



## Community and Town Councils - Welsh Government Areas for Action

Theme	Immediate Action	Further Consideration
<b>Clarifying the role of the sector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake a campaign to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ confirm important role of sector;</li> <li>○ raise awareness of the work of community council (including in areas which don't have them);</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Encourage community councils to reflect on what is required locally, in terms of the kinds of services they could deliver.</li> <li>• Raise awareness of the benefits of establishing new community and town councils.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alongside raising awareness of the benefits of establishing new community councils, explore other models which could provide a focus for communities in urban areas.</li> <li>• Consider further the usefulness of a 'place based services' distinction, the appetite for change and the pace that it could be sustained</li> <li>• Consider consulting on the merits of retaining 'dual hatted' councillors.</li> </ul>
<b>Increasing democracy and participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use existing powers to ensure Community Reviews are conducted on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Establish better understanding of use of social media by community and town councils to engage their community; and facilitate sharing of good practice.</li> <li>• Undertake a campaign to encourage more people to stand for election.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider and potentially consult on the need for a comprehensive review of community council boundaries, recognising any action in future would require a different legislative vehicle</li> <li>• Consider whether to ensure that elections should be held regardless of whether seats are contested - balancing stimulating the democratic process with cost.</li> <li>• Explore what more can be done to promote diversity amongst councillors.</li> <li>• Allow the lower minimum voting age of 16 years to embed (if it goes ahead) before considering whether to lower the minimum age to stand as a community council candidate to 16 years.</li> <li>• Consider how local engagement and public participation has been affected in England following the introduction of the duty on Parish Councils to hold at least one public meeting per year.</li> </ul>
<b>Building capacity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide access to the general power of competence to eligible community councils (through the Local Government and Elections Bill).</li> <li>• Call on community councils to prepare for the introduction of GPoC by working towards the satisfying the three eligibility criteria.</li> <li>• Support the establishment of joint delivery arrangements</li> <li>• Provide guidance, and share good practice, on different delivery models.</li> <li>• Raise awareness of existing sources of funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore how community councils could be encouraged to consider moving to / expanding service delivery.</li> <li>• Explore widening access to new sources of funding for community and town councils, for example eligibility for grants and (through the general power of competence) the power to trade.</li> <li>• Facilitate a conversation within local government about how services are funded and sustained</li> <li>• Explore scope for sharing back office functions.</li> </ul>



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<p><b>Building capability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify core training for councillors and consider the practicalities of introducing a core package of training.</li> <li>• Continue to provide a bursary scheme for councillors and clerks to undertake training.</li> <li>• Encourage an increase in the number of qualified clerk - as a condition for exercise of GPoC, and through support to undertake training.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the establishment of a “network” of community council clerks in Wales</li> <li>• Consider how desirable, and possible, it is to go towards appointing clerks from a national list (including workforce implications)</li> <li>• Consider options for provision of expert advice and support for the sector, within the context of the wider work supporting improvement in local government</li> <li>• Consider whether, and how, core training for councillors should be made mandatory</li> <li>• Explore with WAO what further support could be provided to smaller community councils to help them fulfil audit requirements.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Improving relationships</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate work to strengthen key relationships between community councils and principal councils.</li> <li>• Add a representative from community and town councils in the area to the list of required ‘invited participants’ on Public Services Boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore what else can be done to facilitate relationship building between both tiers of local government and consider whether there is a need to make structures mandatory</li> <li>• Explore support for councillor and employee relationships, when things go wrong</li> <li>• Consider how the Code of conduct and grievance procedures could be strengthened to address poor behaviour by councillors.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Improving accountability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require community and town councils to publish an annual report</li> <li>• Continue to encourage community councils to follow a cycle of “engage, plan, undertake and report”.</li> <li>• Explore how digital mechanisms to engage, meet and share information are used, and could be used more extensively, by the sector.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the case for legislating to extend the ‘sustainable development principle’ to community and town councils</li> <li>• Consider the case for developing standards and principles for community engagement</li> <li>• Test the recommendation that councillors should not be able to be co-opted for more than one term on a consecutive basis</li> <li>• Explore issuing information about community council’s plans for the year with the precept notifications</li> <li>• Consider whether to legislate for appropriate support and intervention arrangements.</li> </ul>