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DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Monday, 2 December 2019

PRESENT: Councillor W.T. Evans (Vice-Chair in Chair)

Councillors:

E.M.J.G. Schiavone and J.M. Charles (In place of D. Thomas)

The following Officers were in attendance:

G. Morgan, Head of Democratic Services

H. Daniels, Corporate Learning and Development Advisor

L. Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer

Chairman's Room, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP. 10.00 - 10.40 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. Curry and D. Thomas.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS.

There were no declarations of Personal Interest.

3. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 30TH JULY 2019

Members noted that the 21st Century Workshop due to be held on the 26th September had been cancelled due to a low number of Members signed-up to attend.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 30th July 2019 be signed as a correct record.

4. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT - FEBRUARY 2020

The Committee were reminded that each year, the Independent Remuneration for Wales (IRPW) determines the rates of payment which are made to elected and co-opted Members of Welsh local authorities for the following municipal year and has powers to make recommendations on proposed variations to the remuneration of Chief Executives and Chief Officers of Principal Councils in Wales.

The Committee considered the draft determinations of the IRPW for 2020 and were advised that the IRPW invited comments on the draft report by the 10th December 2019.

The Head of Democratic Services advised that for 2020/21 the IRPW recommended: -

- an increase in Basic Salaries of 2.5% (£350), bringing the basic salary for Councillors up to £14,218
- no additional increase for Senior and Civic Salary holders
- that in respect of the costs of care that relevant authorities should only publish the total amount reimbursed during the year.
- that the 2020/21 payments take effect from 1st April 2020.

Representations had meet made at a regional meeting with the IRPW on the 22nd of October for the effective date for 2020/21 salary levels to be maintained from commencement of the 2020/21 municipal year and not 1st April 2020. The Head of Democratic Services also outlined representations made to the IRPW in relation to the level of remuneration by principal Councils that require a decision of full Council. One of these decisions is the maximum number of days in one year for which co-opted members can be paid. The Head of Democratic Services as part of the consultation period has suggested that it would be useful, if this option was reconsidered.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED:

4.1 that the report be received

4.2 to authorise the Chair of the Committee to submit a response to the IRPW on behalf of the Committee.

5. CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY FUNCTION - ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

In the absence of the Chair of the Chair and Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny Forum the Head of Democratic Services provided an overview of the Annual Report which outlines the Council's Scrutiny Function and makes specific reference to the work of the 5 Scrutiny Committees: -

- Policy & Resources
- Community
- Education & Children
- Environmental & Public Protection
- Social Care & Health

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received and circulated to all members of the Council

6. DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires each Principal Council to establish a Democratic Services Committee. The report under review outlines the work of the Committee during the 2018/19 municipal year.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received and circulated to all members of the Council

7. DEMOCRATIC SERVICES FUNCTION

The Democratic Services Committee considers matters relating to the provision of support services provided to them in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Act 2011. The report as outlined requires the committee to consider the information contained in the report and determine whether the provision of staff, accommodation and other resources made available to the Head of Democratic Services is adequate to deliver the Democratic Process for the forthcoming year.

During this discussion the Chair noted the lack of facilities within County Hall for individual Members to work and to hold group meetings, the Head of Democratic Services advised that, as part of County Hall development works, proposals had been put in place to provide additional meeting rooms and facilities.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received

8. COUNCILLORS' EXPENSES - SELF SERVICE

The Committee received a report outlining the transition to self-service Councillor expenses and noted that due to security and compliance risks, the Head of Democratic Services had been advised by the IT Division that the existing expenses database would be discontinued by the 31st March 2020. As a result, the Authority would need to find an alternative system for processing expenses, and it was therefore necessary for all members move to the self-service module with effect from March 31st 2020.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received

9. DEMOCRATIC SERVICES FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 20/21

The Committee received and considered a suggested Forward Work Programme for the 2020/21 municipal year

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the Democratic Services Committee 2020/21 Forward Work Programme be adopted.

CHAIR

DATE

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