



Complete Agenda

Democratic Service
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Meeting

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Date and Time

10.30 am, THURSDAY, 26TH OCTOBER, 2017

Location

Siambr Hywel Dda, Council Offices, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 1SH

Contact Point

Sion Owen
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(DISTRIBUTED 18/10/17)

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP (15)

Plaid Cymru (8)

Councillors

Annwen Daniels
Nia Wyn Jeffreys
Linda Ann Jones
Catrin Elen Wager

Annwen Hughes
Charles Wyn Jones
Olaf Cai Larsen

Independent (5)

Councillors

Dylan Bullard
Anne Lloyd Jones
Hefin Underwood

John Brynmor Hughes
Dewi Wyn Roberts

Llais Gwynedd (1)

Councillor Anwen J. Davies

Gwynedd United Independents (1)

Councillor Dewi Owen

Ex-officio Members

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

4. MINUTES

4 - 8

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the last meeting of this committee held on 11th July 2017 be signed as a true record.

5. MATTERS RAISED BY MEMBERS

9 - 10

Present issues regarding support for members.

6. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT INTERVIEWS

11 - 13

To update the committee on messages from meetings with new members.

7. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATIONS PANEL FOR WALES - CONSULTATION

14 - 15

To receive observations of the Democratic Services Committee in response to the consultation.

8. DIVERSITY DATA

16 - 18

An update on diversity data in accordance with the Committee's request at the last meeting.

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE 11/7/17

Present: Councillor Dewi Wyn Roberts (Chair).

Councillors: Annwen Hughes, John Brynmor Hughes, Nia Jeffreys, Anne Lloyd Jones, Charles Wyn Jones, Linda Ann Jones, Cai Larsen, Dewi Owen and Catrin Wager.

Officers: Geraint Owen (Head of Democratic Services), Huw Ynyr (Senior Information Technology and Transformation Manager), Carey Cartwright (Learning and Development Manager), Vera Jones (Democratic Services Manager), Nia Meleri Edwards (Change Management and Development Officer), Cara Williams (Member Development Officer) and Siôn Owen (Member Support Officer).

Apologies: Councillors Annwen Daniels, Anwen Davies and Gareth A. Roberts.

1. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Dewi Owen as Vice-chair of this committee for 2017-18.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

3. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 4 April 2017 as a true record.

4. THE ROLE OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

A short presentation was received by the Democratic Services Manager outlining the role of this Committee. The Committee's duty was noted to assist whilst developing support for the members to represent their co-members, ensure that sufficient staff and resources are provided to support members, and report to the Full Council annually.

Statistics were submitted on the Council's constitution following the May 2017 election:

- That 24 new members were elected in 2017 compared to 30 in 2012
- That fewer female members were members of the Council following the election compared to 2015. By now, 23% of Gwynedd Council members were female.
- That the percentage of the Council's male members between 45 and 65 years old had increased by 18.18%.
- That there were no Council members within the 18-24 age group in 2017.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- It was noted that it was interesting that the number of older members had increased.
- It did not appear that young people took an interest in the democratic process, and it would be beneficial for the Committee to consider engaging with cohorts of young people in order to teach them about the democratic process and encourage them to participate.

- Disappointment was noted that it did not appear that the hard work of the Diversity in Democracy Sub-group brought changes to the statistics of the new Council, although it was noted from the beginning that it would be very difficult to prove the effectiveness of the group's work. It would be beneficial to see whether age/gender analysis was available for all applicants in the May 2017 election.
- It was noted that different stages in life, such as bringing up young children, could be a barrier for some who wished to be Councillors.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

Submitted – a report by the Democratic Services Manager suggesting possible items for the Committee's 2017-18 work programme.

Following a discussion, the following matters were added to the Committee's work programme:

- Closer collaboration with the Standards Committee, including receiving a report on the work of that Committee.
- Research to explain the circumstances that could impact the attendance rates of members in the Council's public meetings.
- Bullying and social media
- Expand the work of promoting democracy
- Researching to see how the elected Members of the Council could contribute towards any further savings.

RESOLVED: To add the above matters to the work programme

6. WELCOME AND INDUCTION

The background of the sessions held to induct the Members following the May 2017 election was presented orally. It was noted that hard work was done in order to provide effective sessions and that this had paid off as positive comments had been received by new and returning Members following the election.

A discussion was held on how the induction sessions could be further adapted for the future in order to improve. Observations from the discussion:

- It was noted that it would be beneficial to receive guidance on ward work, especially on how to keep Gwynedd residents at the centre.
- A tour around the buildings in order to familiarise themselves would have been beneficial.
- It would have been beneficial for brief information on committees and their functions to be available for the Members.
- Communication needed to be improved between the Council departments and the Members when work was done or events were held in specific wards.

9. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Submitted – the report of the Learning and Development Manager, updating the Committee members on the current provision and what was in the pipeline, seeking guidance and observations on further developments. Whilst acknowledging and thanking this Committee for its contribution in developing the training programme for 2017-18, he emphasised that Learning and Development was much wider than formal training sessions. He noted that sessions to identify learning needs were available to the Members. He also noted that a Mentoring and Coaching scheme was available to the Members, and many had already shown an interest.

In response to questions by the Committee members, the learning and Development Manager noted the following points:

- Although the mentoring and coaching scheme was not utilising former members, this was not impossible. Nevertheless, any mentors would have to follow good practice.
- The Learning and Development Service had been attempting to arrange smaller sessions and hold them less frequently, so that those who attended would get the most benefit and would get a choice of a number of different times for their convenience. Additional sessions would be arranged if there was enough demand.

Further observations arising from the discussion:

- That there was a need to take advantage of the opportunities that arose from developments in the technology world.
- That further training was needed and more options for individual members in order to get the most value and benefit from the equipment that was being shared out to the Councillors.
- That holding meetings via video conference could work well with effective chairing.

In response, the Senior Information Technology and Transformation Manager noted that it was important that the members communicated any obstacles and problems that arose with the Information Technology Service. He also emphasised this Committee's role in driving these developments forward.

RESOLVED: To accept the report.

The meeting commenced at 10:00am and concluded at 12:00pm.

CHAIR

Agenda Item 5

| | |
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| MEETING | Democratic Services Committee |
| DATE | 26 October 2017 |
| TITLE OF THE REPORT | Matters raised by members |
| PURPOSE | Submit matters regarding support for members which have been raised by members for the committee's attention. |
| RECOMMENDATION | To receive the Committee's observations |
| AUTHOR | Vera Jones Democratic Services Manager |

1. At the meeting held on 11 July 2017, it was noted that the Committee had a role to assist the Head of Democratic Services when developing support for members and ensuring that sufficient staff and resources are provided to support members.
2. In considering support for members, some matters have arisen via various forums which are appropriate for the Democratic Services Committee to discuss in order to identify a possible way forward.
3. Meeting Venues. Comments have been received that the requirements to attend/travel to meetings (whether formal, informal or training) take up a lot of time and that there is a feeling that many of the meetings to date have been located in Caernarfon. While understanding that some meetings at the beginning of the Council term unavoidably had to be held in Caernarfon (e.g. two induction days), the comments received were about identifying other types of meetings for the future. Several suggestions were made about the way forward, including:
 - holding some meetings (where possible) in Penrhyndeudraeth
 - improve the use of video-conferencing and use it more frequently, particularly for informal meetings
 - holding training in an alternative way e.g. in the area forums, recording training so that members can watch the main parts, webinar training.
 - Improve the use of "Skype for business".
4. Contacting Departments, information and communication from Departments.
 - The aspect of contacting departments will be addressed in the "Personal Development Interviews" report, where it is suggested that a sub-group is established to ensure that the members' portal is current and easy to use for members.
 - Comments were received from some members who were unhappy that developments had happened in their wards and that there had been no contact with them as local members prior to the developments taking place. The committee's observations are requested.
5. Publishing Members' addresses on the website.

The recent serious case of the murder of the MP Jo Cox has brought the safety of anyone working in a capacity to assist the public to the forefront of all our minds. Personal safety is extremely important to all Council members, particularly when elected members assist vulnerable individuals in their community. Some members

have been in touch with a request that their personal addresses not to be published on the website. As it is possible for members of the public to contact their local members via a phone number or official 'councillor' e-mail address, the service has responded by not publishing members' addresses on the website if they do not wish for them to appear. It can be ensured that any written correspondence is forwarded to the specific group office or for the address to be removed entirely.

6. The Committee's observations on the above are invited.

| | |
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| Meeting | Democratic Services Committee |
| Date | 26 October, 2017 |
| Subject | Personal Development Interviews - Individual Meetings arising from the induction |
| Purpose | To update the committee on messages from meetings with new members |
| Author | Vera Jones Democratic Services Manager |

INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee will, no doubt, be aware of the Council's responsibility to offer Personal Development Interviews to each member to discuss their training and development needs. The Committee will need to discuss this and the way it wishes to do so in the coming months after the members of the new Council have settled into their work.
2. However, as part of the Council's arrangements for inducting elected members after the election, an offer was made to the 24 new members of the Council whether they wished to have a 1:1 conversation as they were settling in to their work.
3. 10 of those meetings have taken place with Arwel Jones, the Senior Manager, Corporate Support. It was an opportunity to discuss a variety of matters as the new members got to know the Council and settled into their work. The purpose of this report is to report on the general messages arising from those interviews that require the Committee's attention and to invite the Committee's views on them.

MAIN MESSAGES

4. It is clear from those discussions that there is quite a lot to be done yet to familiarize with the way the Council functions as an organisation. That falls into two categories. Firstly, committee arrangements where some of the constitutional arrangements are very new to some members. A "surgery" was held on 14th September to help with these matters. This was attended by 10 members who were very appreciative but only 3 of those 10 were new members. Therefore, it may be beneficial to re-run the session or prepare an online learning package using parts of that session that were filmed for that purpose.
The Committee's view is sought.
5. The second element of understanding the work of the Council is to know who to contact on different occasions. Some members are still unclear about who to contact – particularly on service matters. Of course, on the Members' Portal, there is a paper where each department has noted responsibilities for services and contact details for them. It has become clear that there are two problems with knowing who to contact:-
 - a) Firstly, a number of members are still unfamiliar with the Portal and do not know how to contact the officers, and
 - b) Secondly, some members feel that they should be able to contact officers lower down the structure than the Service Managers noted on the Portal.

With the agreement of the Committee, our intention is to hold “surgery” sessions on I.T. matters, including the use of the Portal, before or after the next meetings of the 4 Area Forums.

With regard to the content of the list, with the agreement of the Committee, we will ask each department to review the content of the list to see whether it is reasonable to release the contact details of more officers to enable members to contact them.

In addition, there has been considerable input into the portal in order to establish it in Pay, 2017, but its success will depend on it being used regularly since appropriate information is placed on the portal. In order to ensure that the information continues to be appropriate and current, 2-3 members of the committee are invited to form a small group to advise officers on the content and any developments.

The Committee’s view is sought.

6. Members were, clearly, very appreciative of the induction arrangements at the start of the new Council, particularly the two very successful days held during May, 2017. However, looking at the content of those sessions and the subsequent programme, it is clear that the focus has been, very much, on work “within the Council” with little attention being paid to work in the community and in the ward, an extremely important element of a member’s work. Of course, how a members acts within the ward is a very personal matter but it is clearly something where members can learn from each other by seeing good practice. It is suggested, therefore, that we organize another “surgery” where new and experienced members can share the way in which they deal with ward matters and see if such a session proves successful.

The Committee’s views and observations are sought.

7. In some cases, specific needs on individual matters have arisen. Time management is clearly a difficult issue as councilors try to keep a balance between council work, ward work and everyday life, It will be possible to discuss with those members to see whether they could take advantage of time management training. Arrangements are in hand by the Learning and Development Unit to offer a Time Management Webinar before the end of November with the option of offering further face to face training to those who wish.

The Committee’s views and observations are sought.

8. Other more specific matters are time management, public speaking and dealing with difficult people. It is easy to see why there is a need to offer this sort of provision and the Learning and Development Unit will consider the best way to offer that provision. Arrangements are in hand to offer face to face training on “Leading Communities through Change”, public speaking and dealing with difficult people. Because of the nature of the subjects, the intention is to hold a series of smaller groups. It is foreseen that titles will be offered early in the new year but we can be flexible.

The Committee’s views and observations are sought.

9. The Housing field is a difficult field, particularly for new members as they understand the responsibilities of the Council, housing associations and Gwynedd Community Homes in particular. Following concerns about this, arrangements have been made for the Housing Service to hold briefing sessions for new members in September and November to explain how the systems work and how a councillor can act on behalf of their electors in this field.

10. The Committee's responses to the points noted above are invited together with guidance on the way forward regarding them.

Agenda Item 7

| | |
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| MEETING | Democratic Services Committee |
| DATE | 26 October 2017 |
| REPORT TITLE | Independent Remuneration Panel – consultation |
| PURPOSE | To receive the observations of the Democratic Services Committee in response to the consultation |
| RECOMMENDATION | Submit observations |
| AUTHOR | Vera Jones Democratic Services Manager |

1. The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales is responsible for determining the salaries and costs payable to councillors for carrying out their duties. The Panel publishes draft proposals, which are consulted upon, every year.
2. A copy of the full consultation can be seen by clicking on the following link:
<http://gov.wales/irpwsb/home/publication-reports/financial-year-2018-19/?skip=1&lang-eng>
3. This year, the Panel visited every authority in Wales to discuss different elements of the Financial remuneration for members, and the recommendations proposed are based on the findings from the discussions.
4. Attention is drawn to the main suggestions which deserve attention:

a) Basic salary:

The Panel is recommending an increase in the basic salary of £200 a year (£13,600 compared to the current £13,400). This would be an increase of 1.49%.

In order to give some context, it should be noted that the Panel's decision in its report in 2009, when setting the members' salary base, links payments with median gross earnings of full-time workers living in Wales. The basic salary was determined on a level which was three fifths of the all-Wales Median Salary, recognising that there is an unpaid contribution to public service. As a result of financial restrictions on the public sector and local authorities specifically, it has not been possible to maintain the link with median earnings in Wales. Last year, 2017-18, saw the first rise in basic salary for members since 2013, being £100.

The Panel also noted that many members expressed that the basic salary is too low to attract younger people and to encourage diversity, and that there is a significant difference between remuneration and support available to elected members in other levels of government in Wales. On the original basis of 3/5th, the basic annual salary would have increased to £14,700 by now.

Note that there is no recommendation to increase the Senior salaries, however those salaries would benefit from the increase in the basic salary.

Recommendation - to support the proposal to increase the basic allowance from £13,400 to £13,600

b) Two tier levels for Cabinet Members and Chairs of Committees:

The Panel is recommending the removal of the two tier arrangement for executive members and for committee chairs.

The Annual Report 2016 introduced two levels of salary for members of councils' executives and committee chairs of principal authorities. However as far as the payments to members of executives is concerned this flexibility has not been used other than in one case. Similarly it has not been taken on board in respect of chairs of committees.

It was clear from the discussions that arose during the Panel's visits that almost all councils took the view that this arrangement was contrary to the desire for the Panel to be prescriptive in its determinations. The Panel accepts this and has therefore removed the two tier arrangement for executive members and for committee chairs.

Recommendation – to support the proposal to remove the two tier arrangement for executive members and committee chairs.

c) Reimbursement of the costs of care

Members will be aware that there is provision for reimbursing members and co-opted members for costs associated with arranging care for children or dependents in order to allow members to carry out official business. There is a duty on the Council to promote this reimbursement. It should be noted that, once again this year, no claims have been made for the reimbursement in Gwynedd. The reimbursement is for costs incurred whilst undertaking official council business.

Following the Panel's decision to relax the requirements with regards to publishing the reimbursement for the cost of care (whereby the Council can decide to publish the total amount reimbursed by the authority without attributing the payments to named individuals) it will be interesting to see if this will prove effective with more members claiming the reimbursement.

The Panel is urging Democratic Services Committees to take steps to encourage and facilitate greater use of this element of our framework so that members concerned are not financially disadvantaged.

Recommendation - The provision for reimbursing members for care costs are available in order to allow more people from different backgrounds to be able to take up a role as an Elected Member. The Democratic Services Committee notes that the Council has decided to publish the total amount reimbursed by the authority over the course over the year, but without attributing the payments to any named member. It is hoped that this step will see an increase in the number of members claiming.

5. Comments are invited from the Committee.

Agenda Item 8

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| MEETING | Democratic Services Committee |
| DATE | 26 October 2017 |
| TITLE OF THE REPORT | Data update (diversity) |
| PURPOSE | To submit an update to the Committee in accordance with the request at the last meeting of the Committee. |
| RECOMMENDATION | To receive the Committee's observations |
| AUTHOR | Vera Jones Democratic Services Manager |

1. The first meeting of the Democratic Services Committee, after the elections, was held on 11 July 2017 when background data was presented to the Committee members as context to the Committee's role. Lengthy discussions ensued on the day and a request was made for some additional information and data to be presented at the subsequent meeting.
2. The impact of the work of the diversity sub-group was discussed, which had been established and had been very active in the previous council term. While noting that it is very difficult to prove the impact of the group's work when looking at the election results statistics, there was acknowledgment of the developmental work undertaken by them (e.g. videos explaining the role of Councillors and the Council's services, development of awareness raising sessions etc.).
3. The committee members requested information about the numbers who had stood for election in 2012 compared with 2017. An analysis is provided in the following data.

| | 2012 | 2017 |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Women who stood for election | 35 | 39 |
| Unopposed seats | 19 | 21 |

| | | Arfon | Dwyfor | Meirion | Total |
|------|--|-------|--------|---------|-------|
| 2012 | women who stood for election (by area) | 17 | 9 | 9 | 35 |
| | seats (by area) | 34 | 20 | 21 | 75 |
| | Unopposed seats (by area) | 7 | 3 | 9 | 19 |
| | Unopposed seats as a percentage of all seats (by area) | 21% | 15% | 43% | 25% |
| 2017 | women who stood for election (by area) | 13 | 14 | 12 | 39 |
| | seats (by area) | 34 | 20 | 21 | 75 |
| | Unopposed seats (by area) | 7 | 5 | 9 | 21 |
| | Unopposed seats as a percentage of all seats (by area) | 21% | 25% | 43% | 28% |

- It is seen that the number of women who stood in the elections has increased by four between 2012 and 2017.
 - By area, the number of women who stood has reduced in the Arfon area, but has increased slightly in the Dwyfor and Meirionnydd areas.
 - A small increase was seen in the number of unopposed seats in the Gwynedd Council elections between 2012 and 2017. For members' information, it is noted that the number of seats is very likely to reduce by the next Local Government elections in 2022 as a result of the Boundary Commission's work.
4. At the last meeting, several of the possible reasons for the fact that the number of women who choose to stand in local government elections remains low. The final report of the Local Government commission by the Fawcett Society (published in July 2017) has looked at a number of different factors in relation to diversity. It is a critical report which notes that the rate of change seems to be particularly slow and that there will be no consistency in equality within local government until 2065.
 5. In addition, at the end of the last council term, the Local Government Data Unit undertook a survey of elected members who chose not to stand for re-election in 2017 and those members who were unsuccessful in the election. The purpose of the survey was to seek to ensure a better understanding of the drivers for and barriers to being elected members.
 6. The Council has received a report back from the Local Government Data Unit on what was reported by former Gwynedd members. As only a small number of former members responded to the survey, we cannot share the messages from those responses as it would be possible to identify the individuals. However, it should be noted that the responses have been generally positive about the support provided to the members and the spirit of collaboration between members of different groups within Gwynedd Council.
 7. An analysis of the main lessons for Wales as a whole is currently being prepared; however, the main messages which have been shared in draft form at present are as follows:
 - The vast majority of members reported a generally positive experience from their role as councillors, describing that they feel that they have made a difference to their communities and appreciated the support and development provided to them by their local authority.
 - Some members stood down due to dissatisfaction or disillusionment, with the majority standing down to retire or due to changes in their personal circumstances.
 - Many members noted considerable time and personal commitment to the role, which was a particular challenge to those who were in employment.
 - The majority of members described some frustration with the role and identified where improvements could be made in the level of support and/or how councils or political groups work.
 - Some members noted particular negative experiences of some aspects of the role.
 - Considerable experience has been lost across Wales in general as most of the people who responded to the survey had served for at least two terms before standing down.

- The survey noted that there is an opportunity to change the age profile of council chambers, which historically have been dominated by retired people over 60 years old.

It is suggested that a further report containing this information is submitted to the next meeting of the committee.

8. The Committee's observations on the above are invited.