

Democratic Services Committee

(Multi Location Meeting – Port Talbot Civic Centre & Microsoft Teams)

Members Present:

4 September 2023

Chairperson: Councillor S.Rahaman

Vice Chairperson: Councillor N.Goldup-John

Councillors: W.Carpenter, J.Hale, M.Harvey, J.Henton, A.R.Lockyer, P.Rogers, C.Williams and S.Thomas

Officers In Attendance C.Griffiths, S.Curran, T.Rees and P.Chivers

1. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th April 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.

3. **Forward Work Programme**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services provided an overview of the Forward Work Programme which contains standard items required under the Local Government Wales Measure and other matters for consideration. Members were reminded that any further specific matters that members may want to add to the programme should be advised to the Chair of the committee, Democratic Services or raised through this meeting.

The Forward Work Programme was noted.

4. **Democratic Services Annual Report 2022-2023**

Members commented that Cllr. P Rogers and Cllr. W Carpenter were missing from the list of committee members in the annual report, this omission will be rectified by officers

Resolved: That the Democratic Services Committee note and endorse the Annual Report 2022/23 attached at Appendix 1 and commend the same to Council.

5. **Draft Member Training & Development, and Seminar Programme**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised members that the council has a legal requirement to provide training and development opportunities for elected members. A summary of the report and the Members training programme for 2023/2024 was provided. The WLGA training programme is contained within the agenda pack and compliments the Members Training and Development Programme.

Resolved: That Members approve the Draft Members' Development and Training Programme (and Seminar Schedule) for 2023/24 contained in Appendix 1.

6. **Local Democracy Week**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services provided an overview of the report contained in the agenda pack.

Members asked how effective the Citizens Panel was; how often does it meet and in what forum. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services confirmed that the panel were generally contacted for their views via surveys and information was emailed back to the relevant officer. Feedback on policies and proposed new arrangements could be sought from the panel as and when required before policy development is undertaken. Members commented that there was a limit to the amount of times annually, that panel members could be contacted.

This item was noted.

7. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

CHAIRPERSON