

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
HELD AT COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS ON 4TH APRIL, 2014**

PRESENT: County Councillor Sandra Davies [Chairman]

County Councillors G.J. Bowker, L.V. Corfield, D.O. Evans, D.C. Jones, M.J. Jones, P.C. Pritchard, D.G. Thomas, T. Turner and D.H. Williams.

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| 1. | APOLOGIES | DSC11-2014 |
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor P.J. Ashton, D. Bailey and P.E. Lewis.

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| 2. | MINUTES | DSC12-2014 |
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The Chairman was authorised to sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 14th January, 2014.

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| 3. | DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST | DSC13-2014 |
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There were no declarations of interest.

Mr Wyn Richards, Scrutiny Manager, withdrew from the meeting while the following item was discussed.

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| 4. | APPOINTMENT OF HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES | DSC14-2014 |
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The Solicitor to the Council advised that there was only one expression of interest for the Head of Democratic Services.

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| RESOLVED: | REASON FOR DECISION: |
| That Wyn Richards be appointed as the Head of Democratic Services. | To fill the post of Head of Democratic Services. |

Mr Wyn Richards returned to the meeting and the Chair confirmed his appointment.

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| 5. | NEW MODEL CONSTITUTION | DSC15-2014 |
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The Solicitor to the Council advised that he planned to bring the final draft model Constitution to Council in July. The Constitution Working Group was producing the draft, with specific sections being considered by relevant Committees as required. The final draft would be considered by the Democratic Services Committee [DSC] which would recommend its adoption to Council. The Members noted that extra meetings of the DSC were required to consider this.

The Committee considered a request to review the appointment process for the appointment of Council Chair from Councillors P.C. Pritchard and W.T. Jones (copy filed with the signed minutes). It was considered that the current rota i.e. each Shire taking the Chair in turn was unfair considering that the Council was made up of 34 Members from Montgomeryshire, 24 from Brecknockshire and only 15 from Radnorshire. The Members asked that rotation arrangements which were fairer and more accurately reflected the Membership make-up of the Council could be considered.

Officers advised that the Boundary Commission Report and the possibility of decreasing the number of councillors may have an impact on any proposed changes, although it was expected that the reductions would be proportional across the Council's area. It was also unclear if there could be an impact on councillor numbers as a result of the Williams Commission Report.

| RESOLVED: | REASON FOR DECISION: |
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| <p>1. That the views of the Shire Committees be sought regarding the appointment process for Council Chair and that these be forwarded to the Constitution Working Group for consideration.</p> <p>2. That officers draft the new model constitution based on the current process for appointing Council Chair and a revised process.</p> | <p>To ensure that the Shires views influence the rota process for appointing the Council Chair.</p> |

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| 6. | CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP | DSC16-2014 |
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The Solicitor to the Council advised that although some Members of the Working Group had been unable to attend all the meetings, this was not a disadvantage as each meeting dealt with different sections of the Constitution.

| RESOLVED: | REASON FOR DECISION: |
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| <p>The current membership of the Constitution Working Group continues.</p> | <p>To continue the politically balanced membership of the Working Group.</p> |

The Committee discussed the issue of whether working groups, scrutiny panels etc. should be politically balanced.

| RESOLVED: | REASON FOR DECISION: |
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| <p>That working groups etc. should seek volunteers from as many political groups as possible.</p> | <p>To ensure representation on working groups etc.</p> |

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| 7. | MEMBERS' ICT ISSUES | DSC17-2014 |
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The Committee noted that the Portfolio Holder for HR, ICT and Communications was not available.

The Committee noted the following:

Printers for Members – an email had been sent to Members seeking information about their printers. If they did not have one they were asked to state whether they wished to receive one. 29 responses had been received to date and so the email would be sent again. The Portfolio Holder wanted to resolve this issue. Comments were made that the New Members' Folder should contain information about the equipment provided to Members.

| RESOLVED: | REASON FOR DECISION: |
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Members of the Committee go back to their Groups to emphasise the need for Members to respond to the email request for information about printers. 2. That the New Members' Folder should contain information about the equipment provided to Members. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure that Members respond to the request for information. 2. To ensure that Members are aware of the support available. |

Project to test new equipment – it was unclear as to what stage this project was at.

Other ICT and related issues – the Committee raised the following concerns:

- The number of security levels required to get into laptops etc.
- The changes to the ICT support to Members – this would be added to the Committee's Work Programme for review
- Lack of phone network signals in the building.

| RESOLVED: | REASON FOR DECISION: |
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| The Portfolio Holder for HR, ICT and Communications would be asked to attend the next meeting. | To discuss ICT issues with the Portfolio Holder. |

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| 8. | MEMBERS' ANNUAL REPORTS | DSC18-2014 |
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The Committee noted that an email had been sent to Members asking them to confirm if they intended to write an Annual Report for the period 2013-2014. 22 responses had been received and 20 Members confirmed their intention to write a report. These would receive their individual templates, to which they could add their reports. It was hoped that reports could be published by the end of September, 2014. The Committee noted that reports were published on the

Members page of the website and previous years' reports would remain on their pages.

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| 9. | MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP | DSC19-2014 |
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The Committee received the notes of the Member Development Working Group held on 16th October, 2013 and 16th January, 2014 [copies filed with the signed minutes].

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| 10. | JOINT CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS STEERING GROUP | DSC20-2014 |
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The Committee received the notes of the Joint Chairs and Vice Chairs Steering Group held on 29th November, 2013 and 24th January, 2014 [copies filed with the signed minutes].

In addition to the next scheduled meeting on 4th July, 2014 at 10.00 a.m. it was agreed to hold further meetings at 10.00 a.m. in Committee Room A on 13th June, 2014 and 7th July, 2014 to consider the draft Constitution.

County Councillor Mrs S. Davies
Chairman