

MEETING	Democracy Services Committee
DATE	17 February 2022
TITLE	Local Government Elections May 2022
PURPOSE	To submit an update on the preparations for the Local Government Elections, May 2022
RECOMMENDATION	Accept the report and note the information.
AUTHOR	Annes Sion Democracy Team Leader

FOREWORD

1. We are all aware that Local Government elections are to be held in May 2022. 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. As you know, the work has already commenced, and this report provides an update of the draft plans already in place and the further work which is to be achieved over the coming months to prepare for the Election in May and the period immediately afterwards.
3. Sessions for prospective candidates
We have previously conducted a raising awareness campaign as part of the preparations for the election and we will run the campaign again at the end of February. We will also conduct 2 sessions for prospective candidates which will be an opportunity for them to receive information regarding the nomination process as well as receiving information on the role of a Councillor. These informal sessions that are being held at the end of February are an opportunity for anyone who is interested to ask questions. There will be an opportunity for the Election Sub-group to give their opinion on the information that will be shared with the prospective candidates before conducting the sessions.
4. Welcome Day
The initial arrangements have been made to create a timetable for the welcoming Councillors day. The draft arrangements have been prepared as a result of the comments received by you as Councillors following the Welcome days held in 2017. The timetable in brief can be seen below:
 - Morning: Welcome and introductions on the Council, Support for Councillors and an explanation of the Council's Democracy arrangements
 - Afternoon: Sessions in smaller groups on the code of conduct and signing to accept the post, picture taking and information technology equipment.

At the moment, it is proposed to conduct the welcome days in the week following the election. They will be programmed over two days in order to split members to comply with Covid regulations.
5. A draft programme of further induction and training for the first year can be seen in **Appendix 1.**

6. Election Sub-group

Members' Handbook

In 2017, it was decided not to give an information pack to Councillors during the induction days in order to strengthen the message that Gwynedd Council is working towards being a paperless Council. The Council has declared a climate emergency and continues to aim to be paperless, however, in reflecting on the lessons learned from 2017 and having listened to Councillors' comments, we believe that it would be beneficial to create a short handbook for Members at the beginning of their term. The type of handbook in question will serve as a directory which provides the necessary information about the Council, Committees, salaries and useful contacts, referring the Councillors to where to find more information.

7. A draft version of the handbook has been developed over the past few months, and a discussion regarding its content was held in the Election Sub-group. By now, the amendments presented during the discussion have been incorporated in the handbook, and it will be distributed to all members during the Welcome days.

8. Election Sub-group items for the future

Over the coming months the Sub-group will continue to meet to discuss some of the matters below:

- Slides for the prospective candidate sessions
- Welcome Page on the Members Intranet for the period immediately after the election
- Any other element of the preparation work where we feel we need Councillor input.

9. **DECISION SOUGHT**

- **Accept the report and note the information**