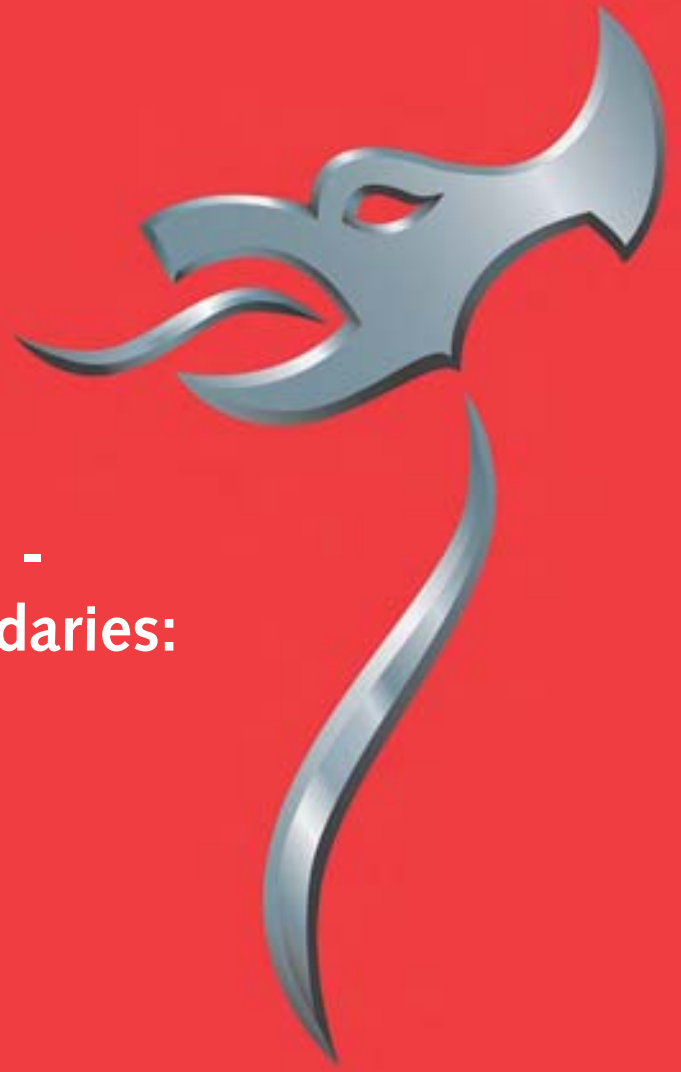


Making the Connections - Delivering Beyond Boundaries:

Transforming Public Services in Wales



November 2006



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

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Foreword



Improving public services is one of the biggest, and most exciting, tasks for the Welsh Assembly Government. We have invested strongly in our public services and made good progress in improving their quality and availability. But there is much more to be done in ensuring that Wales has the public services it needs for the 21st century.

The actions we set out here will mean significant change in the way public services work, built around the needs of citizens. We want to bring about a new era in the way public services work together as a team, responsive to citizens, focussed on meeting people's needs first time regardless of who provides the service and much more ambitious in driving up performance.

Behind these words lie some big challenges: developing an even stronger public service commitment within our public service bodies, becoming more efficient, building the capacity of our workforce and reducing the complexity of the machinery of government.

Our actions build upon our programme for reforming public services in Wales, *Making the Connections*, published in 2004. It was well-received and I am grateful for the strong support we have received across the public service in taking it forward. The approach has now been endorsed by the Review of Local Service Delivery chaired by Sir Jeremy Beecham which we commissioned and which reported in July 2006.

The report, *Beyond Boundaries*, has been widely accepted as a landmark study: we are grateful to Sir Jeremy and his colleagues Dame Gillian Morgan and Sir Adrian Webb and for the supporting research by Professor Steve Martin. Their big message was that we had to push our reforms further and faster.

Our new legislative powers under the Government of Wales Act 2006 will help us do this. We want, for example, to strengthen the duty on local public bodies to co-operate with each other and will be pursuing the necessary powers.

There is only one test of our actions – whether services improve on the ground. We shall publish, from 2008, an annual report on public service performance so that everyone can judge the progress for themselves.

The Beecham team said that Wales had the opportunity to become an international exemplar. I hope that everyone involved in our public services will join us in taking up that challenge - we can do it.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue Essex". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Sue Essex AM
Minister for Finance, Local Government and Public Services

1. Introduction

'With Making the Connections, Wales has set out its stall in a bold way, and its agenda deserves.....decisive action' **Beecham (p.69)**

1.1 Improving public services is of fundamental importance to the future of Wales. Our ambitions for a dynamic economy, better health, high quality lifestyles in sustainable communities and for a bilingual Wales require the best possible public services across the board. This paper sets out the actions we will take, in the light of the Review of Local Service Delivery (the Beecham Report), to accelerate progress towards our goal of transforming the way in which public services are delivered and the experience of everyone who uses them.

1.2 Following substantial investment by the Welsh Assembly Government, public services in Wales are in very much better shape now than they were at the point of devolution in 1999. There have been significant improvements in every key service, for example in hospital waiting times, class sizes, and public transport. Although a survey¹ this year reported that most people in Wales were generally satisfied with our public services, we recognise that performance has been too patchy - and that the pace of improvement must increase sharply from now on. We need to achieve continued improvement in the context of more limited growth in the resources available. The first part of this decade witnessed a step-change in public expenditure but we all need to recognise that the rate of growth from now on will diminish.

1.3 Public expectations for public services are both increasing and changing. Changes in demography and the competitive pressures of a global economy are increasing the overall demand. At the same time people are expecting a broader, more diversified range of public services that can respond to individual and community needs: for example wider curriculum choices in schools and colleges, and more varied pathways in health and social care. This will not be achieved by doing what we do now a little better. It will only be achieved by transforming the way in which public services work. We need

¹ *Beyond Boundaries: Citizen-Centred Local Services for Wales, Cpt.5*

creative and dynamic partnerships across the public, voluntary and private sectors engaging with the public to create a dynamic momentum which can meet both the challenges of today and of the future.

1.4 We strongly support the conclusion of the Review that Wales should aim to be an international exemplar of how small countries deliver public services. We need to have the courage and creativity to do things our own way in order to overcome the challenges and grasp the opportunities as a small country of 3 million citizens. The transformation in quality and effectiveness needs to include all aspects of service delivery together with a commitment to tackling inequality of outcomes. In the following chapters, we set out the required programme of change for the years ahead.

1.5 The actions set out in this document constitute a five year programme.

Our Top Five Areas for Action by March 2008

Putting Citizens First

We will

- give citizens, for the first time, a clear statement of national standards for key services which they are entitled to or can reasonably expect, recognising that many standards are best set locally. Initially we will both focus on a limited set of standards and consult closely inside and outside government on future development.
- deliver the first phase of actions to transform the quality of customer service to citizens, under our new customer service policy, including better use of ICT. We shall encourage the development of single points of entry for people, particularly those with substantial needs, to make it easier for them to secure the services they need.
- set out a programme to improve public engagement in service design and delivery.

(see chapter 2)

Working together to deliver - locally

We will

- engage with all parts of the Welsh public service to establish Local Service Boards (on a local authority area basis). Each Board will bring together the key contributors to local service delivery, both devolved and non-devolved. They will have a mission to improve service delivery and undertake joint action where the need is identified in fields such as health and social care, services for vulnerable children and others where good outcomes depend on joined-up action. We want to eliminate the shunting of costs and people between organisations. We will support their development by using existing and new legislative powers to strengthen the duties on public bodies to co-operate, removing barriers to collaboration and eliminating any unnecessary bureaucratic requirements on public bodies. The Welsh Assembly Government will be represented on the Boards.
- develop the financial and governance arrangements across sectors to make it easier to bring together budgets, staff, facilities and other resources in order to get the best value for people and communities.
- work with Local Service Boards to develop, initially in selected areas, Local Service Agreements on service improvement between the Boards and the Assembly Government, with the potential to introduce multi-area agreements in some instances. The Boards will build on the valuable experience gained from the Community Strategy Partnerships, to implement a shared programme of action to improve services. They will engage with citizens in shaping future services, identifying a manageable suite of shared priorities to improve outcomes for the community and evaluating performance across a broad range of local services, reporting on performance and citizen satisfaction.
- enhance the role of local councillors and non-executive members of boards in the performance appraisal of local services - a wider and more constructive approach than has come to be implied by the term 'scrutiny'. We will develop an approach which is designed to improve public service performance in response to citizens needs and is not merely focussed on finding fault or allocating blame.

- support the Boards to ensure that they build on the work of existing partnerships such as the statutory children and young people's partnerships and health, social care and well-being partnerships, which work across boundaries to plan and implement integrated services and encourage their ambitious development.

Working together to deliver - regionally and nationally

We will

- implement a far-reaching set of actions for commissioning, supporting and delivering those services where regional or national working will mean better quality of service or better use of resources. These include:
 - All Local Health Boards (LHBs) collaborating to form 3 regional consortia to commission specialist hospital services, so refocusing existing resources. There will be new arrangements for LHBs on commissioning primary and community care which will be progressively connected to the work of the new Local Service Boards.
 - New local authority waste management delivery partnerships to enable local authorities to work together over delivering solutions to complex waste management issues and develop a shared service approach to the problems they raise.
 - Pushing ahead with the Heads of the Valleys Partnership, covering the economy, skills, environment, housing and health, and building the Môn a Menai regeneration partnership.
 - Joint commissioning across local authorities and local health boards and a regional approach to services for people with complex communication needs.
 - Pursuing the continued development of the Children's Commissioning Support Resource, to assist all local authorities in providing for vulnerable children.
 - Encouraging the development of six consortia of housing associations to maximise the impact of social housing grant.
 - Strengthening regional transport consortia to deliver an enhanced approach to transport and delivery.

- implementing a new Public Sector Broadband ICT network, connecting all main public sector bodies and enabling joint working.
- supporting the current work of the Welsh Local Government Association's regional partnerships in developing future collaborations.

(see chapter 3)

World class workforce

We will

- engage 3,000 people a year from across the Welsh public service in national and international development programmes for leaders at all levels in the workforce- providing support for public service staff in Wales to take forward the reform agenda.
- grow the capacity of public service organisations to manage change and improve the quality of workforce planning, and support networks of excellence for HR professionals.

(see chapter 4)

Better value for the Welsh pound

We will

- implement the next phase of our efficiency drive to deliver £600 million efficiency gains a year across the Welsh public service by 2010:
 - streamlining corporate functions in public service bodies (e.g. finance and HR) through the first stage of an NHS shared services programme (as in north Wales) and the development of shared services projects in local government and other sectors,
 - make wide-ranging improvements in procurement,
 - establish a collaborative capacity to support improvement in the design, procurement and construction of school buildings and to promote better maintenance and energy utilisation in the school estate.

(see chapter 5)

1.6 Every part of the Welsh public service will contribute to the transformation that is taking place. We recognise the force of argument in the Beecham report that the Welsh Assembly Government will need to transform itself in order to support the changes taking place elsewhere.

Driving the change: transforming the Welsh Assembly Government

We aim to promote continuous improvement in the co-ordinated and streamlined support we offer to service delivery. We will:

- create a capacity in the Welsh Assembly Government to engage directly with Local Service Boards and wider networks. This will involve all portfolio Ministers and relevant senior officials adopting a geographical remit for engaging with them over priorities for improvement and service delivery on a cross-departmental basis. This will enable them to help support local and regional service change, identify where Assembly Government processes need to be simplified, share performance information and ensure that improvements achieved in one part of Wales are communicated to others and can be delivered across the country;
- establish a small Performance Wales team (drawing on external as well as internal talent) providing the First Minister and Cabinet with periodic reports on public service performance, making existing performance information more useable by service leaders and the public, co-ordinating and supporting the development of Local Service Agreements, supporting Ministers and officials in their geographical roles, and co-ordinating the necessary follow-through action.
- report annually to the public on how our public services are performing.
- establish a governance development programme to ensure that public service bodies in Wales and cross-cutting partnerships have clear and effective governance frameworks and the support they need to perform effectively.

(see chapter 6)

Making the Connections and Beyond Boundaries

1.7 This programme is a natural development of the *Making the Connections* policy for public service reform we set out in October 2004. Our vision places citizens at the centre of services which are efficient, driven by a commitment to social justice and equality, which work closely together rather than wastefully duplicating or competing and which have a strong partnership with their workforce. Our approach was widely welcomed and we translated it into an action plan *Delivering the Connections* in June 2005. We have made good progress against this plan and, as part of its implementation, we asked Sir Jeremy Beecham and his team to help us identify how to make further and faster progress.

1.8 The Review's report, *Beyond Boundaries*, confirmed that *Making the Connections* is firmly on the right lines and has strong backing. Equally it demonstrated that we need to drive through the changes faster and more rigorously. It showed we are on secure ground in concentrating on behaviour and cultures and on making existing structures more effective rather than incurring the costs and distractions of extensive re-organisation. It called for public services to be much more ambitious and innovative, making a step-change in how they engage with citizens, plan and deliver services, and work with each other to achieve better results. We fully support the report's analysis including its focus on the dimensions of change required: to enhance capacity, reduce complexity and create a more innovative and ambitious culture.

1.9 This means building on the progress made so far and arrangements that are working well. For example, following the exercise to reduce the number of local government plans that we require (see Box 6.1), we are asking local bodies to concentrate on a smaller number of strategies which will lead directly to better service outcomes for users. The next round of Health, Social Care and Well-Being strategies and Children and Young People's plans will need to reflect this shift in emphasis and promote the shift in culture and capacity that *Beyond Boundaries* requires.

1.10 In addition to the actions set out in this document, we are also publishing a number of policy papers on specific services and sectors. These are listed in Annex 1. Taken together, there is a far-reaching programme of improvement and reform ahead.

Delivering the programme

Values and commitments

1.11 The implementation of this change programme requires a sharp shift from a public **sector** ethos that is limited to particular professional or service boundaries to a public **service** ethos based on promoting quality and equality. That implies a new commitment to high quality, accountable, ethical, collaborative services focused on the well-being of the citizen. It means public services working together, not letting boundaries between sectors, organisations or professions stand in the way of meeting people's needs.

1.12 Pursuing our commitments to sustainable development, a bilingual Wales, equality and social justice will remain paramount, acknowledging the significance, for example, of existing and emerging duties on all public bodies to eliminate discrimination and promote equality in terms of - race, gender, disability, faith, age and sexual orientation. In ensuring responsive public services for all, it is essential that services respond to the needs of the whole community. This is what it means to be a public servant in Wales.

1.13 Effective engagement with citizens is crucial to the transformation agenda. It is essential as a driver for service improvement, including the more personalised services which will increasingly be needed in the 21st century. This engagement will enable us to strike the right balance between the demands of individual citizens and the needs of the whole community.

Roles

1.14 The programme will impact on all parts of the public service in Wales and will mean:

- the **Welsh Assembly Government** providing more engaged leadership. This entails being more active on the ground in translating policy into effective delivery, developing a more joined-up approach to setting clear national service priorities and standards, providing direction, support and constructive challenge to local and regional

service partnerships. It will rely less on bureaucratic systems and place more emphasis on working with partners to drive up performance and delivery, co-ordinated through Performance Wales.

- **local authorities, local health boards, NHS Trusts, the National Public Health Service and other bodies**, building on the significant progress on collaboration and customer service, embracing further radical change where necessary. This will embrace new approaches to public engagement plus new forms of partnership and joint working at local, regional and national levels. The focus on outcomes for citizens will demand an openness to a mixed economy in service delivery, and to promote improved performance.

All these bodies will be active partners in Local Service Boards as well as regional or national networks within their sector - pooling resource, tackling recurrent problems for the long-term, ensuring that the citizen-centred planning results in tangible service improvement, and participating in joint scrutiny of local services. Local authorities will provide the enabling locus for Local Service Boards.

- the **Voluntary and Community Sector** developing (as appropriate for each organisation) an enhanced role as citizens' advocates, providers of policy and service development expertise, and as delivery partners through a new strategy under the Voluntary Sector Scheme. An increasingly mixed economy will need to reflect this contribution towards helping transform the way services are designed and delivered. It will draw upon the associated strengths in addressing multiple needs, drawing on individual and community resources, and responding to those who tend to be excluded from traditional provision.
- **non-devolved services** playing their part in developing more collaborative and citizen-centred services. We shall be discussing with those services for which the UK Government is responsible how they might work within a stronger and more joined-up public service in Wales, building on some outstanding examples of collaboration that already exist.
- the **private sector** being engaged in its well-established role in delivering some public services and working with the Assembly Government and others in developing new approaches to public service-led partnerships to get the best value from our capital

investment and assets, from affordable housing to ICT. It also means that the sector should be engaged in encouraging and supporting secondments and exchanges and in releasing employees for public service roles, for example, as elected representatives, governors and non-executives.

Resources

1.15 We intend to allocate £42 million over the next 3 years to support *Making the Connections*, in addition to funds earmarked within Departmental budgets. We also anticipate provision under the Convergence Programme and the European Social Fund in support of *Making the Connections* in the Valleys and West Wales for capacity building in the public and voluntary sectors.

Timescale

1.16 We are setting clear milestones for the programme to 2010-11. We shall monitor closely the progress we are making and report annually to the public, the National Assembly and, through the Public Services Boardⁱ, to our partners. In 2010, we shall commission a major independent review to assess how far we have succeeded in achieving the transformation and to provide a base for further action. The real test will be the tangible improvements which citizens experience day-in, day-out.

ⁱ The Public Services Board is chaired by the First Minister and has been established as a stakeholder reference group to advise Ministers and review progress in implementing the Making the Connections Action Plan and provide a forum for discussion of best practice and new ideas about public services and their delivery. <http://www.wales.gov.uk/makingtheconnections>

2. Putting Citizens First

'The development of the relationship between citizens and public services must be pursued effectively and urgently....mechanisms for informing and engaging the public need to be transformed' **Beecham (p.57)**

2.1 Putting citizens first and involving them in the design of public services is central to achieving radical change. We can deliver real improvements - improvements that people can recognise and understand - by engaging them in shaping and scrutinising our services. People must not be seen as passive recipients. In many public services, people are essential contributors to the outcomes of the service. We cannot improve health, social care or education, for example, without building upon and supporting the contributions that people make for themselves and their families. People should be able to participate in and support the public services in their communities.

2.2 Our research shows that people want public services to change further to reflect and meet the needs of different groups; for example, the needs of people who speak Welsh, younger and older people, people with different levels of basic skills, people living in deprived areas, people with disabilities, people of different cultures and orientations and people who are vulnerable. These changes also need to reflect our aim of a bi-lingual Wales. For example:

- We need a revolution in how people are able to **contact services**, in the quality of customer care, in the responsiveness they experience, and in their access to redress when things go wrong. This includes creating single points of contact and new options for enabling people to engage with services according to their circumstances. This is especially important for the vulnerable and hard-to-reach through, for example, effective advocacy and outreach, accessible modes of communication for those with sensory impairment, or through other languages. It also means exploiting more effectively the potential of the explosion in people's use of ICT.

- We need to be measuring and reporting on **public satisfaction** - and using citizens' experience of accessing services to improve business processes and drive up performance. This must reflect the experiences and needs of all citizens including the vulnerable and hard to reach.
- We need to strengthen the **active partnership** between services and citizens to achieve better outcomes - for example, in recycling household waste, improving outcomes for children and young people, and in helping disabled people or those with chronic health conditions to achieve the best quality of life. Success depends on teamwork between citizens and those providing the services.
- We need to find ways of **giving people a stronger voice** in their communities - both local communities and as communities of interest - in shaping services and priorities to meet current and future needs. For example, we need to build upon the already excellent, innovative work being undertaken to enable children and young people to participate in developing and reviewing services they receive in accordance with the Assembly Government's commitment to Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2.3 Most of all, we need to embed an ethos of putting citizens first as our way of achieving continuous improvement in Welsh public services. This requires public service bodies, including the Assembly Government, to have an integrated approach to engaging people in all the dimensions of their relationships with the public - better customer service, flexible service options, stronger engagement and clearer public accountability. Boxes 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 are examples.

Box 2.1

Patient involvement in the NHS

A new, purpose-built, Patient Appointment Centre in Conwy & Denbighshire NHS Trusts is providing a calm environment where specially trained staff are freed up to give their full attention to patients (by separating out routines such as preparing case notes). It is transforming the quality of service patients are offered. This is one of a series of developments across the NHS to make it more responsive to patients, linked to the Guide to Good Practice Programme. A second example includes the introduction of Discovery Interviews in Gwent, where anonymised accounts by patients of their experience in a number of speciality areas are being used to improve services.

Box 2.2**Local customer service centres**

The Newport City Council Contact Centre is one of an increasing number of significant contact centre developments in local authorities across Wales which are transforming the way citizens can access local services. The Centre aims to achieve first time enquiry fulfilment of 70-80% and enables citizens to have several enquiries/requests dealt with through a single call. It is the main contact point for the Council, based on a single number and is open Monday to Friday (8.00 - 20.00) and Saturday (9.00 - 13.00). Similar services in authorities such as Pembrokeshire, Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Denbighshire are changing the face of public services.

Box 2.3**Strengthening Active Partnership**

People with disabilities can experience a high level of discrimination in a range of settings and particularly in the attitude of individuals and society as a whole. This provided a catalyst for the development of a training programme by Carmarthenshire County Council for service users with a disability which explored disability equality issues and raised awareness of discrimination. Service users were involved in shaping the content and design of the training to best meet their needs. Those that have taken part in the training have become empowered and now take an active part in developing the plans that will make a difference to their lives. Several of those involved in the training have gone on to become trainers themselves.

Box 2.4**Delivering Services Bi-lingually**

North West Wales NHS Trust provides a good example of following the principle of equality between Welsh and English when delivering services to the public. The Trust runs a wide range of initiatives, including a cadet scheme to encourage Welsh speaking nurses, bi-lingual information provision in a variety of mediums for patients requiring cataract surgery, and tailored Welsh language training for hospital staff with different needs. In 2004 and 2005, the Trust won first prize in different categories of the Welsh Language Healthcare Conference and has also been recognised as demonstrating 'notable practice' by the Commission for Healthcare Improvement.

2.4 What follows sets out our priorities for action so as to put citizens first.

Priority

2.5 Transforming Customer Service - making it easier for people to locate and contact the services they need, the quality of their experience and right to redress.

Actions

National customer service policy, action plans and good practice guidance, following through our 5 principles for customer service (information and access, mutual respect, responsiveness to individual needs and barriers, language needs, redress and getting things put right).

Project to baseline current customer service capacity and performance, including an analysis of customer contact arrangements.

Creating options for people with different needs including customer contact centres, one-stop shops, advocacy & outreach, e-access, for example;

By whom and when

Assembly Government consulting on core principles for customer service now (*Building Better Customer Service - Good Practice Guidance for Public Services*)*. Launch an Action Plan 2007, supported by leadership and workforce development action.

Assembly Government 2007-08.

* www.wales.gsi.gov.uk/makingtheconnections

Actions

Better joint working to facilitate access to emergency / unscheduled health care.

Link-age one stop shops for older people to help them on benefits and other issues.

British Sign Language Apprentice Scheme - BSL Futures - and good practice advice on the provision of public services in BSL.

Improving service access for disabled people in line with the forthcoming *Disability Equality Scheme*, for example, guidance to improve GP surgery accessibility, a programme to improve disabled people's access to sports and leisure pursuits, and supporting approaches to ensure disabled people receive good housing information and advice.

Taking action, in line with the Race Equality Scheme, to ensure organisations take the requirements of different ethnic groups into account when delivering customer service, for example, targeted activity to improve take-up of educational opportunities by minority ethnic groups and guiding social landlords to improve race equality training to staff and board members.

Advocacy and advice services

Developing advocacy services for children and young people, including commissioning and regulation of advocacy services with a view to improving quality and coverage.

Establishing a Commissioner for Older People in Wales to help ensure that the interests of older people in Wales are safeguarded - providing information, advocacy and support.

Developing an independent Mental Capacity Advocate Service for Wales.

Using results from our 2006 and 2007 citizen survey to target activities that will develop and support the advocacy and advice services (e.g. housing advice) infrastructure in Wales.

By whom and when

Welsh Assembly Government consulting now.

20 areas covered by Department for Work and Pensions / local authorities to date.

Assembly Government and partners: 30 apprentices qualified by 2009, good practice advice published by early 2007.

Assembly Government scheme to be published in December 2006; implemented 2006-2008; and reviewed 2008.

Race equality scheme implementation 2006-2008 and review 2008.

Assembly Government consultation 2006.

Assembly Government 2007.

Assembly Government 2007.

Assembly Government 2007.

Actions

By whom and when

Internet and other e-services

A new vision for e-enabled public services and transformed citizen access will be used to align and focus ICT developments, pilots and stakeholders on delivering better access to services for all citizens.

Assembly Government
Winter 2006-07.

More efficient use of patient information and data to help improve patient care: a number of NHS pilots and developments will mobilise patient health information more quickly and securely for clinicians: these include:

Now at business case stage for roll out:

- *My Health Online*, (pilot stage completed in 2006), providing patients with on-line access to their summary health record;
- an individual health record for fast access to health information for (i) emergency settings and (ii) long-term health treatment;
- clinical portal, giving single point access to medical staff of patient correspondence, results and events.

Implementation 2007-10.

Implementation 2007-10 (i) and 2008-12 (ii).

Implementation 2007-10.

Redress

In the wake of successfully establishing the unified Ombudsman service in Wales, establish an NHS Independent complaints facilitation service.

Assembly Government 2007.

Priority

2.6 Measuring citizen satisfaction - so that local and national services are learning about, reporting and acting on people's experience and satisfaction with their services against clear national and local service standards.

Actions

Assembly Government citizen research programme in which we are asking about citizens' views and experiences of public services in Wales, including a particular focus on minority, disadvantaged and vulnerable people.

Better information for citizens about national service standards for citizen access and entitlement.

National survey framework for local satisfaction research targeted on new local service boards, so that they are regularly monitoring citizen and community satisfaction with local services in a common way, including the views of minority, disadvantaged and vulnerable people.

By whom and when

Programme underway, first results 2006-07.

Making existing standards more transparent and accessible 2007-08.

Partnerships reporting annually on satisfaction from 2009.

Priority

2.7 Strengthening active partnership - so that service users have the chance to make greater choices about their own circumstances and determine with providers how services should be provided.

Actions

The Expert Patient Programme (EPP) helping to support people in developing new self-management skills to deal with the impact of living with a long-term health condition/s on their daily lives.

Rethinking social services so that 'better educated, better informed and **empowered service users**, carers and their families, supported by more accessible, more widespread and independently available information and budget control will be able, and will expect, to play a much more active role, in managing their own situation, assessing their own needs, selecting their own care providers, and managing their resources. These higher expectations will need to be taken into account in service planning and delivery'.

Flexible service options

Care pathways replace reactive, episodic care for people with long-term conditions with a proactive, planned and managed sequence of services.

Learning Pathways 14-19 enabling students to choose courses and ways of learning that suit them.

By whom and when

Programme underway. Its roll-out is being accelerated because of strong initial success.

Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities currently out for consultation with implementation plan.*

National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Healthcare (NLIAH) supporting Pathway Development Programme 2006 - 2008.

Local networks in place in 2003 - Action Plan to 2010 underway.

* www.wales.gov.uk/consultations

Priority

2.8 Citizen-shaped services - giving individuals and communities a stronger voice in the design, delivery and governance of services.

Actions

By whom and when

Public Engagement

Assembly Government policy and action plan putting citizen and community voice at the heart of the design, delivery and governance of services, drawing on a range of techniques.

Assembly Government policy and action plan by May 2007.

Voluntary sector strategy, clarifying role of the sector in promotion and facilitation of citizen engagement.

Consultation December 2006 to March 2007.

Children and young people

Framework in place to enable the participation of children and young people. Next phase focussed on growing participation and embedding good practice, and including disabled children and young people, and those from black and minority ethnic communities.

Local authority youth forums; Funky Dragon the all-Wales youth forum. All schools (apart from infant and nursery schools) statutorily required to have school councils in place under new arrangements by November 2006.

Extending entitlement: supporting young people in Wales

10 basic entitlements available to all 11 to 25 year olds.

Children and Young People's Partnerships developing a strategic approach in each local authority and publicity strategy on extending entitlement in progress, Winter 2006.

Public accountability

Developing options for inclusive performance appraisal including cross-boundary citizen-centred remits, wider membership of scrutiny panels and embedding effective consultation.

Assembly Government local government policy statement, March 2007.

3. Working Together to Deliver

'Partnership..... has a key role to play in delivering significant improvement in services.... the whole architecture of public services, and the culture, skills and behaviours of those who work in them, must be made more conducive to shared delivery' **Beecham (p.62)**

3.1 Putting citizens first means the Assembly Government and all local delivery partners working much more closely together to achieve a more effective network of public services in Wales. This must happen quickly, purposefully and effectively, without creating new bureaucracies and processes. Giving focussed attention to delivering better outcomes for people means:

- gathering and sharing objective information about citizen and community needs;
- shared ownership, across sectors, of the action needed to meet the needs of the local population, including action to secure better value for money across budgets and to agreed joint delivery programmes;
- accounting to the local population for service performance and continuously improving services to make them work better for citizens.

Local Service Boards

3.2 From early 2007-08, and through the year, we want local service delivery organisations to start putting in place Local Service Boards to lead the delivery of the community strategy and agreed national strategic priorities across sectors. The Boards will develop out of the existing Community Strategy Partnerships and build on their valuable experience, adding to that the mission for joint action on service delivery.

3.3 Through the Local Service Boards, local leaders and managers will be expected increasingly to work in teams across sectors, to focus on key priorities, to address recurrent problems and overcome them. Actions will include:

- monitoring the performance of public services in the area;
- promoting and organising joint working where the need is identified;
- pooling resources and expertise, developing the workforce and re-designing systems;
- engaging with citizens and communities to ensure that services are meeting their needs;
- developing Local Service Agreements with the Welsh Assembly Government in which all parties commit to an agreed programme of action to deliver against a set of local and national priorities.

3.4 We envisage that the first meeting of Local Service Boards will be facilitated by the Welsh Assembly Government and will thereafter usually be convened by local authorities with Chairs determined by the Boards themselves.

3.5 Both the Assembly Government and local authorities, as democratically accountable bodies, recognise the dilemmas involved in convening partnerships. Success requires a partnership of equals and an understanding from all involved that sovereignty is shared. In harnessing the contribution that all partners, public, private and voluntary can make, there cannot be any expectation of hierarchy in the functioning of Local Service Boards.

3.6 Local Service Boards are not intended to replace key existing partnerships such as those for Community Safety, Health and Well-Being and Children and Young People, but they will provide the hub around which these other partnerships can function.

3.7 We will develop a national framework for reporting on the performance of and satisfaction with local services, to assist Boards and facilitate local and national performance appraisal across sectors.

3.8 The focus will be on stepping up delivery of the community strategy and strategic priorities for public services in Wales, moving from joint planning to shared implementation. We will support the Boards in developing the organisational culture, governance and accountability arrangements required for success.

3.9 We will establish a programme to support the development of the Boards and, initially in selected areas, of Local Service Agreements. We will develop

a robust framework to support Local Service Boards by making the most of existing legislation, removing barriers to joint action, reducing the burden of rules and regulations and introducing a duty to co-operate.

3.10 Spatial Plan Ministers will take responsibility for the Assembly Government's contribution to the Boards in their respective geographical areas, and, in consultation with the Public Services Minister, will sign off the Local Service Agreement. We will contribute directly to each Board through a group of senior and other officials whose role will be to help tackle barriers and ensure effective communication with Departments. The Welsh Assembly Government officials supporting the Local Service Boards will work in close partnership with Performance Wales and Spatial Plan teams.

3.11 New citizen-focussed performance appraisal and challenge arrangements will be required to match the public service wide responsibilities of the Boards. These should be led by local authority elected Members, and include other stakeholders such as non-executive directors and governors of other public service organisations, community councillors, members of community health councils, outside experts, voluntary sector organisations and citizens as appropriate. The focus should be on problem solving and in-depth examination of existing performance and the route to higher standards. We will work with the WLGA and other stakeholders to make performance appraisal a more effective driver of improvement, and include the new model in the statutory framework if this proves necessary. The Performance Wales team will be responsible for consulting on, and for ensuring the development of focused performance information to support Local Service Boards.

3.12 Local Service Boards will lead the transformation of the approach to local service delivery envisaged in the Beecham report. To support existing Community Strategy Partnerships in developing the capacity and skills to achieve this, we propose a phased implementation. During 2007-08, we envisage Local Service Boards being established in all parts of Wales. In that year the Welsh Assembly Government will work on development projects with a number of Boards to shape Local Service Agreements for 2008-09 and to work out the executive delivery arrangements needed to make them happen. This will ensure that the next phase of Local Service Agreements can learn from sound experience and be rolled out effectively by 2010.

Local Service Agreements

3.13 Local Service Agreements will, following a process of negotiation, commit each Board and the Welsh Assembly Government to joint action to achieve

a limited number of key outcomes - some will reflect national priorities and some purely local priorities. The Agreements will be developed, at least in part, from the priorities identified in Community Strategies, the Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategies, Children and Young People plans, Local Development Plans and other issues such as local action on climate change. The purpose of the Agreements will be to drive delivery and turn strategies into action, speeding up progress over addressing fundamental issues, and solving significant problems.

3.14 In addition to Local Service Agreements between individual Boards and the Welsh Assembly Government and in order to support cross-border working, the Assembly Government will also explore the potential of multi-area Agreements with several Local Service Boards where objectives can most effectively be attained across local authority boundaries.

3.15 Local Service Agreements will:

- build upon the needs and priorities of citizens and communities and the strategic priorities of the Welsh Assembly Government;
- facilitate joint working across different organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors in order to provide a more effective and seamless range of services for citizens;
- lead to innovations in governance, accountability and funding in the delivery of public services, including the pooling of budgets both within the Welsh Assembly Government and between different organisations.
- incentivise through freedoms and flexibilities, pooling of budgets, support for capacity building and we will be assessing the options for further rewards.

3.16 We shall consult shortly on our approach to all of this.

Priority

3.17 Local Service Boards and Local Service Agreements - to improve outcomes for citizens through integrating services and to provide greater flexibility to realise local ambition and achieve national priority goals.

Actions

Establishing Local Service Boards building on existing Community Strategy Partnerships leading to Local Service Agreements to improve services, pooling resources and effort as necessary.

Legal changes, as necessary, to strengthen duties on local authorities and other bodies to co-operate and remove barriers.

Strengthened local performance appraisal to cover and report on the work of the Local Service Boards.

By whom and when

Assembly Government consultation Winter 2006-07.

Local partners to begin transformation of community strategy partnerships into local service boards in 2007-08.

Local Service Agreement development projects in a small number of areas in 2007-08.

Local Service Boards and Agreements in all areas by 2010.

By 2009.

By 2009.

Regional and national collaboration

3.18 Public service bodies also increasingly need to work together at regional or national levels where, as individual bodies, they do not have the capacity to deliver some complex, specialised services or services which depend on networks. Joint working is necessary to ensure quality and efficiency.

3.19 For example, local authorities have to work together on waste management, NHS trusts have to network with each other to deliver some highly specialised clinical services, and health, education and children's services have to work together to provide appropriate care for some of the most vulnerable children and young people.

3.20 Radical changes have begun to emerge at regional level, particularly in the last 2 years. Through the *Making the Connections* funds, we have stimulated a further wave of potentially far-reaching studies, many through the new WLGA regional partnerships.

3.21 In encouraging regional or national delivery where it will result in better services, we recognise the need progressively to harmonise regional service boundaries wherever feasible in operational terms.

Box 3.1

Heads of the Valleys Partnership

To bring about a fresh approach to regeneration in the Heads of the Valleys, a strong partnership between the public, private and voluntary sectors is delivering behind a shared vision – finding new ways of doing things by pooling expertise, money and enthusiasm. Launched in 2005 and with special funding of £140 million from the Welsh Assembly Government, they are making progress on projects ranging from cleaning up rivers to local employment and training. A similar regeneration programme has been announced for the Menai Straits area in north west Wales.

Priority

3.22 Regional and national collaborations - in which local bodies work together regionally or nationally to deliver specialised, complex or cross-boundary services which they cannot deliver effectively and efficiently on their own to 21st century standards.

Actions

Regional commissioning units established by Local Health Boards to commission secondary care on their behalf.

Children's Commissioning Support Resource to help local authorities find and commission placement and other support services for vulnerable children, including developing common contracts for residential and foster care and working together with health and education services where appropriate.

Waste management consortia to develop regional projects to support local government in meeting its obligations.

Regional transport consortia of local authorities developing an enhanced approach to transport planning and delivery.

Heads of the Valleys Programme - working in partnership with five local authorities, the private and voluntary sectors to develop the area, including the economy, skills, built & natural environment, housing, and health.

Public Sector Broadband Aggregation collaborating local authorities, NHS bodies, education and others to jointly procure networking across public services.

Special Educational Needs - joint commissioning (LHB/LEA) of services for pupils with communication difficulties and regional approach to education provision for children with multi-sensory impairment and other complex physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural needs.

By whom and when

NHS 2006-07

Assembly Government /WLGA completion of phases 1 and 2 by 2007-08.

Local authorities with Assembly Government funding - in place and developing solutions, 2007.

Local authorities with Assembly Government. Capacity building 2006-07. Enhanced regional plans 2008-09 linked to Wales Transport Strategy. Future Transport Grant funding linked to RTP outcomes.

3-year development plan in place 2006.

Assembly Government-network procured and implemented 2007.

Assembly Government projects in place 2007.

Actions

14-19 Learning Pathways - Improving opportunities for young people by making provision more learner centred, and doing so post-16, through collaboration and/or reconfiguration of the provider network.

Emergency planning through four regional lead authorities.

Social housing - six consortia of housing associations through which all Assembly Government social housing grant for development can be channelled.

Second wave priorities to be decided following 20 MtC funded feasibility studies now underway in education, social services, emergency services, voluntary sector and elsewhere.

By whom and when

14-19 networks in each local authority working together to create strategic collaborative approach to provision by 2010.

Assembly Government to work in partnership with local authorities to complete geographical pathfinder reviews of post-16 provision in all areas by 2010.

The pooling of funding through lead councils in each Local Resilience Forum area 2007-08.

Assembly Government bidding arrangements in place 2006-07.

Studies completed 2007.

The relationship between the Spatial Plan and local and regional partnerships

3.23 The Wales Spatial Plan is triggering innovative and imaginative thinking about the future strategic development of the 6 Spatial Plan areas, and a strong 15 –20 year economic, environmental and social vision is emerging. The actions in this paper are focussed on the different, though related, issue of improving public services. However, the way in which services develop needs to contribute to the achievement of the long-term strategic vision for an area, and indeed better public services will underpin progress on the Spatial Plan.

3.24 We will, therefore, ensure that we develop the right synergy between the Spatial Plan and action on public service improvement. Through the various guidance we will be issuing next year, we shall set out how the local Community Strategies, including how their ambitions for local services, should be informed by and feed into the Spatial Area Plans. We shall also build a close partnership within the Assembly Government between the public service reform and Spatial Plan teams.

3.25 We have different regional groupings in Wales for planning and delivering different public services. For example, one set of regional boundaries for the NHS and another for public transport. This reflects the operational differences between services such as hospital catchment areas and the pattern of roads and railways. However, we will look for opportunities to achieve a closer alignment between networks and service provision boundaries wherever it makes sense to do so and ensure that the thinking about future public service development is also aligned with the Spatial Plan.

4. World Class Workforce

'A skilled, motivated, energetic workforce: from refuse collectors to chief executives, from care assistants to consultants, from receptionists to radiologists is crucial to making public services in Wales amongst the best in the world' **Beecham (p.60)**

4.1 Inspiring the Welsh public service to be more citizen-centred, efficient and collaborative depends on developing a still more highly skilled, highly engaged world class workforce. Leaders, managers and the workforce must be ready, willing and able to embrace future change.

4.2 Over the next few years the transformation of public services to reflect the growing emphasis upon putting the citizen first and the shift in resources to the point of delivery will necessitate new skills and redefined roles and responsibilities for everyone working in the Welsh public service. We need to engage with and enable front-line staff to operate more responsively and flexibly, recognising that they are often best placed to help design and deliver service improvement. We need to build their capacity to innovate and continuously improve the way in which services are organised and delivered.

4.3 Leaders and managers will play a pivotal role in facilitating these changes by demonstrating their personal commitment to the vision of improved and integrated public services coupled with an exemplary ability to manage others. The common foundation binding all public services together will be a strong public service ethos in which the needs and well-being of the citizen become the first point of reference in design and management for all public services.

4.4 We have begun to make good progress in developing managers and leaders across Wales through Public Services Management Wales (PSMW), the National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Healthcare (NLIAH), the work of the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and the Welsh Assembly Government Civil Service. Working in collaboration produces synergies that focus on the unique context for management and leadership in Wales. Yet there are significant challenges ahead.

4.5 We need all public service employers to make sure that they have high quality HR services, workforce plans and staff development plans which will genuinely equip all staff to contribute to a 21st century public service.

4.6 We need to become more skilful in delivering the good business results that depend on equality of opportunity and a sense of fairness in the way we operate as employers, and in our employment practices. This includes a commitment to working in sustained partnership with bodies such as the Commission for Equalities and Human Rights. It also means the opportunity to enhance our reputation as an employer of choice, reflecting the diversity of Wales and underwriting social justice through having a true citizen focus in the way we plan and manage the workforce – and the workforce of the future.

Box 4.1

Recruitment and Retention of the Social Care Workforce

Local and regional partnerships of local authorities, private and voluntary employers and training and development providers are coming together with support from the Welsh Assembly Government and the Care Council for Wales to improve recruitment and retention in the social care workforce. In mid Wales, the social care partnership has worked closely with Job Centre plus and Careers Wales to raise the profile of social care and has sought out new partners from outside social care to promote career opportunities. The partnership recently launched a recruitment pack to encourage the rural and farming community to consider diversifying into social care. The partnership regularly makes use of its recruitment bus to deliver the social care message across the region. In another area a “Care Foundation” programme has been developed which enables potential recruits to take part in a pre-employment programme with work experience placements offered by recruiting employers.

4.7 Through PSMW, and with our trade union partners and employer stakeholders, we have established the Public Services Workforce Forum to advise on how best to support the workforce through the changes ahead, to plan the transition, and to monitor the impact. This is particularly important in striving for equity across the whole public service workforce and, in turn, can promote a clearer sense of identity as a workforce to serve Wales. The Forum is influencing many of the actions we are taking and we shall continue to work closely with our partners and stakeholders so that the change is managed carefully and well.

4.8 We shall also use the opportunities of the European Social Fund within the Convergence Programme for the Valleys and West Wales to build capacity across the public service and those it must connect with to deliver services, including the voluntary sector.

Priority

4.9 Leadership programmes - to build the capacity of existing and future leaders, spearheaded through a partnership between Public Services Management Wales, the National Leadership and Innovations Agency for Healthcare, universities and other providers. This will also draw on members of leadership programmes from key public service employers in Wales such as the Welsh Assembly Government and local authorities.

Development Programmes	
Design and deliver a suite of development programmes and learning interventions for individual managers and leaders using new fast learning technologies that draw upon an international pool of experts.	PSMW / NLIAM programmes 2006-2009 will involve over 2,000 leaders and managers each year.
Promote skills transference and improved collaboration across the public service by facilitating secondments, placements, shadowing and job exchanges across different organisations and professions.	PSMW will aim to facilitate more than 500 exchange and secondment opportunities each year.
Stage a Wales-wide People Exchange Event to enable the workforce to access knowledge, advice and guidance on developing skills and maximising their potential.	The People Exchange Expo 2007 will be staged on the 30th and 31st January.
Launch an International Placement Scheme for 25 public service employees.	International development placements for public service managers and leaders will be available from the end of January 2007.
Continue the ground-breaking annual Wales Public Service Summer School for 3 years.	The next Public Service Summer School will take place on the 25th to the 29th of June 2007 for 300 public service managers and leaders.

Priority

4.10 Supporting organisations in managing change.

Development Programmes

Provide specialist support to public service organisations engaged in managing change.

PSMW will develop a network of high performing consultant practitioners for use across public service organisations.

In collaboration with the National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Healthcare, build organisational development capacity within public service organisations.

To facilitate an accredited programme for managers and leaders wishing to develop OD practitioner skills.

Enable public service organisations to share best practice and emulate examples of high performance leadership and management.

PSMW will facilitate with its partners a series of organisational development raids inside and outside of Wales.

To deliver in collaboration with the National Leadership and Innovations Agency for Healthcare an International Leadership Field Inquiry.

The first Inquiry will take place in the spring of 2007 to the Republic of Ireland to investigate the framework of social partnership.

Priority

4.11 Better employment practice - promoting stronger human resource management in public service bodies, co-ordinated by the Public Services Workforce Forum with support from Public Service Management Wales and the all-Wales HR Network.

Workforce planning

Build better intelligence and understanding of the workforce planning as a key part of strategic change as well as a management process across Welsh public service organisations.

In collaboration with the National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Healthcare and the Welsh Local Government Association, uplift workforce planning skills and capacity across Wales.

Improve the collection and analysis of workforce data.

Facilitate a professional network of HR Leads from across the public service domain.

In collaboration with the National Leadership and Innovations Agency for Healthcare provide a programme of professional development for HR lead officers across Wales.

Improve access to employment opportunities within Welsh public services and manage the costs associated with advertising externally.

Uplift and harmonise the development of employment policies across public service organisations.

PSMW will produce the baseline review of workforce planning across Wales and provide a framework for taking further action.

During 2007 PSMW will co-deliver an accredited programme of development to improve the skills of workforce planners across Wales.

PSMW in conjunction with NLIAH and the WLGA will commission the development of a high quality generic workforce planning model/tool.

PSMW will work collaboratively with the HR Community to establish a Wales-wide People Management Network.

PSMW and NLIAH will launch a development programme for HR professionals in February that will unfold throughout the year.

In collaboration with its partners PSMW will design and introduce a Wales-wide public service recruitment portal and introduce during 2007.

From the spring of 2007, PSMW will host a policy observatory for use by all public service organisations.

5. Better Value for the Welsh Pound

'Improving efficiency is not about cuts; it is about finding new ways of providing services.... The search for greater efficiency is the greatest strategic challenge facing the delivery system'. Beecham (p.31)

5.1 Greater efficiency is fundamental to sustaining and improving services. We have been through a period of unprecedented growth in public spending with the Assembly Government budget nearly doubling since 1999. Increases in the money available to the Assembly Government are now slowing while the pressure to improve services is rising. We have to concentrate resources on front-line services to secure the sustainable improvements we all want.

5.2 The Assembly Government set a target for the Welsh public sector of delivering at least £600 million efficiency gains a year by 2010 - making it clear that efficiency is about improving the way public bodies work, not cutting services. 2005-06 was the first year and there are promising signs of early progress with many public bodies responding energetically to the challenge. We will review the position in the light of the 2007 UK Spending Review but it is vital that public bodies search for every genuine opportunity to improve their efficiency to the demonstrable benefit of services in their communities.

5.3 This section focuses on a range of actions to promote efficiency but it is important to note that many of the collaborations identified in the previous chapter, such as partnerships on waste management, will result in better value for money as well as deliver better service outcomes. The same applies to reconfigurations of local services such as schools. There is more to be done in tracking efficiency gains: for example the Wales Audit Office is now involved in validating the savings made.

5.4 The ambitious range of efficiency studies now underway across the public service, funded through the *Making the Connections* Improvement Grant, reflects wide recognition that the next stage in the efficiency drive will require fundamental re-thinking by public bodies about their business processes and how they allocate resources. It will necessitate innovative models of working in a variety of forms. By 2010, we expect most public bodies to be sharing at least some aspect of their support services with others.

5.5 Crucial to this will be the development of long-term partnering arrangements between public bodies to deliver specific outcomes, such as the local authority waste partnerships, or with the private sector for the construction of new facilities. Long-term partnering can secure quality services whilst at the same time achieving efficiency benefits. There are pitfalls to be avoided too. The Assembly Government will actively promote the sharing of experience and good practice.

Box 5.1

Getting the value

Public service bodies in Wales are estimated to spend about £4 billion each year on buying goods and services from suppliers. Developments such as the Welsh Purchasing Card, designed to eliminate bureaucracy in purchasing and deliver cost savings, are crucial to achieving better value for the people of Wales. Developed by Value Wales, the Assembly Government's value for money arm, the Card is available to the public sector in Wales on a no-fee basis and empowers staff to obtain goods quickly and easily while leaving a clear audit trail. It offers a free electronic management system tailored to each organisation's needs. Usage of the Card is growing fast. In 2006 it is enabling over 157,000 transactions saving over £4 million. This is just one of a whole range of services and activities through which Value Wales is aiming to save Wales about £120 million every year by smarter procurement by 2008.

5.6 We will give strong leadership to the national efficiency drive through Value Wales, established by the Assembly Government to provide practical support and expert advice to public service bodies, engaging on the ground with partnerships and networks as well as delivering a number of efficiency projects itself.

Priority

5.7 Making the Welsh pound go further in order to sustain and improve services - through better ways of working across the public service and spending money on the right things. This will be supported by *Value Wales*, *Welsh Health Supplies*, *Welsh Health Estates* and others.

Actions

National Sourcing Plan the first-ever national procurement plan to enable public bodies to identify collaborative opportunities nationally, regionally and locally along with developing procurement networks in key service sectors - e.g. local government, further education & higher education.

Value Wales procurement tools including more framework contracts for common items, the use of the Welsh Purchasing Card, etc used by all main public bodies unless they can secure better value in other ways.

New e-procurement hub linking purchasers and suppliers electronically for orders and invoices (subject to business case), together with access to all public sector collaborative contracts and a range of tools including tendering documentation, and e-tendering.

Value Wales Open Door Charter for SME friendly procurement and building on the success of the sell2wales website offering free access for 16,000 suppliers to £1.2 billion contract opportunities.

Sustainable procurement programme covering training, environmental efficiency and contracting.

Shared Services Projects to streamline finance, HR and procurement across Wales and use of estate.

By whom and when

Value Wales sourcing plan in place 2006-07.

Value Wales 2006-08.

Value Wales option review 2007-08.

Value Wales programme in place.

Value Wales programme in place and being rolled out.

NHS North Wales Project being implemented 2006-07 as prelude to wider roll-out.

Range of feasibility studies underway in local government, voluntary sector and emergency services. Studies complete in 2007 to provide basis for future action by and across sectors as appropriate.

Actions

Schools support - new Value Wales schools projects. A capital project to get better value for investment in our school buildings and estate, working with local authorities, private sector partners and others to improve planning, design and collaboration; A revenue project to assist schools on procurement and related matters.

Project management improvement programme across the public service so that more public projects are completed to time and to budget through training and development and Gateway Review techniques.

By whom and when

Impacting on schools development from 2007-08.

6. Driving the Change: Government, Resources and Performance

'national and local politicians, as well as the public and other stakeholders, must create a culture that challenges vested interests and does not tolerate sub-standard performance or mediocrity.....The aim must be to prevent failure by early detection and action, but also to instil ambition to perform at the highest level'. Beecham (pp.64-65)

6.1 Driving the reforms set out in previous chapters will need to be supported by a range of enabling actions. These include changing the way in which the Assembly Government functions as an organisation, driving to improve the management of performance, the effectiveness of inspection and regulation, the strength of governance and the usefulness of scrutiny across the public service.

Developing role of the Assembly Government

6.2 At the heart of our reforms is a progressive and significant shift in the way that the Assembly Government will provide leadership for public service improvement. The Assembly Government will continue, as now, to set national policy, priorities and standards. We will take advantage of the size and scale of Wales to promote these locally, relying less on conventional bureaucratic systems. We will place more emphasis on face-to-face engagement by our officials to support Local Service Boards in overcoming barriers to joint working, contribute to their performance management role, and ensuring more effective communication with our Departments. There will be stronger Ministerial engagement to support regional and local delivery partnerships. We will shift resources from routine administration to supporting delivery, reduce complexity in the system, including the number of funding streams and requirement for consents and directions. This will build on the work already undertaken to reduce the requirements on local authorities to produce statutory plans.

Box 6.1**Reducing bureaucracy**

Working closely with the Welsh Local Government Association and the chief executives body (SOLACE) and others, the Welsh Assembly Government has recently established a programme to reduce the number of separate plans required from all local authorities, many by law. Following a detailed exercise, the number of plans required is to be slashed by 33, the majority of which will be removed within the next 3-5 years. The new framework of 4 high-level strategies in each local authority will come into place from 2008-09 with plans covering Health, Social Care & Well-Being, Children and Young People and Local Development, which feed into the Community Strategy.

6.3 We shall establish a small Performance Wales team, drawn from within and outside the Assembly Government. The team will support Ministers and co-ordinate our engagement with Local Service Boards. It will work closely with Assembly Government Departments, following up necessary internal action (for example to eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy, align planning cycles, and overcome barriers to delivery), monitor performance, commission the work to improve access to performance information and improve governance arrangements, as set out below. Performance Wales will link external action for improvement with the on-going internal change programme for the Assembly Government. This will be complimented with a stronger internal challenge function, to ensure that the entire Welsh budget is spent on the right things and in the best way.

6.4 The cross-service and geographical responsibilities for Departmental Ministers will be supported by officials from within their Department working closely with Performance Wales. As this gathers momentum, it will affect the way all Assembly Government Departments work.

Performance information

6.5 It is essential that the public and those leading and working in our public service organisations have easy access to good, comprehensible information about how local services are performing. There is a substantial volume of information in existence – the need is to help people make good use of it.

6.6 There have been a number of significant recent improvements in the design and presentation of performance information in areas such as local government and health on which we want to build. These include the new Local Government Performance Framework and the NHS Balanced Scorecard. As these systems are developed, the challenge is to make them more consistent and complementary, remove duplications or contradictions and to provide good information about performance across the range of local services.

6.7 Working with the Wales Audit Office and the Local Government Data Unit, the Welsh Local Government Association, statisticians, regulators, inspectors and others, we will

- establish a set of national service standards which can be easily accessed by the public so that they can see what core services they should expect wherever they live. This will recognise that many standards are best set locally. In the first phase, we will draw on existing frameworks and standards for a limited set of key services, bringing them together and promoting them more effectively. We will consult closely on further development, including criteria for inclusion to ensure that the set remains manageable;
- improve the quality and usefulness of public service performance information, including cost comparisons, so that the public, service managers and leaders are better able to see how organisations are performing, without recourse to the distorting effect of league tables, and learn from the most successful and cost effective;
- rationalise and eradicate overlap or perverse incentives in performance frameworks for different sectors so that these do not act as barriers to collaboration;
- publish an annual report on the performance of public services in Wales, including progress over our reforms. Benchmarking performance in Wales against other small countries - we are discussing with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and others how this might best be done.

Improving Governance

6.8 Effective performance and governance systems, (including processes relating to the ways in which organisations take decisions, organise themselves to achieve objectives and live up to their values and standards) are essential

to improving services. Building on the work of the current Governance in Health Project, and with the Wales Audit Office, the Welsh Local Government Association, regulators, inspectors and others we will:

- ensure that there are clear, transparent and effective lines of accountability and governance in all sectors, particularly to maximise the effectiveness of collaborative working;
- develop a unified approach to induction, training and awareness-raising for those appointed to run our public services, drawing on existing programmes, so as to improve the skills and support for members of public boards and councillors in leading their organisations;
- review arrangements for recruiting members to boards of public service organisations in Wales to ensure that we have the best possible candidates;
- develop more comprehensive approaches to transferring best practice across public services, building in sustainability at the local organisational level and developing support and intervention policy if an organisation is at risk of failing.

Box 6.2

Turning public services round

With help from an independent board of experts in social services and corporate governance, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has turned around its performance from an inspection report in 2003 which drew attention to serious failings. The board, which was convened by the Assembly Government and national partners, worked with members and officers on the Council who gave their full co-operation and have achieved some startling improvements in service quality. The formal intervention protocol has been successfully brought to an end. The mixture of expert help, formal powers and local commitment has been an important test of finding the best way to intervene if public services are at risk.

Regulation and inspection

6.9 Through our new Heads of Inspectorates Forum, auditors, regulators and inspectors have been pursuing practical actions to improve joint working. We are integrating Care Standards Inspectorate Wales (CSIW) and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (SSIW), and pressing ahead to achieve more risk based and joined-up processes for inspection and regulation more generally. We shall consult in 2007 on future policy for regulation & inspection. We shall set out how we propose to build on the progress made to streamline systems, and work with inspectors and regulators to strengthen the contribution they make to service improvement.

Actions	When
Establish Performance Wales team, nested within the Assembly Government.	2006-07
Initiate Performance Information & Governance Programmes .	2007
Publish initial set of National Service Standards .	2007-08
Establish new senior management team and new organisational identity for CSIW and SSIW to take forward integration.	By April 2007
New regulation and inspection Assembly Government policy to strengthen focus on improvement, enable better joint working and eliminate unnecessary burdens.	Consultation 2007
Identify an initial set of consent regimes to be reformed.	2007-08
Annual Report on public service performance established.	First report summer 2008
Protocols on intervention where there is a risk of corporate failure.	2007-08

7. Fitting It All Together

7.1 This is a wide-ranging programme of reform to boost the capacity and transform the culture and performance of public services in Wales over the next 5 years. Public service organisations will become more:

- responsive to citizens & communities;
- integrated in the way they deliver services to people;
- efficient in the way they are managed; and
- effective in leading and supporting the workforce through the challenges.

7.2 The First Minister has been chairing a Public Services Board, bringing representatives of the main public service sectors together to advise on progress and priorities in taking our reform programme forward. The Board will continue to have a key role in helping us steer the next phase. We will also engage our Partnership Councils (Business, Local Government and Voluntary Sector) to contribute to the thinking.

7.3 This is a big programme: (the chart below brings together where we are going and how we will get there, both short and long-term) it cannot be delivered without the commitment of everyone. It will take all of us to make the connections work.

Our Goals

2006-2008

2009-11

Transforming customer service (access and responsiveness)

Based on 5 principles of good customer service, options for access and redress.

National customer service policy and action plan underway. Citizen satisfaction framework established. More single points of access e-service priorities etc.

Citizens receiving the right services first time through the best route for them, particularly the vulnerable and hard to reach.

Delivering services with citizens

Engaging individuals and communities in shaping and delivering services, improving flexibility and responsiveness.

National strategy underway to transform public engagement. Advocacy improvements. More flexible service pathways. Initial national service standards promoted. Better information on performance.

Strong engagement between citizens and services, underpinned by national service standards, and better information. Services changing on basis of effective consultation, co-production, scrutiny and partnership citizens.

Working together locally

Local bodies working together to deliver better services and shared outcomes, for citizens.

Local service boards established. First group of local service agreements in place. Inclusive approach to scrutiny developed.

Better service outcomes for citizens through all-Wales coverage of local service agreements, benefiting health, social care, jobs, local environment.

Working together regionally and nationally

Effective delivery partnerships for services which are specialised, complex or dependent on networks.

Practical collaborations in place to improve waste management, regeneration, care for vulnerable children, health & social care, 14-19 education, transport, social housing and other services.

Set of effective regional collaborations delivering for citizens and improving performance across public services.

Better value for Welsh pound

Making better use of resources to sustain and improve services.

Efficiency gains on target. National priorities on shared services in place. Range of procurement improvements.

£800 million-a-year efficiency gains being released by public services to benefit front-line.

Creating world class public service workforce

Developing managers and leaders to maximise the performance of organisations and unleash the full potential and talent of the public services workforce.

Development opportunities benefiting 3,000 leaders and managers in Wales. Baseline workforce development projects. Wales-wide public service recruitment portal.

Public service leaders and managers will be more skilled and adept in innovating for success, engaging and motivating the workforce and delivering in collaboration with others.

Government, resources and performance

Assembly Government pursuing more face-to-face leadership, removing barriers to delivery, reducing bureaucratic burdens, promoting better performance management, governance and information.

Performance Wales team in place, supporting Ministers and officials in service delivery role. Performance & Governance programme underway, including first stage in better information and training. New regulation & inspection policy in place.

Transformed delivery relationship between Assembly Government and services, energising improvement in key services and shifting resources from bureaucracy to service delivery.

7.4 Delivering this programme will be one of the most important challenges for the Assembly Government and public services in Wales over the coming years. It will translate the ambitions set out in the Beecham report into reality. It will take us well along the way to becoming a small country exemplar for public service improvement. That will be worthwhile in itself. But, much more importantly, it will be good for the people of Wales.

Current and future related policy statements and consultations

Making the Connections: Delivering Beyond Boundaries provides an overall framework for public service delivery which is being developed further in a number of specific policy statements and consultations. These include:

Already published

The Learning Country: Vision into Action was launched on 26 October, setting out the strategy that aims to transform education and lifelong learning in the period through to 2010 and beyond.

Recent and current consultations

Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities has been out for consultation, with implementation plan. Rethinking social services so that 'better educated, better informed and empowered service users, carers and their families, supported by more accessible, more widespread and independently available information will be able, and will expect, to play a much more active role, in managing their own situation, assessing their own needs, selecting their own care provision, and managing their resources.' This is being followed up with a final strategy statement.

Towards E-Wales, exploiting the powers of ICT in Wales. The key aim of the consultation is to get views on how we get the best out of information and communication technology (ICT) to achieve a better Wales. Ended on 31 October 2006. Will be followed up by an action-based vision on e-enabled public services by early 2007.

Making the Connections: building better customer service - core principles for public services. The aim of the consultation is to seek views on the first-ever set of core principles on customer service to apply across the Welsh public services. Ends on 30th November 2006. Will be followed up by a customer service action plan.

Future consultations and statements to March 2007

Health and social care

A community services framework, to be published in January, will set out the fundamental principles and content of a modern community-based health service linking themes of the general medical services contract, the commissioning, quality improvement and chronic conditions management and how they relate to the overall implementation of *Designed for Life*.

Public health

A consultation on a Public Health Strategy is anticipated early in 2007. The Strategy will build on extant policy and advice, serving as a vehicle to anchor ongoing developments in public health and to focus on delivery. In particular we anticipate that the document will have a strong focus on the multi-sectoral nature of public health and the importance of partnerships - especially in relation to both the Beecham Review of Public Services in Wales and the local development and delivery of Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategies. Addressing inequalities will be a crucial component of the Public Health Strategy.

Voluntary sector

A consultation on the strategic action plan to drive forward the next phase of the statutory Voluntary Sector Scheme, following up the report of the Independent Commission, and the partnership between the voluntary sector and the Welsh Assembly Government. Consultation scheduled for early 2007.

Local government

A local government policy statement to succeed *Freedoms and Responsibilities* is scheduled for March 2007. In charting the way forward for local government, including how it can best play its key community leadership and service delivery roles, the statement will be set within the context of our approach to public service reform set out in this paper.

Guidance on Local Plans

Over the coming months, we shall be consulting on guidance for three of the plans required for each local authority area. They are the single Children and Young People's Plan (covering education, social services for children and young people), the Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategy and the Community Strategy.

Children and Young People's Plans will form the locally agreed, defining statement of strategic priorities for children and young people that will drive other local plans.

Health, Social Care and Well-being Strategies will address the delivery of demonstrable improved health and well-being, effective health services and social services.

Guidance on Community Strategies will take account of the recent evaluation, the issues emerging in the local government policy statement (see above), and will have stronger linkages to other key Guidance and be supported by a 'bank' of notable practice.

Although the consultations will be separate, we shall take the opportunity to ensure that these plans are effectively inter-connected.