



# Complete Agenda

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

Meeting

**DEMOCRACY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Date and Time

**10.00 am, TUESDAY, 16TH JUNE, 2026**

Location

**Virtual Meeting**

Contact Point

**Courtney Leigh Jones**

**courtneyleighjones@gwynedd.llyw.cymru**

(DISTRIBUTED 08/06/26)

# **DEMOCRACY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

## **MEMBERSHIP (15)**

### **Plaid Cymru (10)**

Councillors

Annwen Hughes  
Arwyn Herald Roberts  
Olaf Cai Larsen  
Sian Williams  
[Vacant Seat]

Edgar Wyn Owen  
Ioan Thomas  
Beca Roberts  
Elin Hywel  
[Vacant Seat]

### **Independent (4)**

Councillors

Anwen J. Davies  
Anne Lloyd-Jones

Eryl Jones-Williams  
Dewi Owen

### **Gwynedd First (1)**

Councillor Stephen Churchman

### **Ex-officio Members**

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

# **A G E N D A**

## **1. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

To appoint a Vice-chair for 2026/27.

## **2. APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

## **3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

## **4. URGENT ITEMS**

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

## **5. MINUTES**

4 - 8

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the last meeting of this committee held on 24 February, 2026 be signed as a true record.

## **6. DRAFT OF THE ANNUAL REPORT BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRACY SERVICES**

9 - 22

To consider the report and its contents and recommend it for adoption by the Full Council as required.

## **7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS MAY 2027**

23 - 25

To provide an update on the work being done to prepare for the 2027 Election.

## **8. CYNGOR GWYNEDD'S STATEMENT REGARDING PROMOTING DIVERSITY**

26 - 31

To submit a draft statement regarding the work programme to the Democracy Services Committee for observations before submitting it to be adopted by the Full Council.

## **9. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROVISION FOR MEMBERS**

32 - 34

To present update regarding the Members' Learning and Development provision.

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## DEMOCRACY SERVICES COMMITTEE, 24/02/26

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### **PRESENT:**

#### **Councillors:**

Anne Lloyd-Jones (Chair), Annwen Hughes, Eryl Jones-Williams, Ioan Thomas, Edgar Wyn Owen, Beca Roberts, Cai Larsen, Stephen Churchman

#### **Officers present:**

Vera Jones (Democracy and Language Service Manager), Annes Sion (Democracy Team Leader), Ian Jones, (Head of Corporate Services), Alun Lloyd Williams (Talent and Apprenticeships Lead), Catrin Owen (Members Development Officer), and Courtney Leigh Jones (Democracy and Civic Services Officer).

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Sian Williams, Robert Dewi Owen, Anwen Jane Davies, Arwyn Herald Roberts.

Apologies were received from Mari Edwards (Learning and Development Manager), Catrin Love (Assistant Head of Corporate Services).

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

No declarations of personal interest were received.

### **3. URGENT ITEMS**

No urgent issues were noted.

### **4. MINUTES**

The Chair accepted the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 4 November 2025 as a true record.

### **5. SUPPORT FOR COUNCILLORS**

The Democracy Team Leader presented the report. Reference was made to the Satisfaction Questionnaire which was distributed to members annually enquiring about the service provided by the Democracy Services Team. It was noted that 27 Members had responded to the Questionnaire, which was below the average that had responded over recent years. It was acknowledged that the busy period with extraordinary meetings of the Full Council and Scrutiny Committees may have led to fewer responses. However, it was highlighted that 88% had said that the service was "very good" with 11% stating "good", which was an increase from last year when one

Councillor said that the standard was “acceptable”. Attention was drawn to some examples of the comments received which indicated a high level of satisfaction, with the availability and punctuality of the team's response highlighted in the high-quality support they provided.

Reference was made to members' suggestions to improve the provision. It was noted that a member had proposed that ‘it would be useful to have up-to-date and accurate information on the Council's site for Councillors about the names of staff and telephone numbers of every department’. A Member proposed the idea of developing an App, and the Team Leader confirmed that she would be contacting the individual to discuss the idea further. With reference to the members’ bulletin, which was sent out to members on a weekly basis, it was confirmed that the questionnaire showed that most members did read it and were satisfied with its contents.

It was reported that Members had expressed frustration at delays in responses from Officers and Departments within the Council, and it was assured that further work was underway by the Corporate Director to investigate the matter in detail. It was hoped that a further update on this work would be presented to this Committee during the summer term. Members were welcome to contact the team at any time for any assistance.

A Member expressed that he had experienced difficulty completing the Members' on-line Questionnaire. In response, it was confirmed that the Department would post him a paper copy in future.

Referring to the Questionnaire, it was clarified that the information obtained from the responses would be used in preparing the election work for next year. A Member asked for more details about the proposed improvements by the 2027 election. In response, it was assured that the service was committed to providing the best possible support to the county's members. It was confirmed that the Democracy Team Leader and Service Manager were currently putting together a work programme for the 2027 election to develop and refine the service provided. It was hoped that a report on the work could be presented to the Democracy Services Committee in June, which would set out the planned actions and serve as an opportunity for the members to have input to ensure they were involved in the proactive process of formulating the welcome and induction programme by the election period.

It was elaborated that a second questionnaire had been sent out this year - 'Intranet and More' - with 19 members stating that they made regular use of the members' Intranet. It was noted that elements needed to be improved to ensure that the information was consistent and up to date. In response to an enquiry, it was confirmed that several officers were responsible for updating the Members’ Intranet, primarily the Democracy Team Officers, the Members Learning and Development Officer and the Communications Team. It was explained that the updates were a cross-departmental responsibility, as the relevant knowledge and expertise was within different teams. It was confirmed that the Democracy Services Team was responsible for ensuring that the Members’ Intranet provided comprehensive information and worked effectively for the benefit of the members, as this team was responsible for providing direct support to the Council's members.

A Member asked why all informal meetings, such as the area forums, had not been included in the Calendar of Meetings for the year. In response, it was confirmed that these meetings were internal and informal, and therefore were not published on the Modern Gov system used by the department. It was clarified that the meeting papers were not public and were only sent out to the relevant members. It was explained that only the public meetings were included in the Calendar of Meetings on the website for public information. Consideration was given to including internal meetings in the Calendar of Meetings for the year and it was confirmed that Officers would be assessing this in the future. It was acknowledged that there were still some differences between different types of meetings and forums, and that the department planned to review and sort out these details over the next year.

## **DECISION**

**To accept the report.**

### **6. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2026/27**

The report was presented by the Democracy Services Team Leader. It was highlighted that the date of this year's annual meeting of the Full Council had been pushed forward to 14 May, due to the Senedd Election on 7 May 2026. It was confirmed that the calendar had been discussed with the National Park and the Fire Service, and as a result some dates had to be amended in order to minimise and avoid conflicts between meetings. It was decided at the Scrutiny Forum that two meetings (of the Education and Economy Committee and the Care Scrutiny Committee) would be held in July to avoid holding the meetings during the run-up to the election. It was noted that these dates had not been included in the draft calendar but would be added before the publication of the Full Council's meeting papers. It was highlighted that the date of the Full Council in May 2027 was also later due to a local authority election, and that time would be needed for the induction of new members before the Council's annual meeting.

A Member enquired if the informal meetings could be included in the Calendar. In response, it was confirmed that officers would make every effort to identify meeting dates as soon as possible after the adoption of the formal Calendar of Meetings to ensure that Members received invitations to the upcoming meetings in the year.

It was pointed out that only one meeting had been scheduled for the Harbour Committees across the county. It was acknowledged that this was an error and would be changed before the formal papers were published for adoption at the Full Council. In response to an enquiry, it was confirmed that the number of meetings held annually was based on the decision sought in the Full Council in 2022. Reference was made to the questionnaire which was sent to all members in 2022. It was confirmed that Members had been given the opportunity to note what times would be most convenient for them to attend meetings in order to facilitate arrangements. Members were reminded that a questionnaire would be sent out to them again, immediately after the local authority election/beginning of the next electoral term, to ascertain members' wishes for the next period.

A Member asked about the possibility of holding more hybrid meetings and fewer solely virtual meetings. In response, it was confirmed that the service already maintained a provision of hybrid meetings for meetings of the Full Council, Cabinet, Scrutiny and Planning Committees following a principle established in 2021. It was explained that conducting hybrid meetings required much more resources compared to just virtual meetings. Members were assured that increasing hybrid provision would be considered and that the situation was being constantly monitored and reviewed.

More details were requested regarding the record of attendance at committees and meetings. It was confirmed that members' attendance at formal and informal meetings was recorded on the Council's website. Various reasons for members not being able to attend meetings and committees were considered, and it was asked whether it would be possible to reflect the reasons for apologies on the Council's website. It was asked how the various reasons could be distinguished - some members were unable to attend due to other commitments as part of their role as councillors. It was recognised that Councillors' attendance at Council meetings was not necessarily a full reflection of their work. It was assured that consideration could be given to including reasons for apologies on the website to show that Members had apologised due to undertaking other duties on behalf of the Council.

## **DECISION**

**To accept the report, noting the changes and additions discussed, and to recommend that the Calendar of Meetings be adopted by the Full Council.**

## **7. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROVISION FOR MEMBERS**

The report was presented by the Talent and Apprenticeships Lead, in the absence of the Learning and Development Manager. The appointment of a new Members Development Officer was confirmed and Catrin Owen was welcomed to the post.

Details were given of the eight Core Areas identified for Members, noting that Members were continually being encouraged and reminded to complete them as a minimum in order to be able to carry out their role as councillors effectively. Disappointment was expressed that there had not been a significant increase in the number of Members who had completed more of the core titles since February of last year. Further frustration was expressed that seven Members had not completed any of the eight Core titles, following various requests for them to do so. Members were reminded that they could access the provision of core courses on-line at any time, and that members were welcome to get in touch at any time if there were any difficulties. It was noted that the department had uploaded videos and developed resources on the Members' Intranet to try and facilitate arrangements. It was explained that this enabled members to watch the videos at their convenience. Members were encouraged to attend the safeguarding training session on 6 March.

It was mentioned that there was an opportunity for Members to have discussions around personal development and that some had already taken up the offer. Members were welcome to contact the Department's Learning and Development Manager if they

wanted to add any title or training session as it was the last year of the current electoral term. Reference was made to the new title - 'Ward Leadership' - which was currently under development, noting that arrangements were in place to establish this soon. It was elaborated that discussions with heads of department were underway to determine further training proposals for the new electoral period.

Disappointment was expressed that six Members had not completed any of the training, especially the Code of Conduct. The importance of completing the core courses was emphasised. The importance of the core courses and the possibility of them being renamed as mandatory fields were noted. A reminder was given that the number of courses completed by members was now public information on the Council's website. A question was asked as to whether members could receive personal and direct reminders stating exactly which training they had not completed. It was explained that a note was available on the members' personal page on the intranet to show this information and which clearly indicated the core training that had been completed. Members were encouraged to contact the Members' Learning and Development Officer if they had any queries.

A Member questioned whether the Committee could act to establish an LGBTQI+ training area as an additional core training. A Member expressed that it was a very useful and helpful course in terms of the appropriate language to use in the LGBTQI+ community. It was reiterated that this course would help to ensure that the Council's members were more open and welcoming. It was mentioned that all core areas for members could be reviewed over the next year, identifying which core training members would be expected to complete and follow in the next electoral cycle.

The desire for members to complete all core titles early on in the next electoral period was noted. Consideration was given to linking core training titles to specific functions and seats within members' responsibilities. For example, ensuring that members attended specific training relating to care, if they wanted to be a member of the Care Scrutiny Committee. Reference was made to developments with the Member Development Strategy, with the intention of strengthening training expectations for Members. It was assured that the Strategy would be presented to the Committee in November, before being formally adopted by the Full Council in March 2027

## **DECISION**

**To accept the report.**

The meeting commenced at 13:00 and concluded at 14:00.

## CYNGOR GWYNEDD



### Report to a meeting of the Democracy Services Committee

<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>16 June 2026</b>
<b>Title of Item:</b>	<b>Draft of the Annual report by the Head of Democracy Services in relation to support for Members.</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Ian Jones, Head of Democracy Services</b>

#### 1. DECISION

The Democracy Services Committee is requested to consider the report and its contents and recommend it for adoption by the Full Council as required.

#### 2. What is the background and relevant considerations?

- 2.1 I am required to report to the full Council annually outlining the support available to Councillors.
- 2.2 In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Act 2011, the Democracy Services Committee is responsible for specific matters (under Section 11), as follows:
  - Fulfilling the role of the local authority to appoint a Head of Democracy Services
  - Review the support available in relation to staff, buildings and other resources available to the Head of Democracy Services, to ensure they are adequate for the requirements of the role.
  - **Produce a report, at least once a year, to be presented to the Full Council in relation to support for Members.**
- 2.3 As per usual, this year's annual report is concise and focuses on the developments made during the year rather than outlining all the support available to Members. It also outlines the top priorities for the year ahead.
- 2.4 A draft report is presented to you today, with an opportunity for you to consider its content and format. The report will be presented to the Full Council meeting in July.

2.5 I want to thank you the members of the Democracy Services Committee for your constructive comments during our meetings over the year. A number of teams assist me in providing the best possible support to you. I want to thank everyone for their work, but I want to specifically thank the Democracy and Language Service officers, who are your main day-to-day liaison, the learning and development team, and all other officers who assist in supporting you in your role.



# Annual Report of the Head of Democracy Services

2025/2026





## FOREWORD

I have now been in my role as Head of Democracy Services in Gwynedd for 4 years. During this time, I have learned a lot and have appreciated your comments to help improve the service for you. The world is constantly changing, and we are trying our best to adapt the support available in line with the new challenges.

I am pleased to present my annual report briefly outlining the support available for Gwynedd Councillors.

My special thanks to Councillor Anne Lloyd-Jones, Chair of the Democracy Services Committee, along with the members of that committee for their input and insightful comments. Thanks also to all the officers working in the background.

I look forward to working with you over the coming year in preparation for the May 2027 election.

Thanks, and regards,  
Ian



*Ian Jones,*

**Head of Democracy Services**

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# SUPPORT FOR YOU AS COUNCILLORS

Several teams across the Council provide support for you as Councillors. However, the main provision comes from the Democracy and Language Service. There have been some changes during 2025/26, so here's an overview of the latest changes:

## Eirian's Retirement

Eirian Roberts retired in July 2026, after almost 40 years of service to the Council.



Sian has been responsible for civic work, supporting the Lord Lieutenant and Chairperson, as well as undertaking several other various duties over the years. Best wishes to you Sian and thank you.

## Sian's Retirement



## Courtney's Appointment

Courtney Jones is a Democracy and Civic Officer and has taken up the role since June 2025. Courtney will be undertaking civic duties in the future.



Gwen Roberts has been welcomed as a Democracy Services Officer during the summer of 2025. Gwen is now responsible for supporting Cabinet meetings.

## Gwen's Appointment



## Sera's Appointment

Sera Whitley has also joined the team taking responsibility for supporting the committees of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee.



Catrin Meirion Owen has been appointed to the role of Member Development Officer in the Learning and Development Team during the year. We wish Cara Williams well in her new role.

## Catrin's Appointment



## Support for Political Groups

We welcomed and said goodbye to an officer who assisted the Plaid Cymru group during the year. We look forward to having full support for the groups over the coming year.



Congratulations to Lowri Elin Evans who has qualified as a translator with the translation team. You may not see her often, but many of you will have heard her providing simultaneous translation in various meetings. Congratulations Lowri!

## Lowri's Qualification



*There have been a few changes again this year, and I wish to congratulate the service on continuing to provide a service to the highest standard alongside the induction of new staff in their roles*

# SUPPORT FOR ELECTED MEMBERS



# SUCSESSES 2025/26

**The Democracy and Language Service serves you in your role as Councillors throughout the year.**

**The service has two performance measures.**

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## **Members' satisfaction with the service of the Democracy Team.**

88% of Gwynedd Councillors have reported that the service from the Democracy Team is very good, with 12% stating 'good'. This is an increase from the 97% who reported very good or good in 2024/25, and the 91% in 2023/24

## **Publishing Decision Notices within 5 working days.**

The service is legally required to publish decision notices for all committee meetings, to obtain a clear statement of the decision for transparency to the public. 98% of decision notices were published within 5 working days in 2025/26, up from 94% in 2024/25. The minor slippages were due to the system not working and waiting for comments from certain officers.

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*See below other successes involving the day-to-day work of the service:*

- Maintaining the committee programme for the year, over 150 meetings in total – virtual and hybrid meetings ensuring the webcasting of all relevant meetings  
→ *The webcasts had over 22 thousand views over the year.*
- Holding an extraordinary meeting of the Full Council and two extraordinary meetings of scrutiny committees to ensure that all members had the opportunity to give input to the Council's response to the Our Bravery Brought Justice Report.  
→ *Over 14 hours of scrutiny of the plan in its entirety before being considered by the Cabinet.*
- Providing a simultaneous translation service at all Council committees and informal meetings and providing a written translation service to all Council departments.  
→ *In 2025/26, the team translated 4.5million words in writing. In addition, a simultaneous translation service was provided at 55 meetings a month on average.*

- Providing specific support for the Council's Chair and Vice-chair as well as Chairs and Vice-chairs of the Council's committees via specific training, answering enquiries during committees and preparing briefing sheets for them.
- Specific support is offered for the Scrutiny Chairs through the Scrutiny Forum, in addition to the day-to-day support for them at each committee meeting.
  - ➔ Holding four meetings of the Scrutiny Forum over the course of the year to allow the Chairs to discuss scrutiny developments and challenge one another.
- Welcoming two new Councillors during the year, ensuring that they had access to IT provision and the latest information.
- Administration of Councillors' salaries and expenses and publishing the information in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Conducting a full training programme for Councillors and consulting Councillors on the content of the training programme.
  - ➔ 17 sessions were held during the year.
- Prioritising and holding briefings on matters of importance to all members and recording and uploading these onto the members' intranet to assist those who work.
  - ➔ 8 briefing sessions were held and recorded during the year.
- Administration of regional committees, particularly the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee and its sub-committees. Contributing vastly towards the developmental work of the North Wales Corporate Joint Committee.
- Running training sessions on the Council's democracy arrangements for members of staff to ensure their understanding of the arrangements.
  - ➔ *A pilot has been conducted and a series of sessions scheduled for 2026/27.*



# DELIVERY AGAINST PRIORITIES

## 2025/26

I set out specific priorities for 2025/26 in addition to the day-to-day work. This is an update against what I had promised.

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### What did we promise?

**Start preparations for the Election in May 2027 looking at :**

- **Pre-election arrangements**
- **Election day arrangements**
- **Welcome and induction arrangements**
- **Arrangements for the first 6-12 months and an outline of arrangements for the second year**
- **General support for Councillors**

### Update

Work has begun in the background to identify all the different steps that need to be accomplished against each of the above titles.

In addition, it was decided that members needed to be consulted so a small group of councillors from each party have volunteered to take part in specific discussions on an area-by-area basis to share their experiences. The group consists of four members from each group with half joining before 2022 and the rest after 2022. The work is ongoing and progress will be formally reported to the Democracy Services Committee over the next few months.



## What did we promise?

**We will review the provision in the Chambers with regards to the equipment and the quality of the experience. We will aim to develop a feasibility study and improvement plan during the autumn, 2025.**

## Update

We have assessed our provision in the chambers with regards to the sustainability of the current equipment, as well as the quality of the user experience (whether chamber user or system user).

It became clear that the current provision in our chambers is very volatile and poses a high risk to the Council as regards being able to continue to provide hybrid meetings and maintain the Council's democratic arrangements. We have consistently experienced a few failures but have succeeded despite the system.

Many members have also shared frustrations with their experience of hybrid meetings, and the officers who conduct the whole process work hard to resolve various problems in every meeting.

A bid for money was submitted through the usual arrangements; however, a more detailed report has now been submitted to proceed with going out to the market in search of an appropriate provider. A project board will be set up to drive the work forward in the best possible way.



## What did we promise?

**To make better use of both the time and support of the political group assistants. To rationalise the training programme and briefing programme for Councillors to ensure the best use of Councillors' time and the best use of Council resources.**

## Update

It has been an unstable year in terms of support from the assistants of the political groups with periods without officers in the roles. My thanks go out to the rest of the service for taking on some of the tasks carried out by these officers over the past year. Hopefully, it will be possible to move forward and deliver more against this element during 2026/27 and 2027/28.

Major steps have been taken to rationalise the training programme and briefing programme - with high praise for the briefing sessions which are short and purposeful.

## What did we promise?

**Raising Councillors' awareness of the need to report any incident or threat by completing and returning the relevant forms (HS11).**

## Update

Unfortunately, the safety of Elected Members is still a matter that needs constant attention. Specific support is provided from a designated officer in North Wales Police, and they have offered several virtual sessions for members in consideration of their safety. The officer has also assisted and advised some individual members when issues have arisen.

Support has been offered to several individual members when safety or well-being issues have arisen, signposting them to the guidance available on the members' intranet, and assisting others in a practical manner. We are aware that many Councillors face threats in their communities and urge everyone to report this.

We have not promoted the completion of the HS11 forms which collect information about threats and incidents as an electronic system has been developed over the past year. We have recently trialled the new arrangements with one member and will be conducting training on the reporting arrangements for all members in 2026/27.



## What did we promise?

**An 8th area of core training for Councillors has been adopted, namely Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and sexual violence.**

## Update

The core training areas have been identified to equip Councillors to successfully and safely carry out their role. At the Full Council meeting on the 3rd of July 2025, the 8th core area was adopted in line with the recommendation of the Democracy Services Committee.

Since then, the Democracy Services Committee has been monitoring the number of members completing each area of the core training. A discussion was had around the disappointment of committee members that so many members have not completed the eight core training areas, although members can now do so on-line in their own time. There is an increased risk for the Council at the non-completion of key areas e.g. the code of conduct and safeguarding.

Following a request from Committee members, the Learning and Development Manager is reviewing the training areas and developing a Training Strategy for Elected Members for 2027/28 onwards. The Strategy will set out the expectations on members clearly, with the emphasis on enabling Members to successfully and safely undertake their role.





## PRIORITIES FOR 2026/27

I am comfortable that robust arrangements are in place for supporting Elected Members in Gwynedd, and we will continue to build on these firm foundations over the coming years. It is time to start looking at and thinking about arrangements for May 2027 and onwards, and the following priorities are all linked to timely preparations:

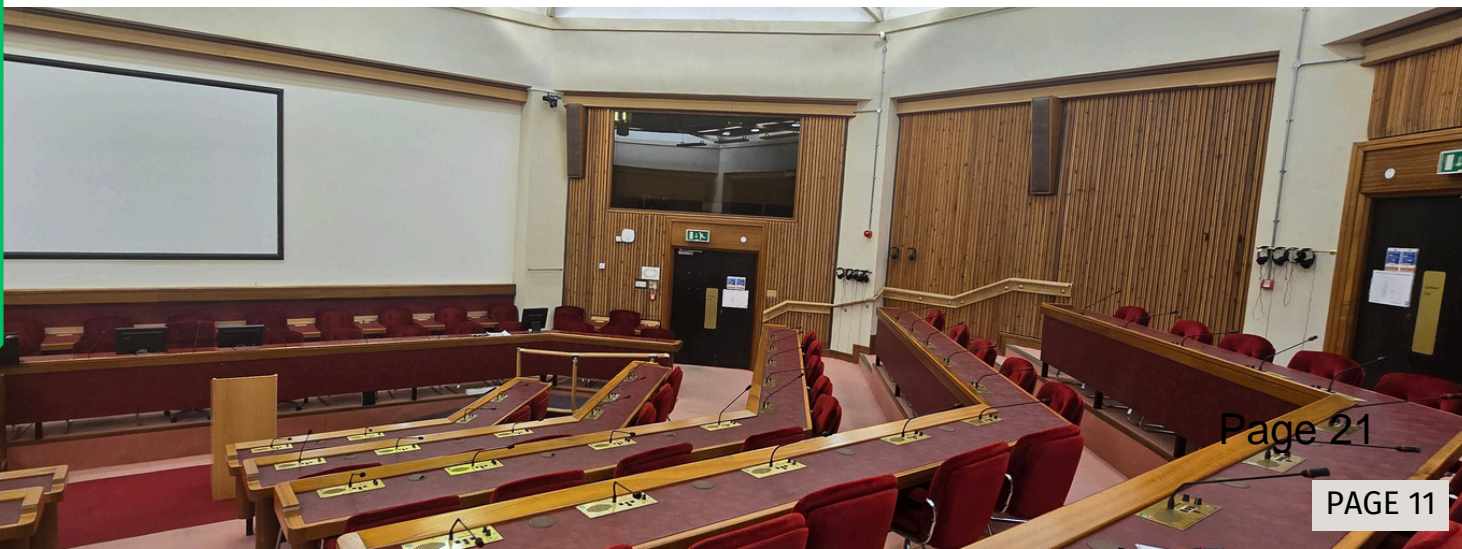
### **Preparing for the Election in May 2027.**

We will continue with the work that has already begun looking at

- Pre-election arrangements
- Election day arrangements
- Welcome and induction arrangements
- Arrangements for the first 6-12 months and an outline of arrangements for the second year
- General support for Councillors.

### **Replacing the resources in the chambers**

The project will follow the necessary procurement arrangements to replace the equipment in the chambers to enable simultaneous translation, remote access, voting and webcasting of Council meetings from the chambers. We want to ensure that the experience for the users of the chambers, for the people of Gwynedd who view the webcasts and for the Council staff responsible for using the system is user-friendly and effective. The work will have to be carefully scheduled, and committees will be somewhat affected if everything is to be in place ready to welcome Councillors for the 2027 term and onwards. However, we have no guarantee that we will be able to complete within this timescale.





## TO CONCLUDE

All of you as Elected Members will probably be considering your wishes for the 2027 term. I want to thank all of you for your input over the years, and best wishes to all who will be standing in the next election or deciding to step down.



<b>MEETING</b>	Democracy Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	16 June 2026
<b>TITLE</b>	LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS MAY 2027
<b>PURPOSE</b>	Provide an update on the work being done to prepare for the 2027 Election
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>To note and accept the report.</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	Annes Sion Democracy Team Leader

## FOREWORD

1. We are all aware that Local Government elections are being held in May 2027. As a result, there are considerable preparations to be made - by you as elected members, by the political groups, and by us as officers.
2. The work is already underway, with three main themes to consider. The identified themes are as follows:
  - Pre-election preparation (including promoting diversity in democracy)
  - Results / election day
  - Induction and the training programme
3. Preparation.  
Naturally, there are many sub-sections to each theme. The work programme for the preparation element includes:

Action	Details
Ensure comprehensive information for prospective applicants on the website	We will be building on the work done prior to the 2022 elections, updating the current information on the website and making it easier to find.
Promoting diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will proceed to create simple videos to explain the role of a councillor, encouraging diversity in democracy at the same time.</li> <li>• Sessions to be held before the election to explain the role of a member to anyone who is considering standing and give them an opportunity to ask any questions.</li> </ul>
Review the Members' Job Descriptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As minor amendments have been made to the job descriptions by the Welsh Local Government Association, we will revisit the job descriptions to ensure that they are up to date. They will be presented to you as members at the Full Council.</li> </ul>
Members' Intranet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Members' Intranet was developed before the 2022 election, and by now there is a need to revisit and further develop it to make it more useful to Elected Members.</li> </ul>

4. It was noted above that preparation was underway to promote diversity in democracy. A report and work programme are being submitted to the committee today to highlight that work. We will aim to submit it at the Full Council meeting in July.
5. Results / election day  
Considerable appreciation was shown to the work done for the 2022 elections, particularly the success in announcing the election results per ward as they were being declared. We will ensure that arrangements are in place for similar success in 2027.
6. Induction and the training programme.  
There are two main elements to induction work, namely the welcome day(s) and the training programme for the first year.
7. There was praise for the arrangements following the 2022 election, particularly the welcome days. However, it was noted at the time that there were lessons to be learnt. We have also received other comments over the years, which will help in drawing-up different and better arrangements for 2027. It is a very difficult balance to strike between providing the necessary information to empower every Member to undertake the role to the best of their ability and not drown Members with too much information at the same time.
8. The main actions for the elements of the work above include:

Action	Details
Welcome day / days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect on the lessons learnt from 2022.</li> <li>• Draw up a draft programme to respond to the improvements from 2022.</li> <li>• Ensure that priority is given to the matters requiring attention on welcome days, arranging further induction sessions in the period between May and July 2027.</li> </ul>
The first-year induction programme	Prioritise mandatory training, aiming to strike a balance between ensuring that members, particularly new members, are armed with the necessary information to fulfil the role, but that they are not drowned in excessive training and information.

9. Developments in line with the rough work programmes noted above are already underway with different teams of officers. Any comments on the work programme are welcomed.
10. Observations by Members.  
In order to ensure that we receive your opinion and input as Members to be a central part of the development work for the election, we have created a small group of Members to share their views. It is a cross-section of experienced members and others who have joined more

recently, and they offer comments on specific fields of discussion. The first meeting was held in April, with a monthly meeting programmed for the coming year.

The discussion group will look at matters such as:

- i. Members' Intranet and Communication
- ii. Information Technology
- iii. Training

11. As members of the Democracy Service Committee, you are also welcome to join if you wish.

We will update you on the preparation work through regular reports to this committee.

**12. DECISION SOUGHT**

**The Democracy Services Committee is asked to note and accept the report**

## CYNGOR GWYNEDD



<b>MEETING</b>	Democracy Services Committee
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	16 June 2026
<b>TITLE OF ITEM</b>	Cyngor Gwynedd's Statement regarding promoting Diversity
<b>PURPOSE</b>	To submit a draft statement regarding the work programme to the Democracy Services Committee for observations before submitting it to be adopted by the Full Council
<b>CONTACT OFFICER</b>	Annes Sion - Democracy Team Leader

### 1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

That the Democracy Services Committee recommends to the Full Council that they adopt the Diversity in Democracy Statement (the new version) as well as the work programme to support action on the statement.

### 2. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

#### Foreword

3. Cyngor Gwynedd has been supportive of promoting diversity in democracy, with many steps being taken over the years to try to encourage more people from various backgrounds to stand for elections.
4. At the Full Council meeting on 7 October 2021, Cyngor Gwynedd adopted the Diversity in Democracy Statement - stating clearly and publicly our commitment here in Gwynedd.
5. With the Wales Local Government elections looming in May 2027, it is timely to review the public statement that Cyngor Gwynedd promotes diversity in democracy. Although it is not a statutory requirement, we believe that Cyngor Gwynedd's current elected members are eager to ensure a fair representation of society in Gwynedd to stand in the elections and therefore encourage individuals from every background to do so.

6. There is a review of the statement in **appendix 1**. There is no significant change in the statement, only minor updates to ensure it is current. However, it is important that we reiterate our commitment to promoting diversity in democracy ahead of the 2027 Local Government election.
7. **Appendix 2** includes a work programme to ensure that the Council takes specific steps to try to promote diversity in democracy and realise the above statement.
8. We ask you as Committee members for your observations on the review of the statement, as well as the work plan, so that they can be submitted for adoption by the Full Council in July.



## Datganiad Amrywiaeth Cyngor Gwynedd

Mae'r Cyngor hwn yn ymrwmo i fod yn Gyngor Amrywiol. Trwy hynny, rydym yn awyddus i fod yn adlewyrchu'r gymdeithas rydym yn byw ynddi gan geisio cynyddu'r niferoedd o ferched, pobl ifanc, pobl anabl, pobl o gymunedau Du, Asiaidd a lleiafrifoedd ethnig a phobl sy'n adnabod fel LGBTQ+ sy'n sefyll etholiad i fod yn Gyngorhrydd Gwynedd.

Rydym yn ymrwmo i

- Ddarparu ymrwymiad clir a chyhoeddus i wella amrywiaeth mewn democratiaeth
- Ddangos diwylliant agored a chroesawgar i bawb, a hyrwyddo'r safonau ymddygiad uchaf
- Hybu gweithrediadau fel Cyngor Amrywiol cyn etholiadau lleol 2027.
- Ddangos ymrwymiad i ddyletswydd gofal dros Gyngorhrywyr
- Ystyried sut i ddarparu hyblygrwydd ym musnes y cyngor drwy adolygu ein trefniadau ymarferol
- Barhau i annog fod yr holl aelodau yn derbyn y lwfansau a'r cyflogau y mae ganddynt hawl eu derbyn, ac yn benodol unrhyw ad-daliadau am gostau gofal, fel bod yr holl aelodau yn derbyn cydnabyddiaeth deg am eu gwaith ac nad yw rôl yr aelodau yn gyfyngedig i'r rhai all ei fforddio.
- Weithio tuag at sicrhau bod cyngorhrywyr o grwpiau a dangynrychiolir yn cael eu cynrychioli pryd bynnag fo'n bosibl mewn rolau proffil uchel a dylanwad uchel.



## **Gwynedd Council Diversity Statement**

*This Council commits to being a Diverse Council. Therefore, we wish to reflect the community in which we live by increasing the number of females, young people, disabled people, people from the Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and people who identify as LGBTQ+ who stand in the elections to be a Gwynedd Councillor.*

*We commit to*

- Provide a clear public commitment to improving diversity in democracy*
- Demonstrate an open and welcoming culture to all, promoting the highest standards of behaviour and conduct*
- Promote actions as a Diverse Council ahead of the 2027 local elections*
- Demonstrate a commitment to a duty of care for Councillors*
- Consider how to provide flexibility in council business by reviewing our practical arrangements*
- Continue to encourage all members to take up the allowances and salaries to which they are entitled, particularly any reimbursement for costs of care, so that all members receive fair remuneration for their work and that the role of member is not limited to those who can afford it.*
- Work towards ensuring that councillors from under-represented groups are represented whenever possible in high profile, high influence roles.*

## APPENDIX 2 - DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME

### In committing to being a Diverse Council, we wish to:

Commitment	What are we going to do?	Timetable
<i>Provide a clear public commitment to improving diversity in democracy</i>	<p>Full Council to adopt a review of the diversity statement.</p> <p>Enquire with members about their experiences, including which obstacles they have faced and what additional steps can be taken to remove these obstacles.</p> <p>Update the 'being a councillor' page on the website, working with the elections team.</p> <p>Continue to raise awareness of the role of a councillor, working with the elections team and the communication team to draw attention to the benefits of voting and raise awareness of the Local Government elections at the same time. All of which with the intention of encouraging individuals to consider being a councillor.</p> <p>Continue to webcast meetings in order to be open and transparent. Consider developing ways of raising the public's awareness of the meetings being held and the items under consideration.</p>	<p>07/2026</p> <p>November / December 2026</p> <p>September / October 2026</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<i>Demonstrate an open and welcoming culture to all, promoting the highest standards of behaviour and conduct</i>	<p>Full Council declaring support to the One Voice Wales, NALC and SLCC 'Pledge of Respect and Courtesy' campaign as a result of the Council Leader's notice of motion.</p> <p>Raise the awareness of the current political group leaders to the possibilities of promoting diversity in democracy and the requirements regarding promoting the standards of conduct from the highest level in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) 2021.</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive induction programme based on the Welsh Local Government Association induction framework to include training on the Code of Conduct (including respect towards others), and Equality and diversity (including self-awareness and conduct).</p> <p>Develop a Training Strategy for Members which will outline specific arrangements for Members to provide continuous development.</p>	<p>June 2026</p> <p>October 2026</p> <p>April 2027</p> <p>April 2027</p>
<i>Promote actions as a Diverse Council ahead of the 2027 local elections</i>	<p>Hold an ongoing programme of online activities to promote the role of Councillors and raise awareness of Local Government elections, encouraging individuals to consider standing.</p> <p>Offer a question and answer session for people who are considering standing. It will include an explanation of the role of councillor, expectations, commitment, opportunities, support etc. Videos of various councillors sharing their experiences are likely to be a part of the event.</p>	<p>October 2026 - Election</p> <p>January / February 2027</p>

Commitment	What are we going to do?	Timetable
<i>Demonstrate a commitment to a duty of care for Councillors</i>	<p>Consider holding specific training for new Councillors on lone working, personal safety, work-life balance, bullying and social media as part of the induction programme over the course of the first year.</p> <p>Provide advice and guidance on practical matters in terms of setting out your workspace properly - information on the councillors' intranet site.</p> <p>Give Councillors the proactive offer to ask them whether or not they wish to publish their home address and/or phone number on the website - only publishing the official e-mail address if that is the individual Member's wish.</p> <p>Raise the awareness of political leaders of the duty under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 regarding promoting good conduct.</p>	<p>April 2027</p> <p>Now / ongoing</p> <p>Now / ongoing</p> <p>November 2026</p>
<i>Consider how to provide flexibility in council business by reviewing our practical arrangements</i>	<p>Implement hybrid meetings and fully virtual meetings in order to make better use of Councillors' time.</p> <p>Conduct a questionnaire following the 2027 election on the timing of the Council's main committee meetings.</p> <p>Consider school holiday periods (avoiding them where possible) when creating the Council's annual meetings calendar, consulting with the Democracy Services Committee before submitting to the full Council for adoption.</p> <p>Ensure training and assistance for Councillors to have the technical skills to be able to take part in virtual and/or hybrid meetings.</p>	<p>Now / ongoing</p> <p>2027/28</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>ongoing</p>
<i>Continue to encourage all members to take up the allowances and salaries to which they are entitled, particularly any reimbursement for costs of care, so that all members receive fair remuneration for their work and that the role of member is not limited to those who can afford it.</i>	<p>Information about financial remuneration to be part of the sessions for the public, information on our website and information that will be presented to the members in the induction sessions.</p> <p>Salaries are paid automatically to Councillors in accordance with the Democracy and Boundaries Commission adjudication, unless an individual Councillor notes differently.</p> <p>Continuously remind Councillors of the reimbursement of care costs that is available - via the Members' Bulletin and by political Group Leaders.</p>	<p>October 2026 onwards</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<i>Work towards ensuring that councillors from under-represented groups are represented whenever possible in high-profile, high influence roles.</i>	<p>Working with political group leaders to ensure that consideration is given to under-represented groups for high-profile, high influence roles.</p>	<p>2027/28</p>

<b>MEETING</b>	Democratic Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	16 June 2026
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Learning and Development Provision for Members
<b>PURPOSE</b>	Delivering an update regarding the Members' Learning and Development provision
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	The Committee is invited to make any further suggestions before receiving the report
<b>AUTHOR</b>	Mari Edwards, Learning and Organisational Development Manager

## 1.0 OVERVIEW

1.1 There are **8** titles that are Core training for Elected Members. These are training that supports Members in their work and there is a strong encouragement them to be completed as **minimum** to be able to carry out the role effectively.

1.2 Here is an update on the numbers who have completed the Core training:

<b>Core Title</b>	<b>Numbers completed in June 2026</b>	<b>Numbers NOT completed</b>
Safe Leadership and Personal Safety	50	18
Code of Conduct	53	15
Well-being of Future Generations Act	32	36
<b>Safeguarding Children and Adults</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>9</b>
Your Responsibility for Equality	38	30
Information About People	50	18
Corporate Parenting	45	23
Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (Group F)	49	19

1.3 Every effort is made to encourage and support Members to be completing these titles, and this happens on a regular basis. However, there has been very little increase in completion figures since February 2025.

1.4 As things currently stand, 22 Members have completed all eight Core titles, with 11 of those having completed the training during this election cycle (as of May 2022). We are thankful for the ready support of our work from these members.

3 Members have not completed any of the eight Core titles. This follows several requests from Members to ensure they complete training and to try

to facilitate the procedure, putting recordings of the Core training on the Members' Intranet. We would appreciate help to encourage Members to complete the training, recognise its importance and for anyone to contact us if they would like to enquire or get help completing the training.

## **2.0 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

2.1 To facilitate opportunities for Members to complete the Core titles an online resource has been developed to offer greater flexibility. Recordings of most of the Core titles are now available on the Members' Intranet. This resource ensures that all Members can access the training at any time.

If any problem arises in not being able to completing the training while using this resource, we should be contacted in the Learning and Development service so that we can be of assistance and ensure that all Members complete the training.

2.2 Following the running of an additional course on the 6th of March 2026, there is another additional session of the training **Safeguarding Children and Adults** arranged for the **2<sup>nd</sup> of September, 2026**. All Members who have not completed this course or who have not completed it in the last three years are encouraged to attend this session.

2.3 Work has begun to look at the training that falls under the Core titles for Elected Members. Consideration will be given to which titles remain suitable as Core and consideration will be given to LGBTQ+. There is an option to incorporate the LGBTQ+ training as part of the Equality training and work to identify the steps to do this will be taken before May 2027.

2.4 There have been requests in the February 2026 Report to identify mentors for any new Members starting with us in May 2027 (or at any other time). There has been no response to this request so far.

We ask for two types of mentor.

1. The first would be an experienced Elected Member who would be responding to questions from a new Elected Member as they settled into their new role. Simply be a point of contact for the new Member and an effort will be made to ensure that they are from the same political party wherever possible.
2. Secondly, there is an offer for any Member who would like to be receiving Motivation or Mentoring sessions to contact us. We will train Elected Members who wish to be a mentor in order to support other Elected Members. This would be more specialized work and a way to develop the self as well as the individual who will be supported.

It would be appreciated if it were possible to share this information with the Elected Members who are not present at this meeting.

- 2.5 An offer is also open to any Elected Member who wishes to be mentored openly. We can get the support of the WLGA to identify external Motivators to support the work of becoming an Elected Member if that would be more beneficial than having an internal mentor. Please feel free to contact us to register your interest.
- 2.6 Members are offered a Personal Development conversation with the Learning and Development Manager or other appropriate Officer who would achieve the same aim. The purpose of these conversations is to give Members the opportunity to reflect on their role, consider any areas they would like to develop, and perhaps draw up a Personal Development Programme to meet their needs. The outcomes of these developmental conversations will allow us as a service to cover a range of areas as well as emerging approaches/experiences. It is also valuable to us in informing the Training Programme for the future. This was proposed to Cabinet Members in the first instance, and the proposal is now open to all Members.
- 2.7 An **Elected Member Training Strategy** is in the process of being created and will be delivered to you once it is ready.

**The committee is invited to consider the training arrangements, comment on what is presented in this report and approve the proposed action.**