

MEETING	Democracy Services Committee
DATE	29/06/2021
SUBJECT	Council's draft Diversity Declaration
RECOMMENDATION	Present a draft of the Diversity Declaration to the Democracy Services Committee for comments prior to presenting for adoption by the the full Council
AUTHOR	Geraint Owen, Head of Democracy Services

1. The Committee has discussed the need to promote diversity in democracy a number of times, with numerous steps taken over the years to try and persuade more people from different backgrounds to stand in local elections.
2. A specific project was included in the Council's Equality Plan, 2016-20, with the work now continuing on a day to day basis, As noted in the report on the preparations for the Local Government Elections 2022, further steps to encourage diversity in democracy are being taken in different areas.
3. In addition, political leaders from all authorities in Wales have been discussing how to encourage more people from different backgrounds to stand in local government elections 2022. Wales Local Government Association have worked with the political leaders and identified a number of possible steps to be taken, some on a National level, others at a political level, and a few recommendations on a local level.
4. One of the matters agreed was for each individual Local Authority to adopt a Diversity Declaration in order to make a clear and public statement of the Council's commitment to diversity in democracy.
5. Gwynedd Council supports such a declaration. A draft Diversity Declaration for Gwynedd Council is presented below.

This Council commits to being a Diverse Council. Therefore, we wish to reflect the community in which we live by, in the first instance, increase the number of females, young people, disabled and ethnic minority who stand in the elections to be a Gwynedd Councillor.

We agree 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*
- *Set out a local Diverse Council Action Plan ahead of the 2022 local elections.*
- *Work towards the standards set out in the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development.*

- *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.*

6. DECISION SOUGHT

The Democracy Services Committee is asked to

- **Provide comments on the draft Diversity Declaration prior to presenting for adoption by the Full Council on 08/07/2021**