

**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**5<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2023**

**MULTI-LOCATION MEETING POLICY**

**RECOMMENDATIONS / KEY DECISIONS REQUIRED:**

To consider the current policy, make any suggestions for improvement and recommend any proposed changes to Council.

**REASONS:**

To review and ensure that the Multi location meeting policy is appropriate.

<b>CABINET DECISION REQUIRED</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>COUNCIL DECISION REQUIRED</b>	<b>YES</b>

Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder(s): Cllr Linda Evans (Deputy Leader)  
Other:- Cllr Michael Cranham (Chair of Democratic Services Committee)

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Designations:</b>	<b>Tel Nos / E Mail Addresses:</b>
Chief Executive's		
<b>Name of Head of Service:</b> Linda Rees Jones		
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**  
**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**MULTI-LOCATION MEETING POLICY**

With the implementation of “The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 the Welsh Government has provided Councils the power and freedom to convene multi-location meetings which will enable greater accessibility and public participation in local government decision making.

Meetings must be capable of being held virtually, but each authority can decide whether their meetings will be held fully virtually or multi-location (where some participants are in the same physical location, whilst others join the meeting virtually, also referred to as ‘hybrid meetings’). Authorities cannot hold purely physical meetings (apart from the Dyfed Powys Police & Crime Panel which is subject to separate regulation).

The Authority’s Multi location meeting policy was approved by Council on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022 (Minute 4.1 refers) and took into account the interim statutory guidance issued by Welsh Government. Welsh Government published the final guidance on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and it is now an appropriate time to review the policy based on our experience of multi-location meetings to-date.

Proposed amendments to the policy, as highlighted in red, include greater guidance on the use of cameras. Some members have not responded when called to speak by the Chair, therefore greater emphasis has been placed on the requirement for members to remain in the meeting throughout debates and during voting, this is particularly important in order to maintain the integrity of the decision-making process and to reduce the opportunity for legal challenge of any decision. Members who need to leave the meeting early or temporarily (i.e. to take a phone call) should notify the Democratic Services Officer that they are no longer present.

**DETAILED REPORT  
ATTACHED?**

**YES.**

## 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	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

### Legal

This Policy has been drafted having regard to the provisions of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and the Welsh Government Statutory and Non Statutory Guidance on democracy within principal councils and particularly guidance on multi-location meetings.

## 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** Not applicable
2. **Local Member(s)** Not applicable
3. **Community / Town Council** Not applicable
4. **Relevant Partners** Not applicable
5. **Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations** Not applicable

### Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Canllawiau Llywodraeth Cymru		<a href="https://www.llyw.cymru/sites/default/files/pdf-versions/2023/8/1/1692615160/statutory-and-non-statutory-guidance-democracy-within-principal-councils-contents.pdf">https://www.llyw.cymru/sites/default/files/pdf-versions/2023/8/1/1692615160/statutory-and-non-statutory-guidance-democracy-within-principal-councils-contents.pdf</a>
WG Guidance		<a href="https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/pdf-versions/2023/8/1/1691417050/statutory-and-non-statutory-guidance-democracy-within-principal-councils-contents.pdf">https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/pdf-versions/2023/8/1/1691417050/statutory-and-non-statutory-guidance-democracy-within-principal-councils-contents.pdf</a>
Council Constitution		<a href="https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/the-council/councils-constitution/">https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/the-council/councils-constitution/</a>