



Measuring National Well-being Programme

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www.ons.gov.uk

Overview

Aim of programme

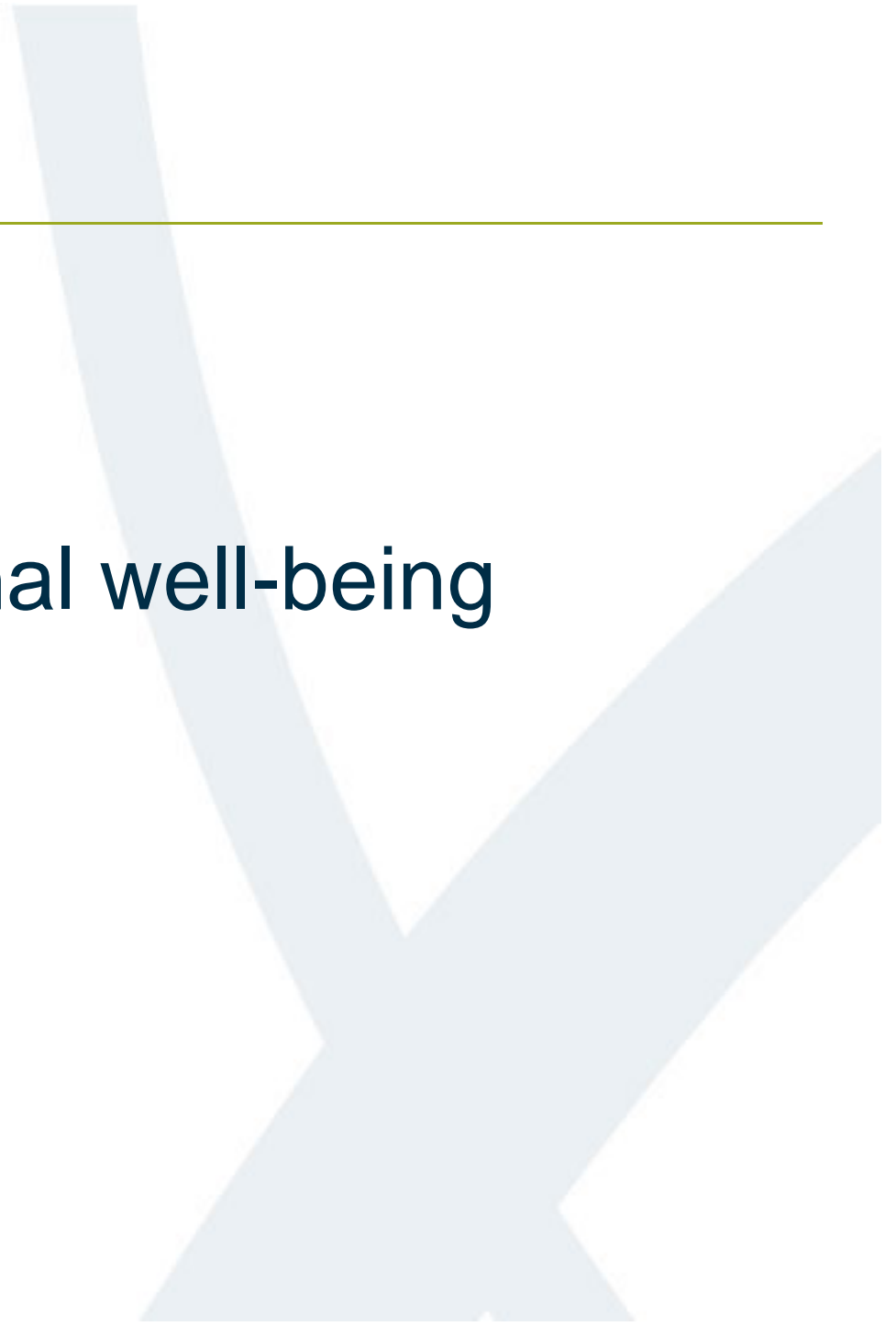
Why?

Individual and national well-being

Measures

Consultation

Outputs



“Government has the power to help improve well-being”



“From April next year we will start measuring our progress as a country not just by how our economy is growing, but by how our lives are improving, not just by our standard of living, but by our quality of life. ...”

PM 25.11.10

‘Statistics are the bedrock of democracy, in a country where we care about what is happening. We must measure what matters - the key elements of national well-being. We want to develop measures based on what people tell us matters most.’

Jil Matheson, National Statistician, 25.11.10

**“Statistics are the mirror
through which we view
society”**

**David Hand: President of the Royal
Statistical Society, 22.02.10**

Aim of the programme

An accepted and trusted set of National Statistics to help people understand and monitor national well-being.

- Multi-dimensional/measures of progress of society
Economy, Quality of Life, Environment & Sustainability

Sharing a common international goal

Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress



OECD
Better Life
Initiative

Beyond **GDP**

Measuring progress, true wealth, and the well-being of nations

National debate

Ran between November 2010 and April 2011, asking 'what matters to you?'

Held 175 events around the country attended by over 7,000 people

Generated over 34,000 responses, mainly from online channels

Helped identify key areas that matter most



What matters?

Health

Relationships

Work

Environment

Education and training

Common underlying
themes of fairness and
equality



Commonly used words in the debate



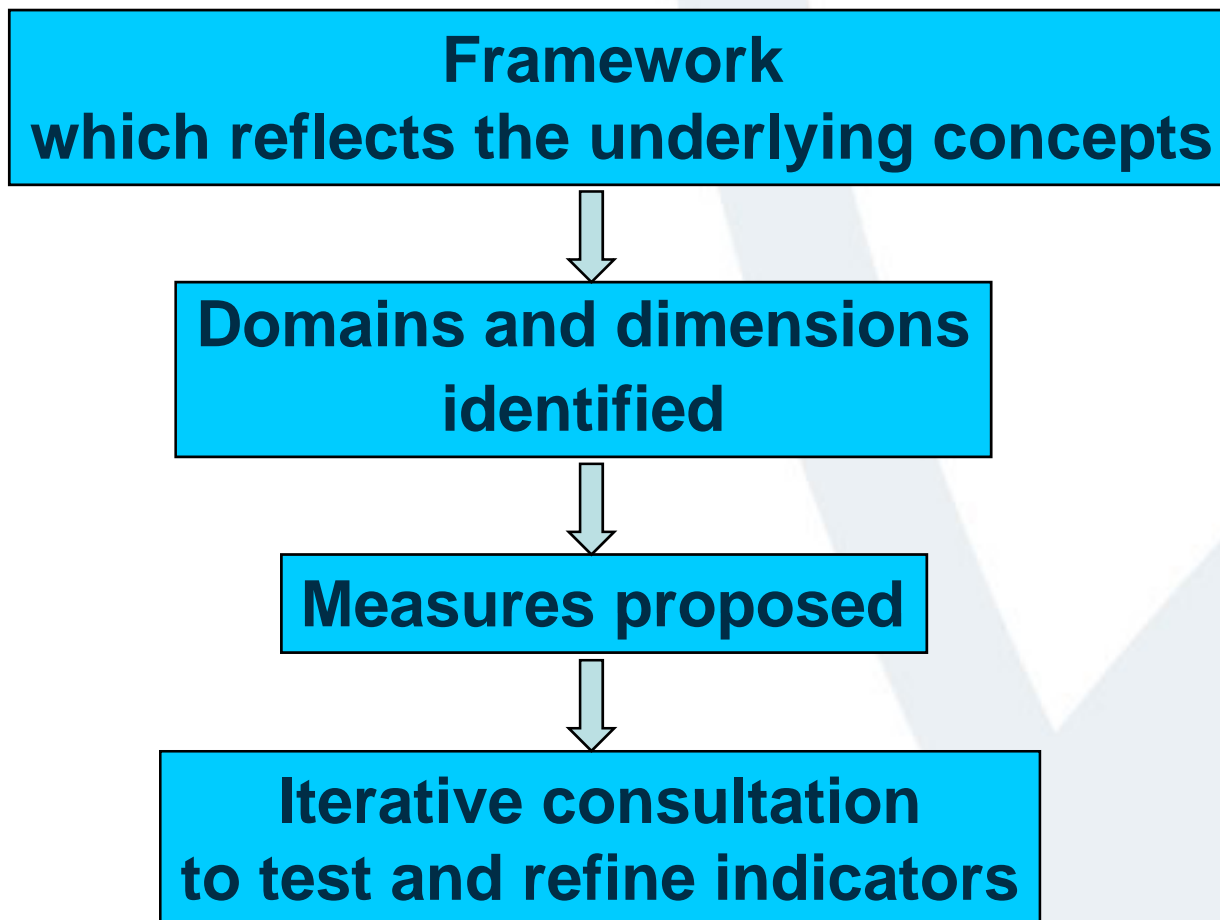
A word cloud of commonly used words in the debate. The words are arranged in a roughly rectangular shape, with 'health' and 'government' being the largest and most prominent. Other large words include 'family', 'relationships', 'happiness', and 'community'. Smaller words include 'belief', 'choice', 'control', 'education', 'employment', 'environment', 'equality', 'freedom', 'friends', 'money', 'purpose', 'religion', 'respect', and 'security'. The words are in various shades of blue and are set against a background of light blue geometric shapes.

belief choice community control education
employment environment equality family
freedom friends government
happiness health money
purpose relationships religion respect security

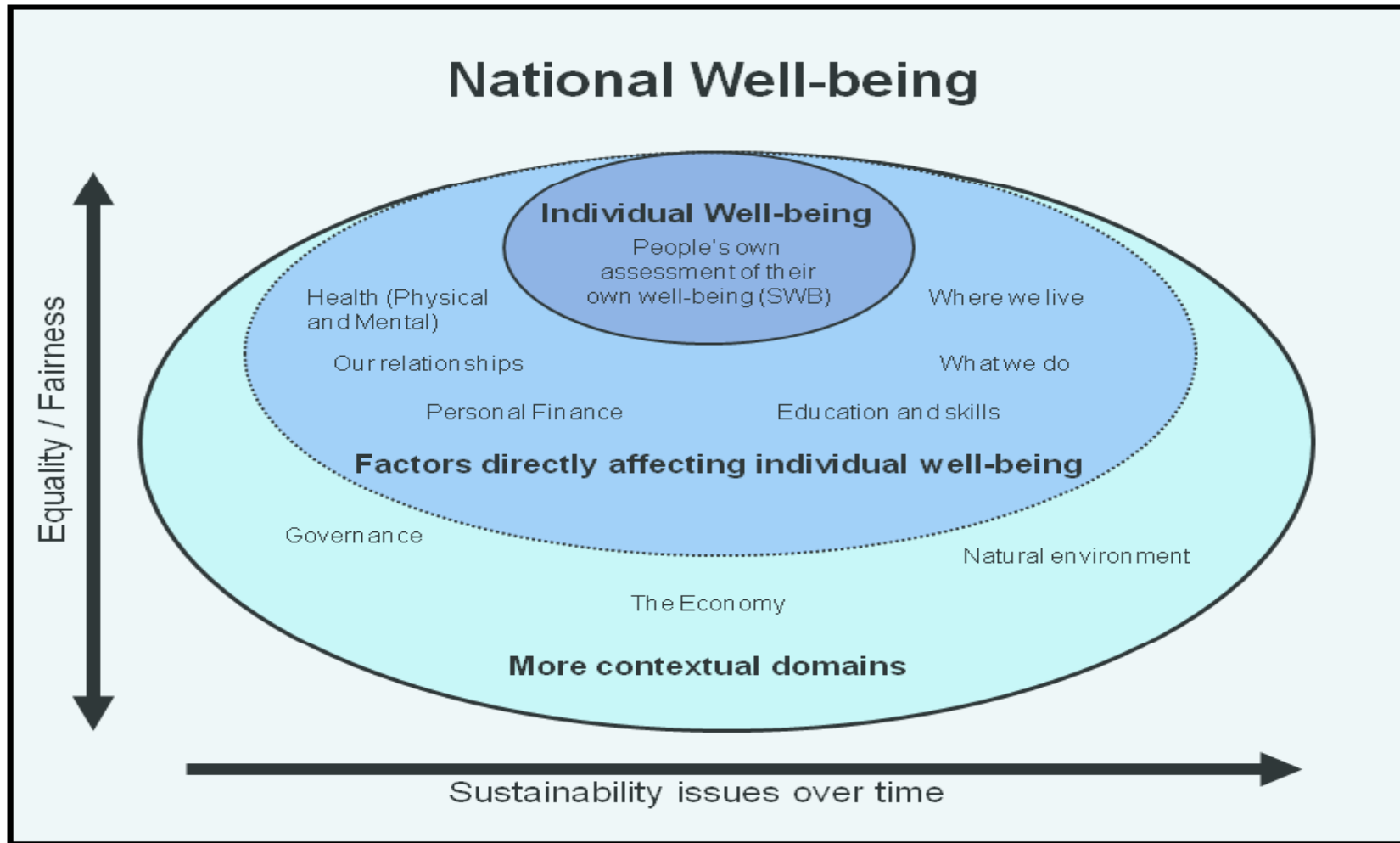
What have we learned?

- Individual well-being is central to understanding national well-being
- Need for objective measures (eg. health, education, access to services)
- Need for subjective measures (eg. life satisfaction, happiness)
- National well-being must also take into account equity, sustainability and locality

How will we measure well-being?



Framework for development of domains and measures



ONS measuring individual subjective well-being

- Draw on several approaches:
 - Evaluation
 - Experience
 - ‘Eudemonic’
- Four top level questions in Integrated Household Survey – from April 2011
- Further questions in Opinions Survey
- ‘Experimental statistics’ – further testing & development planned

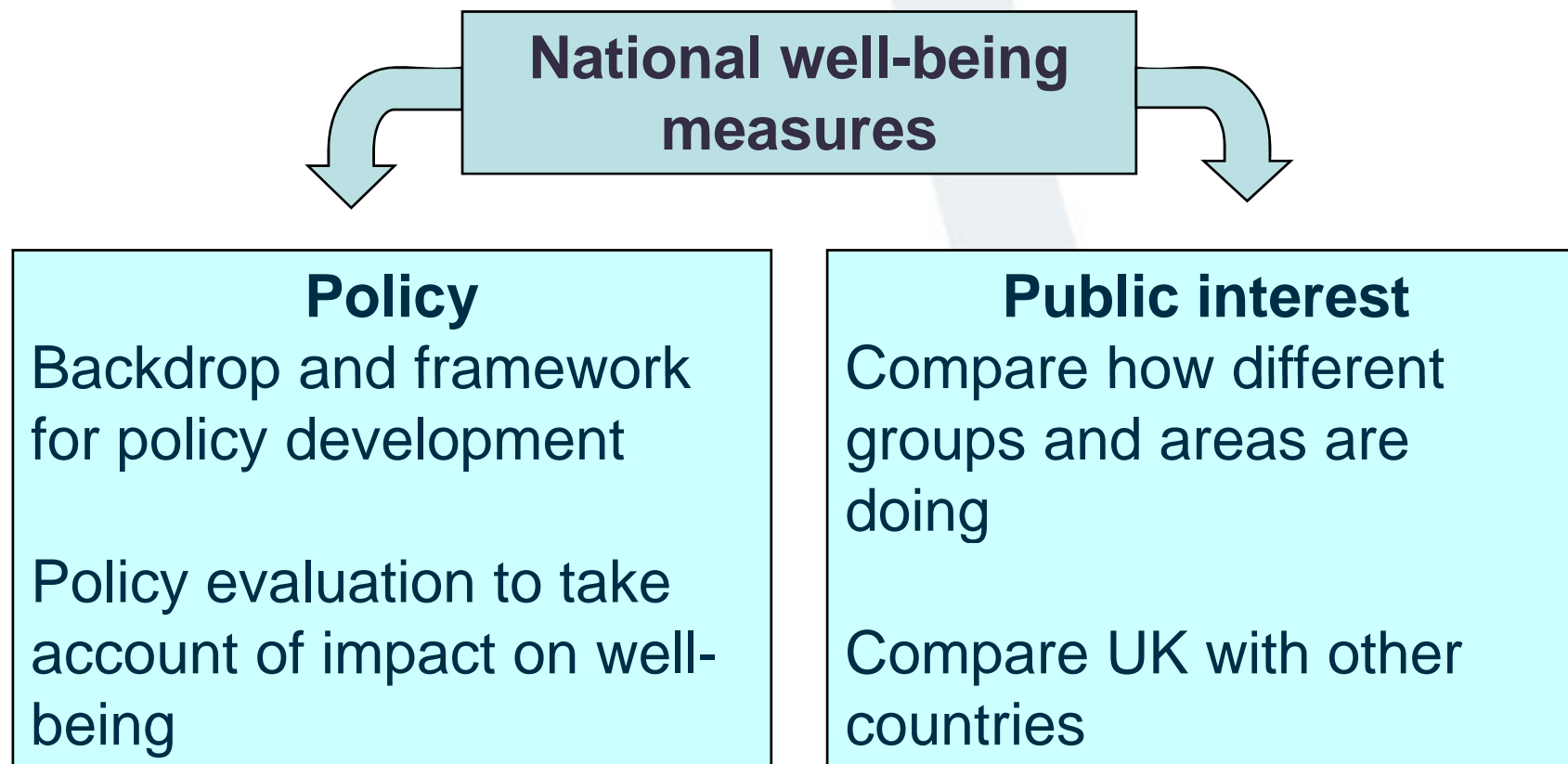
Questions on IHS (all on 0 – 10 scale)

- Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
- Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?
- Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?
- Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

Testing and development

- Use of Opinions Survey (some split level trials) for testing:
 - Interviewer mode effects
 - Question order effects
 - Question wording
 - New and further (eg more detailed) questions
- Cognitive testing:
 - How do people respond to questions?
 - Position of question
 - Response scales

What will measures be used for?



What next?

Ongoing engagement with public, government departments and other stakeholders

Analytical reports on individual subjective well-being (1st Dec 2011 and early 2012)

Report on domain and indicator consultation (Spring 2012)

First annual experimental statistics on individual subjective well-being (July 2012)

First dashboard for national well-being (Summer 2012)

Further information

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/user-guidance/well-being/index.html>

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Consultation: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/about-ons/consultations/open-consultations/measuring-national-well-being/index.html>

Or follow links from

<http://www.ons.gov.uk>