

# Public Document Pack

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To: Cllr Neville Phillips (Chairman)

Councillors: Bernie Attridge, Chris Bithell, Bob Connah, Jean Davies, Rob Davies, David Evans, David Healey, Ted Palmer, Mike Peers, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Ian Smith and Arnold Woolley

20 January 2022

Dear Sir/Madam

**NOTICE OF REMOTE MEETING**  
**CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY, 26TH JANUARY, 2022 at 2.00 PM**

Yours faithfully

Gareth Owens  
Chief Officer (Governance)

Please note: This will be a remote meeting and 'attendance' will be restricted to Committee Members and those Members of Council who have asked the Head of Democratic Services for an invitation. Such attendees may only speak at the Chair's discretion.

The meeting will be live streamed onto the Council's website. A recording of the meeting will also be available, shortly after the meeting at <https://flintshire-public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team on 01352 702345.

## AGENDA

### 1 APOLOGIES

**Purpose:** To receive any apologies.

### 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

**Purpose:** To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

### 3 MINUTES (Pages 5 - 10)

**Purpose:** To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2021.

### 4 DRAFT PETITIONS SCHEME (Pages 11 - 18)

**Purpose:** To enable the Committee to consider and approve the draft Petitions Scheme.

### 5 DIVERSITY IN DEMOCRACY ACTION PLAN (Pages 19 - 30)

**Purpose:** To receive the Diversity in Democracy Action Plan.

***Please note that there may be a 10 minute adjournment of this meeting if it lasts longer than two hours***

## **Procedural Note on the conduct of meetings**

The Chair will open the meeting and introduce themselves.

The meeting will be attended by a number of Councillors. Officers will also be in attendance to present reports, with Democratic Services officers acting as hosts of the meeting.

All attendees are asked to ensure their mobile phones are switched off and that any background noise is kept to a minimum.

All microphones are to be kept muted during the meeting and should only be unmuted when invited to speak by the Chair. When invitees have finished speaking they should go back on mute.

To indicate to speak, Councillors will use the chat facility or use the electronic raise hand function. The chat function may also be used for questions, relevant comments and officer advice and updates.

The Chair will call the speakers, with elected Members addressed as 'Councillor' and officers addressed by their job title e.g. Chief Executive' or name. From time to time, the officer advising the Chair will explain procedural points or suggest alternative wording for proposals, to assist the Committee.

If and when a vote is taken, the Chair will explain that only those who oppose the proposal(s), or who wish to abstain will need to indicate, using the chat function. The officer advising the Chair will indicate whether the proposals are carried.

If a more formal vote is needed, this will be by roll call – where each Councillor will be asked in turn (alphabetically) how s/he wishes to vote

At County Council and Planning Committee meetings speaker's times are limited. A bell will be sounded to alert that the speaker has one minute remaining

The meeting will be live streamed onto the Council's website. A recording of the meeting will also be available, shortly after the meeting at <https://flintshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

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## **CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE** **17 NOVEMBER 2021**

Minutes of the remote meeting of the Constitution and Democratic Services Committee of Flintshire County Council held on Wednesday, 17 November 2021

### **PRESENT: Councillor Neville Phillips (Chairman)**

Councillors: Bob Connah, Jean Davies, Rob Davies, David Evans, David Healey, Ted Palmer, Mike Peers, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Ian Smith, and Arnold Woolley

**SUBSTITUTION:** Councillor Martin White for Chris Bithell

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Bernie Attridge

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Officer (Governance), Head of Democratic Services, Team Leader- Democratic Services and Democratic Services Officers.

### **28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chief Officer (Governance) advised that a personal interest would be recorded on behalf of Members in relation to item 4 – Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW)

### **29. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2021 and 30 September were submitted.

Accuracy: 30 September 2021: first paragraph, meeting of the Committee held on 24 March, should read 30 September 2021.

30 September 2021: In response to the comments made by Councillor Mike Peers, the Head of Democratic Services agreed to inform the Planning Strategy Group of the suggestions as set out in minute no. 24, resolution (f).

The minutes were moved by Councillor Michelle Perfect and seconded by Councillor Jean Davies.

### **RESOLVED:**

That subject to the above correction the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **30. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES (IRPW)**

The Head of Democratic Services introduced a report on the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) draft Annual Report for 2022. He provided background information and said the IRPW had sent the draft Annual Report to County Councils on 29 September, requesting comments to be made by 26 November 2021. The IRPW was required to take into account any representations it received on the draft before issuing the final version of the report in February 2022.

In presenting the draft report, the Head of Democratic Services advised that the IRPW proposed an increase in the basic salary in 2021/22 for elected members of principal Councils which shall be £16,800 with effect from 9 May 2022. Increases were also proposed for Cabinet Members, Council Leaders and their deputies. The Head of Democratic Services advised that the IRPW draft Annual Report had been considered by Group Leaders at a meeting held on 28 October, and their collective view was detailed in paragraph 1.18 of the report. Councillor Neville Phillips, Chair of the Democratic Services & Constitution Committee, and the Head of Democratic Services had shared preliminary observations and feedback from Group Leaders with representatives of the IRPW at a consultation meeting held on 2 November. The Head of Democratic Services sought the view of the Committee on the proposals made by the IRPW in the draft report for 2022 and onwards.

Councillor David Healey expressed a number of concerns and proposed that the Head of Democratic Services, on behalf of the Constitution and Democratic Services Committee, writes to the IRPW to endorse the collective view of the Group Leaders as set out in paragraph 1.18 of the report. This was seconded by Councillor Mike Peers. When put to the vote this was agreed by the Committee.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Committee notes the Determinations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales in the draft Annual Report for 2022/23; and
- (b) That the Head of Democratic Services writes to the IRPW on behalf of the Committee to endorse the collective view of the Group Leaders as follows:
  - It is disappointing that the IRPW have allowed the situation to develop that such a large increase in Members' salaries was now necessary; and
  - We believe that the increase should not be in one tranche, but incrementally over the life of the next Council also ensuring that those increments take into account the levels of inflation prevailing at the time

### **31. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21**

The Head of Democratic Services introduced a report on the Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report for 2020/21. He provided background information and explained the changes that had been made to the format of the draft Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report which was appended to the report for consideration and approval by the Committee.

Councillor Mike Peers referred to page 120 of the report and, on a point of accuracy, advised that Councillor Bob Connah had been a member of the Education, Youth and Culture Overview & Scrutiny Committee, from December 2020.

The Chief Officer (Governance) suggested that a reference to the valuable role undertaken by Group Leaders in terms of providing informal scrutiny of proposals be included in the draft Report. The Head of Democratic Services suggested that the acknowledgement be added to the foreword to the Report which was written by the Leader of the Council.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Ted Palmer and seconded by Councillor Arnold Woolley.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Committee's comments on the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2020/21 be noted; and
- (b) That the draft Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report for 2020/21 be approved for submission to Council.

### **32. MULTI-LOCATION MEETINGS AND FUTURE MEETINGS MODEL – PROGRESS REPORT**

The Head of Democratic Services introduced the report and provided background information and context. He advised that paragraphs 1.07 to 1.12 of the report set out a suggested interim multi-location meetings policy to be considered for adoption until such time as the new Council to be elected in May 2022 determined its own policy. He envisaged that this may not reasonably be until the autumn of 2022.

In response to the comments made by Councillor Mike Peers, Officers provided clarification around the reference to political balance as stated in paragraph 1.08 of the report. Officers commented on the awareness of public perception around political grouping, the location-neutral stance which had been adopted by other local authorities, and the Council's commitment to broaden diversity and democracy.

In response to the further comments made by Councillor Ted Palmer regarding political balance in section 1.08 of the report, the Chief Officer explained that fair and equal access would be given to all Members who wished to be physically present at meetings of the Council held in the Council Chamber.

Councillor Arnold Woolley asked if the option of electronic voting could be provided at Council's Zoom meetings to ensure clarity. The Chief Officer spoke in support of the use of on-line voting at remote meetings. The Team Manager – Democratic Services explained that testing of the on-line voting system on Zoom had indicated that further work was required to adapt for use at Council meetings and agreed to take this forward.

The recommendation in the report was moved by Councillor Rob Davies and seconded by Councillor Mike Peers.

**RESOLVED:**

That the interim Multi-meetings policy, as detailed in paragraphs 1.07 - 1.12 of the report be adopted until such time as the new Council determined its own Multi-location meetings policy.

**33. DECLARATION AND DISPOSAL OF LAND SURPLUS TO REQUIREMENTS**

The Chief Officer (Governance) introduced a report to agree minor changes to the Constitution around how land would be declared surplus to requirements. He provided background information and explained that the process for declaring and disposing of land surplus to the Council's requirements was not currently documented and it was proposed that the process be included within the Constitution to improve transparency and clarity.

Councillor Mike Peers raised a number of questions around delegated authority, membership of the Capital Asset Programme Board, land and property surplus to requirements, and the reference to a delegated report in section 1.03 of the report. Councillor Peers spoke on the need to ensure that 'best value' was obtained for the sale of surplus land/property and proposed that reference to this be included in the Constitution. Councillor Arnold Woolley seconded the proposal.

The Chief Officer referred to section 1.04 in the report and advised that there was a separate documented process to authorise the sale of a particular piece of land which was based on the value of the land and he provided an overview of the disposal process. He confirmed that Members were already involved in the sale process. In response to a question from Councillor Peers the Chief Officer confirmed that an independent valuation was obtained on the proposed sale of land.

In response to the comments made by Councillor Peers concerning 'best value', the Chief Officer advised that this was a statutory obligation on the Council which could not dispose of land less than fair market value except in certain circumstances. The



Chief Officer agreed to include reference to the need to obtain 'best consideration' to the existing delegation to Officers around the disposal of land.

In response to a question from Councillor Ian Smith, the Chief Officer explained that the local Member(s) must be consulted on the sale of any land within their Ward.

Councillor David Healey asked what course of action would be taken if the Governing Body of a School disagreed with the potential sale of land on a school estate. The Chief Officer explained that in such circumstances negotiation would take place with all parties involved. The Chief Officer advised that if a School was to disagree with the potential sale of a particular piece of land the decision on whether the land was declared as 'surplus' should be subject to a delegated report and he outlined the decision making process for delegated reports.

The following recommendations were moved by Councillor David Healey and seconded by Councillor Ted Palmer

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the proposed process for declaring and disposing of land that is surplus to requirements be included within the Constitution;
- (b) That reference to the need to obtain 'best consideration' be included in the existing delegation to Officers around the disposal of land; and
- (c) That if a School should disagree with the potential sale of a particular piece of land the decision on whether the land was declared as 'surplus' should be subject to a delegated report

**34. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS IN ATTENDANCE**

There were no members of the press or public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 3.20 pm)

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**Chairman**

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## CONSTITUTION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday, 26 January 2022
<b>Report Subject</b>	Draft Petitions Scheme
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Governance)

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Members may recall from previous reports that Section 42 of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021, which comes into force with effect from 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022 places a duty on principal councils to make and publish a petitions scheme. Council has previously supported this, in principle, when consulted on the contents of the Local Government & Elections Bill.

Members will be aware that we have a 'Petitions' item on the agenda for each ordinary meeting of Council. That is for Members to bring to the Council's attention petitions which have been raised within their ward. This is recognised as being an important part of the relationship between a Member and the people who live and/or work in their ward. Because of that, Members should be assured that no changes are proposed to that process.

The officers have drafted a petitions scheme, based on the criteria of suitability for questions at Council. This has been in place for some years and following review is still considered to be suitable for our purpose. The Petitions scheme is to enable members of the public to organise and submit petitions directly to the County Council. The submission of electronic petitions can be managed using the Modern.gov software which supports the committee system.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Committee considers and comments on the draft Petitions scheme.
2	That subject to the Committee's approval for the Petitions scheme, that it be submitted to Council for formal adoption.

## **REPORT DETAILS**

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EXPLAINING THE NEED FOR A PETITIONS SCHEME</b>
1.01	Section 42 of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021, which comes into force with effect from 5 <sup>th</sup> May 2022 places a duty on principal councils to make and publish a petitions scheme.
1.02	This is in addition, rather than as a replacement of the current facility for Members to submit petitions at Council meetings. Those arrangements will continue, and still be subject to an annual report. As in previous years, such reports would be made to the last scheduled council meeting of a municipal year.
1.03	The officers have prepared a draft Petitions scheme, which is attached as appendix 1. The parameters for acceptability are based on those which we have had for some years for public questions to Council.
1.04	The Committee is invited to consider and comment on the draft Petitions scheme. Subject to the Committee's approval of the scheme, it will be submitted to Council for formal adoption.
1.05	Once adopted by Council, the Petitions scheme will be published on the Council's website.
1.06	The submission of electronic petitions can be managed using the Modern.gov software which supports the committee system.

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	It is anticipated that the introduction of this statutory scheme will have few resource implications.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	This report is being published for consultation purposes.

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	The adoption of a Petitions scheme is a statutory requirement.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	App 1 - Draft Petitions Scheme

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<p>None</p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Gareth Owens, Chief Officer (Governance)  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 702344  <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:Gareth.legal@flintshire.gov.uk">Gareth.legal@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	None

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## Draft Petitions Scheme

Section 42 of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 places on principal councils, such as Flintshire a duty to make and publish a scheme setting out how we intend to handle and respond to petitions (including electronic petitions).

The Council has had a simple mechanism in place for many years, whereby individual Members of Council are able to hand in petitions at Council meetings. Such petitions have typically, but not always, related to specific ward issues. This petitions scheme builds on that mechanism and our approach to public questions to Council.

The Act requires that the petition scheme must, in particular, set out—

- (a) how a petition may be submitted to the Council;
- (b) how and by when the Council will acknowledge receipt of a petition;
- (c) the steps the Council may take in response to a petition received by it;
- (d) the circumstances (if any) in which the Council may take no further action in response to a petition;
- (e) how and by when the Council will make available its response to a petition to the person who submitted the petition and to the public.

We are required to review our petition scheme from time to time and, if considered appropriate, revise it. This review could be incorporated into the Petitions Annual Report which we already have. If we revise or replace a petition scheme, we must publish the revised or new version. This can be on our website.

Petitions will still be accepted by submission through local Members at Council meetings. Otherwise, they will be submitted through our website, using the Modern.gov system which we already use to publish our agendas and reports. [Link here.](#)

The rules of the petition scheme are as follows:

<b>No.</b>	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Justification</b>
1	Petitions will not be accepted from other on-line petitions systems.	This is to ensure that petitions have not been copied or otherwise adulterated
2	Petitions may collect signatures for a maximum period of 21 days.	This is to ensure that petitions are current, rather than historic.
3.	To be regarded as valid, a signatory must provide their name, address (living or working within Council area) postcode and their email address.	This is to ensure that signatories are genuine, within an interest in Flintshire.

4	Petitions are not admissible if they are the same, or substantially similar to a petition which closed less than six months previously.	This replicates the 'six months' rule for Public Questions to Council and protects against potential nuisance.
5	Requests for a petition on the Council's website (Modern.gov) will be considered by the Monitoring Officer (or by officers attending the monthly Democracy Business Planning Meeting) to ensure that they are appropriate and do not include any issues listed under 13, below.	The role of the Monitoring Officer /officer group is proposed as issues such as the validity of Notices of Motion are determined by that means.
6	A list of rejected petitions will be published on the Council's website with the reasons for rejection.	Openness.
7	For the first year, the minimum number of signatories for a petition is set at ten people. Fewer than that will be regarded as a letter or request for service, depending on subject matter. A petition might be referred to an Overview & Scrutiny Committee or directly to a Chief Officer for actioning within their portfolio.	This is to ensure that petitions are matters of genuine public concern.
8	The Chief Executive will decide how to respond to a petition which may include any one or more of the following: 1) referring it to Cabinet, Council or a committee (including an Overview and Scrutiny Committee); 2) referring it to an officer; 3) not taking any action; and/or 4) taking any other steps it considers appropriate	
9	The current practice of reporting on petitions received during the year will be continued, but individual decisions should be published on the website as they are made.	The annual petitions report (submitted to the last Council meeting of the municipal years) provides a continued record of petitions received.
10.	The response to a petition e.g. considered by Council, passed to Cabinet, an Overview & Scrutiny committee, or to a Chief Officer, added to an Overview & Scrutiny Agenda etc. will be published on the Council's website. The outcome of individual petitions should be reported on the website as soon as possible.	It would be too resource intensive to email all petition signatories, to inform them of outcomes.



12	Petitions will be kept for six years/72 months	Treated as a background paper and subject to the same time constraints. GDPR implications?
13	There should be a mechanism for the public to object (appeal) if they believe that the petition has not been dealt with properly. Relevant Cabinet Member /Chief Officer to review (if not previously involved)	Natural justice to build in an appeal mechanism.
	<p>Petitions will not be accepted if they relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judicial or quasi-judicial matters;</li> <li>• Matters under investigation;</li> <li>• Individual planning, licence or grant applications or appeals;</li> <li>• Named officers or Members of the Council;</li> <li>• Confidential or exempt information as described in the Access to Information Procedure Rules or requires its disclosure;</li> <li>• Party political matters;</li> <li>• Defamatory material;</li> <li>• Substantially the same issue as a question put within the past 6 months.</li> </ul>	Use of the same constraints as well established Council Questions procedure

The Council produces an annual report, detailing petitions handed in by councillors during the year and how they were dealt with. This is submitted to the last Council meeting of the municipal year. Petitions submitted under this scheme will also be included in that annual report in future.

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## CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday, 26 January 2022
<b>Report Subject</b>	Diversity in Democracy Action Plan
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Governance)

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2018 the WLGA has been looking at whether the demography of elected representatives reflects the demography of the areas which they represent. In 2021 it resolved to urge all Councils in Wales to commit to their own diversity in democracy declaration in order to try and make the elected Councillor cohort more reflective of the population as a whole. In July 2021 Full Council approved its own diversity in democracy declaration and agreed to develop an action plan.

The draft action plan is intended to reduce or remove barriers to election amongst underrepresented groups. It contains a series of work streams to:

- Raise awareness of the role and process for election;
- Train and support Councillors once elected;
- Reduce barriers to fulfilling the role once elected;
- Provide inspiration or role models to underrepresented groups.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Diversity in Democracy action plan is approved.
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### REPORT DETAILS

<b>1.00</b>	<b>BACKGROUND</b>
1.01	<p>The lack of diverse representation in local authorities has been recognised for a long time. A more diverse democracy and elected representatives who are more reflective and understanding of their communities can lead to better engagement with communities and ward members. This leads to greater levels of confidence and trust and better decision making informed by a wider range of perspectives.</p> <p>In September 2018 the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) agreed to take steps to advance gender equality and diversity in Councils</p>

	<p>before the 2022 elections in recognition of the lack of diversity in Welsh Councils. A Cross Party Working Group was set up to explore broader underrepresentation in democracy.</p> <p>In March 2021 the WLGA Council received a report from the working group with proposals designed to achieve a step change in diversity following the 2022 elections.</p> <p>The report identified barriers to participation, broadly :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time commitment and meeting times</li> <li>- Political and organisational culture</li> <li>- Childcare and other caring responsibilities</li> <li>- Public criticism and online abuse</li> <li>- Remuneration and impact on employment</li> <li>- Lack of diverse role models and incumbency</li> </ul> <p>The WLGA Council unanimously agreed that action was required. A letter was sent to each Local Authority in Wales (which was considered by Flintshire County Council on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021).</p>
1.02	<p>At their meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July 2021, Flintshire County Council recognised the importance of diversity in democracy by making a commitment to be a ‘Diverse Council’ and undertook to develop an action plan to improve diversity. The Constitution and Democratic Services Committee (C&amp;DSC) were tasked with developing the action plan. Two Member workshops were held on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of January to provide all members with an opportunity to consider the draft plan prior to consideration by the C&amp;DSC. The workshops were supportive of the proposed action plan and suggested further actions to promote diversity. More detailed verbal feedback from the workshops will be provided at the meeting.</p>
1.03	<p>The 11 key areas for consideration are summarised below. Details of the proposed actions in relation to each area are detailed within the attached draft action plan (appendix 1).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assess the effectiveness of the provisions in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 in relation to data collection, and in relation to other candidate data that could be collected within the current devolution framework in order for political parties to support diverse candidates at elections.</li> <li>2. Identify ways to provide broader support to Councillors and potential Councillors to inform their decision to stand for elected office.</li> <li>3. Improve the safety of Councillors and their families when undertaking their Council duties.</li> <li>4. Increase confidence of Councillors that they are valued, expectations placed on them are fair and that their remuneration levels appropriately reflect the work undertaken.</li> </ol>

	<p>5. Maximise opportunities for individuals 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.</p> <p>6. Greater respect and support for those standing for and securing elected office in Wales.</p> <p>7. Increase understanding of different tiers of government in Wales, the role each plays in society and how they operate.</p> <p>8. Comprehensive training and awareness programme available through a variety of routes available for Councillors to support them in their role as Councillors.</p> <p>9. Increase engagement with the public to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• raise awareness of the role and activities of the Council;</li> <li>• provide clarity about how the public can better inform local decision making;</li> <li>• build greater community cohesion through a greater presence at community events, creating and building upon community networks.</li> </ul> <p>10. Increase awareness of the role of Councillors, the contribution they make to society and how to become a Councillor</p> <p>11. Increase opportunities for women to play a full role in supporting and representing their communities.</p>
1.04	The action plan is colour coded to show those actions that are either already in place/for which arrangements have been made (highlighted green) and further steps that could be taken (highlighted yellow). The action plan includes suggestions from the workshops. These actions will be under taken between now and the elections in May and during the next term of the Council.

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
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2.01	The proposed action plan can be supported within existing resources.
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<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
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3.01	The action plan has been shared with all Councillors and two workshops held to debate the contents. The action plan itself proposes a number of surveys for Councillors to establish what barriers exist and what more could be done to promote greater diversity.
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<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
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4.01	None.
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<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Appendix 1 – Draft Diversity in Democracy action plan

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<p>None.</p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Gareth Owens, Chief Officer (Governance)  <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 702344  <b>E-mail:</b> gareth.legal@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	None.

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**DIVERSITY IN DEMOCRACY ACTION PLAN**

	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Proposed Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>
1.	Assess the effectiveness of the provisions in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 in relation to data collection, and in relation to other candidate data that could be collected within the current devolution framework in order for political parties to support diverse candidates at elections	Encourage members to take part in the Welsh Government Survey for candidates and elected members at local government elections to gather important data about the diversity of candidates and Councillors.		Democratic Services Manager
2.	Identify ways to provide broader support to Councillors and potential Councillors to inform their decision to stand for elected office	Consider appointing diversity ambassadors – all groups to champion the diversity expectations within the selection processes of their political parties (recognising that ‘Independents’ don’t have a political party structure).		Group Leaders
		Consider holding Pre-Election Briefings for potential candidates to provide details on election process and highlight the role of a Councillor (duties/ expectations/ commitment). Councillors to participate to give personal experience of being a Councillor to potential candidates. – would be useful to have a diverse range of Councillors involved in this		Chief Executive/Monitoring Officer/Democratic Services Manager

		All candidates to be provided with Welsh Government Candidates' and Councillors survey when available.		Democratic Services Manager/Elections Team Leader
3.	Improve the safety of Councillors and their families when undertaking their council duties	Advise Members to undertake health and safety training, lone working training to ensure their safety during elections and when they are elected. Promote the Lone Working Policy and guidance.	Review after May 2022 Elections	Democratic Services Manager
		<p>All Councillors to receive 'Promoting Personal Resilience for Councillors Guidance' which includes link to WLGA advice &amp; support and information.</p> <p>Remind all Members that CareFirst support is available to all Members</p> <p>Social media safety training to be delivered to members through the Member Induction Programme with ongoing refresher courses.</p> <p>Work with Corporate Health &amp; Safety unit and Community Safety Team to further develop training modules going forward to include Risk Assessment training for Cllrs to help enable them to assess risks and recognise potential danger</p> <p>Register of intimidatory behaviour or communication to be kept by Monitoring Officer.</p>		<p>Democratic Services Manager</p> <p>Democratic Services Manager</p> <p>Democratic Services Manager</p> <p>Democratic Services Manager</p> <p>Monitoring Officer</p>



4.	Increase confidence of Councillors that they are valued, expectations placed on them are fair and that their remuneration levels appropriately reflect the work undertaken.	Have the tools, confidence, skills, knowledge and information to carry out their Ward role effectively;		Democratic Services Manager
		Be equipped with the appropriate technology and digital capability to effectively carry out their community leadership responsibilities;		Democratic Services Manager
		Be placed at the heart of citizen engagement and equipped with the insight and intelligence to translate this into tangible actions.		Democratic Services Manager
5.	Maximise opportunities for individuals 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	Hybrid meetings to be available from: Autumn 2022, when Council agrees its own policy.		Democratic Services Manager/Team Leader Committees
		All Councillors to be fully aware of Family absence provisions available to them. (This will be carried out during Induction, and through C&DSC on cyclical basis)		Monitoring Officer
		Encourage members/officers/public & press to attend meetings remotely.		Democratic Services Manager

		<p>Provide flexibility in Council business by: 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</p> <p>Consider during development of the Schedule of Meetings for the Annual Meeting to have an August recess and that formal meetings should not be held during school holidays unless there is a clear business need.</p>		Both actions for the Democratic Services Manager
6.	Greater respect and support for those standing for and securing elected office in Wales.	<p>Promote duty on political group leaders to promote high standards of conduct. Standards Committee to monitor compliance in relation to standards of conduct and provide training.</p> <p>Support the Welsh Government's plans to introduce an Access to Elected Officer fund to assist disabled people to stand for elected office at the 2022 Local Elections.</p>		<p>Monitoring Officer/Democratic Services Managers/ Monitoring Officer</p> <p>Democratic Services Manager/Elections Team</p>
7.	Increase understanding of different tiers of government in Wales, the role each plays in society and how they operate.	<p>Share Welsh Government educational resources to accompany the extension of the franchise to 16 &amp; 17 year olds in Wales.</p> <p>Consider how to promote WG's Guidance/Materials for 16 and 17 year olds in Wales to include social media.</p>		<p>Democratic Services Manager Elections Team</p> <p>Communications Team</p>

		Consider, with Youth service co-operation, to explore other potential opportunities through youth councils/school councils/Head Teachers Forum, career fairs.		Communications Team
8.	Comprehensive training and awareness programme available through a variety of routes available for Councillors to support them in their role as Councillors.	<p>Consider developing a Member Development Strategy and action plan to identify areas and development opportunities available for Members.</p> <p>Review areas of training and development which can be made available online. National e Learning modules to be accessible via the NHS learning@wales website for 2022 elections</p> <p>Member Induction Programme in the process of being developed – work with WLGA and share good practices across Councils.</p> <p>Provide mentoring/shadowing opportunities for newly elected members.</p> <p>Undertake Personal Development Reviews for Senior Salary Holders and offer to non SRA holders.</p> <p>Promote the WLGA’s online “Councillors Guide”  <a href="https://www.wlga.wales/a-guide-for-new-Councillors-in-wales">https://www.wlga.wales/a-guide-for-new-Councillors-in-wales</a></p>		<p>Democratic Services Manager/Monitoring Officer</p> <p>Democratic Services Manager</p> <p>Corporate Training Manager</p> <p>Group Leaders</p> <p>Group Leaders</p> <p>Democratic Services Manager</p>

<p>9.</p>	<p>Increase engagement with the public to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• raise awareness of the role and activities of the Council</li> <li>• provide clarity about how the public can better inform local decision making</li> <li>• build greater community cohesion through a greater presence at community events,</li> <li>• creating and building upon community networks.</li> </ul>	<p>Consider a 'Becoming a Councillor' web page and promote, including to different communities in Flintshire e.g. Chinese community, Polish community, Asian community, LGBTQ+</p> <p>Explore information on webpage can be made available in different formats such as BSL</p> <p>Consider offering , depending on resources/capacity available, shadowing opportunities to groups who are underrepresented in democracy and for the seldom heard</p> <p>Share link to 'Becoming a Councillor' page with Town &amp; Community Councils and encourage link on their website to be promoted.</p> <p>Develop Public Participation Strategy Scheme (for compliance with duty under the 2021 Act).</p> <p>Encourage people to participate in decision making and promoting awareness of how to become a Member, what membership entails, promoting/facilitating process. Develop materials to target the seldom heard / underrepresented</p>		<p>All actions for the Democratic Services Manager/ Elections Team Leader /Communications Team</p>
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<p>10.</p>	<p>Increase awareness of the role of Councillors, the contribution they make to society and how to become a Councillor.</p>	<p>Council website page 'Becoming a Councillor' to be established and promoted.</p> <p>Consider a Video (available in BSL format as well) to be produced involving current Members highlighting the role of Members including benefits from both member and community perspective, insight into the work, training provided, remuneration package (basic allowance for 2022 is £16,800, IT provision, child care allowance, carers allowance, Local Government Pension Scheme, Broadband allowance etc. Suggest appearances from high profile Councillors.</p> <p>Use key days/weeks/months to highlight the work of Councillors such as International Women's Day, and profile the work/roles/experiences of 1 female councillor from each group plus newly elected Councillors.</p>		<p>Team Leaders</p> <p>Democratic Services Manager/ Communications Team</p> <p>Democratic Services Manager/ Communications Team</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Increase opportunities for women to play a full role in supporting and representing their communities.</p>	<p>Welsh Government introduced family absence for Councillors in principal authorities to enable individuals to balance the important roles they play in society with their responsibilities as parents. FCC have made family absence provisions available to all Councillors.</p>		<p>All actions for Democratic Services Manager</p>

		<p>Consider celebrating and profiling FCC female Councillors on International Women's Day 08.03.22.</p> <p>Consider Creating mentoring /coaching opportunities for women who may be interested in becoming a Councillor.</p> <p>Consider offering opportunities to girls and women to shadow women Councillors for a day.</p> <p>Consider surveying to identify the barriers to becoming a Councillor.</p> <p>Training for all elected members on inclusion , awareness of micro aggressions etc.</p>		
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