



DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

2.00 PM MONDAY, 25 JANUARY 2021

REMOTELY VIA TEAMS

PART 1

1. Welcome and Roll Call for Attendance
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of Previous Meeting (*Pages 3 - 14*)
4. WLGA Competency Framework for Councillors 2021 (*Pages 15 - 32*)
5. Review of the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Constitution (*Pages 33 - 42*)
6. Members - ICT Environment (*Pages 43 - 48*)
7. Draft Annual Report of the Democratic Services Committee 2019-20 (*Pages 49 - 58*)
8. Forward Work Programme (*Pages 59 - 62*)
9. Urgent Items
Any urgent items (whether public or exempt) at the discretion of the Chairperson pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972

Chief Executive

**Civic Centre
Port Talbot**

Tuesday, 19th January

Committee Membership:

Chairperson: Councillor J.D.Morgan

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

**Councillors: M.Harvey, J.Hurley, S.Miller, S.Pursey,
S.Renkes, A.Llewelyn, A.J.Richards, S.K.Hunt,
A.J.Taylor and E.V.Latham**

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

(Via Microsoft Teams)

Members Present:

2 November 2020

Chairperson: Councillor J.D.Morgan

Councillors: M.Harvey, J.Hurley, S.Miller, S.Pursey,
S.Renkes, A.Llewelyn, A.J.Richards, S.K.Hunt
and E.V.Latham

Officers in Attendance: C.Furlow-Harris, K.Jones, C.Griffiths, S.Curran,
C.Plowman and S.Blewett

1. **Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 3rd March 2020**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 March 2020 were approved as an accurate record.

Members then noted the following:

- Officers clarified Members previous concerns around GDPR with regards to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) and carers allowance being claimed; it was stated that although it would be confirmed on the record, if someone were to claim carers allowance, that the person was in recipient of that particular sum, the details and the reasoning why they were claiming it would not be made public
- The few Members who were piloting Office 365 provided positive feedback on the system and highlighted that it works very well and was an essential piece of equipment for Members to have on their iPads. It was noted that other Members had asked if Office 365 could be rolled out to all Members now that it had been piloted, which would be very useful especially during the current circumstances of the Covid 19 pandemic; the only issue raised was that some Members may require training on how to use the package. Officers confirmed that the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny Forum had discussed IT support for Members and had agreed that a survey would be carried out in relation to what equipment each Member had and whether they

had any difficulties with using the equipment, and from this would look into the roll out of Office 365. It was mentioned that it had been raised with Dave Giles (ICT Service Manager) and the process of this would start in the next few weeks. It was suggested that an update in terms of Members IT be raised at the next meeting of the Democratic Services Committee and that the IT Reference Group may want to consider whether they would need a meeting in between now and then.

2. Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) - Draft Annual Report 2021/22

The circulated report set out the proposed changes in the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Draft Annual Report 2021/22; it was confirmed that the report was currently out for consultation and would be closed on 23 November 2020.

The three proposed changes were listed as the following:

1. The IRPW propose that the basic salary for elected members of principal councils be increased by £150 per annum, effective 1st April 2021. Senior salaries will be increased at the same rate (1.06%) as basic salaries.
2. The IRPW propose the replacing of the £403 monthly cap for the reimbursement of costs of care with the following arrangements:
 - i. all relevant authorities must provide for the reimbursement of the contribution towards necessary costs for the care of dependent children and adults (provided by informal or informal carers) and for personal assistance needs as follows:
 - ii. Formal (registered with Care Inspectorate for Wales) care costs to be reimbursed in full
 - iii. Informal (unregistered) care costs to be reimbursed up to a maximum rate equivalent to the Real Living Wage at the time the costs are incurred
3. The IRPW propose the fees paid for co-opted members (with voting rights) increase by £12.00.

It was noted that on 21 October 2020, Caryn Furlow-Harris (Strategic Manager for Policy and Democratic Services) and the Chair of Democratic Services Committee attended a meeting facilitated by the IRPW where the draft report was discussed; they were joined by colleagues from other Councils in Wales including Bridgend Council,

Swansea Council and Ceredigion Council. It was highlighted that the majority of the debate centred on the change to the £403 monthly cap; the Chair of Democratic Services Committee had provided the IRPW with a number of different scenarios in which they said they would be considering before finalising the final report which was set to be issued in April 2021.

A discussion took place in relation to the percentage of increase the IRPW had proposed to the salary for Members. It was noted that there was 10 years of austerity where Members signalled to IRPW that they didn't want to be seeing large increases to Members remuneration during that period; there were wage restraints and other similar measures being deployed more widely across the public sector, however more recently that had changed and there had been increases in salaries for teaching staff, local government workers, civil servants, MPs etc. Officers highlighted that they were surprised that the IRPW weren't taking up the opportunity in the report to begin to address the considerable gap that's now developed between the bench mark rate and what Members were actually being paid; the Head of Democratic Services, Karen Jones, would be raising these points formally to IRPW.

In relation to the the two tier arrangement around the costs of care, Officers weren't satisfied that the IRPW had given a suitable explanation of the reasoning behind a two tier arrangement and were not really getting at the reasons why Members weren't claiming what they were entitled to; Officers confirmed that they would like to see more information from the IRPW before the arrangements were finalised.

Members stated that there should be a fairer mechanism in place for pay rises/allowances as currently those who were eligible for senior salaries were receiving a considerable amount more than those who were on basic salaries due to the increases being calculated by percentages. Officers mentioned that around 2 years ago, IRPW were looking to a develop a different model for remuneration as they had accepted the current model was no longer fit for purpose; since the model was introduced, there had been many developments for example, Joint Scrutiny Committees, and as local government reform moves forward there will be a lot more collaborative working which enlists a new set of duties, responsibilities and commitment from Members. It was confirmed that when the Head of Democratic Services liaised with IRPW in relation to the concerns, the point about the increases not reflecting the amount of work and responsibilities

Members were taking on would be raised. It was suggested that IRPW could hold a consultation period in the first instance, with a discussion around what the model should look like in the future.

The Committee discussed the importance of equality and ensuring that everyone had the opportunity to put themselves forward as a candidate to become an Elected Member; the allowances helped some people to be able to do this e.g. those who would need to pay for childcare. It was highlighted that there shouldn't be any stigma from the media or on social media platforms in relation to Members claiming the allowances that they were entitled to; there were also still issues around the public perception of what Elected Members get paid. It was asked if the Council could communicate or include any information around this matter as it was previously poorly managed which had an effect on those in local government and resulted in some of them not claiming their money.

In regards to Members care allowance, it was noted that Members were still reluctant to claim the allowances despite the work that had been completed across Wales and the encouragement that the Council had provided; it was also evident with travel allowances as well, as very few Members claimed for travel unless they were incurring substantial costs due to the long distance travels from the Civic Centres. It was highlighted that there was a cultural problem with the way in which the public perceives these payments; the Council had to be prepared to stand behind Members and encourage them to claim the entitlements. It was confirmed that the Head of Democratic Services would write a response to IRPW in regards to the concerns raised by Members and provide a copy to the Democratic Services Committee Members. It was added that there was also scope for individual members and/or political groups to make representations to the panel as well; it was asked if the link to be able to do this be circulated to Members.

RESOLVED:

1. That Members note the draft Annual Report and proposed determinations for 2021/22.
2. That Members agree to make a brief response to the consultation and that the Head of Democratic Services prepare the Council's response on behalf of the Committee including:
 - (i) Requesting clarity and transparency in

terms of the details to help to assist
/support members

(ii) Relaying Members concerns/comments
in relation to the percentage increase to
IRPW

3. **Webcasting/Public Participation**

Members received an update report in relation to introducing webcasting of Council meetings and enhancing public participation to the democratic process which the Democratic Services Committee were tasked to complete by Council. It noted that the outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic had an impact on the progress of the work and would slightly alter the proposals. The report highlighted the work that had already been carried out on the proposals, the Councils current position in relation to webcasting and public participation and the plans moving forward; it was mentioned that the pandemic had accelerated and taken over a lot of the work that was previously planned.

Officers highlighted that the webcasting element had been paused as meetings had stopped taking place in the Civic Centres and were being held virtually on the software package Microsoft Teams; currently public meetings were being recorded using the facilities on Teams and the footage was then uploaded online for the public to view. The report detailed that the current process was working successfully and captured the range of viewing figures of the public meetings including Council and Cabinet Scrutiny Committee; Officers were pleased with the amount of views that the meetings were receiving, which were much higher than what could be achieved when in the designated meeting rooms in the Civic Centres, therefore improving public participation.

The Committee was informed that staff were routinely publicising what meetings were being held weekly on the Councils social media platforms and webpages to try and obtain even more engagement from the public. It was confirmed that there had been occasions where members of the public and the press had been in attendance during the virtual meetings. It was added that Officers had already started to prepare next steps in readiness for the next phase of the Local Government Wales Bill which was anticipated to detail

expectations of webcasting and public participation for all Councils across Wales.

It was stated that the Council had made a lot of progress in terms of the technology aspects during the pandemic; Officers were pleased with the work that Members had completed with Democratic Services and the IT team in ensuring that all Elected Members had what was required to be able to take part in the meetings being held remotely. It had been noticed that there was an increase in Members attendance at meetings; the remote working model offered some benefits, especially to those who had other responsibilities.

One of the negatives noted was that the bilingual meetings of Council had been lost as the Microsoft product doesn't enable a bilingual meeting support arrangement; Officers had been making enquiries with Microsoft, but currently there was no time scale for it to be delivered. It was highlighted that the Senedd had been able to provide bilingual meetings and there were currently discussions taking place with the Senedd support workers in relation to how they had achieved this; however, it was noted that there would be a lot of work involved and some considerable cost implications if the Council were to adopt the model. Officers added that they hoped to see improvements on this issue for the whole of Wales over the next coming months.

In terms of public participation, it was noted that some work had been completed in relation to promoting the fact that meetings were being held and explaining how the public could participate in the live meetings and how they could access the recordings after the meeting had been held; this hadn't cost the Council any money. In the report Officers were proposing that progress be made over the next few months on some of the other elements that were previously discussed, in particular:

1. Exploring the petition functionality within the Mod Gov software; this could be trialled internally to understand how it works and how the Council can move that forward if required to do so as part of the result of the new legal duties that would be contained within the Local Government Wales Bill.
2. Improving the navigation around the public facing webpages; some work had already been completed in the background around this and it would be continued in order to simplify how people find out about the democratic process, ensuring the Council was promoting and encouraging people to use it.

Members noted that the Council had spent a lot less money holding meetings remotely via Microsoft Teams and recording them, than what would've been spent implementing the original plans which needed to be reflected on going forward. It was also added that the Council supporting hybrid meetings (meetings where some people may meet face to face and others may join remotely) also needed to be added to the new way forward.

Concerns were expressed in relation to the reliability of the technology which would need to be highlighted to Welsh Government if the plans moving forward were to continue with remote meetings as the Council may need financial support to resolve certain technological issues. Officers stated that the cost implications of the new duties was previously raised with Welsh Government and the Council was continuing to work with the WLGA regarding the costs; it was hoped that there would be additional financial settlement around this particular area of work. It was added that the focus to date had been around the technology costs, however some focus needed to be given to the impact that the new duties was having on staff time; Officers were working with WLGA to provide evidence around staff implications.

It was mentioned that for the Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee, Carmarthenshire Council had been utilising a form of telephone arrangement for those who wished to listen to the meeting in Welsh, as a temporary measure; Members asked if the Council could look into this also as a temporary measure. Officers highlighted that translation arrangements could be made for Welsh speaking Members who wished to have meetings relayed in Welsh, which would be servicing the individual needs of Members, however one of the purposes of the Welsh Language Act was to make the Welsh language visible. It was suggested that if this particular issue could not be solved quickly, Welsh speaking Members could choose to speak in Welsh during meetings as long as they would be prepared to explain what they said in English; this could be included in a protocol going forward. Officers also agreed to find out the arrangements that Carmarthenshire Council had in place for bilingual meetings.

One of the benefits raised in regards to remote meetings was that Members had been able to get used to the idea of meetings being recorded and the fact that they could be reviewed back; this allowed Members to learn some of the etiquette that comes with this. Members asked if any consideration had been given to using Microsoft Teams Live to broadcast meetings as and when they take

place. It was noted that other Councils had done this and it could further engage the public; Members and the public weren't always aware of the timeframe in which the recordings would be uploaded online, which could result in disengagement. Officers mentioned that the target staff worked towards was to upload the recordings on the same day that the meeting had taken place; there had previously been technical issues with the recording being uploaded to YouTube, but going forward these issues should be resolved.

It was confirmed that Microsoft Teams Live was initially looked into at the start of utilising the remote working technology; there was a lot more background work surrounding this particular feature, and it wasn't utilised at the start as the main priority was ensuring that meetings ran smoothly and staff were learning how to use the technology. Members were informed that the current arrangements were that the Council was proactively advertising online meetings and members of the public would be given a link and contact details for Democratic Services if they indicated that they wanted to view a meeting live; the meetings weren't being streamed live, instead recorded and uploaded to YouTube. Officers stated that live streaming of meetings could be explored if the Committee agreed to this, as it would provide the public with a recording of the meeting instantly after the meeting had taken place; however, it was mentioned that although this work hadn't had a financial impact on the Council, it did have an impact on staff time as the amount of extra work for Democratic Services and IT was considerable.

RESOLVED:

1. That Members note the update against the work tasked to the Democratic Services Committee in July 2019 – to introduce webcasting of Council meetings and to enhance public participation in the democratic process.
2. That Members note the impact of the Covid-19 emergency situation on the recommendations prepared by the Democratic Services Committee in respect of webcasting of Council meetings and notes the changes approved by Council in July 2020
3. That Members approve the next steps for progressing the work in relation to

public participation namely:

- what would be involved in establishing a petitioning arrangement, given that the Welsh Government propose to introduce this as a statutory duty and the Council already has an ICT system that could support such a scheme;
- options for introducing rights of audience for certain meetings;
- improvements to the democracy pages on the Council website;
- explaining the forward work programmes and the mechanisms available to the public if they wish to influence agendas and debate.

In addition to the above:

- Find out what Carmarthenshire council have in place in relation to Welsh translation during meetings / look further into servicing bilingual meetings
- Explore live streaming of meetings

4. **Democratic Services Team Structure**

Members were presented with the existing structure of the Democratic Services team and the new proposed structure. It was noted that the Senior Committee and Member Services Manager had retired and rather than filling that particular role, the two senior roles within the team had been combined into the role that Stacy Curran had been appointed to (Democratic Services Manager); the structure was presented to Members to reflect that change and to note that the proposals were not to replace the senior role, but instead to create a grade 7 role.

It was stated that management were planning to fill some of the vacant roles within the structure, but not all of them at the moment due to the new duties and the implements of change in technology that needed to be worked through; there was a need to build resilience in the current structure, however it would be reviewed again when the longer term support arrangements were clear. Members were informed that Corporate Joint Committees were going to be established under the Local Government Reform Act and it was still not very clear what the support for that will entail either.

RESOLVED: The Democratic Services Committee endorsed the proposed structure set out in Appendix 2 and commends this change to Council.

5. Forward Work Programme

Members received the Democratic Services Committee Forward Work Programme for 2020/21.

Concerns were raised in regards to the fact that four out of five Scrutiny Committees had yet to be re-established and meet to scrutinise items within their remits; Cabinet Scrutiny Committee was currently scrutinising items from all Directorates within the Council.

Officers stated that Councils across Wales had received a letter from the Minister asking questions in relation to scrutiny arrangements and responding to that letter provided opportunity to reflect on what Neath Port Talbot Council had done since the outbreak of Covid 19 which included:

- Quickly established electronic version of the Urgency Action procedure, when it was not possible to call meetings. The Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees had been involved in this procedure from the start;
- Throughout the pandemic the Council had tried to keep Members updated on matters by sending out bulletins and by recording briefings from the Leader and opposition group Leaders;
- In June/July Neath Port Talbot were the first Local Authority in Wales to stand up a full meeting of Council. Also in this time, before the August recess, each of the Scrutiny Committees had

- a meeting to inform Members on what the Council had done so far in the pandemic and outlined the framework moving forward;
- Arranged Scrutiny Committees in a workshop format, for September onwards, so that the individual Committees could identify what areas they would like to focus on; it took significant time to arrange these workshops as Officers within Democratic Services did not have a cycle of meetings to work around.

It was highlighted that going forward the Scrutiny Committees were going to meet on a slightly different footing due to current circumstances; however, a cycle of meetings had been established and it had been arranged for each Scrutiny Committee to have a meeting before Christmas, as well as additional meetings scheduled for the New Year. Officers confirmed that each Scrutiny Committee had identified the topics that they would like to focus on, therefore the agendas for those meetings will capture what the Committee themselves had decided; it was also important to note that the Forward Work Programme which detailed the decisions that Cabinet were expected to take, would be looked at within the Scrutiny Committees and the onus was on the Committee to decide what they wanted to look at in terms of pre-decision scrutiny. Officers added that the Cabinet Boards would not yet be re-established due to workloads and capacity.

Another level of assurance was provided to Members, in that when Officers had identified that there were major decisions to be taken for certain services, advice was provided that these particular decisions could be dealt with within a Joint Committee between the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee and the other relevant Scrutiny Committee to ensure the Scrutiny Members weren't disenfranchised. Officers highlighted that they were trying to obtain the right balance with meetings, taking into consideration the current service pressures and how the current circumstances had impacted staff capacity. It was mentioned that a review of the current model could be undertaken in the New Year, taking into consideration Members feedback.

The Head of Legal Services provided Members with context around the future agenda item on the Forward Work Programme 'Establish Terms of Reference for Review of the Constitution'. It was stated that as Monitoring Officer, it was the Head of Legal Services duty to ensure that the Constitution was kept up to date and covered all the legal basis for any decision making within the Council; over the few months, it was anticipated that there would be some changes to the

Local Government and Elections Wales Bill which would need to be reflected into the Constitution. Members were informed that over the past few months the Constitution had been updated to reflect new provisions, and in December Officers would be asking full Council to task the Democratic Services Committee in setting up a Task and Finish Group to complete a full review the Constitution, which would include making it more user friendly for the public. Members were asked to contact Officers if they wished to be part of the Task and Finish Group.

RESOLVED: That the Forward Work Programmed be noted.

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

25th January 2021

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

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All wards

Development Framework for Councillors in Wales 2021

Purpose of the Report:

1. To advise Members of the Development Framework proposed for councillors in Wales for 2021
2. To seek the view of the Democratic Services Committee regarding any proposed feedback to the framework that the Chair and officers can provide to the Lead Members and Officers for Member Support and Development Network.

Background:

3. This framework has been developed by Councillors and officers (throughout Wales) working with the WLGA and outlines the knowledge and behaviours required by Councillors in Unitary Councils in Wales. It is not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive, it can also be locally adapted to reflect the priorities of different councils. It takes account of legislative requirements for members including those set out in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill (currently awaiting Royal Assent)
4. The Framework includes a range of generic competencies required by all Councillors and separate sections for specific roles on the Council. For each theme, the framework sets out the information that Councillors need to know, understand, and be able to do (knowledge and skills), together with examples of how they should act (behaviours).

5. The views of the Democratic Services Committee are sought on the current draft so that proposed feedback to the Framework can be provided to the Lead Members and Officers for Member Support and Development Network.

Financial Impact:

6. No impact.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

7. There is no requirement at this stage to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment though this will be reviewed once the final Framework is approved.

Workforce Impact:

8. No impact

Risk Management:

9. No impact.

Legal Powers:

10. The Framework intends to ensure compliance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

11. There are no specific impacts for valley communities arising.

Consultation:

12. There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations:

13. It is recommended that members note the Development Framework for Councillors in Wales 2021 and identify any proposed feedback and propose key points to enable the Chair to prepare a response on behalf of the Committee to the Lead Members and Officers for Member Support and Development Network.

Reason for Decision

14. To ensure the Development Framework for Councillors in Wales 2021 has been formally considered by the Council

Implementation of Decision:

15. This report will be for implementation after the three day call in period..

Appendices:

19. Appendix 1 – 2021 Competency Framework Consultation

List of Background Papers:

20. None

Officer Contact:

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A Development Framework for Councillors in Wales 2021

This framework outlines the knowledge and behaviours required by Councillors in Unitary Councils in Wales.

It has been developed by Councillors and officers working with the WLGA.

It will be useful for Councils when providing support and training for members and for Councillors to identify their priorities for continuing personal and professional development.

It is not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive, it can also be locally adapted to reflect the priorities of different councils.

The Framework fits with the *Wales Charter for Member Support and Development*. The Charter provides Councils with a structure for local self-assessment and provision of member development, this framework provides a suggested content for that development.

The framework also fits with the WLGA model role descriptions and the induction curriculum for new members. It takes account of legislative requirements for members including those set out in the Local Government (Wales) measure 2011 and the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Using the Framework

The Framework includes a range of generic competencies required by all Councillors and separate sections for specific roles on the Council.

For each theme, the framework sets out the information that Councillors need to know, understand, and be able to do (knowledge and skills), together with examples of how they should act (behaviours).

Part A will be useful for all councillors. **Part B** should be used selectively depending on additional specialist roles.

Part A - relevant to all councillors

Fundamentals: A range of general skills required by all members

REF	Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
A1	Understanding the role of the Councillor	The extent and limits of a Councillor's individual responsibilities, and the powers and responsibilities required for governing the Council.	Undertakes the member role effectively in the Council, the community and with partner agencies. Acts proactively to deliver outcomes. Understands when it is and is not appropriate to act for the Ward or in the interests of the whole area.
A2	Understanding the role of the Local Authority	The services delivered by or on behalf of the Council both statutory and discretionary, and the policies, procedures, plans and strategies which underpin them. The division of responsibility between the different tiers of government, the voluntary and health sectors. Collaboration between Local Authorities, different sectors, organisations, and the public.	Works within the scope of the work of the Council and represents this appropriately to the public. Contributes to the development of council plans and strategies and takes decisions in the light of these. Works collaboratively with other public service delivery agencies and the public.
A3	Conduct	The ethical framework that Councillors must work to. The Code of Conduct. The role of the Monitoring Officer, Standards Committee, Local Resolution Protocol. the role of and guidance from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.	Always abides by the Code of Conduct. Always declares and defines interests when necessary. Seeks advice from the monitoring officer when necessary.
A4	Corporate Governance	The principals of good corporate governance. How the Council understands and meets the needs of the community ethically, responsibly, and efficiently. The Council's Code of Corporate Governance and approach to risk. The Public Participation Duty to encourage local people to participate in decision making. The decision-making and accountability structure of the Council, including the role and value of Scrutiny. The role of, and relationships between, Cabinet, Scrutiny, Full Council, Regulatory and other committees.	Acts effectively across a range of council roles, supporting good corporate governance through seeking the views of the public, taking or scrutinising decisions ethically, and ensuring services are delivered responsibly and efficiently.

		Joint working between Councils and sectors. Structures including Growth Deals and Corporate Joint Committees.	
A5	Equalities and Diversity	Respect for others and taking decisions based on the principals of equality. Unconscious Bias. The need to take account of the protected characteristics of individuals, - sex, race, religion, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and sexual orientation, in all aspects of council and community work. The needs and views of those who are socio economically disadvantaged. Equalities and diversity law relating to the work of the Council and the role of the Councillor.	Demonstrates equalities values in personal behaviour and Council actions. Takes account of the needs of all members of society. Acts within equality and diversity law. Challenges inappropriate behaviour. Acknowledges and compensates for personal bias.
A6	Civility	Respectful behaviour and what constitutes abuse, harassment, and bullying.	Always treats everyone, officers, members of the public and other members with absolute respect, whether in the Council, community, or political group. Both face to face, in correspondence and on social media. Challenges inappropriate behaviour in others. Supports those suffering abuse, harassment, or bullying.
A7	Balancing Council and community expectations and responsibilities	The distinct responsibilities of a councillor as a member of a corporate body and as a representative of a Ward.	Takes decisions relating to the Council or Ward ethically. Manages both community and council expectations through effective communication.
A8	Audit inspection and regulation	The role of the Audit, Inspection and Regulatory bodies and associated Council processes.	Engages effectively with the audit, inspection and regulatory process within the council, using this information to take decisions, monitor performance, constructively challenge and support the affected services.
A9	Work life balance	Time management principals including prioritisation and delegation. Management of information.	Maintains an effective balance between council, personal life, and other work commitments. Managing the time available for Council work to

			concentrate on the issues with the most significant outcomes.
A10	Self-Care	Well-being, including stress management and personal resilience.	Maintains an awareness of the impact that being a councillor can have on wellbeing. Seeks support and assistance before pressures become stress.
A11	Information and data handling and management	Understanding and interpreting information and data. Handling confidential information. Freedom of Information legislation. Understanding the role of a Councillor as a data handler or controller.	Uses and interprets data to take decisions and monitor and assess performance. Acts competently as a data controller or data handler in different contexts when acting on behalf of the council or in a community leadership role.
A12	ICT skills	Proficiency in all 'Office' applications. Email, Word, PowerPoint, Excel. Proficiency in remote working and attending meetings electronically. Standard IT troubleshooting.	Conducts council business and community engagement electronically and remotely as a default approach. Using face to face when possible or more appropriate.
A13	Social media skills	Proficiency in using Social Media through different platforms and Apps. Appreciation of what content is appropriate. Council Social Media Use policy. Guidance from Council comms teams.	Maintains an effective, positive, and ethical online presence in line with the Council's Social Media Policy.
A14	Meeting preparation and participation	Multi-location meetings, remote, hybrid or face to face. Standing Orders, meeting protocols and etiquette, rules of debate. Public speaking, debating, and asking questions.	Participates effectively in formal and informal meetings both remotely and face to face. Prepares effectively for meetings by reading reports and analysing data. Undertakes personal research and participates in any pre meetings. Contributes to positive meeting outcomes by seeking tangible decisions or actions. Effectively contributes to meetings making points clearly and succinctly. Remains focussed on the business in hand. Understands and applies meeting 'rules'. Seeks guidance from officers and Group Leaders before meetings as appropriate.
A15	Working with the media	Building relationships with the Media Interview skills for TV, radio, the press and online media.	Is a recognised source of credible information for the Media. Speaks confidently,

			authoritatively and appropriately in interviews. Enhances the reputation of the council when appearing on screen or in print.
A16	Self-promotion	Developing a profile in the community through local activities and effective communication and consultation.	Reports on achievements and activities. Is highly visible in the community. Maintains a high standard in both personal reputation and that of the Council.
A17	Working with officers	The role of officers generally and the 'rules' they need to abide by including a deeper understanding of the role of senior officers such as the Chief Executive, Senior Management Team, Monitoring Officer and Heads of Finance, Legal and Democratic Services. Skills in acting as a corporate employer. Understanding of the appointments process and interviewing skills.	Maintains professional relationships with officers, recognising boundaries and abiding by the Member Officer Protocol. Acts as an effective member of an appointment panel, applying sound HR and equality and diversity principles to make appointments.
A18	Personal safety	How to protect yourself in the Council, in the community, when travelling and at home and online. Including when lone working, in surgeries or meeting with residents.	Acts proactively to take necessary safety measures. Does not put themselves in harm's way. Asks for support from the Council or Police whenever necessary.
A19	Support for members	The importance of continuous learning. The sources and materials for Councillors' professional development available from the Council. Salaries and allowances. Job sharing opportunities. Family absence.	Proactively seeks out learning and development opportunities. Receives personal development reviews. Identifies support and development needs. Participates in all relevant learning opportunities. Claims allowances and salaries to which they are entitled.
A20	Financial capability	Where Council funding comes from. Financial planning and budget setting. Personal financial skills. The impact of Welfare Reform, Brexit, Austerity and Covid including the vulnerable and those with protected characteristics.	Engages effectively in the budget setting process. Is prepared to take hard, evidence-based decisions. Demonstrates skills in numeracy when interpreting data and asking questions.
A21	Interpersonal skills	Self-awareness, and skills in self-management, "good manners" respect. Emotional Intelligence, listening, negotiation, conflict management and mediation skills.	Acts in a professional and respectful manner to all people and in all places. Is self-aware and able to develop and manage relationships both within and outside the

			Council. Brokers relationships and manages conflict in the community and Council and between the two.
A22	Corporate Parenting	The role and responsibilities of the Councillor as a Corporate Parent.	Takes appropriate corporate responsibility for the welfare of looked after children, actively seeking appropriate information on their situation and progress but not becoming involved in individual casework.
A23	Sustainability	The requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. Including the goals for sustainability and the ways of working to meet them.	Works collaboratively and makes decisions with others to make sure that the needs of future generations as well as the current population, are considered. Seeks to prevent any problems happening in the first place.
A24	Safeguarding	The legal requirements, and the responsibilities placed on authorities and individual councillors to protect children and vulnerable adults at risk of abuse, including reporting mechanisms.	Is vigilant, and acts to make sure that children and vulnerable adults are protected from abuse, taking decisions and reporting incidents.

Local Leadership. A range of skills required by all councillors in their role as community leaders

REF	Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
A25	Working with the community	Contacts for local community groups and leaders. Community issues and concerns. Council plans which impact on local issues.	Understands the needs of the local community. Makes sure that the Council acts on behalf of local people. Communicates with the community, individuals, and the council to ensure engagement and understanding of all parties. Works with the community and the Council to find solutions to local problems. Secures funding for local initiatives.
A26	Consultation and engagement	The Public Participation Duty. The local Public Participation Strategy. Different approaches to engagement ranging from communication to co-production set out in the national principals of engagement for Wales.	Demonstrates positive outcomes because of their effective engagement. Uses a range of communication and consultation tools including social media to understand the needs and views of the community.

		http://www.participationcymru.org.uk/national-principles	Works within the national principals for engagement.
A27	The Voluntary Sector	The role, responsibilities, services provided and contacts for the voluntary sector in the area.	Works with voluntary sector organisations. Signposts local people to voluntary agencies who can help them.
A28	Working with community and town councils	The responsibilities of Community and Town Councils, the role of their members. contacts for the Clerk and their forward work programmes. Services transferred or to be transferred to community councils.	Works with community councils to deliver outcomes for the community. Fosters positive relations and active communication with the members of the Community Council and the Clerk.

Casework on behalf of the public

REF	Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
A29	Being accessible to the public	Understanding of, and ability to arrange and publicise opportunities to discuss casework with the public.	Makes themselves available through the most useful means to connect with the greatest number of people. Uses surgeries, street surgeries, informal settings, and social media as appropriate. Takes steps to ensure personal safety. Promises only that which can be delivered.
A30	Managing casework	The availability and use of case management techniques and software. The officers that can help. Council procedures to support Members with casework.	Responds promptly to requests for help. Keeps the people on whose behalf they are working informed of progress. Monitors progress of cases after they have been referred to officers or other agencies. Uses the established referral schemes within the Council.
A31	Signposting	Sources of information and advice within and outside the council of use to all community groups.	Makes links between members of the public and the appropriate source of help in the council or in the community.

Partnership and representation

REF	Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
A32	Work on outside bodies	The capacity in which Members are appointed. For example, Council representative, locality representative, or as an individual. Whether you are a trustee. The role of the outside body. Its status for example company, trust, charity, unincorporated association. The relationship between the Council and the body and any conflicts of interest.	Reports to and from the Council and outside body as appropriate. Represents the views of the Council, personal views, or that of the community effectively and appropriately according to the role. Engages in briefing and training provided by outside bodies. Operates within the relevant Code of Conduct.
A33	Working as a school governor	Education policy. School organisation. The remit of a governor. Principles of conduct for governors. See also School governance Sub-topic GOV.WALES	Oversees the school performance. Challenges the school management as a critical friend. Takes part in governor training.
A34	Working as a member of a community or town council	Community council governance. The role of the community council and its limits. Transfer of assets and services. Protocols between Community or Town Councils and Unitary Councils. See also The Good Councillors Guide - One Voice Wales	Contributes to the governance of the community or town council. Makes links between the Community Council and Unitary Council, Takes part in Community Council training.

Working in the Political environment

	Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
A35	Party policy (if a party member)	Awareness of values and manifestos both nationally and locally.	Balances the needs of local people, Party, Group and Council
A36	Liaison with the UK Government, Welsh Government and the Senedd	Understanding of the functions of the different tiers of government and methods of engagement.	Liaises with local MPs and MS. Brings local issues to the attention of the WG when appropriate.
A37	Party Group membership	Party rules and constituency group structure and policies.	Works effectively and respectfully with Party Group members and officials.

Part B – relevant to councillors undertaking these specialist roles.

Scrutiny

REF	Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective behaviours
B1	The role of Scrutiny	<p>The value of Scrutiny as an essential part of the Council’s corporate governance.</p> <p>The role of the Scrutiny function in: Contributing to better outcomes - driving improvements in services.</p> <p>Better decisions - ensuring that democratic decision making is accountable, inclusive and robust.</p> <p>Better engagement – ensuring that the public is meaningfully engaged in democratic debate about the current and future delivery of public services.</p>	<p>Contributes to the development of forward work programmes.</p> <p>Selects topics where Scrutiny can have most impact.</p> <p>Promotes the work of Scrutiny within the council.</p> <p>Acts in a non-parochial and non-Party Political manner when undertaking Scrutiny.</p>
B2	Policy development and review	<p>General understanding of the policies, plans, services and functions in development or review.</p>	<p>Makes informed and evidence-based recommendations for policy development.</p>
B3	Holding the Executive to account	<p>Understanding of the remit of the Executive in general and items on the Executive Forward Work Programme.</p> <p>Processes for the constructive challenge of Executive decisions and when and how to use the power to call in decisions.</p>	<p>Monitors and constructively challenges the decision-making process of the Executive, in the best interests of the community.</p>
B4	Monitoring performance	<p>Interpreting data, financial information.</p> <p>Risk, reports from audit, inspection and regulatory bodies, and other information required for performance measurement.</p>	<p>Identifies and challenges poor performance based on evidence, to improve services.</p>
B5	Individual Scrutiny skills	<p>Data handling and research.</p> <p>Meeting preparation for formal and informal scrutiny meetings and groups.</p> <p>Contributing to questioning strategies and asking questions. Active listening.</p>	<p>Prepares thoroughly for every Scrutiny activity and meeting by reading reports, preparing lines of enquiry and undertaking personal research.</p>

			Contributes to questioning strategies and asks relevant, effective questions. Actively seeks outcomes for every Scrutiny activity.
B6	Engaging the public in Scrutiny	How the Public Participation Duty, to encourage local people to participate in decision making is supported by Scrutiny. Appropriate local individuals and organisations who can contribute to the work of Scrutiny, especially those traditionally excluded.	Raises public awareness of the work of Scrutiny and work programmes. Encourages the public to become involved in the policy and decision-making process through Scrutiny.
B7	Collaborative Scrutiny	Joint Scrutiny - Understanding of the remit and terms of reference of any joint Scrutiny committees. Scrutiny of joint arrangements - the role, responsibilities and accountability of regional bodies, partnerships and organisations outside of the Council which are subject to Scrutiny.	Seeks outcomes from effective joint working with scrutiny members from other authorities, partnerships, and organisations.

Chairing

REF	Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviour
B8	Committee leadership	An in depth understanding of the role of the committee and its scope. Ability to liaise with relevant officers, members, and agencies. Commitment to enabling all committee members to develop skills and participate effectively in meetings.	Promotes the work and value of the committee in the Council and to the public. Works with the committee outside of meetings to make it work more effectively. Communicates with members and officers with an interest in committee proceedings. Builds relationships with the relevant Heads of Service/ Directors to ensure that the work of the committee is relevant, well informed and provides the outcomes needed.
B9	Work programme development and management	The subjects within the scope of the committee and how these interact with council policies generally and the roles of other committees. Any Council and community priorities which should inform the work programme.	Works with officers and committee members to develop the work plan. Ensures that the work programme takes account of The Executive Work Plan, risks to the Council,

			other committee programmes, national, regional and local plans and policies, and the expressed needs of the community for services. Makes sure that the committee uses reports from audit, inspection and regulatory bodies.
B10	Meeting preparation and management	Meeting management in a variety of settings and using different channels for physical, hybrid and remote meetings. Broadcasting. Meeting protocols and the rules of debate. Agenda management including fair contributions and time. Public and press participation.	Chairs act clearly and authoritatively to enforce meeting rules and encouraging fair and focussed participation. Manages the agenda by introducing items, summarising debate, focussing on outcomes and limiting contributions which do not contribute to the outcomes. Ensures that the public feel welcome, understand the meeting purpose and how they can contribute.
B11	Committee support	The support, appropriate level and variety of information and finances the committee needs to function effectively.	Negotiates and ensures the support required by the committee.

Serving on statutory/regulatory committees

REF	Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective behaviours
B12	Planning	Statutory role of the committee. Planning and rights of way law generally. How to apply the Code of Conduct to planning issues. Declaring interests in Planning. Local Development Planning. Development Management. Sustainable Development principals and legislation including environmental, welfare, future generations, and design considerations.	Demonstrates objectivity by taking independent decisions based on evidence and the legal responsibility placed on committees acting in a semi-judicial role. Transparently adheres to the Code of Conduct. Seeks appropriate professional officer advice, personal development or briefing before taking decisions.

		The respective roles of Welsh Government and Local authorities. Environmental impact assessment in a planning context.	
B13	Governance and Audit	Statutory role of the committee. Effective Governance and performance management. The Council's and national performance reporting frameworks. Scrutiny of financial performance. Risk Management and the local Risk Management Strategy. Internal and external audit arrangements. The relative roles of Audit and Scrutiny committees.	
B14	Licensing	Licensing regulations and Licensing policy. Local policies which impact in this area such as the Community Plan and wider considerations for sustainability.	
B15	Democratic Services	The legislative requirements for a Democratic Services committee. National and local requirements for member support and development. Role of the Head of Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer (if separate). Role of and collaboration with the Lead Member/Champion for member support and development. Diversity in Democracy.	
B16	Standards	The law and constitution in relation to conduct. Local resolution protocols. Needs of both County Council and Town and Community Councils for Training in relation to the Code of Conduct.	

Executive Members

REF	Requirement	Knowledge and skills	Effective behaviours
B17	Collective responsibility	Developing a collective vision for the Council. The Executive role in enabling public participation within the Public Participation Strategy. Information, good practice and evidence sourcing and handling. Taking decisions collectively. Prioritising issues of most importance to the Authority.	Works collaboratively to develop the vision for the Council. Ensures the participation of the public in the decision-making process. Takes effective strategic decisions. Ensures the best possible performance of the Council.

		Working with other authorities and agencies to secure services for the Council. Working effectively and constructively with the senior management team and Chief Executive.	Guides and enables the performance of the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team.
B18	Portfolio lead	A thorough knowledge of local and national policy relating to the relevant service areas. Effective and respectful joint working with relevant lead officers and Scrutiny chairs. Developing a vision for the portfolio. Integrating the work of the portfolio with the wider Executive programme. High level media skills	Provides political direction to officers in the portfolio area. Is publicly accountable for communication, policy, and performance in the portfolio area. Works with officers to consider issues, priorities and take decisions. Represents the Council in the media
B19	Working with Scrutiny	Valuing and working constructively with Scrutiny, to ensure that the Executive is demonstrably accountable for decisions and takes and reviews decisions which have been rigorously scrutinised.	Actively seeks and values the input of Scrutiny to policy development and performance monitoring.
B20	Delegated responsibilities	The scheme of delegation and process for taking responsibility for decisions under the scheme.	Takes decisions after appropriate research and consultation.

Council Leadership

REF	Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
B21	Promoting and managing the reputation of the council	Acting as an ambassador for the Local Authority.	Effectively represents the Council, ensuring that information about the Council and its services and citizens is communicated positively and with authenticity and integrity.
B22	Leading the vision for the area.	Development of a vision for the Council area or wider region.	Works collaboratively with the community, members, officers and Political Party (if a member) to create and communicate a shared vision for the area.
B23	Leading the Council	Develop a vision for the work, culture and outcomes sought by the Council. Senior Corporate Governance	Works collaboratively with the community, members, officers and Political Party (if a member) to create and communicate a shared vision for the Council. Oversees the delivery of effective corporate

			governance in the Council.
B24	Relationships with the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team	Advanced communication and relationship building. Understanding of and empathy for the work of the Chief Executive and Senior Officers. Performance management and appraisal of chief officers.	Meets and communicates openly and regularly. Makes expectations clear and provides political leadership. Undertakes performance reviews with senior officers as appropriate.

Civic Leadership

REF	Requirement	Knowledge and Skills	Effective Behaviours
B25	Chairing Full Council	Advanced chairing skills. In depth understanding of standing orders and rules of engagement. Remote, hybrid and physical meetings. Broadcast meeting skills.	Effectively and confidently chairs meetings of the full Council through a range of channels. Sets standards and expectations for appropriate behaviour.
B26	Representing the Council at Civic functions	Tact and diplomacy. Advanced public speaking Relationship building.	Demonstrates high level interpersonal communication, and social skills, appropriate to the context.



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Democratic Services Committee

25th January 2021

Report of the Head of Legal Services – Mr Craig Griffiths

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected:

All wards

Review of the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Constitution

Purpose of the Report:

To outline a proposed project plan for the above work

Background:

The Council's Monitoring Officer (the Head of Legal Services) has the specific duty to ensure that the Council, its officers and its elected members maintain the highest standard of conduct in all they do. The legal basis for the post is found in section 5 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989.

The Monitoring Officer has three main roles:

- to report on matters he or she believes are, or are likely to be, illegal or amount to maladministration;

- to be responsible for matters relating to the conduct of Councillors and officers; and
- to be responsible for the operation of the Council's Constitution.

The purpose of the Constitution is to set out the rules that govern how the Council works. It:

- contains rules setting out the processes by which decisions are made;
- states who is responsible for making decisions;
- contains the rules governing the conduct of meetings.

Although the Monitoring Officer has updated the Constitution when decisions are ultimately made by Council and/or Cabinet and when new legislation comes into force, the Monitoring Officer is of the view that it could be updated further and simplified to make the document more user friendly and understandable to members of the public who wish to review. Additional amendments could be made in order to facilitate the democratic process and to take into account the current way of working electronically, for example allowing items to be submitted electronically instead of hard copy.

The Welsh Government have now introduced the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill to the Assembly. The Bill proposes to reform the legislative framework for local government electoral arrangements, democracy, performance and governance. The proposed Bill would require the Council to make a number of changes to its Constitution. For example, although there is an existing duty on councils to prepare and publish a constitution, which includes standing orders and codes of conduct, the Bill places, a duty on councils to keep their constitution "up to date", and to prepare and publish a constitution guide which "explains the content of their constitution in ordinary language.

Terminology will have to change within the Constitution as well to take into account principles that will be established by the Bill, for

example the Head of Paid Service will become the Chief Executive Officer and the Audit Committee will become the Audit and Governance Committee.

Role of the Democratic Services Committee

On the 2nd December 2020, Council received a report on the Review of the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Constitution and it was resolved that the Democratic Services Committee be tasked with preparing advice for Council on the Constitution to ensure it is fit for purpose and meets all legislative requirements, including, where applicable an analysis of the risks and impacts of progressing/not progressing any options considered.

It was concluded that a Project Plan would be necessary to ensure that the discussions can be focussed and amendments made in a measured way.

To enable the preparation of the advice for Council, 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.

The proposed project plan is attached at Appendix 1

Financial Impacts:

There should be minimal financial impacts from undertaking any research/review work. Any potential financial implications that could arise as part of the Constitution review will be incorporated in any advice provided to Council.

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:

No impacts are thought at this stage though this will be assessed as part of the Constitution review.

Workforce Impacts:

Any potential changes may have impacts on the Council's workforce which would need to be assessed as part of any options appraisal.

Legal Impacts:

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:

The risks associated with each option considered, together with any risks associated with implementing the proposed recommendations and also the risks associated with failing to implement the proposed recommendations will be set out in any advice to Council where appropriate.

Consultation:

There will be no requirement for any consultation at this stage.

Recommendations:

That members agree:

- (a) 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;
- (b) the membership of the task and finish group; and
- (c) the proposed project plan outlined within this report.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To ensure the Constitution of Neath Port Talbot Council is up to date and meets all legislative requirements

Implementation of Decision:

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Proposed Project Plan

List of Background Papers:

Local Government and Housing Act 1989
Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011
Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013
Constitution of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Officer Contact:

Mr Craig Griffiths

Head of Legal Services

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Appendix 1
Task and Finish Group – Proposed Project Plan

Date of Meeting	Objective	Action	Output (where identifiable)
February 2021	Implementation of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill and how it will impact Constitution Review of Articles of the Constitution and information on How the Council Operates	An update will be provided by the Head of Legal Services on the impact of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill and how it will impact the work of the Task and Finish Group concerning the Constitution A copy of the Articles of the Constitution will be issued to members of the task and finish group prior to the meeting with proposed amendments highlighted and a discussion will take place on the provisions included.	Identification of the options where more information is required for further discussion at next workshop. Preparation of advice to Council on proposed amendments
March 2021	Review of Codes and Protocols in respect of Members	A copy of the Codes and Protocols that concern member involvement will be issued to members of	Preparation of advice to Council on proposed amendments

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AM and MP Protocol • Members Code of Conduct • Members Gifts/Hospitality • Members Travelling and Subsistent Allowance • Protocol on Member and Officer Relations • Role of Members <p>Local Resolution Processes</p>	<p>the task and finish group prior to the meeting with proposed amendments highlighted and a discussion will take place on the provisions included.</p>	
<p>April 2021</p>	<p>Review of Rules of Procedure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Procedure Rules • Executive Procedure Rules • Scrutiny Procedure Rules 	<p>A copy of the Rules of Procedure will be forwarded to members of the task and finish group with proposed amendments highlighted and a discussion will take place on the provisions included.</p> <p>The Head of Legal Services will collate</p>	<p>Consideration of other local authorities approaches completed</p> <p>Preparation of advice to Council on proposed amendments and agreement of a user friendly guide</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratic Committee Procedure Rules • Family Absence Regulations for Members <p>User Friendly Guide to Constitution</p>	<p>information on other local authorities approaches to Rules of Procedure</p>	
May 2021	<p>Review of Responsibility of Functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of Council • Role of Cabinet • Role of Scrutiny • Role of Various Committees • Officer Delegations 	<p>A copy of the Responsibility for Functions will be forwarded to members of the task and finish group with proposed amendments highlighted and a discussion will take place on the provisions included.</p> <p>The Head of Legal Services will collate information on other local authorities approaches to responsibility of functions</p>	<p>Preparation of advice to Council on proposed amendments</p>

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Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Democratic Services Committee 25th January 2021

Report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services

Matter for information

Wards Affected: All

Members - ICT Environment

Purpose of the Report:

- To provide an update on the status of the ICT environment available to Members in support of their duties.

Executive Summary:

- The ICT Environment consists of a desktop device, Connectivity, Application base, Office Software and a Unified Communications (UC) product. The UC product is the medium for participation in remote meetings.
- Issues were identified with the ability to easily participate in meetings whilst also referencing electronic documents. Where identified as an issue multiple devices, screens have been enabled. In a limited number of instances instance the use of a headset proved inappropriate and a USB Speaker/Microphone was supplied

- Microsoft Office 365 (O365) is the productivity software of choice and following on from a successful pilot with the Members IT Reference Group, the product is being installed for all members. The majority of installations have been completed with all installs scheduled to be complete by the third week of January 2021. Microsoft Teams which is the UC tool has been provisioned to all members;
- No specific issues have been identified with members wireless network connectivity but further work will be undertaken in January and February to confirm. Some members do suffer from limited broadband offerings and ISP vendors have been asked to identify potential solutions.
- Laptops have been updated to the latest Windows version and configured to provide a secure and seamless connection to the council network.
- No specific Training requirements have been identified.

Background:

- The ICT environment is key in supporting Members and is subject to regular review which falls under the auspices of the Members IT Reference Group
- The principal device for members is the Apple IPAD which provides the richest experience for ModGov which underpins the council's committee governance and meeting solution
- The IT Reference Group piloted the use of O365 and recommended the deployment across the member estate. O365 provides a flexible functional access to the Office suite and can be installed on the IPAD.

- The need for members to be able to participate in remote meetings required the Microsoft Teams UC product to be installed prior to the full rollout of O365 suite.
- A survey of the ICT environment was commissioned to identify any issues which would impair ability of member to fulfil their democratic duties. A layered approach has been adopted which includes desk checks of the environment health checks on the equipment and calls to Members to check on potential issues. The survey will continue as an operational task carried out by Members Support

Financial Impacts:

There are no significant financial impacts. Any incremental change to the provided equipment will be funded from the existing budgets

Integrated Impact Assessment:

Report is for information only.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

There are no implications.

Workforce Impacts:

There are no implications.

Legal Impacts:

There are no implications.

Risk Management Impacts:

There are no significant impacts.

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item

Recommendations:

That the Committee notes the update on the ICT Environment

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To provide an update for Members on the ICT Environment

Appendices:

- None

List of Background Papers:

- None

Contact

Officer Contact:

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Mr S Blewett , Systems Manager

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NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

25 January 2021

Report of the Democratic Services Chairperson

Matter for Information

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Annual Report of the Democratic Services Committee 2019/20.

Purpose of the Report

To update Members on the work undertaken by the Democratic Services Committee for the civic year 2019/20 and to endorse and commend the report to Council.

Background

To provide an overview of the work of the Committee for 2019/20.

Financial Impact

No impact.

Integrated Impact Assessment

There is no requirement at this stage to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment.

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.

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 2019/20 attached at Appendix 1 and commend to Council.

Reason for decision

To note and endorse the Annual Report 2019/20 of the Democratic Services Committee.

Implementation of Decision

This report will be for implementation after the three day call in period.

Officer Contacts

Cllr J.D Morgan - Chair of the Democratic Services Committee.

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2019/2020

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 2019/2020 civic year.

It is the third such report to be produced by the committee and 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 2019/20.

The document may also facilitate discussions on additional items that could be included within the work programme for 2020/2021.

3. Committee Membership

The members of the Democratic Services Committee were:

Councillors M.Harvey, J. Hurley, S.K.Hunt, S.Miller, S.Purse, E.V Latham, A.Llewellyn, S.Renkes, A.J.Richards, A.J.Taylor, and the late S.ap Dafydd.

The committee Chair was Cllr. Dr. Del Morgan, and the Vice Chair was Cllr. Angharad Aubrey.

4. Number of Meetings Held

The committee formally met four times during 2019/20. 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 2019/2020, the following task and finish groups were active: Members' IT Reference Group, the Disability Audit Working Group and the Webcasting/Public Participation Task and Finish Group.

5. Issues Considered During 2019/2020

The following topics were discussed:

IRPW (Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales)

The committee considered the Draft Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. The committee discussed the proposed changes to be implemented in 2020/2021 which informed the Council's formal response to the proposals and the Chair participated in a Videoconference session with IRPW and other councillors in relation to the IRPW draft report

The committee noted the final IRPW Report and forwarded their concerns to the IRPW on the two tier nature of the care allowance as proposed and requested a clearer rationale as to why two different rates of payment were being proposed.

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 final report and recommendations were considered by the committee in March 2020.

Democratic Services Staffing Structure

The committee noted the updated staffing structure, which was subsequently endorsed by Council

Webcasting and public participation

Following an instruction from Council, the Committee initiated a major review of webcasting and public participation and a working group was launched.

Research included the Chair and officers attending a meeting of the Swansea Bay City Region Joint Scrutiny Committee at Pembrokeshire County Hall to witness webcasting in action.

The Chair and senior Democratic Services officers viewed live and recorded webcast sessions from various councils and other public bodies to gain best practice ideas and worked extensively with IT colleagues as well as exploring demonstrations of new software to find a solution suitable for NPT.

A substantive report on next steps was prepared and commended by Council, although next steps were halted due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The group are looking forward to revisiting their planned actions and revising them in light of the consequences of the pandemic on digital democracy and remote meetings and are focusing on improving public participation as their next strand of work.

Members' IT Reference Group

The Group's terms of reference 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.

The group has continued to meet to discuss the issues and challenges members have when using information technology (IT) devices, such as iPads, laptops and mobile phones. During 2019/2020 the main focus was overcoming the challenges of remote meetings and attendance and planning for the rollout of the Office 365 system. This group has been

utilised as a forum to pilot the systems, to ensure a seamless roll out to the wider group of members.

All Wales Network for Member Support and Development

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.

Cllr. Dr. Del Morgan, Chairperson
January 2021

**WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Date	Agenda Item	TYPE (Decision, Monitoring, Information)	Rotation Topical, Annual, Biannual, Quarterly, Monthly	Head of Service/Contact Officer
2nd November 2020	Webcasting and Public Participation- Position Statement	Information	Topical	Karen Jones/Stacy Curran
	Assessment of Resources for the Democratic Services Committee	Decision	Annual	Karen Jones/Caryn Furlow Harris /Stacy Curran
	Update following meeting with the IRPW on 21 st October 2020 on the Draft Annual Report	Information	Annual	Karen Jones/Caryn Furlow Harris
25th January 2021	Establish Terms of Reference for Review of the Constitution	Decision	Topical	Craig Griffiths

	Members IT Update re- connectivity survey and Office 365	Information	Topical	Dave Giles
	Democratic Services Committee Annual Report	Information	Annual	Chair of the Committee Cllr Del Morgan
	Competency Framework	Information	Topical	Craig Griffiths
29th March	IRPW Final Report	Information	Annual	Craig Griffiths
	Members IT Reference Group Annual Report	Information	Annual	David Giles
	Member Training and Development Priorities for 2020/21	Decision	Annual	Stacy Curran
	Annual Update on Member Annual Reports and PDR's	Monitoring	Annual	Stacy Curran

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To be Programmed Annually:

- Annual Update on Member Annual Reports and PDR's
- Democratic Services Committee Annual Report
- Assessment of Resources for Democratic Services
- Member Training and Development Priorities for upcoming year (March)
- Annual Member Survey and Timings of Meetings Survey
- IRPW Consultation and Annual Report

First Meeting New Cycle following approval at Council:

- Establish Terms of Reference for 'On-boarding; Programme Plan for Member Induction 2022'

Future Meetings

- Follow on work from the disability audit group

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