

THE 'WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS' PRESENTATION
AT THE RSQ AGM (THURSDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2018)

=====

SLIDE 1: TITLE SLIDE

Some weeks ago, I was listening to a download of a segment of the Religion and Ethics Report on the ABC's Radio National – which is, by the way, an excellent program.

Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, was discussing 'Rethinking how we measure citizen well-being'. He is a philosopher, a theologian, a humanitarian – and Welsh.

Towards the end of the segment, he observed that Wales had passed legislation which required public bodies to consider the long-term social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being of the Welsh people in all of their decision-making.

He asked a pertinent question – “If Wales can do it, why can't everybody else?”. It is a good question – a very good question – and so I am here tonight.

We have a lot to get through, and nowhere near enough time to do it. So, hang on to your hats – it's going to be a bumpy ride.

SLIDE 2: WHAT IS THE 'WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS' ACT?

The first point is the only one that we will have time to get through tonight.

The other points deal with the mechanisms of how the Act operates.

SLIDE 3: GOALS 1 TO 3 TO THE 7 WELL-BEING GOALS

Note that these 7 goals form a legally-binding common purpose.

Note also that even the Prosperity Goal is framed in sophisticated social and environmental terms – not mindlessly consumerist terms.

SLIDE 4: GOALS 4 TO 7 TO THE 7 WELL-BEING GOALS

Note the emphasis on community (not the individual) in Goal 5.

Note also the legislated vision of the nation as a responsible Global Citizen in Goal 7.

SLIDE 5: THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLE

In Queensland, in the 1990s, government planners actually carried out planning according to the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development.

Then, it was comprehensively swept away as the politicians of both political stripes imposed their neoliberal dogmas on the public service.

Somehow, we have to get ESD back as the dominant governmental paradigm – we have to.

SLIDE 6: THE SCORECARD

As you can see, Wales and Queensland are on different planets. Unfortunately, we're stuck on the wrong planet.

Wales is striding into a better kinder future.

Queensland is blindly heading in the opposite direction, with its ever-increasing focus on economic developments, to the exclusion of all other considerations.

SLIDE 7: A WAY FORWARD

They say that the longest journey begins with a single step and this first step is the most critical.

Also, the RSQ has an honourable role to play in this journey.

In conclusion, I want an Australian version of this concept – *and* a Queensland version of this concept.

If I can't have either, at least I want a version of this concept in a major local authority, where it can act as a role model for other local authorities.

Thank you for your attention.

NOTE:

Australia is a nation state; Queensland is a state within a federation of states.

Wales is a nation, but it is not a nation state.

<https://www.quora.com/Is-Wales-a-nation>

Wales does not have its own public service – the public service is the UK Civil Service. In Wales, some parts of planning law are Welsh, some are English and some are both.