

Diversity in Democracy Programme – Action Plan

Requirement	Blaenau Gwent Action	Lead/s	Timeline
<p>Increase engagement with the public and support communication and awareness to potential candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to raise awareness of the role and activities of the Council • to provide clarity about how the public can better inform local decision making • building greater community cohesion through a greater presence at community events • creating and building upon community networks 	<p>1. Promote national marketing materials on becoming a Councillor including communication and awareness, training and development, remuneration, safe and flexible work and targeted support on the Council’s website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a Councillor website https://www.beacouncillor.wales/ • WLGA online Councillors Guide to be developed for Councillors for the 2022 elections. • National Competency framework for elected members is now being developed prior to the 2022 • LGA have produced a tool to enable women, parents and carers to become councillors https://www.local.gov.uk/twenty-first-century-councils 	Election Team Communications	September onwards
	<p>2. Promote national marketing materials on becoming a Councillor and how to vote with local engagement forums (Citizens Panel, BG Youth Network and Youth Forum, 50+ Forum, Democracy Box)</p>	Engagement Team	September onwards
	<p>3. Develop Public Participation Strategy Scheme (for compliance with duty under the 2021 Act). Encouraging people to participate in decision making and promoting awareness of how to become a Member, what membership entails, promoting / facilitating processes.</p>	Engagement Team Democratic Team Election Team Communications	September onwards
	<p>4. Recommend for Political parties to identify Diversity Champions.</p>	Group Leaders	October 21 / May 22
	<p>5. Develop a BG election plan in line with any regional or national approaches</p>	Election Team	September onwards
	<p>6. Dissemination and promotion of Welsh Government guidance / materials / educational resources for 16 and 17 year olds regarding Democracy in Wales.</p>	Engagement Team Education	September onwards
	<p>7. Publication of Council’s Constitution on the Council’s website.</p>	Monitoring Officer	In line with national work
	<p>8. Development of a Constitution guide and inclusion on the website (a requirement under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021).</p>	Monitoring Officer	In line with national work
	<p>9. Improve awareness of opportunities to participate – promote the options available via local groups, the website and various social media platforms.</p>	Communications Democratic Team Engagement Team	May 2022 onwards
	<p>10. Provide opportunities to engage on specific topics – include forward work programmes on the Council’s Website, promote ways to engage, promote that meetings are available online</p>	Communications Democratic Team	May 2022 onwards
	<p>11. Include on the website and social media platforms the decisions being made by Committees</p>	Communications Democratic Team	May 2022 onwards
	<p>12. Work more closely with the Youth Forum to create more opportunities for young people to feed into decision making.</p>	Engagement Team Democratic Team	May 2022 onwards

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify for a young person to sit on committees. • Inform the youth forum of the topics for discussion over the year for them to highlight the areas that they feel they would like to be included with. 		
	13. Improve the feedback loop to young people who participate		
	14. Respond to the WG Race Equality Action Plan Consultation and subsequent implementation	Democratic Team Engagement Team	Spring 2021 Onwards
Provide a comprehensive training and awareness programme available through a variety of routes available for members to support them in their role.	15. Undertake a review of the Member Development Strategy identifying areas and development available for Members.	Democratic Team	January to April 2022
	16. Review areas of training and development which can be made available online, core set of training materials which can be used for all Members. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National e Learning modules freely available via the NHS learning@wales website to be updated for the 2022 elections 	Democratic Team	In line with Induction Programme
	17. Development of the Members Induction Programme - work with the WLGA and share good practices with other councils.	Democratic Team	Early 2022
	18. Provide the opportunity for mentoring / shadowing for newly Elected Members	Democratic Team	Post May 2022
	19. Review the Members Competency Framework	Democratic Team	January to April 2022
	20. Undertake Personal Development Reviews for Senior Salary Holders and offer to non SRAs.	Democratic Team	Post May 2022
	21. Promoting the WLGA's online "Councillor Guide" for the 2022 elections and the suite of National e-learning modules specifically developed for Members and freely available.	Democratic Team	In line with Induction Programme
Promote health and safety with Members including, lone working, providing access to counselling services, safety and wellbeing while performing their role and taking a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment by members including through social networks.	22. Promote, as part of the Member Induction Programme, that members undertake health and safety training, lone working training, cyber security and social media training. online Councillors guide for handling intimidation https://www.local.gov.uk/councillors-guide-handling-intimidation	Democratic Team Health and Safety Communications	In line with Induction Programme
	23. Publish official addresses on council website rather than personal addresses for Members (where requested).	Communications Team	Post May 2022
	24. Include in the Members library the WLGA's advice and support service to individual Members who receive online abuse.	Democratic Team	October 21 / In line with Induction Programme
	25. Include in the Members library the "Personal Safety of Councillors" which has been developed by Swansea Council and the Welsh Local Government Association.	Democratic Team	In line with Induction Programme

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Agrees that councils should set targets to be representative of the communities they serve at the next elections	26. Undertake a diversity and inclusion survey with Members which will provide a benchmark for future elections and allow the feedback to be reviewed to support / barriers that may have been experienced by a Member during their term of office.	Elections Team Democratic Team	Post May 2022
	27. Share survey feedback with Members.	Elections Team Democratic Team	Post May 2022
Maximise opportunities for Members to work in ways that enable them to achieve a work / life balance which protects their welfare and wellbeing and allows them to manage any caring / dependency relationships.	28. Agree at AGM to have an August recess and for no formal meetings during school holidays.	Members	May 2022
	29. Provide flexibility in council business by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking a review of meeting times each year with each committee at the first meeting of each cycle, including the option to stagger meeting times • Encourage members, officers, public and press to attend meetings remotely. • Promote job-sharing by executive leaders and other office holders. 	Members Democratic Team Organisational Development Communications	Ongoing and post May 2022
	30. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the remunerations that are available to Members on the Council website and to candidates standing for Election • Promote family absence provisions. • Promote the IRPW Contribution Towards Costs of Care and Personal Assistance • Encourage all Members to claim any necessary allowances or expenses incurred. • Support the Welsh Government's and IRPW's commitment to explore Resettlement grants or 'parachute payments' payments for Members who lose their seats at election. 	Organisational Development	Ongoing and post May 2022
	31. Hold a Member awareness raising session, as part of the induction process on members remuneration and allowances		In line with Induction Programme