

# DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Friday, 8 September 2017

**PRESENT:** Councillor R. James (Chair)

**Councillors:**

W.T. Evans, S. Najmi, D. Thomas and R.E. Evans (In place of T.J. Jones)

**The following Officers were in attendance:**

G. Morgan, Head of Democratic Services

H. Daniels, Learning & Development Advisor

M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer

**Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen - 2.00 pm - 2.45 pm**

**1. APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor T.J. Jones.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of personal interest.

**3. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee held on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017 be signed as a correct record.**

**4. DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - FUNCTION**

The Committee considered a report outlining the statutory framework within which the Democratic Services Committee functioned together with its remit and powers as detailed in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, the Local Government (Democracy)(Wales) Act 2013 and additional responsibilities approved by Council on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2013.

**RESOLVED that the provisions of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Statutory Guidance relating to the role of the Democratic Services Committee function be noted.**

**5. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER DEVELOPMENT CHAMPION**

The Committee considered a report detailing the necessity to appoint a new Member Development Champion and to confirm the Authority's commitment to the importance of Member Development. The Member Development Champion would work closely with the Member Development lead for the Executive Board and officers of the Learning and Development Team on identifying and promoting member development issues.

It was suggested that the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee should also be the Member Development Champion.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that the role of Council's Member Development Champion be incorporated as a function of the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee.**

## **6. SURVEY - TIMING OF MEETINGS**

The Committee considered a report detailing the initial results of a timing of meetings survey which the Council was required to undertake in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011. The results indicated that the majority of members would prefer meeting arrangements to remain as at present.

A report on the findings had been considered by the Constitutional Review Working Group [CRWG] which had requested that further analysis of the responses be undertaken to ascertain the age profile of those members favouring evening meetings and which Committees they sat on. CRWG had also recommended that the possibility of holding an evening member development session be explored.

### **RESOLVED**

**6.1 that a further report on the timings of meetings be submitted to the next meeting;**

**6.2 that the possibility of holding an evening member development session be explored.**

## **7. DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017**

The Committee considered the Democratic Services Committee Annual Report for the period 18<sup>th</sup> May 2016 – 24<sup>th</sup> May 2017. The report outlined the work of the Committee during that period.

**RESOLVED that the Report be received.**

## **8. UPDATE ON MEMBER INDUCTION PROGRAMME 2017**

Further to minute 4 of the meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 the Committee received a progress report on the Member Induction Programme 2017 and was invited to comment thereon. In order to ensure that the Programme had been effective in providing members with sufficient knowledge and understanding feedback was also sought from members on a proposal to hold focus groups.

It was commented that one or two sessions had unfortunately clashed with committee meetings and that some sessions would have possibly benefitted by being held over two days. Officers stated that information linked to any sessions would be available online for members who had been unable to attend. A concern was expressed over the low attendance at some sessions particularly in view of the amount of preparation work by officers but it accepted that there was no legal requirement to attend. The Chair suggested that maybe this was an issue that the WLGA could take up.

### **RESOLVED**

**8.1 that the report be received;**

**8.2 that the possibility of rearranging the cancelled familiarisation tour of the north and west of the County for newly elected Members be followed up;**

**8.3 the proposal to hold focus groups be welcomed.**

## **9. DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received and considered a forward work programme [FWP] for 2017/18 which provided Members with Agenda Items for the 2017/18 Democratic Committee Cycle.

The Chair suggested that the FWP could also include items on IT provision for members and personal development reviews/mentoring.

**RESOLVED that the Forward Work Programme be adopted subject to the inclusion of the above suggestions.**

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**CHAIR**

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**DATE**