

CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Democratic Services Committee

Date: 24 March 2023

Title: Report in relation to Exit Survey of Members Standing Down

Purpose of report: To consider the findings of the Exit Survey of Members Standing Down

Introduction

The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) works with Data Cymru to conduct an exit survey of councillors who decide to stand down voluntarily at local elections. Surveys were taken in May 2012, 2017 and 2022. The WLGA and Councils use the data gathered to understand the demographic of these councillors, their experiences whilst in office and their reasons for standing down. This information is also used to assess and improve the support and development opportunities for councillors provided both locally and nationally.

Below are extracts of information contained within the report relating to Councillors who stood down from Ceredigion County Council.

The number of Councillors standing down at election in 2022 across Wales is reported by WLGA to be equivalent to 321 (26%). In Ceredigion, 11 Councillors stood down (26% based upon 42 Council seats during the previous administration) which demonstrates that Ceredigion is in line with the Wales average. In Ceredigion, 80% noted that their reason for standing down was due to retirement, 10% due to moving away, and 10% due to other reasons. Throughout Wales, the main reasons for standing down was due to retirement, followed by time pressures, followed by Changes to electoral ward.

The modal response for the number of years spent in the role of Councillor is 21–25 years, equivalent to 4-5 terms of office. The modal age range of those standing down was 75-84 years of age.

The arithmetic mean response to the average number of hours per week spent in the role, including community casework was equivalent to 23.4 hours per week, broken down as follows:

- 9.7 hours per week in Council meetings and meeting preparation;
- 6.7 hours per week involved with Ward and case work;
- 5.1 hours per week involved with outside bodies; and
- 7.8 hours per week listed as other.

Throughout Wales, the majority of respondents stated that the average number of hours spent in the role was 17-30 hours.

66% were of the view that the remuneration received as adequate, whilst 33% were of the view that it was not. This is reflective of responses throughout Wales which states that 60% were of the view that the remuneration was adequate.

The majority of the respondents stated that Councillor support in terms of ICT / or phone equipment, and support and training, Councillor support in terms of induction, training, general guidance and support was very good or good, whilst 70% were of the view that the convenience of meeting times were good or very good, whilst 30% thought that it was neither good nor poor. This is above average for responses throughout Wales however support from the local authority for case / ward work did not fare as well with 20% noting that it was very good, 20% noting that it was good, 50% noting that it was neither good nor poor and 10% noting that it was very poor which is slightly lower than that of responses throughout Wales.

All respondents noted that they took advantage of the induction and training offered, whilst 90% were of the view that the induction and training made them more effective as a Councillor. One was unsure.

10% noted that they were in full-time employment, 60% were self-employed and 30% were retired. All stated that their employers were very supportive. 90% of the respondents noted that they were aware that they could claim reimbursement for caring responsibilities, however none submitted claims during their tenure.

70% noted that they would recommend being a Councillor to others whilst 30% were unsure.

Recommendations:	To note the findings of the Exit Survey of Councillors Standing Down in May 2022
Appendices:	None
Background documents:	Exit Survey of Councillors Standing Down in May 2022 https://www.wlga.wales/SharedFiles/Download.aspx?pageid=62&mid=665&fileid=3728
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