



# Improvement Programme 2023-24

Overview of support available to Councils

May 2023



Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

This document is also available in Welsh

**Cymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru  
Welsh Local Government Association**

**Un Rhodfa'r Gamlas**  
Heol Dumballs  
Caerdydd  
CF10 5BF  
**Ffôn: 029 2046 8600**  
**wlga.cymru**

**One Canal Parade**  
Dumballs Road  
Cardiff  
CF10 5BF  
**Tel: 029 2046 8600**  
**wlga.wales**

# **Welsh Local Government Association - The Voice of Welsh Councils**

We are The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA); a politically led cross party organisation that seeks to give local government a strong voice at a national level. We represent the interests of local government and promote local democracy in Wales.

The 22 councils in Wales are our members and the 3 fire and rescue authorities and 3 national park authorities are associate members.

**We believe that the ideas that change people's lives, happen locally.**

Communities are at their best when they feel connected to their council through local democracy. By championing, facilitating, and achieving these connections, we can build a vibrant local democracy that allows communities to thrive.

**Our ultimate goal** is to promote, protect, support and develop democratic local government and the interests of councils in Wales.

**We'll achieve our vision by**

- Promoting the role and prominence of councillors and council leaders
- Ensuring maximum local discretion in legislation or statutory guidance
- Championing and securing long-term and sustainable funding for councils
- Promoting sector-led improvement
- Encouraging a vibrant local democracy, promoting greater diversity
- Supporting councils to effectively manage their workforce

# About the WLGA Improvement Programme

*“Councils embracing the ethos of sector led improvement will be key to helping councils meet the increasingly difficult challenges that local government is, and will continue to face.”*

**Cllr Andrew Morgan OBE, Leader of Welsh Local Government Association and Leader of Rhondda Cynon Taf Council**

The WLGA Improvement Programme demonstrates the shared commitment of the WLGA and Welsh Government to promoting, supporting, and resourcing sector-led improvement across local government in Wales.

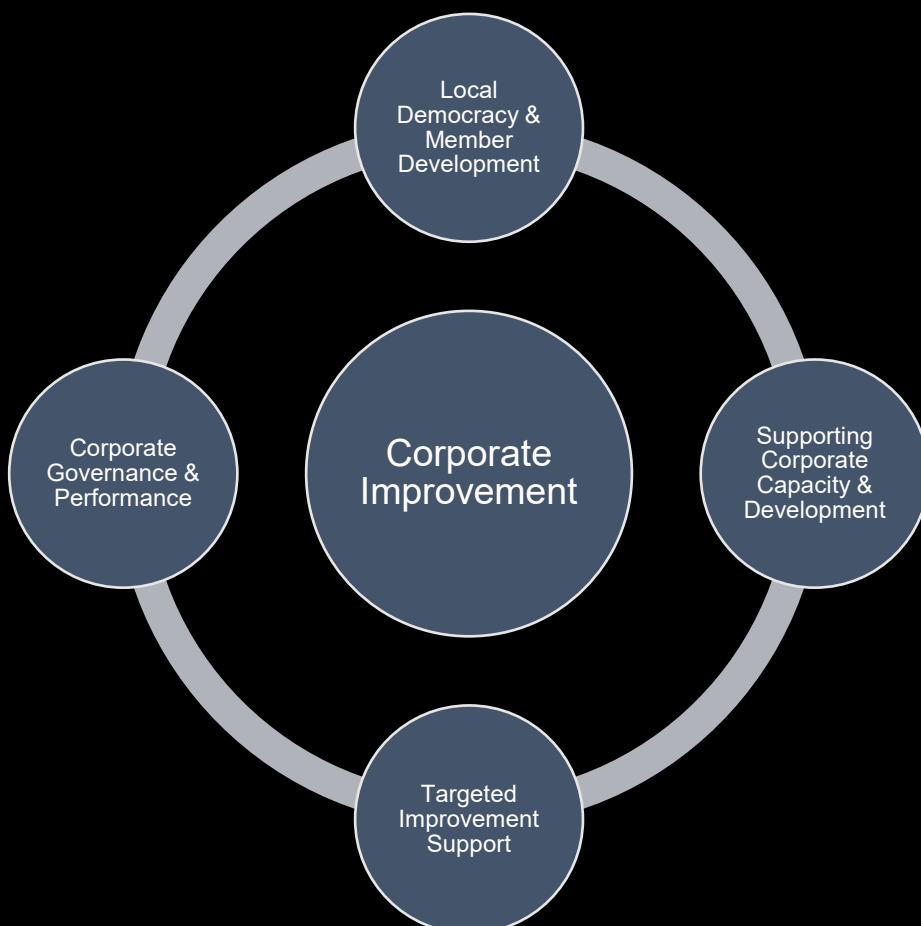
The Improvement Programme 2023-24 builds on the work undertaken over the last two years of the programme and has been informed by council self-assessments, which highlighted the following corporate themes:

- Equalities
- Scrutiny
- Data culture
- Risk management
- Public engagement and participation and community resilience
- Organisational culture
- Workforce planning
- Managing demand and capacity

In addition, we have engaged with councils and professional networks, to gain an understanding of expectations of the programme, priorities, and anticipated demand. Engagement has also been undertaken with the WLGA spokespersons and Welsh Government.

The overarching objective of the improvement programme for 2023-24 is ‘further developing enabling support around public engagement, participation and data and digital capabilities to ensure all councils engage and involve their citizens who have confidence in their performance.’

The programme is structured around the following workstreams:



This brochure provides an overview of the support available to councils across these workstreams. If you have any queries about accessing support, please contact the us at [WLGA.Improvement@wlga.gov.uk](mailto:WLGA.Improvement@wlga.gov.uk).

# Local Democracy & Member Development

This workstream aims to support to councillors and leadership teams to develop the knowledge , skills and capabilities to deliver effective leadership, governance and community engagement.

## Leadership Programme for Councillors

The Leadership Programme is an opportunity for leaders, and those in leadership positions, to explore the latest thinking in political leadership, and equip themselves with the knowledge and skills to be effective leaders. The programme is a combination of learning from experts in the field of leadership and from the experience of fellow political peers. In recognition of the challenges faced by newly appointed senior leaders, the improvement programme has funded a supplementary coaching offer which is open to participants on the programme.

For more information see: [Leadership Programme for Councillors - WLGA](#)

### Councillor Workbooks for Personal Development:

Chairing Skills  
Corporate Parenting  
Child Sexual Exploitation  
Facilitation and Conflict Resolution  
Handling Casework  
Influencing Skills  
Making Sustainable Decisions  
Safeguarding Adults  
Stress Management & Personal Resilience  
The Effective 'Ward' Councillor

Available at: [Member Development and Support - WLGA](#)

### Other Online Resources:

Social Media and Online Abuse  
Councillors Guide to Handling Intimidation  
Personal Safety for Councillors  
Personal Development Review schemes for councillors  
Councillor Development (Competency) Framework  
Councillor Role Descriptions  
Planning Handbook a Guide for Councillors  
Appointments to Outside Bodies: The Councillor's Role

Available at: [Member Development and Support - WLGA](#)

### Online Training Workshops

Chairing Skills  
Scrutiny Chairing Skills  
Scrutiny Questioning Skills  
Mentoring Skills  
Joint Scrutiny  
Introduction to the Equalities Act 2010  
Community Leadership (3 modules) New: under development  
Scrutiny of Performance (under development)  
Introduction to Anti-Racism

### Other Support

Peer Mentoring  
Senior Leadership Development Workshops  
Standards Committee Chairs Forum  
Governance & Audit Committee Chairs Network  
Scrutiny Self-Assessment Facilitation  
Data 101 Training via Data Cymru

For more information on training or support, please contact [WLGA.Improvement@wlga.gov.uk](mailto:WLGA.Improvement@wlga.gov.uk)

We strive to ensure that our offer meets the development needs of councillors and is informed by the sector. If you have feedback on the resources available or suggestions for support , please let us know, so that we can consider as we evolve the programme. Please direct any suggestions to: [WIGA.Improvement@wlga.gov.uk](mailto:WIGA.Improvement@wlga.gov.uk)

# Supporting Corporate Capacity & Development

## Senior Leadership Teams

Top Team Development  
Sessions

Solace Wales WLGAs Funded  
Coaching Offer (hs-sites.com).  
Mentoring Support (on request)

## Financial Sustainability

Bespoke peer  
support/challenge tailored to  
the requirements of the council,  
delivered by former Directors of  
Finance/Resources  
(Section 151 Officers)

## Workforce Support Commissioned via the LGA

### Strategic

Strategic Workforce Planning for Senior Leadership Team (1.5hr-2hrs  
virtual session)

Workforce Planning for Heads of Service/Managers (2.5hrs virtual  
session)

Workforce Planning, Skills and Knowledge for HR/OD/HRBP teams (2  
x 3hr virtual sessions)

### In-depth

Deep dive people analytics

Bitesize Workforce Planning Series (5 x 2.5hr virtual sessions)

## General Guidance

General power of competence  
(under development)

Public engagement evaluation  
toolkit (under development)

The Law of Consultation

## Webinars

Recruitment & Retention: The  
importance of the employer brand  
(July 2023 date TBC)

General Power of Competence  
(Autumn 2023 TBC)

*Further webinars will be developed and  
hosted during the year.*

# Corporate Governance & Performance

## Self-Assessment

Establishing and facilitating a working group to develop good practice guidance and webinar in meeting the consultation duty.

Supporting further workshops to share learning.

Collating corporate improvement priorities to inform support priorities.

## Equalities Support

Support with implementation of workforce aspects of the Anti-Racism for Wales Action Plan, including:

Positive Action training for HR teams.

Working with the Equalities Officers and Cabinet Leads to inform collective support needs.

## Panel Performance Assessment (work in progress)

Finalising the Methodology  
Councillor Peer Recruitment  
Training for Peers

## Peer Challenge and Support

Focus for 2023-24 has shifted to financial sustainability, but support will be sought for any corporate peer reviews or peer support.

## Risk Management

Collating Council Strategic Risk Registers to inform the Risk Landscape for Local Government in Wales

## Supporting Professional Networks

Equality Officers  
Heads of Policy/Performance  
Heads of Democratic Services  
Risk Managers