



Ein cyf/Our ref: CG/PO/165/2023

6 June 2023

Dear Darren Millar MS,

Thank you for your questions following my Oral Statement on Electoral Reform made in Plenary on 16 May.

You asked that I share data on the increase in registration figures in those local authorities that had Welsh Government funded electoral registration officers. Those figures can be found attached at Annex A.

We can say with certainty that all local authorities that appointed a Welsh Government-funded Electoral Registration Support Officer (ERSO) increased registration among newly enfranchised groups. Data detailed in Annex A supports our stance, with each local authority who was a recipient of grant funding and employed an ERSO reporting an increase in registered newly enfranchised voters.

It should be noted that local authorities who did not employ an ERSO mentioned either problems with recruitment, leaving them unable to employ, or not having the internal capacity to run a recruitment drive for this post as reasons why one was not in place. Some of those local authorities that did not appoint an ERSO also increased registration, although to a lesser extent. Local authorities that appointed an ERSO were very positive about the impact of the increased capacity, with many citing increased ability to engage face to face with target groups at schools or in community groups.

Those Local Authorities who did not receive funding for an ERSO were under no obligation to share data with us, this is reflected with Denbighshire and Newport not submitting data.

You also asked me to share a list of projects which will be recipient of our Democratic Engagement Grant, which I include below.

1. Tenby Town Council (1 year project) will establish a community forum to increase participation in their community on local matters.
2. Llanelli Town Council (1 year project) will produce materials and run sessions in local schools focusing on good citizenship, the role of the Mayor in Llanelli, why we vote and the history of voting and democracy.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

3. Llansteffan and Llanybri Community Council will establish a Youth Forum, encouraging young people to be involved with local issues and have a strong link with the Community Council (YF reps will attend meetings and cover topics of interest).
4. Politics Project, pan-Wales (3 year project) will continue to run their Digital Dialogue Sessions in schools across Wales which have previously been attended by many members of the Senedd.
5. PLANED, west Wales (1 year project) will hold activities centred around connecting young people to elected officials from town and community councils in west Wales.
6. British Deaf Association, pan-Wales (1 year project) will run in-person and digital workshops to their stakeholders on how democracy works to empower Deaf people.
7. Ceredigion Council (1 year project) will be creating content specifically designed to reach out and engage with qualifying foreign nationals in their communities.
8. Vocal Eyes, Swansea (2 year project) will be working with schools within an area of Swansea with the lowest voter turnout, introducing the pupils to how democracy works, and the power they have as individuals when they recognise, they have a voice, and can use it, to bring the changes they want to see take shape.
9. South Wales Central Local Authorities is a joint project run by Cardiff, RCT and Vale of Glamorgan Councils (1 year project) who will be creating digital content on what to expect at a polling station.
10. Innovate Trust, pan-Wales (1 year project) will look to raise democratic awareness, increase voter registration and participation amongst people with learning disabilities in Wales.
11. Boys & Girls Club Wales, pan-Wales (2 year project) will continue to run their Pizza and Politics workshops and Raise your Voice Projects, with an emphasis on those who are marginalised. Including: people from ethnic minority backgrounds, LGBTQ+ young people and disabled young people and those with poor mental health.
12. The Democracy Club, pan-Wales (1 year project) will expand on the organisations 'polling station finder' capabilities to include more accessibility information about the buildings that host polling places (eg. whether the building has a ramp, loop systems, and other facilities on site).

I hope this information is of use to you and I look forward to working with you towards our common goal of increasing democratic participation in Wales.

Yours sincerely,



Mick Antoniw AS/MS

Y Cwnsler Cyffredinol a Gweinidog y Cyfansoddiad
Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution

Annex A

Data relating to registration figures received from Local Authorities for 16–17-year-olds, following May 2022 Local Government Elections in Wales and links with Electoral Registration Support Officers (funded via Welsh Government grant funding of £25,000).

Local Authority	ERSO in place?	16–17 Yr Olds registered 2021 Senedd Elections 2021 (LA Figure)	16–17 Yr Olds registered 2022 Local Elections (LA Figure)	% 16–17 Yr Olds registered 2022 Local elections	% change 16–17-Yr Olds registered to vote
Blaenau Gwent	✓	704	985	69.70%	32.91%
Cardiff	✓	2546	3022	40.97%	18.70%
Carmarthenshire	✓	1425	1883	45.85%	32.14%
Ceredigion	✓	902	1008	69.04%	11.75%
Gwynedd	✓	994	1737	70.55%	74.74%
Neath Port-Talbot	✓	1432	1833	61.74%	28.00%
Powys	✓	963	1738	62.63%	80.48%
Torfaen	✓	888	1103	57.30%	24.21%
Vale Of Glamorgan	✓	2098	2275	76.47%	8.44%
Bridgend	✓	1669	1767	56.10%	5.87%
Conwy	✓	1477	1510	64.83%	2.23%
Isle Of Anglesey	✓	791	1058	74.61%	33.75%
Monmouthshire	✓	968	1314	61.81%	35.74%
Swansea	✓	1425	2501	47.47%	75.51%
Pembrokeshire	✓	1332	1528	57.79%	14.71%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	X	2194	2592	49.74%	18.14%
Caerphilly	X	2185	2072	49.40%	-5.17%
Denbighshire	X	960	Not provided	N/A	N/A
Flintshire	X	2192	2235	65.70%	1.96%
Merthyr Tydfil	X	491	574	44.05%	16.90%
Newport	X	1857	Not provided	N/A	N/A
Wrexham	X	1585	1686	56.44%	6.37%

Registration data has been collected from local authorities for 16/17-year-olds and turnout data collected from local authorities (substituted with figures from Wales Online¹ article in case of Wrexham and Gwynedd).

Local authorities who were recipient of grant funding for an ERSO were required, as per the grant conditions, to submit registration data. As Newport and Denbighshire were not subject to these conditions, they were not obligated to provide us with the requested data.

¹ <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/voter-turnout-every-council-wales-23994360>