

Cardiff Council Participation Strategy

The Democratic
Component



What is required?

- **Promoting awareness of:**
 - the Council's functions
 - how to become a member of the council, and what it entails
 - the benefits of Members using social media to communicate with local people.
- **Facilitating access to information about Council decisions which are to be or have been made**
- **Promoting and facilitating processes for local people to make representations to council about a decision before, and after, it is made;**
- **Bringing views of the public to attention of overview and scrutiny committees**
- **Duty to make petition scheme**
- Other considerations
- Involvement of Elected Members

Promoting awareness of the Council's functions

Analysis and Assessment:

- The majority of information required by the legislation is currently available on the Councils website.
- Ward Councillors are able to inform their constituents of the services and duties of the Council during surgeries, in ward letters and meetings with community groups.
- Streaming and Webcasting Council, Cabinet, Scrutiny Committees, Planning Committee, Governance and Audit Committee and the Standards & Ethics Committee which exceeds the legislative requirements.

Proposed Improvement Action:

- Develop an engaging Democracy Portal and which will provide a focal point to complement existing information, include additional information and signposting to other locations where information is already available.
- Develop videos and easy to read information for the Democracy Portal

Promoting awareness of how to become a member of the council, and what it entails

Analysis and Assessment:

- the majority of information was only available on the website during pre-election periods and that general information about the role of a councillor was limited.
- Limited in-person activity to raise awareness was undertaken although some mentoring with Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team (Eyst), Women's Equalities Network (WEN) Wales and other partners was carried out.

Proposed Improvement Action:

- Include additional information on the Democracy Portal of the process for becoming a Cardiff Councillor.
- Provide timely online/in-person awareness sessions for those considering standing for office
- Develop mentoring and shadowing programmes and opportunities with stakeholders and partners including Youth Council and Youth Parliament.
- Launch of Digital Democracy videos in October

Promoting awareness to Members of the benefits of using social media to communicate with local people.

Analysis and Assessment:

- Some members have their own personal social media accounts
- Members' Social Media Code of Principles approved by Council and included in the Council's Constitution.
- The Council's Corporate social media account are supported by Officers and individual members do not have Council social media accounts.

Proposed Improvement Action:

- Provide social media and media training for Elected Members

Promoting and facilitating local people participating in the Council's decision making processes;

Analysis and Assessment:

- Information is available on the councils website, Calendar of meetings , Forward Plans for Cabinet and Scrutiny.
- Public Questions at Council, Petitions at Council and Committees,
- The provision of Statutory and other consultation for Planning and other committees is established
- Multi-location Meetings policy to provide access to meetings where appropriate i.e. witnesses at scrutiny or objectors at Planning and Licensing meetings
- Streaming and Webcasting Council, Cabinet, Scrutiny Committees, Planning Committee, Governance and Audit Committee and the Standards & Ethics Committee which exceeds the legislative requirements and includes the Webcast Library.

Proposed Improvement Action:

- Include additional governance process information on the Democracy Portal i.e. Decision Making roles of Council Cabinet and its Committees

Bringing views of the public to attention of overview and scrutiny committees

Analysis and Assessment:

- [Get involved with Scrutiny](#) and [Have your say](#) on Council's scrutiny website
- Co-opted Members and Registered Representatives on Children and Young People Scrutiny Committees
- Involvement of Youth Council representatives on scrutiny Committees
- Wide range of witnesses attending scrutiny committee meetings to enhance decision making
- Scrutiny Research surveys undertaken to support Task and Finish groups

Proposed Improvement Action:

- Develop a "Democracy" communication plan to promote awareness of the current opportunities including the "Involvement with Scrutiny" with the plan

Duty to make petition scheme

Analysis and Assessment:

- [Cardiff Council Petition Scheme 2022](#) on Councils website which includes the opportunity for a Lead Petitioner to present the petition.
- Petitions regularly submitted to Council and committees
- Queries regarding the information required to be provided by the Petitioner and the scope of petition

Proposed Improvement Action:

- Consult on existing Petition Scheme as part of the Participation Strategy
- Review Petition Scheme with Constitution Committee

Other considerations

Analysis and Assessment:

Other Languages:

- Limited or no access for the use of languages other than English and Welsh for community engagement activities by Ward Councillors

Electoral Services

- Recruitment of a Public Awareness Officer – WG impressed with the work that's being undertaken and are planning to promote this role across Wales
- Engagement with Schools - **Curriculum for Wales 2022 : Political Literacy** pilot project
- Working to develop the next phase of this programme for over 14 year olds
- Resources
- Resources are finite – Staff capacity, working within existing budgets
- Phased implementation - Managing expectations, unknown impact of success

Other considerations

Proposed Improvement Action:

Language

- Assess the cost implications of providing other language translations (WITS) or other solutions

Electoral

- continue development of Electoral engagement plan including:
 - Public Engagement Survey,
 - Democracy Recourses (EC & Cardiff Commitment),
 - Consultation with Adults with learning disabilities
 - Gypsy & Traveller Communities
- Accessible Voting Champion working with United Response, Dimensions, Ambitious About Autism and Mencap. This would increase our engagement work with young people and adults who are autistic, have a learning disability and or an acquired brain injury.

Resources:

- Identify any resources necessary to successfully deliver the Participation Strategy

Involvement of Elected Members

Analysis and Assessment:

- Elected Members provide the primary connections to the communities they serve and are our best resource in the community.
- Undertake ward surgeries to engage with constituents
- Many Elected Members are involved with community groups and can provide local intelligence

Proposed Improvement Action:

- Undertake Member Workshops in May to determine their views:
 - on the proposed plans for the Participation Strategy
 - for other potential actions to support the Participation Strategy
 - Identify the capacity of members to undertake:
 - Mentoring and Shadowing
 - support for proposed activities included in the plan

Next Steps

- March 2023: PRAP Policy Development Session with recommendations to be received
- May 2023: All Member Workshop to be arranged seeking further suggestions to improve engagement practice
- June 2023: Draft Participation Strategy shared for Public Consultation
- October 2023: Consideration of Draft Participation Strategy by Cabinet, aligned to Local Democracy Week (15th October)

Any Questions

