



Complete Agenda

Democracy Service
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

DEMOCRACY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Date and Time

2.00 pm, TUESDAY, 16TH NOVEMBER, 2021

Location

Zoom

*** NOTE ***

Please contact for public access

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(DISTRIBUTED 08/11/21)

DEMOCRACY SERVICES COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP (15)

Plaid Cymru (8)

Councillors

Annwen Daniels
Linda Ann Jones
Judith Mary Humphreys
Mair Rowlands

Annwen Hughes
Olaf Cai Larsen
Edgar Wyn Owen
Gwynfor Owen

Independent (5)

Councillors

Anne Lloyd Jones
Hefin Underwood

Dewi Wyn Roberts
Eryl Jones-Williams

Llais Gwynedd (1)

Councillor Anwen J. Davies

Gwynedd United Independents (1)

Councillor Dewi Owen

Ex-officio Members

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chair for consideration.

4. MINUTES

4 - 8

The Chair shall propose that the minutes of the last meeting of this committee held on 29th June 2021, be signed as a true record.

5. COMMITTEES FRAMEWORK

9 - 14

Submit a draft Committee Operating Framework in order for it to be recommended for the Full Council to adopt

6. MAY ELECTIONS 2022

15 - 20

To submit an update on the preparations for the Local Government Elections, May 2022

7. GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S DIVERSITY DECLARATION

21 - 27

To submit a draft work programme outlining the steps in order to realise the Gwynedd Council Diversity Statement, and recommend for it to be adopted by the Full Council

8. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES DRAFT REPORT

28 - 31

To receive Members' comments on the draft report.

9. MEMBERS SATISFACTION SURVEY

32 - 33

To share the responses received to the Member Satisfaction with the Democracy Services Team Survey

DEMOCRACY SERVICES COMMITTEE THURSDAY, 29 JUNE 2021

Present:

Councillors:

Anne Lloyd Jones (Chair), Annwen Daniels, Anwen Hughes, Judith Humphreys, Eryl Jones-Williams, Cai Larsen, Edgar Wyn Owen, Robert Dewi Owen, Dewi Wyn Roberts, Dylan Bullard.

Officers: Geraint Owen (Head of Corporate Support Department), Iwan Evans (Head of Legal Services), Vera Jones (Democracy and Language Services Manager), Annes Sion (Democracy Team Leader), Sioned Mai Jones and Natalie Lloyd Jones (Democracy Services Officers).

Councillor Dylan Bullard was welcomed to the Committee.

1. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor Dewi Owen was elected as Vice-chair for the 2021/22 year.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors: Annwen Daniels, Mair Rowlands, Linda Ann Jones.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

4. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

5. MINUTES

It was agreed that the minutes of the previous committee meeting held on 18 February 2021 were accurate.

The Chair asked whether dates had been set for the Area Forums. The Democracy and Language Manager stated that there were no definite arrangements to date, but an update would be provided as soon as possible.

6. SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE REPORT

RESOLVED:

To accept the report

The Democracy Team Leader presented the report. She explained that the satisfaction survey had been sent to all members in April, and they had until June to respond to the survey. She explained that the survey contained a range of questions covering the work of the team, future developments, the members' views on future committee arrangements. 38 responses had been received, which was over half the members.

She noted that members were satisfied with the service: 92% had noted Good or Very Good as a response.

Comments were received on the service, and suggestions for developments as follows:-

- Comments regarding the system with the Cabinet, however, it was noted that this system was statutory.
- Requesting more training sessions on time management – they had therefore sent this comment on to the Learning and Development Team.
- Concern had been raised about difficulties in contacting some officers via e-mail.
- Ideas were proposed for extending the tea-break virtual sessions which were already being held for women.
- Requesting further training on Teams and Zoom.
- With regard to future committees, 84% had noted that they were keen to ensure that hybrid committee meetings could be held, with the team noting that they were exploring possible solutions before proceeding to trial options.
- They added that new equipment and material was needed in the chambers to enable this.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:

- A member asked what would happen with the old video conferencing system?
- A member queried if there were plans to obtain the opinions of those who had not completed the survey?
- Members expressed their feeling that virtual committees were good in terms of saving on travelling and costs, however many members noted that they missed attending a normal committee.
- They queried whether any changes could be reviewed after the election in 2022 to see what the new candidates' views are.
- The members thanked the officer for the report

In response the Democracy and Language Services Manager noted:

- The hybrid provision would enable people to join a meeting from the chamber or remotely in their home.
- The Democracy Team Leader added that they could send an e-mail to the members who had not responded to the survey, in order to obtain their opinion on future committee arrangements.
- According to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, members must be given the option to join virtually.

7. PREPARATION FOR 2022 ELECTIONS

RESOLVED:

- a) To accept the report
- b) To approve the general work programme

The Democracy and Language Services Manager presented a paper discussing the main matters being considered in preparation for the 2022 elections, as these matters must be implemented as soon as possible.

The main elements were discussed in detail, including:

Preparation:

- She outlined the main matters being addressed, which included providing comprehensive information to prospective candidates
- She mentioned the project being led by the Elections team that related specifically to schools and encouraging young people to participate in elections, thereby ensuring diversity in democracy.
- She noted that information will be shared as soon as possible regarding the electoral wards.
- The idea of producing a handbook containing the main information for new councillors was discussed.

Information technology provision:

- She explained to the members that they will have the choice of different types of provision in 2022, namely their own provision, or a choice of various devices from the Council.
- In the same vein, she referred to the support and training that would be available together with an information pack for 2022 for new and returning councillors.

Election/results day arrangements:

- The procedure for announcing results was discussed, noting that the service had been commended for its plans during the last election.

Induction and training programme:

- It was explained that there would be welcome days for new and returning members, with sessions beginning soon after the results.
- Because of the current restrictions, it was noted that we need to plan for having members in the chamber and ensuring health and safety as we do this.
- As part of the new training programme there will be a need to secure training for Chairpersons to conduct virtual and hybrid meetings.

During the discussion the following observations were made:

- A member enquired whether they would be returning to counting on the night.
- Concern was expressed about the lack of information to date regarding electoral wards, and that this was unfair to prospective candidates.

- A member enquired how many councillors had resigned and why, in order to see what barriers existed to being a councillor.
- In terms of the IT provision a member expressed that it would be easier to access IT support if everyone had the same device.

In response to these observations:

- It was explained that there would be no change to the current procedure for counting votes, and that the Democracy and Language Services Manager was only discussing the matter of announcing the information.
- She noted that there was research going on in the background to analyse councillors' reasons for resigning.

8. DIVERSITY IN DEMOCRACY

RESOLVED:

To accept the report

The Head of Corporate Support Department gave a foreword, stating that a request had been received from the Welsh Government for all authorities to make a declaration regarding their commitment to ensuring diversity in democracy. He added that the Council was aiming to present the declaration in October together with the work programme, so that there was time to consult with members and officers.

On the tail of this, the Democracy and Language Services Manager noted that a draft plan was being produced, and some actions had now been taken.

During the discussion the following observations were made:

- It was noted that the candidates were elected by the residents of Gwynedd, therefore all the Council could do was encourage diversity. A member added that it was out of the Council's hands as to who was elected in the end, as the electorate tended to elect the person and not their background or gender.
- It was reiterated that it was important that the Council supported whoever stood as a candidate.

In response the Democracy and Language Services Manager noted:

- The Council had a role in creating the environment to allow anyone to stand as a candidate. In addition to this, she stated the need to ensure that the environment was inclusive so that people from all types of backgrounds or gender could stand as a candidate..

9. ACCESS FOR THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

To accept the report and the interim arrangements.

The report by the Head of Legal Services was presented, which explained the arrangements for public access to virtual meetings. The Committee were reminded that public rights had been restricted for a period of time at the start of the Covid pandemic in order to hold virtual meetings. He explained that these regulations had ceased back in May 2021 and that changes had emerged considering this, namely:

- Members and other contributors had a statutory right to attend meetings virtually
- Enabling the public to attend virtual meetings

The Democracy and Language Services Manager elaborated on this by noting that there were arrangements in progress to try to enable hybrid meetings, so that remote attendance at meetings was possible. She added that considerable preparatory work was needed, and the approach would need to be trialled regularly.

During the discussion the following observations were made:

- Members gave thanks for the explanation of the very difficult situation as regards meetings, because of the current restrictions
- A member expressed their opinion that it was not enough for the public to be allowed to merely view the web-cast only, and that it made a difference for the public to be able to be in the same room so that they felt involved in the decision. The member added that if it was a matter affecting society, a member of the public should be present physically, albeit virtually.
- The officers were thanked for the arrangements and the work carried out so that meetings could continue. This gratitude was extended to chairpersons who had adapted to new methods of chairing meetings.

In response the Head of Legal Services and the Democracy and Language Services Manager made the following points:

- It was interim arrangements that had prevented the public from accessing meetings, but those arrangements had now been lifted and the public were now allowed to view and hear deliberations at meetings.
- They had trialled conducting the meeting via a webinar in other committees, and there would be further trialling in the near future, however they had not managed to trial today's committee because of technical difficulties.
- Future arrangements would make it easier for members or the public to attend meetings and committees as there was the option to do so virtually.

The meeting commenced at 10:30am and concluded at 11:55am.

CHAIR

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	16 November 2021
SUBJECT	Operating framework for future committees
PURPOSE	Submit a draft Committee Operating Framework in order for it to be recommended for the Full Council to adopt
AUTHOR	Geraint Owen, Head of Democratic Services in consultation with Iwan Evans, Monitoring Officer

Background.

1. Part 3 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021
 - Allows for remote access for participants to formal democratic meetings.
 - Permits formal democratic meetings to be held at a location or virtually with public access to committees via electronic arrangements
 - Places expectations to publish our arrangements for holding formal democratic meetings
 - Places expectations to Web-cast democratic meetings (regulations are expected which will establish the range of requirement).
2. Several reports have been submitted on various elements already, and the Full Council has adopted the interim arrangements at its meeting on 8 July 2021. An update was submitted to the Full Council meeting on 7 October outlining the practical arrangements (upgrading the chambers in order to hold hybrid meetings) and the other steps that need to be achieved in order to proceed with the work.
3. The report on 7 October noted the need to establish a Committees Framework which would outline which meetings will continue to be held virtually and which meetings will be held at a location with as hybrid.

Meetings and Committees Operating Framework

4. We are reminded in the document 'Interim Statutory Guidance on Multi-location Meetings' published by Welsh Government in May 2021 that the general purpose of amending the act to allow remote access was "... to achieve greater accessibility and improved public participation in local government." It also states that "The convenience of participants and the efficient operation of relevant authorities themselves is important but the needs of the public will come first when these decisions are being made." Any

arrangements established will have to meet the requirements contained in the statutory guidance.

5. The purpose of the paper is to submit a draft Committees Operating Framework in order to seek the comments of the Democratic Services Committee members prior to submitting the Framework to the full Council for adoption.
6. The framework is based on the basic principles established by this committee. Some additions are suggested to the principles (underlined below). Deciding on the arrangements to be established is a matter of discretion. The statutory guidance outlines the considerations to be evaluated in order to draw a conclusion. Local democracy and the requirements of the public are fundamental and leading considerations in deciding on arrangements. The basis for the allocation is in accordance to that noted, being the discussions and decisions in the meetings identified being of high public interest. Holding the meetings at locations, along with webcasting provides the fullest range of opportunities to gain access to discussions. It will also be noted that the draft report recommends for a range of committees to be held through virtual meetings only. Therefore, as a Meetings Framework it reflects the aims of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015

Meetings and Committees Operating Framework Principles

- ✓ We need to build on the success of the virtual meetings which have been held over the past eighteen months.
- ✓ We need to continue to ensure that our Democracy arrangements are transparent for the people of Gwynedd and open for all.
- ✓ We should strive to hold most meetings virtually in order to:
 - Contribute to the carbon reduction agenda by reducing travelling for Councillors and Officers, particularly as the Council has declared a climate emergency.
 - Promote diversity in Democracy by encouraging the flexibility of remote access to virtual meetings and thereby attracting more people who work and young parents
 - Use Councillors' and Officers' time more sensibly by reducing travelling requirements
 - Reduce travelling costs

- Promote positive behaviour and participation

7. It is also important to remember our success over the past eighteen months. We have managed to hold every committee effectively, virtually, in both languages, and are now web-casting many of them. In addition, attendance at meetings has generally been higher since they have been held virtually.
8. We have listened to the observations which have been offered by you as Councillors in various meetings and in response to the recent questionnaire. It is fair to conclude that there are 75 different responses from you as Councillors for the ideal situation in the future when discussing individual committees, with everyone considering their own personal situation.
9. We have also received observations from the people of Gwynedd. At the Planning Committee, observations were received stating that the current arrangements allowing people to attend virtually or record a video clip to be played at the committee are an improvement on the previous arrangements as they are more convenient for the people of Gwynedd. On the contrary, others have expressed their frustration in watching meetings via web-cast only as it does not offer the same experience as attending the public gallery in a chamber as Members are not as aware of the presence of the public when reaching decisions.
10. Whilst the framework seeks to respond to the main messages which have been voiced in recent months, the emphasis is on ensuring a sustainable framework for the future, whoever will be elected as Councillors after May 2022, based on the above principles and the statutory guidance.

What is being proposed?

11. A Framework for the Council's formal meetings is submitted in accordance with the requirements of the Act. It is probably sensible to develop an internal framework noting expectations for other meetings of which Councillors are a part, such as internal meetings, regional and national meetings and training. This will be reported upon in the future.
12. As already noted, the requirements of the Act mean that meetings may be held entirely virtually or by providing remote access where a specific location such as the Chamber has been identified (namely a hybrid meeting).

13. It is important that we do not slip back to the old arrangements because of custom and lose sight of the principles noted above. This is our opportunity as a Council to innovate and set sustainable operating expectations for the future.
14. In order to develop the framework on robust foundations, the simple principle to follow is:
 - a) to hold formal committee meetings virtually wherever possible.
 - b) to hold hybrid meetings when there is a high level of public interest.
15. Committee members will remember the detailed work undertaken to identify the committees to be web-cast originally, with the focus on matters of public interest. The Full Council, Cabinet and Planning Committee meetings were identified originally, with web-casting arrangements later extended to Scrutiny Committee also. It is recommended that the same procedure could be followed to identify the committees that are to be held as hybrid, as noted above.
16. Where meetings are held as hybrid, it is recommended that Councillors seriously consider whether they have to travel to the location, bearing in mind that the circumstances in the chambers and offices will not be the same as they were previously. Note that the majority of officers will be attending meetings remotely and that it will not be possible to pop to see officers in the offices before or after a meeting.
17. There are resource implications to holding hybrid meetings, and it is anticipated that a cohort of officers from the Democracy and Language Service who support the committees with technical aspects and simultaneous translation will have to attend the location when hybrid meetings are held.
18. A table outlining the impact of the above recommendation on a committee by committee basis can be seen in **Appendix A**. It is recognised that there would be exceptions to the arrangements, such as the first meetings following elections. Also, it will be necessary to review our arrangements within a reasonable time-frame.
19. Furthermore, we presume that participating in a hybrid meeting, and particularly chairing a hybrid meeting, will be a very different experience and will require different and new skills. It will be necessary to identify good practice for chairing such meetings and offer training for Councillors.

Access to the Public

20. Alongside the above arrangements, it is necessary to ensure and state how we intend to ensure access to the public to our committees. For virtual committees, public access will be provided by watching the web-cast or by contacting to gain alternative access. Details will be provided on the front of the agenda as currently happens.
21. For hybrid meetings, where a specific location is noted, the public will be able to gain access to the back of the chamber. If the meeting is also web-cast, public access will also be provided via the web-cast.
22. This all raises a question regarding the previous arrangements where the Planning Committee held its meetings in several locations.

Equality Act 2010

23. The Council is subject to a duty under the 2010 Equality Act to give due attention to the need to remove illegal discrimination, harassment and oppression, along with any other behaviours prohibited under the provisions of the Act. In addition, there is a need to increase equal opportunities and foster good relationships between those with protected characteristics and those who do not have protected characteristics (the General Equality Duty). In accordance with the requirement in Wales, and in order to address this duty, an Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared and updated for hybrid meetings. It is appended in **Appendix B** and did not find impacts which would lead to changing the recommendation.

APPENDIX A

Type of meeting	Committees in question
Hybrid	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full Council• Cabinet• Planning• Scrutiny
Virtually only	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Democratic Services Committee• Audit and Governance Committee• Standards Committee• Language Committee• SACRE• Local Joint Consultative Committee• Pensions Committee• Chief Officers Appointment Committee *• Central/General Licensing Committee (and the Central and General Licensing Sub-committees)• Joint Planning Policy Committee• Any sub-committee
Possible exceptions	<p>Employment Appeals Committee (dependent on the individual's request).</p> <p>Chief Officers Appointment Committee - consideration when interviews are held - virtual otherwise</p> <p>Committees and Sub-Committees where quasi-judicial hearings are held</p>

Porthmadog/Pwllheli/Aberdyfi/Barmouth Harbour Consultative Committees will be considered at a later date.

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	16 November 2021
TITLE	Local Government Elections May 2022
PURPOSE	To submit an update on the preparations for the Local Government Elections, May 2022
RECOMMENDATION	To accept the report for information To create an Election Sub-group to look in greater detail at some elements of the preparations.
AUTHOR	Annes Sion Democracy Team Leader

FOREWORD

1. We are all aware that Local Government elections are to be held in May 2022. As a result, there are considerable preparations to be made - by you as elected members, by the political groups, and by us as officers.
2. The work has already commenced, and this report provides an update of the draft plans already in place and the further work which is to be achieved over the coming months to prepare for the Election in May and the period immediately afterwards.
3. Democracy Week
As part of the preparations for the election, a democracy awareness week was held in October this year in order to promote awareness of democracy and encourage diversity among the candidates standing for election. The campaign was held via social websites and included sharing a short video of the experiences of some of the existing Councillors, statistics and useful information. This information is also on the Council Website.
4. The activities reached 14,000 people on Facebook, and over 2,000 people viewed the video of the selection of Councillors. Messages will continue to be shared on social websites over the coming months to raise awareness and interest about the election and to encourage diverse people to stand for election.
5. As part of the preparations for the week, the 'Being a Councillor' page on the website was updated to ensure that the latest information is available to prospective candidates. Over the coming months, the information will be shared regularly, specifically for the element 'How to stand for Election'. We are currently expecting some changes, but continue to wait for statutory guidance to confirm the situation.
6. As part of the week, 'Question and Answer' sessions were arranged for prospective candidates to receive further information about being a Councillor from officers. It must be noted that nobody registered to attend the sessions, which was very disappointing. We believe that many factors led to this, such as not enough advertising, the date of the event being during the half term holiday and it may have been held too early. We will arrange further sessions in January 2022 which will be a further opportunity for individuals to enquire about the role of Councillor, the expectations on them, the support that is available,

as well as the steps that need to be followed in order to stand for election. We will also reconsider how we raise awareness about these sessions.

7. Member Training.

As part of the preparations for the election, work has been carried out to look at the training programme for Councillors during the first year after the election. Prioritising mandatory training, particularly for new members, is very important in order to equip them with the necessary information to fulfil the role. However, it is a difficult task to ensure that we strike a balance between providing the necessary information and ensuring that they are not drowned in too much information and training.

8. A draft programme of the training offered as well as a rough timetable for the first year can be seen in **Appendix 1**. We would appreciate any observations on the draft programme.

9. Members' Handbook

In 2017, it was decided not to give an information pack to Councillors during the induction days in order to strengthen the message that Gwynedd Council is working towards being a paper-less Council. The Council has declared a climate emergency and continues to aim to be paper-less, however, in reflecting on the lessons learned from 2017 and having listened to Councillors' comments, we believe that it would be beneficial to create a short handbook at the beginning of the term. It will serve as a directory which provides the necessary information about the Council, Committees, salaries and useful contacts, referring the Councillors to where to find more information.

10. A draft version of the handbook has been developed over the past few months, but we believe that having members' input on its content will ensure that the information provided is useful to Councillors.

11. Members' Intranet

Work is continuing to develop the Members' intranet to ensure that the information is current for you as Councillors. I would like to draw your attention specifically to a new element which has been added recently, namely "Safety".

12. Your safety as Councillors while you work in the community is clearly important, and this has become increasingly important as a result of Covid and the death of the MP, Sir David Amess. We have developed a short guide for you to consider while you work in the community, and we have also provided links to several other useful sites.

13. We are continuing to develop the Members' Intranet regularly and would appreciate any observations.

14. In order to receive observations and input, we are keen to establish an Election Sub-group of approximately four or five members of the Committee in order to seek an opinion on various aspects of the preparations over the next few months.

15. DECISION SOUGHT

- **To accept the report for information**
- **To establish an Election Sub-group of approximately four or five members of the committee to look in greater detail at some elements of the preparations, such as training, members' handbook and the members' intranet.**



Member Training - Titles for the forthcoming year (May 2022)

When?	Title	Work field	Medium	Relevant to:-
FIRST DAYS	INDUCTION	Welcome to the Council: A brief presentation about Gwynedd Council including reference to Ffordd Gwynedd and the Role of the Welsh Language.	Presentation (virtual or face-to-face).	
		Code of Conduct - Overview and Signing	As above	
		Introduction to Gwynedd - Simple quiz	As above	
		Information about Democracy arrangements	As above	
		Support for Members, including Learning and Development - Developmental Opportunities	As above	
		Practical issues (salaries, Self-service, Members' Intranet etc.)	As above	
		During the day there will also be an opportunity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have support for IT/choose their device, sign to accept the post, • join a political group, • take a photograph, • ask for more information from the Democracy Team and the Learning and Development Team 	As above	
FIRST MONTH	WHAT MAKES A GOOD COUNCILLOR?	E-learning module or presentation Experienced members to talk about their experiences and any problems / difficulties. Tips for communicating with Constituents, how to communicate through social media etc.	Virtual / face to face / E-learning module Recording sessions and place them on the Intranet	
	PRESENTATION BY COUNCIL HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS	Overview of Departments' responsibilities and an opportunity for Members to ask questions	Virtual / face-to-face Recording sessions and place them on the Intranet	
	PLANNING / STANDARDS / LICENSING COMMITTEES	Planning Committee - committee members The Planning Process - A session for Members who have items arising in Committees shortly	Virtual / face-to-face Virtual / face-to-face	Members of the Committee Specific members

		Introduction to Planning - A session for all Members	Virtual / face-to-face	All Members
	WORKSPACE ASSESSMENT	Assessing the workspace in the home through a questionnaire/module	Virtual	Available to all, and immediately
	DEALING WITH INFORMATION ABOUT PEOPLE : YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS A MEMBER	Understanding the legal implications of the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 Understanding the requirements of the Act Understand how to comply with the Act	Virtual / face-to-face / E-module	New Members and any Member who hasn't completed title
FIRST THREE MONTHS	CODE OF CONDUCT	A more detailed session following the presentation/summary in the Induction	Virtual / face-to-face	All Members
	CHAIRING MEETINGS (Leading and Contributing to Effective Committee)	Training for Chairs and Vice-chairs	Virtual / face-to-face	Chairs and Vice-chairs
	PERSONAL SAFETY	Lone Working	Virtual / face-to-face	All Members
	INTRODUCTION TO GWYNEDD	Understanding information and facts about the County	Video on the Members' Intranet	All Members
	SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELL-BEING ACT	Understanding the implications of the Act for Gwynedd	Virtual / face-to-face	New Members and returning Members are welcome
	THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT	Understanding the requirements of the Act and understanding specific requirements of the Act from your perspective as a Councillor	Virtual / face-to-face	New Members and returning Members are welcome
	COMMITTEES	Scrutiny, Audit, Licensing Committees Training	Virtual / face-to-face	Committee Members
UP TO FIRST 12 MONTHS	SOCIAL MEDIA	How to make social media work for Councillors, what sort of things to share, how not to behave on social media, bullying etc.	Virtual / face to face / E-learning module	New Members and any other Member who would wish to attend
	SAFE LEADERSHIP	Understand the legal requirements of the Council in terms of Health and Safety	Virtual / face-to-face	New Members and Members who haven't done the training

	EQUALITY	Your responsibility as an Elected Member in the area of equality when making decisions	Virtual / face-to-face	New Members and Members who haven't done the training
	SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS	Your responsibility as a Member	Virtual / face to face / E-learning module	New Members and Members who haven't done the training
	CORPORATE PARENTING	Your responsibility as a Member	Virtual / face to face / E-learning module	New Members and Members who haven't done the training
	THE ROLE OF WELSH IN THE COMMUNITY	Improve the understanding and awareness of the Council's responsibility to promote the Welsh language across the County and what they can do to help that in their communities	Virtual / face-to-face	New Members and Members who haven't done the training
ON DEMAND	IT TRAINING	One-to-one sessions	Virtual / face-to-face	For those who need it
	WORKSPACE ASSESSMENT	Assessing the workspace in the home through a questionnaire/module	Virtual	Available to all, and immediately
	SOCIAL MEDIA	How to make social media work for Councillors, what sort of things to share and not share, how not to behave on social media, bullying etc.	Virtual / face-to-face	Available for anyone who wishes to have a one-to-one session

GWYNEDD COUNCIL



MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE OF MEETING	16 November 2021
TITLE OF ITEM	Gwynedd Council's Diversity Declaration
PURPOSE	To submit a draft work programme outlining the steps in order to realise the Gwynedd Council Diversity Statement, and recommend for it to be adopted by the Full Council
CONTACT OFFICER	Geraint Owen, Head of Democratic Services

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

It is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee considers the work programme to support the Diversity Statement and recommend it to the Full Council meeting on 2 December, 2021.

2. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Foreword

3. At the Full Council meeting on 7 October 2021, Gwynedd Council adopted a Diversity Statement in order to state clearly and publicly our commitment in Gwynedd to diversity in democracy. The statement can be seen in **Appendix A**.
4. We must ensure that the Council is taking specific steps in an attempt to promote diversity in democracy and realise the above statement. The Council resolved to ask the Democratic Services Committee to lead on developing a full work programme in order to realise the statement as Committee members have already been leading in the field in Gwynedd for some years.
5. Work is already being undertaken to move the agenda forwards. It includes
 - close collaboration on the 16 and 17-year-old franchise project.
 - Holding many varied activities for the Gwynedd democracy week, held during the week commencing 18 October. A series of messages appeared on social media in an attempt to encourage individuals to stand as a Councillor.
 - Discussing with Political Group Leaders on their specific role to promote diversity in democracy in encouraging and selecting individuals to stand for election in May 2022.

6. A draft work programme has been included in **Appendix B**. Therefore, it is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee offers observations and improvements to the work programme, and to adopt it for it to be submitted to the Full Council on 2 December, 2021.

APPENDIX A - Gwynedd Council Diversity Statement

This Council commits to being a Diverse Council. Therefore, we wish to reflect the community in which we live by increasing the number of females, young people, disabled people, people from the Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and people who identify as LGBTQ+ who stand in the elections to be a Gwynedd Councillor.

We commit to

- *Provide a clear public commitment to improving diversity in democracy*
- *Demonstrate an open and welcoming culture to all, promoting the highest standards of behaviour and conduct*
- *Promote actions as a Diverse Council ahead of the 2022 local elections*
- *Work towards the standards set out in the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development*
- *Demonstrate a commitment to a duty of care for Councillors*
- *Consider how to provide flexibility in council business by reviewing our practical arrangements*
- *Continue to encourage all members to take up the allowances and salaries to which they are entitled, particularly any reimbursement for costs of care, so that all members receive fair remuneration for their work and that the role of member is not limited to those who can afford it.*
- *Work towards ensuring that councillors from under-represented groups are represented whenever possible in high profile, high influence roles.*

APPENDIX B - DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME

In committing to being a Diverse Council, we will:

Commitment	What are we going to do?	Timetable
<p><i>Provide a clear public commitment to improving diversity in democracy</i></p>	<p>Full Council adopts the diversity statement.</p> <p>Enquire with members about their experiences, including which obstacles they have faced and what additional steps can be taken to remove these obstacles. Building on the work already carried out with the group of Women Councillors.</p> <p>Update the 'being a councillor' page on the website, working with the elections team</p> <p>Hold a campaign, under the banner of the 'Democracy Week' in the first instance, to raise the public's awareness of the role of councillors, their role within the community and how to become a councillor. Develop a strapline for the week such as "do you want your voice to be heard? Why not stand as a Councillor?"</p> <p>Continue with the above 'marketing' campaign to raise awareness of the role of councillor, working with the elections team to draw attention to the benefits of voting, the voting rights of young people aged 16 and 17, and raising awareness of the Local Government elections at the same time. All of which with the intention of encouraging individuals to consider being a councillor.</p> <p>Continue to webcast meetings in order to be open and transparent. Consider developing ways of raising the public's awareness of the meetings being held and the items under consideration.</p>	<p>07/10/2021</p> <p>November/December 2021</p> <p>September/October 2021</p> <p>October 2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p><i>Demonstrate an open and welcoming culture to all, promoting the highest standards of behaviour and conduct</i></p>	<p>Raise the awareness of the current political group leaders to the possibilities of promoting diversity in democracy and the requirements regarding promoting the standards of conduct from the highest level in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, discussing the possibility of appointing Diversity Ambassadors within the political groups.</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive induction programme based on the Welsh Local Government Association induction framework to include training on the</p>	<p>September 2021 and November 2021</p> <p>April 2022</p>

Commitment	What are we going to do?	Timetable
	<p>Code of Conduct (including respect towards others), and Equality and diversity (including self-awareness and conduct).</p> <p>Continue to develop a training programme annually in consultation with the Democratic Services Committee in order to offer continuous development.</p>	April 2022
<p><i>Promote actions as a Diverse Council ahead of the 2022 local elections</i></p>	<p>Hold a programme of on-line activities during the Gwynedd democracy week in order to promote the role of Councillors and raise awareness of Local Government elections and encourage individuals to consider standing (an ongoing programme starting in October 2021, repeated at various intervals)</p> <p>Offer a question and answer session for people who are considering standing for election to conclude the Gwynedd democracy week. It will include an explanation of the role of councillor, expectations, commitment, opportunities, support etc. Videos of various councillors sharing their experiences are likely to be a part of the event.</p> <p>Offer observations as part of the consultation to the candidate survey, and then encourage every individual standing to respond to the Welsh Government survey.</p> <p>Attend a diversity in democracy workshop held by the Welsh Local Government Association in order to learn from a panel experienced in supporting some of the groups which have traditionally been under-performing, particularly in politics. Adjust the work programme following the above if relevant.</p>	<p>October 2021 and January 2022</p> <p>October 2021 and January 2022</p> <p>November 2021 March/April 2022</p> <p>November 2021</p>
<p><i>Work towards the standards set out in the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development</i></p>	<p>Develop a full induction and training programme as noted above.</p> <p>Consider developing mentoring and/or shadowing arrangements as part of the programme to support new Councillors.</p>	<p>April 2022</p> <p>April 2022</p>
<p><i>Demonstrate a commitment to a duty of care for Councillors</i></p>	<p>Consider holding specific training for new Councillors on lone working, personal safety, work-life balance, bullying and social media as part of the induction programme over the course of the first year.</p>	April 2022

Commitment	What are we going to do?	Timetable
	<p>Continue to offer mental well-being and further support sessions for members.</p> <p>Provide advice and guidance on practical matters in terms of setting out your workspace properly - information on the councillors' intranet site.</p> <p>Offer an opportunity for Councillors who wish to note an official address rather than a home address on the website.</p> <p>Raise the awareness of political leaders of the duty under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 regarding promoting good conduct.</p>	<p>Now / On-going</p> <p>Now / On-going</p> <p>Now / On-going</p> <p>November 2021</p>
<p><i>Consider how to provide flexibility in council business by reviewing our practical arrangements</i></p>	<p>Implement hybrid meetings and fully virtual meetings in order to make better use of Councillors' time.</p> <p>Hold a survey following the 2022 election on the timing of the Council's main committees.</p> <p>Consider school holiday periods (avoiding them where possible) when creating the Council's annual meetings calendar, consulting with the Democratic Services Committee before submitting to the full Council for adoption.</p> <p>Ensure training and assistance for Councillors to have the technical skills to be able to take part in virtual and/or hybrid meetings.</p>	<p>Currently developing</p> <p>2022/23</p> <p>Annual</p> <p>on-going</p>
<p><i>Continue to encourage all members to take up the allowances and salaries to which they are entitled, particularly any reimbursement for costs of care, so that all members receive fair remuneration for their work and that the role of member is not limited to those who can afford it.</i></p>	<p>Information about financial remuneration to be a part of the sessions for the public during the democracy week, information on our website, and information in the Councillors' handbook which is being developed for the induction sessions.</p> <p>Salaries are paid automatically to Councillors in accordance with the Adjudication Panel for Wales, unless an individual Councillor notes differently.</p> <p>Councillors are reminded regularly of the reimbursement of care costs that is available - via the newsletter of the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee and by political Group Leaders.</p>	<p>October 2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

Commitment	What are we going to do?	Timetable
<i>Work towards ensuring that councillors from under-represented groups are represented whenever possible in high profile, high influence roles.</i>	Work with political group leaders to ensure that consideration is given to under-represented groups for high profile, high influence roles.	2022/23

Agenda Item 8

Date of meeting:	16 November 2021
Subject	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales draft report
Recommendation	Members of the committee are asked for their comments in order to respond to the recommendations included in the draft report.
Contact officer:	Vera Jones, Democracy and Language Services Manager

Background and relevant considerations?

1. The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales publish a draft report in the autumn each year. The draft report outlines the intentions for the following financial year. The draft was published in October 2021, with an opportunity to respond to the recommendations by the 26th November, 2021.
2. The changes included in the draft, should they take effect, become operational for the Councillors elected following the May 2022 elections.

Role of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales

3. The Panel is responsible for setting the level of remuneration for Councillors in Wales, and their role is totally independent. From inception, the Panel has consistently and vigorously expressed that local democracy and the governance of public services are not cost free and need to be valued if we are to enable everyone to participate. It is important to promote a culture which encourages take up of remuneration to ensure that people from all walks of life can participate confidently in our democracy.
4. In addition, the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires the Panel to have regard to the financial implication of its decisions. The Panel are required to balance the two elements side by side annually when making their decisions.
5. The Panel have noted that they paused to reflect on the impact of the decisions they take and the messages they are communicating when making this year's determinations. They have also engaged widely with stakeholders prior to determining the draft decisions.

The Panel's Main decisions

6. A full copy of the draft report is available on the link below.
<https://gov.wales/independent-remuneration-panel-wales-draft-annual-report-2022-2023>
7. Remuneration for Elected Members. In 2009, the Panel decided the average work commitment of an elected councillor of a principal council was three working days. The maximum basic salary was set at £13,868. This reflected three fifths of the then median gross earnings of full-time male employees resident in Wales as reported in the Annual Survey of Hourly Earnings (ASHE) published by the Office of National Statistics. The Panel considered it was appropriate to use this figure, as it was comparable with constituents' pay, (adjusted for the part-time nature of the work of a member with no senior responsibilities).
8. Since 2009, the Panel has had a duty to take account of affordability and acceptability and set amounts for the basic salary that varied but have not kept pace with measures of inflation or other comparators. Table 1 shows the percentage increases to the basic salary and a selection of alternative benchmarks from 2013 to 2021.
9. From 2013 to 2020 the basic salary of other Welsh elected members increased by 9% (£13,175 to £14,368).
 A Senedd Cymru member's salary increased by 28.6% (£53,852 to £69,272)
 An MP's salary increased by 23.4% (£66,396 to £81,932).

 MS salaries were realigned in 2017 and MPs in 2015.
10. For further context, the Panel also notes that councillors in Scotland receive £18,604 a year and in 2018 councillors in Northern Ireland received £15,486. Comparison with England is more difficult as the structure of local government is different, although there are examples where members are paid significantly more than their Welsh counterparts.
11. Table 1 (taken from the draft annual report) shows the basic salary of backbench councillors has fallen significantly behind the Welsh average (median) salary and public sector pay.

Table 1 – Yearly percentage increases to basic salary, benchmarks and alternative measures 2013 to 2021

Annual Report Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
IRPW Basic	0.00	0.00	0.95	0.00	0.00	0.75	3.49	2.52
ASHE*	4.00	0.60	1.00	2.70	1.00	2.10	5.10	0.60
NJC **	1.00	0.43	2.05	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.60	2.75

MS	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	17.70	2.10	3.50	0.00	2.40
MP	1.00	1.00	10.30	1.30	1.40	1.80	2.70	3.10	0.00
RPI***	3.00	2.40	1.00	1.80	3.60	3.30	2.60	1.50	3.80
CPI****	2.60	1.50	0.00	0.70	2.70	2.50	1.80	0.90	2.00
NLW	1.90	3.00	3.10	7.50	4.20	4.40	4.90	6.20	2.18
LWF	3.47	2.68	2.61	5.10	2.42	3.55	2.86	3.33	2.15

** NJC final employers offer July 2021; *** RPI and CPI**** are for July 2021.

Wales Median Average (median) gross weekly earnings by Welsh local areas and year (£)
(gov.wales)

MS [Remuneration Board](#)

MP [Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority](#)

RPI all items [Retail Price Index](#)


CPI [Consumer Price Inflation](#)

NLW [National Living Wage](#)

LWF [Living Wage Foundation](#)

Table 2 - Basic yearly salary and actual full time and 3 day (60%) equivalents of Welsh national average pay 2013 to 2021

Year	IRPW basic salary	Wales Median ASHE	
		full time	3 day
2013	13,175	24,499	14,699
2014	13,175	24,655	14,793
2015	13,300	24,915	14,949
2016	13,300	25,643	15,386
2017	13,300	25,904	15,542
2018	13,400	26,476	15,886
2019	13,868	27,828	16,697
2020	14,218	27,974	16,784
2021	14,368	October 2021	October 2021

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12. The Panel believes that local elections in May 2022 provide an opportune time to rectify the imbalance between the basic salary of councillors and the average salaries of their constituents. The basic salary of councillors of principal councils elected in the May 2022 local elections will be reset to align with the 2020 ASHE. This will be £16,800.
 13. Contributions towards Cost of Care and Personal Assistance. The Panel noted that they remain concerned that very few members are utilising the provision in the framework for financial support in respect of care. They note that encouraging take up of the financial support for members will send a positive signal that members with these responsibilities are welcome and valued.
 14. They are encouraging the Democracy Services Committee to continue to encourage and facilitate greater use of this element of the Remuneration Framework. As part of the arrangements for the Elections in May 2022 we will inform potential candidates of the support available.
 15. Other matters – The draft report also refers to the relevant changes due to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) 2021 Act, in particular with regards to arrangements for Job Sharing Arrangements.

Timetable

16. The Timetable for the changes have been noted as below:
 1. For the period 1 April 2022 to 8 May 2022, all of the Determinations contained in the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Annual Report 2021/2022 will continue to apply in respect of principal councils and community and town councils.
 2. With effect from 9 May 2022, (the new municipal year) the determinations set out in this Report in Sections 3 and 13 will apply to principal councils and community and town councils.

Recommendations

17. Members of the Democracy Services Committee are asked for their comments in order to respond to the consultation by the 26th November, 2021.

Agenda Item 9

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	16 November 2021
SUBJECT	Member Satisfaction Survey
PURPOSE	To share the responses received to the Member Satisfaction with the Democracy Services Team Survey
RECOMMENDATION	The Democratic Services Committee is asked to note the observations and accept the report.
AUTHOR	Annes Sion Democracy Team Leader

1. We are eager to improve our service continually and provide the support that Councillors need. Therefore, as a result of recent discussions, it was decided to send out the Members Satisfaction with the Democracy Services Team Survey more regularly than once a year. It was sent to all members during the second half of October.
2. A range of questions were asked, including the satisfaction with the work of the team and any developments the team could make to the future.
3. 23 responses were received, and this report outlines the main messages highlighted by the members.
4. In terms of satisfaction with the service offered to members, 88% stated that the service was very good or good, with one Councillor stating it was acceptable, one Councillor noting that the service was poor and one noting poor / very poor.
5. A number of additional responses were received, which included the following:

"Papers always on time, e-mails answered promptly. You have coped well with the change to virtual meetings"

"I have always found the support from the Democracy Service to be very good both in providing answers and providing information."

"The Service has assisted and advised in a very effective and extremely professional way over the years.
I am very grateful.
Thank you."
6. Members were asked if there were any developments or changes the team could implement to further support members in their role as Councillors. Among the observations, dissatisfaction with the Cabinet system was noted once more, but

- it must be emphasised that this is the statutory system and that there are no steps the Team can take to change this system.
7. The individual who responded saying that the service was poor expressed his dissatisfaction towards the work of another department within the Council - the observations have already been forwarded to the relevant department.
 8. The member who noted that the service was very poor / poor, his/her frustration about the availability of Council Officers along with the response from Officers from some of the Council's Departments to his/her enquiries as a Councillor. The Head of Democratic Services is working with the Chief Executive and heads of department across the Council to address concerns about the ability to respond to queries in a timely manner.
 9. A further conversation was had with the individual who noted that the service was unacceptable in order to understand his observations, and consequently steps were put in place in order to prevent any future problems.
 10. In terms of the other observations, requests were made from a few members for direct contact phone numbers for Council officers. It is stressed once more that a list of useful contacts can be found on the Members' Intranet and is regularly updated by the Departments.
 11. One member expressed a wish to re-start meetings in the chamber and a report on this matter is on today's agenda.

NEXT STEPS

12. We have already stated that we are eager to improve our service and respond to Councillors' requirements. In addition to the survey twice a year, we intend to develop a space on the members' intranet where any member can submit observations at any time. Also, we believe that talking to individuals will give us a better insight, therefore, we intend to try to have a conversation with two or three Councillors every month in order to discuss the support offered to you.
- 13. DECISION SOUGHT**

The Democratic Services Committee is asked to note the observations and accept the report.