

COUNCIL

9TH MARCH 2022

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE TASK & FINISH GROUP FINAL REPORT

DEMOCRATIC PROCESS - NEW WAYS OF WORKING

Democratic Services Committee Recommendation:-

That the Council approves the report and recommendations of the Democratic Services Task and Finish Group on New Ways of Working.

Reasons:

- At its meeting on 23rd March 2021, the Democratic Services Committee agreed to **establish** a Task and Finish Group of 10 politically balanced members (which would automatically include the members of the Democratic Services Committee) to review members' requirements in order to determine the needs of elected members in driving the new way of working for the democratic services function.
- The recommendations contained within the report have been formulated by the Group following the consideration of a range of evidence over a series of meetings held between April 2021 and February 2022

Scrutiny committee consulted Not Applicable

Cabinet Decision Required NO

Council Decision Required YES

Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder: N/A

Chair of the Task & Finish Group:

Cllr. Jeff Edmunds

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Democratic Services Committee Task & Finish Group Final Report

Democratic Process - New Ways of Working

At its meeting held on the 23rd March 2021 (Minute 3 refers) the Democratic Services Committee established a Task and Finish Group to consider new Ways of Working for the democratic services function.

The Task and Finish Group were tasked with reviewing members' requirements in order to determine the needs of elected members in driving the new way of working for the democratic services function.

The work of the Task and Finish Group was partly superseded by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 which introduced a legal requirement for local authorities to make and publish arrangements for the purpose of ensuring that Local Authority meetings could be held by means of any equipment or other facility which means that multi-location meetings (a mix of physical and remote attendance) must be held and this is reflected in the report.

The Group met a total of 4 meetings between May 2021 and February 2022. In addition, the Chair and Vice Chair invited each political group to meet with them to discuss initial thoughts and obtain the views of elected members.

A total of 5 recommendations are placed before the Democratic Services Committee for its consideration and recommendation to Council.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

Yes- Task and Finish Report

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Signed: Linda Rees-Jones Head of Administration & Law

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES	NOT AT THIS STAGE	YES

Legal

The legal requirement for meetings of Principal Councils are set out in the Local Government and Elections Wales (Act) 2021 and previous legislation.



Finance

There are potential revenue and CO2 savings to working remotely, as members have an option to attend meetings in person or online and make use of accommodation closer to home.

ICT

Equipment and systems will be put in place to meet the needs of members in accordance with relevant policies.

Physical Assets

The Accommodation Strategy will take into account the report to make best use of assets to support the Democratic Process.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Signed: Linda Rees-Jones Head of Administration & Law

1. Scrutiny Committee N/A
2. Local Member(s) – All members have had the opportunity to contribute to the review either through political groups or a member survey.
3. Community / Town Council – N/A
4. Relevant Partners – N/A
5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – N/A – Democratic Process only.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW:

Title of Document	File Ref No. / Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Democratic Services Committee 23 rd March 2021	https://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=152&MId=4247&Ver=4