



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

5TH FEBRUARY 2021

COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

DIVERSITY IN DEMOCRACY

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to provide Members with details of the Diversity in Democracy work being undertaken by RCT's Democratic Services Committee and the opportunity to enhance this work through Town and Community Council engagement.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Community Liaison Committee:

- (i) Appoint a Member representative to the Council's Diversity in Democracy Working Group;
- (ii) Note and support the appointment of Ms. C. Kennedy to the Working Group as appointed at the Town and Community Council Officer meeting;
- (iii) Receive feedback on the work of the group as and when appropriate.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Welsh Government is committed to increasing diversity across all aspects of public life, which includes tackling the barriers which prevent individuals' active participation in local democracy. Following the evaluation of phase one of the Welsh Government's Diversity in Democracy work a number of key recommendations and actions have been derived, with such actions being addressed through the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

3.2 In light of this work by the Welsh Government and the importance seen by not only the Council's Democratic Services Committee but the Council as a whole of achieving diversity in democracy, the Democratic Services Committee resolved to establish a working group to take forward a working group to take forward the actions outlined within the Welsh Governments Action Plan.

3.3 The working group will consider what opportunities and engagement would benefit the future of diversity in advance of the 2022 local government elections

in encouraging participation in principal authorities and Community and Town Councils going forward.

4. **Diversity in Democracy Working Group**

4.1 At the inaugural meeting of the working group Members agreed to the following Terms of Reference

“The working group will:

- Review the actions outlined within the Welsh Government Phase 2 Action Plan in relation to Diversity in Democracy in order to consider proposals to support these objectives;
- Consider what the Council can do to raise awareness and promotion of the role of Councillors, to reduce potential barriers to becoming a Councillor (County Borough / Community / Town) with the aim of encouraging future candidates from diverse backgrounds to come forward for Election.”

4.2 To enhance the work of the group, Members were keen to strengthen the membership by engaging with Town & Community Councils and it was proposed that an Officer and Member representative be sought.

4.3 At the Town & Community Council Officer meeting held on the 14th January 2021 Officers proposed and unanimously supported the appointment of Ms C Kennedy (Llanharan Community Council) as representative on an Officer level.

4.4 Members are now asked to consider and appoint a Town & Community Council Member to join the working groups membership.

4.5 Members are advised that through the The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020, meetings of the group are held virtually and dairy markers for forthcoming meetings will be advised upon to both the Officer and Member representative appointed.

4.6 It is proposed that updates on the work of the group are provided to the Committee as and when appropriate and any further engagement opportunities are advised upon accordingly.

5. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no negative Equality or Diversity implications aligned to this report. The review by the working group looks to remove potential barriers and encourages equality across the County Borough and looks to increase diversity within democracy at the local Government Elections 2022 and any future election.

6. CONSULTATION

Members of the working group were consulted in respect of the extension of its membership.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

7.1 None.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

9. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

9.1 Working in partnership with the Town and Community Council's within Rhondda Cynon Taf links with the three priorities within the Corporate plan of People, Economy and Place, as it will help people and Communities to help themselves and assists in building a sustainable Rhondda Cynon Taf.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

5th FEBRUARY 2021

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Democratic Services Committee – [1st October 2020](#).