



DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

2.00 PM MONDAY, 8 APRIL 2024

***HYBRID - CONFERENCE ROOM, PORT TALBOT CIVIC CENTRE AND
MICROSOFT TEAMS***

All mobile telephones to be switched to silent for the duration of the meeting

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PART 1- Democratic Services Committee Business

1. Declarations of Interest
2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (*Pages 3 - 6*)
 - 27 November 2023
3. Forward Work Programme (*Pages 7 - 10*)
4. Independent Remuneration Panel Wales Final Report (*Pages 11 - 18*)
5. Democratic Services Committee Annual Report (*Pages 19 - 32*)

PART 2- Task and Finish

6. Task and Finish Scoping; Dealing with Harassment and Intimidation and Diversity in Democracy (*Pages 33 - 36*)
7. Urgent Items

Any urgent items at the discretion of the Chairperson pursuant to Section 100BA(6)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

K.Jones
Chief Executive

Civic Centre
Port Talbot

2nd April 2024

Committee Membership:

Chairperson: **Councillor S.Rahaman**

Vice **Councillor N.Goldup-John**
Chairperson:

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

Democratic Services Committee

(Multi-Location Meeting - Council Chamber, Port Talbot & Microsoft Teams)

Members Present:

27 November 2023

Chairperson: Councillor S.Rahaman

Vice Chairperson: Councillor N.Goldup-John

Councillors: M.Harvey, A.R.Lockyer, A.Lodwig, P.A.Rees, S.H.Reynolds, P.Rogers and C.Williams

Officers In Attendance C.Griffiths, S.Curran 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 4th September 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.

3. **Forward Work Programme**

The Forward Work Programme was noted.

4. **Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Draft Annual Report 2024**

The Democratic Services Manager provided an overview of the report contained in the agenda pack. The proposals by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, if implemented, would impact Member remuneration in the civic year 2024/2025.

Resolved: That the Committee considers and comments on the Determinations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales in their draft Annual Report for 2024/25.

Resolved: That the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to make a response on behalf of the Democratic Service Committee reflecting the decision and comments made at the meeting, to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

Resolved: That the Head of Democratic Services issue Question 4 of the consultation document to all elected Members and co-opted members for them to respond to individually.

5. Member Annual Reports

The Democratic Services Manager provided an overview of the report contained in the agenda pack and reminded members that support was available for any member who wished to produce an annual report.

Members asked how many annual reports have been produced since the last election.

The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that only a very small amount of annual reports had been produced and all annual reports are published on the council website. It was noted that current technology may allow for members feedback to be produced in various other formats.

Resolved: It is recommended that, having due regard that no integrated impact assessment is required that the Democratic Services Committee note the Members Annual Report Scheme and that the Democratic Services Manager communicates with all Members via email, reminding them of the scheme and inviting them to complete an Annual Report should they so wish.

6. Member Personal Development Reviews

The Democratic Services Manager provided an overview of the report contained in the agenda pack and outlined the current policy in relation to the Members Annual Development Review process.

Resolved: It is recommended, that having due regard to the fact that no integrated impact assessment is required that the Democratic Services Committee:

- Note the Members Personal Development Review Scheme
- Approves that the Democratic Services Manager will communicate with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and political groups to explore a cohort of current members to undertake the training to conduct Personal Development Reviews.
- Approves that the Democratic Services Manager will communicate with all Members via email, reminding them of the scheme and inviting them to complete a Personal Development Review should they so wish.

7. **Proposal to establish a Task and Finish Group on Handling Harassment, Abuse and Intimidation for Councillors**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services provided an overview of the report contained in the agenda pack and outlined the proposal to establish a Task and Finish Group.

Members welcomed the establishment of a Task and Finish Group and commented that there had been a change in terms of people's actions and attitudes since the pandemic with increased levels of online abuse. Members noted that it would be useful to look at information that may be available in the education sphere and to identify why there has been a change in culture and any underlying issues.

Resolved: It is recommended that Democratic Services Committee: Approve the establishment of a Task and Finish Group of the Democratic Services Committee to focus on handling harassment abuse and intimidation for Councillors while promoting Councillor safety at a local level.

8. **Proposal to establish a Task and Finish Group on Diversity in Democracy.**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services outlined the proposal to establish a Task and Finish Group in respect of updating the

Council's Diversity in Democracy Action Plan. If approved, the Diversity in Democracy Task and Finish group and the Harassment, Abuse and Intimidation Task and Finish group would run concurrently.

Members asked if external organisations could be invited to participate under the Task and Finish group remit.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services confirmed that external organisations could be invited under the remit of the Task and Finish Group to ensure the group is as wide ranging as possible and it will be for members of Task and Finish Group to determine whom they might wish to consider hearing from.

Resolved: It is recommended that Democratic Services Committee approve the establishment of a Task and Finish Group of the Democratic Services Committee to focus on developing the next phase of Diversity in Democracy for the Council, considering national developments and local priorities.

9. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

**Cllr. S Rahaman
CHAIRPERSON**

Democratic Committee Services
Forward Work Programme 2023/24

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Type	Contact Officer
<u>4th September 2023</u>	Forward Work Programme Consideration	Discussion	Craig Griffiths/Stacy Curran
	Draft Training Programme for Members	Decision	Craig Griffiths/Stacy Curran
	Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2022/23	Information	Craig Griffiths/Stacy Curran
	Local Democracy Week 2023	Decision	Craig Griffiths/Stacy Curran
<u>27th November 2023</u>	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Draft Annual Report – February 2024	Information and comment	Craig Griffiths/Stacy Curran
	Member Annual Reports	Decision	Craig Griffiths/Stacy Curran
	Member PDRs	Decision	Craig Griffiths/Stacy Curran
	Harassment and Intimidation	Decision	Craig Griffiths/Stacy Curran
	Diversity in Democracy	Decision	Craig Griffiths/Stacy Curran/Rhys George
	Annual Review of E-Petitions/Public Speaking	Decision	Craig Griffiths/Stacy Curran

	Assessment of Resources for Democratic Services (REQUESTED 6 MONTHLY)	Information	Craig Griffiths/Stacy Curran
<u>8th April 2024</u> <u>SECOND PART OF MEETING T&F GROUPS</u>	Assessment of Resources for Democratic Services (DELAY TILL AFTER SCRUTINY MODEL STAFFING ADJUSTMENTS)		
	Annual member survey and Timing of Meetings (DELAY TILL AFTER SCRUTINY MODEL SETTLED IN)		
	Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 23/24	Decision	Craig Griffiths/Stacy Curran
	IRPW Final Report	Information	Craig Griffiths/Stacy Curran

2024/2025

- Annual Review of E-Petitions/Public Speaking
- Review Diversity in Democracy Action Plan
- Draft Protocol for research & member support (WLGA)
- Draft charter (WLGA)
- WLGA Democracy Handbook

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NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Democratic Services Committee

8th April 2024

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services – Mr Craig Griffiths

Matter for Information

Wards Affected:

All wards

Annual Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales 2024/25

Purpose of the Report:

To advise Members of the Democratic Services Committee of the content of the final Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales for the civic year 2024/2025.

The link to the annual report is [Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales: annual report 2024 to 2025 | GOV.WALES](#)

Background:

The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) exercises powers set out in various legislation and can also make recommendations. It has the power to set the level of remuneration payable to elected members and co-opted members of local authorities. It has also been given a general power to review councils' pay policy statements as far as they relate to heads of paid service, extended on a temporary basis to chief officers of principal authorities

Annual Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales

Each year, and before making its final determinations for the next civic year, the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales publishes a draft report and invites comments on its draft proposals. The proposals proposed for the civic year 2024-25 were considered by this Committee in November 2023.

A copy of the consultation responses as agreed at the November meeting of the Democratic Services Committee are attached at **Appendix 1**.

Members of the Committee were encouraged to respond individually to Question 4 of the consultation, which requested an individual response from members.

All members of the Council were sent a copy of the draft report and encouraged to respond to the consultation questions in their own right.

The IRPW has now published its final proposals for the civic year 2024-25 and Members are asked to note that proposals are unchanged from those contained in the draft report.

The proposed changes that would affect the existing arrangements in this Council are summarised in the table below:

Element of Remunerations	Current:	Proposed 24/25
Basic Salary	£17,600	£18,666
Leader	£59,400	£62,998
Deputy Leader	£41, 580	£44,099
Executive Members	£35,640	£37,799
Chairs of Committee	£26,400	£27,999
Leader of largest opposition Group	£26,400	£27,999

Leader of other Political Group	£21,340	£22,406
Civic Head	£26,400	£27,999
Deputy Civic Head	£21,340	£22,406

Payments made to co opted members of Principal Councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities:

The current Determination (made in the 2022 to 2023 Annual Report) states that co opted members of the relevant bodies should be remunerated on a day or half day basis. In addition, the relevant officer may decide on the total number of days remunerated in a year and set a reasonable time for meeting preparation.

The Panel has noted the changes to working practices, put in place during Covid and now becoming more routine, that has meant a move towards more frequent use of online meetings and or training courses, often short, as well as more regular committee meetings. The panel also received feedback from Heads of Democratic Services raising this issue. The Panel considered moving to an hourly rate instead. This would better reflect new ways of working and hours actually worked. However, the Panel recognised that this may not always be appropriate, especially to cover in person meetings scheduled to last several hours.

The Panel therefore determines there should be local flexibility for the relevant officer to decide when it will be appropriate to apply a day or a half day rate or to use an hourly rate where it is sensible to aggregate a number of short meetings. The Panel will also provide guidance of good practice examples.

The amounts are set out in Table 3:

	Hourly Rate Payment	Up to 4 Hours Payment	4 hours and over payment rate
Chairs of standards, and audit committees	£33.50	£134	£268

Ordinary Members of Standards Committees who also chair Standards Committees for Community and Town Councils	£29.75	£119	£238
Ordinary Members of Standards Committees; Education Scrutiny Committee; Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee	£26.25	£105	£210

Financial Impacts:

The proposals would be contained within the budget provision.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

A beneficial impact in attracting people from diverse backgrounds to stand for election as councillors.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

There are no valley community impacts

Workforce Impacts:

There are no workforce impacts associated with this reports.

Legal Impacts:

The Panel are exercising powers set out in Part 8 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, as amended by the Local

Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 and the Local Government (Wales) Act 2015.

Risk Management Impacts:

Any proposed increased to Member remuneration has the potential to attract public criticism at a time of severe and enduring austerity. The Panel acknowledge this in making its proposals but point to the workloads and responsibilities being borne by elected Members as justification for the proposed changes.

Consultation:

All Members were sent a copy of the draft Report. The Committee and the Head of Democratic Services wrote, on behalf of the Chair and Committee to the IRPW, summarising Members' views on the draft proposals as outlined above

Recommendations:

Members of the Democratic Services Committee are invited to note the contents of the final Annual Report issued by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To note the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Annual Report to inform arrangements for the 2024/25 Civic Year.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Consultation Questions response to the IRPW Draft Report November 2023

List of Background Papers:

None

Officer Contact:

Craig Griffiths
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Tel: 01639 763767 or E-mail: c.griffiths2@npt.gov.uk

Stacy Curran
Democratic Services Manager (Head of Democratic Services)
Tel: 01639 763194 or E-mail: s.curran@npt.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Question 1 - Uplift of remuneration using the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

The Panel is fully aware of the current constraints on public funding and the impact its decisions will have on the budgets of Principal Authorities. The Panel is also mindful of our Aims and Objectives to provide a fair and reasonable remuneration package to support elected members and to encourage diversity of representation. We therefore propose to uplift their remuneration based on the average earnings of their constituents.

Do you think that the Panel has struck the right balance between affordability and adequate remuneration for representatives? If not, do you have other suggestions?

Yes ✓

No

No Opinion

Any additional comments:

The Council maintains its support for the continued linking of remuneration for Elected Members' salaries to ASHE

Question 2 - Local flexibility for payments to co-opted individuals

The Panel has received evidence that it would be more cost effective and fairer to provide for flexibility in paying those who are co-opted to serve on committees of Principal Councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities.

The Panel has therefore proposed there should be local flexibility for the relevant officer to decide when it will be appropriate to apply a day or half day rate or to use an hourly rate where it is sensible to aggregate a few short meetings.

Do you agree with this proposal? If not, do you have any suggested alternatives?

Yes ✓

No

No Opinion

Any additional comments:

The Council strongly accepts the stance taken by the IRPW to review existing payment methods to reflect agile working arrangements and changing demands on CoOpted Members and feels this is a very welcome introduction.

Question 3 - Encouraging sustainable travel

The Panel would like to ensure that we support environmental sustainability in our decisions about remuneration. We are aware that there are schemes in many bodies in Wales which encourage sustainable travel and we have advised that, if possible, elected members should be encouraged to participate in these schemes.

Do you have any examples of good practice or other ideas of ways in which we might use our powers to encourage more sustainable travel among members?

Yes

No

No Opinion ✓

Any additional comments:

The Council supports the principle of encouraging the use of sustainable travel by all.

Question 4 - Awareness of the entitlements of representatives.

The Panel has seen evidence of a lack of awareness amongst local elected members of the payments to which they are entitled. We would like to find out if this is a significant issue, and if so, we will aim to raise awareness further, targeted at areas where this may be a problem.

Members encouraged to submit an individual response.

Question 5 - Publication of consolidated sums for Community and Town Councils
Community and Town Councils are required to submit an annual statement of payments to the Panel by 30 September each year, and also publish this on their website. The Panel have provided a template return for clerks to use. The Panel have discussed and considered changing the requirements for Community and Town Councils when submitting their statement of payment returns. The Panel's aim is to simplify administration and encourage Councils to ensure all mandatory payments are made to individual members. The Panel proposes that from September 2024, the returns need only show the total amounts paid in respect of the mandatory payments mentioned above. That is the £156 contribution to the costs of working from home, the £52 set rate consumables allowance and the travel and subsistence expenses paid. This brings these in line with the reporting of the costs of care and personal assistance allowances.

Do you agree that these figures may be published as a global total rather than individually?

Yes

No

No View ✓

What are the reasons for your view?

Whilst this is a matter for Town and Community Councils, the Council supports the Panel's proposal to encourage all Members to take appropriate remuneration for carrying out their duties.

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

8th April 2024

Report of the Democratic Services Chairperson- Cllr S Rahaman

Matter for Information

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Annual Report of the Democratic Services Committee 2023/24.

Purpose of the Report

To update Members on the work undertaken by the Democratic Services Committee for the civic year 2023/2024 and to endorse and commend the report to Council.

Background

To provide an overview of the work of the Democratic Services Committee for 2023/24.

Financial Impact

No impact.

Integrated Impact Assessment

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is in relation to administrative matters only.

Workforce Impacts

No impact.

Risk Management

No impact.

Legal Powers

Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (S.7)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/4/contents>

Valleys Communities Impacts:

There are no specific impacts for valley communities arising from this report.

Consultation

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation

That the Democratic Services Committee note and endorse the Annual Report 2023/24 attached at Appendix 1 and commend the same to Council.

Reason for decision

To note and endorse the Annual Report 2023/24 of the Democratic Services Committee.

Implementation of Decision

Immediate.

Officer Contacts

Cllr S Rahaman - Chair of the Democratic Services Committee.

e-mail: cllr.s.rahaman@npt.gov.uk

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council



NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024

Chair's Foreword

It is with great pleasure that I present this Annual Report for the Democratic Services Committee covering the period from June 2023 to May 2024.

Recent by-elections have welcomed three newly elected members to the Council and the role of this Democratic Services Committee is important in ensuring that new members are fully supported to undertake their role.

The publication of the report is an attempt to provide an element of good practice for members in addition to the production of an appropriate yardstick with which to approach the generation of future reports.

The Democratic Services Committee's forward work programme is agreed by members on a rolling basis. Whilst the Democratic Services Committee takes decisions and provides direction for the Council on several key matters relating to member support and associated issues, members remain mindful that it is the cabinet and ultimately Council that has overall responsibility for all strategic and far reaching decision making on behalf of Neath Port Talbot Council.

However, members are also mindful that they are charged with the duty of carrying out all of the statutory requirements provided for this committee under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011. In this respect, I am delighted to report on the success of the Democratic Services Committee during this period.

We have embraced a dynamic approach as a Democratic Services Committee, being fortunate to build upon the strong foundations of the previous Committee and its former Chairs. We will continue to champion areas previously progressed, in particular the diversity in democracy agenda that the former Democratic Services Committee passionately highlighted through its working group arrangements, but also focus on areas of addressing member intimidation and harassment to ensure all members feel safe in their roles and are supported in various forums. The public perception of the role of the elected member also needs to be built on to encourage anyone in the community to put their name forward as a candidate should they wish to contribute to their communities.

As a Democratic Services Committee, there are many areas and opportunities we have committed to take forward over the next civic year to ensure that every member is given the best opportunity to deliver for their residents. We will produce a robust forward work programme in the new civic year to achieve this aim.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank my Vice Chair, Councillor Nathan Goldup-John for his support and advice to me as Chair of the Democratic Services Committee and to each of the members for their attendance, input and positive challenge brought to each and every meeting.

I would also like to place on record my thanks for the continued hard work and dedication of the Democratic Services Team who provide members with advice and support to carry out their roles.

CLlr Saifur Rahaman (Chair of the Democratic Services Committee)

Members of the Democratic Services Committee

2023-2024

Cllr. Saifur Rahaman	Chair
Cllr. Nathan Goldup-John	Vice Chair
Cllr. Wayne Carpenter	
Cllr. Jo Hale	
Cllr. Mike Harvey	
Cllr. James Henton	
Cllr. Alan Lockyer	
Cllr. Andy Lodwig	
Cllr. Peter Rees	
Cllr. Sonia Reynolds	
Cllr. Phil Rogers	
Cllr. Chris Williams	

The Democratic Services Committee formally met three times during 2023/24 and meetings were held on a hybrid basis, in the Council Chamber and over the Microsoft Teams platform.

The Chair is a member of and attends regular meetings of the All Wales Network for Member Support and Development where best practice is discussed and useful relationships are formed.

The remit of the Democratic Services Committee

The functions of the Democratic Services Committee are:-

- To exercise the functions of the Council under Section 8(1) (a) Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (designation of Head of Democratic Services) (as more particularly described in Section 9(1) of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011);
- To review the adequacy of provision by the Council of staff, accommodation and other resources to discharge democratic services functions (including but not limited to councillor training, improvements and innovations to Council democratic practices)
- To make reports and recommendations to the Council in relation to such provision;
- To determine whether or not the Councillors period of family absence should be cancelled in accordance with Regulation 34 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.
- To determine whether or not to withhold a Councillor's remuneration should they fail to return following a period of family absence on the date specified in the notice provided
- It is for the Democratic Services Committee to determine how to exercise these functions however the Democratic Services Committee may not exercise any functions other than the functions set out above unless approved by Full Council

The work of the Democratic Services Committee in 2023-2024

Member Training and Development and Seminar Programme

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires local authorities to ensure the provision of relevant training and development opportunities for its members.

The Democratic Services Committee approved the draft Members' Development and Training Programme (and Members Seminar Schedule) for 2023/24 which had been revised following feedback from the most recent Members Survey. The Members Seminar Schedule is flexible to allow for the inclusion of any topical issues throughout the year, as required.

The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) also offers a full programme of support and development, which the Council will utilise to complement our Member Development and Training Programme.

Local Democracy Week

Local Democracy Week is held annually in October and the Democratic Services Committee were updated on the Council's plans to mark the event and achieve the following aims:

- Strengthen links between elected representatives and their communities;
- Increase participation in the democratic process;
- Involve citizens in community affairs; and
- Increase knowledge of local democratic institutions and processes.

The council has produced a Public Participation Strategy (required under section 40 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021) which details how the Council intends to promote awareness of the functions of the Council among local people, the roles and responsibilities of an Elected Member and the process for how residents can become elected members of the Council.

In order to discharge the council's responsibilities under the Act and to promote Local Democracy Week 2023 the following activities were undertaken:

- Promotion of the requirement for Voter ID for certain elections;
- Reviewed the Citizen's Panel to ensure it remains active and representative of the population and to offer other residents the opportunity to give their views; and
- Promotion of the political processes within the county borough.

Independent Remuneration Panel Wales Draft Annual Report

The Democratic Services Committee considered the draft report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. The committee discussed the proposed changes to be implemented in 2023/2024 and agreed to make a response to the consultation, reflecting the decision and comments made at the meeting.

Members' Annual Report Scheme

Members were reminded of the current policy to support the production of annual reports by members of the Council. Members received and noted the Members' Annual Report Scheme.

Members Personal Development Review Scheme

Members were reminded of the Members Personal Development Review Scheme and were invited to complete a Personal Development Review should they so wish. The committee approved communications taking place with the WLGA and political groups to explore a cohort of current members to undertake the training to conduct Personal Development Reviews.

Handling Harassment Abuse and Intimidation

The role of an Elected Member is integral to the running of the Council and as such, it is important that they keep in touch with their residents and

communities, which includes communication via telephone, email, social media, virtual meetings and face to face contact with constituents.

The Democratic Services Committee agreed to establish a Task and Finish group to focus on handling harassment, abuse and intimidation for Councillors while promoting Councillor safety at a local level. This work is ongoing.

Diversity in Democracy

Members of the Democratic Services Committee are fully supportive of the drive to promote diversity in democracy and in identifying ways in which this can be achieved. The Democratic Services Committee agreed to establish a Task and Finish Group to develop the next phase of Diversity in Democracy for the Council, considering national developments and local priorities. This work is ongoing.

Future Priorities

The Democratic Services Committee regularly reviews its forward work programme and has identified the following priority areas for consideration in 2024-2025, in addition to the standing items that the committee has a duty to consider:

- Continuing to undertake work to look at harassment, intimidation and the support that can be provided to elected members in this regard
- Diversity in Democracy and how we can do more as a Committee and Council to encourage greater diversity in our candidates for future elections
- Reviewing of participation work such as our E-Petition Schemes and Public Speaking at Council meetings
- Consider the development of a protocol for member support through the work undertaken by the Welsh Local Government Association.
- Further implementation of the Welsh Local Government Association Democracy Handbook
- Draft Charter (WLGA)

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SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH SCOPING DOCUMENT

Title	Harassment Abuse and Intimidation Task & Finish Group
Reasons for undertaking Task and Finish Group	<p>To consider how harassment, abuse and intimidation of Councillors can be addressed and promote Councillor safety at a local level.</p>
Key Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are members concerns in relation to harassment, abuse and intimidation in the course of their work as an elected member? • How can risks be mitigated and members supported in the event of severe intimidation and threats? • Why there is a change in culture and what are the underlying issues that create this behaviour?
Intended Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create a local protocol setting out procedures, should a councillor feel they are being publicly harassed, intimidated or abused. • To establish regular briefings for all councillors, including those who have been newly elected, to share experiences and concerns can both help identify persistent offenders and look at council-led solutions. • To identify what steps should be taken by the Council to mitigate the risk to Councillors in the event of severe intimidation and threats.
Background Information	<p>Local Authorities and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) have undertaken work in relation to increasing levels of intimidation, harassment and abuse elected members are experiencing whilst carrying out their role in public office.</p> <p>During October/November 2022, Democratic Services Committee members were updated on the areas of work being undertaken in relation to Councillor Safety and Wellbeing by various organisations. A Local Government Association (LGA) guidance document in relation to How Councillor’s Handle Harassment, Abuse and Intimidation provided practical advice to enhance Councillors personal security and to minimise the risk of physical abuse in various settings including surgeries, home visits and whilst travelling to and from Council meetings.</p>

	Following the publication of the guidance, the Democratic Services Committee noted steps that this Council are considering.
Member Involvement	<p>Cllr. Wayne Carpenter Cllr. Nathan Goldup-John Cllr. Jo Hale Cllr. Mike Harvey Cllr. James Henton Cllr. Alan Lockyer Cllr. Andy Lodwig Cllr. Saifur Rahaman Cllr. Peter Rees Cllr. Sonia Reynolds Cllr. Phil Rogers Cllr. Chris Williams</p> <p>To open member involvement to other non-executive members, if requested by committee members??.</p>
Officer Support	<p>Head of Legal and Democratic Services Democratic Services Manager Democratic Service Scrutiny Officer</p>
List of potential key officers, stakeholders, partners or other agencies to involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Wales Police • WLGA • LGA
Timeframe/ plan for meetings	1/2 meetings ??

SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH SCOPING DOCUMENT

Title	Diversity in Democracy Task and Finish Group
Reasons for undertaking Task and Finish Group	To update the councils Diversity in Democracy Action Plan and identify ways in which diversity can be encouraged and promoted.
Key Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What further steps can be undertaken to improve diversity within the council? • What are the national developments and local priorities?
Intended Outcomes	<p>To update the Diversity in Democracy Action Plan to reflect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear, public commitment to improving diversity. • A diverse council, representative of all communities.
Background Information	<p>In 2020/2021 the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) embarked on an ambitious Diversity and Democracy Programme to ensure council chambers were more representative of their communities, following local government elections in May 2022.</p> <p>In relation to this work, at a Council meeting held on 26th May 2021, the Council formerly made a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a clear, public commitment to improving diversity; - Demonstrate an open and welcoming culture to all; - Consider staggering council meeting times and agreeing recess periods to support councillors with other commitments; and - Set out an action plan of activity ahead of the 2022 local elections. <p>In response to the task set out in the WLGA requirements and instructed at Council, a Diversity in Democracy Action Plan of activity ahead of the 2022 elections was approved. Work has been continuous</p>

	and ongoing to deliver the commitments set out, and the majority of actions in the original action plan have been completed or are ongoing.
Member Involvement	<p>Cllr. Wayne Carpenter Cllr. Nathan Goldup-John Cllr. Jo Hale Cllr. Mike Harvey Cllr. James Henton Cllr. Alan Lockyer Cllr. Andy Ludwig Cllr. Saifur Rahaman Cllr. Peter Rees Cllr. Sonia Reynolds Cllr. Phil Rogers Cllr. Chris Williams</p>
Officer Support	<p>Head of Legal and Democratic Services Democratic Services Manager Democratic Service Scrutiny Officer</p>
List of potential key officers, stakeholders, partners or other agencies to involve	External organisations as identified by Task & Finish Group members
Timeframe/ plan for meetings	??