

Theme A – Vision, purpose and community planning

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

The council has a clear vision and plan for its community

Questions to consider

- Does the council have a plan for realising its vision and purpose? **Annual report on progress in meeting objectives contained in the local well-being plan, published biodiversity plan and report, Annual report as required by Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, Place Plan in place.**
- How are you involving the whole community in developing that plan? **Public consultation events and surveys**
- How does the council plan take account of its statutory obligations and functions? **Annual report on progress**
- How does the council keep its plan under regular review? **Annual report reviewed annually**
- How does the council apply its vision when considering planning matters relating to the community? **Documented vision, purpose and values statements**

Actions

We will:

- Review Place Plan Terms of Reference

Theme B – Leadership and people

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

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

The council provides leadership to its members and staff

Questions to consider

- Do all councillors understand their obligations to ensure effective governance of the council? **Yes – sign a code of conduct, signed declarations of office, agreed standing orders**
- How do you ensure all members are trained in all aspects of their role? **Training plan in place, regular email reminders to undertake training, evidence of training needs**
- How do you ensure all members are suitably resourced to carry out their role? **Reminder given in a number of meetings throughout year. Attendance at meetings recorded**
- How do members and staff engage with recognised sector representative bodies (i.e. One Voice Wales and SLCC) to share and learn from good practice? **Clerk and Deputy are members of SLCC, CiLCA and FILCA trained. Town Council is a member of One Voice Wales**

Commentary

Fully compliant

The council carries out its employment duties

Questions to consider

- Do all councillors understand their responsibilities as an employer? **Yes - signed contracts and policies which are referenced in contracts of employment and which are fully aligned to the National Pay and Conditions Agreement for Clerks**
- Does the council have a human resources/personnel committee to deal with staffing matters? **Yes, HR Committee, Minutes of full council and HR committee meetings**
- Do all staff understand their obligations under the national employee code of conduct? **Yes- signed contract, employee handbook, job descriptions**
- How does the council review whether staff are remunerated appropriately? **Fully aligned to the National Pay and Conditions Agreement for Clerks, Financial records recording appropriate deductions from gross pay calculations.**
- How does the council ensure open and fair competition for all vacancies? **Ensure current employment law is adhered to, ensure no discrimination takes place, shortlisting panels, interview scoring matrix.**
- What arrangements are in place to enable employees to communicate with their line management and for appraisal? **Open door policy, yearly appraisals take place, appraisal scheme in place to keep record.**
- What processes are in place to resolve both internal disputes / grievances and potential external complaints about council members and staff? **Grievance Policy and Complaints Policy in place**

Commentary

Fully compliant

The council gives its staff the resources and support to carry out their role

Questions to consider

- How does the council encourage continuous professional development of its employees? **Appraisals yearly, individual training budget for each staff member.**
- How does the council ensure all staff are trained in all aspects of their role? **Training policy and plan. Clerk and Deputy Clerk are ILCA, CiLCA, FILCA, PIALC trained.**
- How does the council ensure it provides all necessary facilities and equipment for those working from the office or at home? **Supplied equipment, working from home policy.**
- Are there appropriate policies and processes in place to manage the health, safety and welfare of the council's employees? How do you ensure these are followed? **Equality and Diversity policy, Risk Assessments, H&S Policies, Staffing policies, minuted at annual meeting that policies are agreed**

Commentary

Fully compliant

Theme C – Community engagement and partnerships

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

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

The council engages with its community

Questions to consider

- Does your council understand the demographic composition of its community? **Annual report and Community Place Plan**
- How does the council involve the whole community in its decision-making processes, and provision of services? **Public consultations, Website, Social Media, Councillor Surgeries**
- How does the council stay in touch about local “hot topics” that emerge from time to time? **Proactive work with community groups, social media activity, involvement in other aspects of community life e.g. school governors**
- How does your council plan and provide for the diversity of needs within its community? **A good mix of ages and diverse personalities**
- What methods and tools are used by the council, to involve the community in community planning issues? **Noticeboards, Website, Minutes of meetings**

Theme C – Community engagement and partnerships

- How does the council ensure it is reflecting the voice of the community in reviewing planning applications and contributing, where appropriate to the Local Development Plan? **Meeting minutes, open meeting participation for members of the community**
- What does the council do to ensure it engages with the people in the community in the language of their choice? **Welsh Language Policy, on request will provide all documentation in the language of choice.**

Actions

We will:

Look into

- **Maintaining social media activity**
- **Community surveys prior undertaking any projects/schemes**
- **Newsletters**
- **Community information/engagement events**

The council works with partners to help its community

Questions to consider

- How does the council work with partners to help achieve its vision and purpose? **Proactive work with community groups**
- How does the council assess who it could and should work with (including statutory partners)? **Work with public services board**
- Are you working with everyone you could / should be working with? **Involvement in other aspects of community life e.g. school governors, Local Authority (County Councils)**
- How has the council ensured it is resourced to develop its partnerships? **Annual report**

Actions

We will explore:

- A charter agreement with the principal authority (CCBC are looking to implement/re-launch existing agreement)

The council communicates with its partners and community

Questions to consider

- Are you confident that your communications are accessible to all parts of the community? **Social media activity, minutes of meetings, Annual Report, Website, Noticeboards**
- How do you encourage feedback and involvement from across the community? **Public participation sessions on council meetings, Compliments and complaints letters**
- How does your website help you engage and communicate? **Blog page, useful numbers, minutes, contact details**
- How do you use social media to engage with your community? **Upload good news stories, Councillor engagement stories and photos and goings on in the community**

Actions

We will explore:

- Holding community events
- Undertaking community surveys
- Holding council surgeries
- Improving the website to make it more accessible and user friendly
- Creating a council newsletter

Theme D – Business processes

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

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

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

The council operates high standards of accountability and governance in an open and transparent way
Questions to consider • What processes are in place to ensure effective and timely decision making and are these processes documented? Published timetable of council and committee meetings, Terms of Reference for committee / sub-committee framework • How does the council's annual business / service plan inform its budget? Usage of standing orders; Financial Regulations; and risk register • How does the council use committee and sub-committee decision-making arrangements? Standing Orders, Financial Orders, Scheme of delegations to support decision making • What processes are in place to review risk management? Risk register • What handover provisions are in place for transfer of information, finances and records when the clerk/responsible financial officer leaves the council? Internal controls documentation All processes reviewed periodically by council / committee to ensure they remain appropriate, with findings recorded
Commentary Fully compliant

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

Questions to consider

- How does the council oversee and manage its health and safety arrangements? **External H&S Consultant**
- How has the council assessed whether it has the necessary expertise, skills and resources to manage its affairs safely as needed?
Appointed H&S Consultant who reviews policies and procedures annually.
- How does the council secure health and safety in its premises and activities? **Health and Safety Policy Statement, Health and Safety Procedures, Risk assessments, Records of tests, Stress management policy, Stress risk Assessment, Accident report book and related investigation procedures,**
- Does the council allocate sufficient budgetary resources to meet current Health and Safety legislation in relation to all its activities?
Yes, Health and Safety Procedures, Risk assessments
- Review the H&S budgets annually in line with legislation and Consultants recommendation – **Yes**

Commentary

Fully compliant

The council understands how to manage its assets and facilities

Questions to consider

- How does the council deliver and review the services it provides to the community? **Maintenance programme**
- How does the council record, manage and maintain its existing assets and facilities? **Evidence in minutes from budget setting discussions and business planning meeting, Register of Assets.**
- Does the council have a process to identify potential transfer options / consider transfer requests of services and assets from its local authority? **Land registry documentation / title deeds**
- Is there adequate insurance cover in place to safeguard assets and facilities? **Insurance documentation**

Commentary

Fully complaint

Theme E – Resources and financial management

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

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

The council has suitable accounting and audit systems

Accounting Questions to consider

- What methods does the council employ to document its accounting systems and controls? **Internal Audit yearly, External audit three yearly. Schedule of accounting records maintained by the council**
- How does the council satisfy itself these meet its needs? **Reports from auditor to the council**
- How does the council satisfy itself the accounting systems and controls are operating as intended? **Standing agenda item at June and September / October meetings to confirm approval and publication of accounts, Internal and external audit reports and recommendation tracking**
- How does the council ensure that accounting records are secured and available to relevant officers? **Documented arrangements for transfer of documents on change of responsible financial officer**
- How does the council take responsibility for completing and approving the Annual Return / statement of accounts in a timely and complete manner? **Internal audit terms of reference and audit reports**

Audit questions to consider

- How does the council appoint its internal auditor? **Reviewed annually at the annual meeting**
- How often does the council review its appointment of its auditor? **Annually**
- How does the council ensure that it receives reports from both internal and external audits? **By ensuring that an experienced and proficient auditor is employed.**
- What methods does the council employ to examine and act upon both internal and external audit reports to reflect on and to improve its financial management?

Commentary

Fully complaint

The council has suitable financial management and financial assistance processes

Financial management questions to consider

- How does the council develop and approve its annual budget? **Detailed budget prepared which analyses expected receipts and payments, use of reserves etc supporting the total budget requirement to be met by the precept, Precept receipts**
- How does the council monitor its budget over the course of the financial year? **Regular monitoring of expenditure through year**
- What arrangements has the council made for the transparent approval and execution of payments? **Regular bank reconciliations prepared by responsible financial officer and subject to appropriate review, Annual report, Community engagement activity, Reflection by members, individually and jointly**

Financial Assistance questions to consider:

- How does the council determine which bodies to award financial assistance to? **Grants award policy and criteria, Minutes documenting grant awards linked to a grants policy**
- How does the council monitor the value of financial assistance awarded in each year? **Reflection by members, individually and jointly, strict criteria to be adhered too, monitoring forms given to successful grants to gain feedback.**
- How does the council manage risk and ensure confidence in its financial assistance processes? **Documented internal control procedures**

Commentary

Fully compliant

Theme F – Evaluating impact

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

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

The council assesses the benefit to the community of the work it does, to inform future activities and services

Questions to consider

- How do you know that what you have achieved for the community has been beneficial and made a difference? **Reflection by members, individually and jointly**
- What evidence do you use to understand the impact of the council's work? **Complaints and compliments, Previous year's Annual Report**
- Have you considered future changes to the community or legislation (e.g. general power of competence) to explore opportunities for new ways to help your community? **Yes, Towyn and Kinmel Bay have GPC**

Commentary
Fully complaint

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

Summary of actions	By who	By when
Review place plan terms and conditions	Place Plan Committee	ASAP
Explore increasing engagement collate the community's ideas	All Councillors	On going
Maintain social media activity	Assistant/Deputy	On going
Explore improving website to make it more accessible and user friendly	Assistant/Deputy/Clerk	March 2025
Explore creating a newsletter	Clerk/Deputy	