

Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Local Government and Communities



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Clerks to Town and Community Councils

5 September 2013

Dear Clerk,

A consultation on the proposed Designated Persons Order has been published on the Welsh Government's website.

The documents and the accompanying letter from the Minister were sent to all Town and Community Councils electronically.

As we don't have an email address for your community council, please find the consultation at the following web-link:

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/designated-persons-order-number1/?status=open&lang=en>

We welcome your views on the organisations we propose to designate, including town and community councils.

If you require a hard copy of the document please email LGDTmailbox@wales.gsi.gov.uk or telephone 02920 801048.

Please note that we are only able to send one copy of the Consultation Document per council.

Yours faithfully

Sinéad O'Toole
Scrutiny Democracy and Participation Branch

Interested Parties

Ein cyf / Our ref: qA1117615

Eich cyf / Your ref:

Dyddiad / Date: September 2013

Dear Colleagues

Expert Group on Local Government Diversity - Call for Evidence

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 contained provisions aimed at strengthening local democracy by removing the barriers and disincentives to standing for local election.

The 2011 Measure requires each county and county borough council in Wales to conduct a survey of candidates and councillors at each local election. The results will assess the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at improving diversity in Welsh local councils and build a demographic profile of those standing and being elected.

The first survey was conducted at the May 2012 local elections across Wales and the May 2013 local elections on the Isle of Anglesey. Of those who stood for election in May 2012, 3021 responded to the questionnaire. The results (except in relation to the Isle of Anglesey) were published by the Welsh Government. A link is attached.

<http://wales.gov.uk/about/aboutresearch/social/latestresearch/local-government-candidates-survey-2012/?jsessionid=73091415704DCF2F0F0B28C1959AA31E?lang=en>

Following publication of the Local Election Survey Results, the Minister for Local Government and Government Business announced her intention to establish an Expert Group to consider the survey results and related matters and to formulate an action plan aimed at improving the diversity of local government ahead of the 2017 local elections.

A copy of the Minister's statement and the terms of reference can be found at:

<http://wales.gov.uk/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2013/lqdiversity/?lang=en>

I have been appointed as Chair of the Expert Group and I am writing to ask you or your organisation to consider submitting evidence in relation both to the Local Government Election Survey and, in particular, the issue of diversity of elected representatives in local government more generally. We are seeking evidence based on your knowledge, experience and expertise, and would also welcome any examples of best practice that you might be able to provide.

You might wish to consider the following questions in framing your evidence:

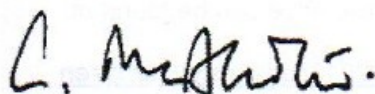
1. Do you think the Local Government Election Survey could be improved in any way? If so, how?
2. What might encourage a higher rate of response to the Local Government Election Survey?
3. In what ways have you used or considered using the survey results in your organisation?
4. What are the main barriers for under represented groups standing for local government?
5. What good examples of programmes or initiatives that promote, support and enhance diversity in terms of representation have you experienced in local government or elsewhere that might be transferable?
6. What initiatives do you think might lead to increased participation by underrepresented groups (particularly women, young people, employed persons, disabled and minority ethnic groups)

The Expert Group will be looking for some case studies to evidence good practice or where improvements could be made in this area. If you or your organisation would be prepared to take part in a more detailed discussion of your evidence or experience please let us know.

We are required to report to the Minister by Christmas. Given the tight time frame it is regrettable that the usual 12 week consultation period is not practical.

I would be grateful if you could submit your evidence to Christine.Ayres@Wales.gsi.gov.uk by **30 September 2013**.

Yours sincerely



Professor Laura McAllister
Chair, Expert Group on Local Government Diversity