Using the London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure

A guidance note for practitioners

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MAYOR OF LONDON

London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure

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Contents

London
Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure

CITY INTELLIGENCE

CENTRE FOR
THRIVING
PLACES

Introduction

The GLA's new London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure provides a framework for understanding a wide range of different elements of the experience of living and working in London. It is both a dataset, with a wealth of data grouped and organised around key facets of wellbeing and sustainability; and also a framework, that can shape policy design, provide a tool to understand need and shape ideas for how to improve the system, and most importantly, uses the lens of lived experience as a way to understand how different policy areas, datasets and institutions connect and intersect.

This document is in three parts:

1. Introducing Wellbeing Frameworks

How the London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure sits within an increasing international momentum towards adopting a 'Wellbeing' approach to policy design and system change work.
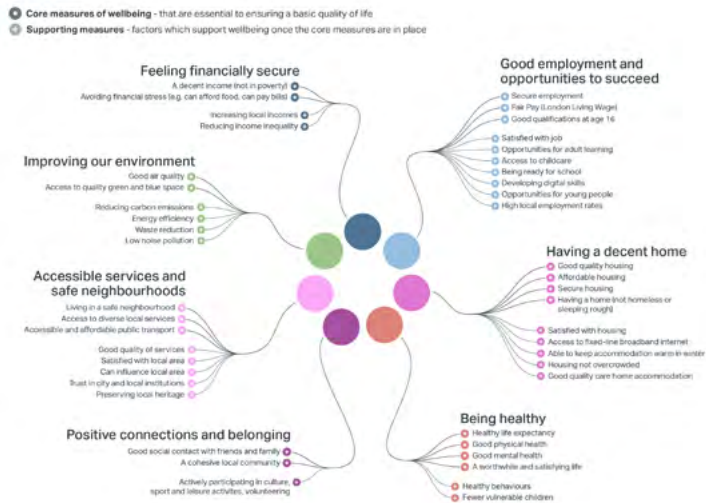
2. Applications

Some practical suggestions for specific approaches and areas of potential application; and some examples from London based actors already using Wellbeing-informed approaches.

3. FAQs

Some FAQs about how the new London Measure in particular works and can be used.

It draws both on expertise within Centre for Thriving Places (a national organisation that supports place-based institutions to develop and embed Wellbeing Frameworks) and insights and expertise from across a range of London based institutions already thinking about how to apply the new London measure in practice.

We hope it provides some inspiration for how the new London Measure might be practically useful to the many public, private, voluntary and community sector institutions already working to shape and improve the lives of Londoners, at neighbourhood, borough and pan-London level.

Core measures of wellbeing - that are essential to ensuring a basic quality of life
Supporting measures - factors which support wellbeing once the core measures are in place

Feeling financially secure
A decent income (not in poverty)
Avoiding financial stress (e.g. can afford food, can pay bills)
Increasing local incomes
Reducing income inequality

Good employment and opportunities to succeed
Secure employment
Fair Pay (London Living Wage)
Good qualifications at age 16
Satisfied with job
Opportunities for adult learning
Access to childcare
Being ready for school
Developing digital skills
Opportunities for young people
High local employment rates

Improving our environment
Good air quality
Access to quality green and blue space
Reducing carbon emissions
Energy efficiency
Waste reduction
Low noise pollution

Having a decent home
Good quality housing
Affordable housing
Secure housing
Having a home (not homeless or sleeping rough)
Satisfied with housing
Access to fixed-line broadband internet
Able to keep accommodation warm in winter
Housing not overcrowded
Good quality care home accommodation

Accessible services and safe neighbourhoods
Living in a safe neighbourhood
Access to diverse local services
Accessible and affordable public transport
Good quality of services
Satisfied with local area
Can influence local area
Trust in city and local institutions
Preserving local heritage

Being healthy
Healthy life expectancy
Good physical health
Good mental health
A worthwhile and satisfying life
Healthy behaviours
Fewer vulnerable children

Positive connections and belonging
Good social contact with friends and family
A cohesive local community
Actively participating in culture, sport and leisure activities, volunteering

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1. Introducing Wellbeing Frameworks

What is a Wellbeing Framework Approach?

A Wellbeing Framework approach revolves around three distinct features:

a) Placing the priority to build human wellbeing and environmental sustainability at the core of policy, programme design, place-making, growth plans, organisational values, etc.

b) Understanding and building on the connections between the different things which drive both human and planetary wellbeing - from health, to housing, to income, to carbon emissions, to social infrastructure, to environmental resilience, and so on.

c) Proactively seeking to build the conditions for wellbeing and sustainability, rather than simply seeking to mitigate negative impacts of the existing system on those conditions.

Our prevailing economic model – and the frameworks and data to support it – are focused on delivering growth. The measures that enable us to track this objective – like Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – tell us only if we are producing and consuming more, not whether we are any 'better off' for doing so.

This model doesn't make it easy to track progress in the quality of lived experience, or environmental sustainability. At its worst, it risks driving many of the social and environmental crises we're experiencing. Those trying to achieve progress on wellbeing and sustainability within places need tools that enable a systemic shift towards an approach not just to the economy, but to the wider system that shapes our experience of living and working in a place – with the wellbeing of people and planet centre stage. The collective efforts of citizens, communities, businesses and governments can be driving towards a much more ambitious and meaningful outcome – the growth of our capacity to thrive.

With a wellbeing approach, our strategies, plans and actions are all focused on making a difference to lives, now and for generations to come.

A place powered by a wellbeing approach is a place where:

• all decisions, on policy, investment and actions are made based on their ability

• to grow the wellbeing of people, place and planet

• success is measured by how well they deliver these wellbeing generating outcomes

• shared goals are created that bridge political, economic and cultural divides –

• it becomes everyone's job to help the town to thrive

• responsibility for delivering these wellbeing outcomes, and sharing learning on

• what works, is shared across sectors, departments and communities

• collaboration, participation and creativity are vital pathways to success, and everyone's contributions are recognised, valued and rewarded.

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The London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure in context

The GLA's new London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure provides a uniquely useful tool for London based organisations and communities seeking to shift to a wellbeing framework approach:

- It has been developed through drawing together, reviewing and teasing out the most relevant and useful elements of a wide range of existing frameworks and tools, in relation to how these relate to the lived experience of Londoners.

- It is structured around themes that have been developed with residents through a comprehensive participatory research process, so that the framework itself is shaped around the reality of lived experience.

It brings together national level with local level data sources, enabling a deep level of analysis across and between borough boundaries, down to neighbourhood level, as well as at pan-London level.

The new London Measure sits within a wider context of other Wellbeing Frameworks, dashboards and data sources which many organisations are already using to structure their own approaches to embedding wellbeing and sustainability priorities nationally and internationally.

At the global level, this includes frameworks such as The UN Sustainable Development Goals and The OECD Better Life Index; while at the UK national level the ONS also provides a Wellbeing Dashboard. The devolved nations have produced pioneering work around both the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act and The National Performance Framework (Scotland), and at a more local level the Thriving Places Index (from Centre for Thriving Places) publishes data for all Local Authority areas in England and Wales annually, and other models such as The SEED model (from Carnegie UK) and The Doughnut Economics Model (from Kate Raworth and Doughnut Economics Action Lab) provide useful conceptual frameworks applicable at place based level. Within London itself, many boroughs have invested in developing models and data banks based on this kind of approach including the Social Progress Index developed in LBBD; Newham's Wellbeing Framework; Camden's Good Life approach, both discussed in more detail later in this document; and many others.

Understanding how these work, and how they are used in a place-based context, may be helpful in thinking through how to apply the new London Measure in practice.

Some of these other frameworks are based around datasets, while others provide a conceptual way of grouping themes and policy areas but do not come with an associated impact data set. Many of these are reviewed and compared in the February 2023 report jointly produced by Centre for Thriving Places, Carnegie Trust and a number of other partners, 'The Shared Ingredients for a Wellbeing Economy'.
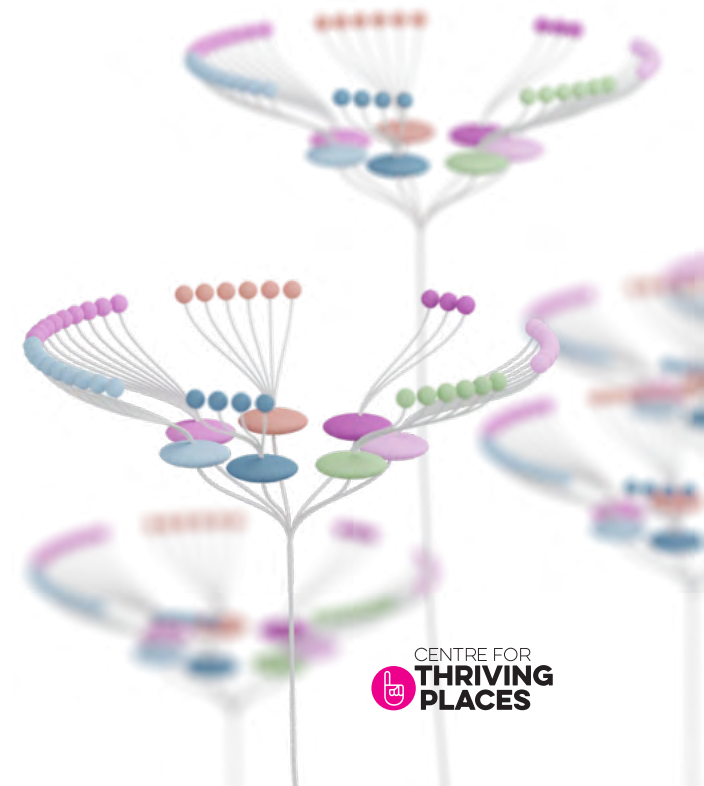
Whilst these frameworks offer different ways of visualising and understanding a wellbeing economy, there is a large degree of agreement and overlap in both the narrative running through all these models, and the types of priority areas and associated indicators they track, which tend to fall under three categories:
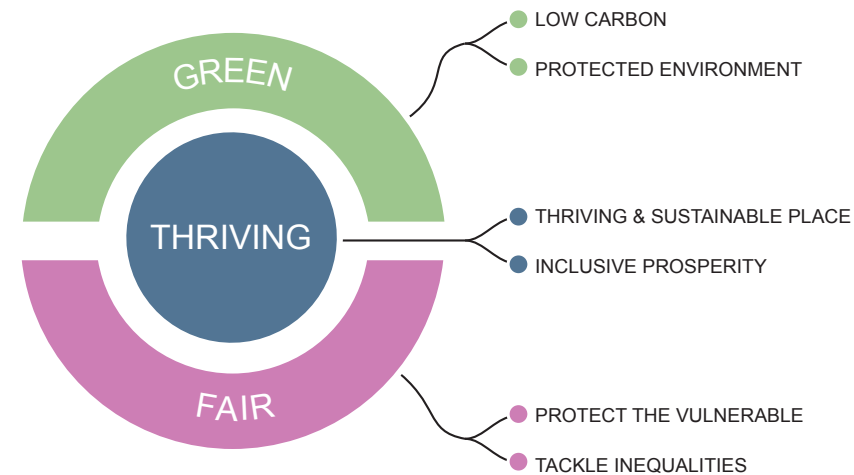
- Conditions for people to thrive (wellbeing, prosperity, health, social connection, voice and influence, healthy local economy etc)

- Conditions for sustainability (Low carbon, environmental resilience, biodiversity, etc)

- Conditions for equitability (Equality of opportunity, access to resources and services, structural inequalities, vulnerable groups etc)

All these models share a call for the same fundamental shift that is embedded in the concept of the London Measure: a move away from a singular focus on driving economic growth as an end in itself, and towards a focus on growing the known drivers of a range of interconnected outcomes that improve lives – now and in the future.

But it is not always straightforward for practitioners and policy makers to make good use of all these tools. Challenges include:

- the plethora of data and evidence available through national and local data sources with varying levels of geographic detail is complex.

- the sheer volume and quantity of information and approaches;

- the ability to pull together data from multiple sources underneath diverse priority areas;

- the resource to be able to undertake real-time, community rooted research at scale to relate reams of data to the realities of lived experience; are just some of these challenges.

In this context, the London Measure is a particularly useful new addition to the toolbox available for London based organisations, because it has already covered off a lot of ground in sifting data, and grouping and organising this under categories and themes based on Londoners' lived experience and priorities.

As well as being a comprehensive and user-friendly data set, it can be a transformational tool in approaching decision-making and policy development for leaders, including elected officials, local government senior managers, community anchor organisations and visionary business leaders. Most importantly, it is a very bespoke place-based approach, built around framing developed through iterative participatory research with Londoners. This gives it the advantage also of providing a bridge between how policy is often made in thematic silos ('mental health' or 'housing' or 'transport'), and how in people's lived experience these things are intersectional, often correlated, and very specifically shaped by the physical environment.

The next section outlines some of the main uses of wellbeing frameworks in general, and how these might apply to the London Measure in particular. This is not an exhaustive list of applications, but gives a sense of the different types of work it may support.

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2. Applications

Broadly speaking, there are at least three interconnected categories of application that a good wellbeing framework can offer:
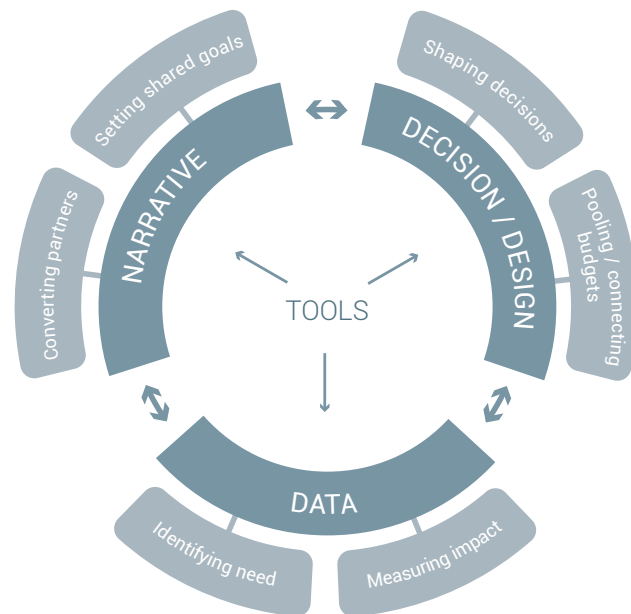
As a narrative tool:

- Convening different partners within a place around a joint narrative and shared outcomes

- Setting shared goals between diverse organisations and communities

As a data tool:

- Identifying and prioritising areas of need and investment focus within a place focus on growing wellbeing and understanding needs and assets

- Developing impact and measurement approaches for specific programmes, funding streams or other interventions

As a design /decision tool:

- Linking resources, pooling budgets, and enabling cross-fund or cross-budget line spending and impact tracking (for example at local authority or ICS level, when knitting together multiple funding streams to fund long term or cross-sector programmes)

- Within decision making and screening processes (for example, in grant making, procurement, planning, or investment)

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As a Narrative Tool

Convening partners and co-creating shared narratives and outcomes

A Wellbeing Framework is a powerful tool to bring together people across political, sectoral and social divides. Having a clear and shared local mission of growing wellbeing, backed by a set of outcomes to achieve this mission and progress measures to understand what works to get there can provide a 'common denominator' around which diverse issues intersect.

The London Measure headings have been developed through direct consultation with residents and align closely with a lived-experience lens. Therefore the structure of the London Measure could function equally well as a 'ready-made' framework within which local priorities can be organised and emphasised; but also, could be used effectively as a structure for new conversations in an area to develop a more bespoke, locally-owned version of a wellbeing framework, which the London Measure data set could then slot under as an evidence base.

The adoption of a wellbeing framework by any individual organisation can already help align areas of work or direction with others in itself. An added benefit of convening partners and co-creating a local set of shared priorities based in a lived-experience, wellbeing-oriented framework, is developing a sense of shared responsibility and joint endeavour across a place-based network of organisations. This can be an important catalyst in transforming local capacity to collectively deliver real and lasting progress.

As a Data tool

Identifying and prioritising areas of need and investment focus within a place focus on growing wellbeing and understanding needs and assets

A wellbeing framework can be used to assess the extent to which places are thriving and healthy, and how fairly and sustainably they are achieving that. It can help to identify strengths and needs and the domains where prioritised funding and/ or interventions could make the biggest difference to local wellbeing. Critically, by presenting the interconnections between outcomes areas, it can function in a slightly different way to identify areas

of need than, for example, simply looking at IMD scores to determine the most 'needy' place, or ONS demographic data to determine the most 'affected' groups or people based on one or other indicator. Instead, for example, it enables an analysis of how different challenges interact and drive one another - e.g. the connection between quality of housing, affordability of housing, proximity to employment opportunities, transport availability and affordability,

and health outcomes, for a particular area or group. As a source of connected data that both links outcome areas through a lived experience lens; and provides a place based picture, the London Measure data can offer clear potential uses in creating evidence bases and needs assessments, as well as asset focussed analysis of where strengths can be built on.

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CITY INTELLIGENCE

CENTRE FOR
THRIVING
PLACES

Developing impact and measurement approaches for specific programmes, funding streams or other interventions

As well as using the data as a snapshot tool to build a diagnostic picture of place or of intersecting areas of need or asset, the framework within which the data is organised provides a clearly usable structure to develop impact measurement frameworks for specific interventions and projects. The London Measure shows data for the whole of London, for all demographic groups, and how this changes over time. It is not in itself an impact measurement tool for an individual intervention targeting a particular group of people or a particular area, because you would not expect the impact of a single intervention on a specific target group to show up in the dataset

the London Measure provides for the city for all Londoners. However, the headings and indicators within the measure can be used as the framework for tracking the impact of an intervention on a particular group, in a particular place. This could include both using the indicators to determine what new baseline and impact data needs to be collected for the target group, as well as potentially using the data within the London Measure that shows the picture against these indicators for the whole city, as a benchmark to compare the tracked impact of a particular intervention against.

Because the headings and indicators selected for the London Measure look at wellbeing and sustainability as a holistic set of interconnected indicators across policy and outcome areas, using its structure as the basis for programme impact measurement frameworks makes it particularly useful for interventions that involve diverse teams and organisations working across different sectors, seeking to make holistic impact in a cross-cutting way.

As a Decision/Design tool

Within decision making and screening processes (for example, in grant making, procurement, planning, or investment)

There is already a really well established range of good practice across London within a variety of institutions at all levels, to screen decisions about procurement, grant making and investment against some form of social value framework, or holistic commitment to driving structure change. Using the London Measure in this way offers another evidence based, holistic framework against which to test and

screen these kinds of decisions. This can be used not just to 'screen out' or rank spending or other decisions (whether that's a procurement exercise ranking value, or a planning decision tested against any potential damage to an area's ability to realise significant wellbeing goals) but also to identify aspects in need of improvement or impact mitigation.

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Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure

CITY INTELLIGENCE

CENTRE FOR
THRIVING
PLACES

Linking resources, pooling budgets, and enabling cross-fund or cross-budget line spending and impact tracking (for example at local authority or ICS level, when knitting together multiple funding streams to fund long term or cross-sector programmes)
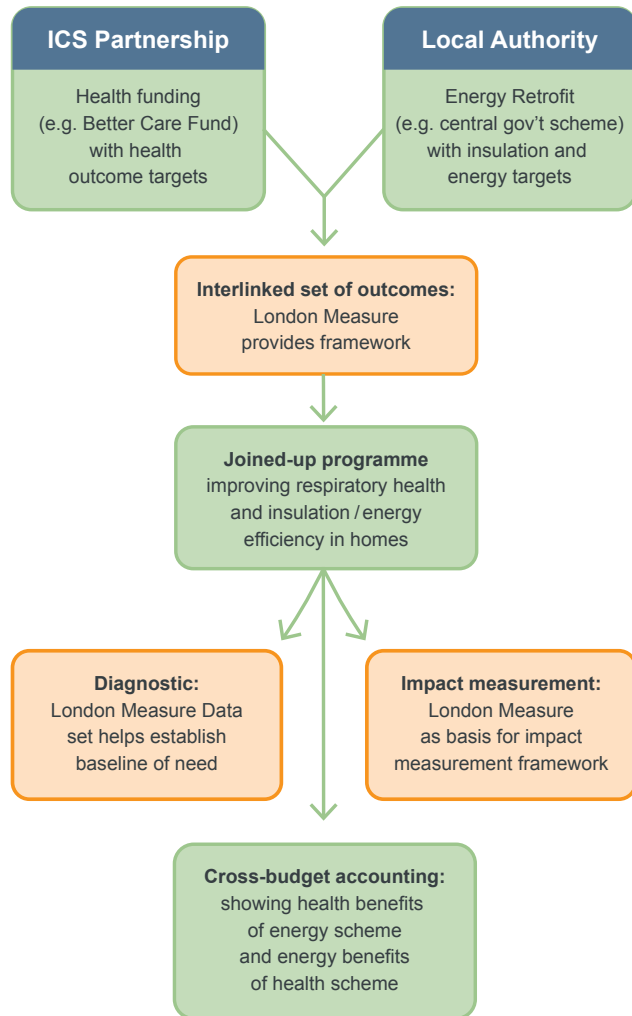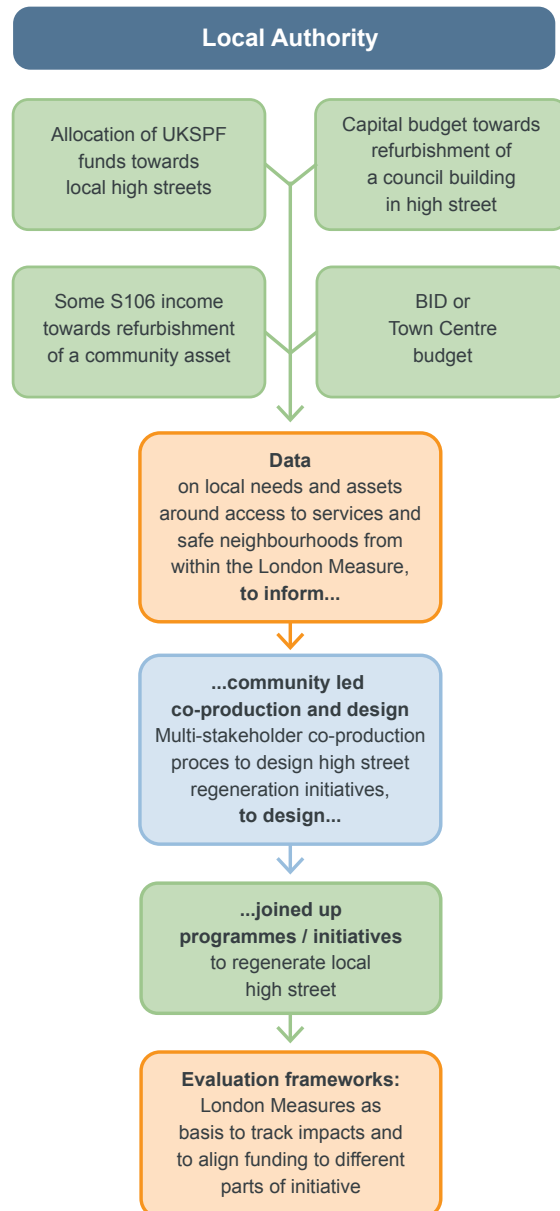
The London Measure structures and showcases the connections between indicators and outcome areas, and also offers diagnostic information the data provides about priorities, needs and assets. So it presents excellent opportunities to shape the design of programmes in ways that allow the pooling of resources and budgets across different funding streams, intervention areas and partners, where those budgets and funding streams are often themselves designed quite narrowly to drive improvements in one piece of the puzzle ('obesity' or 'qualifications for NEET young people' or 'carbon emission reduction in local business' or 'child mental health outcomes' or 'housing insecurity').

The London Measure itself is designed to show how these puzzle pieces fit together, and how an intervention to drive the causes of one area may well drive impact on other areas also; or conversely, how in order to tackle one area (such as children's mental health) an investment in another area (such as housing security, income levels, or access to open space, etc) might be the most impactful use of resources.

Most place-based institutions, whether within the community and VCS, or local authority teams, or ICS partnerships, are constantly attempting in as creative a way as possible to knit together these streams of funding sources in long term, joined up ways - but this is incredibly challenging - particularly when each one requires a narrow set of often service rather than outcome level impacts to be tracked. Whilst the existence of the London Measure does not solve this challenge, it does provide a really useful tool to facilitate attempts to join up the design, the evidence base work and the impact measurement of interventions that seek to pull together resources and budgets from multiple sources across diverse partners.

As an example: imagine an ICS partnership with NHS derived health budgets to spend on improving health outcomes, and a Local Authority with energy retrofit subsidy schemes to drive improvement in insulation of housing stock, who are trying to align funds in a joined up and place-based way to tackle the interconnected outcomes of respiratory health and warm homes.

ICS Partnership

Health funding
(e.g. Better Care Fund)
with health
outcome targets

Local Authority

Energy Retrofit
(e.g. central gov't scheme)
with insulation and
energy targets

Interlinked set of outcomes:
London Measure
provides framework

Joined-up programme
improving respiratory health
and insulation / energy
efficiency in homes

Diagnostic:
London Measure Data
set helps establish
baseline of need

Impact measurement:
London Measure
as basis for impact
measurement framework

Cross-budget accounting:
showing health benefits
of energy scheme
and energy benefits
of health scheme

Local Authority

Allocation of UKSPF
funds towards
local high streets

Capital budget towards
refurbishment of
a council building
in high street

Some S106 income
towards refurbishment
of a community asset

BID or
Town Centre
budget

Data
on local needs and assets
around access to services and
safe neighbourhoods from
within the London Measure,
to inform...

**...community led
co-production and design**
Multi-stakeholder co-production
proces to design high street
regeneration initiatives,
to design...

**...joined up
programmes / initiatives**
to regenerate local
high street

Evaluation frameworks:
London Measures as
basis to track impacts and
to align funding to different
parts of initiative

The London Measure in this instance might:

- Help articulate cross cutting interconnected outcomes that a joined-up programme might achieve across housing quality, energy efficiency, respiratory health outcomes

- Provide data to support the diagnostic analysis of need within the given partnership area

- Develop an impact framework for an intervention

- Help show how impact across connected policy areas interacts, so that funds spent on a housing retrofit initiative can be clearly related to health outcomes.

Equally, where diverse funds and priorities are being knitted together internally within one institution, the London Measure may provide a useful architecture for tracking relationships between outcomes. Imagine a London borough keen to align community-focussed UK Shared Prosperity Funds (for example focussed on social isolation, access to transport, or local high streets) with high street regeneration plans (perhaps supported by the GLA high street renewal funds, or S106 / CIL / BID derived income).

Being able easily to draw together data from within the London Measure on the "Access to Services and Safe Neighbourhoods" domain could be hugely useful in

- facilitating a constructive, multi-stakeholder community and business engagement process to explore how to best join up available funds to create interventions in the high street that tackle those issues in a joined up way

- developing a joined-up intervention improving access to local high street based amenities for particularly isolated groups

- tracking impact against these various different outcomes across funding sources designed to target different parts of that puzzle

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Existing local practice

In producing this guidance note, we spoke to a small selection of organisations across London already using or thinking about using a wellbeing framework approach. We explored how they envisage using the new London Measure and dataset in relation to their existing work on embedding a wellbeing framework.

At a borough level, London Boroughs of Newham and Camden both already have established programmes in place to embed a Wellbeing Framework at borough level. At a city-wide level, London Youth and the NHS Thrive London Network are two examples of pan-London institutions or networks who already take a holistic approach to policy and evidence, and also offer an interesting perspective on how a wellbeing framework approach per se, and the London Measure in particular, could be directly useful in the context of their work.

The four short case studies below are intended to illustrate and provide further jumping off points for those exploring how to use the London Measure in their own context, either in conjunction with an existing wellbeing framework approach, or to underpin and support related place-based initiatives, or indeed to catalyse this kind of work from scratch.

London
Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure

CITY INTELLIGENCE

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PLACES

London Borough of Newham

How does a wellbeing approach relate to how they work?

The London Borough of Newham has developed an outcomes framework centred around the wellbeing of its communities to help deliver Building a Fairer Newham's corporate plan. This is embedded across the organisation and each of the council's strategic priorities. This framework is based on an annual Residents' Survey with a representative panel of residents. Previously, this has covered around 1.5K residents, and this year this has increased to over 2K residents, and using a randomised sampling approach. They believe this is one of the largest residents surveys in London, and one of the largest carried out by a local authority in the country.

As such, the data itself represents a real time snapshot of lived experience in the borough, tracking the direct subjective wellbeing experiences of Newham residents from across a section of society.

The questions in the survey are based around four pillars of wellbeing: personal, community, democratic and economy. These priorities are embedded across the corporate strategy as well as within individual services. The data itself is helpful for undertaking inequalities analysis within services, and to identify correlations between service areas of particular groups who appear to be less well served. The data is already available to council teams through a data dashboard.

Because this framework and data set is based entirely on primary data, collected locally, at regular intervals; and because the pillars are oriented around, and very much used to evaluate, adjust and inform how the council's services themselves are being delivered and impacting on people's lives, this type of framework is in a sense a performance measurement framework for the council itself, in the way that the London Measure is not.

As the majority of questions are benchmarked to regional and national surveys and to previous local surveys, the council can track trends to model future scenarios to inform service planning and use the benchmarks to identify leading local areas to learn from.

The council will also be following up on this quantitative approach with participatory qualitative research to get under the skin of the findings from the survey on key cross-cutting themes.

Following this, services will "listen and act" on the insights to develop responses to the improvements identified by residents.

How might the London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure be used in this context?

The London Measure offers a distinct but aligned set of secondary data about wider London populations, which brings together some of the subjective wellbeing measures within the Newham framework with a number of objective measures of known drivers of wellbeing. Because it does this using existing public data, rather than a repetition of the residents' survey Newham already undertakes, it offers a triangulation point to compare the two data sets. The London Measure data set could be used to will for example offer

a) Data points that are not embedded in the residents' survey but which help unpack and explain gaps within that data, or drivers of the outcomes that the residents' survey is picking up

b) Potentially, a way to compare local experience to London experience, both at pan-London level (as a 'benchmark') and with 'statistical neighbours' in terms of understanding variations in perceptions and experiences of wellbeing between demographic groups with otherwise similar circumstances within the 'drivers' of wellbeing (such as income, health, access to services etc)

c) As a 'common denominator' both in terms of narrative / vision, and in terms of data and evidence, to connect experiences and priorities from within Newham itself, to the priorities and outcome targets of institutions LBBN regularly engages with to drive forward outcomes for residents who operate at pan London level - for example, TfL, or NHS partners, or police / community safety.

Newham colleagues are also clear that whilst a huge amount of work has already been invested in developing and embedding their outcomes framework and strategy, there is still huge appetite and room for further innovation and creativity in many internal council services to 'rewire' their approaches to more inherently incorporate the wellbeing framework approach; as well as an ongoing interest in connecting the council's own bespoke wellbeing strategy, to efforts within place based partners' approaches to delivering shared outcomes.

In both these contexts, the London Measure is seen as a potentially critically useful common source of narrative and vision structure, triangulation and data source, and broader framework to stimulate join-up across a range of services and partners who deal with different parts of the system that ultimately drives the lived experiences of residents as captured by the Residents' Survey.

London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure

CITY INTELLIGENCE

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London Borough of Camden

How does a wellbeing approach relate to how they work?

London Borough of Camden is developing a comprehensive wellbeing framework approach, starting through a co-production process with residents in the past year, working with a small group of around 20 residents to lead a comprehensive programme of wider engagement workshops, community events and peer research. The resulting framework, 'Good Life Camden', organises a number of critical priorities that have emerged, into nine headline themes, under which they have also identified what 'signals' of improvement would look like, and which indicators best track this. The emerging framework was mapped onto various other frameworks including the OECD Better Life Index, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the ONS Measures of National Wellbeing, the Thriving Places Index, the Social Progress Index, Co-op Wellbeing Index as well as the GLA's London Measure of Wellbeing and Sustainability, in order to draw on best practice in the sector.

This is a fantastic example of using a wellbeing framework approach as a tool to convene and support communities to develop a shared vision and narrative, and to try to embed a community led vision into council decision making. Whilst existing recognised frameworks form a backbone to the structure, the co-creation of the framework itself offers immediate opportunities for convening further partnerships and shared ambitions between place based organisations and communities; as well as an accountability tool for the community and the council.

Having developed this proto-type framework with a community led process, the council is now working through embedding this both internally across council teams, and externally within local partners. Within the council, several individual teams have identified specific pieces of work they would like to use as a 'test' case to pilot how they might use the framework and demonstrate impact - for example, through using it as a structure for a social impact evaluation, integrating it into the social value in procurement process, or into policy specific surveys for example in waste services. The council's research team is also exploring embedding the headlines and indicators into a specific survey which can be carried out with residents going forward to track their experience against the priority areas.

The team is also building a data dashboard, and will incorporate the data into the next state of the borough report, to help establish a baseline snapshot of data against the framework headings. The ambition is for the framework to both help shape strategy at council level as well as within partners, around shared outcomes; but also to be able to measure outcomes and impacts of specific interventions over time.

How might the London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure be used in this context?

Camden colleagues see an immediately obvious use in how the London Measure could support the creation and population of their data dashboard. This dashboard will be seeking to generate a baseline evidence base against the indicators within the framework, and the Camden framework headings align well with many of the London Measure headings and subdomains.

Based on work already undertaken to begin to draw together available data against the Camden framework indicators, it is also already clear that there are some data gaps which the London Measure may be able to help address.

In addition to potentially helping complete and triangulate data, similarly to in Newham, and particularly in the context of Camden's interest in working with external partners within the borough, the London Measure may also provide further opportunities to connect the strategic priorities of residents as expressed through the Good Life Camden process, with similar priorities and goals reflected within the wider London Measure as other local or pan-London institutions access and use these too. Camden colleagues also see a significant benefit in how the London Measure may help in harmonising and aligning data collection efforts in individual boroughs, and with benchmarking, comparing and making more of locally collected data, for example when understanding the experience of very small underrepresented groups who's experience may not show up at borough level because the numbers are too small, but can be understood better looking at the pan-London picture.

Thrive LDN

How does a wellbeing approach relate to how they work?

As a citywide public mental health partnership, Thrive <DN ('Thrive London') exists to ensure all Londoners have an equal opportunity for good mental health and wellbeing. Thrive LDN brings together the Mayor, NHS, Local Government and academic partners around five functions:

- Responsibility for the Public Mental Health strategy (delegated by the Health Board);

- Leading on communications and campaigns for Londoners;

- Research, Insights and Evaluation, including regular provision of evidence briefings ;

- Regional programmes (around things like Children and young people's mental health, inequalities, suicide prevention etc);

- Supporting civic response and scenario planning and forecasting

During the pandemic, Thrive LDN coordinated the public mental health response to COVID-19. This crisis response approach is now a critical part of London's infrastructure bringing together cross-sector partners to focus on the holistic and interconnected aspects of public and mental health. Whilst they are not currently using a named 'wellbeing framework' approach, the nature of the partnership is precisely and inherently driven by a holistic understanding of the drivers of wellbeing in place, and this informs much of their structures and ways of working.

The Thrive LDN partnership has already been heavily involved in supporting the development of the London Wellbeing and Sustainability measure, and make regular use of the data available through the City Intelligence Unit and data store.

How might the London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure be used in this context?

Primarily, Thrive LDN have a keen interest in using the data the London Measure makes accessible, on a practical day to day basis, to inform the structure and the content of various evaluation, research and evidence briefings Thrive LDN produces. The London Measure offers another source of information to triangulate and inform priorities, help assess progress and function as a diagnostic tool to show areas of strength and need.

Beyond using it as a data tool, Thrive LDN is also interested in the opportunity to use the new measure as a structure to shape how information is presented in briefings, as it offers a useful way to frame a huge range of different data points in the context of Londoners' lived experiences of day to day live. This is helpful in strengthening the case and widening the scope of Thrive LDN's work, and informing strategy and policy discussions within Thrive LDN about areas of need and ways to look at tackling this upstream, holistically and intersectionality across policy areas.

Thrive LDN is also involved in supporting the emerging Integrated Care System in the partnerships covering London's geography, and sees an interesting opportunity in how the London Measure is structured, to support ICS partnerships in their aims to shift a focus from purely clinical health outcomes, to a more system focussed approach looking at tackling social determinants and other drivers of health outcomes, The London Measure is useful in showing how many of these drivers are grouped in the way they impact on Londoners, and how indicators impact on each other, in a way that Thrive London believes directly supports the case for upstream and holistic approaches to public health.

In general, Thrive LDN is keen to use its position and networks to help 'platform' the London Measure and ensure a wider range of partners and stakeholders are aware of and have access to it in practice.
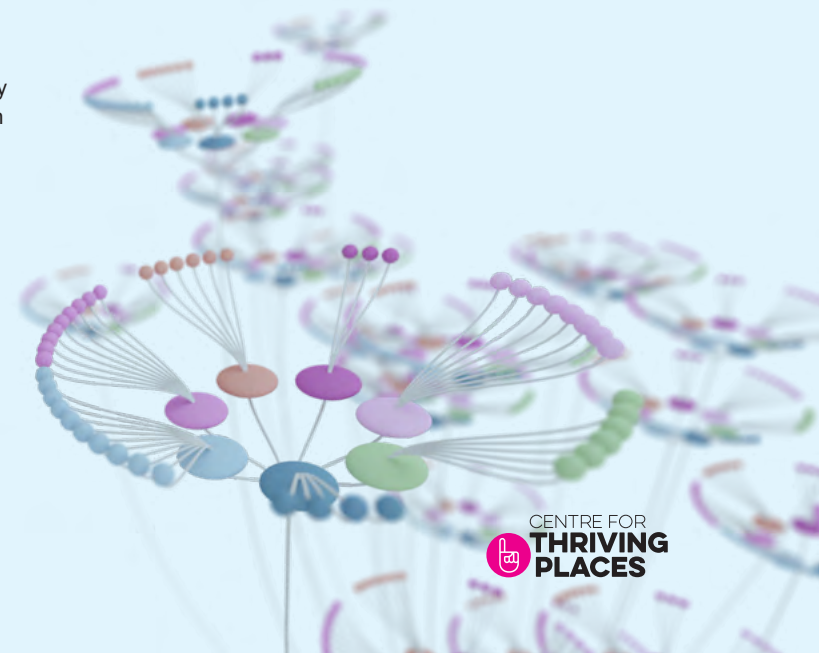
London Youth

How does a wellbeing approach relate to how they work?

London Youth is a membership organisation, working with over 600 youth organisations in the capital. As part of its offer, the organisation delivers a significant programme of policy and advocacy work on behalf of the sector, in a way that is very much led by the insights and experiences of young people and practitioners, including through convening a youth practitioners network (which in turn includes a wellness and mental health network) and a Youth Board.

London Youth confirmed that wellbeing and mental health are among the top priorities consistently emerging within their policy and public affairs work. They have also been advocating on these issues to highlight the connections between mental health and wellbeing, and positive life outcomes for young people. They have looked at how, amongst other themes, employability, housing and transport issues in London all intersect with young people's sense of wellbeing. The pandemic and the cost of living crisis have been significant contributing external factors in that regard.

London Youth has been calling for greater access for young people to outdoor activities, which play such a vital role in building physical and mental wellbeing. They are also calling for a dedicated government mental health strategy for children and young people. This will continue to be a key priority policy area given the mental health emergency facing so many young people. The ability to use the data within the London Measure will help illustrate various contributing factors to positive wellbeing in a London context. There are so many components to young people's wider sense of wellbeing. They see the London Measure as something which will widen the evidence base, and help them to address this issue holistically.

How might the London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure be used in this context?

London Youth are very interested in the scope for the London Measure to help triangulate this experience with data that shows the connections and interactions between indicators across

housing, transport, mental health, and other connected drivers. This is a really interesting example of how the measure could support organisations who operate at the interface between lived experience / frontline intelligence, and policy and advocacy work with decision makers. The measure itself offers a structure through which data and evidence is shaped in a way that clearly matches the lived experience frame: where to talk about mental health issues and solutions is inherently to understand the drivers across housing security and affordability, mobility and connectedness, physical safety, etc.

As well as considering how this helps frame and tackle policy issues in a more systemic and evidence based way, London Youth is also interested in using the London Measure as a conceptual framework to 'anchor' how young people relate to the individual indicators - using the framework as a structure to facilitate co-productive conversations and shape ideas about tackling challenges from the bottom up.

London
Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure

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In summary

As this short overview already starts to show, there are a wide range of excellent existing examples of how wellbeing framework approaches are being applied, that can help inform and inspire how London based institutions might want to make use of the new London Measure.

In general, Centre for Thriving Places recommends using a wellbeing framework approach across all these potential areas, in a cyclical way, to allow for continuous learning, improvement, evaluation, and re-design of how partners work together, and programmes and policies alike are designed and shaped.

The London Measure has already done a huge amount of the work required for the first three steps in the cycle illustrated below ('Shared Goals, Shared Outcomes, and 'Measure of Progress'). The point at which institutions across London now pick up this measure and apply it to place based and pan-London work, will naturally move into the next parts of the cycle:

(Further relevant ideas about this cyclical approach can be found in Centre for Thriving Places and Carnegie Trust work on applying this approach in the context of thriving towns.)

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3. FAQs

How does the GLA's London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure function?

The GLA's London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure (the London measure) is a framework to explore how we are doing as a city, as individuals and as diverse communities, based on what matters to Londoners. The measure was developed through a process that brought together existing evidence bases with various participatory and consultative input from a range of Londoners to shape it conceptually.

Over the last decade, wellbeing measures have increasingly been used to assess the effectiveness of government intervention, policies and programmes in improving the wellbeing of their citizens. Wellbeing data provide a wider view of progress than that provided by economic data alone. They help policymakers to understand priorities for action and better invest public money to improve the lives of citizens.

The vast data behind the London measure provide a composite indicator of wellbeing – bringing together multiple indicators under different themes – a set of 'building blocks' to reflect the lives of Londoners. The data can be summarised both as an overall index for London over time and for different elements of the framework, and/or used more qualitatively to look at variation in outcomes across different population groups and areas of the city.

The London measure allows a holistic assessment of our progress as a city and functions as a systems-thinking framework that can help look at the interconnectedness of policy domains. Moreover, because it touches on so many varied policy areas and how they intersect in Londoners' lived experience, it offers a particularly useful bridge between the priorities and data behind human wellbeing, and environmental sustainability.

What about it is actually new?

This is the first time that this data provision has been centralised and drawn together across this set of headings, for London as a city. It is also the first time that Londoners' views and priorities have been used directly as the structure and shape of the data framework tracking wellbeing and sustainability progress in the city, and is underpinned by new, primary in-depth qualitative research by the GLA.

This work is part of the vanguard of local and regional government work to recognise the limitations of economic indicators alone in providing a useful measure of quality of life, and progress. It is part of a bigger shift to develop better ways of understanding and tracking how all the building blocks of wellbeing and sustainability come together at a place-based level to shape experience now and in the future.

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Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure

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What is the difference between the GLA's London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure and other frameworks and measures, for example the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), or Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)?

As interest in wider measures beyond traditional economic indicators has grown, the number of frameworks and measures has also multiplied. Although these are developed for different purposes, they can seem similar and sometimes confusing to understand.

There is close alignment with the SDGs' overarching vision and principles and some of the objectives of the London measure. There is also alignment between some of the indicators used to measure progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the London Measure. Although the London measure may not be 'badged' with the SDGs, they are able to demonstrate London's contribution to the Global Goals mission.

As mentioned earlier, there are also many area-based composite measures such as the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). The IMD provides a useful deprivation indicator to a very small level of geography and is designed to compare deprivation across the country as a whole. It lacks data on many of the wellbeing issues prioritised by Londoners (e.g., low pay) and is only updated every four to five years.

The data set that sits underneath the London measure itself does not replace other frameworks or data sets and progress measures. Rather, it is a complementary tool that can be used to help understand drivers of wellbeing and sustainability. The main critical differences in form and function with national datasets that track deprivation, such as the IMD, include:

- The GLA measure data offers a reflection of in-depth qualitative research, captured at a unique historic time emerging from the pandemic, based on a real societal paradigm shift in reflecting on what is necessary to 'live well'. It's a London specific tool that provides a way of understanding and pulling together data that sits across a range of different data sources, including the IMD.

- The GLA measure itself has been developed with a participatory process, and with place as its starting point. It is set up within a positively framed, aspirational and forward-looking framework, to show information about what Londoners care about to live well. The IMD data offers valuable insights, nationally, into which LSOAs are in most severe deprivation of need.

- The GLA measure data offers a different scale of data: it looks at an overall, pan-London view of what matters to the city, and monitors what is getting better and worse at city level. The IMD offers a more granular picture of data that focuses on specific aspects and causes of deprivation.

- The GLA measure data will be updated annually, whilst the IMD data has a slower regularity of update, with the currently available IMD data from 2019. The City Intelligence Unit will be coordinating the centralisation of data, from the London Datastore as well as other sources bringing together data not yet on the datastore. For example, from the English Housing Survey, Community Life Survey, Public Health Outcomes Framework, MOPAC Public Health Dashboard, and supplemented by some GLA polling.

There is also some alignment between indicators in the London wellbeing and sustainability measure and health inequality measures used by the GLA Health and Wellbeing team focusing on the social determinants of health (i.e., those used by the Institute of Health Equity in their Marmot Review publication). The London measure has a broader coverage looking at wider indicators of wellbeing and sustainability, rather than specific drivers of health inequality. For instance, it looks at measures of sustainable behaviour. But there is a close relationship between many of the indicators in the two measures.

Finally, the GLA is also developing a framework to measure civic strength. Like the IMD above, this is designed to be a small area measure to support our understanding of how civic strength varies at a community level in order to underpin area-based programme and investment decisions.

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Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure

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Is it a performance management framework?

No. The London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure is not, and cannot usefully be used, to directly demonstrate the impact of any specific intervention or individual organisation on the overall quality of life or sustainability for London as a city. It shows the picture for the whole city, of how these areas present and interact. It does not show the correlations, or attribution pathways, between any organisation's individual interventions or activities, and the direct impact over time on a specific target group, for example.

However, the headings under which the data in the dashboard are grouped can be used as the headings within any impact measurement framework which is designed to measure the impact of a specific intervention. The data that currently shows the status quo against those headings can be used as a benchmark when creating a baseline, and when comparing the impact of specific interventions

against the wider London status quo. It can also be used as context for the theory of change, where an individual organisation or intervention is seeking to achieve a change in one or more of the domains the London Measure shows is a priority for Londoners, to evidence need and priority, and to explain the value or potential value of an individual organisation or intervention that might be able to contribute towards overall progress in that area.

The case study on the London Borough of Newham mentioned earlier in this guide shows a useful example of how an organisation can set up a process and framework to track its own impact on a specific population in a way which is much closer to a performance management framework, through collecting primary data from that population at regular intervals tracking the impact of specific interventions on those areas of experience within that group of people.
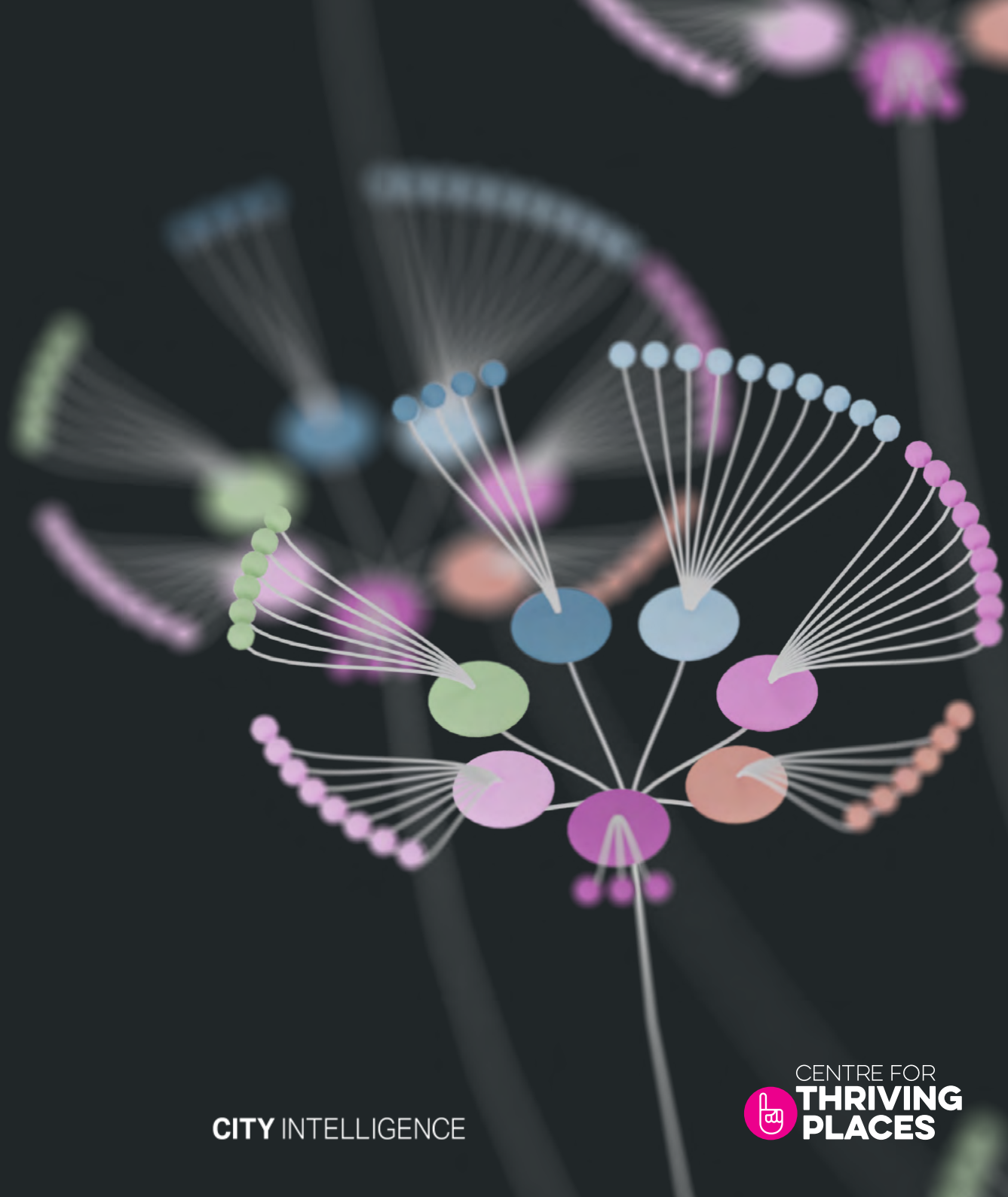
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Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure

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Further useful resources

- ONS Wellbeing Dashboard

- OECD Better Life Index

- The UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Goals Centre

- What Works Centre for Wellbeing and their many resources on wellbeing

- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and accompanying Essential Guide

- Scottish National Performance Framework

This guide has been produced by the Centre for Thriving Places for the GLA to accompany the launch of the London Wellbeing and Sustainability Measure. Our Thriving Places Index is an example of a Wellbeing Economy Framework that is designed for use at place based level. Our jointly authored report, Shared Ingredients for a Wellbeing Economy, also offers a comparison of a number of the frameworks mentioned above, and some further tools and guidance.

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Thank you