

**Date: 27 February, 2017**  
**Status: For Immediate Release**

## **Independent Candidate Training**

The Electoral Commission is offering training sessions for people wishing to stand as independent candidates in this year's Local Government Elections in Wales.

Rhydian Thomas, Head of the Electoral Commission's Wales Office said: "It's important that those considering standing as a candidate in the upcoming Local Government Elections in Wales are fully aware of the rules and regulations in place.

"We look forward to working with the respective local authorities, and with prospective candidates, to ensure that this information is communicated effectively, making the process of standing for election as straightforward as possible."

Chris Jones, Returning Officer for Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council said: "We encourage all independent candidates who are thinking of standing in the Local Government Elections in May to attend this event, which will cover the nominations process, campaigning rules and important information from the local police force regarding integrity".

There are four training sessions taking place on:

- Wednesday 8 March in Merthyr Tydfil
- Wednesday 15 March in Swansea
- Monday 20 March in Carmarthen
- Thursday 23 March in Wrexham

Anyone wishing to attend should contact the Electoral Commission on 02920 346800. These events are free to attend.

**ENDS**

## Notes to Editors

1. The Electoral Commission is an independent body set up by the UK Parliament. Our aim is integrity and public confidence in the UK's democratic process. We regulate party and election finance and set standards for well-run elections and are responsible for the conduct and regulations of referendums held under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act (2000).
2. The details for the sessions are as follows:
  - a. Wednesday 8 March 2017 (6pm-8pm)  
Council Chamber, Civic Centre  
Castle Street  
Merthyr Tydfil  
CF47 8AN.
  - b. Wednesday 15 March 2017 (6pm-8pm)  
University of Swansea, Bay Campus  
Fabian Way  
Swansea  
SA1 8EN.
  - c. Monday 20 March 2017 (6pm-8pm)  
Halliwell Centre  
University of Wales, Trinity St. David  
Carmarthen  
SA31 3EP
  - d. Thursday 23 March 2017 (5pm-7pm)  
Council Chamber  
Guildhall  
Wrexham
3. These events are open to independent candidates from across Wales who may be interested in standing for election, and are not limited to those seeking election in the four areas mentioned above.
4. The Returning Officers that will attend the four meetings above are:
  - (a) Gareth Chapman - Returning Officer for Merthyr Tydfil Council
  - (b) Steve Phillips - Returning Officer for Neath Port Talbot Council
  - (c) Mark James - Returning Officer for Carmarthenshire Council
  - (d) Dr Helen Paterson – Returning Officer for Wrexham County Borough Council

**For further information contact:**  
**Gary Marsh**  
**Media Officer**  
**Telephone: 01443 424120**  
**Email: [gary.marsh2@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:gary.marsh2@rctcbc.gov.uk)**