Cyngor Tref Trallwng
Welshpool Town Council

Finance & Governance Toolkit

Welshpool Town Council

January 2026

Theme A – Vision, purpose and community planning

A community and town council provides community leadership. In exercising this role it will benefit from having a clear vision for its community, developed in partnership / consultation with all sections of the community. This will inform council plans, budgets and activities to ensure the council best works with and in the interests of the community.

	Statutory obligation

Theme A – Vision, purpose and community planning			
Statement	**In place? (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
The council has a clear vision and plan for its community			
A.1 A vision and purpose statement has been agreed by the council		Having a clear vision and purpose agreed by all members will help your council in achieving for its community.	
A.2 The council has prepared and published a biodiversity plan and reports on the actions taken to improve biodiversity and promote ecosystem resilience every three years.		Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Section 6 Councils have a duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of its functions, and must prepare and publish a plan setting out what it proposes to do and report on the actions taken to improve biodiversity and promote ecosystem resilience every three years. See Introduction to the Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty;	

Theme A – Vision, purpose and community planning			
Statement	**In place? (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
		Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1: Guidance for Section 6 – the Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Frequently Asked Questions; The Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty: reporting guidance; The Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty: reporting requirement frequently asked questions; The Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty: reporting template; and The Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty: example reporting template. Example plans and reports from the first reporting round: Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council; Llanfoist Fawr Community Council	
A.3 The council has completed an annual report on progress in meeting objectives contained in the local well-being plan		Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – Section 40 places a duty on certain community and town councils to take all reasonable steps towards meeting the objectives included in the local well-being plan that has effect in their areas. A community or town council is subject to that duty only if its gross income or expenditure	

Theme A – Vision, purpose and community planning			
Statement	**In place? (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
		was at least £200,000 for each of the three financial years preceding the year in which the local well-being plan is published.	
A.4 The council has prepared an annual report		Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 – Section 52 From April 2022 community and town councils have a duty to prepare and publish a report about the council's priorities, activities and achievements. Statutory guidance has been issued on the duty to prepare and publish an annual report.	

Theme C – Community engagement and partnerships

Community and town councils play an active role in engaging, involving and consulting with their communities. An effective council understands its community's (people and places) needs and desires, and knows the positive difference it is making. Councils should aim to ensure that no one feels disadvantaged, and that all groups within the community are engaged.

A partnership is an agreement to do something together that will benefit all involved, bringing results that could not be achieved by a single partner operating alone and reducing duplication of efforts. Partnership working allows services to be delivered in a joined-up way, such as through shared goals and/or sharing resources.

	Statutory obligation

Theme C – Community engagement and partnerships			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
The council engages with its community			
C.1 The council has an agreed community engagement strategy		A community engagement strategy sets out how the council will understand its community, involve the community in their work and communicate with their electors.	
C.2 The community engagement strategy is reviewed periodically			
C.3 The council complies with the requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011		The council is expected to treat the Welsh language reasonably and proportionately in its dealing with the public. A scheme endorsed by the Welsh Language Commissioner sets out the principle, context and use of the Welsh Language and how it is applied to council activities and in the workplace. Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, Part 4 Chapter 1: Duty to comply with standards – Welsh Language Commissioner – The Welsh Language Measure	
C.4 The council makes provision to translate documents when required			
The council communicates with its partners and community			

Theme C – Community engagement and partnerships			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
C.5 The council has an electronic presence / website		A community or town council must make certain information available electronically as set out in the Local Government (Democracy) Wales Act 2013 section 55 and associated guidance.	
C.6 The council publishes electronically a) Information on how to contact it and, if different, its clerk including— • a telephone number • a postal address • an email address b) information about each of its members, including— • the member's name • how the member may be contacted • the member's party affiliation (if any) • the ward which the member represents (where relevant)		See Welsh Government Statutory Guidance: Access to Information on Community and Town Councils Schedule 4 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 includes changes to the Local Government Act 1972 relating to community council notices e.g. giving notice of meetings and their arrangements and the issuing of a short note within 7 days of council meetings. These should be read in conjunction with section 55 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, which requires community councils to make available electronically certain information and documents (including minutes of meetings).	

Theme C – Community engagement and partnerships			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
• any office of the council held by the member • any committee of the council to which the member belongs c) the minutes of the proceedings of the council's meetings and (in so far as is reasonably practicable) any documents which are referred to in the minutes d) any audited statement of the council's accounts			
C.7 The council has a social media policy published on its website			
C.8 The council has an agreed process for handling complaints which is published on its website		See model complaints handling process available from the Complaints Standards Authority Public Services Ombudsman Wales has legal powers to look into complaints about public	

Theme C – Community engagement and partnerships			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
		services	

Theme C – Community engagements and partnerships – Summary of actions

Summary of actions	By who	By when
•	•	•

Theme D – Business processes

A process is a series of actions or steps taken to achieve a particular end. A well-run and well-managed council will have clearly defined processes in place for key areas of business. These processes give an overall structure for decision-making designed to:

- ensure compliance with legislative requirements;
- deliver consistent outcomes or results; and
- mitigate against risk by ensuring tasks are performed correctly.

Business processes are likely to be key indicators of the strength of financial management and governance arrangements of a community or town council. The following will support your council to reflect on areas where typically a council has established processes in place, and help you determine if you need to introduce new or different processes.

	Statutory obligation

Theme D – Business processes			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
The council operates high standards of accountability and governance in an open and transparent way			
D.1 The council has a set of standing orders to help govern the conduct of meetings, which is published on its website		Councils are subject to arrangements relating to the conduct of meetings and making decisions as set out in the Local Government Act 1972, in particular Schedule 12. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 made amendments to Schedule 12 of the 1972 Act which councils will also need to be aware of, see in particular Schedule 4 to	

Theme D – Business processes			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
		the 2021 Act. In addition, it is strongly recommended that a council has its own standing orders. One Voice Wales and SLCC can provide model standing orders to member councils. Councils **must** have standing orders with respect to contracts for the supply of goods and materials or the execution of works (see Local Government Act 1972, s135).	
D.2 Councillors' declarations of personal and prejudicial interests are recorded in the minutes and published on a separate rolling register on its website		See The Code of Conduct for members of local authorities in Wales: Guidance from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales	
D.3 The council has published a schedule of meetings on its website		Having an annual cycle of council and committee meetings in place to expedite business arrangements supports local democracy and demonstrates transparency and public accountability.	
D.4 The council holds an annual meeting in May		See Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, Part IV, section 23 Note also the duty to hold an annual meeting within 14 days of an ordinary election of community councillors.	

Theme D – Business processes			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
		The chairman should sign a declaration of acceptance of office.	
D.5 The council has clearly defined terms of reference (as appropriate) in place where it discharges functions to standing committees. The terms of reference should be published on the council's website		See Local Government Act 1972 section 101	
D.6 The council publishes all agendas and supporting background papers on its website at least three clear days before the meeting.		See Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, Part IV, section 26	
D.7 Councillors are served with a summons and receive copies of agenda papers and draft minutes at least three clear days before the meeting		See Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, Part IV, section 26	

Theme D – Business processes			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
D.8 Members of the press and public are permitted access to council meetings and are supplied with copies of the agenda papers		See Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and amendments to that Act provided for in Schedule 4 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021	
D.9 The council publishes all council / committee / subcommittee minutes on its website		See Welsh Government Statutory Guidance: Access to Information on Community and Town Councils Schedule 4 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 includes changes to the Local Government Act 1972 relating to community council notices e.g. giving notice of meetings and their arrangements and the issuing of a short note within 7 days of council meetings. These should be read in conjunction with section 55 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, which requires community councils to make available electronically certain information and documents (including minutes of meetings).	
D.10 The council makes and publishes arrangements for multi-location attendance at		See Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 section 47 and chapter 2 of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act	

Theme D – Business processes			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
community and town council meetings		2021: Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils	
D.11 The council has approved scheme of delegations to committees and the clerk and these are published on its website		These must provide clear terms of reference for areas of responsibilities for committees and to facilitate the clerk taking urgent decisions between the cycles of meetings.	
D.12 The council has a documented constitution describing its general governance arrangements		A council constitution sets out the rules governing the council's business and how it operates and enhances local accountability and transparency. An example of a council constitution can be found on Llanelli Rural Council's website.	
D.13 The council produces and approves an annual business plan			
D.14 The council has a freedom of information publication scheme		The council must have documentation in place in order to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Duty to have a publication scheme The Information Commissioner's Office has produced a Freedom of Information self-assessment toolkit	

Theme D – Business processes			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
D.15 The council has a current information and data protection policy, which is published on its website.		The council must comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR). The Information Commissioner's Office has published a guide to Data Protection and a guide to GDPR on its website. The Information Commissioner's Office has a checklist to help comply with data protection responsibilities The Information Commissioner has produced a checklist 'How secure is your personal data?'	
D.16 The council has completed and met the requirements of the Information Commissioner's data protection self-assessment checklist for organisations		A Data protection self-assessment is available on the Information Commissioner's Office website.	
D.17 The council has a current IT Information Security Policy, which has been issued to councillors and staff			

Theme D – Business processes			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
D.18 The council has a suite of privacy notices published on its website, email communications and other forms of client correspondence		Model policies and privacy notices available to members from One Voice Wales and the SLCC.	
D.19 The council has performed a data audit to assess what information it holds			
D.20 The council has a document retention policy published on its website			
D.21 The council periodically purges information which it no longer needs to keep			
D.22 The council keeps information disposal records			
D.23 The council has published an accessibility statement on its website and undertakes periodic reviews to ensure that		See The Public Sector (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 See Understanding accessibility requirements for public sector bodies	

Theme D – Business processes			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
the website remains compliant			
D.24 The council has a business continuity plan to help it continue to function should it encounter loss or damage to property		One Voice Wales can supply a selection of model policies to member councils on a consultancy basis.	
D.25 The council has an emergency plan to help support community resilience and which has been shared with the Emergency Planning Authority			
The council fulfils its duties and responsibilities in regard to health, safety and welfare			
D.26 The council has an extant Health and Safety Policy Statement and associated procedures		Employers must: Provide a safe working environment for employees and all other persons affected by its actions, including contractors and members of the public. Employees must:	

Theme D – Business processes			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
		Act in accordance with the council's Health and Safety policy and supporting procedures and comply with all statutory regulations and Health and Safety legal requirements. See Health and Safety Executive website	
D.27 There is an annual budget in place to meet health and safety requirements			
D.28 The council has documented risk assessments in place and performs regular reviews (at least annually) of all its risk assessments to identify hazards and the adequacy of existing control measures across all activities and service areas			
D.29 The council has developed internal systems to manage the control measures set out in the risk assessments relating to			

Theme D – Business processes			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
council property and activities, and produces an annual action plan which is reviewed and reported to council			
D.30 The council has an accident report book and related investigation procedures			
D.31 The council has a stress management policy			
D.32 The council has a stress risk assessment			
D.33 The council facilitates and controls community events and has an events management plan to consistently regulate event activities safely			
The council understands how to manage its assets and facilities			
D.34 The council maintains a register of its assets		The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, regulation 6, requires the council to keep a record of all assets and liabilities held by the council.	

Theme D – Business processes			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
D.35 The council periodically examines and risk assesses its assets and prepares maintenance / repair plans		Councils need to ensure that their community based assets are safe for use by councillors, officers and the public.	
D.36 The council prepares a business case before entering into the acquisition of large value assets		Councils should ensure that they fully understand the implications and effects of acquiring assets. These may incur ongoing maintenance and running costs and may require the council to borrow money to finance the projects. Welsh Government guidance - Borrowing approvals: guidance for community and town councils	
D.37 The council has adequate insurance cover to protect employees, buildings, other property, cash and members of the public.		Insurance must be in place to cover employees, members of the public, all buildings, contents and events. Insurance documents should be circulated and approved by full council. Certificates of insurance must be displayed in a prominent position at all council premises.	

Theme D – Business processes – Summary of actions

Summary of actions	By who	By when
•	•	•

Theme E – Resources and financial management

Community and town councils are entrusted with management of public funds and assets. All councils should have appropriate financial governance arrangements in place to ensure the security of these resources and to ensure that they achieve economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of those resources.

This theme considers the arrangements the council has put in place to manage its resources and covers both assets held and the council's finances. The questions here will provide confidence that the statutory and non-statutory procedures for good financial management are in place, or highlight areas where the council needs to make improvements.

	Statutory obligation

Theme E – Resources and financial management			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments**
The council has suitable accounting and audit systems			
E.1 The council has a formally appointed responsible financial officer		Local Government Act 1972 section 151 requires the council to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers, the responsible finance officer, has responsibility for administration of those affairs. See chapter 4 of Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide for further guidance.	

Theme E – Resources and financial management			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments**
E.2 The council has a complete and up to date ledger/cashbook		Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 - regulation 6 requires the Council's accounting records to: (a) be sufficient to show and explain a relevant body's transactions and to enable the responsible financial officer to prepare the accounting statements; and (b) contain— (i) entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the body and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments accounts relate; (ii) a record of the assets and liabilities of the body; and (iii) a record of income and expenditure of the body in relation to claims made, or to be made, by it for contribution, grant or subsidy.	
E.3 The council has clearly documented accounting procedures including any segregation of duties and a schedule of key records		The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 require the responsible financial officer to determine the council's accounting control systems and ensure that the accounting control systems are observed. The accounting control systems must include—	

Theme E – Resources and financial management			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments**
		(a) measures to ensure that financial transactions are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately as reasonably possible, measures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud, and the ability to reconstitute any lost records; (b) identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions; (c) procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including bad debts, are not written off except with the approval of the responsible financial officer, or such member of that person's staff as is nominated for this purpose, and that the approval is shown in the accounting record; and (d) measures to ensure that risk is appropriately managed	
E.4 The council has a schedule of its key accounting records		Councils should ensure that they are fully aware of all key accounting records including for example, burial register, cheque books, invoices, payroll records, contracts (including employment contracts)	

Theme E – Resources and financial management			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments**
E.5 There are documented arrangements for transfer of documents on change of responsible financial officer		Councils must ensure that all accounting records including contracts, payroll records, invoices etc are held securely and proper arrangements are in place for the transfer of records on changes in the clerk/responsible financial officer. This is particularly important where the council does not have its own office. The council's copy of the clerk's employment contract should not be retained by the clerk where the council does not have its own office.	
E.6 The council has and monitors a record of its earmarked reserves and balances and ensures that precept is not raised unnecessarily		See Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A practitioners guide (2019 Edition) chapter 22 for guidance	
E.7 There is an agreed timetable for the preparation and approval of the Annual Return/statement of accounts		Preparing and agreeing a timetable for the preparation and approval of the annual return will enable the council to meet the statutory approval date of 30 June each year. Documenting these arrangements also assists in handover of responsibilities between outgoing and incoming responsible financial officers.	
E.8 The approval of the Annual Return is a set		See The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014, regulation 15	

Theme E – Resources and financial management			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments**
agenda item on the council meeting schedule to be approved by 30 June		Members will need to be mindful of the statutory timetable for approving the accounts and where the statutory dates are not met, establish why there is a delay and make arrangements to approve the accounts as soon as possible thereafter. Members must receive the full annual return 3 days before the meeting. The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 requires that the council as a whole approve the accounting statements (contained in the Annual Return)	
E.9 Councillors receive appropriate evidence to support the governance assertions made in the annual governance statement as included in the annual return		Councils should not approve the annual return until they are satisfied that the assertions made in the annual governance statement are supported by sufficient evidence to justify the answers given.	
E.10 The council has a risk register which is reviewed at least annually		See Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A practitioners guide (2019 Edition) chapter 9 for guidance	

Theme E – Resources and financial management			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments**
		The council should have a risk management scheme which highlights every significant risk in terms of the council's activities and makes clear how such risks will be managed. This includes investing in adequate insurance to protect employees, buildings, cash and members of the public.	
E.11 Appointment of the internal auditor and internal audit terms of reference are approved by the council		See Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A practitioners guide (2019 Edition) – chapter 11 and appendix 2	
E.12 The effectiveness of internal audit is reviewed at least once in each year		Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 - regulation 7 requires that the council maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit.	
E.13 Councillors examine the audit pack to be sent to the Auditor General for Wales to confirm the accuracy of the information provided			
E.14 The rights of the public in relation to the accounts are		See Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 – regulation 17	

Theme E – Resources and financial management			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments**
advertised at the appropriate times			
E.15 The council allows inspection of the annual return or statement of accounts and the supporting accounting records and other documents once the statement of accounts has been approved by the council		See Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 – regulation 17	
E.16 Councillors receive a copy of the Auditor General's final audit report and a copy of the Auditor General for Wales' certified annual return		The council should ensure they are aware of the outcome of the statutory audit and any issues identified so that its arrangements can be improved or errors corrected for future years	
E.17 The statement of accounts is published after the annual external audit, together with the auditor's report		See Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 – regulation 18	
The council has suitable financial management and financial assistance processes			
E.18 The council prepares a detailed		The Local Government Finance Act 1992 section 50 requires the council to calculate its budget requirement for the year and	

Theme E – Resources and financial management			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments**
budget each year prior to setting the precept		specifies how the budget requirement is to be calculated See Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A practitioners guide (2019 Edition) – chapter 6	
E.19 The budget and the precept requirement are approved by the council			
E.20 The council receives periodic (monthly/quarterly) reports comparing income and expenditure against the approved budget, and where there are differences between actual and budget figures, the council ensures it receives detailed explanations of the differences		Regular monitoring of income and expenditure can help councils to identify financial issues before they become problems.	
E.21 The council receives and reviews periodic		The bank reconciliation is an important internal control as it provides evidence of the completeness and accuracy of the amounts recorded in the council's	

Theme E – Resources and financial management			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments**
(monthly/quarterly) bank reconciliations		accounting records. Reconciliations should be prepared whenever a bank statement is received and should be reviewed to confirm they have been properly prepared. Reviewers should seek evidence and explanations for reconciling items.	
E.22 Welsh Government consent is obtained before entering into long term borrowing to finance capital expenditure		Councils must obtain Welsh Government consent before entering into long term borrowing arrangements. Welsh Government publishes guidance on applying for borrowing approvals and an application form on its website.	
E.23 Arrangements are in place for internal audit of the council's accounting records and of its system of internal control, and for receipt of the internal audit report prior to the council's approval of the annual return		Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 - regulation 7 requires that the council maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit.	
E.24 Standing orders are in place specifically for the procurement of the supply of goods,		Local Government Act 1972 section 135 requires all councils to make standing orders covering contracts for the supply of	

Theme E – Resources and financial management			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments**
materials, works and services		goods, materials and the execution of works. The standing orders must make provision to secure competition and to regulate the way in which tenders are invited. Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows for small contracts to be exempt and to make an exemption in a particular case. One Voice Wales and SLCC can provide model standing orders to members.	
E.25 The council reviews procurement thresholds in its standing orders and financial regulations to ensure they remain relevant		Model standing orders and financial regulations need to be tailored to fit the needs of the council.	
E.26 Significant items of expenditure and all contracts are reviewed to ensure compliance with the standing orders / financial regulations			
E.27 Exemptions to the standing orders / financial regulations are		Standing orders / financial regulations must be followed as a matter of course, any exceptions are expected to be rare and the	

Theme E – Resources and financial management			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments**
only applied in exceptional circumstances		reasons for departure should be documented / recorded in the minutes of the council.	
E.28 Documented procedures are in place for making payments to third parties and employees		The council should have clearly documented procedures for authorising and making payments. This is required to ensure: • Bank accounts are only opened with consent of the council • Direct debits and standing orders are properly authorised • Appropriate authorisation limits and procedures are in place to ensure that only approved payments are made • Access to council funds is safeguarded in case of departure of members/officers	
E.29 Payments are periodically reviewed to ensure that the appropriate procedures have been followed		Independent review of payments processes is an important control to limit the risk of fraud or other error arising.	
E.30 The establishment and ongoing payments made by bank standing order/direct debit are monitored		Bank standing orders and direct debits result in an ongoing series of payments and the council should ensure that it understands what the payments are for and the current level of payments made.	

Theme E – Resources and financial management			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments**
E.31 There is a documented policy and procedure for the award of grants		Adoption of a policy and specified procedure for the award of grants will help councils to decide between competing requests for support. Councils can set key criteria for eligibility, limits on the assistance that may be awarded and specify evidence required to support applications for funds. It also provides a clear trail from the application to the award of grant.	
E.32 The council calculates annually the maximum sum it is allowed to spend under the section 137 power		The amount councils are permitted to spend is limited to a multiple of registered electors as at January immediately before the start of the financial year. Councils need to ensure that they do not spend more than the allowed sum. The allowable amount is published annually by Welsh Government. Note - Once a council resolves itself an eligible community council for the purposes of the general power of competence, section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 no longer applies to the council. Unlike section 137 there is no financial limitation on what an eligible community council can spend if they are exercising the general power of competence.	

Theme E – Resources and financial management			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments**
		See chapter 1 of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils	
E.33 Before making a decision to award a grant for financial assistance under s137 of the Local Government Act, the council considers if the grant awarded is commensurate with the benefit that will be accrued to the community		Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that the financial assistance awarded is commensurate with the benefit accrued to the community. Where a council has resolved itself to be an eligible community council under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and the general power of competence is intended to be exercised, the conditions under section 137 do not apply. See chapter 1 of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils	
E.34 Before making a decision to award a grant under s137 of the Local Government Act 1972, the council considers if it has a specific power to incur		The miscellaneous power cannot be applied to incur expenditure where there is an existing statutory provision that would allow the expenditure to be incurred. In addition these powers cannot be applied to circumvent a statutory prohibition on the expenditure being incurred.	

Theme E – Resources and financial management			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments**
the expenditure rather than applying the section 137 power, or if there is a statutory prohibition on making such a payment			
E.35 The council keeps a separate account of all section 137 payments		See section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972	
E.36 For eligible community councils, which are therefore able to exercise the general power of competence, the council ensures it acts in accordance with the relevant sections of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and associated guidance.		See Part 2 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and chapter 1 of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils	

Theme E – Resources and financial management – Summary of actions

Summary of actions	By who	By when
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Summary of all actions to be taken as a result of Part 1 – The health check

Summary of key actions	By who	By when
•	•	•

Part 2: The self-assessment

Introduction and how to use

The self-assessment is the **councillor-led** part of the toolkit. The self-assessment consists of six themes, the first five of which are the same as the themes contained in Part 1 – The health check:-

- Vision, purpose and community planning
- Leadership and people
- Community engagement and partnerships
- Business processes
- Resources and financial management
- Evaluating impact

Each theme contains one or more overarching governance statements that reflect the characteristics of effective governance of a community or town council. The **council should consider how it is operating in relation to each of the statements**, and is **supported to reach conclusions by a series of probing questions and examples of evidence** that it may wish to consider.

Each overarching statement is followed by:-

- **Questions to consider -** these will help you and your council understand and reflect on how the council is operating and where there is a need or opportunity to strengthen this area of your work.

- **Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment -** this contains suggestions of things that are likely to already be available to the council, and which may be helpful to you in reaching conclusions on how the council is operating in relation to the overarching statement. These are suggestions only and you should consider reviewing any evidence that you think will help inform your assessment. The completed Part 1 – The health check will also be a key piece of evidence to review as you think through the self-assessment questions.

- **Further information** – this section explains a little more about councils' responsibilities in relation to the theme / overarching statement, and contains sources of additional guidance, support and training to help bring about change or improvements to your working arrangements and processes. Click on any underlined text in the further information column to access additional resources.

- **Commentary** – this is space for your council to summarise its conclusions in relation to the overarching statement and questions.

- **Actions** – this is space for your council to record the actions it will take as a result of the assessment in relation to each overarching statement.

We suggest that the following steps are taken when using this part of the toolkit:-

1) Councillors review the self-assessment and form their own views on how the council is operating in relation to each of the themes and statements.
2) Councillors meet as a task and finish group or working group to compare their thoughts and arrive at an agreed view which can be summarised in the **commentary** box provided under each statement.
3) Based on the conclusions reached in the commentary box, record **actions** that the council proposes to take to develop, or further develop, in that area.
4) The summary of findings and proposed action may then be **discussed and agreed in a full council meeting**.

Your council may decide to complete all of the health check first and then all of the self-assessment, or you may choose to complete a theme in both the health check and the self-assessment in parallel before moving on to the next theme.

There is space at the end of the self-assessment to summarise the key actions to be taken as a result of Part 2 – The self-assessment in one place.

Theme A – Vision, purpose and community planning

A community and town council provides community leadership. In exercising this role it will benefit from having a clear vision for its community, developed in partnership / consultation with all sections of the community. This will inform council plans, budgets and activities to ensure the council best works with and in the interests of the community.

The council has a clear vision and plan for its community
Questions to consider • Does the council have a plan for realising its vision and purpose? • How are you involving the whole community in developing that plan? • How does the council plan take account of its statutory obligations and functions? • How does the council keep its plan under regular review? • How does the council apply its vision when considering planning matters relating to the community?

Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment
 	
• Documented vision, purpose and values statements
• Community planning tools
• Public consultation events and surveys
• Press releases and articles
• Statutory reports as appropriate for example:
  - Annual report on progress in meeting objectives contained in the local well-being plan
  - Published biodiversity plan and report
  - Annual report as required by Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

Further information

Regardless of its size, having a vision and purpose agreed by all members will help your council in achieving for its community. An agreed vision and purpose will provide a clear focus for decision-making on how to utilise the budget and resources available to deliver the outcomes that the people in the community want to see.

Involving the community in developing vision and purpose statements and the business plan ensures that the council can identify and act on the wants and needs of the community it has been elected to serve.

The council's business plan should reflect the agreed vision and purpose, provide an overall framework to focus the council's actions, and create the budget that determines the precept.

The values of the council will guide all aspects of its work and activities in terms of principle and practice. Councils can research the values adopted by other councils, normally displayed on their websites, and One Voice Wales can also supply examples to member councils to assist them in developing their own.

In considering what services to deliver, or what activities to support, councils should also take account of the assessment of local well-being for their area and the objectives contained within the local well-being plan. While only some community and town councils will be under a duty to take reasonable steps towards meeting those objectives, all councils have an important role to play in improving the well-being of their area and in doing so contribute towards improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. Councils may find it helpful to use the five ways of working set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act to guide their planning and decision making – long term, prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement. More detail on the ways of working can be found in Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: the essentials

The council should keep its plan under regular review to ensure it remains up-to-date and relevant.

Relevant statutory obligations

Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Section 52 – From April 2022 community and town councils have a duty to prepare and publish an annual report, as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year, about the council's priorities, activities and achievements. Councils must have regard to guidance about annual reports issued by Welsh Ministers. See Part 3,

Chapter 5 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 - The Act places a duty on certain community and town councils to take all reasonable steps towards meeting the local objectives included in the local well-being plan that has effect in their areas. A community or town council is subject to that duty only if its gross income or expenditure was at least £200,000 for each of the three financial years preceding the year in which the local well-being plan is published. If a community or town council is subject to the duty, it must publish a report annually detailing its progress in meeting the objectives contained in the local well-being plan. Community or town councils which do not meet the criteria for being subject to the duty in section 40(1) of the Act but which still wish to contribute towards meeting the local objectives in the local well-being plan are welcome to do so on a voluntary basis.

Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Section 6. - Councils have a duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions and a council must prepare and publish a plan setting out what it proposes to do and report on the actions taken to improve biodiversity and promote ecosystem resilience every three years. See also: Introduction to the Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty; Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1: Guidance for Section 6 – the Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty Frequently Asked Questions; The Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty: reporting guidance; The Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty: reporting requirement frequently asked questions; The Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty: reporting template; and The Section 6 Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty: example reporting template.

Example plans and reports from the first reporting round - Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council; Llanfoist Fawr Community Council.

Community councils are able to decide whether to prepare one composite annual report covering the reporting duties in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, or to produce three individual reports.

Resources and training

One Voice Wales has guidance on business planning and examples of business plans which are available to members. Researching the work of other councils can also be helpful in supporting the council to develop its own plan.

The Understanding Welsh Places website contains data and geographical information about local areas to help you identify opportunities for your community.

Planning Aid Wales provide planning training and guidance, community engagement tools and techniques including specific place plan support. Shape my town **–** this is a practical toolkit to inspire local people to play a part in shaping their built environment Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: the essentials – sets out the seven well-being goals and the ways of working to go about achieving the goals. Shared Purpose: Shared Future. Statutory guidance on the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – SPSF 4: Collective role (Community councils) – guidance for community and town councils on their role in local well-being plans. Wales Biodiversity Partnership – website for general information about biodiversity and what we can do to help, together with a dedicated section for the section 6 duty.
Commentary
Actions **We will:** •

Theme B – Leadership and people

The council should respect the values of openness and transparency and adhere to, and model, the behaviours and standards set for all councillors as contained in the code of conduct. In leading its community, the council should be committed to enhancing its capability and capacity as is commensurate with its range and scale of operations.

Employees are the principal asset of any council and it is important that they are given the trust and respect to perform their roles to their maximum ability within a safe working environment. Training and development of employees is vitally important as well as having appropriate systems in place to provide adequate reward, recognition, and accountability, within a framework of effective employment policies.

The council provides leadership to its members and staff
Questions to consider • Do all councillors understand their obligations to ensure effective governance of the council? • How do you ensure all members are trained in all aspects of their role? • How do you ensure all members are suitably resourced to carry out their role? • How do members and staff engage with recognised sector representative bodies (i.e. One Voice Wales and SLCC) to share and learn from good practice?
Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment • Vision, purpose and values statements • Declaration of acceptance of office • Standing orders • Code of conduct • Arrangements for discharge of functions • Records of attendance at council meetings • Evidence of councillor training needs analysis and training undertaken

- Training plan
- Membership of One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks

Further information

Responsibilities for effective governance

A formal declaration of acceptance of office must be signed before an individual is able to act as a member of a community or town council. This includes an undertaking to observe the code of conduct adopted by the council. All councillors should adhere to and model appropriate behaviours and standards in line with expectations of those taking up elected office.

Resources and training

The Code of Conduct for members of local authorities in Wales: Guidance from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

Model Code of Conduct

Video –Councillors' Guide to the role of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales – The Members' Code of Conduct

One Voice Wales online training (free to all councillors) The code of conduct for community and town councillors

One Voice Wales training module *'The Councillor'* covers a range of issues relevant to councillors' responsibilities including code of conduct and ethical behaviour. A specific training module on 'Code of conduct' is also available. Contact One Voice Wales for further information.

The good councillor's guide for community and town councillors

Councillor training

A good community council is committed to ongoing training and development, for both councillors and staff. A National Training Strategy is currently under review.

Section 67 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires community and town councils to make and publish a plan about the training provision for its members and staff. The training plan should reflect on, and address whether the council collectively has the skills and knowledge it needs to deliver its plans most effectively. The first training plan must be published by 5 November 2022, six months after the duty comes into force. The training plan must be reviewed no later than three months after an ordinary election of community councillors. Statutory guidance has been published about the duty to make and publish training plans see Chapter 5 of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils

Information on any current bursaries for councillors to undertake relevant training may be found on the One Voice Wales website.

A training plan template is available to One Voice Wales members on request.

Councillor remuneration

The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales is the independent body responsible for determining payments to elected members of community and town councils in Wales. The Panel produces a report every year setting out the type and level of payments that may be made. It is the duty of the proper officer of a council (usually the clerk) to arrange for correct payments to be made to all individuals entitled to receive them.

The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual report and guidance on payments to elected members

Sector bodies

Councils are encouraged to be in membership of One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks. Contact One Voice Wales and SLCC for details. One Voice Wales Area Committees and One Voice Wales and SLCC conferences and training events provide opportunities to learn about developments in other councils as well as share their own good practice. Consideration could also be given to submitting applications for the One Voice Wales annual awards scheme. In the case of 'larger' councils, they should consider taking a full part in the Larger Councils' meetings.

Commentary

Actions **We will:** •

The council carries out its employment duties
Questions to consider • Do all councillors understand their responsibilities as an employer? • Does the council have a human resources/personnel committee to deal with staffing matters? • Do all staff understand their obligations under the national employee code of conduct? • How does the council review whether staff are remunerated appropriately? • How does the council ensure open and fair competition for all vacancies? • What arrangements are in place to enable employees to communicate with their line management and for appraisal? • What processes are in place to resolve both internal disputes / grievances and potential external complaints about council members and staff?
Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment • Evidence of applying current employment law • Evidence of signed contracts and policies which are referenced in contracts of employment and which are fully aligned to the National Pay and Conditions Agreement for Clerks • Pay policy • Job descriptions • Employee Handbook • Appraisal scheme and evidence of appraisals completed • Minutes of full council and HR committee meetings • Financial records recording appropriate deductions from gross pay calculations • Grievance and complaints procedure

Further information

The council must act at all times as a responsible employer and must ensure it complies with employment law. All staff must have a contract of employment incorporating terms and conditions and supported by appropriate employment policies.

The council must approve the remuneration payable to all staff in advance. Councils should consider using an effective benchmarking tool for determining salaries of their employees, ensuring appropriate hours are agreed for each role. In the case of clerks/deputies and assistants the national job evaluation and pay scales would be appropriate.

When councils with several employees wish to change job roles and staffing structures they should be mindful of the processes involved in varying contracts.

It is essential that effective line management arrangements are in place for all employees. In the case of smaller councils, perhaps with a single part-time clerk, consideration should be given to arrangements for the day-to-day routine management of the clerk and a reporting mechanism to the council via a human resources / personnel committee.

It is important that members and officers are trained in the use of employee appraisal and there is a suitable scheme in place which is understood by the council and employees.

The code of conduct for qualifying employees of relevant authorities in Wales sets out the conduct expected of employees of a community council. This sets out as a general principle that the public is entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from employees of a community and town council and notes that in performing their duties they must act with integrity, honesty, impartiality and objectivity. The code of conduct also covers:-

- Accountability
- Political neutrality
- Relations with members, the public and other employees
- Equality
- Stewardship
- Personal interest
- Whistleblowing
- Treatment of information
- Appointment of staff

- Investigations by monitoring officers

Resources and training

Employment policy support is available through One Voice Wales and SLCC, including model terms and conditions of service and model policies.

ACAS has a range of advice, templates and training available on its website to support both employers and employees

The Code of Conduct (Qualifying Local Government Employees) (Wales) Order 2001

The National Agreement on Salaries and Conditions of Service of Local Council Clerks in England and Wales 2004 - This publication covers the salaries and conditions of service of full-time and part-time Clerks and other officers of Town, Parish and Community Councils. The National Agreement can be found on the One Voice Wales website

One Voice Wales have sent a model pay policy to all councils.

One Voice Wales have a training module on 'The Council as an Employer' which covers a range of areas including contracts of employment, role and person specifications, discipline and grievance, and health and safety. A short e-learning module is also available on the One Voice Wales website and is free of charge to all councillors as an introduction to this area.

One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks have jointly produced a guidance document 'Bullying and Harassment in Councils'. This is available to members on request.

Commentary

Actions

We will:

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The council gives its staff the resources and support to carry out their role
Questions to consider • How does the council encourage continuous professional development of its employees? • How does the council ensure all staff are trained in all aspects of their role? • How does the council ensure it provides all necessary facilities and equipment for those working from the office or at home? • Are there appropriate policies and processes in place to manage the health, safety and welfare of the council's employees? How do you ensure these are followed?
Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment • Training policy and plan • Training budget • Dignity at work policy • Member/officer working protocol • Equality and diversity policy • Risk assessments • Evidence of a process of establishing and reviewing individual development plans for all staff • Investment in line management training for clerks who manage other council staff • Investors in people status as appropriate
Further information A successful council supports the development of its employees. Section 67 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires community and town councils to make and publish a plan about the training provision for its members and staff. The training plan should reflect on, and address whether the council collectively has the skills and knowledge it needs to deliver its plans most effectively. The first training plan must be published by 5 November 2022, six months after the duty comes into force. The training plan

must be reviewed no later than three months after an ordinary election of community councillors. Statutory guidance has been published about the duty to make and publish training plans - See Chapter 5 of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils

A training plan template is available to One Voice Wales members on request.

Many of the training requirements for council staff can be sourced from the SLCC - including the CiLCA qualification. Councils are encouraged to provide the necessary funding, including paid time off, for courses and in the case of qualification routes to provide appropriate workload relief to support studies. Further information on courses and any bursary support available can be found on the SLCC website.

Providing staff of the council with the appropriate resources to complete their work is a key consideration in ensuring the successful operation of the council. For example, staff should be provided with council email addresses and access to council computer systems rather than being expected to use their own. Council staff should not use personal email addresses for council communications or save council documents to personal computers for reasons of information security, as well as for ensuring effective continuity if the council employee should leave their role.

Resources and training

One Voice Wales provides a training course on this subject.

SLCC also provide a range of training opportunities – see the SLCC website for latest courses and availability.

Commentary

Actions

We will:

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Theme C – Community engagement and partnerships

Community and town councils play an active role in engaging, involving and consulting with their communities. An effective council understands its community's (people and places) needs and desires, and knows the positive difference it is making. Councils should aim to ensure that no one feels disadvantaged, and that all groups within the community are engaged.

A partnership is an agreement to do something together that will benefit all involved, bringing results that could not be achieved by a single partner operating alone and reducing duplication of efforts. Partnership working allows services to be delivered in a joined-up way, such as through shared goals and/or sharing resources.

The council engages with its community
Questions to consider • Does your council understand the demographic composition of its community? • How does the council involve the whole community in its decision-making processes, and provision of services? • How does the council stay in touch about local "hot topics" that emerge from time to time? • How does your council plan and provide for the diversity of needs within its community? • What methods and tools are used by the council, to involve the community in community planning issues? • How does the council ensure it is reflecting the voice of the community in reviewing planning applications and contributing, where appropriate to the Local Development Plan? • What does the council do to ensure it engages with the people in the community in the language of their choice?
Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment • Community engagement strategy prepared and periodically reviewed • Community surveys • Proactive work with community groups • Involvement in other aspects of community life e.g. school governors, citizens advice etc.

- Social media activity
- Minutes of meetings
- Annual report
- Website
- Newsletters
- Noticeboards
- Community events
- Employment of a community development officer (where appropriate)
- Youth representatives serving on the council

Further information

The council is elected to serve all parts of the community and must ensure it reflects the needs of all the people in its community. Being open and transparent about the work of the council, and its decision-making, is key to engaging the community. A community engagement strategy sets out how the council will understand its community, involve the community in their work and communicate with their electors.

Relevant statutory obligations

Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 – Part 3 Promoting Access to Local Government

The intention of the public participation provisions in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 is to encourage a more diverse range of members of the public to engage with local democracy. Principal councils are required to prepare, consult on, publish and review a 'public participation strategy', with the aim of making it easier for members of the public to understand how local government functions; how it makes decisions; and how local people can follow proceedings, input their views, and have them taken into account. There is no requirement for a community council to make a public participation strategy, though they should consider how they enable public participation to take place.

People presiding over community and town council meetings that are open to the public must give members of the public in attendance reasonable opportunity to make representation about any business being discussed at the meeting, unless this is likely to prejudice the effective conduct of the meeting.

Section 47 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 provides for multi-location attendance at community and town council meetings. The requirement is that a community council must make and publish arrangements for convening meetings, which allows – but not requires – participants to be in multiple locations. See Chapter 2 of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils

Schedule 4 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 also includes provisions relating to community council notices e.g. giving notice of meetings and their arrangements and the issuing of a short note within 7 days of council meetings. These should be read in conjunction with section 55 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, which requires community councils to make available electronically certain information and documents (including minutes of meetings).

Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 – made provision for the appointment of community youth representatives (section 118)

Resources and training

National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales aim to guide behaviour and encourage good quality, consistent engagement activity with service users and the general public. See Third Sector Support Wales Knowledge Hub to view the National Principles and access other supporting information.

Public service geo-spatial agreement provides location data which can support planning and decision-making.

One Voice Wales offers two training modules relating to community engagement - *'Introduction to Community Engagement'* which explores how councils and councillors can improve how they engage with the communities they serve; and *'Community Engagement Part 2'* which covers tools and techniques.

SLCC offer a Community Governance qualification.

Commentary

Actions **We will:** •

The council works with partners to help its community
Questions to consider • How does the council work with partners to help achieve its vision and purpose? • How does the council assess who it could and should work with (including statutory partners)? • Are you working with everyone you could / should be working with? • How has the council ensured it is resourced to develop its partnerships?
Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment • Proactive work with community groups • Involvement in other aspects of community life e.g. school governors, citizens advice etc. • Annual report • Community events • Work with public services board (especially those councils with a duty under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015) • Lead subject representatives appointed • Expertise to serve on advisory committees (co-option of non-councillors) • Charter agreement with the principal authority
Further information Community and town councils can provide services with other bodies, including neighbouring community councils. Partnership working recognises the limitations of what we can do on our own and the opportunities for achieving more by working together. A stakeholder analysis is a simple way of identifying who might have most interest and influence in delivering the council's vision and plan.

This can be a helpful tool in identifying and prioritising potential partners. A by-product of this work is that it might identify opportunities to take forward ambitions that might otherwise have been missed. Having completed a stakeholder analysis, the council will need to consider who it seeks to work with and whether it is suitably resourced to take work forward.

If the council takes the lead in setting up a partnership, it should represent community interest groups and minority interests through either membership or consultation.

Working with the principal council

Building effective relationships between community councils and the principal council for the area can support councils to deliver for the people they serve. Informal and / or formal mechanisms may be established for engagement and partnership working.

A charter agreement is entered into by a principal council and a community council for a community or communities within its area. It is a shared agreement describing the way in which the councils' respective functions will be exercised for the purpose of maintaining and improving co-operation between them.

The Welsh Government strongly encourages all councils to enter into formal charter agreements to underpin the relationship with the county or county borough council for the area. Working together through effective relationships and networks can support both tiers to ensure they are delivering the right outcomes for the people they serve. A charter provides clarity of commitments from both parties and gives validity and recognition to both parties as equal partners.

Resources and training

Case studies on effective engagement with partners are available to One Voice Wales members upon request.

Ensuring Effective Stakeholder Engagement - Guide produced by the Government Communication Service to support engagement with stakeholders, including tools to identify key stakeholders and plan for engagement.

Commentary

Actions **We will:** •

The council communicates with its partners and community
Questions to consider • Are you confident that your communications are accessible to all parts of the community? • How do you encourage feedback and involvement from across the community? • How does your website help you engage and communicate? • How do you use social media to engage with your community?
Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment • Community engagement strategy prepared and periodically reviewed • Community surveys • Appointing council representatives to serve on outside bodies • Social media activity • Minutes of meetings • Annual report • Website • Newsletters • Noticeboards • Community events • Compliments and complaints letters • Public participation sessions on council meeting agendas • Council surgeries
Further information The Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 requires that community and town councils publish certain information electronically. Section 55 of the Act requires councils to publish electronically information about how to contact it and, if different, its

clerk. The information which must be available electronically includes a telephone number, a postal address and an email address. In addition, councils must publish electronically information about its members, including a list of the council's members, each member's name, information about how they may be contacted, party affiliation (if any) and any office held or committee they belong to within the council. If the community concerned is divided into community wards, the ward each member represents must be shown. Councils must also publish electronically the minutes of its meetings and, so far as reasonably practicable, documents referred to at those meetings. They must also publish their annual audited accounts electronically.
It is a decision for each council to take as to whether they will operate their own, independent website, or whether they decide to link up with other councils in their area, or the principal council, or some other body which is happy to host their information. It is, however, a requirement that there is a regularly updated website providing the public with the ability to access the information described above.

A website is such a key means of communicating that people who want to find out about your council will simply assume you have one. A website offers the opportunity to promote, test and share ideas for the future of the community.

Social media is fast and free to use as well as a great way of getting your messages to more people in your community. Social media can help increase accessibility and can help break down barriers for people who might otherwise find it difficult to participate in your council's activities.

Different communication methods will be needed to ensure the council effectively engages with and informs the whole community. Considering how you are communicating, the audience for the different methods of communication, and where there are any gaps, will ensure you are reaching a full range of people within your community.

Resources

Statutory Guidance: Access to Information on Community and Town Councils

Connecting with your local community: A Communications Guide for Welsh Community & Town Councillors and their Clerks.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils – Chapter 3 Participation at meetings

A Communications Toolkit is available to One Voice Wales members upon request.

The Local Government Association has produced a series of guides to support councillors in using social media.
Commentary
Actions **We will:** •

Theme D – Business processes

A process is a series of actions or steps taken to achieve a particular end. A well-run and well-managed council will have clearly defined processes in place for key areas of business. These processes give an overall structure for decision making designed to:

- ensure compliance with legislative requirements;
- deliver consistent outcomes or results; and
- mitigate against risk by ensuring tasks are performed correctly.

Business processes are likely to be key indicators of the strength of financial management and governance arrangements of a community or town council. The following questions will support your council to reflect on areas where typically a council has established processes in place, and help you determine if you need to introduce new or different processes.

The council operates high standards of accountability and governance in an open and transparent way
Questions to consider • What processes are in place to ensure effective and timely decision making and are these processes documented? • How does the council's annual business / service plan inform its budget? • How does the council use committee and sub-committee decision-making arrangements? • What processes are in place to review risk management? • What handover provisions are in place for transfer of information, finances and records when the clerk/responsible financial officer leaves the council?
Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment • Standing orders • All processes reviewed periodically by council / committee to ensure they remain appropriate, with findings recorded • Internal controls documentation • Published timetable of council and committee meetings • Minutes of council meetings record decisions on the need for committees / sub committees and are published in a timely manner

- Usage of standing orders; financial regulations; and risk register
- Terms of reference for committee / sub-committee framework
- Scheme of delegations to support decision making
- Risk register
- Evidence of an easily accessible local complaints process for members of the public, and reference to the role of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales in investigating complaints about public services.

Further information

All community and town councils must conduct their business in an open and transparent way and comply with statutory requirements in relation to decision making.

The council must conduct its business and make decisions through meetings, either of the full council or committees. There are rules governing meetings set out in the Local Government Act 1972, in particular Schedule 12.

Councils are legally required to keep minutes of meetings held and these minutes must be available to the public for inspection. Council meetings must be open to the public and press. They can only be excluded by a council resolution for a particular agenda item where sensitive issues are to be discussed (such as legal, contractual or personnel matters).

Rules for the annual meeting of the council and all other meetings should be contained in the council's standing orders.

The Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 requires that community and town councils publish certain information electronically. Section 55 of the Act requires councils to publish electronically information about how to contact it and, if different, its clerk; information about each of its members; the minutes of its meetings and, so far as reasonably practicable, documents referred to at those meetings; and their annual audited accounts.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 – section 47 makes it easier for meetings to take place through a variety of arrangements, including multi-location meetings where all individuals are attending virtually, and hybrid meetings where a number of individuals are attending in person at a designated location and others are attending virtually from a range of other locations. See Chapter 2 of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils

Schedule 4 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 also includes provisions relating to community council notices e.g. giving notice of meetings and their arrangements and the issuing of a short note within 7 days of council meetings. These should be read in conjunction with section 55 of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013. The electronic publication of documents extends to include making available key information as soon as reasonably practicable, and within seven working days of the

community council meeting taking place, and must include: the names of members who attended; apologies for absence; declarations of interest; any decisions taken and the outcome of any votes. This would not apply to any decisions taken in private, or where disclosure of the information would be contrary to any enactment.

In accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, section 48, people presiding over community and town council meetings that are open to the public must give members of the public in attendance reasonable opportunity to make representation about any business being discussed at the meeting, unless this is likely to prejudice the effective conduct of the meeting.

It can be helpful to put all information about how the council operates; how decisions are made; and the procedures which are followed to ensure that decision making is accountable, open and transparent into a single documented constitution. The primary components of a documented constitution will be the council's standing orders and financial regulations, along with the clerk's scheme of delegated powers, the code of conduct for members, the code of conduct for employees, member / officer protocol, terms of reference for committees etc.

Resources

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils - Chapter 3 Participation at meetings

The good councillor's guide for community and town councillors – Part 3 provides guidance for council meetings

Arnold – Baker on Local Council Administration (12th Edition Dec 2020)

Statutory Guidance: Access to Information on Community and Town Councils

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 - sections 41, 50 and 51 set out how the council should calculate its budget and precept.

Local Government Act 1972 - Section 101 makes provisions for the appointment of committees and the discharge of functions by committees.

Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

Good practice examples of council business plans including community plans are available to One Voice Wales members upon request.

For an example of a documented constitution see Llanelli Rural Council website

Commentary
Actions **We will:** •

The council fulfils its duties and responsibilities in regard to health, safety and welfare

Questions to consider

- How does the council oversee and manage its health and safety arrangements?
- How has the council assessed whether it has the necessary expertise, skills and resources to manage its affairs safely as needed?
- How does the council secure health and safety in its premises and activities?
- Does the council allocate sufficient budgetary resources to meet current Health and Safety legislation in relation to all its activities?
- What systems and checks does the council have in place to manage risk?

Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment

- Health and Safety Management Committee
- Health and Safety Policy Statement
- Health and Safety Procedures
- Risk assessments
- Records of tests
- Annual Health and Safety action plan
- Accident report book and related investigation procedures
- Stress management policy
- Stress risk assessment

Further information

Employers **must**:

Provide a safe working environment for employees and all other persons affected by its actions, including contractors and members of the public.

Employees **must**:

Act in accordance with the council's Health and Safety policy and supporting procedures and comply with all statutory regulations and health and safety legal requirements.

Relevant legislation includes:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992
- The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013

Resources, advice and training

Health & Safety Executive has a range of guidance available on its website

IOSH Managing Safely course – suitable for councillors and clerks

One Voice Wales covers health and safety in its training module *'The council as an employer'*

Commentary

Actions

We will:

-

The council understands how to manage its assets and facilities
Questions to consider • How does the council deliver and review the services it provides to the community? • How does the council record, manage and maintain its existing assets and facilities? • Does the council have a process to identify potential transfer options / consider transfer requests of services and assets from its local authority? • Is there adequate insurance cover in place to safeguard assets and facilities?
Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment • Evidence from surveys, engagement events, contributions from the public to council meetings • Evidence in minutes from budget setting discussions and business planning meetings. • Evidence of operating a charter or protocol with the local authority • Minutes recording assessment of need for new asset or service • Register of assets • Maintenance programme • Land registry documentation / title deeds • Asset transfer policy • Insurance documentation
Further information: Internal controls should be in place to safeguard the assets and investments held by the council from loss or damage and to ensure their proper use within the community. Internal controls should include:

- Maintaining an asset register;
- Regular inspection of fixed assets to ensure they exist, remain in good repair and are being used appropriately;
- Appropriate authorisation for the disposal or scrapping of fixed assets; and
- Maintaining secure boundaries of any land and buildings held by the council and holding all title deeds securely.

Having an asset transfer policy gives a positive message to the community about the council's stance in regard to safeguarding local facilities. A policy confirms the intention to take over the responsibility for the ownership, management and running of assets from the principal council.

Relevant legislation

Local Government Act 1972, sections 124, 126 and 127 – Power to acquire by agreement, to appropriate, and to dispose of land.

Local Government Act 1972, section 135 - requires a council to make standing orders covering contracts for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works

Local Government Act 1972, Section 139 – Power to accept gifts of land.

Local Government Act 1972, Section 133 – Power to provide buildings for public meetings and assemblies

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, Section 19 – Power to provide a wide range or recreational facilities

Resources

Assets and Services Toolkit – contains information, case studies and resources designed to help councils taking on community services and assets.

Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A practitioners guide (2019 Edition) – see part 2 Governance and financial management.

Commentary
Actions We will: •

Theme E – Resources and financial management

Community and town councils are entrusted with management of public funds and assets. All councils should have appropriate financial governance arrangements in place to ensure the security of these resources and to ensure that they achieve economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of those resources.

This theme considers the arrangements the council has put in place to manage its resources and covers both assets held and the council's finances. The questions here will help the council reflect on the overall approach to financial management, and will be best supported by information on this theme contained in the health check to provide confidence that the statutory and non-statutory procedures to support good financial management have been followed.

The council has suitable accounting and audit systems
Accounting Questions to consider • What methods does the council employ to document its accounting systems and controls? • How does the council satisfy itself these meet its needs? • How does the council satisfy itself the accounting systems and controls are operating as intended? • How does the council ensure that accounting records are secured and available to relevant officers? • How does the council take responsibility for completing and approving the Annual Return / statement of accounts in a timely and complete manner? **Audit questions to consider** • How does the council appoint its internal auditor? • How often does the council review its appointment of its auditor? • How does the council ensure that it receives reports from both internal and external audits? • What methods does the council employ to examine and act upon both internal and external audit reports to reflect on and to improve its financial management?

Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment

- Schedule of accounting records maintained by the council
- Documented arrangements for transfer of documents on change of responsible financial officer
- Internal audit terms of reference and audit reports
- Council / committee meetings with the internal auditor, presentations by the internal auditor to the council
- Internal and external audit reports and recommendation tracking
- Standing agenda item at June and September / October meetings to confirm approval and publication of accounts

Further information

Community and town councils have a responsibility to ensure effective governance and management of the public money they have been entrusted with, and that this is used economically, efficiently and effectively. The financial rules, statutes and procedures protect the council and give it the tools to achieve its goals and make best use of public money. All councillors are accountable for the council's finances and should ensure the council has proper arrangements in place.

The law requires that councils submit their annual accounts to the Auditor General for Wales. For most councils the accounts are in the form of an annual return. The Auditor General makes arrangements for the external audit to be undertaken by auditors. The external audit is a check that accounting statements have been properly prepared and the council has complied with its statutory responsibilities in relation to financial management.

The annual return is the principal means by which the council is accountable to its electorate and councils must complete an annual return to confirm that everything is in order. Signed statements confirm responsibility for governance arrangements during the year. In particular they show that:

- the accounts have been properly prepared and approved;
- a system of internal control is in place – including the appointment of a competent and independent internal auditor – and the effectiveness of both the system and the appointment has been reviewed;
- the council has taken reasonable steps to comply with the law;
- the council has assessed all possible risks to public money;
- the accounts have been publicised for general inspection so that electors' rights can be exercised;
- there are no potentially damaging or hidden issues such as an impending claim against the council;
- significant differences in the figures (between the current and the previous year) have been explained.

A smaller relevant body must, no later than 30 June immediately following the end of a financial year – (a) consider the accounting statements by the members meeting as a whole; (b) following that consideration, approve the accounting statements for submission to the auditor by a resolution of the body; (c) following approval, ensure that the accounting statements are signed and dated by the person presiding at the meeting at which that approval was given.

The council should ensure they are aware of the outcome of the statutory audit and any issues identified so that its arrangements can be improved or errors corrected for future years.

Some key legislation to be aware of includes:-

- The Local Government Act 1972 (section 151) requires a community or town council to appoint a responsible financial officer (RFO). It is the role of councillors to ensure that the RFO acts properly.

- The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 (as amended) set out the council's responsibilities for financial management, internal controls and internal audit (Regulations 5, 6 and 7) as well as the required procedures and timetable for signing, approval and publication of accounts (Regulation 15).

Resources and training

Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A practitioners guide (2019 Edition) provides detailed guidance on financial management and governance (Part 2), accounting practices (Part 3 for councils with income and expenditure below £2.5 million and Part 4 for councils with income and expenditure above £2.5 million), as well as checklists for annual internal audit review (Appendix 2) and for financial year end (Appendix 3). The guide also covers the external audit and electors' rights (part 5).

Your council must have its own financial regulations giving details of how the council manages its finances. Model financial regulations are available to members of One Voice Wales and SLCC.

One Voice Wales run a training module 'Local Government Finance'. For more details, including any bursary support that may be available for this training, visit the One Voice Wales website. A basic online e-learning module 'Understanding Local Government Finance' is also available, free to all, on the One Voice Wales website.

SLCC offer relevant qualifications for clerks, including:-

• Financial Introduction to Local Council Administration (FILCA) • Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA) Webinar: Internal Audit Arrangements at Town and Community Councils in Wales – a shared learning event provided by the Good Practice Team at Audit Wales
Commentary
Actions **We will:** •

The council has suitable financial management and financial assistance processes
Financial management questions to consider • How does the council develop and approve its annual budget? • How does the council monitor its budget over the course of the financial year? • What arrangements has the council made for the transparent approval and execution of payments? **Financial Assistance questions to consider:** • How does the council determine which bodies to award financial assistance to? • How does the council monitor the value of financial assistance awarded in each year? • How does the council manage risk and ensure confidence in its financial assistance processes?
Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment - Financial management • Detailed budget prepared which analyses expected receipts and payments, use of reserves etc supporting the total budget requirement to be met by the precept • Reflection by members, individually and jointly • Regular bank reconciliations prepared by responsible financial officer and subject to appropriate review • Regular monitoring of expenditure through year • Precept receipts • Documented internal control procedures **Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment - Financial assistance** • Grants award policy and procedure • Financial support policy and procedure

- Minutes documenting grant awards linked to a grants policy
- Annual report
- Community engagement activity
- Reflection by members, individually and jointly

Further information

Financial Management

The budget is an essential tool for controlling the council's finances. It demonstrates that your council has sufficient income to carry out its activities and policies. The budget must be prepared in advance, as it is used to set the precept for the year. By checking spending against budget plans on a regular basis at council meetings, the council controls its finances and monitors progress towards what it wants to achieve.

The council must have a system of internal control where someone, (other than the responsible financial officer), oversees the arrangements for financial management and checks financial documents selected at random, including procedures for receiving money, making payments and recording financial transactions. This task would usually be undertaken by a councillor or councillors with a good grasp of financial documentation. The level of internal control should be appropriate to your council's expenditure and activity, councils providing a wider range of services will need more comprehensive checks and balances. The findings are reported to the council, and together with regular feedback from the responsible financial officer on the accounts, all councillors will be aware of the council's financial position. This ensures everything is open and above board and you have the information you need.

The council's spending plans may require a level of external borrowing, for example for capital projects. Borrowing by community and town councils is subject to government controls and Welsh Government's approval is required. The Welsh Government may also impose conditions in accordance with which the borrowing may be carried out. The Welsh Government publishes guidance on applying for borrowing approvals and an application form on its website.

Some key legislation to be aware of includes:-

- The Local Government Finance Act 1992 - sections 41, 50 and 51 set out how the council should calculate its budget and precept.

Resources

Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A practitioners Guide (2019 Edition) sets out statutory requirements, proper practice and guidance on budget setting and monitoring at Chapter 6

Financial assistance

Financial assistance by a council occurs when a council agrees to provide grants and / or loans to other bodies. Section 137 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 permits community and town councils to spend on activities for which it has no other specific powers if the council considers that the expenditure is in the interests of, and will bring direct benefit to, the area or any part of it, all or some of its inhabitants, providing that the benefits are commensurate with the expenditure. Community and town councils are also permitted under section 137 (3) to incur expenditure for certain charitable and other purposes, The Welsh Government issues a letter to all community and town councils setting out the maximum expenditure that can be incurred under section 137 (1) and (3) for the relevant financial year. Note - Once a council resolves itself an eligible community council, section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 no longer applies to the council. Unlike section 137 there is no financial limitation on what an eligible community council can spend if they are exercising the general power of competence.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 makes provision for eligible community and town councils to exercise a general power of competence, with the aim of bringing about more effective, capable and innovative local government. The general power will allow eligible councils to act in their communities' best interests, generate efficiencies and secure value for money outcomes. They will also be able to raise money by charging for discretionary services and to trade. See The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils (Chapter 1).

Resources and training

One Voice Wales run a training module 'Local Government Finance'. For more details, including any bursary support that may be available for this training, visit the One Voice Wales website. A basic online e-learning module 'Understanding Local Government Finance' is also available, free to all, on the One Voice Wales website.

SLCC offer relevant qualifications for clerks:-

- Financial Introduction to Local Council Administration (FILCA)

- Certificate in Local Council Administration (CILCA)
- Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA)

Commentary

Actions

We will:

-

Theme F – Evaluating impact

A well-run council does not always equate to a council having a significant impact in the local community. This theme draws upon the outcome of the work generated from previous themes and is an opportunity for the council to assess whether it is delivering the desired benefits for its community. It will provide a natural self-review of whether the council is providing the service expected of it and whether it is doing all it could do.

Considering the questions in this theme will also help you to summarise the council's achievements and determine future council priorities and activities to inform the council's annual report.

The council assesses the benefit to the community of the work it does, to inform future activities and services
Questions to consider • How do you know that what you have achieved for the community has been beneficial and made a difference? • What evidence do you use to understand the impact of the council's work? • Have you considered future changes to the community or legislation (e.g. general power of competence) to explore opportunities for new ways to help your community?
Examples of evidence to review to inform assessment • Previous year's annual report (if available) • Community engagement activity • Reflection by members, individually and jointly • Complaints and compliments

Further information

The questions here will give you, as councillors, the opportunity to collectively consider what the council is achieving for the community. You may already have established means of evaluating the impact of the council's work, or this may be something you decide needs to be worked on. This will help you in preparing the council's annual report as required by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (section 52). The reports will set out the council's priorities, activities and achievements during the year. See also Chapter 4 of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Statutory Guidance for Community and Town Councils

Using evidence to understand what you have achieved for the community, and what could be achieved in future, is vital in making the right decisions going forward. A good understanding of what you are delivering, the significance to the community, effectiveness and value for money will give you the information you need to make good decisions for the community going forward. Conversely, not taking the opportunity to reflect on whether you are delivering what the people in your community need can lead to investment of time and resources in things that may have little impact.

You can use various methods to gather evidence of the benefit your council is having for the community – councillor surgeries, community surveys, community engagement sessions and social media are just some ideas.

Commentary

Actions

We will:

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Summary of key actions to be taken as a result of Part 2 –The self-assessment

Summary of actions	By who	By when
•	•	•

Theme A – Vision, purpose and community planning – Summary of actions

Summary of actions	By who	By when

Theme B – Leadership and people

The council should respect the values of openness and transparency and adhere to, and model, the behaviours and standards set for all councillors as contained in the code of conduct. In leading its community, the council should be committed to enhancing its capability and capacity as is commensurate with its range and scale of operations.

Employees are the principal asset of any council and it is important that they are given the trust and respect to perform their roles to their maximum ability within a safe working environment. Training and development of employees is vitally important as well as having appropriate systems in place to provide adequate reward, recognition and accountability within a framework of effective employment policies.

	Statutory obligation

Theme B – Leadership and people			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
The council provides leadership to its members and staff			
B.1 The council has adopted a code of conduct		The Code of Conduct for members of local authorities in Wales: Guidance from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales The council should formally record in minutes that they have adopted a code of conduct based on the model code of conduct.	To be uploaded to the website
B.2 All councillors have signed a formal declaration of acceptance of office		A formal declaration of acceptance of office must be signed before an individual is able to act as a member of a community and town council.	Completed by every newly elected/co-opted councillor. In new Councillor packs.

Theme B – Leadership and people			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
B.3 All councillors have been provided with a copy of the council's adopted code of conduct			In new councillor packs.
B.4 All councillors have a council email address or a separate email address for council business			Yet to be done.
B.5 All councillors have received training on their role and training needs are regularly reviewed		One Voice Wales, Planning Aid Wales and principal councils provide a range of opportunities for training of members in relation to their roles. The council must develop a training plan and maintain a record of training received. A training plan template is available to One Voice Wales members on request.	
B.6 All payments to councillors are made in line with the levels set out by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales		The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual report and guidance on payments to elected members is available on its website.	
B.7 A statement of payments to councillors is published by 30		Community and town councils must publish a statement of payments detailing all payments made to elected members in the previous municipal year. Nil returns must also be reported. See Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales guidance.	

Theme B – Leadership and people			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
September each year detailing payments made to elected members in the previous municipal year			
The council carries out its employment duties			
B.8 All employees have a written employment contract setting out the terms of their employment		See ACAS – What an employment contract is One Voice Wales and SLCC have model contracts of employment for clerks which are available to members.	V.V
B.9 All employees have an up-to-date job description		One Voice Wales and SLCC can provide guidance to member councils in relation to the preparation of a job description and person specification.	V.V
B.10 Any changes to terms and conditions, including salary increments, are recorded and approved by the council		Councils must ensure that all changes to terms and conditions are properly approved and recorded.	V.V
B.11 All staff have been given a copy of the employee code of conduct		The Code of Conduct (Qualifying Local Government Employees) (Wales) Order 2001	Circulated via email.
B.12 The council has core employment		One Voice Wales and SLCC can provide member councils with a suite of policies and procedures.	

Theme B – Leadership and people			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
policies in place, for example:- • Adoption and Paternity Policy • Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy • Annual Leave Policy • Appraisal Scheme • Bullying and Harassment • Capability Policy • Code of Conduct for Employees • Dignity at Work Policy • Discipline and Grievance Policy and Procedure • Equality and Diversity Policy • Health and Safety at Work Policy • Maternity Leave Policy		The ACAS website also contains a range of model policies and procedures Maternity Policy - • Maternity Policy https://www.welshpooltowncouncil.gov.uk/council/documents/ • Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy - https://www.welshpooltowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Alcohol-drugs-and-substance-misuse-policy.pdf • Annual Leave Policy - To be approved • Appraisal Scheme - To be approved • Bullying and Harassment - https://www.welshpooltowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Bullying-Harassment-and-Discrimination-Policy.pdf • Capability Policy - (Fitness for work) https://www.welshpooltowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Fitness-for-work-policy-2024.pdf • Code of Conduct for Employees- To be completed. • Dignity at Work Policy - https://www.welshpooltowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Dignity-at-work-policy.pdf • Discipline and Grievance Policy and Procedure https://www.welshpooltowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Staff-Grievance-and-disciplinary-policy-2024.pdf • Equality and Diversity Policy	

Theme B – Leadership and people			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
• Member / Officer Relations Protocol • Recruitment Procedure • Shared Parental Leave Policy • Attendance Management Policy • Stress Management Policy • Time off in Lieu Policy • Training Policy • Whistleblowing Policy		https://www.welshpooltowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Equal-Opportunitues-policy.pdf • Health and Safety at Work Policy - Legislation on policy yet to be confirmed by One Voice Wales. • Member / Officer Relations Protocol https://www.welshpooltowncouncil.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Member-Officer-Protocol.pdf • Recruitment Procedure - To be completed • Shared Parental Leave Policy - (Within Maternity Leave Policy) • Attendance Management Policy - to be uploaded • Stress Management Policy - To be approved. • Time off in Lieu Policy - To be approved. • Training Policy/plan - To be completed • Whistleblowing Policy - https://www.welshpooltowncouncil.gov.uk/council/documents/	
B.13 The council is registered as an employer with HMRC		All councils must operate PAYE unless no staff:- • earn above the lower national insurance threshold; **and** • have any other source of income. In practice, this means that very few clerks, even of small councils, will fail to be exempt from PAYE. Other sources of income include income from pensions as well as other employments.	

Theme B – Leadership and people			
Statement	**In place (Yes/No)**	**Further information**	**Comments and actions**
		See GOV.UK PAYE and payroll for employers	
B.14 All overtime payments are paid through the normal payroll process and subject to PAYE		All additions to salary must be subject to PAYE	
B.15 Any additional allowances paid to staff are subject to tax where appropriate		Fixed sum allowances for home working are limited by HMRC. Payments above this amount are taxable and should be taxed through PAYE or entered onto a P11D return. Mileage payments are also subject to tax when they exceed mileage allowances specified by HMRC – currently 45p per mile.	
B.16 The council complies with pensions legislation		See The Pensions Regulator website	
The council gives its staff the resources and support to carry out their role			
B.17 All staff have received appropriate training for their role		The council must develop a training plan and maintain a record of training received. A training plan template is available to One Voice Wales members on request.	
B.18 All staff have council email addresses and access to council IT systems		Council staff should not use personal email addresses for council communications, or save council documents to personal computers, for reasons of information security.	

Theme B – Leadership and people – Summary of actions

Summary of actions	By who	By when
•	•	•