

Report to	Standards Committee
Date of meeting	6 March 2020
Lead Member / Officer	Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer
Report author	Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer
Title	Civility in Public Life

1. What is the report about?

1.1. The report is about the UK wide Civility in Public Life campaign coordinated by the Local Government Association (LGA), the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA).

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. To inform members of the Committee of the campaign and to seek the Committee's views on the draft programme of activities attached as Appendix 3

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. That the Committee considers and provides comments upon the draft action plan attached as Appendix 3 to this report

4. Report details

4.1. In July 2019 the WLGA Executive Board discussed concerns about the increase in abuse and intimidation of councillors in particular in online news comments sections and social media. The WLGA launched a Councillors Guide to Handling Intimidation later in 2019. A copy of the guide is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

4.2. The four organisations representing local authorities across the United Kingdom referred to in paragraph 1.1 above have subsequently agreed to jointly develop a

Civility in Public Life campaign. The campaign was officially launched in London in December 2019.

- 4.3. The campaign aims to address the intimidation of councillors and local government officers, standards of public and political discourse, standards of conduct in public office, and to provide support to councillors and officers.
- 4.4. The campaign has three themes, namely, Prevention, Support and Intervention, and Challenge. More detailed information about these themes can be found in a report to the WLGA Executive Board in January 2020, a copy of which is attached to this report as Appendix 2.
- 4.5. The four local government associations referred to in paragraph 1.1 above are now working on action plans within these broad themes. A draft action plan is attached as Appendix 3 to this report. Members are asked to consider the action plan and provide any comments on it which can be fed back to the WLGA.

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

- 5.1. The report has no direct bearing on the corporate priorities but a reduction in the abuse and intimidation of councillors and officers, and a higher standard of public discourse is conducive to good government.

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

- 6.1. There are no direct costs associated with this report.

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

- 7.1. There is no requirement for an assessment.

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

- 8.1. There has been no consultation with Scrutiny. The views of the Democratic Services Committee will also be sought.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1. There are no direct financial consequences as a result of this report.

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

10.1. There are no risks directly associated with this report

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. There is no decision required.