

9th August 2022

To:

Cllr. Bryan Davies (Leader) Ceredigion County Council
Cllr. Ceredig Davies, Chair of Democratic Services Committee

CC: Head of Democratic Services

Diversity in Democracy– Maintain the momentum on diversity declarations and action plans

We are writing in respect of the recent local government council elections. Whilst we congratulate two councils (Monmouthshire and Vale of Glamorgan) for hitting the 50/50 gender balance mark in the elections, we are also pleased to see the overall increase in numbers of women councillors elected. However, there is still work to be done to get to 50/50 in all authorities and we would like to support you in becoming a more diverse council.

We believe that the Senedd has set a positive pace towards creating a more equal and diverse Wales in leadership and representation through its support of legally binding gender quotas. Local authorities across Wales have also taken important steps as part of their diversity declarations and action plans published ahead of the 2022 elections. This is a real opportunity to build on the progress made so far, evaluate what has and hasn't worked, and redouble our efforts for diversity in democracy. We want to support your Council in maintaining the positive momentum of the Diversity in Democracy agenda, ensure Local Authorities across Wales are inclusive and welcoming workplaces for all, and get a head start on encouraging greater numbers of diverse candidates for the next elections. We are therefore asking that your council take active steps to consider:

- Providing job-share opportunities in Cabinet and within council staff teams;
- Demonstrating an open and welcoming culture to all;
- Continue hybrid meetings and flexible council meeting times to ensure Diversity of members with due regard to people with protected Characteristics and caring responsibilities;
- agree to recess periods to support councillors' other commitments, disabilities, or caring responsibilities; and
- Setting out an action plan of activity ahead of the next local elections.

As a coalition of organisations in the Diverse5050 Campaign, we wanted to get in touch to offer our support in discussing this process. We can offer support and guidance on a range of areas including mentoring schemes, diversity targets, training, and development. We have significant experience in all these areas and would be happy to discuss this with you in more detail. We also offer a bespoke Women's Rights and Gender Equality training for elected members to help raise awareness of how gender equality impacts on their everyday work.

Also find attached detailed briefings of our research on job share and our myth-busting document on quotas, highlighting the relevance of equal and diverse representation in leadership in Wales especially for women from underrepresented groups.

We look forward to working with you in promoting Diversity in Democracy and achieving our shared ambition to ensure our council chambers better reflect the diversity of the communities they serve.

We are ready and willing to support your council's work on this crucial matter. Please feel free to reach out to us on any queries or ways we can support your work in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

Evelyn James
Diverse5050 campaigner, Women's Equality Network (WEN) Wales

Jess Blair
Director of Electoral Reform Society (ERS) Cymru

Nkechi Dawson
Community Engagement Officer at Race Council Cymru

Selima Bahadur
Programme Manager, Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team (EYST) Wales

Our campaign is supported by the following organisations:



Action for Children, Chwarae Teg, Citizens Advice Swansea Neath Port Talbot, Co-production Network for Wales, Cynon Taf Community Housing Group, Disability Wales, Diverse Cymru, Fair Treatment for the Women of Wales (FTWW), Institute of Welsh Affairs (IWA), Llamau, National Federation of Women's Institutes (the WI), Oxfam Cymru, Race Alliance Wales, Social Firms Wales, Stonewall Cymru, Tai Pawb, Together Creating Communities, Welsh Women's Aid.