encouraged or required as the norm in guidance and dialogue between WLGA and WAG and funding discussions.

The important role of the individual 'change agent' within organisations and sectors came up constantly in interviews, as many examples of 'maverick' managers making progress on SD were cited, in spite of the performance and strategic environment they were working in. It was

often felt that these individual's resourcefulness, creativity and energy had driven the change. The common element all of these examples had were of the individuals having the evidence, senior management backing and space to innovate, whether in relation to discussions around waste at the national level, or delivering more sustainable meals to schoolchildren. Creation of these conditions within sectors and organisations is something a new Scheme should develop.

The discussions, consensus and direction achieved through both the Welsh National Parks Association and the Resource Efficiency Wales debate has shown that this partnership work and space can be achieved within quite complex organisational and policy contexts, and the case of the latter with the help of a third party – Arena Network to facilitate the debate both within and outside WAG.

Interviewees from the local government, voluntary and community sectors felt it was important to identify the key areas where progress would be optimized via the devolution of delivery down to partnerships in the private and third sector. Areas where this approach might work best could include:

- Community Carbon Footprinting or Auditing;
- Peak Oil/Transition Towns;
- Organic Consumer Groups;
- Community Waste Cooperatives.

*“At the end of the day [SD is] not going to be delivered by governments, it's going to be delivered by people. And the Assembly Government is not the best placed institution in Wales to advise, to encourage, to kind of coerce people to make lifestyle changes in their attitudes and their behaviour.... Mail drops and adverts don't work. People trust organisations in the second and third sector more – Tesco's and Oxfams would therefore be better at getting messages out.” (Voluntary sector)*

*“Take this to the people! Take the Scheme to the people; take the Action Plan to the people; go out there... Assembly members. Tell people what you're going to do; explain why you're going to do it, and what their role is in helping... I think that's vital.” (Community Sector)*

The Education for Sustainability and Global Citizenship Panel is another good example of partnership work driven outside and within WAG by committed and informed professionals to place SD into the curriculum and inform policy and practice. These examples of partnership working have clear benefits, providing ownership to other organisations and bringing champions from different WAG divisions together, thereby helping to develop a consistent, rather than fragmentary approach from different WAG divisions.

*(On the implementation gap) “We've got documentation, we've got the theory and all the rest of it, but there's a big gap between that and how we communicate that to the actual job on the ground.” (Business)*

The Science Policy for Wales document provides some excellent understanding of SD and outlines the opportunities for low carbon research, and work on sustainable construction and life cycle analysis, but it does not provide a clear link between WAG's aspirations for SD and providing an evidence base to inform it. Partnership work with FHE institutions will help in all of these areas, but there is also a need to more effectively engage them in policy debates as well as delivery of technological solutions. Omission of FHE institutions in early discussions on Climate Change in Wales, despite excellent academic research in this area, is an example.



The Science Policy for Wales refers to a ‘virtual sustainable development research centre’, suggesting that this will happen as a matter of course. It is suggested that WAG and others are more proactive in bringing the research and scientific community together to inform SD partnership and delivery work to develop the ‘knowledge economy’ of SD. This is not currently being done, and many excellent pieces of work both within and outside WAG are not informing policy development including ISEW, Environment Satellite Accounting and the work of Science Shops Wales at the University of Glamorgan. The expertise in Wales needs to be better utilised to develop the evidence base and practical solutions on the ground.

From the perspective of senior local authority officers hypothecated funding for SD delivery is seen as essential to drive innovation and delivery at the local authority level in Wales. Innovative approaches and distinct change from business as usual activity is very difficult to achieve in many organisations which are having difficulty in delivering services in a tighter financial climate. SD initiatives are often the first to be sacrificed in times of financial difficulty. An example is how many ESDGC initiatives have been lost or are vulnerable as demands on education budgets become greater. Indeed the lack of funding for ESDGC compared to Healthy Schools was cited as a key barrier not only in delivery but in the message this sends out on priorities.

The SD Fund in Welsh National Parks is seen as a good example where hypothecated funding has driven community solutions around things like renewable energy and sustainable transport, and engaged the community in discussions around SD with the National Park Authorities. The Policy Agreements with local authorities showed how funding could drive ESDGC, energy efficiency and EMS activity in local government.

*(On the SD Fund partnership) “You’ve got relatively small pump priming that has led to greater things through the funds. For example, the investment in Talybont Energy Feasibility Study has led to an installation supporting social enterprise, re-circulating profit in the community for further CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and is a training and information resource for others, so I mean there’s a lot more that you can do.”*

Many interviews suggested the establishment of a Wales SD Innovation or Leadership Fund to drive action, experimentation with SD solutions and ideas across the sectors. This was suggested as an extremely positive, pro-active step WAG could take in supporting activity rather than in ‘we don’t have enough money’ context. Suggestions on a hypothecated fund, were that seed money should be given and good practice rewarded with longer term funding, and that there should be room to experiment and make mistakes. Interviewees felt that this fund needs to be about converting curiosity (what would happen if we did x...) and appetite (we’ve been trying to do y for years...) into implementation and leadership on the ground. As one interviewee noted:

*“Give the people who want to try and make a difference some tools to do it and that’s a starting point,”*

The establishment of this Fund should be given serious consideration in renewing the Scheme.

Certainly WAG need to make progress in creating the conditions so best practice can be replicated and become the minimum standard. Sustainable school buildings were often cited as happening in spite of systems and processes rather than because of them. Requirements for BREEAM Excellent standards in Capital Programmes for school buildings signify progress,

and the Schools Buildings Investment Programme is an opportunity to make SD requirements the norm. However, WAG and partners in their debate on delivering SD need to identify the key mechanisms which need to change in all sectors to make good practice normal practice, through funding and training of deliverers.

The following table provides some strong direction to WAG on how engagement and delivery of SD could be improved in Wales.

### **ENSURE EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY**

- a) Target engagement on SD to key decision makers across the sectors including senior management fora across the Welsh public sector.
- b) Utilise businesses expertise on risk, economic benefits/innovation and enterprise for SD.
- c) Establish a leadership Council for SD in Wales.
- d) Target the support available on SD to the skills gap in the public and community sectors.
- e) Engage with deliverers in arriving at policy decisions.
- f) Be pro-active in the use of the expertise on offer in FHE institutions on SD partnerships and delivery.
- g) Build greater capacity within professional groups inside and outside WAG to understand, articulate and deliver SD in their specialism to achieve outcomes.
- h) Celebrate innovation and good practice in partnership and delivery – but identify why and how it worked and seek to replicate this and make it the norm.
- i) Use voluntary sector and other networks more effectively to engage with the public on SD.
- j) Raise the profile of SD and demonstrate the difference that can be made when targets, funding, monitoring and review are combined (e.g. hypothecate funding for SD delivery for local government).
- k) Promote innovation through initiatives such as whole life costing; a Wales SD innovation fund which provides seed money for experimentation and long term funding for successful multi sectoral partnerships and projects.
- l) Develop the Policy Integration Tool to challenge unsustainable activity while ensuring senior officials across WAG are engaged with SD objectives.
- m) Encourage multi sectoral partnerships and initiatives in Wales, such as Fair-trade and Transition Towns to develop local engagement in practical solutions.

### **3.6 MEASURE TANGIBLE CHANGE**

This section illustrates the frustration and difficulty expressed by interviewees at the lack of progress in establishing successful and established mechanisms to measure SD progress in Wales. After 8 years of the SD scheme, there is a strong perception that, except in a number of notable examples, there are a limited number of ways to measure whether Wales is becoming more sustainable or not.

The notable progress on measuring the Ecological Footprint, work on the Index for Sustainable Economic Welfare and Environment Satellite Accounts was acknowledged, as was the changing UK picture on a SD measurement framework. However, there was an expression of disappointment at the level of analysis on the existing SD indicator set in the Annual Reports, the lack of progress in an agreed list of Quality of Life Indicators from the SD Indicator Group and the lack of formal reporting on alternative economic indicators (such as ISEW).

It was also felt that the current Performance Management Framework in the public sector, including WPI and the national indicator set were too narrow to place Wales' journey towards SD into perspective, and in many cases we were measuring the effectiveness of the process of delivery of the output. A good example used was the measurement of time it takes to turn around a planning application, rather than measuring the number of people living at risk of flooding as a key indicator at a local authority level. The difficulty of shared outcome indicator work was also acknowledged by interviewees. Confusion is widespread in this area – a new Scheme with a vision and routemap, with outcome based indicators may help to tackle this and provide greater clarity.

In terms of the developing evidence base to measure change, there were a number of individual pieces of work which were singled out for praise by interviewees including, Valuing Our Environment, Low Carbon Wales and the work on the Ecological Footprint. However there was frustration on the level of awareness among partnerships and across WAG about these pieces of cutting edge work, and a perceived lack of influence on policy makers within WAG. There is clear desire to use tools and evidence that have been developed, but the mechanisms to do this are not apparent and communicated to partners. There has been good involvement of academia, professionals, deliverers and communities in developing the evidence base for sustainable development, but this work needs to influence policy. WAG also need to ensure data is available to inform policy, transport was cited, where commercial data was unavailable for assessment.

There is a perceived reticence of WAG in setting targets for SD at a strategic level, as if government is reluctant to be tied down to clear objectives and outcomes. The 3% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions target was felt to be a very clear step in the right direction. But clear national goals and targets would be welcomed in all areas within the context of SD. Interviewees wanted national targets which were simple and meaningful to the general public and communicated to the community on a regular basis. Sydney's indicators were cited as a good example, where air quality, reservoirs capacity, and CO<sub>2</sub> from factories were communicated on a regular basis in the local paper. Bhutan's Happiness Index was also suggested as a useful model. Carmarthenshire's good practice in this area could be built upon.

*(On the destination) “What really needs to change is getting appealing targets, an appealing vision that works for both business and Government that delivers in the long term, ...based around a sustainable economy, not just creating jobs.” (Business)*

Carbon footprinting, and individual carbon accounting were seen as two areas where Wales could take a lead. It was felt that WAG should explore ways of using carbon as a currency in Wales at a policy level to reward low carbon approaches. Another example of good practice was the Green League Table of Universities and requirements of annual reporting on SD for FE Institutions were seen as positive drivers for change in the Education Sector. Here, student expectations were driving the change in performance management and institutional change.

One area of concern highlighted by the interviews and documentary review was the lack of tangible change and outcomes from a changed approach to SD. At a policy level many felt that the empty messaging and Policy Integration Tool had not resulted in much change from business as usual mindsets.

*(On policy) “I think it’s still very much on the superficial cut and paste level - pasting the SD requirement into any documentation that exists and thereby having it there and giving some lip service to it. Where could you stand up and say, you know, decisions have changed as a result of the SD commitment of this government? You know, in a lot of the principles of SD, actually we were going to do this but actually we now reckon you really need to do this. I can’t see any examples. I couldn’t give you an example really (laughs).” (NGO)*

Another area of concern was the difficulty of interviewees in identifying where sustainable development principles had influenced things on the ground. Many suggested buildings which had sustainable design features (schools predominantly), others mentioned SD being pursued as part of partnerships e.g. through projects, where the environmental aspects had been given greater prominence than usual, e.g. use of biomass boilers. The SDF provided the most examples of real change on the ground.

*“If you’re looking for examples of SD in the community we have some excellent ones here - frequently those having benefited from CAE funding - such as Caffi Gwynant, a community café and second hand bookshop in a converted chapel; Abergynolwyn Community Hall - Integrated hall facilities with community café, community kitchen, lock up post office and police presence; Community Bunkhouses... Bethesda and Trawsnewydd (regeneration business established by Trawsfynydd Community council; Community shop at Garreg Llanfrothen.” (National Parks)*

However, many of the good examples were around process, and the pressure processes bring to bear on organisations having to consider SD e.g. Wales Programme for Improvement, Policy Agreements and the SEA Directive. When pressed on outcomes, from this pressure, interviewees had difficulty in expressing how things had changed.

At the same time, many felt that major developments, especially at the local authority level, and involving WAG’s DEIN (now changed to Department for the Economy and Transport) had not been influenced by SD. This raises a very clear question on the influence of the SD Scheme on the policies and processes which continue to provide unsustainable developments across Wales. This lack of articulation of how both major policy and implementation has been influenced by SD is perhaps one of the most striking features of the interviews. This weakness was acknowledged by some interviewees, suggesting that as well as process, there

should be a greater emphasis on outcomes. These outcomes need to be agreed and articulated clearly.

Scrutiny of WAG and its SD Scheme and other organisations performance came up frequently in the interviews. Despite the activity of Wales Audit Office, the Sustainable Development Commission and the recently established National Assembly for Wales Sustainability Committee, many felt that there was limited scrutiny of policy frameworks and performance across Wales, and this meant that SD was peripheral to much corporate and service delivery planning. The solution cited by some interviewees was a mandatory annual report from WAG divisions on SD with a requirement for Ministers to make an annual statement for their portfolio, putting their performance in the context of the larger SD impacts. There was also a need identified to build capacity among local government, WAG, AGSB Committees and inspectors on the right questions to ask of WAG and its partners' performance.

The following table suggests what is required to provide a sense of movement and progress on sustainable development – to make it tangible and to provide theoretical, process based and physical evidence to justify claims that Wales is 'a model of sustainability'.

#### **MEASURE TANGIBLE CHANGE**

- a) Set clear national targets for SD at a strategic level, and establish and maintain a simple SD indicator set of well-being (or happiness!) and communicate this well to the public and partners.
- b) Ensure targets and measurements are simple and meaningful (i.e. provide information on whether we are moving towards or away from sustainable development).
- c) Align the performance management framework in the public sector to focus on risks to well-being and sustainable outcomes (not process).
- d) Build on the excellent work on ecological footprinting and ISEW to regularly report on progress and inform policy.
- e) Develop a carbon currency in Wales to inform policy development, funding and a low carbon Wales.
- f) Ensure that there are clear lines of financial accountability, scrutiny and reporting so that it is possible to:
  - Communicate to internal and external stakeholders the tangible changes to policy and practice as a result of a more sustainable approach;
  - Demonstrate that flagship projects have sustainable outcomes and not, for instance, simply that they utilise sustainable inputs or processes;
  - Raise the profile of SD scrutiny via the Sustainability Committee, Sustainable Development Commission and inspectorates.
- g) Require annual reports from Ministers on SD in their portfolio on areas of major

impact.

### 3.7 HOW DOES THIS LINK WITH PREVIOUS WORK?

Many of the issues identified in this research echo the findings of previous review work including the Davidoff Report (2003) on *External Perceptions of the First Sustainable Development Scheme of the National Assembly for Wales* and Williams and Thomas (2004) *Sustainable development in Wales - Understanding effective governance* and *Aiming Higher* by Flynn and Marsden (2006). Those that undertook the first review argued that:

*“WAG should bring SD to life, be clear about what it means for Wales and the Assembly and identify key, crunch issues” CAG (2003)*

Those comments continue to strike a resonant chord.

In terms of the understanding and communication of SD, there is further evidence that there is still a lack of interpretation of crunch issues, communication of the scale of the challenge and consistency of message. Partners still feel there is insufficient engagement in the debate on what SD looks like in different policy areas, and similar themes on the lack of evidence base to contextualise aims and objectives are also apparent.

Progress on integration of SD into policy and practice has also been slow. There is still, in many areas, a clear absence of structures, processes, monitoring, accountability, target setting and reporting evident on SD. In many sectors there continues to be limited linkage between strategies and acknowledgement of policy conflict. The four ‘musts’ identified within organisations by previous work are still missing in many of Wales key organisations with regard to SD: organisational design for SD, awareness and communication, integration framework and tools and mechanisms for evaluation.

Importantly, the opportunities identified in previous work to fully integrate SD have not resulted in a shift of business as usual within key areas of strategy and performance, including Community Strategy Guidance, Wales Programme for Improvement, Spatial Planning and financial systems in Wales. The importance of SD is still not getting through despite some development of guidance and templates exploring links with these key processes, and therefore there is still limited evidence of delivery on the ground. Perhaps the most disappointing has been the lack of focus on SD in the Making the Connections Agenda post Beecham Review.

Lack of corporate working within WAG again was picked up as a major barrier and constraint in the Scheme having influence on external partners. There is still limited evidence that WAG are working though divisions rather than around them on integrating SD into relationships with partners as suggested by previous work.

The research also shows that there are still weaknesses in methods of partnerships working on SD identified in the previous studies around the lack of engagement of key delivery agents in priority setting and action planning. In some cases there still seems to be a separation of the policy formulation and implementation stage. Despite the Wales Spatial Plan process, there is still room for improvement in partnership working between WAG, AGSB’s and local

government on SD outcomes. Similar themes on allowing organisations to experiment with SD on the ground also emerged. Rather than reinforce the message of previous work that WAG were “over-controlling” of others, there seems to have been a shift towards a desire for leadership and prescription where appropriate.

On the evidence of this research, progress between 2003 and 2008 on addressing the weaknesses identified by CAG and others has been slow, and in many cases, the SD Scheme has become weaker in its influence and interpretation by key delivery agents. Much of this is down to the weak messaging, tokenism, lack of co-ordination, understanding, corporate working and vision from WAG. This urgently needs addressing by a new Scheme if the duty is to be realised in tangible change in communities and organisations in Wales.

### **3.8 CASE STUDY: LAND USE PLANNING AND THE DELIVERY OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The following case study of SD in planning in Wales highlights how different approaches to messaging, prescription and guidance from WAG can have far reaching consequences both strategically, and for delivery on the ground.

The planning system is a key means for WAG to work with local government to deliver sustainable development. Underpinning the planning system is the mandatory completion of Sustainability Appraisals and Strategic Environmental Assessments which are designed to promote more sustainable outcomes in the formulation of plan policies.

However, little work has been undertaken to measure the extent to which development permitted by the planning system is sustainable or to review the performance of LPAs in delivering sustainability. In a recent study Maxted (2007) was particularly interested to explore the extent to which planning policy may help to deliver SD. He has analysed the extent to which Welsh LPAs deliver environmentally sustainable development for new residential development. It is estimated that by 2050 up to one third of the housing stock will have been constructed after 2006. The policies of LPAs will be central to achieving more sustainable outcomes.

In recent years WAG, along with the UK government, have published a range of documents designed to promote more sustainable development. It remains a moot point, however, the extent to which the aspirations of WAG are reflected in the performance of LPAs. Maxted (2007) sought to close this gap by reviewing the extent to which existing Welsh LPA policy on new build incorporated notions of SD. His review covered UDPs, LDPs and relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance. As Maxted (2007, p29) points out, since:

*“Most Welsh LPAs are currently focussed on producing LDPs and the majority of these should be adopted around 2010-2011 ... It is ... important that existing policy is adequate and that any guidance is sufficient to ensure future Welsh LPA policy is as robust as possible.”*

Policies were scored against seven broad ranging environmental policy themes: energy, water, materials, waste, pollution, the inclusion of sustainability indicators or systems and the adoption of the “Merton Rule” (Maxted 2007, p29). The analysis reveals significant differences in the way in which these themes are tackled by individual LPAs and by LPAs as a whole for both SPG and plan policies.

With regard to SPG, for example, the draft National Park Authorities Guidance for Sustainable Design is in line with WAG policy and requires that ...

*“All development in the National Parks of Wales must meet BREEAM ‘Excellent’ standard or equivalent as a minimum”.*

Whilst the Wrexham CBC SPG on Sustainable Buildings, published in 2004, like that of other LPAs, is less demanding and requests that proposals should “Maximise natural energy sources” but does not specify a minimum standard (Maxted 2007, p39, p41).

The use of BREEAM indicates a desire amongst the National Parks to work with national standards but how might other LPAs assess the energy efficiency of buildings in their SPGs? Table 1 below shows the variety of different forms of assessment and of their likely application, and whose end result is likely to be a variability in performance between LPAs, and, perhaps, not the drive towards the delivery of SD that WAG may have expected.

**Table 1 SPG inclusion of sustainability indicators or system use and a description of relevant policies.**

LPA	Description of Policy
Cardiff	Encourage use of Standard Assessment Procedure.
Flintshire	None.
National Parks	Use of Sustainable Appraisal Tool and require BREEAM standard for selected topic areas.
Pembrokeshire	Non residential development over 1000 m <sup>2</sup> requires Energy Design Advice Report, also recommends use of BREEAM assessment.
Powys	Use of matrix of appropriate energy efficiency measures required.
Vale of Glamorgan	Sustainability checklist use; advisory only.
Wrexham	Sustainable statements use; advisory only.

Source: based on Maxted (2007) Table 4.1, p44

In his analysis of UDPs, Maxted (2007, p48) notes that policies are poor for energy, materials and waste. Perhaps more worryingly still Maxted has compared the date for the publication of a UDP and its sustainability performance. Older UDPs, less informed by sustainability thinking, should perform more poorly than newer UDPs. Unfortunately, no such correlation could be observed (Maxted 2007, p50).

As Maxted shows UDP policies, like those in SPG, are littered with statements that are at the same time aspirational and ambiguous, so leaving plenty of room for how individual planning applications may be interpreted in practice. When pursuing the reasons why there should be such flexibility in planning policies Maxted (2007, p67-8) conducted a small number of interviews with planning staff. His findings suggest that where policies are ‘strong’ they come under pressure to be ‘weakened’. For example, policy would follow a more ‘advisory’ route, or



policy should be ‘encouraging’ particular routes of development. Maxted (2007, p69) concludes that:

“if those planning authorities with the strongest policies likely to deliver environmentally sustainable development are required to re-word the policies and that they are not being implemented [because of weaknesses in Development Control]; then a gap between the aspiration and reality must exist. It is difficult to envisage how the aspiration of WAG to achieve sustainable development and to achieve carbon neutral development by 2011 is possible without a significant change in approach.”

Some idea of the scale of the change that is required is that despite both WAG and WLGA guidance suggesting that a ‘Merton Rule’ type policy is advisable for LPAs, it is not currently to be found in any UDP or SPG. Such change is not likely to occur when the guidance from WAG is couched in advisory terms. The mandatory nature of text in relation to TAN 15 on development and flood risk has been much more effective in promoting effective coverage of the topic by LPAs.

This case study supports many of the observations in the analysis, that, in the case of planning, perhaps a more direct, rather than incrementalist approach is needed to move towards SD. However, as the next section highlights, there is no a ‘one size fits all’ approach to partnerships or governance that is needed. A more sophisticated and well thought out system of governance is needed to drive and encourage SD among sectors, partners and communities.

## 4. GOVERNANCE OUTCOMES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This research raises some important questions regarding governance for sustainable development, especially in relation to the recommendations made in the analysis. Which approach to governance should WAG adopt to create the conditions for sustainable outcomes on the ground? The analysis provides some clear expectations of WAG and other partners and suggests many pre-requisites and needs for successful engagement and delivery.

The National Assembly for Wales and the Wales Assembly Government have committed themselves to working in partnership with the voluntary, business and statutory sectors. Partnership working in Wales involves a distinctive model of service delivery, one that is inclusive, representative (both geographically and socially) and transparent. From the perspective of the delivery of sustainable development, partnership working has additional resonance. Many of the challenges of sustainable development cross traditional departmental, organisational or sectoral boundaries. Tackling these issues inevitably involves shared working arrangements to seek integrated outcomes. Moreover, part of the philosophy of sustainable development is to encourage inclusivity and participation (e.g. as recognised by the Local Agenda 21 process or Community Strategies) which requires a deeper engagement between those engaged in strategic thinking and those operating at lower levels of government or in the community, and so necessitates vertical forms of partnership working. It is here that we can begin to identify a major tension in partnership models of governance, for as Teisman and Klijn (2002, p198) point out in partnership “public actors take their interdependencies with other actors into account and try to solve governance problems through cooperation rather than through central steering and control”. As our work has made clear, many of the key actors that we have interviewed are looking for a strategic steer from WAG on sustainable development.

The tensions inherent in partnership working in Wales have been analysed in-depth in a WAG funded report by Gillian Bristow and her colleagues (2003). Their work is based upon an extensive documentary review and large number of interviews. In an important comment they argue that “Where organisations are working towards a *common vision, objective or outcome*, all respondents [i.e. interviewees] agree that partnership provides them with additionality in their everyday work and their strategic planning” (Bristow et al 2003, p47) (emphasis added). In their work, Bristow et al point out that whilst WAG has committed itself to partnership working as a favoured form of governance, the strategic thinking to make those partnerships work has often been lacking. Bristow et al (2003, p7) note “there is a groundswell of frustration and disappointment in the working of partnerships in Wales.” There are a number of important challenges to be faced in turning the aspirations of the benefits of partnership into service delivery.

Throughout their report Bristow and her colleagues argue that conflicting rationales for partnerships require a much better fit of form and function. More specifically, the research team identify four main problems with partnership working (Bristow et al 2003):

- Partners hold conflicting expectations;
- There is little agreement about the division of responsibilities between partners;
- The powers and responsibilities of partnerships are not clear;
- Partnerships are often short lived and poorly resourced.

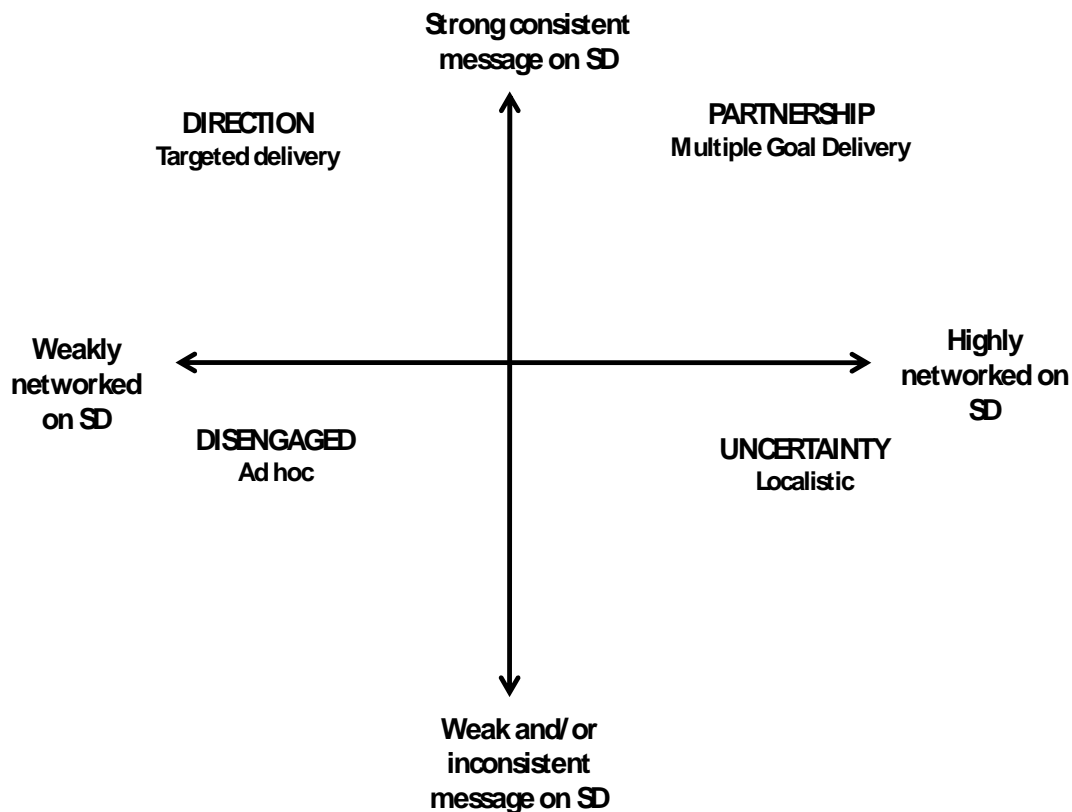
The report makes recommendations to tackle the four problems to promote more effective partnership working (see Bristow et al 2003 section 5). All involve efforts by WAG and its

partners to ensure that existing inter-organisational and policy frameworks facilitate rather than constrain partnership working and recognising the variety of contexts in which partnerships operate. The recommendations of Bristow and her colleagues strike a resonant chord with our own analysis, suggesting clearer goals, lifting constraints on capacity, ‘matching form to function’ as well as reducing the formality of partnership working.

In Figure 1 in the Methodology Section we outlined the different ways in which processes of governance may facilitate or constrain moves towards more sustainable development. We concentrated on two dimensions: SD messaging and SD networks, since these are central to the project remit. However, whilst we have been able to show that the processes for the delivery of SD can take multiple forms –and therefore require more sophisticated understanding of how partner organisations can be engaged in WAG’s SD agenda – it is also important to address how the model that we have developed may shape SD *outcomes*.

Figure 2 shows a second Analytical Framework called ‘Governance Outcomes and Sustainable Development’ this has the same quartiles as the earlier model, but is now focused on outcomes rather than methods of governance. Like our earlier discussion of SD processes, our analysis of outcomes is a simplified version of reality but does capture the variation in practice. Again the four quartiles have very distinct characteristics:

**Figure 2: Governance Outcomes and Sustainable Development.**



**Direction:** since there is a strong and consistent message on SD and does not rely upon well developed networks to assist in delivery, this is more often targeted at a particular policy area

or partner. It is marked by its emphasis on a top-down form of governance in which WAG has a key role to play and may need to impose its vision on others. Such an approach may be utilised where it is necessary to quicken the pace of change or when faced by the need to meet external policy challenges (e.g. EU waste targets, climate change).

**Partnership:** key partners need to develop capacity (e.g. skills, resources) which means that outcomes may not be achieved in the short term. Since partners will be fully committed to the WAG SD agenda, they can receive a consistent message and reproduce that message in the networks in which they operate. Outcomes can then be achieved across a range of activities since partners recognise how their work can add value to others and so delivery adds up to more than the sum of its parts (i.e. the individual contributions of partners).

**Uncertainty:** here organisations recognise the importance of SD but are not bound into WAG's SD agenda because they are not receiving strong or consistent messages. Here SD outcomes are not so much set by government but emerge more organically from bottom-up activities. Typically SD outcomes may be individualistic or localistic. Over time, though, participants may recognise their common circumstances and the benefits of collaboration and engage in a variety of forms of organisational learning and capacity development to raise their SD contribution.

**Disengaged:** since SD is not an objective towards which the organisation aspires or values as it is not receiving clear SD messages from WAG or peer pressure from networks, then SD outcomes are likely to emerge as a by-product of other activities. SD emerges as a secondary effect rather than the result of primary actions.

This model suggests that SD Governance is not a 'one size fits all approach'. There are a number of choices of approach for WAG to consider in developing its thinking on delivering its statutory commitments to partnerships and SD: whether to be direct and prescriptive in its relationship with key actors, to develop meaningful partnerships for 'multiple goal' delivery, or to provide the conditions for SD delivery by other actors in a more 'organic' or bottom up approach. All activity or approaches to Governance should be moving actors out of the 'Disengaged' quartile of the model.

Further work should focus on applying the best methods to deliver outcomes for SD in different areas of high impact policy, drawing on the advice and expertise of key players, including senior decision makers and change agents, individuals with technical 'know how' and the 'customer' from whichever sector or community.

WAG's key challenge for a new SD Scheme therefore is not only to focus on outcomes, but to create the conditions for delivery and bring key actors along with them. The approach has to be more sophisticated and nuanced than it has been, to build on the appetite and enthusiasm and expertise on offer in Wales.

**APPENDIX 1 - DOCUMENTS REVIEWED**

<p>A Fair Future for our Children                  A Shared Responsibility: Local Government Policy Statement                  A Winning Wales                  A World of Opportunity - International Trade Strategy                  Better Homes for People in Wales - National Housing Strategy/Action Plan                  Beyond Boundaries (Beecham)                  Building Strong Bridges - Partnership Working between the Voluntary Sector and NHS Wales                  Business and Environment Action Plan                  Climbing Higher - Strategy for Sports and Physical Activity                  Community Learning Strategic Framework                  Community Strategy Guidance                  Creative Future Culture Strategy                  Delivering the Connections: from vision to action                  Designed for Life - Health &amp; Social Care Strategy                  Economic Development &amp; the Welsh Language                  Energy Routemap                  Environment Strategy                  Environment Strategy First Action Plan                  EPRM Low Carbon Wales                  ESDGC Action Plan                  FE Institutional Planning Letter                  Health, Social and Wellbeing Strategy guidance                  Healthcare Standards                  Iaith Pawb                  Improving Health in Wales                  LDP Guidance                  Learning Country Programme                  LG Finance Settlement - Ministerial Statement                  Local Vision - Preparing Community Strategies                  Making the Connections                  Making the Connections - Connecting the NHS Workforce                  Making the Connections - Delivering Beyond Boundaries (5yr Action Plan)                  Making the Connections- Local Service Board Guidance</p>	<p>Microgeneration Strategy                  National Park Grant letter                  Healthy Sustainable Wales - NHS Toolkit                  One Wales                  Planning Grant                  Planning Policy Wales                  Professional Standards for TTT for Wales                  Remit letter CCW                  Remit Letter Estyn                  Remit Letter HEFCW                  Remit Letter National Museums                  Remit Letter Welsh Language Board                  Responding to our Changing climate                  Rural Development Plan                  Science Policy for Wales                  SEA &amp; SA Guidance                  Second Organic Action Plan                  Statement for National Parks and National Park Authorities (WAG)                  Strategy for Older People                  Voluntary Sector Scheme                  Wales: A Better Country                  Wales for Innovation Action Plan                  Wales Programme for Improvement Guidance                  Wales Spatial Plan                  Warm Homes &amp; Energy Conservation Act 2000: Fuel Poverty Commitment                  Welsh International Sustainable Development Framework                  WSP Central Interim Statement                  WSP North East Interim Statement                  WSP North East Interim Statement                  WSP North West Interim Statement                  WSP Pembrokeshire Interim Statement                  WSP SE Interim Statement                  WSP Swansea Bay Interim Statement</p>
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**APPENDIX 2 -DOCUMENTARY EVALUATION TEMPLATE**

<b>1. COMMUNICATING THE NEED FOR CHANGE AND ACTION ON SD</b>	
a) Fully recognises nature of change required by SD	
b) Recognise importance of SD but does not challenge existing models or arrangements	
c) Mentions SD but no clear implications for action by partner(s) to deliver change	
d) Mentions SD but no mention of partner(s) for delivering change	
e) No mention of SD	
Comments:	
<b>2. SD IN OTHER WORDS</b> (Utilises other concept sympathetic to SD e.g. wellbeing, quality of life, climate change)	
a) Fully recognises nature of change required by SD though does not use the language of SD	
b) Recognises importance of SD without using the term but does not challenge existing models or arrangements	
c) Mentions term sympathetic to SD but no clear implications for action by partner(s) to deliver change	
d) Mentions term sympathetic to SD but no mention of partners for delivering change	
e) No mention of term sympathetic to SD	
Comments:	
<b>3. PARTNERSHIPS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SD</b>	
a) Comprehensive identification of partner(s) in policy delivery and <i>meaningful and relevant</i> explanation of roles /responsibilities	
b) Partial identification of partner(s) in policy delivery and <i>meaningful and relevant</i> explanation of their roles and responsibilities	
c) Comprehensive identification of partner(s) in policy delivery but lack of clarity in explanation of their roles and responsibilities	
d) Weak identification of partner(s) and role	
e) Fails to identify partner(s) or role	
Comments:	
<b>4. CHALLENGE AND CHANGE FOR SD</b>	
a) Clear explanation of what partner(s) should do differently to act as a change agent(s) in moving towards more sustainable outcomes	
b) Partial explanation of what partner(s) should do differently to move towards more sustainable outcomes	
c) Limited challenge to partner(s) to deliver differently and weak explanation of SD outcomes	
d) No explanation of what partner(s) should do differently but some expectation of change	

e) Business as usual	
Comments:	
<b>5. TARGETS, INDICATORS AND MONITORING FOR SD</b>	
a) Clear identification of targets, indicators and monitoring arrangements for the delivery of SD	
b) Partial identification of targets, indicators and monitoring arrangements	
c) Inconsistent identification of targets, indicators or monitoring arrangements	
d) Weak identification of targets, indicators and monitoring arrangements	
e) Failure to identify, targets, indicators and monitoring arrangements	
Comments:	
Overall assessment based on analysis. <i>Does it link with other strategies? Indication of direction of travel? Indication of significance of change? Clear Routemap?</i>	

**APPENDIX 3- ORGANISATIONS INTERVIEWED**

<p>Arena Network                  Brecon Beacons National Park                  Black Environment Network                  Bro Morgannwg NHS Trust                  Carmarthenshire NHS Trust                  Confederation of British Industry                  Countryside Council for Wales                  Cynnal Cymru                  Environment Agency Wales                  Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Panel                  Estyn                  Federation of Small Businesses                  Higher Education Funding Council for Wales                  Local Authority- Economic Development                  Local Authority- Education                  Local Authority- Planning</p>	<p>Local Authority - Waste                  Museum Wales                  NHS Confederation                  Organic Centre Wales                  Oxfam                  Sustainable Development Commission                  Small or Medium Enterprise                  Snowdonia National Park                  Wales Consumer Council                  Wales Fair-trade Forum                  Wales Council for Voluntary Action                  Welsh European Funding Office                  Wales Environment Link                  Welsh Local Government Association (Transport)                  Welsh Local Government Association (Education)</p> <p>N.B Dr. Alan Netherwood was involved in discussions with key policy, performance and SD officers in 19 Council's and 3 National Parks (over 80 staff) as part of work on the WLGA Sustainable Development Framework. This research has fed into the analysis.</p>
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**APPENDIX 4 - INTERVIEWS – AREAS OF ENQUIRY**

Interviewee	Organisation and Sector	Date

**The message**

1. Are you <b>aware</b> that WAG have an SD duty – what impact has it had on your organisation?	
2. a) What are the <b>key documents</b> that WAG produces that influences <b>strategy and operations</b> – do they mention well-being, SD or other key terms or	
3. b) What are the <b>key documents</b> that WAG produces that influence how you <b>deliver SD</b> ?	
4. What <b>influence</b> has WAG got on how sustainable development is pursued in your organisation/sector/community of interest?	
5. are WAG <b>selling the Scheme</b> effectively enough? Is the relationship between WAG’s duty on SD and other <b>strategic documents</b> clear and meaningful?	
6. what is missing? Where are the <b>gaps</b> between high level policy and SD delivery? Why are things not happening?	
7. How effectively is the <b>pace of change</b> that is required for SD communicated?	
8. Is the pressure to tackle <b>climate change</b> as an unsustainable trend (political and organisational) enabling SD activity/thinking. Has SD been subsumed by CC? How should this be tackled in a new Scheme?	

**The mechanisms**

9. What are the <b>tools, levers and mechanisms</b> in place to create change towards SD?	
10. <b>What, if anything, is changing</b> as a result of these mechanisms? (we should capture good practice and success stories)	
11. What are the <b>levers we are not pulling</b> to affect change towards SD?	
12. Are there <b>other ways</b> to achieve the change towards SD that is required (mechanisms, or targets?)	
13. Have we any clear indication of the <b>direction of travel</b> – are the current measurement tools ( <b>indicators</b> ) fit for purpose? Do we need <b>targets</b> ? At what level?	

14. What can WAG do to <b>fill gaps</b> , or reinforce or establish mechanisms and levers?	
15. Can WAG use its <b>money</b> differently to progress SD in your area of interest?	
16. How effectively do WAG <b>monitor progress</b> on SD?	
17. What is influencing (e.g. economic development professionals) <i>insert own profession to go business as usual or go for SD?</i> what are the drivers?	

**Action and change**

18. How are you <b>building capacity</b> on SD within your organisation? What can be done to <b>help</b> you do this more effectively?	
19. What are the main <b>barriers</b> for progressing sustainable development? What/who is responsible for these barriers? How can they be <b>removed</b> ?	
20. <b>Who else</b> is doing interesting/innovative work around SD?	
21. How effectively are <b>organisational/professional/regional networks</b> dealing with SD?	
22. Who are the <b>key actors not yet engaged</b> in SD?	
23. 3 examples of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what are WAG doing well,</li> <li>• what are WAG not doing well</li> <li>• what WAG need to change</li> </ul>	
24. Can you provide 3 examples of where you are progressing SD – these may be achievements at the corporate level or in delivery on the ground. This enables us to answer what has been delivered differently as a result of SD would you have done this anyway? (without the Scheme and WAG’s influence?)	

## **APPENDIX 5 – GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS**

ADEW:	Association of Directors of Education Wales
AGSB:	Assembly Government Sponsored Body
BRASS:	Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society
BREEAM:	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method
CAE:	Cronfa Arbrofol Eryri (Snowdonia National Park's Sustainable Development Fund)
CAG:	CAG Consultants
CBC:	County Borough Council
CBI:	Confederation of British Industry
CCW:	Countryside Council for Wales
CEO:	Chief Executive Officer
CO <sub>2</sub> :	Carbon Dioxide
CSR:	Corporate Social Responsibility
DEIN:	(WAG) Department for Enterprise, Innovation & Networks
EAW:	Environment Agency Wales
EMS:	Environmental Management System
EPRM:	Expert Panel on Resource Management for Wales
ESDGC:	Education for Sustainable Development & Global Citizenship
ESRC:	Economic & Social Research Council
EU:	European Union
FE:	Further Education
FHE:	Further & Higher Education
HEFCW:	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
ISEW:	Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare
LDP:	Local Development Plan
LG:	Local Government
LPA:	Local Planning Authority
LSB:	Local Service Board p15
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHS:	National Health Service
PPW:	Planning Policy Wales
PSMW:	Public Service Management Wales
SD:	Sustainable Development
SDC:	Sustainable Development Commission
SDF:	Sustainable Development Framework
SE:	South East
SEA:	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SPG:	Special Planning Guidance
TAN:	Technical Advice Note
UDP:	Unitary Development Plan
WAG:	Welsh Assembly Government
WAO:	Wales Audit Office
WAVE:	Wales: a Vibrant Economy
WEFO:	Welsh European Funding Office
WLGA:	Welsh Local Government Association
WNPA:	Welsh National Parks Association
WPI:	Wales Programme for Improvement
WSP:	Wales Spatial Plan

## **APPENDIX 6 - BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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