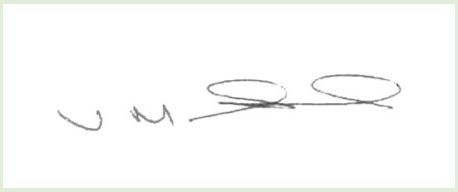
BARRY TOWN COUNCIL
CYNGOR TREF Y BARRI

PURSUANT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE BELOW STATUTORY PROVISIONS, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A MEETING OF THE PLANNING FOR BARRY SUB-COMMITTEE WILL BE HELD ON A HYBRID BASIS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, KING SQUARE, BARRY, CF63 4RW AND REMOTELY ON TUESDAY 10 JUNE 2025 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRANSACTING THE BUSINESS SHOWN IN THE AGENDA SET OUT BELOW.

From 1 May 2021 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 makes provision 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. The Act makes permanent provision for remote meetings (multi-location) and electronic publication of documents

This is a public meeting and any resident of Barry may attend in person or remotely; for remote access details, please contact info@barrytowncouncil.gov.uk Should members of the public wish to address the Committee in relation to any of the planning applications set out below, they will need to raise their hands when the application in question is reached. The Chairperson will then seek the Committee's permission to allow them to address Councillors on the application about to be discussed.

Yours faithfully



Mark Sims
Acting Chief Officer

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for absence**

2. **To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct** (Note: Members seeking advice on this item are asked to contact the Monitoring Office at least 72 hours before the meeting)

3. **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

   (To note)

   Planning Committee members will note that this Act sets out the requirement for a public body to act in a manner which seeks to ensure ***that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.***

   In order to act in that manner, a public body must take account of the following things:

   (a) the importance of balancing short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long term needs, especially where things done to meet short term needs may have detrimental long-term effect;

   (b) the need to take an integrated approach, by considering how—

   i. the body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals;

   ii. the body's well-being objectives impact upon each other or upon other public bodies' objectives, in particular where steps taken by the body may contribute to meeting one objective but may be detrimental to meeting another;

   (c) the importance of involving other persons with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and of ensuring those persons reflect the diversity of the population of the part of Wales in relation to which the body exercises functions;

   (d) how acting in collaboration with any other person (or how different parts of the body acting together) could assist the body to meet its well-being objectives, or assist another body to meet its objectives;

   (e) how deploying resources to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may contribute to meeting the body's well-being objectives, or another body's objectives.

4. **To approve the minutes of the Planning for Barry Sub-Committee's Meeting held on 15 October 2024**

   (Pages 425 - 428)

5. **Election of Chairperson for 2025/26 municipal year**

6. **Election of Vice-Chairperson for 2025/26 municipal year**

7. **To note the Planning for Barry Sub-Committee's Terms of Reference**

(Page 429)

Consultations

8. **To consider Consultations:**

(Pages 430- 487)

a) Proposals to improve the administration and enforcement of Council Tax in Wales
b) Review of Electoral Arrangements of The Vale of Glamorgan

9. **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next Planning for Barry Sub-Committee is scheduled for Tuesday 23 September 2025

Distribution

Electronic notification of summons and front-page Agenda to all Committee members. Email notification of electronic papers to all Barry Town Councillors (22). A full copy of the agenda and papers for this meeting (with the exception of confidential items) will be available at the Town Council Offices and on the Town Council Website – www.barrytowncouncil.gov.uk

This document is available in large print and other formats upon request/Cewch y ddogfen hon mewn pring bras a ffor matiau eraill drwy holi.

From 1 May 2021, the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 sets out a statutory requirement that: As soon as reasonably practicable after a meeting of a community council, and in any event before the end of seven working days beginning with the day on which the meeting is held, the council must publish electronically a note setting out—

(a)the names of the members who attended the meeting, and any apologies for absence;
(b)any declarations of interest;
(c)any decision taken at the meeting, including the outcomes of any votes.

Barry Town Council meets this duty by publishing this information in the form of draft meeting minutes which will be displayed electronically within 7 working days after the meeting. It should be noted that these minutes are DRAFT and not agreed until the next meeting.

BARRY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLANNING FOR BARRY SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2024 AT 6:03PM

PRESENT: Councillor S Thomas (Chair) together with Councillors Ball, and Hennessy

ALSO PRESENT: Greg Smart – Planning Officer
Courtney Parker – Administrator
Councillor N Hodges – Observer
Councillor S Hodges – Observer
Councillor D Clarke – Observer

12. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Davies-Powell.

13. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT**

None Received.

14. **WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015**

RESOLVED: That the Well-being for Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 be received and noted.

15. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING FOR BARRY SUB-COMMITTEE'S MEETING HELD ON 11 JUNE 2024**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Planning for Barry Sub-Committee's meeting held on 11 June 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

16. **TO CONSIDER CONSULTATIONS**

a) Election campaign expenditure limits for political parties at Senedd elections

b) The valuation of houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) for Council Tax

c) Draft Sustainable Investment Principles

d) Implementing the Infrastructure (Wales) Act 2024

e) Charitable non-domestic rates relief for private schools

RESOLVED: That members views / comments on the consultations received are provided to the Planning Officer by 22 November 2024 to then submit a Council response by the appropriate closing dates.

17. **OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL'S ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT**

The Planning Officer provided a report for members to consider reviewing the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Annual Self-Assessment.

RESOLVED: That members views / comments on the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Annual Self-Assessment are provided to the Planning Officer by 22 November 2024 to then submit a Council response by the appropriate closing date.

18. **JOINING THE DESIGN COMMISSION FOR WALES' PLACEMAKING CHARTER**

The Planning Officer provided a report for members to consider joining the Design Commission for Wales' Placemaking Charter established by the National Assembly for Wales and advised that officers and members should undertake training regarding the placemaking charter.

RESOLVED:

1. **That the report on the Placemaking Charter be received and noted.**

2. **That the Planning Officer makes a referral for any training that should be needed to DCFW.**

RECOMMENDATION to the next meeting of Full Council being held on 9 December 2024 that the Design Commission for Wales' Placemaking Charter be adopted.

19. **UPDATE REGARDING PROGRESS OF 'PLANNING CLINIC'**

Councillor Hennessy suggested that the sub-committee reconsider this item at a future meeting following receipt of legal advice on the waiver.

RESOLVED:

1. **That a further update on the Planning Clinc be provided to a future meeting of the sub-committee following receipt of legal advice regarding the 'waiver'.**

2. **RECOMMENDATION to the next meeting of Full Council being held on 9 December 2024 that legal advice be obtained to review the 'waiver'.**

20. **UPDATE REGARDING THE PLACEMAKING PLAN FOR BARRY** The Planning Officer provided a report advising that he and Councillors Iannucci-Williams and S Hodges had attended a meeting with officers from the Vale of Glamorgan Council and two representatives from the appointed consultants. He commented that the meeting was very informative however, some thought is needed on how we can help the Vale of Glamorgan Council to create a document that will have the best impact on the residents of Barry.

Councillor S Hodges added that she also found the meeting very informative and believes it's extremely important that Barry Town Council remain involved.

Councillor Hennessy queried if the Vale of Glamorgan Council would be expecting any financial help from Barry Town Council.

The Planning Officer stated that the Vale of Glamorgan Council are expecting an input from Barry Town Council including raw materials and time however if there were to be any cost implications they would not be very high.

RESOLVED:

1. **Members note the contents of the report.**

2. **That the Planning Officer continue the data gathering assignment from the Vale of Glamorgan Council and forward the questionnaire received to Members.**

21. **UPDATE REGARDING VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL'S REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2021-2036**

Councillor N Hodges commented that Barry Town Council should be proactive in looking for burial space as many local cemetery's are now full.

Councillor Thomas informed the committee that the crematorium has now opened a burial ground therefore would like to insure full interments and interments of cremated remains are kept as affordable as possible long term.

The Planning Officer suggested submitting an application for burial space to the Vale of Glamorgan Council and recommended this gets discussed at the next Full Council meeting.

Councillor Hennessy queried the life expectancy of Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery.

Councillor N Hodges advised that it would take approximately 15 – 18 years before Merthyr Dyfan cemetery would be nearing full and that the Town Council should remain open to the possibility of new burial ground being situated within the ale of Glamorgan.

RECOMMENDATION to the next meeting of Full Council being held on 9 December 2024 that members discuss submitting a request to the Vale of Glamorgan Council to include a provision for future burial space in Barry within the RLDP.

22. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next Planning for Barry Sub-Committee is scheduled for Tuesday 25 February 2025 at 6pm

Meeting closed at 6:21 pm.

Signed……..(Chairperson) Dated……..

PLANNING FOR BARRY SUB-COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

ADVISORY FUNCTIONS

1. To consider all consultations received and facilitate responses

2. To consider any consultation responses provided by One Voice Wales and make comment

3. To be the point of contact for the Placemaking Plan for Barry and report updates regularly to the parent Planning Committee

4. To be the point of contact for updates on the Long-Term Plan for Barry and the Barry Partnership and report updates regularly to the parent Planning Committee

5. To work with partners to produce a Placemaking Plan to inform the Council's future work programme (in particular the Council's Corporate Plan), to be used as a tool for Community Groups when accessing funding streams and to influence S106 monies.

BY WAY OF RECOMMENDATION TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

- To recommend engagement activity and actions to deliver the Placemaking Plan for Barry

- To advise on preparation of consultations responses for the Planning Committee to submit.

PLANNING FOR BARRY SUB- COMMITTEE	**10 JUNE 2025**	**AGENDA ITEM: 8a**

PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE THE ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF COUNCIL TAX IN WALES

Report Author

Mark Sims, Acting Chief Officer

Purpose of Report

To provide members with the opportunity to comment on the consultation on Welsh Government's proposals to improve the administration and enforcement of Council Tax in Wales.

Detailed Information

Welsh Government is currently consulting on proposals to improve the administration and enforcement of Council Tax in Wales. Proposals include:

- changing the law to create a fairer, transparent and more effective enforcement process for unpaid Council Tax
- providing guidance to help councils collect Council Tax debt more fairly and sustainably

There are consultation questions (detailed below).

Question 1 - Please specify if you are responding as a member of the public or on behalf or an organisation.

Question 2 - Which council area do you live in?

Question 3a - Has there ever been a time when you have had difficulty paying Council Tax or fallen behind with your Council Tax payments?

Question 3b - If you answered yes to question 3a. Your local council or Citizens Advice can provide information and advice if you have difficulty paying or have fallen behind with your Council Tax payments. Did you seek help or advice?

Question 4 - The Welsh Government proposes that councils should always issue at least one reminder notice to households each time a Council Tax instalment is missed. Do you agree with this proposal?

Question 5 - The Welsh Government proposes that councils should always issue a final notice for a missed instalment if the household does not pay after receiving at

least one reminder notice. We propose the final notice can only be issued 41 days after the instalment was missed and more than 14 days since the last reminder notice was issued. Do you agree with this proposal?

Question 6 - It is always best for households to keep up with their regular Council Tax instalments to avoid falling into debt, and to contact their council as early as possible, ideally before missing an instalment. However, when an instalment is missed, currently households can become liable for the annual balance of Council Tax if they haven't paid within 7 days, and this is set out in law.

To provide more time for households to recover from missing an instalment and get back on track, the Welsh Government proposes that households should not become liable to pay the remaining annual balance after missing an instalment until 62 days have passed. This includes ensuring 21 days have passed since a final notice has been issued. Do you agree with this proposal?

Question 7 - The Welsh Government proposes that councils can apply to a court for a liability order one day after the remaining annual balance has become due, and the household has not made a payment or contacted the council to arrange an alternative payment plan. In total, this will be a minimum of 63 days after missing the first instalment. Do you agree with this proposal?

Question 8a - The Welsh Government wants to ensure that households having difficulty paying their Council Tax bill have reasonable time to contact the council and seek help. We propose that 63 days is a reasonable period, which provides further time for receiving wages or benefit payments, contact the council and contact a range of other advice agencies. What is your level of agreement with the proposal?

Question 8b - Please explain your reasons for your rating for Question 8a.

Question 9 - All councils in Wales endorse the Council Tax Protocol which outlines best practice and guidance around how to deal with vulnerable customers. In addition to the Council Tax Protocol for Wales, the Welsh Government proposes producing best practice guidance for councils to ensure a fair and consistent approach to collecting Council Tax across Wales. Suggestions about what may be included in the guidance are outlined in this consultation. Do you agree with this proposal?

Question 10 - Do you have any other comments on the proposals?

Question 11 - What, in your opinion, would be the likely effects of the proposals on the Welsh language? We are particularly interested in any likely effects on opportunities to use the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English.

• Do you think that there are opportunities to promote any positive effects?
• Do you think that there are opportunities to mitigate any adverse effects?

Question 12 - In your opinion how could the proposals be formulated or changed so as to:

• have positive effects or more positive effects on using the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English; or

• mitigate any negative effects on using the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

Comments / responses are invited by 23 July 2025 either online or by post to:

Council Tax Policy
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Recommendations:

1. Members are requested to consider the aforementioned information and attached consultation document.

2. That any comments / responses on Welsh Government's proposals to improve the administration and enforcement of Council Tax in Wales are formulated and submitted to the Planning Committee for approval / amendment / submission.

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION, DOCUMENT

Consultation on improving the administration and enforcement of Council Tax in Wales

We want your views on the changes we want to make on how unpaid Council Tax is collected.

First published: 30 April 2025

Last updated: 30 April 2025

Contents

Introduction

The Welsh Government is committed to making Council Tax in Wales fairer and more progressive, and we have achieved several improvements over the decades since the Council Tax system was created in 1993. We have **consulted** (https://www.gov.wales/fairer-council-tax-phase-2) on future Council Tax reforms, including revaluation and redesigning the property tax bands in 2028, to make them fairer for people with less wealth. This plan has been approved by the Senedd through the **Local Government Finance (Wales) Act 2024** (https://business.senedd.wales/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=42241&optionId=0).

As we prepare for those major changes, we are working on improvements to the way Council Tax is collected. This consultation proposes changes to the enforcement framework to help councils manage Council Tax collection in a way that fosters earlier engagement and focusses on earlier intervention to prevent people becoming trapped in harmful cycles of spiralling debt. This includes making the legislative steps in the process clearer, adopting best practice that we know is already happening, and reviewing the amounts households owe at different stages.

The Welsh Government is clear everyone has an obligation to pay Council Tax to help fund local services like schools and social care. Thousands of people are supported to manage Council Tax bills through a range of exemptions, discounts, and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. This scheme is crucial for tackling poverty and supporting low-income households.

This consultation seeks views on proposed changes to improve the administration and enforcement of Council Tax. The consultation applies only to Wales.

Are you struggling to pay Council Tax?

If you are having trouble paying your Council Tax, or you are already in debt with your Council Tax, contact your **local council** (https://www.gov.wales/local-authority-council-tax-contacts) for help. They can check your eligibility for discounts or reductions, discuss payment options, and direct you to other support services.

For free and confidential advice, call Advicelink Cymru on 0808 250 5700 or visit the **Claim what's yours** (https://www.gov.wales/claim-whats-yours-campaign) website to check what other financial support you may be entitled to.

It is always best to reach out for help before you miss a Council Tax instalment.

Background and past improvements

What is Council Tax?

Council Tax is something we all must pay to help fund public services in our own community, like schools and social care, unless you are exempt. It is not a direct charge for each service you use. The amount you pay depends on your property's value, who lives with you, and if you qualify for any discounts or support. This ensures everyone pays their fair share.

What does Council Tax pay for?

As taxpayers, we contribute over £2.8 billion a year towards the £11 billion cost of essential local services in Wales. This funding helps keep schools open, care for our loved ones, and support thriving communities. Council Tax part-funds hundreds of local services, including those provided by councils, police services,

and fire services. **Find out what your Council Tax pays for.** (https://www.gov.wales/find-out-what-your-council-tax-pays)

How we've made Council Tax fairer

The Welsh Government has previously made several improvements to the Council Tax system and these are regularly recognised by key stakeholders. In 2011 the Welsh Government capped the court fees associated with liability orders at a maximum of £70, and in 2013 we delivered a nationalised Council Tax Reduction Scheme for low-income households, which has been maintained and uprated every year since to keep pace with the cost of living.

In 2018 in partnership with local government, we focussed our efforts on assisting vulnerable groups by exempting young care leavers from paying Council Tax until age 25 and standardising the exemption that is available for people with a severe mental impairment. In 2019 the Welsh Government ended the threat of imprisonment for non-payment of Council Tax and published a **Protocol** (https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-protocol), raising collection standards across Wales.

To tackle the root causes of an unfair tax system which currently places a higher burden relatively on those with lower wealth, in 2024 the Senedd approved the **Local Government Finance (Wales) Act 2024** (https://www.gov.wales/local-government-finance-wales-act-2024). This Act paves the way for a revaluation of properties for Council Tax purposes in 2028 to create a fairer design of Council Tax , and then to ensure the system tracks economic conditions and is updated every five years. From April 2025 we have made further improvements to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, enabling local councils to use Universal Credit data to automate applications for Council Tax support. We launched an experimental **Debt Rescue Scheme** (https://www.gov.wales/pilot-council-tax-debt-rescue-scheme) pilot in Merthyr Tydfil, Blaenau Gwent and Newport to test new ways of supporting people to clear their Council Tax arrears in partnership with

credit unions.

The Welsh Government has also focussed tirelessly on awareness campaigns urging people to **claim the support they're entitled to** (https://www.gov.wales/claim-whats-yours-campaign), and we have continued to support the provision of free, quality assured advice services through our Single Advice Fund.

Council Tax bills

In April each year, councils issue households with a Council Tax bill, this is sometimes called a Council Tax demand notice. The Council Tax bill sets out:

- how much a household must pay for the year
- how that amount has been calculated
- the dates on which payments are due

The bill is usually divided into 10 or 12 monthly payments, or it can be paid in one lump sum at the start of the year.

Ways to pay

Households can usually pay Council Tax online or by direct debit. Households can also use 'Paypoint,' 'Payzone' or 'Quickcards' for cash payments at post offices, banks, newsagents, and convenience stores. The Council Tax bill provides details of other payment methods available.

If you miss a Council Tax payment

As much as possible, households must plan and prioritise budgets as best they

can to pay their Council Tax because it is a tax obligation. **Budgeting help is available** (https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/everyday-money/budgeting/budget-planner). But households can fall behind with Council Tax payments for many reasons, if they are on a low income, they may have difficulties managing money and budgeting to meet the cost of living. A sudden or temporary change in a household's circumstances such as becoming unemployed or an illness may also cause payment difficulties.

The council can take action to recover any debts owed if a household falls behind with their payments.

Households should contact their council as soon as possible if they have any difficulties paying their Council Tax bill, and ideally before missing a payment. Councils want to help and can provide advice and support tailored to a household's circumstances. This could include:

- checking if the household is entitled to a Council Tax reduction, discount or exemption
- changing the payment date if this would make keeping up with payments easier,
- switching to 12 instead of 10 payments per year
- offering an alternative payment plan, which can include planning over a timeframe longer than one financial year, subject to next year's tax bill
- directing the household to check if they are entitled to any benefits, signposting to the council's in-house money advice team, or to other advice agencies like Citizens Advice for help

Current process for issuing a reminder notice

Councils can use various methods like texts, emails, or calls to remind households that they have missed a payment before sending a formal reminder notice. A reminder notice is sent either by letter to the address or sometimes by

email if the household is signed up for e-billing.

If a payment is missed, the council sends a reminder notice. The law currently states that the household then has 7 days to pay the missed amount before losing the right to pay in instalments. If they pay within 7 days, they can continue paying their annual balance in instalments.

If they do not pay within 7 days, the law currently states that they must pay all the Council Tax owed for the year (the remaining annual balance) after another 7 days. If this full amount is not paid, the council can issue a court summons letter and apply to a court to recover the outstanding Council Tax plus any fees and court costs. If the balance is not paid before the court date, the council can ask the court for a liability order which enables the council to move into recovery action.

In addition, the law also states that councils only need to send reminder notices for the first two missed payments in a financial year (April 1 to March 31). If a household misses a third payment, they must pay the remaining annual balance within 1 day.

Current process for issuing a final notice

Councils do not have to send a final notice if they have already sent a reminder for a missed payment, and it has not been paid. A final notice, asks for the amount owed to be paid within 7 days.

If the amount owed is not paid the council can issue a summons and apply to a court to recover the outstanding Council Tax plus any fees and court costs. If the balance is not paid before the court date, the council can ask the court for a liability order.

Many councils in Wales send final notices for Council Tax and we consider this

to be a positive approach, because it helps ensure clear communication between councils and households. It fits with what households would usually expect after a reminder notice has been issued, as final notices are a standard feature of managing other household bills. While Council Tax is a tax liability not a household bill (and this difference is important), final notices provide a clear and fair warning before further action is taken. Clearer steps can help councils support households to stay on top of their obligations while maintaining trust and accountability.

What is a liability order?

If a taxpayer does not pay the amount of Council Tax they owe after receiving a reminder or final notice, the council can issue a summons notice for the remaining annual balance. The summons notice will state how much Council Tax is owed and the added costs (up to a maximum of £70 in Wales) and will request the taxpayer to attend the magistrates' court on a specified date.

A taxpayer does not have to attend the magistrates' court, but if no payment is made before or on the hearing date, the council will ask the court to issue a liability order. This document allows the council to take enforcement action to recover the money owed.

Once a liability order has been issued to the council, the taxpayer can still pay the full amount or agree on a repayment plan with the council. The liability order enables the council to use various recovery methods, such as:

- sending enforcement agents (bailiffs) to take items from the property
- arranging for the taxpayer's employer to deduct a fixed percentage from their pay (attachment of earnings)
- arranging for the Department for Work and Pensions to deduct money from benefit payments
- securing the debt against the property (Charging Order)

- applying to have the taxpayer declared bankrupt if they owe more than £5,000

The current process allows taxpayers 7 days after receiving a reminder notice to seek advice and engage with their council if they are having difficulty paying. If the taxpayer does not engage with the council within this period, they can become liable for the outstanding annual balance within a further 7 days.

Council Tax Protocol for Wales

The Council Tax Protocol for Wales (https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-protocol) ("the Protocol") was launched in 2019 and all councils in Wales have committed to following the standards it sets out. This was a major step in changing Council Tax enforcement encouraging councils, enforcement agencies, and advice agencies to work closely together. It provides guidelines for strengthening these partnerships.

A key requirement of the Protocol is that councils offer effective support to households in managing their Council Tax and provide help if they fall into debt. The goal is to prevent debt problems from getting worse by encouraging early engagement and ensuring that any action taken is fair and consistent.

In November 2023, all council leaders in Wales committed to using only accredited firms to collect Council Tax, making Wales the first nation in the UK to do so. This ensures that enforcement agencies and their bailiffs follow the standards set by the Enforcement Conduct Board.

The case for change

Council Tax arrears are a common debt issue for households in Wales, often alongside other debts, leading to serious financial problems. Falling behind on Council Tax can result in a court summons, liability order, or visits from enforcement agents. Research shows that the Council Tax collection framework can make it hard for households to escape debt because it escalates to a larger amount relatively quickly, often prolonging the problem. The impact of debt on individuals and families can be negative and long-lasting.

Research from a range of organisations including **Citizens Advice** (https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/policy/publications/dyledus-profiadau-o-ol-ddyledion-treth-gyngor-yng-nghymru-indebted-experiences-of-council-tax-arrears-in-wales/), **Step Change** (https://www.stepchange.org/policy-and-research/council-tax-debt-collection.aspx), the **Money and Mental Health Policy Institute** (https://www.moneyandmentalhealth.org/publications/in-the-public-interest/), the **Money Advice Trust and the Centre for Social Justice** (https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/library/still-collecting-dust), and others, estimates:

- that across England and Wales, proportionately more people who seek advice for Council Tax debt are women, single parents, renters, people living with mental health conditions, and households living on a negative budget
- many households falling behind with Council Tax payments are also in debt with other bills, such as energy bills and housing costs
- the reasons why people fall into debt can be complex and multifaceted
- that there are examples of excellent practice within councils to build upon, including clear local policies and procedures for helping vulnerable people

There are also calls to align the Council Tax collection framework with features of consumer credit, personal finance or utilities, and in particular to remove the annual balance for Council Tax becoming due at some point in the financial

year. We have considered how tax systems differ from finance and utilities.

Council Tax becomes liable from the start of each financial year with taxpayers opting-in to paying by instalment to clear the account by the end of the financial year, so that councils can afford to run services. Councils must balance a budget (income and expenditure) within the same financial year and these features are set out in primary legislation, the Local Government Finance Act 1992. Financial institutions and utility companies are not restricted by these characteristics or fixed periods.

The alternatives to removing the annual liability for Council Tax being due at some point in the collection process would mean that under current legislation, each council would need to calculate the amount owed on a daily basis and decide when to apply for a liability order to recover the amount up to that day. This leaves recovery of the rest of the year ambiguous, or in practice enforcement action could not begin until after the end of the financial year. This potentially results in no consistency or structure to the enforcement framework at all and introduces instability to council finances. Alternatively, we considered whether each of the 10 or 12 instalments should be enforced individually, but this would add significant additional administration to the system and add up to £70 court costs to the taxpayer each time, worsening their arrears position. We do not consider these options as beneficial improvements to Council Tax collection.

Reprofiling instalments for the rest of the year when a payment is missed is a tool councils already have to help people get back on track before moving into enforcement action and we consider this to be good practice, which is discussed further in this consultation.

Policy proposals

We propose changing the law to create a fairer, transparent and more effective enforcement process for unpaid Council Tax and providing guidance to help councils collect Council Tax debt more fairly and sustainably. Focussing on clearer steps, earlier intervention and encouraging people to reach out for help before they miss payments.

We have balanced the proposed changes to the framework with operational complexity and minimising the risk of tax avoidance. We have ensured the proposals in this consultation fit the characteristics of tax systems, which are distinctly different to frameworks for consumer credit or personal finance. Taxes are liable at the start of a financial year, and need to be collected within fixed periods to ensure councils can run essential services like schools and social care.

Further to this consultation, we are interested in working with partners, advice services and local councils to test new ideas or ways of working. For some ideas, it is important we fully test the effects at smaller scale before making decisions, to ensure beneficial outcomes can be demonstrated which minimise the risk of unintended consequences to the stability of the local tax system.

Proposed change for reminder notices

Councils can use various methods like texts, emails, or calls to remind households that a payment has been missed before sending a formal reminder notice. We want this to continue.

We propose that councils should always send a reminder notice when a Council Tax instalment is missed. The timing of the reminder notice will be up to the council.

The reminder notice should provide details of the amount that is owed on the day it is issued. It will not specify a deadline for payment, allowing councils to send multiple reminder notices which provide advice on how to pay or encourage households to contact the council for help or arrange alternative payment plans.

Additionally, if a payment is missed for a third time in a financial year, it should be treated the same as the first and second missed payments, and the household will always receive a reminder notice.

Proposed change for final notices

To ensure fairness, households should always receive a final notice and have enough time to engage before the council can apply to a court for a liability order. Sending final notices is considered good practice that adds consistency and transparency to the process, as people often expect this kind of notice, given it's a standard step in managing many types of household bills.

We propose that councils must issue a final notice, but only after sending at least one reminder notice. The final notice should not be sent less than 14 days after the last reminder notice to give households enough time to pay or contact the council to make alternative payment arrangements.

We propose that a final notice should not be issued less than 41 days after the missed payment. It will inform the household that they have 21 days to pay the outstanding amount. If not paid, the unpaid annual balance will be due the day after this period ends.

Councils can apply to a court for a liability order one day after the unpaid annual balance becomes due. This approach prevents a council applying for multiple liability orders for each missed instalment, reducing costs for households and administrative work for councils.

This period allows households to seek help and engage with their council, balancing debtor protection and Council Tax collection. During this time, councils should engage with households to offer alternative payment plans, check for eligibility for reductions or discounts, and direct them to advice agencies. More information on this is set out later in this consultation.

The proposed measures for reminder and final notices will give households at least 63 days from the date a payment is missed to when the council can apply for a liability order for the unpaid annual balance. This means a household could miss three instalments before the council can take action to recover the debt if the household has not engaged with the council. The timeframe broadly aligns with the 60-day **breathing space scheme** (https://www.gov.uk/options-for-dealing-with-your-debts/breathing-space).

Proposed best practice guidance for the administration and collection of Council Tax

Effective engagement between councils and households is key to the fair recovery of unpaid Council Tax. We want to encourage people to come forward and engage with their council at the earliest sign they may struggle to pay. Earlier intervention, especially before a missed payment, means there are more actions available that councils can take to help.

Councils in Wales already use the **Council Tax Protocol** (https://www.gov.wales/council-tax-protocol) as a guide to support struggling households. This protocol strengthens partnerships between councils and enforcement agents and provides guidelines for supporting vulnerable households. As the Protocol is a multi-agency political agreement, it is not appropriate for it to be a statutory requirement.

The Welsh Government proposes introducing best practice guidance alongside the Protocol to ensure a fair and consistent approach to collecting Council Tax

across Wales. This will help councils collect taxes reasonably, consider engagement and offer alternative payment plans or other assistance to those struggling to pay. We envisage the guidance will include:

- Advice on engaging with households when an instalment has been missed, when and how to signpost to broader debt advice.
- Clear next steps set out in reminders and final notices.
- When to check eligibility for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, discounts and disregards, and what tools or data to use.
- Best practice for offering and agreeing to reprofile payments, or alternative payment plans, and any other payment help including changing payment dates, moving to 12 monthly instalments.
- Making clear that councils can have the confidence to offer payment plans which extend past the end of the financial year on a case-by-case basis, and a recognition that allowing some people to repay what they owe in manageable chunks may be more favourable than continuing to enforce the whole amount.
- Highlighting best practice examples that have led to positive outcomes.
- Information to explain legislative changes.

We also acknowledge the success of some of these actions is dependent on taxpayer's own engagement and circumstances.

The Welsh Government will work with councils to design and develop this guidance in more detail, and it will operate under section 60 of the Government of Wales Act 2006. As the guidance will be coproduced, we do not envisage it will significantly increase the administrative burden on councils overall or undermine the legislative framework. The idea is that resource shifted to preventative actions earlier in the collection process would lead to resource and cost savings of the more expensive types of recovery action later in the process. The goal is to embed best practices to support households struggling to pay their Council Tax, and these can be added to over time.

Following the outcome of this consultation, the legislative process will include a detailed Regulatory Impact Assessment of the costs and benefits.

Consultation questions

Question 1

Please specify if you are responding as a member of the public or on behalf or an organisation.

Question 2

Which council area do you live in?

Question 3a

Has there ever been a time when you have had difficulty paying Council Tax or fallen behind with your Council Tax payments?

Question 3b

If you answered yes to question 3a.Your local council or Citizens Advice can provide information and advice if you have difficulty paying or have fallen behind with your Council Tax payments. Did you seek help or advice?

Question 4

The Welsh Government proposes that councils should always issue at least one reminder notice to households each time a Council Tax instalment is missed.

Do you agree with this proposal?

Question 5

The Welsh Government proposes that councils should always issue a final notice for a missed instalment if the household does not pay after receiving at least one reminder notice. We propose the final notice can only be issued 41 days after the instalment was missed and more than 14 days since the last reminder notice was issued.

Do you agree with this proposal?

Question 6

It is always best for households to keep up with their regular Council Tax instalments to avoid falling into debt, and to contact their council as early as possible, ideally before missing an instalment. However, when an instalment is missed, currently households can become liable for the annual balance of Council Tax if they haven’t paid within 7 days, and this is set out in law.

To provide more time for households to recover from missing an instalment and get back on track, the Welsh Government proposes that households should not become liable to pay the remaining annual balance after missing an instalment until 62 days have passed. This includes ensuring 21 days have passed since a final notice has been issued.

Do you agree with this proposal?

Question 7

The Welsh Government proposes that councils can apply to a court for a liability order one day after the remaining annual balance has become due, and the household has not made a payment or contacted the council to arrange an alternative payment plan. In total, this will be a minimum of 63 days after missing the first instalment.

Do you agree with this proposal?

Question 8a

The Welsh Government wants to ensure that households having difficulty paying their Council Tax bill have reasonable time to contact the council and seek help. We propose that 63 days is a reasonable period, which provides further time for receiving wages or benefit payments, contact the council and contact a range of other advice agencies.

What is your level of agreement with the proposal?

Question 8b

Please explain your reasons for your rating for Question 8a.

Question 9

All councils in Wales endorse the **Council Tax Protocol** (https://www.gov.wales/

council-tax-protocol) which outlines best practice and guidance around how to deal with vulnerable customers.

In addition to the Council Tax Protocol for Wales, the Welsh Government proposes producing best practice guidance for councils to ensure a fair and consistent approach to collecting Council Tax across Wales. Suggestions about what may be included in the guidance are outlined in this consultation.

Do you agree with this proposal?

Question 10

Do you have any other comments on the proposals?

Question 11

What, in your opinion, would be the likely effects of the proposals on the Welsh language? We are particularly interested in any likely effects on opportunities to use the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English.

- Do you think that there are opportunities to promote any positive effects?
- Do you think that there are opportunities to mitigate any adverse effects?

Question 12

In your opinion how could the proposals be formulated or changed so as to:

- have positive effects or more positive effects on using the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English; or

- mitigate any negative effects on using the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

Next steps

The consultation is open for a 12-week period until 23 July 2025. Consultation responses help the Welsh Government to clarify policy proposals and inform amendments to the legal framework.

How to respond

Submit your comments by 23 July 2025, in any of the following ways:

- complete our **online form** (https://www.gov.wales/node/67852/respond-online)
- download, complete our **response form** (https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2025-04/wg51763-consultation-response-form.docx) and email **CTandNDR.Consultations@gov.wales** (mailto:CTandNDR.Consultations@gov.wales)
- download, complete our **response form** (https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2025-04/wg51763-consultation-response-form.docx) and post to:

Council Tax Policy
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Your rights

Under the data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data held about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be ‘erased’
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please **tell us** (https://www.gov.wales/improving-administration-and-enforcement-council-tax-wales).

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the UK GDPR, please contact:

Data Protection Officer

Data Protection Officer
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Email: **Data.ProtectionOfficer@gov.wales**
(mailto:Data.ProtectionOfficer@gov.wales)

Information Commissioner's Office

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 01625 545 745 or 0303 123 1113

Website: **ico.org.uk** (https://ico.org.uk/)

UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The Welsh Government will be data controller for any personal data you provide as part of your response to the consultation. The Welsh Ministers have statutory powers they will rely on to process this personal data which will enable them to make informed decisions about how they exercise their public functions. Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about or planning future consultations. Where the Welsh Government undertakes further analysis of consultation responses, this work may be commissioned to be carried out by an accredited third party (e.g. a research organisation or a consultancy company). Any such work will only be undertaken under contract. The Welsh Government's standard terms and conditions for such contracts set out strict requirements for the processing and safekeeping of personal data.

In order to show that the consultation was carried out properly, the Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part

of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then redact them before publishing.

You should also be aware of our responsibilities under Freedom of Information legislation. If your details are published as part of the consultation response, these published reports will be retained indefinitely. Any of your data held otherwise by the Welsh Government will be kept for no more than 3 years.

Further information and related documents

Number: WG51763

You can view this document in **alternative languages.** (https://gov.wales/alternative-languages) If you need it in a different format, please **contact us** (https://gov.wales/contact-welsh-government).

PLANNING FOR BARRY SUB- COMMITTEE	**10 JUNE 2025**	**AGENDA ITEM: 8b**

REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN

Report Author

Mark Sims, Acting Chief Officer

Purpose of Report

To provide members with the opportunity to comment on the consultation on the review of electoral arrangements of the □ale of Glamorgan.

Detailed Information

The Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru is required to carry out periodic reviews of the electoral arrangements of principal areas in Wales at least once every 12 years. These reviews are described in this consultation document as “electoral reviews”. The way the Commission conducts an electoral review is defined by legislation and may be guided by directions issued by Welsh Ministers.

The consultation document sets out the Commission’s procedure and methodology and council size policy for the programme of electoral reviews which must be carried out during the 12-year period that started on 30 September 2023.

The purpose of an electoral review is to consider whether changes should be made to the electoral arrangements of the principal area. At the outcome of the review, the Commission will recommend changes which it considers appropriate to those electoral arrangements (or will recommend that no changes are made). The Commission’s recommendations are made to the Welsh Ministers, who then decide whether to implement changes recommended by the Commission (with or without modifications).

In this context, the “electoral arrangements” of a principal area are defined in Section 29 (9) of the 2013 Act as:

(a) the number of members of the council for the principal area;

(b) the number, type and boundaries of the electoral wards into which the principal area is for the time being divided for the purpose for the election of members;

(c) the number of members to be elected for any electoral ward in the principal area; and

(d) the name of any electoral ward.

The 6-week consultation period begins on the 5 June 2025 and closes on 16 July 2025 and any representations should be sent via email to consultation@dbcc.gov.wales or by post to:

Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru
4th Floor
Welsh Government Building
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Recommendations:

1. Members are requested to consider the aforementioned information and attached consultation document.

2. That any comments / responses on the Commission's procedure and methodology are formulated and submitted to the Planning Committee for approval / amendment / submission.

DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION CYMRU

ELECTORAL REVIEWS: POLICY AND PRACTICE 2025

Comisiwn Democratiaeth a Ffiniau Cymru

Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru

FOREWORD

The Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru etc. Act 2013 ("the 2013 Act") requires the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru ("the Commission") to review the electoral arrangements for each principal area in Wales at least once every 12 years.

Before carrying out a review of the electoral arrangements for a principal area (which the Commission describes as an "electoral review"), the Commission is required to consult certain specified bodies (known as "mandatory consultees") on its intended procedure and methodology for the review, and in particular on how it proposes to determine the appropriate number of members for any principal council in the principal area or areas under review. The Commission consulted on its Policy and Practice document from February 11 2025 to March 24 2025 and received responses from principal councils across Wales. After considering the responses the Commission has updated its document and has produced this final version.

This document sets out the Commission's procedure and methodology and council size policy for the programme of electoral reviews which must be carried out during the 12-year period which started on 30 September 2023. The reviews will start in May 2025, and thus the Commission refers to this cycle of reviews as the "2025 programme".

Beverley Smith
Chair

The Commission welcomes correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh or English.
This document is available in Welsh

Background

1 The Commission is required to carry out periodic reviews of the electoral arrangements of principal areas in Wales. These reviews are described in this document as "electoral reviews". The way the Commission conducts an electoral review is defined by legislation and may be guided by directions issued by Welsh Ministers.

2 This document sets out the Commission's procedure and methodology and council size policy for the programme of electoral reviews which must be carried out during the 12-year period which started on 30 September 2023 (and which is known as the "2025 programme").

Statutory Requirements

The Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru etc. Act 2013

3 The 2013 Act requires the Commission to review the electoral arrangements of principal councils in Wales. The 2013 Act has recently been amended (and given its new name) by the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act 2024 .

4 Section 21(3) of the 2013 Act provides that the Commission in carrying out its duties must seek to ensure effective and convenient local government. This is the paramount and primary function of the Commission.

5 Section 29 of the 2013 Act lays upon the Commission the duty to review the electoral arrangements for each principal area at least once in every 12-year review period.

6 The purpose of an electoral review is to consider whether changes should be made to the electoral arrangements of the principal area. At the outcome of the review, the Commission will recommend changes which it considers appropriate to those electoral arrangements (or will recommend that no changes are made). The Commission's recommendations are made to the Welsh Ministers, who then decide whether to implement changes recommended by the Commission (with or without modifications).

7 In this context, the "electoral arrangements" of a principal area are defined in Section 29 (9) of the 2013 Act as:

(a) the number of members of the council for the principal area;

(b) the number, type and boundaries of the electoral wards into which the principal area is for the time being divided for the purpose for the election of members;

(c) the number of members to be elected for any electoral ward in the principal area; and

(d) the name of any electoral ward.

8 When the Commission recommends changes to electoral arrangements at the outcome of an electoral review, it may also recommend consequential changes to the boundaries, council and/or electoral arrangements of a community within the area under review, as well as consequential changes to the area of a preserved county (Wales is split into eight preserved counties. They are areas used for the ceremonial purposes of lieutenancy and shrievalty).

Considerations for a Review of Principal Area Electoral Arrangements

9 When carrying out an electoral review, the Commission is required by Section 30 of the 2013 Act to have regard to the following factors-

(a) the desirability of having a ratio of local government electors to the number of members of the council to be elected that is the same, or nearly the same, in every electoral ward of the principal area (which the Commission refers to as "electoral parity");

(b) special geographical considerations, including in particular the size, shape and accessibility of an electoral ward; and

(c) any local ties (including local ties connected to the use of the Welsh language) that would be broken by changes to the electoral arrangements in the area.

10 When the Commission takes into account considerations of electoral parity (within the meaning of point (a) above), the Commission is also required to take into account:

(a) any discrepancy between the number of local government electors and the number of persons that are eligible to be local government electors (as indicated by relevant official statistics); and

(b) any change to the number or distribution of local government electors in the principal area which is likely to take place in the period of five years immediately following the outcome of the Commission's electoral review.

Balance

11 The Commission's task is to exercise a balanced judgement taking into account all relevant considerations, with a view to making recommendations for electoral arrangements that will achieve effective and convenient local government.

12 In an ideal situation, it would be possible to devise a pattern of electoral ward boundaries in which all electoral wards in a principal area had an equal ratio of electors to councillors, which brought together people in clearly identifiable communities, demonstrated clearly how local government would be both effective and convenient, and resulted in the appropriate number of councillors.

13 The geographical, social, economic and administrative make-up of Wales is however not so straightforward as to facilitate the drawing up of ideal electoral patterns. This means that the Commission must consider all relevant factors and exercise a judgement with a view to achieving a pattern of electoral wards which is as close as possible to the ideal described above. Achieving a structure that ensures effective and convenient local government is paramount.

Timetable

14 The Commission's timetable for the 2025 programme of electoral reviews can be found at Appendix 1.

15 Section 36B(2) of the 2013 Act requires the Commission to use its best endeavours to publish its final report in an electoral review within 12 months of starting the review.

Council Size Policy

16 For the 2025 programme the Commission has allocated each principal council a range within which the total number of councillors for a council should fall. Details of the methodology followed by the Commission and the appropriate range of councillor numbers for each principal council are set out in Appendix 2.

17 Should a principal council not agree with the range allocated by the Commission then the Commission will require a well evidenced argument to be submitted prior to the start of the review. The Commission has developed a template document which can be used to help shape this and the document is available on the website. The Commission will consider any submissions on a case by case basis.

Procedure

18 The procedure for conducting electoral reviews is set out in Chapter 4 of the 2013 Act and is summarised in the following sections.

Pre-review Procedure

19 The Commission will designate a Lead Commissioner for each electoral review, whose role will be to lead the Commission's staff through the review and who will present proposals and recommendations internally for the Commission's collective consideration and approval.

20 Before conducting an electoral review, the Commission will require that the principal council for the area under review provides electorate data and five-year forecasted electorate figures, in each case broken down to community ward level. The technical advice note in Appendix 3 to this document provides guidance for principal councils on the Commission's requirements and on how forecasted electorate figures can be produced.

21 The Commission is also required at the start of the review to take such steps as it considers appropriate to bring the review to the attention of members of the public affected by the review, the mandatory consultees and any other person it considers likely to be interested in the review. If any directions have been given by the Welsh Ministers which are relevant to the review, then the Commission is also required to make the mandatory consultees and such other interested persons aware of these.

22 For these purposes, the "mandatory consultees" are defined in Section 34(3) of the Act as:

- any local authority affected by the review;
- the police and crime commissioner for any police area which may be affected by the review;
- any fire and rescue authority constituted pursuant to the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 for an area in Wales which may be affected by the review;

- the National Park authority for a National Park in an area affected by the review,
- the Port Health authority constituted under section 2 of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 (c. 22) for a port health district in an area affected by the review,
- the Welsh Language Commissioner
- any organisation representing the staff employed by local authorities which has asked to be consulted; and
- such other persons as may be specified by order made by the Welsh Ministers.

23 Prior to the planned start of the review programme the Commission will provide online briefing sessions about the review process that can be attended by any interested parties. These briefings will describe the Commission's practice and procedures when carrying out electoral reviews.

Initial consultation and investigation

24 At the official start of an electoral review the Commission will publish a statement specifying the date on which the review begins, as required by section 36B(1) of the 2013 Act.

25 The Commission will also communicate with the principal council under review, all the town or community councils in the area, the Members of Parliament and Members of the Senedd for the local constituencies and other interested parties as well as the mandatory consultees listed above to inform them of the review and to request preliminary views on the issues to be considered in the review.

26 The Commission will issue press releases about the review to publicise the review to the media.

27 The initial consultation period, during which anyone with an interest in the review can submit initial views to the Commission, will last for 6 weeks.

Draft Proposals

28 Following the end of the initial consultation period, the Commission will consider the representations it has received and will publish draft proposals for consultation. The Commission will write to the principal council under review, all the community councils in the area, the Members of Parliament and Members of the Senedd for the local constituencies and other interested parties as well as the mandatory consultees to inform them of the draft proposals and to request their views. The Commission will also issue press releases about the proposals and provide publicity material that it will request both the principal council and town and community councils distribute in appropriate places, such as public libraries, town and community notice boards, websites and council newsletters etc in order to raise the profile of the review and to encourage public engagement.

29 Following the publication of the Draft Proposals Report there will be a consultation period, lasting 6 weeks, during which representations in relation to the draft proposals can be

submitted to the Commission.

30 During this consultation period the Commission will offer an online briefing to the officials of the principal council under review to discuss the draft proposals and the next stages of the review.

Further Consultation

31 Following the period of consultation on the Commission's draft proposals, the Commission will consider the representations it has received and prepare its final recommendations. The Commission's final recommendations may be the same as the proposals in the Commission's Draft Proposals Report, or the Commission may change its proposals in the light of the representations it has received and make recommendations in its final report reflecting those changed proposals.

32 However on occasion, after it has received representations, the Commission may wish to bring forward changes to the electoral arrangements of the area under review which are so different from the proposals in the Commission's Draft Proposals Report that the proposed changes amount to new proposals. Where this is the case, the Commission may engage in supplementary consultation in relation to its new proposals.

33 Any supplementary consultation period will usually last 4 weeks. The Commission will write to the principal council under review, all the community councils in the area, the Members of Parliament and Members of the Senedd for the local constituencies and other interested parties as well as the mandatory consultees to inform them of the further draft proposals, to request their views. The Commission will also issue press releases about the further proposals and provide publicity material that it will request both the principal council and town and community councils distribute in appropriate places, such as public libraries, town and community notice boards, websites and council newsletters etc in order to raise the profile of the review and to encourage public engagement.

Final Recommendations

34 When the Commission is ready, it will publish its final recommendations in the review (in a report known as a Final Recommendations Report) and submit them to Welsh Government. The Commission will write to the principal council under review, all the community councils in the area, the Members of Parliament and Members of the Senedd for the local constituencies and other interested parties as well as the mandatory consultees to inform them of its submission of recommendations to Welsh Government. The Commission will also issue press releases about the recommendations and provide publicity material that it will request both the principal council and town and community councils distribute in appropriate places, such as public libraries, town and community notice boards, websites and council newsletters etc.

35 Once the Commission has published its Final Recommendations Report, there is no further opportunity to provide representations to the Commission.

36 It is then for the Welsh Ministers to decide how they wish to proceed in relation to the

Commission's recommendations. If the Welsh Ministers choose to implement the Commission's recommendations (with or without modifications) they will do so by making an Order, after waiting for a period of six weeks as required by section 37(3A) of the 2013 Act. During that six week period, anyone with an interest will have the opportunity to submit representations to the Welsh Ministers in relation to the representations.

Matters which the Commission will consider during an electoral review

37 Typically, electoral reviews present a range of issues and challenges which require a judgement on balance, taking into account matters, in addition to statutory requirements, that include the following:

- effective and convenient local government;
- electoral parity (number of electors per councillor);
- considerations that might justify atypical levels of electoral parity, such as particular community ties;
- topography of the land, hills and rivers creating natural boundaries and motorways/railways forming man-made boundaries;
- variable factors (such as deprivation, student populations and tourism);
- differences between rural and urban areas; and,
- community area boundaries and any community ward boundaries – since the Commission will use communities and community wards as the "building blocks" for principal area electoral wards.

38 The Commission will take into account all of these factors when designing proposals and making recommendations, and invites respondents to consider each of these when submitting representations to the Commission during electoral reviews.

Effective and convenient local government

39 It is a duty of the Commission to recommend to Welsh Ministers electoral arrangements that are designed to achieve effective and convenient local government for principal councils.

40 In seeking to ensure effective and convenient local government, the Commission, when considering potential electoral arrangements, seeks to ensure that electoral wards are internally coherent. In the Commission's view, this means that there are reasonable road links across the electoral ward so that it can be easily traversed, and that all electors in the ward can engage in the affairs and activities of all parts of it without having to travel through an adjoining ward. This may not be the case, for example, if a potential electoral ward boundary amalgamates two communities where a feature such as a mountain or river divides them.

41 Factors including convenient access to elected members by the electors and people they represent, patterns of settlements and ease of communications within electoral areas will be taken into account.

Electoral parity and Numbers of Councillors

42 As described above, the Commission is required to take into account the desirability of electoral

parity when it carries out electoral reviews. Electoral parity refers to a situation in which the ratio of electors to elected members is the same, or nearly the same, in every electoral ward in the principal area.

43 The information which the Commission receives about the number of electors in an area will enable it to determine ward boundaries, and numbers of elected councillors for each ward, with a view to achieving electoral parity. The Commission will seek to achieve electoral ratios for electoral wards which are close to the council average, but the Commission nonetheless acknowledges that some degree of variance is inevitable in practice.

44 The Commission's policy will be to attempt to achieve a level of variance that is not greater than 20% from the council average for any electoral ward. However, the Commission takes the view that each council is different and that some councils and electoral wards will be able to provide for a better level of electoral parity than others. The Commission will seek to provide the best level of electoral parity for each area under review and will take each case on its merit. The Commission takes the view that departing from the average ratio for the council can only be justified by clear evidence of other balancing factors, such as local ties or other relevant considerations.

45 Many principal councils have both urban and rural electoral wards. On occasion the Commission has received comments to the effect that urban areas should have proportionately more councillors than rural areas because urban areas present more complex issues. Others have argued that rural areas should have proportionately more councillors because rural populations are more dispersed, and therefore harder to contact. There is no provision in legislation for such an approach. Increasing use of electronic communication methods generally makes no distinction between urban and rural areas. However, there may be exceptions where local characteristics, including topography and the availability of high-speed broadband, lead to an acceptance of a particular variance in electoral ratio for one or more electoral wards.

46 The Commission has commissioned independent research regarding the workload of County Councillors in Wales. The research shows that the biggest impact on the workload of a councillor is the various cabinet and committee responsibilities, however deprivation also has a large impact on the workload of a councillor. The report can be found on the Commission's website, and the Commission has taken it into account in determining the approach to its council size policy which is set out above.

47 As noted above, the 2013 Act places a further requirement on the Commission to take into account "…any discrepancy between the number of local government electors and the number of persons eligible to be local government electors (as indicated by relevant official statistics)". The Commission relies on the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to provide population figures, on the basis of which the discrepancy between the number of registered electors and the local population can be assessed. However it is often the case that population figures and elector numbers are recorded across slightly different local areas, so the discrepancy can only be the subject of a rough estimate. The Commission will utilise the available statistics as best it can and where it is appropriate to do so.

48 The Commission's general aim is that electoral parity in a principal area should improve as a

result of an electoral review. This will be informed by the data provided by councils as to current electors as well as five-year electoral forecasts. The Commission will consider and respond to the implications of changes in the number and distribution of electors which are forecast. The Commission looks to councils to provide estimates of electorate changes supported by appropriate evidence. However, in the experience of the Commission the projected figures are often at significant variance with actual changes in the number of electors which occur subsequently, and the Commission will also take this into account in its decision-making (see further below).

Multi-member electoral wards

49 The Commission considers that multi-member electoral wards are more likely to be effective and convenient in urban areas than in rural areas. In areas of denser population, such as is found in urban areas, it is possible that many of the issues which a councillor may be called upon to address may be broadly similar in nature and may therefore allow multiple councillors to deal with similar issues. The Commission considers that multi-member wards in rural areas would lead to very large geographical areas which will create additional issues to the electors and the elected members such as travel time.

Five-year forecasted figures

50 The Commission must have regard to five-year projected electorate figures as part of its deliberations when creating proposals and recommendations. As noted above, the Commission requests these projections from the principal council under review. The Commission is aware that projections are not an exact science and therefore while the Commission will have regard to the principal council's projected figures, the Commission will give greater weight to current electorate figures provided by the council.

Population figures

51 The Commission will have regard to the population figures that are provided to it by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), as described above. The Commission uses the mid-year estimates of populations for national and local areas. These are based on Census data, updated with information from a variety of sources which are published annually. The Commission will refer in its deliberations to the most recently published mid-year estimate at the time when the electoral review started.

Communities

52 There can be some confusion over what is meant by the word community. Some may consider it to refer to the street in which they live, others a more broad village area, others much larger areas. All of these are entirely accurate and reflect the lives of people and the differences and similarities of places where we live, work and interact. However, in Wales there is an additional and more technical meaning to the word as the whole of Wales is divided into community areas.

53 Many community areas have community or town councils. Where a community area has a community or town council then these areas may be divided into wards for electoral purposes. Over two-thirds of Wales' population is covered by town and community councils.

54 The Commission will use communities and community wards as its primary "building blocks" making up electoral wards.

55 The 2013 Act also enables the Commission to recommend changes to community and community ward boundaries as a consequence of changes to the electoral ward boundaries.

56 Accordingly, the Commission has flexibility as to how it uses the existing communities and community wards as building blocks to create electoral wards. However in creating electoral wards the Commission must have regard to the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable, and the desirability of not breaking local ties (these requirements are considered in more detail below). The Commission will ensure that proposals for significant changes to electoral ward boundaries and for consequential changes to community and community ward boundaries are subject to consultation (either in a draft proposals report or in a supplementary consultation) before being included in a Final Recommendations Report. The Commission will especially welcome representations relating to proposals for changes to boundaries that are supported by clear and relevant evidence.

Easily identifiable boundaries

57 The Commission will generally use community areas and, where they exist, community wards as the primary building blocks for electoral wards. This in effect means that the boundaries of any proposed electoral wards are usually formed from the boundaries of existing local government areas and as such should be easily identifiable. This does however depend on community boundaries and community ward boundaries being regularly reviewed by the principal council to take account of new developments that cross existing boundaries.

58 On occasion during an electoral review the Commission may identify changes that have occurred in a local area that might suggest that electoral ward boundaries should be changed, in circumstances where those changes in the area have not yet been reflected in changes to communities or community wards. For example, it may be the case that a large new housing development has been created across existing electoral ward and community boundaries. In these situations, the Commission may consider in the course of an electoral review whether the electoral ward boundaries should be changed so as to be more easily identifiable in light of the changes to the area. If the Commission considers that electoral ward boundaries should be changed in this way, it may also consider whether consequential changes to community or community ward boundaries should be made for the same or related reasons.

59 Where changes to community or community ward boundaries are considered as a consequence of changes proposed to electoral ward boundaries, the Commission will seek to ensure that these new boundaries are easily identifiable in the same way.

60 More generally, roads can influence the boundaries between electoral wards or communities, for example if they are the location of shops or community facilities which people visit regularly and where they interact, or if they are the source of community interactions for example in relation to safety, environmental or economic considerations. Alternatively, major highways, rivers or railway lines are often physical barriers marking the boundary between different

communities. The Commission will take into account geographic elements such as these in seeking to arrive at identifiable boundaries between electoral units.

Local ties

61 The legislation requires the Commission to have regard to any local ties which would be broken by changes to electoral arrangements. This may be particularly relevant when proposals are made for new arrangements that divide existing electoral wards. However, such is the complexity of the term "local ties" that people may consider that their area has ties to a number of other areas. It can also be the case that those sharing an interest in the physical maintenance and management of their immediate living environment may consider that their local ties are within quite confined boundaries.

62 However, the Commission may also receive representations from those who may have an interest in the way their general hospital or secondary school provides services or in the continuation of a large-scale employer and thus identify themselves as also part of a community much wider in extent. This often leads to suggestion of local ties between multiple community areas (whether they have a community or town council or not) and can often bring deep opposition to dividing those areas into 2 (or more) electoral wards where they were previously contained within 1.

63 Another example of local ties could be that an area identifies itself as a Welsh- speaking area. The Commission takes into account the Welsh language characteristics of an area when conducting an electoral review, and has a general duty to promote the use of the Welsh language. The Commission will utilise census data to attempt to ensure that it does not put forward proposals which would undermine the use of the Welsh language.

64 The Commission often only hears from respondents who oppose its proposals on the basis that they would break local ties. The Commission also asks that respondents tell it when its proposals do reflect local ties, so that any support for the Commission's proposals can be taken into account when the Commission decides whether to reflect its proposals in its final recommendations.

65 In many areas electoral wards will need to be greater in physical extent than individual communities due to considerations of electoral parity. In these instances the Commission will combine 2 or more communities within individual electoral wards.

Electoral ward names

66 As part of an electoral review, the Commission considers the names of electoral wards in the area under review. The Commission's general practice will be to recommend changes to the name of an electoral ward if it considers that the name can be improved, whether or not the Commission is also recommending changes to other electoral arrangements affecting that ward.

67 In the light of the Commission's duty to promote the use of the Welsh language, the Commission's general preference will be for electoral wards to bear a single name in the Welsh

language which is acceptable for use in English.

68 The Commission will regard a Welsh-language name as acceptable for use in English if it considers that the name is likely to be recognisable to residents of the same broad area of Wales whose primary language is not Welsh. This may be because (for example) the name is composed of a place name which is the same or similar in Welsh and English or because the place name in Welsh is particularly well-known in the area.

69 If the Welsh-language name is composed of more than 1 word, the Commission will regard that name as acceptable for use in English only if every word of the name is likely to be recognisable in this way. Accordingly:

- if the Welsh-language name incorporates 1 or more place names which are likely to be recognisable in this way as well as a place name which is not, the Commission will not regard that name as acceptable for use in English;
- if the Welsh-language name incorporates words which are not place names (for example a geographic designation such as "north", "south" or "central") the Commission will usually not regard that name as acceptable for use in English;
- however if the Welsh-language name is composed solely of place names which are likely to be recognisable in this way together with a Welsh-language word meaning "and", the Commission will regard that name as acceptable for use in English.

70 The Commission will also propose names that aim to avoid the need for mutations in Welsh in order to make names more recognisable.

71 If the Commission is unable to identify a suitable single name in the Welsh language which is acceptable for use in English in relation to an electoral ward, the Commission will propose alternative names for that ward in Welsh and English.

72 The Commission will consult with the Welsh Language Commissioner (WLC) in relation to the names of electoral wards in the area which is subject to an electoral review. The WLC is responsible for advising on the standard forms of Welsh place-names. The WLC has convened a Place-names Standardisation Panel to provide recommendations and expert advice in this field. In forming its recommendations, the Panel follows national standardisation guidelines and also gives consideration to the meaning, history and etymology of the place-names, as well as their usage. The WLC has agreed to provide specialist advice to the Commission regarding how electoral ward names should be spelt in official contexts.

73 The Commission welcomes suggestions as to electoral ward names at all stages of an electoral review.

Representations

74 The Commission encourages principal councils, town and community councils, elected representatives, interested parties and the general public to make representations and suggestions as part of the process of electoral reviews. The Commission welcomes representations that are based on evidence and facts which are relevant to the electoral

arrangements under consideration. The Commission will consider and acknowledge every representation made. If any person or body makes a representation to the Commission and does not receive an acknowledgment, they should contact the Commission to ensure it has received the representation. If your representation is not acknowledged, then it is highly likely the Commission has not received the representation and it will not be considered in the Commission's deliberations. If you have not received an acknowledgement in response to your representations please get in touch with the Commission.

75 All representations which the Commission receives will be published on the Commission's website alongside the Commission's Draft Proposals and Final Recommendation Reports. To protect the privacy of individuals participating in the reviews, the Commission will take the following approach to redacting personal information contained in the written representations that the Commission publishes.

76 Representations from public figures and officials (such as councillors, Members of Parliament or Members of the Senedd) acting in an official capacity:

- the Commission will publish the name of any public figure or official writing in an official capacity
- however, all postal and email addresses, telephone numbers and signatures will be redacted

77 Representations from members of the public, and from public figures or officials writing in a personal capacity:

- the Commission will redact the name and postal address of individuals submitting representations, but will publish the approximate location of the individual's postal address – that is, by reference to the village, town or city stated
- all email addresses, telephone numbers and signatures will be redacted

78 The Commission will also redact anything in a representation that could be illegal, libellous or both.

79 The Commission wishes to encourage representations from those with local knowledge of their area to suggest appropriate electoral arrangements to the Commission when a review is being undertaken. The Commission will accept representations by email, letter or via its consultation portal. All communication details will be provided at the start of a review.

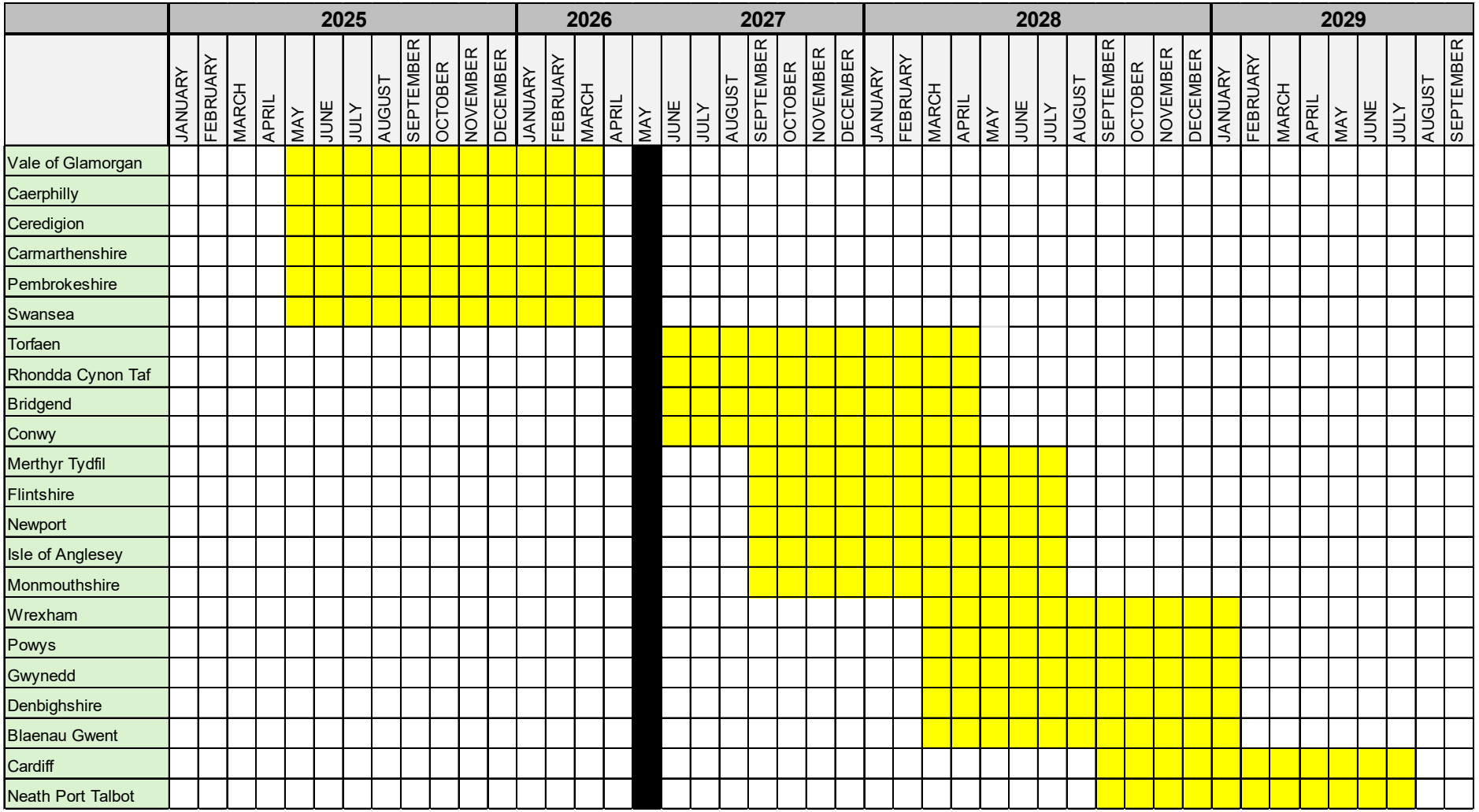
Conclusion

80 An electoral review is an exercise of the Commission's statutory responsibility, the application of powers given to the Commission, and the use of judgement which the legislation calls for. The Commission's policies are intended to give confidence in how it will approach the challenges in any review, but do not preclude striking the right balance in the particular circumstances of the communities and principal council under review. The Commission

exercises a collective judgment in determining issues in its reviews and the consideration given to the issues and the reasoning adopted will be explained in the Commission's reports.

May 2025

Appendix 1 - ERP 2025 Timetable



Appendix 2 - Council Size Methodology

Key Principals

1. **Minimum and Maximum Council Size:**
    - Council size should not be less than 30 members.
    - Council size should not normally exceed 75 members.
2. **Exclusion of Cardiff:**
    - Cardiff is excluded from calculations due to its significantly higher population and density. Cardiff Council currently has 79 members, which will be the starting point for future reviews. Should Cardiff be included within the calculations the Commission deems that this number of councillors would be unmanageable and would not provide for effective and convenient local government.

Methodology

1. **Population Factor:**
    - The smallest council size is set at 30 members.
    - The principal council area with the smallest population is Merthyr Tydfil (58,593). This is considered the minimum population.
    - Additional councillors are allocated based on the population over this minimum. The range of councillors (30 to 75) is proportioned to the range of populations over the minimum (58,593 to 246,742).
2. **Sparsity Factor:**
    - Population density is calculated by dividing the population by the area.
    - A sparsity factor is determined by expressing each council's population density as a percentage of the highest density (Newport at 859.2) and then inverting it.
    - Additional councillors are allocated based on this sparsity factor.
3. **Deprivation Factor:**
    - Councils with 10-20% of their areas in the most deprived 20% of LSOAs in Wales receive 1 additional councillor.
    - Councils with more than 20% in the most deprived areas receive 2 additional councillors.
    - Councils already at the maximum of 75 members do not receive additional councillors.
4. **Rurality Factor:**
    - Councils with 40-75% of their built-up areas (BUAs) under 10,000 people receive 1 additional councillor.
    - Councils with more than 75% of their BUAs under 10,000 people receive 2 additional councillors.
    - Councils already at the maximum of 75 members do not receive additional councillors.
5. **Recommended 10% Change Cap:**
    - A recommended 10% maximum change from the existing number of councillors is applied.
    - Councils already at the maximum of 75 or minimum of 30 members do not receive additional or fewer councillors.
6. **Range:**
    - Each principal council is allocated a range of number of councillors.
    - Councils are asked to provide their preferred number of councillors within this range in their response to the policy and practice consultation.

Council Size Methodology

1. This council size utilises published population and area statistics in order to calculate an optimum council size for each principal council area. This methodology is based on the following principals:

- Council size should not be less than 30 members;
- Council size should not normally be more than 75 members;
- population;
- population sparsity;
- Deprivation;
- Rurality, and,
- Recommended 10% change cap

It was also considered that Cardiff should be been taken out of all calculations because of both its substantially higher population and population density. Cardiff Council currently has 79 members and that will be the starting point for any future reviews.

The following table shows the existing number of councillors and the population sizes for each principal council area.

Authority	Population (2023 ONS MYE)	Current Councillors
Blaenau Gwent	67,356	33
Bridgend	146,743	51
Caerphilly	176,437	69
Cardiff	383,536	79
Carmarthenshire	190,083	75
Ceredigion	73,050	38
Conwy	114,410	55
Denbighshire	97,156	48
Flintshire	155,812	67
Gwynedd	119,173	69
Isle of Anglesey	69,291	35
Merthyr Tydfil	58,593	30
Monmouthshire	94,572	46
Neath Port Talbot	142,898	60
Newport	163,628	51
Pembrokeshire	125,006	60
Powys	134,439	68
Rhondda Cynon Taf	241,178	75
Swansea	246,742	75
Torfaen	93,419	40
Vale of Glamorgan	134,733	54
Wrexham	136,149	56

The population information is from the 2023 Mid-Year Estimate figures published by the ONS.

Population Factor

3. On the basis that the smallest council size should be 30, all areas are given this allocation as the minimum number of councillors (Min Cllrs). The principal council area with the smallest population is Merthyr Tydfil with 58,593 so this has been considered the minimum population and the population over this minimum has been calculated (Population over Min). The number of additional councillors based on population size (Additional Pop Cllrs) has then been calculated by proportioning the range of numbers of councillors (30 to 75 = 45) to the range of populations over the minimum (58,593 to 246,742 = 188,149). Dividing 188,149 by 45 gives an allocation of 1 councillor per 4,181 people. The number of additional councillors is then calculated by dividing the population over the minimum by 4,181. For example, Denbighshire has a population of 35,107 over the minimum this, when divided by 4,181, gives a total of 8 (8.3 rounded down) additional councillors.

Authority	Min Cllrs	Population	Pop over min	Additional Pop Cllrs
Blaenau Gwent	30	67,356	8,763	2
Bridgend	30	146,743	88,150	21
Caerphilly	30	176,437	117,844	28
Cardiff	30	383,536	324,943	
Carmarthenshire	30	190,083	131,490	31
Ceredigion	30	73,050	14,457	3
Conwy	30	114,410	55,817	13
Denbighshire	30	97,156	38,563	9
Flintshire	30	155,812	97,219	23
Gwynedd	30	119,173	60,580	14
Isle of Anglesey	30	69,291	10,698	3
Merthyr Tydfil	30	58,593	-	-
Monmouthshire	30	94,572	35,979	9
Neath Port Talbot	30	142,898	84,305	20
Newport	30	163,628	105,035	25
Pembrokeshire	30	125,006	66,413	16
Powys	30	134,439	75,846	18
Rhondda Cynon Taf	30	241,178	182,585	44
Swansea	30	246,742	188,149	45
Torfaen	30	93,419	34,826	8
Vale of Glamorgan	30	134,733	76,140	18
Wrexham	30	136,149	77,556	19

The population information is from the 2023 Mid-Year Estimate figures published by the ONS.

Sparsity Factor

4. The following table shows the area for each principal council area as derived from the standard area measurements published by ONS published in December 2022. The population density (Pop Density) has been calculated by dividing the population by the area. A Sparsity Factor has then been calculated by expressing each principal council's population density (Pop Density) as a percentage of the highest density figure (Newport at 859.2) and expressed as an inverse so that areas with the highest densities will have the lowest percentage figures.

Authority	Population	Area (sq km)	Pop Density	Sparsity Factor
Blaenau Gwent	67,356	109	619.49	28%
Bridgend	146,743	251	585.13	32%
Caerphilly	176,437	277	636.07	26%
Cardiff	383,536	141	2721.77	
Carmarthenshire	190,083	2,370	80.19	91%
Ceredigion	73,050	1,785	40.92	95%
Conwy	114,410	1,126	101.62	88%
Denbighshire	97,156	837	116.09	86%
Flintshire	155,812	440	354.25	59%
Gwynedd	119,173	2,535	47.01	95%
Isle of Anglesey	69,291	712	97.31	89%
Merthyr Tydfil	58,593	111	525.75	39%
Monmouthshire	94,572	849	111.37	87%
Neath Port Talbot	142,898	441	323.85	62%
Newport	163,628	190	859.25	0%
Pembrokeshire	125,006	1,618	77.24	91%
Powys	134,439	5,181	25.95	97%
Rhondda Cynon Taf	241,178	424	568.61	34%
Swansea	246,742	378	653.42	24%
Torfaen	93,419	126	743.20	16%
Vale of Glamorgan	134,733	331	406.87	53%
Wrexham	136,149	504	270.26	69%

5. The number of additional councillors for each principal council in respect of population sparsity (Sparsity Cllrs) is then calculated by applying the Sparsity Factor (described in the table above) to the number of Population Councillors (Pop Cllrs). For example for Neath Port Talbot the number of Sparsity Councillors is 62% of 20 which is 12 (12.4 rounded down).

Authority	Pop Cllrs	Sparsity Cllrs
Blaenau Gwent	2	1
Bridgend	21	7
Caerphilly	28	7
Cardiff		
Carmarthenshire	31	28
Ceredigion	3	3
Conwy	13	11
Denbighshire	9	8
Flintshire	23	14
Gwynedd	14	13
Isle of Anglesey	3	3
Merthyr Tydfil	0	0
Monmouthshire	9	8
Neath Port Talbot	20	12
Newport	25	0
Pembrokeshire	16	15
Powys	18	17
Rhondda Cynon Taf	44	15
Swansea	45	11
Torfaen	8	1
Vale of Glamorgan	18	10
Wrexham	19	13

Deprivation Factor

6. For this Review Programme the Commission has also included a factor for areas of high deprivation. Principal councils with a percentage between 10 and 20 of the most deprived 20% LSOA's in Wales have been allocated an additional councillor, those with a percentage higher than 20 have been allocated a further councillor (total of 2). The number of allocated councillors following the deprivation factor is shown as Dep Cllrs in the table. Those with an allocation of 75 are already at the maximum number of councillors allowed within this policy and therefore no additional councillors have been added.

Authority	% LSOAs in Most Deprived 20% (WIMD 2019)	Additional Cllrs for Deprivation
Blaenau Gwent	45	2
Bridgend	20	1
Caerphilly	24	2
Cardiff	28	
Carmarthenshire	11	1
Ceredigion	4	0
Conwy	13	1
Denbighshire	16	1
Flintshire	11	1
Gwynedd	5	0
Isle of Anglesey	14	1
Merthyr Tydfil	31	2
Monmouthshire	2	0
Neath Port Talbot	33	2
Newport	35	2
Pembrokeshire	11	1
Powys	6	0
Rhondda Cynon Taf	29	2
Swansea	24	2
Torfaen	32	2
Vale of Glamorgan	13	1
Wrexham	12	1

Rurality Factor

7. For this Review Programme the Commission has also included a factor for areas of high rurality. Principal councils with a percentage between 40 and 75 of its build up areas (BUA's) being under 10,000 people have been allocated an additional councillor, those with a percentage higher than 75 have been allocated a further councillor (total of 2). Those with an allocation of 75 are already at the maximum number of councillors allowed within this policy and therefore no additional councillors have been added.

Authority	% population in BUA's < 10K (ONS 2001)	Additional Rural Cllrs
Blaenau Gwent	34	0
Bridgend	23	0
Caerphilly	59	1
Cardiff	3	
Carmarthenshire	69	1
Ceredigion	80	2
Conwy	48	1
Denbighshire	54	1
Flintshire	60	1
Gwynedd	86	2
Isle of Anglesey	84	2
Merthyr Tydfil	33	0
Monmouthshire	61	1
Neath Port Talbot	40	0
Newport	18	0
Pembrokeshire	79	2
Powys	92	2
Rhondda Cynon Taf	36	0
Swansea	24	0
Torfaen	17	0
Vale of Glamorgan	37	0
Wrexham	57	1

The BUA information is published by the ONS based on the 2021 Census data.

Authority	Min Cllrs	Additional Pop Cllrs	Sparsity Cllrs	Additional Cllrs for Deprivation	Additional Rural Cllrs	Allocation
Blaenau Gwent	30	2	1	2	0	35
Bridgend	30	21	7	1	0	59
Caerphilly	30	28	7	2	1	68
Cardiff	30					
Carmarthenshire	30	31	28	1	1	91
Ceredigion	30	3	3	0	2	38
Conwy	30	13	11	1	1	56
Denbighshire	30	9	8	1	1	49
Flintshire	30	23	14	1	1	69
Gwynedd	30	14	13	0	2	59
Isle of Anglesey	30	3	3	1	2	39
Merthyr Tydfil	30	-	0	2	0	32
Monmouthshire	30	9	8	0	1	48
Neath Port Talbot	30	20	12	2	0	64
Newport	30	25	0	2	0	57
Pembrokeshire	30	16	15	1	2	64
Powys	30	18	17	0	2	67
Rhondda Cynon Taf	30	44	15	2	0	91
Swansea	30	45	11	2	0	88
Torfaen	30	8	1	2	0	41
Vale of Glamorgan	30	18	10	1	0	59
Wrexham	30	19	13	1	1	64

Final Allocations

8. For this Review Programme the Commission has allocated each Principal Council a range of number of councillors which takes into account all of the factors listed in the sections above. The Commission has also included a factor of a recommended 10% maximum change from the existing arrangements as anything larger would cause significant disruption across the whole Principal Council. The Commission has maintained the position that no council should have more than 75 councillors and no council should have less than 30 councillors. It should be noted that Cardiff has been taken out of all calculations because of both its substantially higher population and population density.

The Commission will ask each principal council in their response to the policy and practice consultation to set out their preferred number of councillors from within the allocated range. The Commission has provided a template which responses to the council size policy should be made, in order to make sure that the submission is evidenced. The Commission will consider responses from any interested parties.

Authority	Existing Councillors	Allocation	Allocation with Cap	Range
Blaenau Gwent	33	35	35	30-35
Bridgend	51	59	56	46-59
Caerphilly	69	68	68	62-68
Cardiff	79			78-79
Carmarthenshire	75	91	75	67-75
Ceredigion	38	38	38	34-38
Conwy	55	56	56	49-56
Denbighshire	48	49	49	43-49
Flintshire	67	69	69	59-69
Gwynedd	69	59	62	59-62
Isle of Anglesey	35	39	39	31-39
Merthyr Tydfil	30	32	32	30-32
Monmouthshire	46	48	48	41-48
Neath Port Talbot	60	64	64	54-64
Newport	51	57	56	45-57
Pembrokeshire	60	64	64	54-64
Powys	68	67	67	61-67
Rhondda Cynon Taf	75	91	75	66-75
Swansea	75	88	75	66-75
Torfaen	40	41	41	36-41
Vale of Glamorgan	54	59	59	49-59
Wrexham	56	64	62	49-64

Appendix 3

Technical Note: Requirements for each principal council for the provision of statistical data to the Democracy Boundary Commission Cymru.

Introduction and History

1 In order to conduct an electoral review of a principal council area it is necessary for the Commission to have the requisite statistical information upon which it can make decisions, including as to the number of councillors in a Council and the number of electors in each electoral ward.

2 At the start of an electoral review the Commission requests from the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) of the council for the area under review the latest electoral figures for each community area and ward (where a community is warded). A 5-year projection of the number of electors is also requested on the same basis.

3 In respect of the existing figures, these have not always been provided in a consistent format and, on a number of occasions, this has required the Commission to go back to the ERO for clarification of the figures. The inconsistencies have taken a number of forms such as electorate broken down by polling district rather than community/community ward, missing data, incorrect totals, etc. The clarification and correction of this data has taken time and effort to resolve and, on occasion, this has had an impact on the timely running of a review.

4 In respect of projected figures, the Commission has in the past received projections based on a number of different methodologies, ranging from blanket increases by percentile, to carefully thought-out determination by reference to attainers, deaths and development proposals. On some occasions the Commission has been told that it is not possible to provide such statistics, and in such circumstances the Commission has no alternative but to use the existing electorates when proposing electoral arrangements and is then unable to gauge the future suitability of those arrangements. Again, the difficulties in obtaining these statistics have, on occasion, had an impact on the timely running of a review.

5 In order to avoid problems which the Commission has previously encountered in respect of electoral statistics, the Commission has created this Technical Note. This is intended to assist the ERO's of each principal council to understand the precise requirements of the Commission with regard to the electoral data it will be requesting before the start of a review.

Requirements

6 The Commission requires 2 different sets of data from the ERO of each principal council:

i. Data as to existing arrangements; and
ii. A 5 year projection.

Existing Arrangements

7 The Commission requires the most up-to-date number of registered local government electors in each **community and community ward** (where a community is warded) in the principal council area. These areas are the primary building blocks which the Commission will use when creating electoral wards. Numbers of electors by postcode, polling district or electoral ward are **not** acceptable alternatives.

8 The information should be provided in the pro forma provided to the council at the beginning of the review. Different councils will have different officers responsible for compiling these figures and the Council itself should identify who in the council is best placed to provide this information.

9 The Commission also asks that the full register of elector data, from which the information is derived, is retained at the principal council (saved).

A Five-Year Projection

10 The Commission requires a carefully considered and, so far as is possible, accurate projection of the number of electors in each existing **community and community ward** (where a community is warded) in the principal council area in the year that is five years after the register that is being used for the review. These projected figures should be submitted in the pro forma provided to the council at the beginning of the review.

11 It is up to the council under review to determine a precise methodology for producing these forecasts, and the Commission recognises that this is not an exact science. However projected figures should be calculated using determination of attainers, deaths, development proposals and trends of population shift. There is an example of the methodology used by Cardiff City Council given below:

Electorate Projections for 2030: Methodology

- The latest (mid-2022) mid-year population estimates for small areas from ONS were used to produce figures for those aged 18+ in each community and ward. For the communities this was based on a best fit of Output Areas (2021 Census). This was mainly based on the ONS lookup available at Output Area (2021) to PARNCP to LAD to RGN to CTRY (December 2024) Best Fit Lookup in EW | Open Geography Portal. However, the three sub-communities in both the Pentyrch (Creigiau, Gwaelodygarth, Pentyrch) and Radyr & Morganstown (Morganstown, Radyr North, Radyr South) communities were not included in the lookup. The Output Areas for these sub-communities were instead assigned by Cardiff Council.
- The proportion of the total Cardiff population aged 18+ living in each community/ward was calculated.
- The projected overall population aged 18+ for Cardiff for 2030 was calculated using the latest (2022-based) ONS national projection for Wales. For the latest (mid-2023) population estimates for local authorities, Cardiff accounts for 12.1% of those aged 18+ in Wales. This same proportion was applied to the Wales projection for 2030.

[NB. The latest (2018-based) local authority projection for Cardiff was not used due to a lack of confidence in these figures following the impact of the pandemic, Brexit, government policy, etc. For example, the 2030 projection for Cardiff of those aged 18+ is already below the level seen in the latest mid-year estimate]

- The mid-2022 community/ward breakdown proportions were applied to the 2030 projection for Cardiff (aged 18+) to estimate the number of residents aged 18+ in each area in 2030. This was then adjusted based on housing development information.
- Figures from the 2021 Census (Table TS041) on the number of households within each of the communities (using the same best fit of Output Areas used for the population estimates) and wards were downloaded from www.nomisweb.co.uk.

[NB. Population and household figures for an area may differ between the community and ward tables due to the increased levels of perturbation used by ONS in the Output Area datasets used for the

community tables]

- Additional information provided by Cardiff Council's Planning department was then used to estimate the additional number of households in each community/ward in both 2022 (to match the date of the latest population estimates) and 2030:
    - Annual completions by community/ward for 2021/22 to 2023/24 [number of units]
    - Forecasted future developments (10+ sites) by community/ward for 2024/25 to 2029/30 (sites with planning permission or in adopted plan) [number of units]
- The number of households for 2022 for each community/ward were estimated by adding the annual completions for 2021/22 to the 2021 Census figures.
- The number of households for 2030 for each community/ward were estimated by adding the annual completions for 2021/22 to 2023/24 and the forecasted future developments for 2024/25 to 2029/30 to the 2021 Census figures.
- For each community/ward, its share of the total number of households in both 2022 and 2030 was calculated.
- The ratio between these two figures was then calculated to see if a community/ward accounted for a larger or smaller share of total households in 2030 than 2022 (the areas with a larger share of total households in 2030 than 2022 would have a figure over 1, while those areas with a smaller share of total households would have a figure below 1).
- This ratio was then used to adjust the projected community/ward populations (aged 18+) previously calculated for 2030 (by multiplying the non-adjusted projection figure by the ratio).
- The sum of these adjusted community/ward figures were subsequently constrained to the overall population (aged 18+) projection for Cardiff for 2030 that had been estimated from the (2022-based) national projection for Wales (i.e. they were scaled back, while maintaining the same proportional make-up, to ensure that they totalled the population (aged 18+) projection for Cardiff for 2030). This gave the final estimated population eligible to vote in each of the communities/wards in 2030.
- The latest (mid-2022) community/ward population estimates (aged 18+) and the electoral roll figures for June 2022 were then used to calculate the proportion of the total population aged 18+ that were on the electoral roll at that time. These proportions were applied to the estimated populations eligible to vote to produce final projected electorate numbers for 2030. [NB. For some areas the size of the electorate exceeded the population estimate. In these cases the proportion was capped at 100%.]

12 Cardiff has developed a new method for projecting future population figures, which differs from the official Welsh Government projections. These government projections are now considered outdated due to recent changes in Cardiff's population.