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**Gwasanaeth Democraidd**  
**Democracy Service**  
Swyddfa'r Cyngor  
CAERNARFON  
Gwynedd  
LL55 1SH

Cyfarfod / Meeting

**PWYLLGOR GWASANAETHAU DEMOCRATAIDD**  
**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Dyddiad ac Amser / Date and Time

**10.00am DYDD MAWRTH, 10 MAWRTH, 2015**

**10.00am TUESDAY, 10 MARCH, 2015**

Lleoliad / Location

**SIAMBR HYWEL DDA**  
**SWYDDFEYDD Y CYNGOR/COUNCIL OFFICES**  
**CAERNARFON**

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Dosbarthwyd/Distributed 2.3.15

**PWYLLGOR GWASANAETHAU DEMOCRATAIDD  
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**AELODAETH / MEMBERSHIP (15)**

**Plaid Cymru (7)**

Y Cynghorwyr / Councillors

Annwen Daniels  
Sian Gwenllian  
Dilwyn Morgan

Selwyn Griffiths  
Annwen Hughes  
Michael Sol Owen

Sedd Wag / Vacant Seat

**Annibynnol / Independent (4)**

Y Cynghorwyr / Councillors

Lesley Day  
Jean Forsyth

Tom Ellis  
Anne Lloyd-Jones

**Llais Gwynedd (3)**

Y Cynghorwyr / Councillors

Anwen Davies

Jason Humphreys

Gweno Glyn

**Llafur / Labour (1)**

Y Cynghorydd / Councillor

Sion Wyn Jones

**Aelod Ex-officio / Ex-officio Member**

Cadeirydd y Cyngor / Chairman of the Council  
Y Cynghorydd / Councillor Dewi Owen

## **AGENDA**

### **1. APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

### **2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

### **3. URGENT BUSINESS**

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

### **4. MINUTES**

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the last meeting of this committee held on 9 December, 2014 be signed as a true record

(copy herewith – **yellow** paper)

### **5. WEB-CASTING**

To consider the report of the Head of Democratic Services

(copy herewith – **lilac** paper)

### **6. ELECTED MEMBERS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

To consider the report of the Head of Democratic Services

(copy herewith – **green** paper)

### **7. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS**

To consider the report of the Head of Democratic Services

(copy herewith – **pink** paper)

### **8. ENGAGEMENT WITH MEMBERS**

To consider the report of the Head of Democratic Services  
(copy herewith – **blue** paper)

**9. CONSULTATION PAPER ON REFORMING LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

To consider the report of the Head of Democratic Services  
(copy herewith – **cream** paper)

**10. IMPROVEMENT GRANT - WELSH GOVERNMENT**

To consider the report of the Head of Democratic Services  
(copy herewith – **grey** paper)

**11. THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES' ANNUAL REPORT**

To consider the report of the Head of Democratic Services  
(copy herewith – **salmon** paper)

**12. HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

To consider the report of the Chief Executive  
(copy herewith)

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## DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE, 09.12.14

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**Present:** Councillor Lesley Day (Chair)  
Councillor Tom Ellis (Vice-chair).

**Councillors:** Anwen Davies Jean Forsyth, Selwyn Griffiths, Siân Gwenllïan, Annwen Hughes, Jason Humphreys, Sïon Jones, Michael Sol Owen, Mandy Williams-Davies.

**Also present:** Councillor Ioan Thomas (Cabinet Member for Customer Care); Councillor Annwen Daniels (shadowing)

**Officers:** Geraint George (Head of Strategic and Improvement Department/Head of Democratic Services), Arwel Ellis Jones (Senior Manager - Corporate Commissioning Service), Huw Ynyr (Senior Manager - Information Technology and Transformation) and Lowri Haf Evans (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer).

Carey Cartwright (Learning and Development Manager) and Cara Williams (Members' Training Coordinator) for item 8 only.

### 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting by the Chair, Lesley Day, with a special welcome to Councillor Siân Gwenllïan to her first meeting and to Councillor Annwen Daniels, a new member of the Council who was shadowing. Apologies were received from Councillors Gweno Glyn, Dilwyn Morgan, Mair Rowlands and Vera Jones (Members' Manager - Democratic Services.)

### 2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

### 3. URGENT ITEMS

Reference was made to the decision made by Mr Leighton Andrews (Minister for Public Services in the Assembly), to withdraw the grant paid by the Welsh Government to the Welsh Local Government Association to provide support to improve Authorities in Wales from April 2015.

**RESOLVED to send a letter in the name of the Democratic Services Committee to Mr Leighton Andrews asking him to reconsider his decision.**

### 4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 9 September, 2014, as a true record subject to: a correction that Councillor Tom Ellis was the Vice-chair and not Councillor Anne Lloyd Jones.

### 5. WEB-CASTING

Submitted – the report of the Head of Democratic Services, sharing the latest information regarding the developments of web-casting. It was explained that the meeting of the Council that was held on 4.12.14 had been broadcasted internally and had been a successful exercise. It was highlighted that web-casting was important for the image of the

Council and valuable for sharing information with the public. Further observations were invited by members of the Committee regarding their opinions on preparing brief guidelines.

During the discussion, the following was highlighted:-

- The web-casting training had been very useful.  
It was proposed that there was a need for specific training for Chairs and Members on presenting.
- There was a need for a note explaining the procedure of committees so that the public were familiar with the rules. Concern was expressed regarding the public's understanding and, therefore, it was recommended that the chair should summarise decisions or explain the recommendations.
- The committees that would be web-casted. The intention thus far had been to broadcast meetings of the Council and the Planning Committee in Caernarfon. (It was explained that it was due to technical reasons only that the decision had been made to broadcast the Planning Committee in Caernarfon only).  
It was suggested that consideration should be given to web-casting meetings of the Formal Cabinet as it was here where the power and the leadership was to make operational decisions. It was expressed that there was a need to highlight Scrutiny work which would convey the challenge and the discussions undertaken prior to the decisions being reached by the Cabinet. It was proposed that the Scrutiny Forum could choose items which would be of interest to the public. A balance had to be ensured and it had to be shown that the Council was acting 'healthily'.
- If the web-casting was successful, there would be a need to review the contract hours and to consider the statistics that would provide evidence of web-casting use. It would be appropriate for Eleri Williams (Information and Internet Services Manager), to attend the next meeting.

**RESOLVED to accept the report and to agree that a brief guidance is prepared with Councillors Lesley Day, Selwyn Griffiths, Sion Jones and Tom Ellis to collaborate with officers to draw it up.**

## 6. CONSIDER THE USE OF E-CIGARETTES IN COMMITTEES

Submitted - the report of the Head of Democratic Services to stimulate a discussion on the use of e-cigarettes by elected members. The Committee was invited to consider whether the Council should adopt a policy statement extending the ban on staff and customers from using e-cigarettes within Council premises and their vicinity to elected members.

During the discussion:-

- It was noted that the same rule should apply to everyone and that the use of e-cigarettes should be banned within Council premises and their vicinity.
- Should a further discussion be needed regarding the Council's general policy, it should be referred to the Cabinet Member or the Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

**RESOLVED that the Council should adopt a policy statement extending the ban on the use of e-cigarettes in Council premises and their vicinity to elected members.**

## 7. COMMUNITY AND TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITES

- a) Submitted – the report of the Senior Manager - Information Technology and Transformation, on the developments regarding the Welsh Government's £500 grant for providing web

presence to Community/Town Councils. It was stated that Option 2, namely collaborating with other town and community councils in the county to establish a joint website, had now been priced and that protocols were in the pipeline.

During the discussion:-

- Concern was expressed that there was insufficient guidance regarding what was needed. It was suggested that a package could be produced for community/town councils which could provide guidance on what would be possible to provide.
- In terms of sharing good practice of already established websites, it was noted that the website had to be kept simple and that it should be updated regularly ensuring up-to-date information.
- It was proposed that the preferred language for the websites was a matter for the Community Councils.

**RESOLVED to continue to support the work of facilitating the development of websites for town and community councils during 2014/15.**

- b) In response to the arrival of the Council's new website, it was noted that there was a need to give more prominence to the work of the Cabinet. Access had to be simplified to highlight the importance of their work. There was also a need for an easier access to see the responsibilities of each Member and the committees of which they were members. It was explained that the Council had ordered a committee agenda management system (Modern Gov) that would in time include a 'Democratic' Department. It was proposed to have the system in place by Easter 2015. The programme would also include an app to ensure that agendas were downloaded automatically onto Councillors' tablets.

## 8. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT INTERVIEWS

Submitted – the report of the Head of Democratic Services, when the committee was reminded that 20 members had received Personal Development Interviews. Several general themes arose from the interviews and it was intended for these to be addressed via the current training programme.

During the discussion:-

- It was suggested that it would be worthwhile to implement the 'who is who?' information soon to ensure up-to-date information. It was suggested that Rhaeadr could be used to address this.
- For those who had been interviewed, it was reported that it had been beneficial and had highlighted weaknesses/difficulties that would otherwise not have been highlighted. Other members were encouraged to take advantage of the situation.

**RESOLVED to submit a report to a meeting of this committee in the next few months on the response of the 20 members to the personal development interviews and what has happened as a result of the interviews.**

## 9. ONLINE TRAINING PROVISION

Submitted – the report by the Learning and Development Manager on the online training provision for members as a result of a discussion regarding Members' annual reports. It was explained that the Council acknowledged the importance of appropriate training to support Members to fulfil their roles effectively and that learning via technology was now



exciting and advantage had to be taken of it. It was emphasised that e-learning was in addition to the members' training programme:

- it offered all types of technology, e.g. video, modules, internet research etc.
- it used different devices i.e. i-pad, Smartphone, Laptops and PC Computers
- it was an opportunity to create interesting, attractive and high quality learning materials
- it offered a convenient and flexible provision which provided value for money (by avoiding travelling costs and time)

The next step would be raising awareness.

During the discussion:-

- a request was made for the quality and contents of the training modules to be simple and accessible with support and instruction (it was noted that initial sessions with the Members' Training Coordinator would provide a taste of what was available).
- it was highlighted that this addressed the needs of those members who had difficulties in attending training because of work commitments.

The Learning and Development Manager was thanked for the information.

## **10. DEVELOPING THE USE OF I-PADS AND TRAINING**

Submitted – the report of the Senior Manager - Information Technology and Transformation, on the developments in training arrangements to make better use of i-pads and apps to support their use. It was reported that meetings had been held with the Head Teacher of Ysgol Llanrug (Llanrug Primary School) to produce a training package which included subjects that the members had highlighted.

During the discussion:-

- It was reported that there was a need to ensure better use of i-pads. It was acknowledged that the i-pad was an excellent device for procedure and information and there was potential for it to offer more.
- It was suggested that further training was needed on the use of social media.

It was noted that there was a need for five to participate in the apps trial on the use of i-pads (to include officers and members).

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 11.55am.

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>Democratic Services Committee</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>10 March, 2015</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>Web-casting</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>Provide the latest information</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>Geraint George Head of Democratic Services</b>

1. The Council's web-casting system is up and running and live web-casts have been broadcasted since January 2015.
2. In order to prepare for the web-casting two training sessions were held with elected members:
  - 26 November 2014 – session held and all Council members were invited. 41 members were present including some members of the Standards Committee.
  - 12 January 2015, web-casting training for Chairs and Vice-chairs
3. The reasons behind the decision to web-cast were explained during the sessions, short guidelines on conduct were discussed, along with discussing some possibilities of adapting committee arrangements.
4. By now, the Council has web-cast 5 committee meetings, as follows:

Date	Committee	Viewing Figures	
12/01/2015	Planning	236	
13/01/2015	Council Cabinet	105	
12/2/2015	Services Scrutiny Committee	49	*
19/2/2015	Council Cabinet	51	*
24/2/2015	Communities Scrutiny Committee	21	*

5. The web-casting can be viewed live on the Council's web site during the meeting, and it will be placed in the archive on the web site within 48 hours of the meeting, and is available for a period of 6 months. This is the web site link for viewing:

<https://www.gwynedd.gov.uk/en/Council/Councillors-and-committees/Councillors-and-committees.aspx>
6. Please note that the majority of viewings are made through the archive site rather than live viewings. Therefore, although correct at time of going to press, the figures noted with \* are likely to rise.
7. Although it remains early days, some lessons have already been learned, with a few technical issues already resolved, and some procedural matters requiring further

adjustments by officers. The short guide-lines developed to help members can be seen in Appendix A to remind members of the relevant considerations whilst a meeting is being web-cast.

8. The Committee is reminded that the Council's current arrangements allow for 60 hours of web-casting. The committees noted below have been programmed to be web-cast during the next quarter.

05/03/2015	Full Council
23/03/2015	Planning Committee
16/04/2015	Services Scrutiny Committee
14/05/2015	Full Council

9. The committee members are invited to comment on the developments thus far.

## **WEB-CASTING – SOME QUESTIONS FOR MEMBERS**

### **A. Preparing for the meeting**

- Have I prepared for the meeting and am I clear about the points / questions that I plan to raise?
- Have I thought whether my appearance conveys a proper and appropriate image?
- Have I remembered to turn off my mobile phone before the meeting starts so that it does not interfere with the signal?

### **B. At the meeting**

#### **1. Request to speak:-**

I should remember that the system in the two chambers is different:-

- In the Dafydd Orwig Chamber, I press the “request to speak” button and then wait for the Chairman to invite my contribution
- In the Hywel Dda Chamber, I try to draw the Chairman’s attention by raising my hand, wait for the Chairman’s invitation to contribute, switch on my microphone to speak and then turn it off when I have finished

NB There will be a seat allocated to me in the Hywel Dda Chamber but I can move in the Dafydd Orwig Chamber if I take my card with me

#### **2. When speaking:-**

- Am I speaking a reasonable distance from the microphone? (not too close, not too far)
- Is the tone of my voice interesting and reasonable?
- Am I repeating what someone else has already said?
- Am I getting too emotional because I feel strongly about an issue and is there a danger that I may say something I will regret?
- Am I speaking clearly and speaking at the right pace (not too quickly) so that anyone listening (including a translator) has trouble keeping up?

#### **3. When listening:-**

- Am I showing respect to other speakers, particularly those who have a different viewpoint?
- Am I listening properly and paying attention to what is happening in the meeting room, particularly if I am within the camera shot of the speaker at the time?
- Can I be seen to be listening or am I whispering with someone else on another issue or have I gone out for a cuppa or a chat?
- Can I be seen to be “playing” with anything (tablet, biro or other device) that could draw attention?

### **C. After the meeting:-**

- Can I learn something about my public image by watching the webcast again?
- Can I use the webcast to spread information about what is being discussed at the Council?

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>Democratic Services Committee</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>10 March, 2015</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>Elected Members Information Technology requirements</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>Present an update</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>Geraint George, Head of Democratic Services</b>

#### Development requirements – training on the i-pads

1. A number of comments have been made by elected members for the need for further Training on the use of the i-pads. This was raised during the Personal Development Reviews, during an informal Training session for Cabinet members, and during a number of informal conversations with members. The Council's Training Unit and IT Department have held a number of sessions over the years, and a number of members noting that they have been very beneficial.
2. By now, members are asking for further training on the i-pads with a view to making better use of the technology provided eg how to file information and so on.
3. The IT Department have contacted Mr Robin Williams, Headteacher of Llanrug Primary School to provide further Training for elected members. Llanrug Primary school have been at the forefront of developments with using this technology, and bring specialist knowledge from the user's perspective.
4. Two possible dates have been identified for a pilot session (18 or 25 March) with arrangements currently under way to invite elected members. The session will be limited to approximately 10 members in order to ensure we get the most out of the session and are better able to assess its suitability.

#### Word processing on the i-pads

5. The Committee will recall that they requested word processing facilities on the i-pad in order to facilitate their work. It was decided to undertake a small pilot to trial the use of the word processing app to ensure its suitability for other members.
6. A verbal update report will be given to the Committee on this issue.

### Additional requirements by elected members for it purposes

7. At the beginning of the Council term in 2012 the elected members were presented with i-pads in order to facilitate their work and bring a saving to the Council by reducing printing and posting costs.
8. The majority of members have learned to use their i-pads during this time, with a high number very comfortable with the new technology. Alternative arrangements are in place for those not using the i-pads. Recently, due to the success of the i-pads, a number of members have requested that they are able to access the information (ie their e-mails) through various other devices. The requests include:
  - Access to Councillor e-mails from home
  - Access to the Councillor e-mails from mobile phones
9. At the same time, the Council's IT department have reviewed and changed the Council's systems in order to ensure safety of information. These changes have led to a cost being incurred should anyone require any additional access to the access provided on council i-pads (there is a set-up cost of approximately £30 and an annual cost of approximately £30).
10. Whilst we agree in principle that any additional access would benefit the members and make life easier, it is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee refuse any requests at the moment, and re-assess the situation following the additional i-pad training (noted in 4 above).

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>Democratic Services Committee</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>10 March 2015</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>Personal Development Reviews</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>Present the latest information</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>Geraint George Head of Democratic Services</b>

### Background

1. The committee will recall the need for the Councils to have a system whereby members are offered a personal development reviews (PDR). The Local Government Bill, Wales, 2011 insists that every Council must offer members a process to assess their development needs.

2. Following discussions at this committee, each member who does not sit on the Cabinet was contacted to offer them this opportunity. 20 of the 65 front-line members received a Personal Development Review interview during September and October 2014, and below is a list of the development fields resulting from the interviews.

### Themes emerging from the interviews

3. Some common themes emerged from the interviews, including:

- Information in relation to who is who/ whom to contact
- Developing language skills (Welsh)
- Developing confidence for public speaking
- Dealing with difficult situations
- Chairing meetings (especially with web-casting)
- Twitter/ Facebook – how to develop and use social media
- I-pads
- Prepare prospective elected members prior to election
- More training for newly elected members (following election)
- Web-casting

4. Please note that some of the themes are already included in the current training programme for elected members, and the interviews have been a way of increasing awareness of some of the courses.

A table is attached identifying the training fields that are common to more than one member, more specialised training fields, and also to compare the list with current provision already available or being developed.

### Assessing the PDA's

5. In addition to updating the committee of the training requirements identified, the value of the personal development reviews must be assessed. There are two elements to this work.
6. Firstly members who took part were asked for their views on the process. They were asked about how it felt to have the chance to have an informal confidential discussion about development and training needs (and some other things)? Was the process too formal? Is there anything that can be done to improve things?
7. Only a small number of comments were received. The comments were positive, noting that members appreciated the chance to have an informal discussion about their training needs. In addition, a number appreciated the chance to chat about other matters and present ideas on how to improve things and do other things differently.
8. Secondly, we will be trying to assess if and what members have gained from being part of this process (if at all). It is considered too early to undertake this work at the moment. More time is needed prior to assessing in order to arrange and facilitate more training sessions and ensure sufficient time for members to reflect on any developments. This work will happen within the next few months with a further report presented to the Democratic Services Committee in due course.





Cyfleoedd Rhwydweithio / Adeiladu consensws. Networ king, consensous building opportunities	2																			
wedi derbyn hyfforddiant/ training provided																				
Wedi cofrestru ar hyfforddiant/ registered for training.																				

Teitl	Gweithred	Pwy
Cyfyngau Cymdeithasol/Social Media	1 Sesiwn Saesneg wedi cael ei gynnal yn barod. WLGA wedi cadarnhau eu bod wedi dod o hyd i ddarparwr Cymraeg - Cara i drefnu. 1 English Language session held, WLGA have confirmed a Welsh speaking provider - Cara to confirm. dyddiad yn y misoedd nesaf,	Cara
	1 English Language session held, WLGA have confirmed a Welsh speaking provider - Cara to confirm.	
Gwe-ddarlledu/Web-casting	Sesiwn wedi ei gynnal ar 26 Tachwedd a sesiwn pellach i Gadeiryddion ac Is-Gadeiryddion wedi ei gynnal ar 12/1/15 yn dilyn cais gan Aelodau.	AEJ
	Session held on 26 November and a further session held on 12/01/2015 for Chairs and Vice-Chairs following request by Members.	
Her ariannol/cyfnod anodd/newid. Financial challenge / changing services / difficult times.	Sesiynau yn digwydd yn Chwefror 2015	DLE
	Sessions to be held in February 2015	
Newidiadau Llywodraeth Leol / Changes in Local Government	Sesiynau wedi digwydd ddiwedd 2014	AEJ
	Sessions held end of 2014	
Hyfforddiant ar lein / On-line training on policies etc	Ar y gweill. Bydd neges yn mynd allan gyda cyfres o fodiwlau i ddilyn.	Cara
	Developments underway. Message to all members soon with a series of modules to follow	
Rheoli Amser ag Ymdopi efo Straen / Time and stress management.	Sesiwn wedi ei drefnu ar 17 Ebrill 2015 gyda 12 Aelod wedi rhoi eu henwau ymlaen gyda Gwen Greaves	Ar y gweill
	Session organised for 17 April 2015 with 12 members registered - with Gwen greaves	
Pendantrwydd a Deio nero Pobl Anodd / Managing difficult people, situations. Assertiveness	Sesiwn hyfforddiant wedi ei drefnu ar 20ain o Fawrth gyda Gwen Greaves - yr un 12 Aelod yn mynychu hwn a'r un Pendantrwydd.	Ar y gweill
	Session arranged for 20 March with Gwen Greaves - the same 12 members registered as for above.	
Sgiliau Cadeirio Effeithiol / Effective Chairing	2 sesiwn (Saesneg)wedi ei gynnal (2/10/13 a 16/4/14). Cara yn disgwyl ymateb gan y WLGA os oes modd cael darparwr Cymraeg.	Cara
	2 English Language sessions held (2/10/13 and 16/4/14). Cara awaiting response re Welsh Language provider from WLGA.	
Cynllunio / Planning	Pennaeth Rheoleiddio wedi cadarnhau bod y Gwasanaeth yn barod i ddarparu hyfforddiant cyffredinol i Aelodau ar faterion cynllunio - cynnal rhain 2 waith y flwyddyn mewn grwpiau bach i bawb fydda'i â diddordeb.	Cara
	Head of Regulatory Services has confirmed that the service will provide general training to Elected Members on planning issues - to be held twice a year in small groups.	
Holi a chraffu effeithiol / Effective scrutiny and questioning.		
Adroddiadau Blynyddol / Annual Reports	I'w drafod gan y Pwyllgor Gwasanaethau Democrataidd.	Vera
	To be discussed by the Democratic Services Committee.	
Defnydd o'r I-pad / IT/ Use of I-pads	Trefniadau ar y gweill gydag Ysgol Llanrug i gynnig hyfforddiant i'r Aelodau sydd wedi datgan diddordeb. Efallai y byddai hyn yn gyfle i hybu e-Gwynedd a dysgu ar lein.	Vera
	Arrangements being made with Llanrug school to provide training for members who have expressed an interest. This may be an opportunity to promote e-learning.	
Siarad Cyhoeddus / Public Speaking	WLGA yn cynnig yr hyfforddiant yma ond gan mai ond un Aelod sydd wedi dangos diddordeb, ni fyddai'n cyfiawnhau trefnu cwrs. Cara wedi cysylltu a'r Cyngorydd gan ddweud bod hyfforddiant 'Cyflwyniadau Effeithiol' ar gael fyddai'n help o ran gallu cyflwyno, iaith corff, hunan hyder ayyb.	Cara
	WLGA do offer training, but as only one member has expressed an interest we cannot currently run the course. Cara has contacted the member to let them know that they may benefit from a similar training course - Effective presentations, which deals with body language, self confidence etc	
Leadership Academy		
Delio a'r Wasg / Dealing with the press.	Cara i drefnu sesiwn pellach eleni cyn belled a bod 6 yn mynychu.	Cara
	Cara to organise a further session, with a minimum of 6 members.	
Gloywi Iaith / Improving Language	Catrin Parri wedi cysylltu a'r Cyngorwyr. Arweiniad ar gael gan Catrin Parri pe bai unrhyw Aelod a diddordeb mewn hyfforddiant ieithyddol priodol.	
	Catrin Parri has contacted the individual members. Catrin willing to discuss with any members with regards to language issues.	
Rol Aelod Lleol / Local Member Role	Angen datblygu hyfforddiant yn fewnol.	Arwel/Vera
	Internal training session to be developed.	
Ymddygiad/ Conduct	Angen datblygu hyfforddiant yn fewnol.	
	Internal training session to be developed.	
Trefn 360 gradd/ 360 degree assessment	Ddim yn bodoli ar hyn o bryd.	
	Not currently available	
Cysgodi/ Shadowing	Ddim yn bodoli ar hyn o bryd.	

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>Democratic Services Committee</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>10 March, 2015</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>Engagement with members</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>Seeking further guidance on specific recommendations</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>Geraint George, Head of Democratic Services</b>

## **BACKGROUND**

1. The Democratic Services Committee will recall that I reported previously on a commission from this committee and the Customer Care Delivery Panel for work on our arrangements for engagement with members. This followed consultation on our arrangements with members (at workshops and through a questionnaire) that highlighted a number of key messages:-
  - That, in general, there is good co-operation between members and officers but that this is inconsistent
  - A failure to use the knowledge of local councillors effectively
  - A real need to improve and make better use of members in the difficult dialogue with the public
2. Following these initial discussions, a joint task group of officers (directors, heads and practitioners) and elected members (including cabinet members and front line members) was established.
3. The Task Group met on two occasions. At the first meeting, the positive and challenging elements of the relationship between members and officers were analysed and 11 areas for improvement were identified. However, it is fair to note that there is a considerable difference between them in terms of scale and complexity and that a number of matters are interlinked.
4. I should note, in passing, that the discussion in the Task Group has been beneficial and honest with members and officers appreciating the opportunity to discuss openly and honestly on issues such as, for example, the issue of trust.
5. At the second meeting, it was agreed that there were too many issues to give meaningful attention to all of them at the moment and that we should concentrate on two major issues, one of them being large in scale and strategic and the other being smaller and more operational in nature.

## SPECIFIC PROPOSALS

6. Big Changes / The Gwynedd Challenge – This is the main area that needs to be addressed in the near future. The basic principle is to seek to bring members into the discussions on big and significant changes as soon as possible. It was noted that this could prove risky if members went to the press or Social Media before a matter was ready.

Specific Action Points:-

- a) A commitment to use pre-scrutiny more extensively and that there is regular dialogue between Cabinet Members and Scrutiny Chairs on issues that could be dealt with in this way.
  - b) A commitment from Cabinet Members and officers to contact local members who could be effected in discussions on significant changes in some area. NB Mention was made of a possible top 10 with other issues being dealt with under the operational arrangements noted below
  - c) A commitment from individual members to respect trust and confidentiality until new proposals are ready to be published and consulted upon.
7. Operational Contact Arrangements – It is deficiencies in this area that causes the greatest frustration amongst members with things happening within wards without their knowledge until the story appears in the Press or they are approached by one of their residents. A number have also expressed frustration that they do not know who to contact on various issues.

Specific Action Points:-

- a) Encourage members to make use, in the first place, of Galw Gwynedd because of the effectiveness of Galw Gwynedd's tracking system for enquiries
  - b) The Communications Unit to update a list of key contacts on the web-site publicising (through Rhaeadr) where that is available
  - c) Every department should remind officers to include local members on any local operational matters happening within their wards
8. The Democratic Services Committee is invited to consider and approve the above action points.

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>Democratic Services Committee</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>10 March, 2015</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>CONSULTATION PAPER ON REFORMING LOCAL GOVERNMENT</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>To seek members' observations on a consultation paper</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>Geraint George Head of Democratic Services</b>

1. Following considerable discussion over the past few months about local government re-organisation, Leighton Andrews, the Public Services Minister has now published a consultation document on Reforming Local Government. The document outlines a number of changes the Government is considering in terms of local government arrangements and structures in Wales
2. Observations on the document are sought by 28 April, 2015. A note was sent out to each member, through Rhaeadr, noting that individual members or political groups, of course, are welcome to send their comments directly. A copy of the short version of the consultation document (that is appended to this report) and the response form was sent to all members. A full copy of the report is also available on the Welsh Government website <http://gov.wales/docs/ds/jlg/consultation/150203-power-to-local-people-fullv2-en.pdf>.
3. The formal procedure within the Council is that the matter will be considered at this meeting of the Democratic Services Committee and also by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 26 March before it is presented to the Cabinet on 14 April where the formal response by the Council will be approved.
4. Members who are not members of the Democratic Services Committee or the Scrutiny Committee were given an opportunity to contribute in two ways:-
  - Sending written comments so that they can be addressed at the meetings;
  - Making a request to attend either one of the two meetings to contribute to the discussion
5. In terms of the document itself, whilst it is very wide-ranging in its scope, it is appropriate for this Committee to consider several elements of it. Therefore, in addition to having an opportunity to pass on general observations on the document to the Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet, the Committee's observations are sought on the following issues that relate to councillor roles in particular:-

Paragraph 3.1 – Council Elections – a suggestion of a move to a system of phased elections or staying with the system of having full elections after four or five years

Paragraph 3.2 – The Role and Responsibilities of a Leader – a suggestion of placing a duty on a Leader that as many different people from as many different backgrounds as possible are selected for Cabinet so that many different views are represented

Paragraph 3.4 – The Role and Responsibilities of Councillors – a suggestion of a change in the law to ensure that Councillors produce an annual report

Paragraph 3.5 - Diversity among Councillors – there is a wish to put procedures in place to ensure diversity amongst the body of elected members and to ensure that Councils are open, welcoming and respect differences

Paragraph 3.6 – Remuneration for Councillors – there is mention of commissioning of a review of the best way to pay Councillors since the current system affects people differently

Paragraph 3.7 – The Number of Councillors – there is a question here whether the number of councillors should be reduced and what factors should be used in deciding on the correct number.

Paragraph 3.8 - Term limits for Councillors – this is the most controversial suggestion to have received public attention, that of a suggested limit of five terms for Councillors, and two terms for Leaders, Elected Mayors and Cabinet Members

Paragraph 3.9 – Recall of Councillors – a suggestion of introducing a system whereby a councillor must resign their position if 10% of the people in their area sign a petition and call for it.

Paragraph 3.10 – Electoral qualification – a suggested relaxation of the current rules around standing for election, for example so that a local government officer would be able to stand for election to be a councillor

Paragraph 4.2 - Councillor-led community governance a suggestion of establishing an system of Area Boards that would include charities, community bodies, social enterprises and other public services, including Community Councils with local county councillors leading those boards

Paragraph 4.6 - Community Councillors serving on more than one Council – views are sought on the possible prevention of a single person from serving on a main Council and a Community Council, and on more than one Community Council

6. The Committee's observations are sought.



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Devolution, Democracy  
and Delivery

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# Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People (Everyday summary version)

Date of issue: 3 February 2015  
Responses by: 23:59 on 28 April 2015





## Overview

The White Paper Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People is the Welsh Government's statement of intent about the future of Local Government in Wales. A White Paper sets out the changes the Welsh Government wants to make to the law so people can give their opinion before it happens.

This paper is a summary of the main changes we want to make, but it is not the White Paper itself. You can use it as the basis for making your views known but for the full detail you should refer to the White Paper which is available on the Welsh Government website: <http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/power-to-local-people/?lang=en>.

## How to respond

This consultation covers a large number of matters. Many are of interest to the general public but some are technical and may only be of interest to Local Authorities. We have designed a web-based consultation survey in order to make both collecting and analysing responses easier.

You may choose to address all the issues raised by this White Paper or to complete a shorter version of the survey which focuses on the main matters of public interest. You will be able to choose your preferred option when you start the survey. A Word version is also available but we encourage you to use the online survey.

To respond to the consultation please either complete the [online form](#) or request the accompanying survey and return it

either by email to [RLGProgramme@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:RLGProgramme@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

or by post to  
Reforming Local Government  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

## Further information and related documents

The full White Paper and a youth friendly version are available on the Welsh Government website.

Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.

**Data protection****How the views and information you give us will be used**

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future consultations.

The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.



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## Ministerial Foreword – Our Vision for Local Government in Wales



If you visit the Gwent Archives at their magnificent new facility in the General Offices of the former steelworks in Ebbw Vale, you can read the minutes of the Tredegar Workmen's Medical Aid Society where Councillor Aneurin Bevan and his colleagues sought to put in place co-operative health solutions for their local community. These records are a reminder that at its best, Local Government in Wales has always had an activist nature, engaging co-operatively with local communities to find collective solutions.

We want all our Councils to be activist Councils, engaged in delivering modern, accessible, high quality public services with their communities. As we have developed our plans, we have looked at the best international experience, and drawn on the experiences of the co-operative councils movement in the UK. But we should never forget that Wales has always pioneered co-operative models, both in Aneurin Bevan's time and today. In 11 Local Authorities in Wales, tenants voted for community mutual or social enterprise solutions for the management of their social housing. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 legislates for the creation of co-operative and mutual models in social care.

In this White Paper, we set out the terms of a new deal for Local Government in Wales. More than 15 years after the establishment of the National Assembly, it is time to recast the relationship between National and Local Government in Wales. Our new deal for Local Government, based on a smaller number of stronger Councils, will result in National Government in Wales setting a small number of clear national priorities, following the passage of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill, enabling Local Government to determine with local people the bulk of local priorities.

We recognise that Local Government in Wales is currently under severe pressure as a result of UK Government austerity policies and rising demand for services. This is not an easy time for anyone in Local Government, whether they are Councillors or Council workers. It is therefore critical that we allow Local Government to focus on key priorities and learn from the best practice – tried and trusted as well as innovative – in improving the delivery of services across Wales.

Meanwhile, we must ensure local Councils are wholly representative of local communities. We need a far more diverse range of Councillors. There is a direct challenge to the leadership of Local Government to ensure this. Local Councils that reflect local communities are more likely to achieve the trust of those communities when difficult decisions have to be taken by local leadership. We should be making it easier for new people to enter Local Government at Town or Community and Principal Council level. We must ensure the system of allowances for Councillors does not mean that Cabinet Members and those with senior responsibility payments simply become another part of the paid bureaucracy. We should be seeking to reduce the cost of politics and management in Local Government.

At a time when public service organisations all around the world are learning that the old ways of doing things are not sufficient for the future, Wales has the opportunity to leap beyond others if our minds are open to the possibility. If we want to reshape our public services,

and reshape our localities, then we need to see strong, adaptive leadership across all our public services, including Local Government.

We are ambitious for Local Government in Wales, and for our local communities. This White Paper sets out our vision for Local Government in Wales, and explains how we will take these proposals forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leighton Andrews". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Leighton Andrews AM**  
**Minister for Public Services**



## 1. Introduction

The Welsh Government wants the best for Wales and people living in Wales.

In order to achieve this, we believe Councils in Wales must change. We have set out our reasons and our proposals for change in a White Paper called *Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People*. A White Paper details the changes the Welsh Government wants to make to the law so you can give your opinion before it happens. This is a shorter version of *Power to Local People* which highlights the main changes we want to make.

Now we want to know what you think

### 1.1 Our vision

Our vision is that people in Wales are served by responsible Councils that listen to everyone in their area, that represent the communities they serve and are accountable for delivering good quality services.

### 1.2 Why things need to change

Councils are also known as County or County Borough Councils, and as Local Authorities. There are 22 of them in Wales. A Council is made up of up to 75 Elected Members (or Councillors) who stand for election every four years. This group of up to 75 Members is the ruling body or "full Council". If you're over 18 and live or work in the area, you can vote in Council elections and stand to be elected as a Councillor.

Every year in Wales, Councils spend about £8 billion. Over half of this money comes in the form of a grant from Welsh Government. The rest is made up of council tax, fees, charges and other sources. With this money, Councils provide a vast range of everyday services including:

- primary and secondary schools;
- social services, including services for families and children, adoption and fostering, disabled people, and older people;
- youth services;
- recycling and rubbish collection;
- maintaining roads and pavements and cleaning the streets;
- leisure centres;
- licensing the sale of alcohol and tobacco;
- making sure cafes and restaurants have clean and hygienic kitchens;
- controlling where new houses, offices and factories are built;
- housing;
- libraries; and
- allotments.



Councils are facing enormous pressures. The population of Wales is getting older and as well as being a good thing (we all want to live longer) this can put a strain on Council services. Our expectations for the quality of services are rising. At the same time, while the amount of money Councils have to spend is still going up slightly, they are certainly under serious funding pressures. In part, this is because the Welsh Government has been getting less from the UK government. This is likely to continue for some time, so something has to be done.

The Welsh Government asked a group of experts, known as the Commission for Public Service Governance and Delivery, to make recommendations about what we should do. We agreed with most of the Commission's findings and *Power to Local People* sets out the Welsh Government's plans to make changes to how Councils work. When everybody has had an opportunity to make their views known, we will produce a Draft Bill (a law we propose to ask the National Assembly for Wales to pass). The Bill will show in detail how the changes will work. Everybody will have a chance to comment on the Draft Bill before it is introduced into the Assembly after the next Assembly elections in May 2016.

To read our full proposals for Reforming Local Government, please refer to the White Paper, *Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People*.

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/power-to-local-people/?lang=en>

## 2. Balancing the Responsibilities of the Welsh Government and Local Government

It's important that everyone understands the roles and responsibilities of the Welsh Government and Local Government.

Councils make their own decisions locally and answer to local people, but for some of the services they deliver they also have to meet requirements placed on them by the Welsh Government. Our role is to set national policy and standards for key services like education, social services, waste and planning. This is important so people can expect the same high quality of service no matter where they live in Wales. If Councils don't deliver services to these standards, the Welsh Ministers can step in and take action.

### 2.1 Present role of Councils

The role of Councils has always been changing and will continue to change with time. Councils have:

- **mandatory functions and powers** (things they must do) such as education, social services, safeguarding children, waste collection, housing and local transport;
- **discretionary powers** (things they may do) such as promoting economic development, arts, culture, leisure, sports and tourism; and
- **regulatory functions and powers** (things they do to protect the public) such as trading standards, environmental health, licensing alcohol and tobacco sales, taxis etc.

The most important thing is that Councils are successful now and in the future. This means having good, strong leadership.

### 2.2 Working together

If services are to meet people's needs, service providers need to work together, this includes Councils, the NHS, the police, voluntary organisations and community groups. For example, the NHS and the Council will need to work together when somebody comes out of hospital and needs help at home.

Public services also need to work together in other areas that are behind the scenes. Sharing 'back office' services like office space, energy, ICT and financial systems, and professional services can help keep costs down.

There are many different ways in which Councils work with partners, such as:

- the Partnership Council and the Welsh Government's Local Government Scheme help National and Local Government work together;
- local service boards bring all the main public services in a Council area together to decide what the main priorities are; and
- the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 helps Councils work with partners to keep children safe and look after older people.

### 2.3 Regional working and City Regions

Councils also have to work with neighbouring Councils to meet the needs of a region. This type of working already happens in many areas, such as social services, fostering and adoption services, youth offending and alcohol and substance misuse.

It's also important for jobs. People often live in one Council area and work in a nearby city, such as Cardiff, Swansea or Newport. With new investment, our cities are seen as the main source of new jobs and growth for the next generation. This needs the Welsh Government to work together with Councils, private businesses and voluntary organisations. We've already started this work by setting up City Region Boards to provide leadership in the Swansea Bay City Region and the Cardiff Capital Region.

### 2.4 A Framework for Sustainable Public Services in Wales

The new Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill, which is currently being considered by the National Assembly, sets out a framework for all public services in Wales, to ensure they meet the needs of people today and in the future. The Bill:

- sets out national goals and measures for progress;
- ensures public services work according to sustainable development principles, such as thinking about the long term, collaborating, focusing on prevention, and working with the public;
- sets out how Councils and other public services will set local goals;
- establishes a Future Generations Commissioner to oversee and report on progress towards the goals; and
- requires public services in local areas to work together through Public Services Boards.

This framework will help clarify the relationship between National and Local Government.

**For example:** In waste, setting goals nationally has delivered better results. Councils are responsible for collecting and dealing with domestic waste, but the targets are set nationally. Under our 'Towards Zero Waste' Strategy we have invested £676 million since 2001 in helping Councils meet recycling targets, reducing landfill costs and creating new jobs. As a result, Wales is now the best in the UK and 4th in Europe.

### 2.5 Council areas

In our previous White Paper, *Devolution, Democracy and Delivery: Reforming Local Government* (July 2014), we set out our intention to reduce the number of Councils in Wales. We will make arrangements to do this in the draft Bill to be published in autumn 2015.

### 2.6 Status of new Councils

Councils are known by lots of different names, for example; County, County Borough, City and County. We think all Councils should use the same title: County Councils.

## 2.7 Staff

We want each new Council to have a strong, motivated workforce. These changes will take a lot of planning. We consulted on setting up a non-statutory Public Services Staff Commission, initially on a non-statutory basis. We will now make legislative provision for it in the second Bill.

This Commission will consult widely, for example, with employers, Trade Unions and employees. They will advise on:

- recruiting and keeping staff within and across Councils during these changes;
- transferring staff from current to new Councils;
- making sure everyone understands and has the same terms and conditions of service, such as travel payments, flexible hours and pensions;
- job grading and evaluation;
- appointments to senior posts and other posts; and
- how the effects of these changes and other issues need to be considered for other public services.

## 2.8 Legal powers of Councils

Councils need to be able to carry out their work within the law. We call this legal competence. Unless the law permits it, sometimes Councils are not free to make choices or follow new ideas for delivering services.

Councils have argued for a 'general power of competence' which would enable them to do more things in the best interests of their communities. We agree and intend to give them this power.

## 2.9 Other powers

We are in favour of giving these new Councils more powers, but first we want to make sure they are using the powers they already have well. We will then consider whether they should be given more powers in the future.

## 2.10 Council constitutions

Rules are necessary, but too many rules can make work difficult. By law, Councils have to set out their rules in a document known as a constitution. The constitution helps Councillors, officers and the public understand how they make decisions and who's responsible for those decisions. However, constitutions can be huge documents which seem to focus only on legal and bureaucratic processes.

We think it would be better for Councils to have a constitution that also sets out some of the more basic things which people care about: its core values, the principles it works to and how it will relate to the public it serves.

## 2.11 Review of the body of Local Government Legislation

Councils work under the rule of law. Some of these laws date back to the 1970s and many have not changed much since Victorian times, while some have been added to or changed many times so they can be difficult to understand. We want to look at the laws that Councils have to follow and see if they are still up-to-date and fully fit for the next generation.

### **We want:**

- all Councils to be known by the same title (County Council);
- to give Councils more freedom to do what's best for their local communities; and
- each Council to set out its core values, the principles it works to and how it will relate to the public it serves.

To read our full proposals for **Balancing the Responsibilities of the Welsh Government and Local Government**, please refer to Chapter 2 of the White Paper, *Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People*.

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/power-to-local-people/?lang=en>

### 3. Renewing Democracy

Local democracy isn't achieving everything it could to improve the well-being of people in Wales. This is partly because there are different roles in a Council and there's often confusion about who does what. So we want to make sure everyone understands their responsibilities and how they are accountable. We also want Councillors to reflect the communities they represent.

#### 3.1 Council elections

Elections to the UK government and the National Assembly happen every five years but elections to Councils are every four years. In Wales, all Councillors come up for election in one go, but in some Councils in England, a third of the Councillors are up for election every year. This is called 'phased elections'. In some ways, phased elections mean the public are given a choice more often, but in other ways it means that Councils change a lot and can lack direction.

We want your views on whether we should have Council elections every five years rather than four, or whether we should consider phased elections.

#### 3.2 The roles and responsibilities of the Leader

If someone is standing to be a Leader, people want to know what they stand for. We believe they should have a written statement of goals and present it to the Council before their election, and report each year on how they've achieved their goals. The public should be told how they are carrying out their job and be clear if there are problems.

The Leader is the political spokesperson for the Council and they select a Cabinet of Elected Members to help them get things done. Together, they are known as the Executive. The Chief Executive is not an Elected Member (or a member of the Executive!). They are appointed by the Council and are responsible for the management of the Local Authority and the staff.

Leaders need their Cabinet Members and the Chief Executive to deliver their plans, so they need to know how well they are doing. To make this clear to people, we want the Leader of each Council to set goals for Members of the Cabinet and for the Chief Executive and check how they are doing each year.

We believe the best Cabinets are those that reflect the population they serve. So we intend to put a duty on Leaders to make sure that as many different people from as many different backgrounds as possible are selected for Cabinet so that many different views are represented.

#### 3.3 The roles and responsibilities of Cabinet Members

The Cabinet is there to decide what the priorities are and how they can be achieved. They have a responsibility in decision-making. Some Cabinets make decisions in an open fashion and can show evidence to back their decisions, others aren't. This has led to some criticism, especially as it costs a lot of money to have a large number of Cabinet Members across Wales.

Under the Local Government Act 2000, a Cabinet can have up to ten members. In Wales, Council Cabinets range from seven to ten members. Each Cabinet Member is full-time and on a senior salary. Some of them have important legal responsibilities, for example the Cabinet Members for social services and education. However, it's not clear if all Cabinet Members have the same level of responsibilities or need to be full-time. It may be a good idea to have part-time

Deputy Cabinet positions that open the door to a wider range of Councillors who may have other jobs or be parents. We are seeking views on whether we should reduce the number of Cabinet Members.

### 3.4 The roles and responsibilities of Councillors

We need to make it clear what the expectations are for Councillors. They need to lead their communities and make sure people's voices are heard when decisions are made. They need to communicate with the people they serve and this includes making sure there are opportunities for them to participate in what is happening. They should use social media and digital technology to make themselves more available.

Councillors have a very important role holding the Leader and Cabinet to account. They are essential for making sure the Council is well run. This is a difficult job and they need to have the right training, especially as their responsibilities grow in larger Councils.

Councils have to support Councillors to publish a report each year on what they have achieved. However, fewer than half do so, which is why we want to change the law to make sure they publish a report. Councillors are paid through taxpayers' money and they should tell us what they have achieved.

### 3.5 Diversity among Councillors

We want communities to identify with their Councillors and feel like they are listening to them. Inequalities in gender, age and ethnic groups standing for election means that communities don't always trust that their views are being understood or their needs met.

In other areas of public life, such as voluntary organisations, there are a lot more people from different religions, cultures, backgrounds and genders working to meet people's needs. However, very few people who work in these areas go on to become a Councillor. This is a loss to democracy. If we want to encourage people to stand for election we have to show that Councils are open, welcoming and respect differences. We need to make sure that there are policies in place to stop bullying and harassment, and promote respect as well as making sure leaders understand their responsibility to set an example to all Councillors and Council staff.

Many Councils across Wales have Youth Councils. We believe these are essential for encouraging young people get involved in politics now and in the future and we will make it a requirement each area must have a Youth Council.

### 3.6 Remuneration of Councillors

It's important for democracy that we encourage a more diverse group of people to stand for election and that they are not out of pocket from being a Councillor. At the moment, Councillors receive £13,000 a year allowance, but Leaders, Cabinet Members and some others get considerably more, between £26,000 and £53,000.

This allowance affects people differently. For example, for a retired person it's an extra income, but for a single parent with a part-time job this could take them to a higher tax bracket and therefore discourage them from serving.

We believe the system of remuneration for Councillors – Executive and non-executive – needs to be clearly spelt out in such a way as the public can see how the levels payable are arrived at.

### 3.7 Number of Councillors

At present, there are 1,254 Councillors in Wales. We will need to decide how many Councillors there should be in fewer, larger Councils in Wales. We are seeking views on whether the number should be reduced and what factors we should take into account in determining the right number.

### 3.8 Term limits for Councillors

At the moment there's no limit to how long someone can be a Councillor. One survey found that half of all Councillors in Wales had served at least ten years and some over 50 years. It might be better for communities if there was a limit on the number of years or terms Councillors can serve. This would give more opportunities for people to stand and for more people to take part in running their local area. We are suggesting a limit of five terms for Councillors, and two terms for Leaders, Elected Mayors and Cabinet Members.

### 3.9 Recall of Councillors

The Recall of MPs Bill is a new law being passed by the Houses of Parliament. This means that a Member of Parliament must resign their position if ten per cent of the people in their area sign a petition and call for it. Recall could only happen if the MP has:

- broken the law and been convicted of an offence;
- been imprisoned; or
- they've been suspended from the House of Commons for at least ten days.

We are seeking your views on whether we should have similar rules for Councillors. For example, the recall of a Councillor could happen if they have been punished by the Council's Standards Committee or the Adjudication Panel for Wales for breaking the code of conduct.

### 3.10 Electoral qualification

Most local people can serve as a Councillor but a few small groups are not able to. People who work in a Council may not stand for election to the Council they work for unless they resign first. We believe this prevents a large number of potential candidates from diverse backgrounds coming forward. We want to change the law so they would only have to resign if they were elected.

We also want to look at whether Councillors in Local Government should be stopped from serving either as Assembly Members or as Community Councillors at the same time, because of the demands on time and possible conflicts of interest.

### 3.11 The roles and responsibility of the Chief Executive

The term "Chief Executive" (occasionally "Managing Director") is used throughout Local Government in Wales for the top official or the head.

Chief Executives are appointed, not elected. The Chief Executive's main role is to make sure the Council delivers the Leader's political objectives and meets the needs of the people in their areas. They also need to make sure that everything the Council does is in line with the law and value for money. However, there is no legal requirement to have a Chief Executive and we believe there should be.



The law says each Council must have a designated person who is the Head of Paid Service. This person should have the staff and other resources they need to carry out that role. In most Councils the Chief Executive is also the Head of Paid Service and we believe these two roles should be combined.

The Chief Executive must have a clear set of duties against which their performance can be measured and to make sure, if they fail, they can be dismissed by the Council. We believe these duties should be to:

- prepare and publish a corporate plan;
- prepare and publish self-assessments of the Council's performance each year;
- set up a peer review every two years of the Council's performance and prepare a report for the Council on actions to be taken;
- put in place a performance management system for all employees; and
- promote engagement and diversity in democracy.

### 3.12 Term limits for Chief Executives

When someone has been the Chief Executive for a very long time, there is a danger of that person's power and influence becoming overwhelming. We are seeking views on whether there should be a limit on how long a Chief Executive can stay in post, and if so, how long.

### 3.13 The cost of senior management

Councils set the salaries of Chief Executives and many senior management roles. Chief Executives in Wales earn between £105,851 and £194,661. The size of senior management teams in Wales varies widely, from three in some Councils to 17 in others. Senior managers earn between £60,000 and £150,000. The variation in both the number of senior management posts and their salaries seems to be unconnected to the size or complexity of the Council. It's a lot of public money, in total almost £26 million a year. We are seeking views on whether there should be more consistency in the number of senior posts and their salaries.

### 3.14 Senior appointments to the new Authorities

In some countries, such as New Zealand and the Republic of Ireland, there is an independent body that manages the appointments of Chief Executives and other senior public roles. This helps to bring more consistency and to build a body of public leaders with the right skills and training to do the job well.

We are seeking views on whether we should adopt this approach in Wales.

#### **We want:**

- to look at the roles and responsibilities of people at all levels of Local Government, this includes the Leaders, Cabinet Members, Councillors and Chief Executives;
- to reduce the cost of politics in Wales;
- a wider group of people from different ages and backgrounds to get involved and stand to be a Councillor if they want; and
- to look at how often and for how long someone can hold a senior position in a Council.

To read our full proposals for Renewing Democracy, please refer to Chapter 3 of the White Paper, *Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People*.

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/power-to-local-people/?lang=en>

## 4. Connecting with Communities

Wales has always had strong communities, where people get involved and make things happen. Sometimes, they find it difficult to get involved because they're not told about decisions until the last minute. This means people often only get involved when there is a threat of closing a service or closing a community facility, such as a library or leisure centre. This results in lost opportunities for communities to take charge of things themselves.

Councillors are chosen to represent their area through Council elections, and then they make decisions on our behalf. This is called 'representative democracy'. But we expect more these days. We pay for local services through our taxes and we expect to have a say more often than every four years when there are Council elections. We expect to be able to participate in all decisions which affect us. This is called 'participatory democracy'.

Councils have not always been very good at helping people to get involved. This must change. In their community leadership role, Councils and Councillors need to be putting people and their views at the centre of everything they do.

### 4.1 Community governance in Wales

Community governance is the way people in local areas or neighbourhoods organise themselves and manage their services and assets they hold. There are different ways of doing this:

- Council area committees;
- Community Councils;
- Partnerships between public services and voluntary groups;
- Community trusts and social enterprises; or
- Programme partnerships, such as Communities First.

There are already many of these groups working in communities and sometimes it can be difficult for them to make their voice heard and to influence Council decisions. We believe Councillors should have a strong role leading their communities and we are proposing there should be a new system to help do this.

### 4.2 Councillor-led community governance

With fewer, larger Councils, it is essential that communities play a greater role than at present. We believe the new Councils when they are working with communities should be divided into smaller areas, and a community partnership called an Area Board set up in each of these. The Council should decide the size and shape of these smaller areas after talking with local people and other public services.

The Area Boards should be led by the Councillors for that area acting together, but they must involve charities, community bodies, social enterprises and other public services, including Community Councils. The meetings of these Area Boards must be held in public, and everybody who lives in the area should have the right to speak, so that the Board can take notice of their views and concerns.

The purpose of these Boards is to shape the local community by changing the way services are delivered there. The Board will be able to call the officers of the Council to explain themselves if services are not up to scratch. They should also help community groups when they want to take charge of local facilities, such as a community centre or playing fields. There's also an opportunity for Area Boards to take responsibility for new ideas and initiatives in their area, including those funded by UK and Welsh Government programmes.

Councils will have to understand that these Area Boards are really important and support them with all the resources they need to carry out their day-to-day roles.

### 4.3 Community Councils

There are 735 Community Councils in Wales. Community Councils work at the town or village level and some serve a very small area. We believe this is too many and the smaller ones simply don't have the resources to get much done. One strength of Community Councils is that they're closer to local people, however, they aren't always open and don't always involve the public they serve. In principle they are democratic bodies and for this reason they can raise local taxes, but in reality there is no competition for the vast majority of seats in Community Council elections.

### 4.4 Local Authorities review of Community Councils

There's a lot of good work that Community Councils do. However, we think there is a clear case for making changes. We want Community Councils to be more ambitious and work in partnership with other community groups. We want them to be open about the decisions they are making and involve the people in their area. We need them to see themselves as part of public services in Wales, and be more actively involved in work that support families, children and young people and other vulnerable groups like older people.

They can only do this, if there are fewer, larger Community Councils. Some of the smaller Community Councils should look at joining together to form larger Community Councils that look after wider areas. In order to achieve this, we want to give Local Authorities the power to review the Community Councils in their area and with a view to reducing the overall number, and for them to complete this work by 2022.

### 4.5 Governance and standards

As well as changes to Community Council areas, the public needs to know there are standards for how Community Councils manage their business and how public money is spent and accounted for. We want to have a set of tests that Community Councils have to pass to be seen as capable and competent.

Councils that pass these tests will have extra rights and responsibilities. They will have wider powers to do things for the benefit of their community. Those that don't pass the tests should look to do so by joining with another smaller Community Council to form fewer, larger Community Councils.

#### 4.6 Community Councillors serving on more than one Council

Almost half the Councillors on the main Councils are also Community Councillors. This could cause conflicts of interest when main Councils are conducting reviews of Community Councils. Also, some people serve on more than one Community Council as well as being a Councillor of the main Council.

We want your views about whether we should prevent the same person serving on a main Council and a Community Council, and on more than one Community Council.

##### **We want:**

- Councillors to be actively involved in their communities and Area Boards;
- Councillors to have an open door, listening to people's needs;
- Councils to work together with other services, voluntary organisations and communities; and
- Councils to look at the Community Councils in their area and consider changes.

To read our full proposals for *Connecting with Communities*, please refer to Chapter 4 of the White Paper, *Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People*.

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/power-to-local-people/?lang=en>

## 5. Power to Local Communities

Wales has a proud history of co-operatives and community or social enterprise, people who run a business not for personal profit but to help the community. There are many examples across Wales of small community trusts which run village halls, leisure centres and sports facilities. There are also many big examples, such as farmers' co-operatives and housing associations, as well as major companies like Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water and the Principality Building Society. In fact, the social housing in half all Council areas in Wales is now run by housing associations and tenants have a major role in running them.

We want to see more of this kind of social enterprise so that communities can have greater rights to decide how things work and people can be involved in the decisions which affect them.

### 5.1 Community participation

Sometimes people get frustrated because the service they're getting is not good enough and they know it could be improved, often with small changes. We believe that if a community group feels that a service could be improved, they should have a right to approach the Council, set out all their ideas and plans, and get involved in improving the service. In some cases, this could mean the community group taking over the service and running it themselves.

We believe this could be a powerful way for community groups to make sure their voice is listened to. Council staff will need to develop skills to work in new ways and it may take a culture change in leadership.

### 5.2 Transferring Council property to the community

Councils own lots of buildings, land and property, such as offices, halls, libraries, leisure centres and playing fields. These are known as 'assets'. In these difficult financial times, Councils may no longer afford to keep them and they may want to sell them or get somebody else to run them up. However, they don't always ask the community for their views and whether they would like to take it on themselves.

We believe community groups should have the right to approach the Council and propose that they take over an asset for the benefit of the community. This could mean selling the asset to the community group (at the market rate or below) or the community group may wish to run and manage it for a period of years. We would expect the new Area Boards to help community groups where there was community support for taking over Council property. The Welsh Government has produced a toolkit setting out how to transfer assets successfully.

As well as being able to show support for their plans, community groups would need to have a legal structure with the right skills and financial controls in place. There would need to be safeguards so that the asset remained in the community and was not sold for profit.

**For example:** Torfaen Council transferred three sports and leisure centres over to a community trust to run and it means the community got to keep using these. Other Councils let community trusts run libraries, so they don't have to close.

### 5.3 Community ownership

Communities may also want to have more say over property which is privately owned, such as a village pub or shop or playing fields, or owned by other public services. This kind of property has a special value to the community and can often play an important role in making sure communities thrive, by providing jobs and services for local people. In some areas they can be important for protecting the Welsh language.

The Welsh Government believes community groups should have a right of first refusal when property of community value comes up for sale. They would normally have to buy the property at market value but they would have a period of time in which to raise the funding. There could be an accelerated procedure for property that has been neglected or abandoned. There would need to be certain protections for private property owners.

We are seeking your initial views on this proposal, with a view to consulting further in due course.

**We want:**

- community groups to have rights and powers they can use; and
- community groups to actively take part in change.

To read our full proposals for Power to Local Communities, please refer to Chapter 5 of the White Paper, *Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People*.

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/power-to-local-people/?lang=en>

## 6. Corporate Governance and Improvement

The public and people who work for Councils expect them to be well run. However, Councils face enormous pressures. The population is getting older and this puts a strain on Council services. Our expectations for the quality of services are rising. At the same time, the amount of money Councils have to spend has been getting less each year because the Welsh Government has been getting less money from the UK Government. This is likely to continue for some time, so something has to be done.

There are times when Councils in Wales haven't met the needs of people in their area and Welsh Ministers have had to step in to put things right. Sometimes this happens because it's not clear who's really in control and who's job it is to fix things.

At times like this, leaders need to be focused and have vision, and managers need the right controls in place so they know what's going on.

### 6.1 Corporate Governance

Corporate governance is about how well an organisation is running, including how it manages risks, plans its finance and resources and has the right checks and balances in place so people can be held to account.

It's the Chief Executive's job to make sure all of this is in place, but Councils under the law also must have an Audit Committee to help the Chief Executive by checking the Council is being the best it can be and making improvements where they're needed. There is also a role for the Monitoring Officer whose job it is to see the Council operates within the law.

We want Councils to take more responsibility for making improvements so the Welsh Ministers don't have to step in so often to put things right. This means the corporate governance processes need to work better.

### 6.2 The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009

This law means Councils have to make annual plans to improve. The Auditor General for Wales checks every year whether they have improved, and whether they can improve further. We believe this law is not working as it should and that sometimes we are measuring the wrong things and missing the things that really matter. The Welsh Government intends to do away with this law, although some parts of it may be kept in new legislation.

### 6.3 Managing improvement through Self-assessment and Peer Review

In order to make sure improvements are happening and the right checks and balances are in place, we intend to make Audit Committees stronger. Under our proposals, the new Corporate Governance and Audit Committee will have more powers and involve more independent members. These independent members won't hold political agendas that could influence their decisions.



We will also require the Chief Executive to carry out a self-assessment each year of how well the Council is operating and to report to the Leader and Cabinet on any matters of concern and what action is being taken to put things right.

To make sure the assessments are fair and reasonable, every other year we want the Council to be reviewed by a group of experts. This is known as a 'peer review'. A peer review is when a group of qualified professionals and people who understand how Councils work look at what staff do and the systems they use so they can pick out areas for improvement. They also compare what they have found with the Chief Executive's assessment to see how well they match.

Together, we believe stronger Corporate Governance and Audit Committees and a system of self-assessment and peer review should give the Leader all the information they need to deliver the best services possible for local people within the budget available.

#### 6.4 Powers to intervene

Sometimes, however, things will still go wrong. When this happens in areas such as social services or education, there is a risk of that members of the public might suffer disadvantage or even come to harm. In these cases, the Welsh Ministers must have powers to act quickly.

We believe the Welsh Ministers should have the power to commission an independent review of a Local Authority if:

- a whistle-blower says there are issues;
- their performance is below what it needs to be;
- they are behind other Councils in key areas;
- there are concerns raised by the Council itself or its Members;
- information from auditors or inspectors show problems; or
- the public have concerns about issues.

The Welsh Ministers would then use these findings to decide if support or formal intervention is necessary.

#### **We want:**

- to strengthen the role of the Council Audit Committees;
- to introduce a system where Council leadership have to do self-assessments and be challenged over the systems they put in place;
- to give Welsh Ministers powers to ask for independent reviews; and
- to give Welsh Ministers powers to step in if they think Councils aren't improving or aren't working.

To read our full proposals for Corporate Governance and Improvement, please refer to Chapter 6 of the White Paper, *Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People*.

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/power-to-local-people/?lang=en>

## 7. Performance in Local Government

Public services should be excellent no matter where people live in Wales.

The Welsh Government sets out the policy and legal framework that each Council has to work to but services are managed and delivered by Councils. Making sure services are excellent means having the right systems in place so managers know what needs to be done, how much needs to be done, and what quality standards need to be met.

Every community is different. The Council's role is to make sure that services are right for their communities.

### 7.1 Planning how to get things done

Providing excellent services means having clear goals, the right information and a detailed plan. This is called 'corporate plan'.

A new law, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill, is currently going through the National Assembly. This law sets out long-term goals for Wales and will require each Council to have their own goals which show what the local priorities are. These will be chosen by the Leader, agreed by the whole Council and set out in the 'local well-being plan'.

We believe it is the job of the Chief Executive to then produce a plan to show how these goals will be achieved. The corporate plan will set out how the Council will meet its goals in the short, medium and long-term. It will set out how the Chief Executive will use the staff and resources of the Council, how risks will be managed, how services are performing now and what needs to improve, and how the public can have their say on the things that affect them.

### 7.2 Information to compare services

Corporate planning can only work well if the Council has good, up-to-date information. This doesn't mean more information. In fact, we believe we should simplify the information Councils are required to publish.

The right information, however, lets managers, Councillors and the public see how things change over time, spot dips in performance, and compare one Council's performance with others. An example is the My Local School website, which allows parents to compare their school with others (<http://mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/>).

The Welsh Government believes there should be a single website where Councils will be required to publish information that can be used by the public to compare how Councils are performing and challenge services to improve. This website should also include:

- the local well-being plan;
- reports on individual Councils by expert bodies such as the Wales Audit Office and the bodies that inspect education and social services;
- self-assessment and peer review reports;
- the corporate plan; and
- information about complaints.

### 7.3 Digital Councils

The Welsh Government believes digital technology has huge potential to change the way services are delivered and how Councils are held to account. The focus needs to be on ease of use and open access. We question whether most Councils fully understand the kind of cultural change required to achieve the greatest impact from technology.

We have made clear our intention that Council and Executive meetings must be broadcast live online so more people can take part and see what is happening in their area. Now we want to go further. We want to give the public the right to make their views known on any agenda items of meetings of the Cabinet, the Council or its Committees, and for those views to be taken into account. We also believe the public have a right to report or have their say by using social media during all public meetings in the Council.

### 7.4 Complaints

Complaints give valuable information that can lead to improvements. We want Councils to give communities and people as many ways as possible to complain and tell them about problems they are facing with services, and for the Council to prepare regular reports for the Audit Committee to consider, setting out information about the number of complaints, what they are about and how they have been resolved.

#### **We want:**

- to make it a requirement that Councils have to write and publish a plan each year that shows what they will do in the short, medium and long-term to serve their community;
- to build a website holding information about each Council and how they are doing compared to other Councils; and
- Councils to have ways for people to complain when there's a problem. This includes online ways.

To read our full proposals for Performance in Local Government, please refer to Chapter 7 of the White Paper, *Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People*.

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/power-to-local-people/?lang=en>

## 8. Strengthening the Role of Review

Public scrutiny is an essential part of making sure Councils are effective and accountable. Councils are paid for through taxes and their decisions and actions should always be open to examination and the public should play a part in this.

The main ways this happens in Councils is through **internal checks** carried out by Councillors sitting on scrutiny committees, and **external checks** carried out by independent experts.

### 8.1 Internal checks – Scrutiny by Councillors

Most Councillors are not part of the Executive. That is, they are not involved in the day-to-day spending decisions or running of the Council. One of their most important jobs is to examine the plans and decisions of the Executive and the senior management team and suggest improvements. They do this through scrutiny committees.

Good scrutiny leads to better decision-making and supports better services. Good scrutiny must

- be independent from the Executive;
- be planned in advance so that people can prepare;
- have adequate resources;
- have the right information to hand; and
- draw on the experience and views of service users, their families and community groups.

The Welsh Government has done a lot in recent years to strengthen scrutiny but we believe it could be strengthened further. We are seeking views on whether Councils should do more to protect the independence of scrutiny, enable scrutiny to look at the Executive's main decisions before they are made, set out clearly what will be scrutinised in the future, and give independent members of scrutiny committees the same voting rights as Councillors. As many services are now delivered in partnership between different bodies, we also want to know whether Council scrutiny committees should be able to look at all the public services in their area.

### 8.2 Giving people a voice in scrutiny

People want to be involved and engaged if they believe they can make a difference. This includes taking part in the assessment of services and how they've been provided. This happens in some Councils but not all. We want more opportunities for people to be able to take part and have a say about a service improvement and be able to ask scrutiny committees to look into things they're concerned about in a Council.

### 8.3 Scrutiny of regional services

Many services are now delivered by a number of Councils working together, for example, improvement services in education. This can mean that the body delivering the services is examined separately by each individual Council. This can be very time consuming and wasteful. The Welsh Government is proposing the Councils that are working together should set up a joint scrutiny committee to examine the work of the service provider.

#### 8.4 External checks – Scrutiny by Audit, Inspection and Regulation Bodies

There are a number of independent bodies established by law to look at what Councils do. The Auditor General for Wales looks at how they are spending public money and whether they are getting value for money. The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales inspects Councils' social care work and regulates child care and care homes. Estyn inspects Council education and children's services, including schools. They play a very valuable role providing an independent view of how Councils are performing and whether services are up to scratch.

We believe the links between groups that carry out external reviews and scrutiny committees should be stronger. By sharing information, scrutiny committees can draw on the independent expertise of the external review bodies to ask harder questions about areas of concern.

We also believe we should strengthen joint working between the external review bodies. Every two years they should work together to produce a report on each Council as well as an annual assessment of Local Government as a whole across Wales. Their focus should be on the difference Councils are making and on spotting examples of good practice so Councils can learn from each other.

##### **We want:**

- scrutiny committees to plan better;
- the public to get involved in scrutiny more; and
- groups involved in external checks to share information, work with Councils and write reports together.

To read our full proposals for Strengthening the Role of Review, please refer to Chapter 8 of the White Paper, *Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People*.

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/power-to-local-people/?lang=en>

## 9. Reforming Local Government Finance

There are a lot of changes that we want to make through this White Paper, but they will make a real difference to communities across Wales and the people who live in them. To support these changes, it also makes sense for us to review how we fund the work that Councils do.

Councils in Wales spend over £8 billion a year on running costs and delivering services. This money comes from lots of different places: the Welsh Government, grants, council tax and more.

The way the system works now is complicated and there are other things happening in Wales, like new tax raising powers, which will inform our options for change. However, changing our funding systems isn't without risk and we want to make sure that we do it right. We won't change the whole system all in one go, but we will make sure the current system is prepared for when the new larger Councils begin to take over.

We also need to be thinking long-term. We need to think about how the funding system can be changed so that Councils are more accountable to local people when they decide what to spend their money on. At the moment, Council funding and capital investment comes from many different places and we want to look at whether the balance is right between what comes from national funding and what Councils raise locally, like council tax. We also need to consider how we can link funding to the performance of Council services. These things will require a lot more thinking and we will publish further papers on this in due course.

### We want a new system that:

- is clear and simple;
- works and manages our resources well;
- gives clear lines of accountability so new Councils can show what they're spending money on;
- has clear links between the amount of funding and the amount of results so services can improve;
- encourages new thinking, planning and ideas for delivering services;
- helps local communities get involved; and
- helps with decision-making.

To read our full proposals for Reforming Local Government Finance, please refer to Chapter 9 of the White Paper, *Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People*.

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/power-to-local-people/?lang=en>

## 10. Conclusion

Thank you for reading this. If you want to read the full document or to let us know your thoughts please fill in our online survey which you can find on our website:

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/power-to-local-people/?lang=en>

Or you can send your views to:

Reforming Local Government  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

or by email to: [RLGProgramme@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:RLGProgramme@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

The closing date is **28 April 2015**.

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>Democratic Services Committee</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>10 March 2015</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>Improvement Grant - Welsh Government</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>Present the latest information and seek guidance on the way forward.</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>Geraint George Head of Democratic Services</b>

### Background

1. The arrival of the Local Government Measure 2011 (Wales) brought considerable requirements and expectations on elected members. The Measure also outlines the requirements for Local Government to support members to fulfill their roles successfully. This support can be offered through a number of ways (Training, clear role descriptions, personal development interviews and so on).
2. The Committee will remember that the Wales Local Government Association (WLGA) have played an integral part supporting Local Government to fulfill the requirements of the Measure by leading on certain developments and developing other elements in partnership with Local Government. A number of topics of discussion by this Committee has been based upon guidance by the Wales Local Government Association over the last few years.
3. We now understand that the Minister for Local Services, Leighton Andrews has decided that the Welsh Government Improvement Grant will cease at the end of March 2015.
4. As things currently stand, this will lead to the Improvement and Equality Team within the WLGA and the Local Government Data Unit which is responsible for performance data, ceasing to exist. The services provided by these teams will come to an end.

### Competency Framework Consultation.

5. The competency Framework consultation, which is included in Appendix A is an example of the work lead by the WLGA, it is an important tool to support elected members. The consultation has been shared with all members through Rhaeadr on 6th February, with a request for members to provide any comments for the Committee to consider or provide comments directly to the WLGA.

### Member Support and Development Charter

6. The WLGA developed the Member Support and Development Charter, known as the 'Member Charter'. The new Charter was developed in 2012/13 following



consultation with political arenas and member support officers from various Councils. Elements of the Charter build upon the requirements of the Local Government Measure 2011 (Wales) mentioned above.

7. Currently, however, due to the situation noted in 3 and 4 above, with the abolishment of the Equality and Improvement Team within the WLGA, Gwynedd Council will no longer be able to achieve the Charter as no further awards can be made.
8. However, elements included in the Charter are considered to be very important and valuable (eg suitable role descriptions, ensuring a full training programme etc) as they endorse the Council's principles for supporting elected members development to ensure they are able to undertake their role successfully. It is considered that we should continue to identify and work towards the important elements within the Charter in order to ensure that the relevant support is given to Member development within Gwynedd Council. This is also very important with consideration to the forthcoming Local Government elections, with the aim to ensure everything is in place by then.
9. It is recommended that the Committee
  - A) Consider any comments they have with regards to the competency framework consultation, especially with regards to the specific questions asked.
  - B) Support the Head of Democratic Services to continue to identify the important elements of the Charter in order to ensure the appropriate support is developed for the members of Gwynedd Council. It is important to continue with this work with the aim of ensuring all important elements are in place prior to the next Local Government elections.

# **WLGA Continuing Professional Development for Councillors 2015**

## **Draft for Consultation**

### **Competency Framework**

**This competency framework describes the range of skills and knowledge required by elected members and a set of associated effective behaviours. It has been developed by the WLGA working with members and officers across Wales and is intended to be used by members when considering their need for professional development or reviewing their performance. It also provides a "curriculum" for authorities when developing local strategies for member development. The Framework includes a range of generic competencies required by all members and separate sections for specific roles on the council so that members may use some sections selectively.**

### **Consultation**

**Please discuss this as widely as possible within your Council. We are interested in the views of officers and members, particularly members in all roles and officers with a responsibility for Democratic services, scrutiny and Organisational development. Please consider:**

- 1. Does the Framework adequately cover the roles of all members?**

**If not, what should be added (bearing in mind that the document should not become too long or complex)**

**What might need to be removed (in particular, are all the aspects of section 10 and section 11 necessary?)**

- 2. Is the terminology used meaningful for members?**

**If not what might be substituted?**

**Closing date for responses **4<sup>th</sup> March 2015****

**Please return to Sarah Titcombe 029 2046 8638**

**sarah.titcombe@wlga.gov.uk**

## 1. Fundamentals: A range of generic skills required by all members

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
<b>Understanding of the role of the Councillor</b>	The extent and limits of a councillor's individual responsibilities and powers and responsibilities in corporate governance. Also corporate responsibilities such as corporate parenting and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.	Undertakes their role effectively in the council, the community and with partner agencies. Understands when it is and is not appropriate to act for the ward or in the interests of the area as a whole. Acts proactively to deliver outcomes within corporate responsibilities.
<b>Understanding the role of the Local Authority</b>	Understanding of the services delivered, both statutory and discretionary and the policies, procedures, plans and strategies which underpin them.	Is able to describe the work of the council to the public and where these responsibilities lie with other agencies such as community and town councils, voluntary sector or the Welsh Government. Contributes to the development of council plans and strategies and takes decisions in the light of these.
<b>Conduct</b>	Understanding of the ethical framework governing the work of councillors, specifically the Code of Conduct. Understanding of the role of the monitoring officer. Appreciation of the importance of accountability, integrity and transparency for good governance.	Abides by the code of conduct at all times. Always declares and defines interests. Seeks advice from the monitoring officer when appropriate. Treats others with respect in all settings. Demonstrates integrity. Values others. Listens. Stays calm in difficult situations
<b>Equalities and respect</b>	Personal skills in demonstrating respect for others regardless of sex, race, religion, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity or sexual orientation. Understanding Equalities and Diversity law relating to the work of the council and the role of the councillor. Understanding of the need for and what constitutes respectful behaviour towards	Demonstrates equalities values in personal behaviour and council decisions. Applies appropriate equalities legislation and demonstrates equalities values in personal behaviour and council decisions. Treats everyone with respect at all times when acting as a councillor whether in the Council, community, or political group.

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Knowledge and Skills</b>	<b>Effective Behaviours</b>
	others.	
<b>Audit, Inspection and Regulation</b>	An understanding of the role of the Audit Inspection and Regulatory bodies and associated council processes.	Engages effectively with the audit, inspection and regulatory process within the council, using this information to constructively challenge and support the affected services.
<b>Balancing commitments</b>	An understanding of time management principals including prioritisation and delegation	Maintains an effective work/life balance, managing the time available to concentrate on the issues with the most significant outcomes.
<b>Information management</b>	Understanding of the legal requirements of Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation. Understanding and interpreting information and data. Ability to handle data in the format provided by the council	Receives information and data from a variety of sources and is able to store share and use it effectively and where possible electronically. Does not keep records about people without seeking their agreement. Responds promptly and appropriately to FOI requests.
<b>Using ICT and social media</b>	Skills in all 'Office' applications such as word processing, presentation and spreadsheets. And communication and social media applications including email, tweeting, blogging and personal website management.	Conducts all council business electronically Communicates with the community electronically and through social media where appropriate. Maintains an effective, positive and ethical online presence.
<b>Meeting preparation and participation</b>	Understands standing orders, protocols and rules of debate. Skills in public speaking, debating, asking questions.	Prepares effectively for meetings by reading papers, analysing data, undertakes personal research and participates in any pre meetings. Contributes to positive meeting outcomes by seeking tangible decisions or actions. Effectively contributes to meetings making points clearly and succinctly Remains focussed on the business in hand Understands and applies meeting 'rules' Seeks guidance from officers and group leaders before meetings as appropriate.
<b>Working with the media</b>	Skills in building relationships with the media and being	Is a recognised source of credible information for the media. Speaks

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Knowledge and Skills</b>	<b>Effective Behaviours</b>
	interviewed on TV radio and for the press.	confidently, authoritatively and appropriately in interviews. Enhances the reputation of the council when appearing on screen or in print.
<b>Self promotion</b>	The ability to develop a profile in the community through local activities and effective communication and consultation.	Writes an annual report on achievements and activities. Is highly visible in the ward. Maintains a high standard in both personal reputation and that of the council.
<b>Working with officers</b>	Understanding the role of officers generally and the 'rules' they need to abide by including a deeper understanding of the role of senior officers such as the Chief Executive, senior management team, Monitoring officer and Heads of Finance and Legal and Democratic Services. Skills in acting as a corporate employer. Understanding of the appointments process and interviewing skills.	Maintains professional relationships with officers, recognising appropriate boundaries and abiding Acts as an effective member of an appointment panel applying sound HR and equality and diversity principles to secure the best candidate.
<b>Health and safety</b>	Understanding of Health and safety legislation in the work of the council. Understand how to assess risks and ensure personal safety and that of others.	Promotes and ensures the health and safety of everyone in the council. Ensures personal safety when working in the council and when in groups or alone in the community.
<b>Continuing professional and development</b>	Ability to identify personal development needs and to participate in development activities.	Undertakes regular personal development reviews taking account of role descriptions and competency frameworks. Takes responsibility for developing personal skills and knowledge, attends learning and development activities seeking tangible outcomes.
<b>Financial capability</b>	Understanding of the way councils and services are funded. Understanding and skills in budget setting. Personal financial capability. Understanding the impact of welfare reform and the	Engages effectively in the budget setting process. Is prepared to take hard, evidence based decisions. Demonstrates skills in numeracy when interpreting data and asking questions.

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
	austerity agenda.	
<b>Interpersonal skills</b>	Self-awareness, and skills in self-management, "good manners" emotional intelligence, listening. Negotiation, conflict management and mediation skills.	Acts in a professional and respectful manner to all people and in all places. Is self aware and able to develop and manage relationships both within and outside the council. Brokers relationships and manages conflict in the community and council and between the two.
<b>Sustainable development</b>	Understanding of issues that impact on future generations such as health and wellbeing, financial security and the environment.	Takes decisions based upon the needs of future generations as well as the current population.

## 2. Local Leadership. A range of skills required by all councillors in their role as community leaders

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
<b>Working with the community</b>	Knowledge of community groups and leaders. Understanding of community issues and concerns. Ability to seek the views of all relevant parties.	Understands the needs of the local community and secures action from the council on behalf of local people. Communicates with the community, individuals and the council to ensure engagement and understanding of all parties.
<b>Consultation engagement and</b>	Understands the different levels of engagement ranging from communication to co-production set out in the national principles of engagement for Wales. <a href="http://www.participationcymru.org.uk/national-principles">http://www.participationcymru.org.uk/national-principles</a>	Demonstrates positive outcomes as a result of effective engagement.
<b>Voluntary sector</b>	Understands the role and responsibilities of the voluntary sector in the area.	Builds effective relationships with the voluntary sector and communicates and works with them when appropriate.
<b>Local issues</b>	Understands the issues of importance to people locally and throughout the council area. Knows which council plans will impact on local issues.	Works with the community and the council to find solutions to local problems. Secures funding for local initiatives.
<b>Working with community and town councils</b>	Understanding of the responsibilities of community councils and their forward work programmes.	Works with community councils to deliver outcomes for the community. Fosters positive relations and active communication with the community

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
		council and clerk.

### 3. Casework

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
<b>Being accessible to the public</b>	Understanding of and ability to arrange and publicise opportunities to discuss casework with the public.	Makes themselves available through the most appropriate means to connect with the greatest number of people. Uses surgeries, street surgeries, informal settings, home and social media as appropriate. Promises only that which can be delivered.
<b>Managing casework</b>	Ability to use case management techniques and software and to monitor and communicate progress.	Keeps the people on whose behalf they are working informed of progress. Monitors progress of cases after they have been referred to officers or other agencies. Uses the established referral schemes within the council.
<b>Signposting</b>	Knowledge of sources of information and advice within and outside the council.	Makes links between members of the public and the appropriate source of help in the council or in the community.

### 4. Scrutiny

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
<b>Understand the role and potential of scrutiny for driving improvement</b>	Understanding of the characteristics of effective scrutiny (insert hyperlink when available)	Contributes to the work programme. Acts in a non-political and non-parochial manner when reviewing policy or monitoring performance. Prioritises the areas of work where scrutiny can make a difference. Promotes the work of scrutiny within the council.
<b>Policy development</b>	Understanding of the area of service or council function for which the committee is responsible.	Makes informed and evidence based recommendations for policy development.
<b>Holding the Executive to Account</b>	Ability to review and constructively challenge the work and decisions of the Executive. Understanding of the use of the power to call in Cabinet decisions.	Effectively monitors and challenges the work of the executive in the best interests of the community.

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Knowledge and Skills</b>	<b>Effective Behaviours</b>
<b>Performance monitoring</b>	Ability to understand complex data, financial information, risk, reports from audit, inspection and regulatory bodies, and other information required for performance measurement.	Identifies and challenges poor performance based on evidence.
<b>Meeting skills</b>	Ability to prepare thoroughly for meetings. Ability to understand and contribute to the questioning strategy. Ability to listen and question effectively throughout the meeting.	Listens actively and effectively Makes appropriate use of pre meetings to plan a questioning strategy. Focuses on meeting outcomes using meeting processes as a means to an end.
<b>Engaging with the public in scrutiny</b>	Raising public awareness of scrutiny and work programmes. Ability to engage with individuals and organisations especially those traditionally excluded.	Encourages the public to become involved in the policy and decision making process through scrutiny.
<b>Joint scrutiny</b>	Understanding of the role, remit, terms of reference and powers of any joint scrutiny committee and the role of the individual member on that committee. To understand the role, responsibilities and priorities of regional bodies, partnerships and organisations outside the council that the committee may need to scrutinise.	Demonstrates a commitment to working jointly with scrutiny members from other authorities, partnerships and organisations.

## 5. Chairing

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Knowledge and Skills</b>	<b>Effective Behaviours</b>
<b>Meeting management</b>	Understanding of meeting protocols and the rules of debate.	Chairs clearly and authoritatively, enforcing the rules and encouraging fair participation.



<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Knowledge and Skills</b>	<b>Effective Behaviours</b>
	<p>Ability to manage the agenda, contributions and time.</p> <p>Ability to engage with the public and press and viewers in the case of webcast meetings.</p>	<p>Manages the agenda by introducing items, summarising debate, focussing on outcomes and limiting contributions which do not contribute to the outcomes.</p> <p>Ensures that the public feel welcome, understand the meeting purpose and how they can contribute.</p>
<b>Committee leadership</b>	<p>An in depth understanding of the role of the committee and its scope. Ability to liaise with relevant officers, members and agencies.</p> <p>Commitment to enabling all committee members to develop skills and participate effectively in meetings.</p>	<p>Works with the committee outside of meetings to develop its effectiveness and that of participating individuals.</p> <p>Communicates with members and officers with an interest in committee proceedings.</p> <p>Builds relationships with the relevant Heads of service/ directors to ensure that the work of the committee is relevant, well informed and provides the outcomes needed.</p>
<b>Work programme development and management</b>	<p>Understanding of the subjects within the scope of the committee and how these interact with council policies generally and the roles of other committees.</p> <p>Ability to develop a balanced work programme for the committee and clear terms of reference and outcomes for any sub groups.</p>	<p>Works with officers and committee members to develop the work plan taking account of the fit with the work of other committees.</p> <p>Ensures that the work programme takes account of national regional and local plans, policies and the expressed needs of the community for services.</p> <p>Makes sure that the committee also takes account of inspections or reports from audit, inspection and regulation bodies.</p>
<b>Resourcing</b>	<p>Ensuring that the committee has the staffing, information and finances to function effectively</p>	<p>Negotiates and ensures the support required by the committee.</p>

## 6. Statutory/Regulatory

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Knowledge and Skills</b>	<b>Effective Behaviours</b>
<b>Planning</b>	<p>Understanding of planning and rights of way law</p>	<p>Demonstrates objectivity by taking independent decisions based on</p>

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
	<p>generally.            Understanding of how to apply the Code of Conduct to planning issues.            The declaration of interests as this relates to planning matters.            Understanding of the Local Development Plan.            Understanding of the 'rules' for Development Management.            Understanding of Sustainable Development principals and legislation including environmental, welfare and design considerations.</p>	<p>evidence and the legal responsibility placed on members acting in a semi judicial role.</p> <p>Transparently adheres to the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Seeks appropriate advice, development or briefing before taking decisions.</p>
<b>Audit</b>	<p>Ability to scrutinise financial performance. An understanding of risk management and internal and external audit arrangements.            An understanding of the relative roles of audit and scrutiny.</p>	
<b>Licencing</b>	<p>An understanding of Licensing regulations and Licensing policy.            Understanding of local policies which impact in this area such as the Community Plan and wider considerations for sustainability.</p>	
<b>Democratic services</b>	<p>An understanding of the legislative requirements for a DS committee.            Understanding of the requirements for member support and development.            Liaison with the Head of Democratic services and Lead member for member support and development.            Promoting diversity in local government.</p>	
<b>Standards</b>	<p>Understanding of the law and constitution in relation to conduct. Ability</p>	

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
	to advise and secure training for members of both principal and community councils in relation to the Code of Conduct	

## 7. Cabinet

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
<b>Portfolio lead</b>	A thorough knowledge of relevant service areas. An ability to build relationships with relevant officers and scrutiny chairs. Ability to work collaboratively to develop a vision for the service area.	Provides political direction to officers in the portfolio area Is accountable for communication, policy and performance in the portfolio area. Actively seeks and values the input of scrutiny to policy development and performance monitoring. Works with officers to consider issues, priorities and take decisions.
<b>Collective responsibility</b>	Ability to handle information and take decisions after full consultation and consideration of the issues. Ability to prioritise issues of most importance to the authority. Ability to work with other authorities and agencies to secure services for the Council	Takes responsibility as a cabinet member for strategic council decisions.
<b>Taking decisions under delegated responsibilities</b>	Understanding of the scheme of delegation. Ability to take responsibility for decisions taken under the scheme.	Takes decisions after appropriate research and consultation.

## 8. Strategic Leadership

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
<b>Manage the reputation of the council</b>	Ability to act as an ambassador for the authority.	Effectively represents the council at all levels ensuring that information about the council and its services and citizens is communicated positively and with integrity.
<b>Leadership of area/region/place</b>	Ability to develop a vision for the area/region/locality.	Works with the council and the public to collaboratively develop and communicate a local vision that is clear, supported by the public and understood by the Council.
<b>Develop, communicate and lead a vision for the council</b>	Ability to develop a vision for the work of the council.	Works with the council to collaboratively deliver the local vision.
<b>Maintain a successful relationship with the Chief Executive and Senior Management team</b>	Ability to communicate effectively with the Chief Executive and senior officers. Understanding of the performance appraisal process and personal skills in conducting reviews setting objectives and giving feedback.	Meets and communicates openly and regularly. Makes expectations clear and provides political leadership. Undertake performance reviews with senior officers as appropriate.
<b>Leadership of the Council</b>	Ability to ensure individual and collective effective governance.	Promotes and supports good governance in the council. Manages performance.

## 9. Civic Leadership

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
<b>Chairing Full Council</b>	Advanced chairing skills	Effectively chairs meetings of the full council demonstrating meeting management and leadership skills. In depth understanding of standing orders and rules of engagement.
<b>Representing the Council at Civic Functions</b>	Reputation management Public Speaking Relationship Management	Demonstrates high level communication, interpersonal and social skills.

## 10. Partnership and representation

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
<b>Work on outside bodies</b>	Understanding of the role of the outside body. Understanding of the role of the councillor on the outside body whether as council representative, locality representative, or as an individual.	Reports to and from the council and outside body as appropriate.  Represents the views of the council, personal views or that of the community effectively and appropriately according to the setting.
<b>Working as a school governor</b>	Understanding of education policy and school organisation.	Oversees the school performance. Challenges the school management as a critical friend. Takes part in governor training.
<b>Working as a member of a Community or Town Council</b>	Understanding of the role of the community council and its limits.	Liaises effectively between the community council and Unitary council, acting as a link and Council representative when appropriate. See Community and Town Council Member Development Framework appended.
<b>Working as a Co-optee</b>	Understanding of the role and limits of the role of co-optees on committees.	Shares expertise with committee impartially.

## 11. Political Environment

Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
<b>Party Policy</b>	Awareness of values and manifestos both nationally and locally.	Effectively balances the requirements of people, party, group and council.
<b>Liaison with National Government WG and NafW</b>	Understanding of the functions of WG and means of engagement.	Liaises with local MPs and AMs. Brings local issues to the attention of the WG when appropriate.
<b>Group membership</b>	Rules and constituency group structure and policies.	

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>Democratic Services Committee</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>10 March 2015</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Annual Report</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>2015/16 Report</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>Geraint George Head of Democratic Services</b>

1. The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Annual Report, dated February 2015, to be implemented in the financial year 2015/16, has now been published.
2. This is the Panel seventh Annual Report since the Panel was established in 2008 and is the fourth Annual Report since the approval of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 ('the Measure')<sup>1</sup>.
3. Last year the Panel decided, given the very modest relaxation in the constraints on public sector pay and also to prevent a further erosion of relative levels of remuneration, to increase the basic salary for members of principal authorities by 0.9% from spring 2014, and to increase other payments proportionately.
4. This year we have decided that there will be **no increase in remuneration** given the continuing constraints on local government spending.
5. A full copy of the report can be seen on the Panel's website on the following link:

[www.renumerationpanelwales.org.uk](http://www.renumerationpanelwales.org.uk)

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>Democratic Services Committee</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>10 March, 2015</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>Head of Democratic Services</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>To nominate an Officer to the Post</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>Dilwyn Williams, Chief Executive</b>

1. Under section 8 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 the Council is required to nominate one of its officers to the new statutory post of "Head of Democratic Services". The council is also required to provide support for the officer to do the job.

2. The appointment is to be made by the Democratic Services Committee on behalf of the Council.

3. The Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and the Chief Financial Officer cannot be appointed Head of Democratic Services. The post is politically restricted in the same way as the other head of department posts (i.e. the postholder cannot take a prominent part in political activity).

4. The functions of the Head of Democratic Services are:

a) To provide support and advice

- to the authority in relation to its meetings
- to committees of the authority and members of those committees
- to any joint committee
- to members and officers in relation to the functions of the authority's scrutiny committees
- to each member of the authority in relation to his/her work

b) To promote the role of the scrutiny committees

c) To make reports in respect of the numbers and grades of staff required to discharge the functions

5. The Head of the Strategic and Improvement Department has been undertaking this role since May, 2012. The committee will be aware that I reported to the Council that, as part of the higher management savings that are part of the Council's Savings Strategy, I have decided to bring together the Strategic and Improvement Department and the Human Resources Department, with that coming into operation from 1 April, 2015.

6. The arrangement since May, 2012 has worked well and the sensible thing to do therefore is for the responsibility to fall on the Head of the new Department that will be established through this amalgamation, the Head of Corporate Support and Organisational Development.

7. I recommend this to the committee, and that the Committee denotes the Head of Corporate Support and Organisational Development as the Council's Head of Democratic Services.