



Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Standards Committee - 22 March 2024

Review of Community & Town Council Training Plans

Purpose:	To review the publication of Community & Town Council Training Plan.
Policy Framework:	Standards Committee Terms of Reference – Council Constitution.
Consultation:	Legal, Access to Services and Finance.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) The update be noted.
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Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Debbie Smith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Standards Committee has previously voiced some concerns around the level of training available to Community / Town Councillors in complying with the Code of Conduct particularly when dealing with financial matters.
- 1.2 Section 67 of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires Community & Town Councils to make and publish a plan about the training provision for its Councillors and staff. Community / Town Councils had to publish their first training plan by 5 November 2022. The Training Plan must also be published electronically when approved.

2. Community & Town Councils Training Plans

- 2.1 Welsh Government produced draft guidance for Community / Town Councils as to the contents of a Training Plan which may include:
 - i) Reflecting on, and addressing, whether the Council collectively has the skills and knowledge it needs to deliver its plans most effectively.
 - ii) Identifying areas which all Councils should ensure that they have sufficient skills and understanding i.e. Code of Conduct, Financial Management, Governance and Councillor Induction.

- iii) Broader training i.e. shadowing more experienced Councillors.
- iv) Training needs assessments.

- 2.2 Similarly One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks have produced Guidance on Preparing a Council's Training Plan including a model Training Plan template.
- 2.3 In 2023, the Monitoring Officer wrote to Community / Town Councils asking them to send copies of their Training Plans when approved by their Councils. The Standards Committee should note that it is a matter for individual Community / Town Councils to approve their Training Plans and not the Standards Committee.
- 2.4 Community / Town Councils should regularly review whether there are opportunities to improve their administration and governance so that they are better able to perform their responsibilities and serve their communities.
- 2.5 The Standards Committee considered a report relating to Community & Town Council Training Plans on 22 March 2023. The report was noted, and the Committee wished to review the Training Plans item, six months later.

3. Review of Community & Town Councils Training Plans

- 3.1 The Head of Democratic Services has written to all Community / Town Councils seeking an update on their Training Plans. 23 of the 24 Community / Town Councils within the Swansea Council state that they have adopted and published their Training Plans.
- 3.2 Llangennith, Llanmadoc & Cheriton Community Council have drafted their Training Plan which is currently out for consultation. Their Council will consider adopting it on 3 April 2024.

4. Integrated Impact Assessment

- 4.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage.
 - Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.
 - Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
 - Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- 4.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.
- 4.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also considers other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.
- 4.4 An IIA Screening Form has been completed and no adverse implications have been noted.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications associated with the report.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 The legal implications associated with this report are set out within it.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices: None.