

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

Democratic Services Committee

16th April, 2018

REPORT AUTHOR: Chair of DSC

SUBJECT: Developing the promotion of involvement in public life

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Background

The DSC's Work Programme includes the following areas of work:

- Review how the Council engages with young people and
- Developing the Council to be representative of its electorate in 2022

In addition, a motion was considered at the Council meeting on 8 March, 2018. The following is an extract from the draft minutes of this meeting.

NOTICE OF MOTION - TO ENCOURAGE WOMEN TO RUN FOR ROLES IN POLITICS

Council debated the following notice of motion proposed by County Councillor Liam Fitzpatrick and seconded by County Councillor Amanda Jenner:

“That in celebration of the centenary of women gaining the vote, this council recognises the incredible contribution women have made to politics in Powys, Wales and the United Kingdom since time immemorial.

This council will continue to actively encourage women to run for political roles in the future and will strive to assist them in any way it can.”

County Councillor Myfanwy Alexander moved an amendment seconded by County Councillor Rachel Powell to request that the Democratic Services committee examine ways in which women and other under-represented groups can be encouraged to participate in civic life in Powys.

The Chair of the Democratic Services Committee advised that he had already arranged a meeting with officers to look into this.

The amendment was put to the vote and by 32 votes to 0 it was

RESOLVED to request that the Democratic Services Committee examine ways in which women and other under-represented groups can be encouraged to participate in civic life in Powys.

2. Developing the promotion of involvement in public life

The Chair, with the Portfolio Holder for HR, ICT and Communications and Portfolio Holder for Finance attended an initial meeting with officers on 9 April, 2018 regarding how the Council can use the National Democracy Week 2 – 6 July, 2018 to start to develop the promotion of involvement in public life.

The attached details possible objectives and themes for each year leading to the elections in 2022.

This meeting proposed that a Working Group from the DSC be formed to develop and manage this programme and call in appropriate officers and link with other organisations, as required.

3. RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation	Reason for Recommendation:
1. A DSC Working Group is established to plan and set the priorities 2. A different focus for each year be developed to be promoted during National Democracy week.	To promote democratic engagement and participation regardless of background, gender, disability or race.

Relevant Policy (ies):			
Within Policy:	Y	Within Budget:	Y / N

Relevant Local Member(s):	
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Sandra Matthews, Principal Elections Officer
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	Ongoing

Contact Officer:	Sandra Matthews, Principal Elections Officer
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Background Papers used

Objectives:

- **promoting democratic engagement and participation regardless of background, gender, disability or race;**
- **ensure that every member of society who is entitled to do so has an equal chance to participate in our democracy and to have their say;**
- **raise awareness, particularly among underrepresented groups.**

2018	Suffragette Centenary – celebrating women in politics addressing and breaking down the barriers
Interviews /video blogs with:	<p>Leader - Councillor Harris - 1 of 4 female leaders across Wales What is it like to lead the Council? How has being a councillor changed over the years?</p> <p>New members – maybe an example from each different role, portfolio holders/scrutiny members or one representative from each political group.</p> <p>Potential questions: has your experience as a County Councillor been what you expected, what have been challenges/ the rewards? How have you found juggling work, family life with being a councillor? How do balance the role representing your communities with the organisation making the difficult decisions/ what has been the biggest challenge?</p>
	Statistical information: female councillor numbers 1996 to present day Currently 23 out of 73, set a challenge to the women of Powys to increase this in 2022 or increase the numbers of women standing for election.
	In view of the centenary, it would be good to highlight any local suffragettes or influential women – any stories that we can highlight from history in the Powys area. Need a call out to Archives, local historians and the public in general – highlight how anyone can make a difference.
	Booklet or social media feed - #100 reasons to be a female politician – see what resources are already out there.
Potentially later in the year – Autumn Term onwards	Competition for local schools/colleges to produce artwork/ logo/ social media campaign to be used to promote elections in 2022 – maybe different themes each year/targeting different audiences: standing for election, voting at 16-17 – winners potentially first time voters in 2022 to be judged by the Democratic Services Committee in conjunction with Powys Youth Forum which can help promote the project Prize – suggestion of a visit to Houses of Parliament /Senedd etc

2019	Extending the Franchise - Votes at 16-17 Raising awareness and why your vote can make a difference – the impact of local government on your lives
	Extending invite to political parties to careers fair?
	County Councillors visiting schools as part of the curriculum and raising awareness of what Powys County Council does and develop further links with Youth Forum. Need to also establish links with Education team
	Mock elections – investigate which schools might be interested in running mock polling day and setting up a polling station, explaining voting process etc. How they register to vote etc
	Schools/College competitions could be run each year (as above) depending on resource decision.
	Question time – hosting events between schools in the Chamber, County Hall – questions/issues pertinent to the school children
	Running a programme of school visits/ councillor shadowing where content of meetings allow, maybe holding mock council meetings

2020	Breaking down the barriers – addressing the impact disabilities can have on standing for election and being a councillor
	Targeting some of the barriers: previous Leader raised awareness of dyslexia, ? find out if anyone would be willing to take this up or maybe Barry Thomas would be prepared to be interviewed or give his views.
	Councillor Charlton has hearing impairment – what barriers did she find with standing for election, the campaign process and her experience since becoming a Councillor
	Candidate in Welshpool with disabilities: again could we ask him for his experience of standing for election, the campaign trail etc
	What other barriers do candidates face – again perhaps we could speak to new members (political and independent members) to find out the problems they faced.
	Schools/College competition to be run each year (as above)

2021	Welsh Assembly elections
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