# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Survey of Councillors in Wales** |
| **DATE**  | **30 November 2022** |
| **BY** | **Rebecca Evans MS, Minister for Finance and Local Government** |

This Welsh Government is committed to increasing diversity across all aspects of public life. This includes tackling the barriers which prevent individuals’ active participation in local democracy.

In July I provided an update for members about progress made in respect of phase two of our Diversity in Democracy programme. As part of that update, I confirmed the Welsh Government had undertaken a programme of research to find out more about the role and experiences of councillors in Wales at principal and community and town council levels. The findings from these studies will inform the next steps in our ongoing work to tackle the barriers that prevent active participation in local democracy.

The [evaluation of the Diversity in Democracy Programme](https://gov.wales/evaluation-diversity-democracy-0#:~:text=The%20evaluation%20found%20that%20the,and%20awareness%20of%20local%20government.) in 2019 highlighted a lack of understanding among the public about the role of councillors and the important contribution they make on behalf of communities. Building on that evaluation, we have since carried out an [evidence review](https://gov.wales/councillor-remuneration-and-citizen-engagement-councillors-survey-public-attitudes) of how councillor remuneration in Wales compares with other countries, and a [survey of public attitudes](https://gov.wales/councillor-remuneration-and-citizen-engagement-councillors-survey-public-attitudes).

The final element of this research has involved carrying out an online survey of councillors in Wales. More than 1,600 responses were received from principal and community and town councillors, and a wealth of information has been collected on topics such as the perceived influence of councillors, workload, remuneration, and behaviours and attitudes towards councillors. The findings of this survey were published today.

During December I will be hosting a series of events which will bring together the results of this research through a number of workshop discussions. Delegates, including councillors and key partners will have an opportunity to explore the full range of subjects included in the research, discuss key areas of concern, and identify actions to address the issues further, consider key issues arising from the research and identify ways of addressing those issues.

I am aware the areas explored in this research are of wider interest and I want to make sure members are able to help shape the future work programme in this area. I intend to hold a ‘drop in’ session for members to discuss with officials working on the diversity in democracy agenda, the survey results in more detail. The session will also provide members with an opportunity to share information about the challenges faced as elected members and thoughts about how the issues arising from the research might be addressed.

Further information about the ‘drop in’ session will be provided once a date for it to be held has been identified.