

# **CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL**

**Report to:** Democratic Services Committee

**Date:** 16.12.2022

**Title:** Diversity in Democracy

**Purpose of report:** To consider correspondence received from the Women's Equality Network (WEN) Wales.

## **Background**

The Women's Equality Network (Wales) wrote to Ceredigion County Council on 9 August 2022 offering their support to the Council in becoming a more diverse council (Appendix 1). The letter notes that two councils have hit the 50/50 gender balance mark in the 2022 local elections and that there is an overall increase in the numbers of women councillors elected.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021, Ceredigion County Council endorsed the WLGA 'Diversity in Democracy Declaration'. It was agreed 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's Diversity in Democracy Declaration was published on the Council's website and promoted via social media, a press-release and a Candidates' Guide for prospective candidates in the Local Elections. This detailed the role of a Councillor, the different Committees, the nomination process etc. The Guide also referred to the contributions the Council can make to the cost of care as well family absence etc. This has also been reinforced by the enabling hybrid meetings to take place which will provide flexibility for those who may have caring or work commitments. A review of meeting times for council meetings will take place shortly, with the views of Councillors sought via consultation.

The number of seats in Ceredigion reduced in 2022 from 42 to 38 following a Wales Boundary Review. Prior to the elections in 2022, Ceredigion County Council had 37 male Councillors (88%) and 5 female (12%) Councillors. Following the Elections, 30 male Councillors were elected (79%) and 8 female Councillors (21%); which equates to a shift of 9%. Following the Lampeter by-election in October 2022, the number of male Councillors stands at 29 (76%), and the number of female Councillors stands at 9 (24%).

Below is a breakdown of all current Councillors by party / group or independent status as of May 2022:

	Number of Councillors	Number (male)	Number (female)	Percentage (male)	Percentage (female)
Plaid Cymru	20	15	5	75%	25%
Liberal Democrats	7	4	3	57%	43%
Independent Members	9	9	0	100%	0%
Labour	1	1	0	100%	0%
Gwlad	1	1	0	100%	0%

Breakdown following the Lampeter by-election:

	Number of Councillors	Number (male)	Number (female)	Percentage (male)	Percentage (female)
Plaid Cymru	21	15	6	71%	29%
Liberal Democrats	7	4	3	57%	43%
Independent Members	9	9	0	100%	0%
Gwlad	1	1	0	100%	0%

Following the elections in May 2022, returning Councillors made up the majority of the Council, with 24 retuning Members. Of the 14 new Councillors, 8 are male (57%) and 6 female (43%), which demonstrates a significant move towards meeting the goal of improving diversity in democracy in Ceredigion. The figures following the by-election are as follows: 15 new Councillors of whom 8 are male (53%) and 7 are female (47%)

Below is a breakdown of newly appointed Councillors by party / group or independent status as of May 2022:

	Number of new Councillors	Number (male)	Number (female)	Percentage (male)	Percentage (female)
Plaid Cymru	9	4	5	44%	56%

Liberal Democrats	2	1	1	50%	50%
Independent Members	2	2	0	100%	0%
Gwlad	1	1	0	100%	0%

Breakdown following the Lampeter by-election:

	Number of new Councillors	Number (male)	Number (female)	Percentage (male)	Percentage (female)
Plaid Cymru	10	4	6	40%	60%
Liberal Democrats	2	1	1	50%	50%
Independent Members	2	2	0	100%	0%
Gwlad	1	1	0	100%	0%

The number of candidates that stood for the 2022 elections, including non-contested seats equates to 87. The number of male candidates were 67 (77%), and the number of female candidates were 20 (23%). Including the Lampeter by-election data, the number of candidates that stood for the 2022 elections, including non-contested seats equates to 91. The number of male candidates were 68 (75%), and the number of female candidates were 23 (25%).

Below is a breakdown of candidates by party / group or independent status as of May 2022:

	Male	Female
Plaid Cymru	20	10
Independent	23	3
Liberal Democrats	9	4
Labour	7	2
Green Party	4	1
Conservative	2	0
Gwlad	1	0

No description	1	0
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Breakdown following the Lampeter by-election:

	Male	Female
Plaid Cymru	20	11
Independent	24	3
Liberal Democrats	9	5
Labour	7	3
Green Party	4	1
Conservative	2	0
Gwlad	1	0
No description	1	0

**Recommendations:** To note the shift towards improving diversity in democracy at Ceredigion County Council

**Appendices:** Correspondence from The Women's Equality Network (Wales)

**Background documents:**

**Name:** Lowri Edwards

**Job Title:** Corporate Lead Officer: Democratic Services

**Date:** 26.11.2022