

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 2023

PRESENT: Councillor W.T. Evans (Vice Chair in the Chair) (In Person)

Councillors (Virtually):

H.A.L. Evans

F. Walters

P.T. Warlow

Also Present (In Person):

Councillor AG. Morgan (Invited to attend in his capacity as Chair of both the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny Forum)

The following officers were in attendance (In Person)

J. Owens, Democratic Services Officer [note taker]

M. Runeckles, Members Support Officer [webcasting]

The following officers were in attendance (Virtually):

G. Morgan, Head of Democratic Services

M. Evans Thomas, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Chamber - County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP and remotely - 10.00 - 10.10 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

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 9TH JUNE 2023

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9th June 2023 be signed as a correct record.

4. DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

The Committee received for consideration a report which outlined the work of the Committee during the 2022/23 municipal year. The report detailed the key issues considered, together with the associated outcomes in respect of the role and function of the Committee, member induction programme, multi-location meeting policy, timing of meetings survey and the Committee's forward work programme. The report highlighted that whilst the Democratic Services Committee had met only once, members of the Committee did meet informally during the reporting period to view and input into a revised and updated member portal for elected

Note: These minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting.

member enquiries, with members' feedback forming the final report being placed before the Committee in June 2023.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOVLED that the report be received and made available to members of Council for information.

5. CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY FUNCTION - ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

The Committee considered the Carmarthenshire County Council's Scrutiny Function – Annual Report 2022/23 which provided an overview of the Council's Scrutiny Function incorporating specific reference to the work undertaken by the five scrutiny committees pertaining to:

- Corporate Performance and Resources
- Communities, Homes and Regeneration
- Education, Young People and the Welsh Language
- Place, Sustainability and Climate Change
- Health and Social Services

The report highlighted scrutiny's key role in promoting accountability in the decision making process of local authorities, being a valuable tool in ensuring council policies reflected current priorities, as well as promoting efficiency and encouraging partnership working with external agencies.

The Chair of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny Committee reported that the Scrutiny Committee remits had been updated by the Council following the May 2022 elections whereby each Scrutiny Committee became responsible for the overview and scrutiny of specific Cabinet Portfolios and their respective services.

Furthermore, in order for Scrutiny Committees to take on greater ownership of their own work programmes, a pre-decision method of scrutiny was introduced during the course of the municipal year which enabled Scrutiny Committees to be proactive in their interaction with the Cabinet Forward Work Plan, and to scrutinise relevant matters from their inception.

Reference was also made to the Audit Wales review of the Council's overview and scrutiny arrangements published in July 2022 which had recommended processes to be put in place to enable the assessment of the effectiveness and impact of overview and scrutiny. Accordingly, a move towards a more outcome focussed approach was being implemented by the Council.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

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CHAIR

DATE

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