

# FUTURES TOOLKIT



Ash Futures

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# INTRODUCTION

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Futures thinking is an approach to identifying long term trends and developments and exploring their implications for policy and strategy development. It is a systematic process that helps organisations identify how current and emerging issues might develop and how they might create new challenges and opportunities in the long term.

Futures is a particularly powerful way of helping partnerships to build shared models of the changing landscape in which they operate. The approach benefits from involving a wide range of participants and the techniques are designed to gather different perspectives on how the future might develop. The process of sharing ideas and exploring the changing nature of the business environment helps partner organisations to anticipate future challenges and opportunities and to identify new ways to work together to address them.

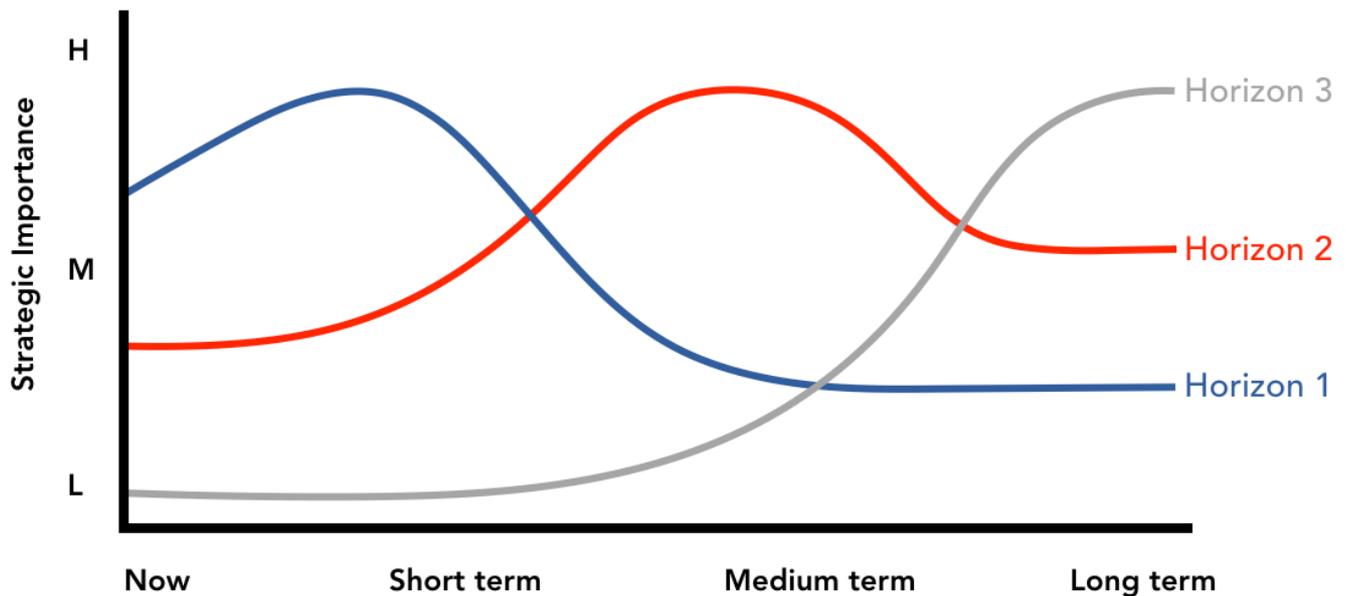
This toolkit has been prepared for the Gwent PSB to provide a suite of tools that members can use in partnership or in their own individual councils. There are 7 commonly used futures tools, each of which is described in detail. There are also examples of outputs to help users with process design.

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

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## Three horizons

The three horizons model defines three time frames for thinking about the external trends and developments which might impact on an organisation's strategy.



**Horizon 1 (H1)** is the present and the near future. H1 issues are strategically important now. They are visible and well understood and are generally the issues that the organisation is already responding to. H1 issues are therefore the focus of current policy and strategy.

**Horizon 2 (H2)** is the less immediate future. H2 issues are less well characterised and the organisation may not yet be fully aware of them or their implications for policy and strategy. By their nature, horizon 2 issues are less urgent; so even when organisations do become aware of them, they may not respond immediately, preferring to wait and see how the issues develop.

**Horizon 3 (H3)** is the mid to long term future. H3 issues can be difficult to characterise in detail since they are the long run outcome of a range of factors, some of which may not be fully in play. Tracking horizon 3 issues is therefore important for organisations who want to spot emerging opportunities and threats and anticipate how to respond to them quickly.

## Future focussed

The focus for futures work is Horizon 2 and Horizon 3

It's often easy to understand what is happening in the present and near future - Horizon 1. The further forward planners look, however, the harder it can be to spot emerging trends and make sense of what they mean for future well-being.

Futures thinking focuses on identifying emerging trends and making sense of weak signals of change. It's sometimes unclear what these signals are, why they are important and how they will affect the future development of Wales and Gwent.

# USING THIS TOOLKIT

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The toolkit contains 6 techniques for futures projects. Each technique is represented by an icon that readers can use to navigate the toolkit:



**Horizon scanning**



**Futures interviews**



**Driver mapping**



**Creating scenarios**



**Plausibility mapping**



**Wind tunnelling**

In addition to these techniques, the final section of the toolkit sets out the structure of three different types of futures workshop.

Each description of a technique also provides a brief overview of the technique and who the target audience/participants are:



**Overview**



**Participants**



## Looking for signals of change



Horizon scanning is the process of looking for articles that say something about long run trends and developments that might have an impact on the future of Gwent.

Horizon scanning looks towards the long term (Horizon 2-3) but doesn't need to be focussed exclusively on it; many H3 developments are the long term outcome of a range of factors which are in play already.

The main output from horizon scanning is a series of scans that record the information and describes why scanners found it interesting.

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Horizon scanning can be carried out with a small dedicated team which then circulates a horizon scanning paper to partners; or it can involve a wider group of people around the partnership to look for articles and send them to a project co-ordinator.

To keep the process manageable, it may be best to start with no more than 10 people. A group of 10 people who produce one scan every fortnight will produce 60 scans every quarter.

The process manager needs to agree a template for the scans and needs to gather them in and hold them in a central database or word document.

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Writing abstracts takes a little practice, but is relatively straightforward. The hardest part is knowing whether something is interesting or relevant enough to include. **Always** err on the side of including something rather than not. Scanners should trust their intuition and instinct.

Try to keep scans to one page. Give the scan a title and then describe

- What the scan is about
- Why you think it is important for Gwent
- Over what timescale you think it will have an impact
- What it *might* mean for the PSB in the future

**Remember:** you don't need to get anything 'right'. This stage of the futures process is simply about looking for emerging trends and developments.

Appoint a project manager to gather together scans from contributors and prepare a scanning report. This can be circulated widely and used as a source document for further discussions or as an input to scanning workshops.



There are a range of formats. The Gwent Scanning report provided summary scans (below) and full scans (page 8). Page 9 shows a slightly different format.

#### **Electric vehicles: Charging ahead**

The UK Government's Industrial Strategy aims to support the development of infrastructure for electric vehicles (EVs) through £0.5bn investment in charging infrastructure and plug-in car grants. As the number of EVs rises so will the charging infrastructure requirements. 2017 data show that the UK added less than one new public charging point for every six new plug in vehicles. The figures make particularly grim reading for early adopters in Wales, where, despite having around half as many plug-in vehicles as Scotland does, it has just one tenth the number of rapid chargers. Of course, people can charge their cars at home but there are concerns about access to charging points and about grid capacity and stability.



One of the key infrastructure policies in the [UK Government's Industrial Strategy](#), is to support development of infrastructure for electric vehicles (EVs) through investment of £400m in charging infrastructure and £100m to extend the plug-in car grant. These developments are key to the Government's [Clean Growth Strategy](#) and part of the [global push for EVs](#).

While there are [some concerns](#) that the government is falling behind on its targets for EVs, banning petrol and diesel cars may just be the push that consumers needed. EVs are now [increasing in popularity in the UK](#) and historic concerns about poor performance and limited range are changing. The [best electric cars today](#) can – at a price - surpass 300 miles of range, produce 0-62mph times to rival supercars, and even offer 7-seat variants for those who need space and practicality above all else.

So far so good; but as the number of EVs rises so will the infrastructure – and specifically the charging infrastructure - requirements. Figures released at the end of 2017 show that the the UK added less than one new public charging point for every six new plug in vehicles. The figures make particularly [grim reading for early adopters in Wales](#), where, despite having around half as many plug-in vehicles as Scotland, it has just a tenth of its total of rapid chargers.

People can charge their cars at home but this has two implications. First, that people may [become concerned](#) about the lack of charging points - which may slow the adoption of EVs. Second, that an increase in charging vehicles at home may have [significant and serious consequences for grid capacity and stability](#). Local networks in particular could face significant problems.

### Implications for Gwent

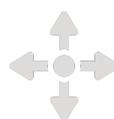
Electric charging infrastructure will be crucial for the successful uptake of EVs and the [availability of public charging points](#) in Gwent – and in Wales – will need to increase significantly.

Around one third of car owners live in terraced houses or in flats and therefore have no access to off street parking. For them, plugging in overnight is not yet an option and so innovative solutions – such as [converting street lights to charging points](#) or [adopting a workplace charging scheme](#) – are going to be required. But things are slow to get off the ground. [A recent government scheme where councils could bid for funding](#) for 75% of the cost of installing charging points received applications from only five local authorities.

Government has created a new £4.5million fund and is urging councils to bid this time. We're likely, too, to see [rapid developments in charging networks](#) and new energy storage technology that may soon mean [charging takes minutes rather than hours](#).

Which is all good news as long as people can actually recharge locally. This is going to be important for more than residents; leisure and business drivers will need to feel confident that they have access to power once they enter the region. Or else, there's a danger they won't.

**Gwent *must* begin to plan its electric charging infrastructure.**



## The world has 12 years to limit climate change catastrophe

<b>Sources</b>	IPCC, WWF, Scientific American		
<b>Date</b>	October 2018 - December 2018		
<b>Author(s)</b>	Numerous		
<b>Potential scale of impact</b>	<b>Certainty of outcome</b>	<b>Impact horizon</b>	
★★★★★	★★★★★	H1	<b>H2</b> H3
<b>Diagnostic</b>	<b>Potential THREAT</b>		

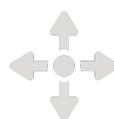
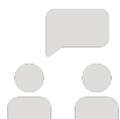
Climate change is a clear and present danger to our way of living and working.

- the IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C published in October 2018 warns that the world has 12 years to limit climate change catastrophe and that we need to cut carbon pollution as much as possible and as fast as possible
- WWF's [Living Planet Report 2018](#), also published in October 2018, shows that wildlife populations have declined by over half in under fifty years. This is, says WWF, the last generation that can save nature
- the Committee on Climate Change's report [Managing the coast in a changing climate](#), published in October 2018 highlights that England will have to adapt to at least 1m of sea level rise within the next 80 years. This will place 1.6 million properties under risk and threaten infrastructure. Sea level rise will, of course, also affect the rest of the UK
- plastics pollution is at crisis point globally. 79% of all plastic produced ends up in landfills, dumps or in the wider environment - including the world's seas. [Single-Use Plastics: A Roadmap for Sustainability](#), a UN Environment report published in June 2018 highlights the scale of the problem globally and suggests a raft of policy responses to manage impact. [China's import restrictions](#) on waste from the UK create an additional set of challenges for affected councils in the immediate future

Press coverage has been highly vocal about the need to act now. However, writing in *Scientific American* on 25 December 2018, Kate Marvel, a climate scientist at Columbia University commented that

*You may have heard that we have 12 years to fix everything. This is well-meaning nonsense, but it's still nonsense. We have both no time and more time. Climate change isn't a cliff we fall off, but a slope we slide down [and] we can always choose to begin the long, slow, brutal climb back up....*

*It's true that we're not going to get utopia. The planet has already warmed by one degree Celsius. Most of the coral reefs are going to die, and many of the glaciers will melt...[We] don't have to settle for dystopia. It's going to be worse, but it doesn't have to be bleak.*





# FUTURES INTERVIEWS

Gathering different perspectives on the future



Futures interviews are based on the '7 question' methodology pioneered by Shell in its scenario planning process. They are useful for

- Identifying important strategic issues for the future
- Engaging stakeholders who cannot take part in a futures workshop
- Stimulating individuals' thinking in advance of a futures workshop

Interviews are also a powerful technique for the interviewing team to learn more about the opinions and perspectives of interviewees.

Interviews are confidential and conducted under the Chatham House rule - interviewees can be quoted but the quotes must be anonymous.



Use interviews to gather opinion from diverse stakeholders on their ambition for Gwent in the future. Interviewees can be from a range of organisations and - ideally - will include people from outside Gwent, Wales or the UK who may have an interesting perspective to offer.

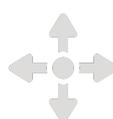
Interviews are ideally carried out by 2 people; one to lead the interview and one to take detailed notes. With practice, interviewers will find it easy to work alone.



## Structuring the interviews

The questions are open ended: interviewees speak as much or as little as they want, without any prompting from the interviewer(s). That's not always easy (for either side) but it's important to let the interviewee follow his or her train of thought without interruption. Silence often means interviewees are thinking about issues prompted by the question.

1. If you could speak someone from 2040 who could tell you what Gwent is like in the future, what would you like to ask?
2. What is your vision for Gwent in 2040?
3. What are the dangers of not achieving your vision?
4. What needs to change (policy, partnerships, decision making, culture for example) if your vision is to be realised?
5. Looking back, what are the successes we can build on? The failures we can learn from?
6. What needs to be done now to ensure your vision becomes a reality?
7. If you had absolute authority and could do anything, is there anything else you would do?





Typically, 80% of the strategic issues for the future are uncovered in the first 12-15 internal interviews. Any other interviews are done to uncover the remaining issues and – critically – to include people in the process.

You may wish to send a copy of the interview write up back to interviewees so they can verify what they said.

### Developing the Issues Paper

Once the interviews have been written up, a useful exercise is to draw up an issues paper that reflects the key points raised in the interviews. The steps are relatively straightforward:

1. Highlight the ten issues (no more!) that seem to be most important in each interview. Spot them by
  - using your intuition
  - noticing where issues have come up repeatedly
  - paying attention to comments like – “this one is really key...”
2. Pull the issues into themed groupings (they’ll probably change as you develop things) and copy quotes directly into the groupings
3. Amend the quotations so that any references that could lead to a speaker being identified are removed
4. Group quotes together by sub theme and by correlation (or opposition) of view point

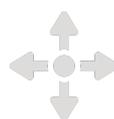
For the first few interviews you process, simply list the quotes as bullet points. Think about lightly editing the quotes to remove any references that might cause the interviewee to be identified. As the interviews proceed, keep selecting key quotes and add them to the paper.

After four or five interviews, you’ll notice some themes appearing and you can begin to group quotes accordingly.

Let the themes evolve – they will almost certainly change as you draw in more interviews. Group quotes together within each theme according to correlation (or opposition) of viewpoints. There’s no need to provide any analysis of the quotes as part of the paper; the quotes and how you group them create their own narrative.

The Issues Paper is a powerful analytical tool for the policy and strategy development team. You may also want to circulate the paper more widely to interviewees, to people participating in workshops or to senior stakeholders. Drawing out key quotes at different stages of a workshop conversation (for example) can be a useful way to focus groups on important areas for discussion.

There is a sample interview on pages 12-13 and an extract from an issues paper on pages 14-15. Neither of these are from Gwent.



## An example of a 7 Questions interview

### Interview with the Chair of a Professional Services Association

#### **If you could speak to someone from 2025 who could tell you about the Association and what it is doing, what would you ask?**

How is it funded? Does it receive money from the EU?

Is there free mobility of [profession] around the EU?

Are the members active? How do they promote the Association internally and to others? Has [professional] education been developed and qualified?

#### **What is your vision for the Association?**

My vision is that the Association works across the industry to develop a shared strategy for change and to develop the education and training resources it will need. I'd like to see lots of activities and drive - both from individual members and organization members.

I'd also like to see fewer talking shops and less documentation being produced.

This is not only important from a professional practice point of view. There's going to be a lot of calls from regulators across the EU for cost-benefit evidence and for increased focus on quality of service. I want the Association to be an acknowledged leader in practice and partnership.

#### **What are the consequences for the Association if your vision is not realised?**

It may slowly get obsolete. We may see a drop in the number of members if they perceive we are irrelevant and not delivering for them.

#### **What needs to change (membership, relationships, structure, for example) to make your vision a reality?**

We need to have a strategy for the Association itself and for how we can lead change across the profession. We need a strategy for helping both individual members and organization members and to support the network at a global level.

We urgently need to address our information gathering and how we translate it into knowledge and better practice. One way is to systematize evidence based practice. We need to gather and manage evidence urgently - our customers are already several steps ahead of us in their practice and they are noticing that we're lagging.

We need to engage the individual members. They don't see the broad agenda and we have to help them engage with it and drive practice forwards.

#### **Looking back, are there particular lessons – successes, failures - from the last 10 years that we can learn from?**

Our annual conferences always seem successful, but we should do an evaluation to see how they actually make a difference to working practice.



We could learn a lot more if we followed up on the site visits to see what has actually happened with regard to quality improvement.

We have to be better at showing the value in what we do.

We need to support networking and the promotion of the Association.

### **What needs to be done now to make sure your vision is realised?**

This is a challenging question.

We have to work on different levels and to learn from experience to make sure [our practice] improves [customer experience]. How can we evaluate the sustained impact of [practice] on behalf of our customer base?

Research has highlighted new ideas about [practice] that can help us think about what we do. Some [members of the profession] are still old fashioned in the way they deliver services and a challenge for us is to develop a stronger customer-centered approach across all our membership.

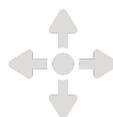
We need to continue to work with the EU so that they can see the benefits of the work we are doing; but we also need to be open to and learn from good practice globally.

We need tools to encourage members to take responsibility for practice. We need to share good practice more - I'm not sure we have a good enough strategy at sharing.

### **If you had the power to make anything happen, is there anything else you would do?**

I would like a physical centre where all members could be welcome and could come for advice on strategic action planning, for networking, for learning evidence based-practice and where we promote quality and life-long learning.

I would like to have very direct contact with governments and legislators – and given the chance to be a part of strategic decision making.



## An extract from an issues paper

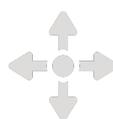
The bullet points on this page and the next are quotes extracted from a series of interviews with senior managers in a multinational manufacturing business.

### Growth

- The business is not growing as fast as it could. Product line 1 is growing, but it is organic growth – about 5 or 6% a year. With Product line 2, there is much more opportunity to grow faster, an increase of 10 to 15%.
- If we do not continuously grow, then we will lose who we are. If we don't deliver this continuous growth we will spiral downwards and it will be hard for the business to survive. It may not be the mega growth of the technology sector, but if we can't deliver a steady 2% growth, we won't continue as a business
- If we keep doing what we've done well for the last 6 or 7 years – which has been very aggressive – I believe we'll have a very good future. But it all depends on the strategy for growth. If we stop growing, I believe we'll be threatened by our competitors. We have to be big, strong to compete.
- Investment in major acquisitions is something we're not good at. We pay over the odds for businesses; they're purchased on the basis of being available rather than if they can grow; we had an aggressive strategy to double size of company in a short time, but it didn't work... So how do we grow in future - boring steady rate, no acquisitions for 2 years?
- What's our expectation for Asia? We should grow the business by 10% over the next 5-8 years. That's a very different proposition from Europe and the US. Our business growth is not aggressive enough today. It's not very exciting. Getting from 4% to 10% is the difficult bit...
- We've had problems with organic growth – so I'd like to see faster growth in the emerging markets.

### Customers

- Put customers in the middle of our circle. We don't now.
- We have to develop relationships with customers that are more concrete than today, rather than looking at this and that in emerging markets without a clear plan to move forwards.
- We should periodically meet customers - whether big and global or small and local - to talk about performance and ask what their vision for their market is. The more we can communicate, the more we understand each other and can build relationships.
- Are we really focusing on and increasing the satisfaction of customers, increasing our quality in great manufacturing plants?
- We are very concentrated on a few customers - and they are able to negotiate strongly.

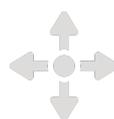


## Culture

- We reinvent the wheel because we lost the people and the expertise. We love initiatives! The flavour of the year was innovation, now its balanced scorecard. By the nature of my job, I love initiatives, but I find even I'm saying 'here we go again!' Do we have initiative fatigue?
- There are still parts of the business, particularly where it is unionised where the allegiance is more to the union than it is to the company.
- The majority feel appreciated by the business, but there are still too many "living in the past" who make it difficult for us to move forward.
- We must make sure our employees are really satisfied so that every day they wake up and want to come to work, that they love working at the business. Are we good at these things or not?
- Corporate people don't have such a good reputation, they point out problems. They have to work in a different way – proactively - and find ways to help the plant deliver. They have to be part of the solution rather than saying 'just do it' and then going back to corporate.
- We are too micro managed and it needs to be macro; leaders should not be involved in the day to day operations but lead by task, objective and example (so they can focus on the long term and strategy).

## Creating value

- Markets will be very, very connected in the future and our customers will demand sustainable solutions. We have to think very hard about this, all the way along the value chain.
- We need to try and develop new products with our customers in a more collaborative way. Many of the projects we have developed here have come from good experiences in Europe – but it is always our customers who have seen something they like in Europe and who ask us to copy it. It is reactive. We have to be more integrated within their supply chain and manufacturing process. This is how we will create value – if we end up competing only on cost, we will find it very tough.
- We can maximise quality and minimise cost by working more closely with the customer to understand their requirements in more detail.
- We should choose the business areas carefully. Innovation will be essential to meet the tight margins – especially so the customer can see how we create value.
- Product line 2 is good at working with clients, at creating new ideas to put on the table. They have good processes, lots of ideas, meet customer demand. We should investigate this for the Product line 1 side of the business. I don't know the process, but it would be good to develop relationships with Product line 2 to see how they do it.





# DRIVER MAPPING

Exploring the dynamics of change



Driver mapping is used to identify the external **Political, Economic, Societal, Technological, Legislative and Environmental** drivers (PESTLE) that are shaping the future business environment. The process is used to

- Identify drivers shaping the future
- Identify which drivers are most important for the future of Gwent or a particular policy area
- Identify which drivers have a certain outcome and which drivers have an uncertain outcome
- Decide what needs to be addressed now and what needs further planning and research



Driver mapping is best carried out in a workshop setting, although it can also be done in small group discussions.

Anyone with an interest in - or a stake in - future development of the policy area can be involved.



The driver mapping exercise lasts for 1.5-2 hours depending on the size of the group and the nature of the activity. It can be a stand alone exercise or the first stage in a **Creating scenarios** workshop

The approach set out here assumes that some workshop participants are new to futures work in general and to the project being undertaken.

There are three steps

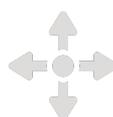
1. Introduce the workshop and the concept of driver mapping
2. Brainstorm drivers
3. Map the drivers

## Introduce the workshop and the concept of driver mapping

15 minutes

Introduce the aims of the project if this is a workshop with external stakeholders or participants who are unfamiliar with it.

Introduce the aims and approach of the workshop. It may be useful to explain the three horizons model (page 2) and invite the group to focus on the mid to long term (horizons 2-3). Clarify the timescale - 5 years, 10 years, 10+ years - if appropriate. Introduce the driver categories (PESTLE) and perhaps offer brief examples of each type.





## Brainstorm drivers

45 minutes

This step is not necessary if groups are working with pre-prepared drivers drawn from the horizon scan. In that case, go straight to the *Map the drivers* section.

Invite participants to work in groups of 6 (or so). Follow these steps if you want participants to brainstorm their own drivers:

- Ask groups to identify what's driving change and link it to the project question/policy area. Encourage them to think about drivers in the wider global context
- You can, if you wish, ask each group to focus on one or two driver categories (ask one group to focus on political and economic trends; another to focus on societal and technological trends and so on). This can reduce overlaps and ensure you get coverage across all the categories, but it's not essential
- Groups should brainstorm drivers onto post-it notes (one driver per post-it). Ensure that the rules of brainstorming – list drivers, build on each other's ideas, don't critique anything at this point - apply. Quantity at this stage is more important than 'quality'
- You may want to suggest that groups use different coloured Post-its to record drivers acting in the short, medium and long terms

## Map the Drivers

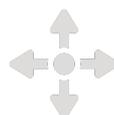
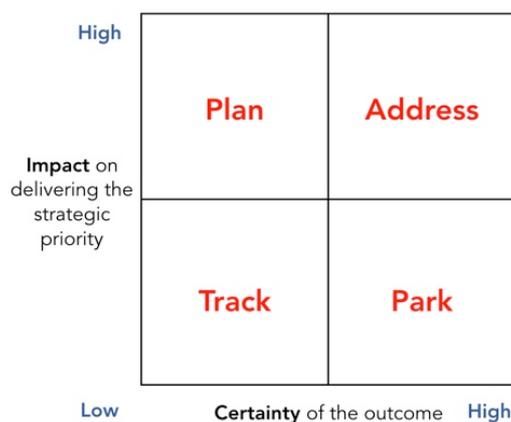
Two different approaches to mapping drivers are set out here. Both can be used to map drivers generated by workshop participants or to map drivers that have been pre-prepared.

### METHOD 1a: Map drivers according to impact and certainty

30-45 minutes

One common method is to introduce a 2x2 matrix and ask participants to map the drivers according to

- whether they are likely to have a higher or lower impact on the particular project area or strategic priority in questions
- whether the outcome of the driver is more or less certain





## METHOD 1b: Use the 2x2 map for further analysis

30-45 minutes

Each of the four quadrants provides a different way to think about drivers that can be fed into the scenario process or other activities:

- Drivers which have a high impact and a highly certain outcome need to be **Addressed** - participants need to discuss what the impact on Gwent is, when it is likely to happen and how PSB members should respond to them
- Drivers which have a potentially high impact but a less certain outcome need to be **Planned for** - participants need to discuss what the impact on Gwent might be, when that impact might happen and how PSB members should consider responding if it did. Drivers in this quadrant can also be used to inform the development of **scenarios**
- Drivers in the **Track** quadrant are ones which appear to have low impact at the moment but which are worth keeping an eye on in case their impact becomes clearer - and perhaps more significant - as the outcome becomes more certain
- Drivers that have a highly certain outcome but low impact are not relevant or important for the future and can be **Parked**

## Method 2a: Cluster drivers by theme

30-45 minutes

In this method, participants build clusters of drivers according to their relatedness. It's worthwhile encouraging participants in this exercise to look for interesting and distinctive connections.

In this approach, participants

- Cluster drivers, restricting the number in each cluster to 6
- Name the cluster according to the theme or issue the cluster represents
- Identify the two drivers or issues in each cluster that are most important and have a certain outcome (equivalent to the **Addressed** quadrant)
- Identify two drivers or issues in each cluster that are most important but have an uncertain outcome (equivalent to the **Planned for** quadrant)

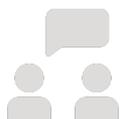
## METHOD 2b: Define the response to prioritised drivers

30-45 minutes

Divide the group into two subgroups.

Ask one subgroup to focus on drivers that need to be **Addressed** and identify what the impact on Gwent is, when it is likely to happen and how PSB members should respond

Ask the other subgroup to focus on drivers that need to be **Planned for** and discuss what the impact on Gwent might be, when that impact might happen and how PSB members should consider responding if it did. These drivers can also be used to inform the development of **scenarios**





## Developing plausible alternative futures



Scenarios are stories that describe alternative ways the external environment might develop in the future. Each scenario explores how different conditions might support or constrain delivery of strategic objectives

The aim of scenario thinking is to identify important strategic uncertainties for Wales and Gwent and to explore how they might play out in the future. The scenario stories do this in a way that helps officers and decision makers anticipate how the future might differ from today and how to develop responses and policies that are resilient across a range of possible futures.

Scenarios are not predictions. They are not meant to be 'right' or 'wrong', 'good' or 'bad', but to offer interesting (and in some cases challenging, or controversial) pictures of the future. They provide a safe space – a sand pit - to explore alternative ways that Wales and Gwent might develop and the choices that various stakeholders might make under different market conditions.

Scenarios should be set a reasonable distance into the future; 10-20 years is good for a workshop but groups can be pushed to think further out.

Scenarios developed in a workshop are necessarily brief but provide insight into the specific challenges and opportunities each future presents for the policy area. The narrative structures can be used to develop and research more detailed stories after the workshop if required.



The optimal number of workshop attendees is 16-24 but scenarios can be developed with fewer participants.

A one day scenario building workshop starts with driver mapping and uses the high impact, low certainty drivers as the starting point for creating the scenario matrix.

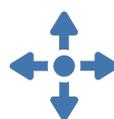


There are a variety of ways to create scenarios. The method described here is part of a one day scenario building workshop (see page ...) and a strong starting point.

Scenarios are constructed around the scenario matrix, a 2x2 that describes the critical future uncertainties for Gwent and that provides the logic framework for creating the scenario narratives.

There are 4 main steps:

- Identify axes of uncertainty
- Construct a scenario matrix
- Develop outline scenario narratives in a workshop
- Refine the scenarios storylines post workshop





## Identify axes of uncertainty

40 minutes

Participants work in small groups of 3 or 4.

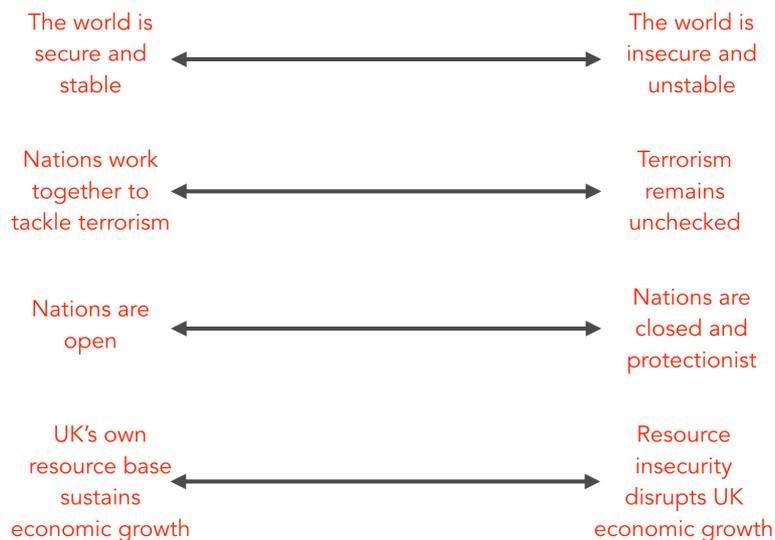
Each group should select one or two drivers from the **Plan for** quadrant of the driver mapping exercise (important drivers that have a low certainty/highly uncertain outcome).

For each driver, participants should identify different ways that the uncertain outcome might play out.

For example, if a driver is '**global stability**', participants might agree that the uncertainty relates to whether the world is stable or unstable in the future. They can represent this on an axis of uncertainty as



Participants should explore several different interpretations and outcomes for each driver and choose the one that best describes the nature of the uncertainty from their - and Gwent's point of view. So, a group might end up with several axes:



Finally, each group should agree which version of the axis is that one that seems most relevant to the project. this axis is then taken forwards into the next step constructing a scenario matrix.





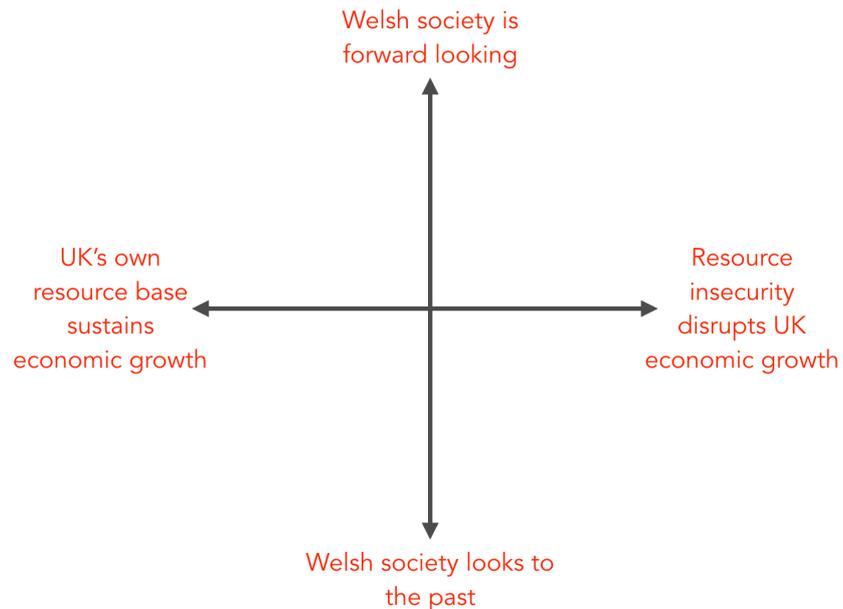
## Construct a scenario matrix

30 minutes

Facilitate a plenary discussion where each small group puts forwards their axes and where the whole group agrees which two will create the most interesting or valuable scenario matrix.

The most straightforward way to do this is to invite everyone to vote on which two axes they want to use.

It may help the decision to draw up a couple of alternative matrices and briefly explore what the scenarios will look like. The final scenario matrix will look something like this:



## Develop outline scenario narratives

90 minutes

The procedure set out on the following pages is based on dividing a plenary group into four sub groups, each of whom develop one scenario.

It's best to divide people up randomly for these groups.





### Describe what the world is like

20 minutes

Groups describe the world of their scenario in general terms. The questions may need to be varied to reflect the scenario matrix but can be structured along the following lines:

1. Describe the global economic environment in your scenario
  - What are the main economic drivers in play?
  - Is the global economy growing or flat?
  - Where is the main economic power in the world?
  - How open is the global economy?
  - What are the main trading blocs and economic relationships?
2. Describe the environment in your scenario
  - Is energy widely available?
  - Are food and water widely available?
  - What is the impact of climate change?
  - Do societies care about low carbon living?
  - What are the consequences for lifestyles and consumption?
3. Describe international relationships
  - What are the strong international relationships? The weak ones?
  - Where are the tensions and how does the international community manage them?
  - Is the prevailing mood one of optimism or pessimism? Why?

### Describe what the UK and Wales are like

30 minutes

- How's the UK economy doing? And the Welsh economy?
- Is the UK/Wales outward looking or insular? Is society comfortable with itself? Are there any fault lines?
- Who are the main winners and losers?
- What are the opportunities for Wales/Gwent in this scenario?
- What are the challenges for Wales/Gwent/in this scenario?

### Create a timeline of events leading to the scenario

15 minutes

- Identify the 10 key events that lead from the present day to the future scenario and map them on a timeline:



### Name the scenario

5 minutes

- Come up with a name for the scenario that is memorable and that evokes the essence of the narrative

### Identify recommendations and issues for Gwent

20 minutes

- The final question in the exercise provides a bridge between the future scenario and the present policy or strategy challenge. Each group should answer the following question for their scenario

*Assume this is future that will occur. With that knowledge, and based on this conversation, what three recommendations would you make to the PSB and to each Council to ensure Gwent achieves well-being for its current and future population?*

### Plenary presentation and discussion

30 minutes

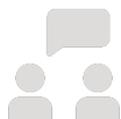
Invite each group to give a short (5 minute) presentation of the key points in their scenario. Make sure they give you the scenario name and the recommendations to the Secretary of State. At the end of the presentations, ask the group for similarities and differences between the scenarios and for key learning points from the overall exercise

### Write up the scenario narratives after the workshop

The one day scenario workshop described here will generate four scenarios, each with a good level of detail. Use the workshop notes to write up four scenarios that are each 600-800 words long and that capture the essence of the narratives generated in the workshop. You may wish to structure the scenarios so that they describe (for example) what the world is like in the future, what the UK is like, what Wales and Gwent are like and what the particular policy issues and challenges for Gwent are.

For an exercise of this type, you may prefer to write end state scenarios: stories that are set in the future you are describing. The alternative – timelines that describe how the scenario developed from the present day – are difficult to write without more detailed research.

The scenarios must be plausible and they must challenge the *status quo*. Use the notes and knowledge from each group discussion to identify emerging technologies and research key trends and events that are important to development of the scenarios. Try to write in an engaging style that evokes something of the future you are describing.





# PLAUSIBILITY MAPPING

## Identifying different perspectives on the future



**Plausibility mapping is a voting technique used to explore what participants in a scenario workshop think about the range of futures they are working with.**

**It is an informal, light touch exercise which should be carried out at the end of the workshop. Ideally, the facilitator should offer some immediate feedback.**



The vote is led by the facilitator and involves all the participants in a scenario workshop discussion. It can follow on directly from the scenario building exercise or be used after participants have worked with scenarios in a wind tunnelling exercise.

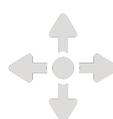


Once the group has developed (or discussed) a set of scenarios, it is useful to ask a series of questions that explore their perspective on the future.

The questions can be modified to particular audiences but a good start in Gwent might be to ask which scenario is

- Most plausible
- Most favourable for UK plc
- Most favourable for society
- Most favourable for Gwent
- Closest to now
- Closest the future that local government across Gwent is delivering currently
- Closest to the future that you personally value the most
- The future that demands most radical change
- Closest to the direction that UK Government policy is pushing in

The matrix is a subjective tool but (almost!) never fails to reveal differences of opinion, tensions between current plans and preferred futures and strategic dilemmas.



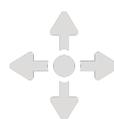


The following illustrative example is taken from a workshop in Gwent:

	Most Plausible	Most favourable for UK plc	Most favourable for society	Most favourable for Gwent	Closest to now	Closest to the future local govt is delivering	Closest to the future you personally value the most	Closest to the future that demands most change	Closest to the direction UK Govt policy is pushing
<b>Scenario A</b>	0	3	5	4	0	2	7	8	2
<b>Scenario B</b>	6	7	1	1	4	3	0	1	3
<b>Scenario C</b>	3	1	0	0	7	3	0	0	2
<b>Scenario D</b>	2	0	5	6	0	3	4	2	4

In this example

- Participants thought three scenarios were plausible, although one - **Scenario B** - was seen as most plausible by just over half the group
- **Scenario B** was also seen by the majority as most favourable for 'UK plc' - but not favourable for society or for Gwent
- The group was split in its opinion about scenario is most favourable for Gwent - **Scenario A** or **Scenario D**
- Neither of these scenarios were perceived to be closest to now, suggesting that a favourable future for Gwent will require change
- The majority of the group (nearly three quarters) thought that one of these scenarios - **Scenario A** - demands most change
- Two thirds of the group also aspire to achieve **Scenario A**
- less than one fifth of the group perceived that local government is working towards **Scenario A**
- ...and, in fact, there was no sense that local government is working for a single one of these scenarios
- ...perhaps because the group also perceived a lack of clear strategic direction from UK government





# WIND TUNNELLING

## Testing the fitness of objectives for the future



**Wind Tunnelling** is a method for testing policy, strategy or project objectives against a set of scenarios to see how well the objectives stand up to a range of external conditions.

Wind tunnelling is useful for

- Exploring how different political or market conditions might affect the relative importance of strategic objectives
- Identifying which objectives are robust across the full range of scenarios and which will need to be modified if conditions change
- Identifying what external events might trigger modifications and what those modifications might be



Wind tunnelling is used to see how well a set of objectives stand up to a range of market conditions. It's a flexible technique that can be done straight after a group has developed scenarios or it can be a stand alone session at a separate workshop. In the latter case, groups need to be introduced to the scenario set, so the narratives need to be written up in bullet form at least.

Groups review each objective against the different market conditions that exist in each one of the scenarios and in each case decide whether the objective is still relevant or whether it is need to be adjusted.



There are four steps:

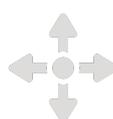
1. Introduce the scenarios if they were developed by the group
2. Introduce the policy or strategy objectives being considered
3. Test the objectives against all scenarios
4. Review the findings and discuss the implications

**Introduce the scenarios**

20 minutes

Deliver a short presentation that explains

- What scenarios are and what they are designed to do
- How this particular set of scenarios was developed
- The scenario matrix
- The broad structure of each scenario and some of the strategic questions each one throws up





### Introduce the policy or strategy objectives to be tested

10 minutes

Deliver a short presentation that reminds the group of (or introduces them to) the specific policy, strategy or project objectives being tested. It is worth spend a few minutes at this point having a conversation with the group to ensure they understand the objectives clearly.

### Test the objectives against the set of scenarios

40-60 minutes

Divide the group into four and allocate one scenario to each group. Give each group the relevant scenario handout and – if required – the full set of objectives being tested. Invite people to read the scenario individually and to discuss the relative strengths and weaknesses of the scenario for achieving their policy or strategy goals. Allow 20-30 minutes for this step.

Invite each group to test the objectives against their scenario. They should

- Imagine that the world is as described in the scenario
- Decide whether – for this world – each objective is
  - Robust
  - Redundant
  - In need of modification
- Be prepared to explain why they have made their decision

Allow 20-30 minutes for this step.

### Review the findings and discuss the implications

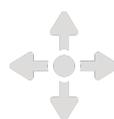
30 minutes

Facilitate this discussion by drawing up a table that lists the range of policy objectives down the side and the scenarios across the top.

Gather feedback from each group and record it all in the table before analyzing the results.

The table may look something like this:

Strategic objective	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4
Objective 1				
Objective 2				
Objective 3				
Objective 4				
Objective 5				



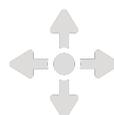
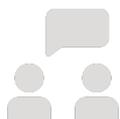


Once you have built the table, spend some time discussing it with the group and exploring the implications for the policy.

For example, in the table above (which is a real example taken from a policy workshop)

- Objectives 1 and 5 look robust across most futures but may need a slight adjustment depending on the circumstances
- Objectives 2 and 4 need to be revisited – and may not be required at all
- Objective 3 may need to be reassessed

Individual groups will have different perspectives as well. The group assessing scenario 1 will take the view that most of the objectives need to be revisited (read vertically to see this). So will the group reviewing scenario 2. None of the groups will be confident that the objectives as a whole are robust for the future.



# WORKSHOP DESIGN

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This section of the toolkit sets out the structure of three types of workshop to stimulate thinking about process design. These are illustrative.

The three workshop types are

- Using the output of horizon scanning to identifying important themes for future plans
- Scenario Building
- Developing project recommendations from existing scenarios

## Using the output of horizon scanning to identifying important themes for future plans

This workshop uses horizon scans as the stimulus to identify emerging issues that are important to Gwent or to individual PSB members

### 9.30 Introduction

- Introduce the project aims and objectives
- Introduce the workshop program
- Introduce horizon scanning and the scanning material

### 9.50 Cluster scans

- Create groups of around 6 people
- Give each group around 30 scans, summarised on post it notes or card
- Asks groups to cluster the scans according to related futures issues
- Name the clusters

### 11.00 Coffee

### 11.30 Identify future issues (part 1)

- Groups choose one or two clusters to discuss further
- For each chosen cluster, describes
  - What the most important strategic/operational issue within the cluster is
  - How the issue is likely to develop in the short term (next 5 years), medium term (5-10 years) and long term (10 years or more)
  - Why issue is important for Gwent/the Council and for whom it is important (threat/opportunity and impact)
  - What needs to be done in response to the priority issue and who needs to be involved in doing it

### 12.30 Lunch

### 1.00 Lunch

### 13.30 Identify future issues (part 2)

- Repeat the exercise with further clusters

### 14.30 Plenary: discussion ad next steps

### 15.00 Close

## Scenario Building Workshop

This workshop builds scenarios from scratch. Participants do not need to know about scenarios but may benefit from seeing scanning material in advance of the workshop.

### 9.30 Introduction

- Introduce the project aims and objectives
- Introduce the workshop program
- Introduce scenario thinking

### 9.50 Conduct driver mapping

### 11.00 Coffee

### 11.30 Develop axes of uncertainty

### 12.30 Agree the scenario matrix

### 1.00 Lunch

### 1.45 Develop scenarios

### 3.15 Tea

### 3.30 Feedback scenarios

### 4.00 Plausibility Mapping

### 4.30 Next steps

### 4.45 Close

## Developing project recommendations from existing scenarios

This workshop invites participants to use existing scenarios to test policy/strategic/operational decisions. Participants do not need to know about scenarios or to have been in the original scenario building workshop

### 10.00 Introduction

- Introduce scenario thinking
- Introduce the scenarios
- Introduce the topic

### 10.25 Explore scenario 1

- Present the scenario and set up 3 small groups. Give each group a handout with the scenario text
- Discuss in groups
  - What do you like about this scenario? What do you not like?
  - What does the scenario mean for people in Wales? For Government in Wales?
  - What are the implications for the well-being for future generations?
  - What are the implications for the priorities/key activities in our plan?
  - Assume that this is what the future will look like. With that knowledge, what recommendations should we make?
- Plenary review

### 11.30 Coffee

### 11.50 Explore scenarios 2, 3 and 4

- Allocate scenarios to groups
- Each group read the scenario text/key points and answer the same questions as before

### 13.00 Lunch

### 13.30 Review

- Groups present the outcomes of their discussions
- Q and A/discussion of the scenarios

### 14.15 Plausibility map the scenarios

### 14.45 Agree recommendations for the PSB/County strategy plan

### 15.00 Close