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**Project Vote 2022: Local council elections**

**Lesson Plans 1-3**

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**Links to the UNCRC**

* Article 2: All children have these rights no matter what. All children should be treated equally.
* Article 12: You have the right to be listened to and taken seriously.
* Article 13: You have the right to find out and share information, and say what you think.
* Article 17: You have the right to honest information from the media that you can understand, as long as it’s safe.
* Article 29: You have the right to be the best you can be. Education must help you develop your skills and talents to the full

**Curriculum links**

FOUR PURPOSES

* ambitious, capable learners
* enterprising, creative contributors
* ethical, informed citizens
* healthy, confident individuals

HEALTH AND WELLBEING AoLE

* Our decision-making impacts on the quality of our lives and the lives of others
* How we engage with social influences shapes who we are and affects our health and well-being

HUMANITIES AoLE

* Enquiry, exploration and investigation inspire curiosity about the world, its past, present and future
* Events and human experiences are complex, and are perceived, interpreted and represented in different ways
* Human societies are complex and diverse, and shaped by human actions and beliefs
* Informed, self-aware citizens engage with the challenges and opportunities that face humanity, and are able to take considered and ethical action

**Information for teachers/group leaders: lesson plans**

* The purpose of the lesson plans is to develop students’ knowledge and understanding of local council elections before they take part in an online vote.
* We have provided Lessons 1-3 which cover learning about local councils and will publish Lesson 4, which supports your students to research candidates standing for election, in March 2022.
* We also have Project Vote lesson plans for young people with additional learning needs, [available here.](https://www.projectvote.wales/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/ALN-ENG.docx)
* We have included approximate timings for each activity as a guide but you can adapt them for your class or group.
* If your school/group took part in Project Vote 2021 (Senedd elections) you could remind students of this and what they did when you begin the lessons.
* You may wish to read Welsh Government’s [Teaching citizenship and politics education: guidance for practitioners on remaining impartial](https://info.childcomwales.org.uk/WI-3997/Shared%20Documents/Lesson%20plans/Teaching%20citizenship%20and%20politics%20education:%20guidance%20for%20practitioners%20on%20remaining%20impartial) before delivering the lessons.
* You may wish to establish some ‘ground rules’ / ‘making it work’ before engaging in any debates or discussion.
* You may wish to support the lesson plans with other activities and lessons on democracy or citizenship. We have included some suggestions on page 6.

**Information for teachers/group leaders: voting**

* In May you will be sent a link to pass on to your students so that they can vote online. The link will be open from 3rd – 5th May 2022, to coincide with the real local council elections.
* Voting, including researching candidates, will be covered in lesson 4, which you'll receive a link to in March 2022.

**Additional resources**

[Electoral Commission: Welcome to your vote](https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/welcome-your-vote)

Political literacy resources for 14 – 18 year olds. You could use some of the activities from this resource to complement and support the lesson plans below.

[The Politics Project: Digital Dialogue Wales](https://www.thepoliticsproject.org.uk/digital-dialogue-wales)

Funded by Welsh Government and designed to support the new curriculum, this free of charge programme brings together students and their local politicians through video conferencing. It offers free teacher CPD, 3 hours of teaching resources and online engagements with local and national politicians.

To be involved with this opportunity, please contact The Politics Project **before** **February half-term**.

[Welsh Government: Voice2Vote](https://hwb.gov.wales/search?query=voice2vote&strict=true&popupUri=%2FResource%2F7837e755-a522-4bb9-9d10-6b3dc78e4e60)

A resource aimed for use with young people aged 13 and over in Wales which bring to life why young people should vote.

[Omidaze Productions: The Democracy Box](https://www.omidaze.co.uk/blog/our-democracy-story-that-every-uk-citizen-should-know-in-five-chapters/)

Resources (including a podcast, raps and videos) co-created with young people to explain democracy in the UK.

The Children’s Commissioner for Wales is not responsible for the content from any external links.

**Lesson 1: Intro lesson**

Preparation for teachers:

* [Lesson 1 PowerPoint slides](https://www.projectvote.wales/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Lesson-1-2.pptx) - you may wish to adapt them for your school/group.
* Establish which local council your school or group falls under (e.g. Wrexham County Borough Council)
* [Link to the Kahoot quiz](https://play.kahoot.it/v2/?quizId=882ad26b-e4cd-40cc-9d99-e43e2b6d512f)
* [Local councils video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_kUf3q-GFQ0)
* [Project Vote video](https://youtu.be/71NLLgyK9o4)

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| **Learning outcome** | **Activity** | **Additional information** |
| Students understand that votes occur in different aspects of their lives | Begin by exploring different types of votes with students. Ask your students: - What is a vote? - Can you think of any examples of things where people use a vote?  - What’s the purpose of a vote?  If nobody has said elections, then make sure to include it after listening to all responses.  Elections are where we choose the people who make decisions which affect all of our lives.  (5 mins) | You could prompt students by giving them examples e.g. school council, Strictly Come Dancing, Eurovision  **Adaptation:** You could demonstrate how a vote works with students by voting together e.g. hold a vote whether cats or dogs are better, hold a vote to choose a specific activity |
| Students understand the different types of elections that happen in Wales  Students understand which local council area they live and learn in | Remind students that there are different elections that happen in Wales. In these elections, we vote for who want to represent us and make decisions which affect us all.  Show students the PowerPoint slides to show the key differences between the three elections.  In the Senedd/Welsh Parliament election, people in Wales choose who will make decisions that affect Wales alone.  In the UK election, also called a General Election, people in Wales and all over the UK choose who will make decisions that affect the whole of the UK.  In local elections, people choose who will make decisions that affect their local area (e.g. Conwy, Newport).  A summary table is included below:   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Senedd/Welsh Parliament election** | **UK Parliament election** | **Local council election** | | First Minister Mark Drakeford | Prime Minister Boris Johnson | Each council will have a different leader | | Members of the Senedd (MSs) | Members of Parliament (MPs) | Local councillors | | Some of the things they have control over:  - The NHS in Wales - The curriculum for schools - Where our energy comes from - Coronavirus regulations | Some of the things they have control over:  - Immigration - The Police - Rules for social media companies to follow - Armed Forces | Things they have control over:  - Collecting waste and recycling - Caring for people who need extra help at home, for instance elderly people - Roads, footpaths and cycle paths - Parks - School transport | | Age you can vote in an election:  16+ | Age you can vote in an election:  18+ | Age you can vote in an election (in Wales):  16+ |   Explain to students that over the next few lessons you will be looking at local council elections. In May 2022, 16 and 17 year olds will be able to vote in local council elections for the first time.  Show students the picture of the local council map (on the Powerpoint slides).  Ask students: - Can you work out which council your school/group is in?  - Does the place you live come under the same council?  Explain that in an election, some people vote by post, but most people will go to a particular place (a polling station) in their community on Election Day. There, they will be given a list of people running for the election (a ballot paper). People are given private space to put an X next to the person they want to win the election on the ballot paper and then put their vote in a box to be counted. You choose the people who represent the area you live in at the council by voting to make them your local councillor.  Play this video from the Electoral Commission to give a brief insight into local councils: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_kUf3q-GFQ0>  Ask students to feed back some of the things they learned from the video.  (10 mins) | Sometimes local councils are referred to as local authorities.  You could display a picture of your local council logo and/or local council building in this section when discussing local councils. You could also display pictures of the Senedd & Westminster when talking about those elections.  **Adaptation:** You could use the information in the summary table to turn this into a card sort activity, then show the Powerpoint slides to the class to check whether they were correct.  **Adaptation:** You could show students maps of the local council area, Wales and the whole UK to reinforce the differences and to illustrate the size of the area they cover |
| Students understand some of the things their local council has control over | Tell students that you’re going to do a quiz which will help them think about who makes different decisions in Wales. They'll learn more about some of the things under their local council's control.  You can access the Kahoot quiz here: <https://play.kahoot.it/v2/?quizId=882ad26b-e4cd-40cc-9d99-e43e2b6d512f>  (10 mins) | During the quiz, pupils will have three possible answers to each question: the council; the Welsh Government; or the UK Government. |
| Students understand the kind of discussions councillors have in council meetings  Students explore views and opinions related to things the local council has control over | Tell students that the council is made up of people called councillors. We vote for the person we want to represent us and the person with the most votes wins. Councillors make decisions which affect everybody in the county.  Ask the class or group to imagine that they are the local council for the area and they are all local councillors. Explain that you are going to give them a chance to discuss a topic, as councillors may do in their work. You can propose one of the topics below, or choose your own, as long as it is related to local council’s powers.   * Black bins should only be collected once a month to make people recycle more * Street lamps should be turned off at 11pm every day to save the council money * New cycle paths should be built to help young people cycle or walk to school * All school buses should have wi-fi and charging ports * There should be a zebra crossing every 100 metres on every road * All libraries should have cafes in them * Theatre shows should be free for under 16s   (20 mins) | You could consider using a ‘talking stick’ or using ‘talking tokens’ (everybody gets 3 tokens and has to hand them back each time they speak) to ensure everybody gets a chance to speak during the discussion.  You may wish to swap this activity with the ‘voting with your feet’ activity in Lesson 3, if you feel that a discussion would not be appropriate for your students during the first lesson. |
| Students understand that their school/group is taking part in Project Vote 2022 | Explain that councillors often have discussions or debates like this. Councillors usually push for the things they think would benefit the people living in the area. They do this by listening to local people and making sure they share their views in council meetings.  Remind students that over the next few lessons, you will be learning more about local councils, councillors and new candidates standing for election in their area.  Over 3-5 May 2022, students will have the chance to take part in a parallel vote to indicate which candidate they would vote for.  Remind pupils that when they are 14 they can register to take part in a real election, although they won't be able to vote until they are 16, or 18 for a UK Parliament election. To take part in a real election, you have to register. They can do this by going to <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>  Play [this video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=71NLLgyK9o4) for students to learn more about Project Vote:  Reinforce learning by asking students:  - Can you remember the name of your local council? - Can you name something the local council has control over?  (5 mins) | **Extension activity:** Divide students into groups of 2-4 people. Give each group a set of the domino cards in [Appendix 1](#_Appendix_1) and ask them to shuffle and divide the between group members. Tell students that they will need to start by placing the ‘ELECTION’ domino on the table. Then, they need to place the domino with the definition for ‘ELECTION’ next to it. Repeat this until they have placed all their dominoes. |

**Lesson 2: Councils**

Preparation for teachers:

* [Lesson 2 PowerPoint slides](https://www.projectvote.wales/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Lesson-2-2.pptx) - you may wish to adapt them for your school/group.
* [Local councils video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_kUf3q-GFQ0)
* A list of things that local councils have control over ([in the guidance for teachers](https://www.projectvote.wales/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Teacher-Guidance.docx))
* [Street scene picture](https://www.projectvote.wales/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/streetscene_colour_finalflat-scaled.jpg)
* [Street scene picture with answers](https://www.projectvote.wales/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/streetscene_colour_finalflatcircled-scaled.jpg)

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| **Learning outcome** | **Activity** | **Additional information** |
| Re-cap on previous lesson | Remind students that you are learning about a particular type of election. Ask students: - Can you remember which election you are learning about? - Can you remember the name of your local council?  - Can you remember how old you have to be to vote in local council elections in Wales? - Can you share anything else that you learned in the last lesson?  Explain that in this lesson you are going to be thinking about what a local council does.  Play this short video to introduce the lesson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_kUf3q-GFQ0>  (10 mins) | You could share an image of the local council area or local council building. |
| Students understand some of the things local councils have control over | Tell students you are going to start thinking about what things your local council has control over.  Councils have to provide certain services to the people who live in the area. These are set out in the law, so they have to do them.  Ask students to get into groups of 4 or 5 and do one of the following activities:  **Option 1**  Give each group [this picture](https://www.projectvote.wales/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/streetscene_colour_finalflat-scaled.jpg) to look at.  Ask students to look at the picture and ask them to circle, mark or put post-its on the things they think councils have control over.  Allow 5 minutes for feedback after whichever activity you choose. Ask students to share which areas they think the council has control over.  **Option 2**   Give each groups a big piece of paper and some pens.  Ask students to draw their local area. This could be your school/your meeting point and the surrounding area or it could be a central point all students are familiar with.  Ask students to mark the places or things in their drawing which they think the local council has control over.   (20 mins) | You may want to have a list of things the council control to confirm with students as they feed back. [Here is a list](https://www.projectvote.wales/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Teacher-Guidance.docx) you can use. You can also use [the street scene with answers](https://www.projectvote.wales/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/streetscene_colour_finalflatcircled-scaled.jpg) to confirm their answers.  The illustration used in this activity was created by artist Frank Duffy.  **Adaptation:** You could use the symbols cards [in this supporting resource](https://www.projectvote.wales/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/PV-ALN-resource-english.pdf) and ask students to match the cards with the corresponding area in the illustration.  **Extension activity:** In groups, ask students to go out in their community (this could be the area immediately outside the school or could be the area where they live). Ask students to take photos or videos of things they think the council have control over. Share what they found with the rest of class through a PowerPoint or video. |
| Students explore their priorities for local councils | Explain that most people living in the area give money to the council to provide and maintain these services. This is called council tax. The council receives the money and then decides where to spend it.  Ask students to imagine that they are the local council and they have received £20million in council tax.  Give the groups 10 minutes to decide on what things and places they would prioritise spending the money. Are there any things in their local area that the council needs to improve?  The money can only be used on things the council has control over. They can use what they learned in the last activity to help them.  Ask students to feedback and write their answers on the board as they do. Group together or tally any answers which are the same or similar.  (15 mins) | You could display the list of things the council has control over at the front of the class.  **Adaptation:** You could use the symbols cards [in this supporting resource](https://www.projectvote.wales/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/PV-ALN-resource-english.pdf) to give to students to rank using a ‘Diamond 9’ ranking to illustrate their priorities |
| Re-cap on lesson  Students consider the importance of elections and how relevant they are to their lives | Ask students to think back and reflect on what they’ve learned today and in Lesson 1. Ask students to consider:  - How relevant are local council elections to young people’s lives?  - Are all types of elections equally relevant?  (5 mins) | You could display the table/PowerPoint showing different types of elections at the front of the class here. |

**Lesson 3: Councillors**

Preparation for teachers:

* [Lesson 3 PowerPoint slides](https://www.projectvote.wales/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Lesson-3-2.pptx) - you may wish to adapt them for your school/group.
* True or False statements – either [printed](#_Appendix_2) and cut or using [WordWall](https://wordwall.net/play/26740/511/661)
* A list of all wards in your local council. [Use this website](https://www.projectvote.wales/wards-by-council/) to help.
* Paper/stickers/tokens for final activity

Additional opportunity:

If you would like an opportunity for your students to meet your local councillors, check out The Politics Project's Digital Dialogue: Wales programme. It offers free teacher CPD, 3 hours of teaching resources and online engagements with local and national politicians.

Funded by the Welsh government and designed to support the new curriculum, the free of charge programme brings together students and their local politicians through video conferencing.

Find out more [here](https://www.thepoliticsproject.org.uk/digital-dialogue-wales).

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| **Learning outcome** | **Activity** | **Additional information** |
| Students understand that some councillors represent a political party  Students understand that some councillors stand as independent candidates | Tell the pupils that you’re going to be thinking more about councillors in this lesson. These are the people who are voted for or elected to represent your local area at the local council.  Some councillors represent a political party. Can pupils name any political parties? Can pupils explain what a political party is?  A political party is an organization of people who work together because they share the same views about the way power should be used in a country or society.  Some councillors stand as ‘independents’. Can pupils guess what this means?  Independent councillors are not a part of any political party.  (5 mins) |  |
| Students understand some of councillors’ day-to-day duties | Tell students they’re going to be thinking about what councillors do as part of their role.  Give students the statements below (see [Appendix 2](#_Appendix_2) for print version) and ask them to sort them into ‘TRUE’ and ‘FALSE’ categories. They can do this individually or in pairs.  **TRUE**   * Find out what’s important to local people and share their views in council meetings * Take part in council debates and decisions * Be honest, open, and respectful   **FALSE**   * Travel to the Senedd in Cardiff to work * Invite members of the public to their house for dinner * Have regular meetings with Boris Johnson   Share the correct answers with the class/group.  (10 mins) | You can do this activity by cutting out sets of the statements to do in groups, displaying the statements at the front of the class or by using this [WordWall link.](https://wordwall.net/play/26740/511/661)  You could finish the activity by asking students whether they have ever interacted with a local councillor e.g. have they ever contacted them with an issue? Have they ever seen them at an event?  **Extension activity:**  [Play this video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3o0eKrX2Ds) on local councillors up to **2:25 mins**. Ask your students one or more of the following questions:  - The video says that the average age of a councillor is 60. How do you feel about this? - The video says that 99% of councillors are white. How do you feel about this? - Do you think it’s important that councils are diverse? Why or why not?  - Would you ever consider being a councillor? |
| Students understand that council areas are broken down into wards | Councillors represent a specific area, known as a ward. Every council area is broken up into wards.    Ask students if they can remember which council area they live in, which they learn about in previous lessons.    Tell students that each council area is broken up into smaller parts called wards. When we vote in local elections, we vote for somebody to represent the views of the people who live in our ward.  You could explain this with the analogy that the council area is the school while the wards are the different classes within the school. In school council elections they may do something similar by electing a representative (like a councillor) for each class (like a ward).    Ask students to use the website [www.writetothem.com](http://www.writetothem.com) to find out their ward, using their home postcode.    What's the name of their ward?  Can they see who their current councillors are?    Ask students to now use the school/youth group’s postcode on the website.    Do they live in the same ward as the school?  Why do they think it's important that they vote for people representing their ward, as opposed to the whole council area e.g. the whole of Powys? Remember the school analogy - why do you need a representative from every class?  (15 mins) |  |
| Students understand that people hold a range of opinions and views  Students understand the impact of voting/not voting | Ask your students to stand on their feet. Explain that one end of the room is ‘strongly agree’ and the other side ‘strongly disagree’. Start by sharing a statement from Round 1 and ask students to stand in a line, depending on how much they agree or disagree with the statement. If they’re not sure they can stand in the middle.  Ask students to look at the line. Is everybody standing in the same place? Does everybody necessarily STRONGLY agree or disagree? People’s opinions can vary.  Repeat the activity with another statement from Round 1.  Ask students to look at the line. Did everybody who felt the same way about Rich Teas feel the same way about Radio 1? People may agree with each other on one issue but that doesn’t necessarily mean they agree on every single thing.  Everybody has a different range of views and it’s important that all of these views are listened to.  Repeat the activity with a statement from Round 2. This time, give half of the students a token to distinguish them from the other half (a sticker, a piece of paper to hold, something to hold). Tell them that you will explain what this means later.  Repeat the activity with another statement from Round 2. After the students have indicated their opinion, ask those **without** a token to step out of line.  Ask students to imagine that those with a token are those who went out to vote. At the last local elections in Wales, only around 50% or less of people voted in their local elections.  Ask your students: - What does this mean for the people without a token?  - Is voting important? Why or why not? - More specifically, is voting important to young people?  Remind students that the people who vote and take part in local democracy will be the voices that councillors hear and will be able to influence what councillors discuss and support in council meetings. Voting gives you a say over who has control over your local area.  (15 mins) | You may wish to swap this activity with the discussion/debate in Lesson 1.  Round 1:  - Rich Teas are the best biscuit  - BBC Radio 1 plays good music - Football players earn too much money  Round 2:  - School canteens should do Meat Free Mondays - Towns and cities should have local businesses only and no chains e.g. no McDonalds, no JD Sports - Town and city centres should be car-free to encourage people to use public transport  This activity has been adapted from the Voice2Vote resource pack by Welsh Government.  **Extension activity:** Ask students to create a short video, between 15 seconds and 1 minute to persuade people to vote in local council elections. |
|  | Ask your students to write a ‘Tweet’ or short sentence summarising something they’ve learned today. Then, ask them to share with a partner. Finally, ask for students to share their ‘Tweet’ with the class.  Remind students that in the next lesson they will have the opportunity to research the candidates standing for election in their area and will be able to take part in a parallel election and vote for the party they think best represent their views.  Remind pupils that when they are 14 they can register to take part in a real election. But they will need to be 16 before they can vote, and 18 to vote in the UK Parliament election. To take part in a real election, you have to register. They can do this by going to <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>  (10 mins) |  |

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# **Appendix 1 –** cut in strips along the horizontal line

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|  | ELECTION |
| a time when people vote in order to choose someone for a political or official job | POLITICAL PARTY |
| an organization of people with particular political beliefs that competes in elections | DEMOCRACY |
| the belief that everyone in a country has the right to express their opinions, and that power should be held by the people, through the people they elect | LOCAL COUNCIL/AUTHORITY |
| an official organization that is responsible for governing an area of the country | INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE |
| a politician who does not represent a political party | WARD |
| one of the areas into which a city or town is divided | COUNCILLOR |
| an elected member of a local council | LOCAL SERVICES |
| responsible for a particular type of activity or a particular thing that people need |  |

# **Appendix 2**

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| Find out what’s important to local people and share their views in the council |
| Take part in council debates and decisions |
| Be honest, open, and respectful |
| Travel to the Senedd in Cardiff to work |
| Invite members of the public to their house for dinner |
| Have regular meetings with Boris Johnson |