



DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

9.30 AM - THURSDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2019

COUNCIL CHAMBER - PORT TALBOT CIVIC CENTRE

PART 1

1. Declarations of Interest
2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (*Pages 3 - 6*)
3. Increasing public engagement in the democratic process including web casting - draft project plan (*Pages 7 - 16*)
Report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer enclosed.
4. Draft Annual Report of the Democratic Services Committee (*Pages 17 - 26*)
5. Forward Work Programme 19/20 (*Pages 27 - 28*)

S.Phillips
Chief Executive

Civic Centre
Port Talbot

6 September 2019

Committee Membership:

Chairperson: Councillor J.D.Morgan

**Vice
Chairperson:** Councillor A.R.Aubrey

Members: Councillors S. ap Dafydd, M.Harvey, J.Hurley,
S.Miller, S.Purse, S.Renkes, A.J.Taylor,
A.Llewelyn, A.J.Richards and S.K.Hunt

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

(COMMITTEE ROOMS 1 AND 2)

Members Present:

11 July, 2019

Chairperson: Councillor J.D.Morgan

Vice Chairperson: Councillor A.R.Aubrey

Councillors: S.K.Hunt, A.Llewelyn, S.Miller, S.Pursey,
S.Renkes, A.J.Richards and R.L.Taylor

Officers In Attendance: K.Jones, C.Griffiths, C.Furlow and A.Manchipp

1. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 March 2019 were approved as an accurate record.

Matters Arising

Members received an update on the following:-

- In relation to Minute No 2, it was noted that Members' carers' allowance was subject to tax, as such it was agreed that officers contact the IRPW requesting that it petitions the HMRC to amend this;
- In relation to Minute No 4, a survey would be issued to Members to identify social media training needs and thereafter training be provided as appropriate. Member training on committee procedure had been prepared and would be rolled out following the Chairs and Vice Chairs Forum next week;
- In relation to Minute No 11, Members were advised that the new Committee cycle had taken on board the view of Committee around school holidays. In addition the issue around Planning Site Visits and the cancellation of Seminars

had been addressed. The request around scrutiny briefings would be addressed going forward.

2. **DATA PROTECTION ACT 2018 TRAINING AND DATA PROTECTION FEES**

Committee received the report of the Head of Legal Services in relation to the above. Members noted that a further training session would be held in the autumn, if however Members wished one to one training this could also be accommodated.

In relation to the fees payable, the fee for 2019/20 had been paid for each Member by the Council, however going forward there would be no registration fee.

Members' access to the Potentially Violent Persons Register was queried, in particular in relation to GDPR. The Head of Legal Services advised that the register was managed by Health and Safety and that how and why the information was gathered together with the reason the information was required would need to be considered in relation to any request from Members to access the database.

RESOLVED: That the Head of Legal Services provide a report in relation to the above.

3. **WEBCASTING**

The Committee was advised that a report would be considered by Council on 17 July 2019, in relation to engaging the public in the democratic processes of the Council, which included webcasting, and to charging this committee with exploring the different options available.

In advance of Council's decision, the Committee was invited to discuss how best to start the process and it was agreed that, subject to Council's decision, a Special meeting be arranged in September to agree a way forward. The following issues would need to be considered:-

- Which meetings to be webcast?
- Staffing resources
- Member training

- Translation/signing /subtitles?
- Whether consultation be undertaken with the public seeking their views?
- The introduction of e petitions
- Visit/SKYPE other local authorities to view their system
- To determine whether public participation has improved as a result of webcasting etc.
- View other local authorities webcasting
- That webcasting be undertaken as a pilot?

RESOLVED: That an additional meeting of the Committee be convened in September and that the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer submit a report on a proposed project plan for the work to be undertaken in relation to increasing public engagement in the democratic process.

4. **MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT PRE BRIEFINGS**

In accordance with Minute No 3 of 7 March 2019, Committee received the report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer in relation to Member attendance at scrutiny committee pre briefings.

RESOLVED: That Group Leaders be requested to encourage all Members to attend the pre briefings of the scrutiny committees on which they sit.

5. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 19/20**

Committee considered the Forward Work Programme.

RESOLVED: That a Special meeting be convened in September and that in addition to the project plan, the Chairperson's Annual Report be considered at that meeting.

CHAIRPERSON



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Democratic Services Committee

12 September 2019

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND CHIEF DIGITAL OFFICER –K JONES

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Report Title:

Engagement of the Public in the Democratic Processes of the Council

Purpose of the Report:

To outline a proposed project plan for the above work.

Background:

On 17 July 2019, Council received a report on 'Engagement of the Public in the Democratic Processes of the Council' and it was resolved that the Democratic Services Committee be tasked with preparing advice for Council, by 31 March 2020 in respect of the following:

- a) Options available to the Council to webcast some or all of the Council's meetings and the cost-benefits of each of the options considered;
- b) Options available to the Council to increase public participation in the Council's democratic processes, including but not limited to the ways in which digital technologies may assist the Council in this regard;
- c) Proposals as to how the public can be involved in testing support for any of the options recommended;
- d) Proposals as to how the set up and recurring costs associated with any options presented might be funded; and
- e) An analysis of the risks and impacts of progressing/not progressing options considered

At the Democratic Services Committee meeting held on 11 July 2019, the committee had an initial discussion on how best to start the above work and requested a proposed project plan be developed for discussion at the committee's additional meeting scheduled on the 12 September 2019.

Proposed Project Plan:

To enable the preparation of the advice for Council, by 31 March 2020, it is proposed to establish a task and finish group. Three workshop style meetings of the Group will be arranged.

The establishment of a task and finish group will enable the committee to progress the work on an informal basis outside of the main committee meetings and will enable the committee's forward work programme to remain focused on other business the committee is scheduled to consider.

It is proposed for the two strands of work, webcasting and increasing public participation in the Council's democratic processes, be progressed in parallel.

The proposed project plan is attached at Appendix 1.

Financial Impacts:

There will be minimal financial impacts from undertaking any of the research / review work proposed in this report. However, there will likely be costs associated with the introduction of webcasting and in widening arrangements for public participation in the democratic process.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

An Integrated Impact Assessment will be completed as the options for introducing webcasting of meetings and increasing public participation in the democratic process are being developed to ensure the Council's legal obligations in respect of the Welsh language; equalities legislation; Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Biodiversity Duty have been fully considered.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

Options for webcasting of meetings and widening public participation in the democratic process for valley communities will be explicitly considered by the task and finish group.

Workforce Impacts:

The introduction of additional ways of enabling public participation in the Council's work will have impacts on the Council's workforce which will need to be assessed as part of the options appraisal process.

Legal Powers:

The Democratic Services Committee has been commissioned to undertake this work using powers contained in s11A of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013.

Risk Management Impacts:

There are no risks associated with this report, however future proposals of the task and finish group will likely require amendment to the Constitution of Neath Port Talbot Council. The Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer and the Head of Legal Service will provide advice to the Committee in this regard.

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item at this stage. However, it is proposed to involve the public in the development of the options for both strands of work.

Recommendations:

That Members agree:

1. The establishment of a task and finish group to undertake the proposed work outlined within this report to enable the preparation of advice to Council by 31 March 2020;
2. The membership of the task and finish group; and
3. The proposed project plan outlined within this report.

Reason for the Proposed Decision:

To fulfil the commitment given to Council.

List of Background Papers:

Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

Welsh Government White Paper: Reforming Local Government: Resilient and Renewed 2017

Council Papers 17 July 2019

<http://modern.gov.neath-porttalbot.gov.uk/documents/g8461/Printed%20minutes%2017th-Jul-2019%2014.00%20Council.pdf?T=1>

Officer Contact:

Karen Jones

Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer

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Task and Finish Group - Webcasting / Increasing Public Participation in the Council's Democratic Processes

Proposed Project Plan

Date of meeting	Objective	Action	Output (where identifiable)
October (date tbc)	<p><u>Webcasting:</u></p> <p>To consider other local authorities approaches to and experiences of web-casting to inform the development of options available to the Council</p>	<p>The following information will be collated by the Democratic Services Team to inform the discussion:</p> <p>Which meetings other local authorities are webcasting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The issues / problems other local authorities have encountered;• The training needs identified for both members and staff and how those needs were addressed;	<p>Identification of the options where more information is required for further discussion at next workshop</p>

	<p><u>Public Participation in Democratic Processes</u></p> <p>To define the scope of the work to increasing public participation in the Council's democratic processes</p> <p><u>To consider how to involve the public in the above two strands of work</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Welsh language requirements have been met; • Implications for the minuting of those meetings that are web-casted; • Accommodation issues i.e. lighting, sound etc; • The costs incurred (set-up and ongoing); and • To view examples of meetings webcasted by other local authorities/ site visits <p>Information will be collated by the Democratic Services Team to inform the definition of the scope</p> <p>Discussion at workshop</p>	<p>Scope of work determined</p>
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Date of meeting	Objective	Action	Output (where identifiable)
<p>November (date tbc)</p>	<p><u>Webcasting</u> To further discuss the options available to the Council to webcast some or all of the Council's meetings and the cost-benefits of each of the options considered</p> <p><u>Public Participation in Democratic Processes</u> To undertake a review of the mechanisms already in place to encourage and assist members of the public to participate in the democratic process</p> <p>To consider other local authorities approaches to increasing public participation in their democratic processes</p> <p>Any other work identified following agreement of scope</p>	<p>The Democratic Services Team will collate further information on the options identified in workshop 1</p> <p>The Democratic Services Team will prepare an inventory of those mechanisms already in place to encourage and assist members of the public to participate in the democratic process and an indication of the use / take-up of those mechanisms</p> <p>The Democratic Services Team will collate information on other local authorities approaches to increasing public participation in their democratic processes</p>	<p>Set of options identified to be costed and discussed at next workshop</p> <p>Review of mechanisms already in place completed</p> <p>Consideration of other local authorities approaches completed</p>

Date of meeting	Objective	Action	Output (where identifiable)
<p>January Date tbc</p>	<p><u>Webcasting</u> To prepare proposals as to how the set up and recurring costs associated with the options presented might be funded.</p> <p>To prepare an analysis of the risks and impacts of progressing/not progressing the options considered</p> <p><u>Public Participation in Democratic Processes</u></p>	<p>The Democratic Services Team will collate information to inform the discussion on costs/risks/impacts to inform the discussion</p> <p>To be agreed pending progress to date</p>	<p>Preparation of advice to Council on options available</p>

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2018/2019

Democratic Services Committee

Draft Annual Report

1. Chairperson's Foreword

It is with great pleasure that I present the Annual Report for the Democratic Services Committee for the 2018/2019 civic year.

It is the second such report to be produced by the committee, having produced its initial Annual Report following the 2017/2018 civic year. Its publication 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 committee's forward work programme is agreed by members on a rolling basis. Whilst the 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 committee during the last civic year.

2. Purpose of Annual Report

The main aim of this report is to highlight the work that has been undertaken by the Democratic Services Committee during 2018/19.

The document may also facilitate discussions on additional items that could be included within the work programme for 2019/2020.

3. Committee Membership

The members of the Democratic Services Committee were:

Councillors J.D.Morgan, M.Harvey,
S. ap Dafydd, S.K.Hunt, S.Miller, M.Protheroe,
S.Pursey, S.Renkes, A.J.Richards, A.J.Taylor,
R.L.Taylor and A.Llewelyn

The committee Chair was Cllr. Dr. Del Morgan, and the Vice Chair was Cllr. Mike Harvey.

4. Number of Meetings Held

The committee formally met three times during 2018/19. The committee is also responsible for forming a number of specific task and finish groups as appropriate to look at particular key topics in more detail. These groups are then able to feed back to the committee with a set of recommendations, as appropriate. During 2018/2019, the following task and finish groups were active: Members' IT Reference Group and the Disability Audit Working Group.

5. Issues Considered During 2018/2019

The following topics were discussed:

Members' Personal Development Review (PDR) Process

In September 2018, the committee received the findings of the task and finish group set up to consider the Members' Annual Personal Development Review (PDR) process.

The council is required to make arrangements to secure reasonable training and development opportunities for elected members and specifically that each elected member should have the opportunity for an interview with a suitably qualified person each year to advise about their training and development needs. As part of their review, the members of the task and finish group considered the statutory guidance and scheme already in place.

The following recommendations of the task and finish group were supported by the committee:

1. That the current Annual Personal Development Review Scheme for elected members be retained and all members be reminded on an annual basis of their entitlement to participate;
2. That alongside the Annual Personal Development Review Scheme all members are reminded on an annual basis of the alternative ways their training and development needs can be met alongside the scheme; and
3. That a small group of councillors be nominated from the individual political groups to undertake training to allow them to be 'reviewers' for the purpose of the Scheme, and that the Head of Democratic Services also be identified as a 'reviewer' to undertake Annual Personal Development Reviews with elected members if they so choose, reflecting the preference of a number of members who are already addressing their development needs in this way.

Following receipt of the above recommendations, a cohort of members were identified, along with the Head of Democratic Services, as reviewers and received the necessary training to undertake PDR's. All members were reminded of the entitlement to participate in the scheme.

Members' IT Reference Group

During 2018, the group was re-established and its terms of reference reviewed to reflect the focus of the work of the group:

- To provide a structured and focussed opportunity for members to consider the extent to which the ICT equipment, support and training meets members' needs;
- To provide a structured mechanism to shape the use of the committee administration system Modern.Gov to best suit members' needs.

On 21 February 2019, the group met to discuss the issues and challenges members have when using information technology (IT) devices, such as iPad's, laptops and mobile phones. During 2019/2020 it is planned for the group to explore the new skype and Office 365 systems that will be introduced to members and staff. Going forward, this group will be utilised as a forum to pilot the systems, to ensure a seamless roll out to the wider group of members.

Member Annual Report Scheme

In September 2018, the committee received the findings of the task and finish group set up to consider the Member Annual Report Scheme. Members of the task and finish group considered the guidance and template already in place and the ways in which information was disseminated to their constituents.

The following recommendations of the task and finish group were supported by the committee:

1. That the design of the current Annual Report Template be improved

- to make it more dynamic;
2. That members be reminded of the Scheme and be provided with a copy of the improved template;
 3. That training be provided for those members interested in the use of Social Media, and to receive appropriate support including training on analytics;
 4. That a tool kit be developed to assist members in designing their newsletters.

Members' Apologies at Meetings

In September 2018, the Democratic Services Committee reviewed and updated the current Members' Apologies Policy, which was then approved by Council in December 2018.

Guidance Note for Members on Declarations of Interest and Decision Making Issues

In November 2018, members considered a draft guidance note prepared by the Head of Legal Services. Following consideration, members requested some minor amendments before the guidance note was issued to all members.

Disability Audit Working Group

During 2019, the committee commissioned an external organisation to carry out a disability audit of members' facilities in both Port Talbot and Neath Civic Centres. Following an invitation to all members to be involved in this work, a working group was established chaired by Cllr. Sandra Miller. The disability design and access audit was undertaken in April 2019 and the working group will shortly be considering how to progress the recommendations and report back its findings to the committee.

Members' Development and Training Programme

In September 2018, the committee considered the results of the Members' Development Survey which was undertaken during May and

June 2018 to provide a steer on how the information should be used to inform the Member Development Programme for 2018/2019.

Following consideration of the feedback, members identified the following priority areas for training for the remainder of the civic year 2018/19:

- Social Media
- Chairing Skills (for Council meetings and meetings within community wards)
- Committee Procedures (following the update to the Constitution by the Head of Legal Services)
- Income Generation and Commercialisation

IRPW (Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales)

In November 2018, the committee considered the Draft Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. The committee discussed the proposed changes to be implemented in 2019/2020 which informed the Council's formal response to the proposals.

In March 2019, the committee noted the final IRPW Report and forwarded their concerns to the IRPW on the Carers' Allowance being classified as an income rather than a reimbursement.

Member Scrutiny Champion – Update Report

In March 2019, the committee received an update from the Member Scrutiny Champion, Cllr Arwyn Woolcock, following the conclusion of recent observations of various scrutiny committee meetings.

Following consideration of the content of the Member Scrutiny Champion's update, at the request of the committee, an e-mail was circulated by the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer to all members reminding them that grammatical issues contained in reports and minutes are to be raised with relevant officers and dealt with outside of meetings.

The committee also requested that a report be prepared to the next meeting (2019/2020 Civic Year) regarding non-committee member

attendance at meetings and that the attendance of members at pre-briefings be monitored by the chairs and vice chairs of Scrutiny Forum.

Rules of Procedure

In November 2018, the committee considered and agreed two amendments to the Rules of Procedure to the Council's scrutiny meetings which were subsequently approved at Council. Those amendments were the replacement of the existing paragraph 12.4 with the following:

"12.4 Content and Length of Speeches and Questions

Speeches must be directed to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or point of order. No speech may exceed 5 minutes without the consent of the chairman save for non-executive Council Committees and Sub-Committees (including the Audit, Standards and Scrutiny Committees) where the time allowed for speeches and/or questions shall be at the discretion of the Chairperson (as a guide around 10 minutes per member)"

and the amendment to the Constitution that the person who is appointed chair to a meeting is to go by the title of "Chairperson".

Democratic Services Staffing Structure

In March 2019, the committee noted the updated staffing structure, which was subsequently endorsed by Council.

Cllr. Dr. Del Morgan, Chairperson
September 2019

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**WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

MEETINGS TO START AT 9.30am AND FINISH AT 11.00am

DATE	Agenda Items	Type - Decision, Monitoring or Information	Rotation - Topical, Annual, Biannual, Quarterly, Monthly	Contact Officer/Head of Service
<p align="center">14 November 2019</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webcasting • Social Media Training (Update) • IT Reference Group Update • Disability Audit Update • IRPW Draft Report • Update following meeting with the IRPW on 22 October 2019 on the Draft Annual Report 			

<p>3rd March 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment of Resources for Democratic Services• IRPW Final Report• Webcasting• Public Participation• Member Training and Development Priorities for 2020/21• Annual Update on Member Annual Reports and PDR's			
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