

CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Democratic Services Committee

Date: 15th October 2021

Title: Diversity in Democracy Action Plan

Purpose of report: For the Committee to consider and agree upon the Diversity in Democracy Action Plan

Introduction

At its meeting on 23 September 2021, the Council endorsed the Diversity Declaration as agreed by the WLGA Council as follows:

This Council commits to being a Diverse Council. We agree 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*
- *Consider staggering council meeting times and agreeing recess periods to support councillors with other commitments; and*
- *Set out an Action Plan of activity ahead of the 2022 local elections;*

The Council also agreed that the Democratic Services Committee, in conjunction with the Group Leaders agree upon and deliver an action plan leading up to the 2022 local elections with the aim of improving diversity in democracy.

Recommendation: To agree to the action plan leading up to the 2022 local elections with the aim of improving diversity in democracy

Appendix: Appendix A – Action Plan

Background documents:

Lowri Edwards
Head of Democratic Services

27th September 2021

CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL
DIVERSITY IN DEMOCRACY ACTION PLAN

| OBJECTIVE | ACTIONS | TIMEFRAME |
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| <p>Increase awareness of the role of members, the contribution they make to society and how to become an Elected Member</p> | <p>Produce a Candidates' guide</p> <p>Review the Council's website page, to include the Candidates' guide</p> <p>Promote the candidates' guide via social media</p> | <p>Draft to be reviewed by the Democratic Service Committee,</p> <p>Circa November / December following receipt of guidance from Welsh Government on the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (LG&EW) and confirmation of Local Election (Wales) Rules 2021</p> <p>December 2021</p> |
| <p>Increase awareness of importance of diversity in democracy</p> | <p>Council to sign up to the Diversity Declaration</p> <p>Press release issued by the Communications Team</p> <p>Review the Council's website to include the Diversity in Democracy declaration</p> <p>Promote diversity in Local Government elections via social media</p> | <p>Agreed by Council on 23.09.21</p> <p>23.09.2021</p> <p>October 2021</p> <p>December 2021 – March 2022</p> |
| <p>Maximise opportunities for individuals to work in ways that enable them to achieve a work-life balance which protects their welfare and well-being and allows them to manage any caring / dependency responsibilities</p> | <p>Arrangements for hybrid meetings</p> <p>Promote job-sharing opportunities and other benefits such as family absence provisions, and contribution towards costs of care and personal assistance via social media</p> <p>Review of meeting times to have more flexibility to suit the committee Members</p> | <p>January 2022</p> <p>December 2021 – March 2022</p> <p>This review takes places annually – ongoing. Will take place following the elections.</p> |

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| <p>Provide a training awareness programme for Members</p> | <p>Review areas of training and development which can be made available online</p> <p>Members Induction Programme</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p> |
| <p>Undertake a diversity and inclusion survey with current Members</p> | <p>Undertake a diversity and inclusion survey with Members which will provide a benchmark for future elections and allow the feedback to be reviewed to support barriers that may have been experienced by a Member during their term in office. This survey feedback will help to deliver a positive and diverse environment for future Member to undertake their roles</p> | |
| <p>Increase engagement with the public to raise awareness of the role and activities of the Council, and how the public can better inform local decision making</p> | <p>The Draft Engagement Policy, which is currently in consultation provides information regarding the LG&EW Act and public consultation</p> <p>To produce an e-petition scheme</p> <p>To publish postal and electronic addresses for each Member</p> <p>To enable remote attendance at Council Meetings</p> <p>Members of the public are currently able to suggest issues or topics for Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and to present their views on an upcoming item. A protocol is in place which outlines this process and can be viewed on the Council's website.</p> | <p>Currently in consultation. Published circa November 2021</p> <p>May 2022</p> <p>May 2022</p> <p>Councillor and members of the public are currently able to attend via zoom. This will be replaced by a hybrid option circa January 2022</p> |

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| | <p>To develop a protocol whereby members of the public will be given an option to either address the Development Control Committee directly via zoom or to have their comments read</p> <p>Publication of the Council's Constitution guide.</p> | <p>October 2021</p> <p>The Constitution is currently on the website. The guide is due to be in place by May 2022</p> |
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