

Draft	Notes / Comments
(DRAFT) DIVERSE COUNCIL DECLARATION	
<p>The following provides a draft declaration. It is proposed that this is further developed in consultation with authorities, representative organisations and will be informed by emerging priorities from councils' own diversity and equality action plans and emerging priorities from the Welsh Government's Race Equality Action Plan.</p>	<p>The draft opposite was prepared using the template provided by the WLGA. It has been amended by officers as indicated. An action plan will need to be developed on how these commitments (if agreed) can be taken forward.</p> <p>The items marked with a ✓ below are believed acceptable as originally drafted, some have added background information in the column below. Others marked Δ require further discussion and a view from political group leaders.</p>
<p>This Council commits to being a Diverse Council. We agree to</p>	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a clear public commitment to improving diversity in democracy 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate an open and welcoming culture to all, promoting the highest standards of behaviour and conduct 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set out a local Diverse Council Action Plan ahead of the 2022 local elections. Including: 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Appoint Diversity Ambassadors for each political group on the council to work with each other and local party associations to encourage recruitment of candidates from underrepresented groups. 	✓

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encourage and enable people from underrepresented groups to stand for office through the provision of activities such as mentoring and shadowing programmes and information and learning events for people interested in standing as nd official candidates 	<p>Δ There is only a limited activity that the Council can undertake in encouraging individuals to stand for election which revolves around providing information to potential candidates. Political groups will have undertaken their own selection processes, and Council Members themselves may be undertaking mentoring and shadowing exercises in the lead up to the election, especially where those Members are not seeking re-election</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Proactive engagement and involvement with local community groups and partner organisations supporting and representing under-represented groups 	<p>✓</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure that all members and candidates complete the Welsh Government candidates' and councillors' survey distributed at election time. 	<p>✓</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work with Diversity Ambassadors to encourage each political group to set ambitious targets for candidates from under-represented groups at the 2022 local elections 	<p>Δ The Council can work with political groups to encourage targets to be set, but each political group will set its own target. Therefore, starting with a target should be the first step and that can be improved upon in future.</p> <p>It will not be possible to set any targets for "Independent" members.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop and promote new ways of working for members, which will enable and encourage candidates from underrepresented groups to stand for office 	<p>Δ This text is an addition to the draft from the WLGA and ties into work already being undertaken within the Council. Encouraging new ways of working could potentially attract candidates from diverse background to stand for election.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work towards the standards for member support and Development set out in the <i>Wales Charter for Member Support and Development</i>. 	<p>✓ (The Council is working on the Charter currently as the current Charter runs out in 2021)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a commitment to a duty of care for Councillors by: 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ providing access to counselling services for all councillors 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ having regard for the safety and wellbeing of councillors whenever they are performing their role as councillors. 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ taking a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment by members including through social networks. 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide flexibility in council business by 	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ regularly reviewing and staggering meeting times 	✓ (The Council under the Local Government Measure 2011 is currently required to do this once in a Council term)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ encouraging and supporting remote attendance at meetings and 	✓ (Requirement of the Local Government and Elections Act 2021)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ agreeing recess periods to support councillors with caring or work commitments. 	Δ This is to be encouraged where possible. However, with the significant pressure on dates and the current numbers of meetings being held / requested, this can be operationally difficult for those organizing meetings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage Ensure that all members 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. 	✓ (All the Council can do is to encourage the take up and Members can decide not to take up an allowance or salary, including a right to forego part of their salary under the IRPW regulations)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that councillors from under-represented groups are represented whenever possible in high-profile, high influence roles. Encourage representation from under-represented groups in high-profile, high-influence leadership positions roles whenever possible	<p>Δ This should be a long term Council ambition to encourage individuals from under-represented groups to stand for election as Chairs / Vice-Chairs or for appointment as Cabinet Members. However, this may take time to develop, and will of course depend on those elected in 2022 and in subsequent elections.</p>
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