

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	26 June 2018
SUBJECT	Women in Democracy
PURPOSE	Report on the lessons learnt from a conference promoting the role of women in Democracy, and identify the next actions.
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1. At the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee on 26 October 2017, discussions were held on continuing to attempt to promote diversity in democracy. It was reported that considerable work had been done by a sub-group of the committee before the May 2017 elections in an attempt to encourage more diversity, especially in the following fields:
 - Young people
 - Women
 - Disabled people
2. The Committee decided that this work was essential and that there was scope to build on what had already been achieved, and therefore a new sub-group was formed.
3. As reported at the previous meeting of this committee, there is much to be learnt from attending courses or seminars on behalf of the Council and, if that happens, it is essential that Members report on what they have learnt.
4. Councillor Catrin Wager attended the 'Women in Democracy' conference as a member of this committee. A verbal report will be given by the Councillor during the meeting.
5. We are aware that the discussions at the seminar was based on the findings of the Fawcett Society. They published a detailed report in July 2017 - "Does Local Government work for Women?" based on thorough research.
6. The report proposes a number of recommendations to encourage more women to stand as candidates in local government elections, and presents recommendations on how to improve circumstances within local government, focussing on ensuring that procedures are fair to women.

7. The recommendations by the Fawcett Society vary, and include the recommendations below amongst others:
 - collecting and publishing data about the profile and salaries by gender in local government
 - changing culture,
 - role of political groups,
 - contacting women who are active in their communities to encourage them to stand at local government elections
 - role of local government to support Members
 - specific policies to support elected members, such as maternity leave etc
 - maximum 4 term role for members
 - support women to undertake leadership roles within local government
 - mentoring forums for female elected members in order to provide support for each other.

8. The Commission's report is available on their website.

9. The Committee is requested to consider the messages Councillor Catrin Wager is presenting, and identify the way forward with the work of promoting democracy in local government.