

Public Document Pack

To: Members of the Democratic
Services Committee

Date: 2 June 2023

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Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE** to be held at **10.00 am** on **FRIDAY, 9 JUNE 2023** in **COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, RUTHIN AND BY VIDEO CONFERENCE.**

Yours sincerely

G Williams
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Pages 3 - 4)

Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interest in any business identified to be considered at this meeting.

3 URGENT MATTERS

Notice of items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

4 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

To appoint a Vice-chair of the Democratic Services Committee for the 2022 – 23 municipal year, this appointment having been deferred at the last meeting of the Committee.

5 DRAFT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION STRATEGY (Pages 5 - 20)

To consider a report by the Principal Officer – Strategic Marketing (copy attached) to update the Committee on the progress made to date in producing the Strategy.

6 DUTY OF GROUP LEADERS TO PROMOTE ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

(Pages 21 - 24)

To consider a report by the Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer (copy attached) to inform the Committee of the new duty placed upon political group leaders to promote ethical behaviour.

7 PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS (Pages 25 - 36)

To consider a report by the Democratic Services Manager (copy attached) to brief the Committee on personal development reviews.

8 COUNCIL POLICY ON MEMBER TRAINING (Pages 37 - 48)

To consider a report by the Democratic Services Manager (copy attached) to provide information on member training and development issues.

9 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 49 - 54)

To consider a report by the Democratic Services Manager on the Committee's Forward Work Programme and associated issues (copy attached).

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

Michelle Blakeley-Walker
Ellie Chard
Karen Edwards
Chris Evans
Hugh Evans
Justine Evans

Martyn Hogg
Brian Jones
Delyth Jones
Cheryl Williams
Elfed Williams

COPIES TO:

All Councillors for information
Press and Libraries
Town and Community Councils

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

Code of Conduct for Members

DISCLOSURE AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

I, *(name)*

a *member/co-opted member of

*(*please delete as appropriate)*

Denbighshire County Council

CONFIRM that I have declared a ***personal / personal and prejudicial** interest not previously declared in accordance with the provisions of Part III of the Council's Code of Conduct for Members, in respect of the following:-

*(*please delete as appropriate)*

Date of Disclosure:

Committee *(please specify)*:

Agenda Item No.

Subject Matter:

Nature of Interest:

*(See the note below)**

Signed

Date

*Note: Please provide sufficient detail e.g. 'I am the owner of land adjacent to the application for planning permission made by Mr Jones', or 'My husband / wife is an employee of the company which has made an application for financial assistance'.

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Report to	Special Democratic Services Committee
Date of meeting	9 th June 2023
Lead Member	Councillor Julie Matthews, Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policy and Equalities
Report author	Sian Owen, Principal Officer – Strategic Marketing
Title	Draft Public Participation Strategy

1. What is the report about?

Draft Public Participation Strategy

1.1. This strategy needs to be in place to meet the requirements of The Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

Sub-heading (delete as needed)

2.1. To update the committee on the progress made to date in producing the strategy.

2.2. To get early engagement and feedback on the draft report.

2.3. To ensure that the strategy has the support of the committee and takes on board any recommendations for further engagement with other council committees, including the level of formal approval required.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. That the Committee contributes towards creating an effective and appropriate strategy by reviewing the draft strategy and providing feedback.

4. Report details

4.1. Please find attached the draft strategy which we have as a team decided would benefit from the early view and input of this committee.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

A well- run, high performing council

5.1. Being a 'learning' organisation that uses feedback and lessons-learned to drive organisational improvement.

5.2. Fostering a culture that welcomes fair and appropriate challenge.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1. Costs are contained in Service budgets as they primarily involve staff time

6.2. Costs for the required public research were contained within the previous Corporate Plan project "People are involved in shaping and improving services"

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1. The Well-being impact assessment has been started and will be ready for the formal approval process, once the final version of the strategy is ready.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1. Representatives from Democratic Services, Legal, Business Improvement and Public Engagement are all on the group working on the strategy.

8.2. Two pieces of public research have been undertaken and are referenced in the draft strategy.

8.3. A final version of the strategy and the Well-being Impact Assessment will be presented to the Strategic Equality and Diversity Group on the 14th July and the final version of the strategy will be brought back to this committee in September 2023.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. Not required.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

No risk associated with the recommended actions requested.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. The Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021.

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Public Participation Strategy 2022-2027 (draft)

Approved by	TBC
Date implemented	TBC
Owner	Corporate Communications and Engagement Team
Review date	June 2027

Public Participation Strategy 2022-2027 (draft)

Changes to this document

This document is reviewed regularly to keep up with changes in policy or legislation. The latest versions of our publications can be found on our website. Before contacting us about the content of this document, we recommend that you refer to the most recent version on the website and any relevant guidance.

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Notes / changes
1.0			
2.0			

Public Participation Strategy 2022-2027 (draft)

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Public Participation Strategy 2022-2027 (draft)

The purpose of this strategy

The purpose of this Public Participation Strategy is to set out how the Council aims to encourage local people to participate in Council decision-making.

It complements the existing Engagement Policy which gives guidance and support for officers and Councillors to carry out a range of public engagement and consultation activities.

Legislative Background

The Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021 requires principal Councils (of which Denbighshire County Council is one such Council) in Wales to develop and implement a Public Participation Strategy that in particular addresses:

- Ways of promoting awareness among local people of the principal council's functions;
- Ways of promoting awareness among local people of how to become a member of the principal council, and what membership entails;
- Ways of facilitating access for local people to information about decisions made, or to be made, by the principal council;
- Ways of promoting and facilitating processes by which local people may make representations to the principal council about a decision before, and after, it is made;
- Arrangements made, or to be made, for the purpose of the council's duty in section 62 of the 2011 Measure (bringing views of the public to attention of overview and scrutiny committees);
- Ways of promoting awareness among members of the principal council of the benefits of using social media to communicate with local people.

Principal Councils are required to consult with the local community in developing and reviewing the Public Participation Strategy. This strategy must be reviewed at least once after every ordinary local government election.

Public Participation Strategy 2022-2027 (draft)

Key findings from the consultation

To support the development of this strategy, Denbighshire County Council has carried out research over two separate projects:

1. Work was already being carried out under a project from the 2017-2022 Corporate Plan cycle to support a project called *People are involved in shaping and improving services*. This aimed to investigate and address key concerns raised in previous Residents Surveys that it was difficult to get involved in Council decision-making and residents were not sure whether their involvement would make a difference
2. Following the introduction of the Local Government Act (Wales) 2021 legislation, and the requirement to carry out a consultation to support the development of the Public Participation Strategy, additional research was carried out to address some 'knowledge gaps' not covered by the previous corporate plan work.

The research for both pieces of work was appointed to external researchers and included an independent audit of the council's existing activities, an online survey, and some street surveys where researchers would approach members of the public to ask them for their opinion. In terms of the survey, both pieces of research received a combined total of 1,215 responses, of which approximately 750 were carried out as 'street surveys' (it should be noted however that due to the Covid pandemic one year's worth of surveys was conducted exclusively online)

In summary the data from both pieces of research showed that:

1. On average, around 75% of survey respondents wanted to get involved in decisions made which affect them
2. On average, around 73% of respondents felt that 'meaningful engagement' meant that they felt included, informed and listened to (even if the eventual decision made was not one they agreed with). Around 19% of respondents only felt that engagement would be meaningful if the council made a decision that they personally agreed with. Around 8% of respondents weren't sure or didn't have an opinion

Public Participation Strategy 2022-2027 (draft)

3. There is more knowledge around what the Council does and how it impacts people's lives in the south of the County. This is likely to be because communities in rural Denbighshire are generally smaller and therefore the decisions the council makes will have a wider impact within that community.
4. This was reflected in the number of respondents who said they had attended a Council committee meeting (or knew it was possible to do this). In Corwen, over 50% of respondents surveyed said they had either attended a meeting or knew it was possible to do this, compared to Rhyl where 27% of respondents had either attended a meeting or knew it was possible to do this.
5. Respondents were generally not interested in becoming involved in decision-making to the extent that they would consider becoming a Councillor. Across the county fewer than 1 in 10 people thought this would be something they might like to do.
6. Reasons why people felt they might not become a Councillor included: being unsure what would be involved, not having a campaign issue/not being sure people would vote for them, they were too busy, too old, or unsure as to what level of commitment would be required
7. In terms of the mechanisms by which respondents wanted to find out or get involved in decision-making which affects or impacts them:
 - a. Around 43% want the Council to write to them
 - b. Around 30% would like to attend a public information session or public meeting
 - c. Around 42% would like to see something on social media
 - d. Around 29% would like to see something on the Council's website
8. The important thing in terms of reaching people is to 'meet them where they are at' – letters (either email or post) as a means of direct contact are likely to be the most personal and most effective means of contacting people. Public meetings or information drop-ins should be as close to the target community as possible, rather than (for example) expecting people to visit the nearest Council office or other amenity to attend. To ensure both of these methods are effective, Council officers will need to have high levels of confidence before starting a project that they have accurately and adequately mapped all of their stakeholder groups and be confident they are approaching them via the most appropriate means.

Public Participation Strategy 2022-2027 (draft)

9. A large number of respondents are on social media and would like to see it better used as a communication tool than it is currently. Further research may be needed to A/B test different mechanisms within social media (for example participation in local community groups/spaces on social media, versus paid advertising, versus standardised posts on the Council's own social media channels)

[Still to arrange and include – a workshop with first-time Councillors elected in 2022 to understand their experiences. This would not include people who have previously been Councillors or who have previously stood for other electoral roles e.g. Senedd Member or Member of the UK Parliament]

Our key approach aims

The following aims will set out how we intend to approach each requirement of the strategy.

Consistency

Our approach to involving local people in Council decision-making will be consistent.

Transparency

Our approach to involving local people in decision-making will be transparent, and people will understand why we may take a particular approach.

Fairness

We will recognise the differences between 'equality' and 'equity' and work to ensure that nobody who wishes to be involved in Council decision-making is prevented from doing so due to their particular circumstances. Where this means that some people require more support to participate in Council decision-making, we will do our best to enable this wherever it is possible to do so.

Compliance with the act

This section will set out what the Council is currently doing, and where improvements can be identified, how we aim to carry out these improvements.

Public Participation Strategy 2022-2027 (draft)

Ways of promoting awareness among local people of the principal council's functions

Denbighshire County Council's existing approach includes:

- The Council's website
- Press releases
- The social media channels Twitter and Facebook

To improve this, the Council will consider:

- People who are digitally excluded
- People using social media channels other than Twitter and Facebook
- Supporting local Councillors to take a more active role in promoting their own work

Ways of promoting awareness among local people of how to become a member of the principal council, and what membership entails

Denbighshire County Council currently has a website page called 'Be A Councillor':

<https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/your-council/voting-and-elections/be-a-councillor.aspx>

Ahead of election periods, this page is promoted via press release (which may be picked up in the local press) and via social media channels Facebook and Twitter

To improve this, the Council will:

- Regularly ask people how they would like to receive information – this is a standard item as part of the Council's Engagement Policy
- Ensure that the information is available in print or alternative format for people who are digitally excluded
- Continue to research how best to contact people, with specific considerations given to any circumstances which may be a barrier to their engagement

Public Participation Strategy 2022-2027 (draft)

Ways of facilitating access for local people to information about decisions made, or to be made, by the principal council

The Council currently has an Engagement Policy which states that people must be able to obtain information:

- Online via any or all of the following:
 - The Council's main website
 - The County Conversation Portal
 - The Planning Portal
 - Via online drop-in or public meeting sessions (currently via Microsoft Teams)
- Offline via any or all of the following:
 - Information to be made available in local libraries
 - Information to be made available in the local press either by press release, advertisement or public notice
 - Where appropriate, via public information sessions (either drop-in or meeting)
 - Where appropriate, by posting letters to those impacted by decisions, or by carrying out door-knocking

To improve this, the Council will:

- Regularly ask local people if the channels we are using to provide them with information are the right ones
- To regularly review our Engagement Policy in line with what people are telling us

Ways of promoting and facilitating processes by which local people may make representations to the principal council about a decision before, and after, it is made

The Council currently has an Engagement Policy which states that, where appropriate, people must be able to participate in local decision-making in (at least) the following ways:

- Online via any or all of the following:

Public Participation Strategy 2022-2027 (draft)

- The County Conversation Portal and associated citizen's panel *Y Panel*
- The Planning Portal
- Via online drop-in or public meeting sessions (currently via Microsoft Teams)
- Offline via any or all of the following:
 - By viewing consultation or engagement documents and completing feedback forms in local libraries or other venues as appropriate
 - Where appropriate, via public engagement or consultation drop-in sessions
 - Where appropriate, by facilitating discussions with specific communities or service users (e.g. focus groups)

To improve this, the Council will:

- Regularly ask local people if the channels we are using to engage with them and facilitate their participation are the right ones
- To regularly review our Engagement Policy in line with what people are telling us

Arrangements made, or to be made, for the purpose of the council's duty in section 62 of the 2011 Measure (bringing views of the public to attention of overview and scrutiny committees)

'The Council has arrangements in place to bring the views of the public to the attention of its three Scrutiny committees.

Members of the public may contact their local councillor, to raise issues through their councillor, or they can make a direct request using a 'Public Scrutiny Request Form', available from the Council's website on this page:

<https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/your-council/about-the-council/how-the-council-works/scrutiny-committees.aspx>

The following criteria are used when considering whether a request is suitable for consideration by a Scrutiny Committee:

Public Participation Strategy 2022-2027 (draft)

- Public interest – is the matter of concern to residents?
- Ability to have an impact – can Scrutiny influence and change things?
- Performance – is it an underperforming area or service?
- Extent – does it affect a large number of residents or a large geographic area?
- Replication – is anyone else looking at it?

Ways of promoting awareness among members of the principal council of the benefits of using social media to communicate with local people

Denbighshire County Council currently includes some basic social media training as part of its Members' Induction Process.

To improve this, the Council will:

- Consult with Councillors after every ordinary Council election to ascertain their current level of understanding about the social media channels available to them, and how these can complement the channels the Council uses
- Arrange regular social media training for Councillors:
 - At least once per year
 - After any extra-ordinary election or by-election
- Develop and publish a social media toolkit to support officers and Councillors

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Report to	Democratic Services Committee
Date of meeting	9 th June 2023
Lead Member / Officer	Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer.
Report author	Lisa Jones, Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Title	Duty of Group Leaders to Promote Ethical Behaviour.

1. What is the report about?

The report is about informing the Committee of the new duty placed upon political group leaders to promote ethical behaviour.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To update Members on the work done to date to enable Group Leaders to be supported in their duty which supports the overall democratic environment.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That Members note the contents of the report providing any observations that would assist in embedding a collective approach to discharging this democratic function.

4. Report details

4.1. Section 62 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 provides a new duty on the leaders of political groups to take reasonable steps to promote and maintain high standards of conduct of their members. The duty does not make the Group Leader accountable for another members' behaviour, but the role is one of taking reasonable steps. Although oversight of the ethical framework falls to the Council's Standards Committee, this additional duty on Group Leaders is the Welsh Government' approach to a collective culture of high standards requiring local leadership and all members to accept responsibility for their actions, collectively and individually.

4.2. The legislation also provides new duties on the Standards Committee to monitor group leaders' compliance with this duty and to advise and provide training for group leaders on the discharge of the duty. However it is highly appropriate that Democratic Services Committee are informed and consulted as the Council learns how to implement the new duty given its importance to all members. Councils must be places where an open culture thrives and people are welcomed and respected, whatever their background, in order to encourage a more diverse range of people to seek elected office in local government. Standards of behaviour are key to this and all members have a responsibility to act in a manner which respects and values all.

4.3. The Welsh Government produced draft statutory guidance for group leaders and standards committees prior to the election and sought views upon it. The draft guidance can be viewed here: <https://gov.wales/consultation-local-governmentand-elections-wales-act-2021-standards-conduct-statutory-guidance>. At the time of writing this guidance remains as draft.

4.4 By way of summary the draft guidance includes examples of how Group Leaders might perform their duty such as:

- demonstrating personal commitment to and attending relevant development or training around equalities and standards;
- encouraging group members to attend relevant development or training around equalities and standards;
- ensuring nominees to a Committee have received the recommended training for that Committee;
- promoting civility and respect within group communications and meetings and in formal Council meetings;
- promoting informal resolution procedures in the Council, and working with the Standards Committee and monitoring officers to achieve local resolution;
- promoting a culture within the group which supports high standards of conduct and integrity;
- attending a meeting of the Council's Standards Committee if requested to discuss Code of Conduct issues;

- work to implement any recommendations from the Standards Committee about improving standards;
- work together with other Group Leaders, within reason, to collectively support high standards of conduct within the Council.

4.5. The following steps are being or have been implemented thus far:-

4.5.1 Standards Committee' Chair and Vice Chair attended a Group Leaders meeting in January 2023 and agreed a meeting at least once a year with Group Leaders in the form of an 'Ethical Liaison Group - Standards Committee Chair and Vice Chair will be invited to a Group Leaders' meeting to discuss progress on the duty in an informal and collaborative way.

4.5.2 Group leaders to each provide an annual report to the Standards Committee on their progress in fulfilling their duty. The report should cover demonstrating personal and group commitment to attending relevant training or training around equalities and standards; promoting civility and respect within group communications and setting a good culture; receiving data on the level of complaints; promotion of informal resolution procedures; engaging with standards committee as necessary and working collectively with other Group Leaders. All Group Leaders have been supported by the Monitoring Officer and Deputy in completing their reports and provided with relevant data in respect of their group.

4.5.3 The Standards Committee will be able to discuss these reports with group leaders and make reference to the work carried out in the Standards' Committee annual report.

4.6 Training opportunities will be provided in respect of resolving disputes and working within any local resolution procedures.

4.7 This is a new and evolving duty which Group Leaders are keen to embrace and good practice will be discussed and cascaded within Group Leader and Group meetings and shared with the Standards' Committee.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

If the duty is being met, then this should contribute to good member/officer relations and member-member relations. Thus a functioning, well governed Council contributes to good local democracy and trust.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

Costs will be met within existing resources. Some member training is available from the WLGA which the Council is looking into taking up.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

A well-being impact assessment is not required.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

Standards Committee have been consulted on the WG Guidance in respect of this item and Group Leaders have been briefed on duties.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

The duty should be contained within existing resources.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

The introduction of this duty and the enhanced role of the Group Leader in supporting the discharge of it, will mitigate against the risk of behaviour occurring which falls short of the expected standards of conduct and complaints to the regulator.

11. Power to make the decision

Section 62 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

Report to	Democratic Services Committee
Date of meeting	9 June 2023
Lead Member	Councillor Julie Matthews, Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policy and Equalities
Head of Service	Lisa Jones, Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Report author	Steve Price, Democratic Services Manager
Title	Personal Development Reviews

1. What is the report about?

1.1. This report outlines the background to personal development reviews for members.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. To brief the committee on personal development reviews and to seek feedback from the committee.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. That the Committee makes appropriate comments or recommendations in respect of the personal development review process.

4. Report details

4.1. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires that a Personal Development Review (PDR) be made available to each councillor. A PDR is a way for a member and the Council to mutually assess a member's personal development needs. The review would be set within the context of the role of the member, their aspirations for what they hope to achieve, the purpose and aspirations of the Authority and the needs of the community. The interview could include a review of the training and development received by the member over the previous year.

- 4.2. A PDR is not a Performance Appraisal; it is intended to be a means of supporting and developing members. Members are not obliged to undertake a PDR.
- 4.3. Any member choosing to have a PDR can request to have the interview conducted by their group leader, or by an officer from Democratic Services.
- 4.4. Information on the PDR process and a personal development plan template are attached to this report.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027: The Denbighshire We Want?

- 5.1. Indirectly, the personal development review process could inform members' contributions to the Corporate Plan.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

- 6.1. The personal development review process is supported by the Democratic Services team. Training and development activities identified by the process may require contributions from other services or external agencies, such as the Welsh Local Government Association. Costs are likely to be related to officer time.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

- 7.1. A Well-being Impact Assessment is not required for this report.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

- 8.1. The appropriate forum for consultation on the personal development review process is the Democratic Services Committee.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1. Not required for this report.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1 The personal development review process is designed to promote continuing development for members, which should reduce any risks associated with members undertaking their roles.

11. Power to make the decision?

11.1. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

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Personal Development Reviews

A Personal Development Review (PDR) is a way for a member and his/her Authority to mutually assess a member's personal development needs. The review should be set within the context of the role of the member, his/her aspirations for what s/he hopes to achieve, the purpose and aspirations of the Authority and the needs of the community. The interview could include a review of the training and development received by the member. A PDR is **NOT** a Performance Appraisal but a means of supporting and developing members

PDR schemes enable members to build confidence, develop skills and knowledge and improve their own performance and contribution to the council and the community. They can provide:

- Clarity for members about the expectations and accountabilities placed upon them.
- Understanding of and support for the individual and collective development needs of members
- Support for members in preparing for new roles (succession planning)
- An understanding and ownership of organisational goals
- Support for improved member performance
- An agreed plan which sets out training and development needs, if any, identified for the year ahead
- A written record, signed by both member and reviewer.
- A private document which is not expected to be published by the authority or member, although a member is free to publicise in his or her annual report any training and development undertaken if he or she so wishes.

Guidance for Members being interviewed

Before undertaking your review you may find it useful to consider the following guidance:

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of your meeting will be to provide you with an opportunity to review your role generally, consider any specific tasks for the year ahead, consider the areas where you feel confident and identify areas that you might find challenging and may need support and development. You will have an opportunity to identify learning and development needs which you will then be able to feed back to Democratic Services officers to organise development programmes.

Preparation

Before your meeting you will need to complete the Personal Development Plan. This will help you to think about your role, specific tasks for this year and

any support that you might need. You'll also find it useful to review the role descriptions in Section 19 of the Council's Constitution.

Make contact with your interviewer and plan a time and place convenient to you both where you can have a confidential undisturbed conversation.

Undertaking the Review

Please remember that the conversation you have with your interviewer needs to be kept confidential to yourselves.

Use the PDP Form as a basis for your discussions

Your interviewer will help you consider your role/contribution, strengths/weaknesses and training needs. They will act as an objective sounding board in this conversation.

Their role is not to give their own feedback on your performance.

Please note that it is your responsibility to undertake any actions resulting from the conversation, keep any documentation and discuss any emerging development needs with Democratic Services officers.

Any additional support required from the authority may also be identified and fed into the organisation as appropriate.

MEMBERS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Please complete this pro forma and bring it with you to your personal development review session. This form is confidential to you and the person who is conducting your Review, except for the final sheet which will be used by Democratic Services officers.

Name:

Name of Reviewer:

1. What are my current roles and responsibilities? (e.g. a Cabinet or Scrutiny member, chair or member of a committee such as Corporate Governance, Planning or Licensing or other panels or boards. Community representative or leadership roles can be given here too).

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2. What do I need to know about and be able to do to undertake my roles effectively? (See the role descriptions in Section 19 of the Council's Constitution)

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3. What aspects of my current or potential future role(s) am I confident in?

4. Where am I less confident or need to develop further?

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5. What might prevent me from undertaking my role(s) effectively? *(Consider any personal, organisational or political issues which might be a barrier to success)*

Areas that I would like to develop or learn more about:	Preferred method of learning or development (e.g. e-learning, reading materials at home, visits to other authorities, mentoring or networking, 'classroom' based training or practical workshops, etc.)
Skills (e.g. Chairing or questioning skills, effective meeting behaviours, social media, IT skills, public speaking, organisational skills, resilience and mental toughness, etc)	
Knowledge (e.g. the code of conduct, local government finance, equalities, the planning process, the policy framework, Denbighshire's governance and decision making arrangements.)	

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This sheet is to be detached and sent to Democratic Services, County Hall, Ruthin – email: democratic@denbighshire.gov.uk . It will be used to develop both generic and personal development plans and training programmes

Learning and Development Plan for _____ (insert year).

Area of Learning or Development	Method of Delivering the Learning & Development	Priority / timescale (e.g. 1 st priority by Nov 202X)

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Member's signature: _____

Date: _____

Reviewer's signature: _____

Date: _____

Report to	Democratic Services Committee
Date of meeting	9 June 2023
Lead Member	Councillor Julie Matthews, Lead Member for Corporate Strategy, Policy and Equalities
Head of Service	Lisa Jones, Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Report author	Steve Price, Democratic Services Manager
Title	Council Policy on Member Training

1. What is the report about?

1.1. This report provides information on member training and development issues.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. The purpose of this report is to obtain the views and recommendations of the Democratic Services Committee, prior to consideration of member training by full Council.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Democratic Services Committee:

3.1. Notes the report and highlights member training topics to be covered in future.

3.2. Makes appropriate recommendations to full Council on mandatory member training requirements.

4. Report details

Introduction

- 4.1. A programme of member inductions, training and development commenced immediately after the Council elections in May 2022. The sessions delivered as part of the initial induction for new and returning members included training on the Council's Code of Conduct, members' ICT provision, familiarisation with services, equalities and diversity, safeguarding, and an introduction to Scrutiny. Training was also provided for undertaking certain roles as members (for example, for members of the Planning or Governance and Audit Committees, and acting as a 'corporate parent'). Training opportunities have continued with sessions for Licensing Committee members, Revisiting Scrutiny and Treasury Management.
- 4.2. The regular all-member Council Workshops have provided a forum for training and information sharing on a varied range of topics such as climate change and ecological issues; the Council's budget setting process; the Council's operational structure; and strategic regional public services work. Further Council Workshops are planned.
- 4.3. Individual departments of the Council routinely provide training for members in a variety of forms for the services they deliver. The training provided by the Council's own officers and departments contributes by far the biggest portion of member training, though external training and facilitators are also used when appropriate.

E-Learning

- 4.4. The development of e-learning resources for members has been coordinated nationally by a Member Support Officer Network in conjunction with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA); and a national e-learning platform for members is now available.
- 4.5. A draft Guide to accessing the e-learning modules was circulated to members of the Democratic Services Committee in March 2023, for the purpose of checking the functionality of the Guide and the e-learning site. The draft Guide is attached as appendix 1.

Welsh Local Government Association

4.6. The WLGA provides a range of support to members including guidance materials and training programmes. The Council has previously worked with the WLGA, particularly on training for Scrutiny and Cabinet roles, for example with Scrutiny chairing and questioning skills sessions. The Council also participates in the WLGA's 'Leadership Programme for Councillors', in conjunction with Academi Wales and the Welsh Government. The Leadership Programme is for councillors in leadership positions, to equip them with the latest thinking in political leadership and the knowledge and skills they need to undertake their roles. Where the WLGA has the expertise, it will also consider requests for bespoke training.

Co-opted Members

- 4.7. A co-opted member or lay member is a person who is not a councillor (having not been elected to the Council), but in line with statutory requirements, sits on one of the Council's committees. The Council has co-opted members on the three Scrutiny committees for education business; on the Standards Committee; and on the Governance and Audit Committee. It is a legal requirement for the chairs of the Governance and Audit and Standards Committees to be lay members.
- 4.8. The Council's Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group recently asked that the education Scrutiny and Governance and Audit co-opted members be invited to Scrutiny training events. Scrutiny and Governance and Audit co-opted members attended the 'Scrutiny Revisited' training session with councillors in April 2023, and further Scrutiny training is planned on Scrutiny Chairing Skills; Scrutiny Questioning Skills; and Effective Scrutiny for Better Outcomes.

Mandatory and Discretionary Training

4.9. The Council may wish to identify certain training as being mandatory for all members, or for members undertaking certain roles. Attending at least one training session on the Members' Code of Conduct during each full term of office is mandatory, as a result of the requirement being included within the Council's Code of Conduct. The Council has mandatory training for members of the Planning Committee by agreeing to the principle of committee members only voting on planning matters if they have

undertaken sufficient, recent planning training. This is set at two planning training sessions in a twelve-month period.

4.10. To enable members to fulfil their obligations, any mandatory training would need to be offered at appropriate times and frequencies, and over a realistic timeframe. The line-management and training policy arrangements for staff are not appropriate for members as they are elected office-holders rather than employees. However, Council could decide to enforce a mandatory training policy for members, for example by:

- The provision of training records to the group leaders
- Reporting on mandatory training records to the Democratic Services Committee
- Publishing training attendance and non-compliance with mandatory requirements
- Groups considering training issues in their allocation of roles to their members.

4.11. The former Council in 2018 decided that the following would be mandatory training courses:

- Code of Conduct - once a term.
- Planning – two training events each year (for Planning Committee Members).
- Licensing - two training events each year (for Licensing Committee Members).
- Data Protection and GDPR – annual training but subsequently amended to once a term.
- Local Government Finance - once a term.
- Safeguarding - once a term.
- Corporate Parenting – once a term.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027: The Denbighshire We Want?

5.1. This report does not directly contribute to the Corporate Priorities but appropriately trained and supported elected members will contribute to the Council's performance at strategic, policy development and decision-taking levels.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1. Most of the training plan is provided by the Council's officers. This does not require extra funding but does require officer time and that is an important factor in the size and complexity of the training programme that can be delivered. For some training external facilitation may be required which would need to be contained within the member training budget.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1. A well-being impact assessment is not required for this report.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1. Member training and development issues are reported to the Democratic Services Committee and full Council.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. A Chief Finance Officer Statement is not required for this report.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1. Training and development are intended to equip members and co-opted members with the skills and knowledge required for the different roles of the modern councillor and lay member. Without appropriate training and development there is also a greater risk of successful challenges to decisions and of complaints. As mentioned in section 6 above, to a large extent the provision of member training relies on the capacity of Council staff to provide training on their areas of work and expertise.

11. Power to make the decision

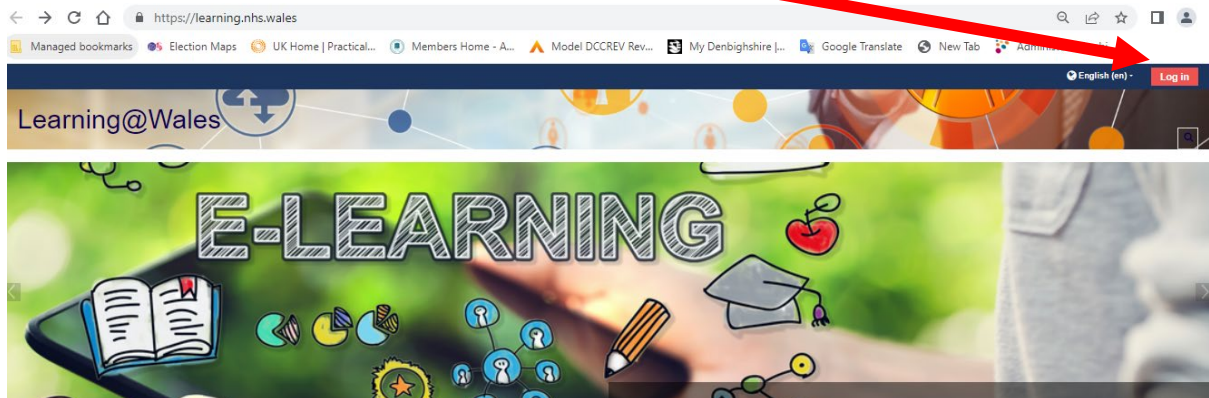
11.1. Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

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Concise Guide to e-Learning Courses for Councillors

1) The site is accessed from this link: <https://learning.nhs.wales/>

2) Choose 'Log in'



3) Enter your username which will be your normal sign on e.g. [REDACTED], all lower case. This will be the [REDACTED]. Your password will be [REDACTED].

Click the red login button at the top right of your screen.

4) From the 'Local Authorities command (see below) choose 'Denbighshire'.



5) On the following screen, choose Cymraeg or English for your language choice.

Course categories: Local Authorities / Denbighshire Local Authority



Croeso i Portal E-Ddysgu Cyngor Sir Ddinbych. Welcome to Denbighshire County Council E-learning Portal.

I fewngofnodi defnyddiwrch eich enw defnyddiwr arferol, e.e. joha8513. Eich cyfrinair fydd Denbighshire1% gyda 'D' fawr. Os gofynnir am allwedd cofrestru i agor modiwl, defnyddiwrch Denb106%.

To log in use your normal user name, e.g. joha8513. Your password will be Denbighshire1% with a Capital 'D'. If asked for an enrolment key to open a module, use Denb106%.

Cymraeg

English

6) Choose 'Councillors'

The button below will take you to the available e-learning modules.

To log in use your normal user name, e.g. joha8513. Your password will be Denbighshire1% with a Capital 'D'. If asked for an enrolment key to open a module, use Denb106%.




7) Choose 'Mandatory Modules'




8) Choose the course you want from the list below.

Course categories: [Local Authorities](#) / [Denbighshire Local Authority](#) / [English](#) / [Councillors](#) / [Mandatory Modules](#)



[Denbighshire Council Home Page](#)



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- [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)
- [Social Media Awareness](#)
- [Public Speaking & Working with the Media](#)
- [Planning for Planning Committee Members](#)
- [Local Government Finance](#)
- [Introduction to Planning](#)
- [Introduction to Licensing](#)
- [Governance, Audit & Risk Management](#)
- [Ethics & Standards](#)
- [Equality & Diversity](#)
- [Effective Scrutiny](#)
- [Community Leadership & Casework](#)
- [Chair Meetings Effectively](#)
- [Welsh Language Standards](#)
- [Social Services & Wellbeing \(Wales\) Act 2014](#)
- [Corporate Parenting](#)
- [Corporate Governance](#)

9) Choose the 'Enrol me' box (as arrowed below).

Enrolment options

 Social Media Awareness

▼ Self enrolment (Student)

No enrolment key required.



10) Click the green icon next to the course name (as arrowed below).



New Mandatory Modules for Elected Members May 2022

Social Media Awareness E-Learning Module

You can complete the module by clicking on the below green icon and heading. Once into the

Social Media Awareness

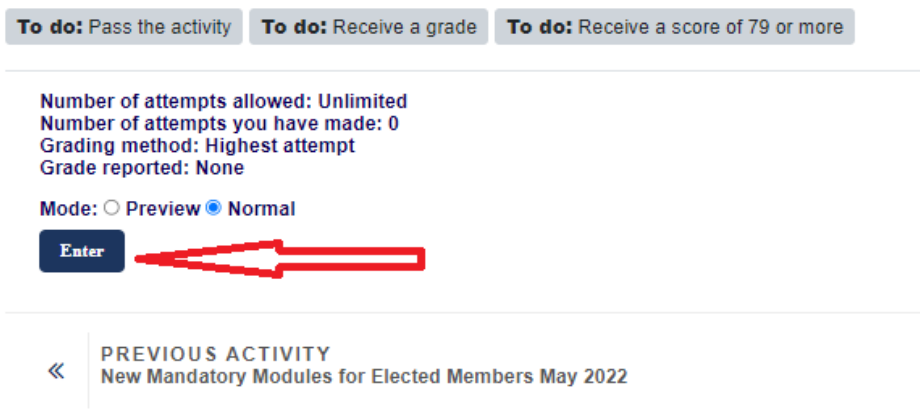
To do: Pass the activity **To do:** Receive a grade **To do:** Receive a score of 79 or more

g Module

Topic 2

Topic 3

11) Choose 'Enter'.



To do: Pass the activity **To do:** Receive a grade **To do:** Receive a score of 79 or more

Number of attempts allowed: Unlimited
 Number of attempts you have made: 0
 Grading method: Highest attempt
 Grade reported: None

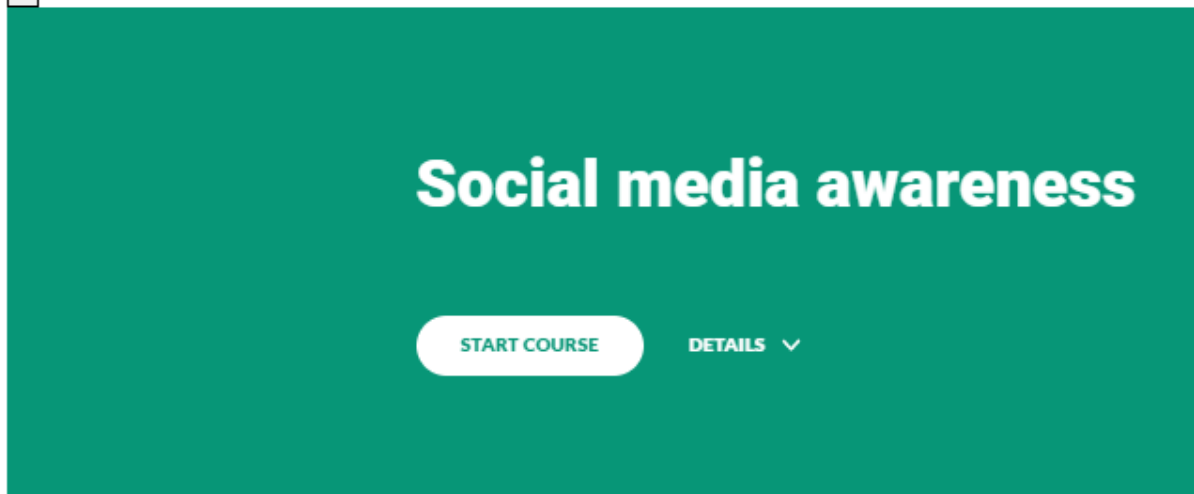
Mode: Preview Normal

Enter

PREVIOUS ACTIVITY
 << New Mandatory Modules for Elected Members May 2022

12) Choose 'Start Course'.

Social Media Awareness

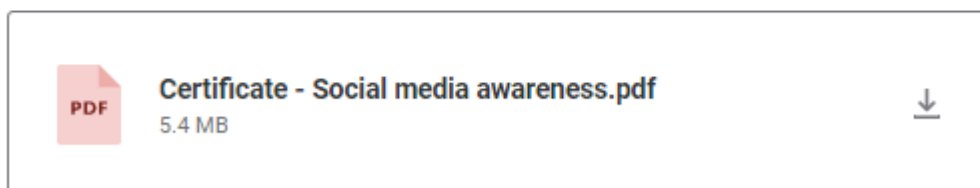


13) The course will now start and you progress through it by scrolling down the screens, answering any quiz questions and pressing 'Continue' or 'Next' etc., where prompted.

14) A certificate can be downloaded on completion of the course.

Download your certificate

Click the link to download your certificate.



15) After downloading your certificate, you can exit the course by choosing the 'Exit activity' button:





- Communications team
- IT/Digital team



Download your certificate

Click the link to download your certificate.

	Certificate - Social media awareness.pdf 5.4 MB	
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Report to	Democratic Services Committee
Date of meeting	9 June 2023
Head of Service	Lisa Jones, Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Report author	Steve Price, Democratic Services Manager
Title	Forward Work Programme

1. What is the report about?

1.1. This report is intended to facilitate discussion and feedback on the areas within the remit of the committee, and to confirm agenda items for future meetings.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. It is appropriate for the committee to review its forward work programme at each meeting. Items that may be appropriate include the following (this list is not exhaustive):

- Member training and development
- Support arrangements for members to fulfil their roles
- Support for the Scrutiny function of the Council
- Reviewing resources available to members (for example accommodation and technology)
- Welsh Government initiatives, legislation and consultations on local democracy issues including diversity, equality and participation
- Members' Remuneration

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. That the Committee considers the information within this report and confirms the forward work programme for future meetings.

4. Report details

Members' Working Group on How Meetings are Held

- 4.1 A report on this working group had been included in the forward work programme. The group is yet to be fully formed in terms of members being appointed, and has not therefore begun its work.
- 4.2 A verbal update of the latest position can be given during consideration of this forward work programme report.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Plan 2022 to 2027: The Denbighshire We Want?

- 5.1. This report does not directly contribute to the Corporate Plan.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

- 6.1. There are no cost implications from consideration of the forward work programme and the updates included in the report.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

- 7.1. A well-being impact is not required for this report.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

- 8.1. N/A.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1. A Chief Finance Officer Statement is not required for this report.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

- 10.1 No specific risks have been identified from consideration of this report. Reviewing the forward work programme and associated information is an important feature of the Democratic Services Committee's role.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

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Democratic Services Committee Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Author	Date Entered
29 Sept 2023	1	The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act	To receive information on the implications of the Act.	TBC	Sept 2022
	2	An Archive for Webcasts	A review of the arrangements for archiving the Council's webcasts	Steve Price	Feb 2023
	3	Ratification of the Public Participation Strategy	To consider endorsing the Council's Public Participation Strategy, following public consultation on the Strategy.	Siân Owen / Jo Sutton	April 2023
	4	Voter ID at elections	To consider the implications of voter ID and associated changes for the conduct of elections.	Steve Price	May 2023
	5	Co-opted Member Remuneration	To consider the Council's approach to co-opted member remuneration.	Steve Price	March 2023
	6	Regional Scrutiny Arrangements	To consider how local authority Scrutiny arrangements apply to regional public service delivery.	Steve Price	March 2023
	7	Measures to tackle intimidatory behaviour against members	To consider endorsing a package of information and measures to support councillors experiencing hostile, intimidatory, defamatory or violent behaviours because of their elected member roles.	Lisa Jones / Steve Price	April 2023
	8	Single Transferable Vote	To discuss the legislative provisions for elections using the single transferable vote provisions.	Steve Price	March 2023
	9	(Subject to Progress): Members' Working Group on How Meetings are Held	To consider the Council's policy for holding virtual, hybrid and in-person meetings.	TBC	Feb 2023

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