

12th July 2024

APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY LEADER AND SPOKESPERSONS FOR 2024-25

Purpose

1. To appoint a Deputy Leader(s) and Spokespersons to serve for the Council term 2024-25

Background

2. Section 10 of the [WLGA Constitution](#) empowers the WLGA Council to appoint a Deputy Leader/s and Spokespersons at each Annual General Meeting:

- 10.3 The Council shall, at each Annual General Meeting of the Association, appoint a Deputy Leader or Deputy Leader(s) to support the work of the Leader of the Association.*
- 10.4 The Council may appoint Spokespersons and such Deputy Spokespersons as are required with responsibility to promote the policies of the Association in specified policy areas. Spokespersons, on behalf of the Association, may undertake bilateral meetings with Welsh Government Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers, UK Government Ministers, represent the Association at committees of the Senedd or Parliament, chair meetings of cabinet member forums and fulfil the terms of reference of any relevant WLGA Advisory Group or sub-committee.*
- 10.5 The Council will appoint Spokespersons so that the number of spokespersons appointed from each political group will so far as is possible reflects the political balance of the Council.*
- 10.6 To ensure that a majority group, or coalition, on the Council can express a majority view if required, such majority group, or coalition, shall have the first choice in appointing Spokespersons.*
- 10.7 Spokespersons may convene meetings of leading members and officers from each Member Council, and with relevant professional bodies to exchange information, inform and review Association policy and report to report back to the Association*

Spokespersons

3. The Association always seeks to achieve consensus and speak with one voice whenever and wherever possible. Members have previously adopted a collective leadership approach to appointing Spokespersons to enable representation and engagement with Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers to be shared. Such an approach aims to ensures the WLGA is able to field a consistent and experienced team of members at key Welsh Government bi-lateral meetings, Partnership Council for Wales, Cabinet Member networks, Senedd Committees and Inquiries, and meetings with the Secretary of State for Wales and Members of Parliament. The Group Leaders also meet regularly as a cross-party forum for opinion and the facilitation of business.

4. At its meeting in May, the WLGA Executive Board agreed:

- Spokespersons be appointed to mirror the areas covered by the Welsh Government Cabinet Secretaries, in addition to Spokespersons for Workforce and Frontline and Regulatory Services as previously agreed;
 - Social Partnership be covered by the Workforce Spokespersons and social care to be covered by the health and Social Care portfolio. In relation to Mental Health and Early Years, it is proposed Mental Health be picked up by the health and social care portfolio and Early Years to be covered by the Education brief;
 - Issues that fall within the corporate policy and services portfolio in the WLGA (such as electoral reform, civility in public life etc) to be covered by the Spokesperson for Finance and Constitution as the lead but recognising the need to work with other Spokespersons as appropriate to the issue being considered, such as their lead role in facilitating the development of a partnership agreement between Welsh Government and local government;
 - The creation of a Data, Digital and Improvement Spokesperson role;
5. To aim for a maximum of 3 Spokespersons per portfolio, with a lead spokesperson to be identified and agreed by members;
 6. Once appointed, Spokespersons to determine how they will operate as a 'team', for example, whether there is a lead for specific issues within the portfolio, approval processes for correspondence, chairing meetings etc;
 7. Members may wish to consider appointing a Deputy Spokesperson for each portfolio to add resilience, support succession planning and provide the opportunity for members to gain experience;
- In appointing Spokespersons, consideration should be given to how the role matches with member skills, preferences and areas of interest/knowledge; and
 - Spokespersons to agree with officers how they want to be undertake and be supported in their roles and any priority issues for action, also noting the WLGA's strategic corporate priorities that have been agreed for that area of work.

8. The list of Spokespersons agreed for 2023-24 is below for reference:

Finance	Cllr Anthony Hunt (Torfaen) – Labour Cllr Steve Thomas (Blaenau Gwent) – Labour Cllr Mark Pritchard (Wrexham) – Independent Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn (Gwynedd) – Plaid Cymru
Digital & Innovation	Cllr Jane Mudd (Newport) – Labour Cllr Neil Prior (Pembrokeshire) – Independent
Economy	Cllr Rob Stewart (Swansea) – Labour Cllr Huw Thomas (Cardiff) – Labour Cllr Jason McLellan (Denbighshire) – Labour Cllr Carwyn Jones (Ynys Mon) – Plaid Cymru
Rural	Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn (Gwynedd) – Plaid Cymru Cllr Lis Burnett (Vale of Glamorgan) – Labour Cllr James Gibson-Watt (Powys) – Lib Dem
Workforce	Cllr Anthony Hunt (Torfaen) – Labour Cllr Jane Gebbie (Bridgend) – Labour Cllr Rob Stewart (Swansea) – Labour Cllr Robin Williams (Ynys Mon) - Plaid Cymru
Social Justice	Community safety – Cllrs Jane Mudd and Emily Owen Fire and Rescue – Cllr Emily Owen, Cllr Lis Burnett Armed Forces – Cllr Lis Burnett

	Migration – Cllrs Mary Anne Brocklesby, Cllr Nia Wyn Jeffreys, Cllr Jason McLellan Equalities – Cllr Mary Anne Brocklesby, Cllr Nia Wyn Jeffreys, Cllr Jason McLellan
Climate Change	Cllr Andrew Morgan (RCT) – Labour Cllr Andrea Lewis (Swansea) – Housing – Labour Cllr Keith Henson (Ceredigion) – Plaid Cymru Cllr Geraint Thomas (Merthyr Tydfil) – Independent Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby (Monmouthshire) – Labour
Health & Social Services	Cllr Huw David (Bridgend) – Labour Cllr Llinos Medi (Ynys Mon) – Plaid Cymru Cllr Charlie McCoubrey (Conwy) - Independent Cllr Norma Mackie (Cardiff) – Labour
Education & Welsh Language	Cllr Ian Roberts (Flintshire) – Labour Cllr Darren Price (Carmarthenshire) – Plaid Cymru
Public Health & Regulatory Services	Cllr Steve Thomas (Blaenau Gwent) – Labour Cllr Mathew Vaux (Ceredigion) – Plaid Cymru

9. The proposed portfolios for WLGA Spokespersons in 2024-25 are:

1. Climate Change and Rural Affairs
2. Culture and Social Justice
3. Data, Digital and Improvement
4. Economy, Energy and Welsh Language
5. Education (including Early Years)
6. Finance and Constitution
7. Frontline and Regulatory Services
8. Health and Social Care (including Mental Health)
9. Housing, Local Government and Planning
10. North Wales and Transport
11. Workforce (including Social Partnership)

10. There would also be a WLGA Presiding Officer, Deputy Presiding Officers, Leader, Deputy Leader and Group Leaders, all of whom may be appointed as a Spokesperson or provide support as part of a Spokesperson 'team'.

Recommendations

11. The WLGA Council is invited to:

- 11.1 Confirm the appointment of a Deputy Leader(s) for the Council term 2024-25; and**
- 11.2 Agree the members to undertake the roles of Spokespersons for the Council term 2024-25.**

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