

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD
AT COMMITTEE ROOM A - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON
MONDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER 2019**

PRESENT

County Councillor E Vaughan (Chair)

County Councillors G Breeze, J Charlton, L V Corfield, D O Evans, D Jones-Poston,
D R Price, D Rowlands and R Williams

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors K Laurie-Parry
and K S Silk.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

**RESOLVED that County Councillor Jackie Charlton be elected as Vice
Chair until the next Annual meeting.**

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 29 July,
2019 as a correct record.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1. Questions by Members at Council and Speaking at Council meetings

Questions by Members at Council

The Committee noted the distinction between questions to Portfolio Holders
regarding strategy and policy and operational questions, which should be
addressed to Heads of Service. The Committee was advised that where
operational questions were not answered or where answers were lacking,
Councillors had recourse to the Chief Executive.

It was noted that the Group Leaders had considered the issue and
recommended that the trial period should be for three months rather than 12
months as originally considered by the Committee. After discussion the
Committee considered that the trial should be for three months, with a review
being undertaken by the Committee at its meeting on 6 January, 2020 and that it
be delegated to the Committee to extend the trial period if required.

The Committee noted that the questions and answers would be available on the
Council website, for Councillors and the public to view. The Committee noted
the changes recommended to the Constitution.

Speaking at Council meetings

The Committee noted the changes recommended to the Constitution.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL	Reason for recommendation
<p>(i) That Rule 4.29 of the Constitution is suspended for an initial period of three months to allow a trial of a "Formal Questions at Any Other Time" process,</p> <p>(ii) That the trial be reviewed by the Democratic Services Committee at its meeting on 6 January, 2020 and that it be delegated to the Democratic Services Committee to extend the trial period.</p> <p>(iii) During the trial period referred to in (i) and (ii) above a new Rule 4.29A to 4.29C as set out in Appendix 1 is adopted.</p> <p>(iv) That the Council implements a process of having nominated speakers to items on Council agendas (in addition to other Members making different / additional points), in accordance with amended Rule 4.47 as set out in Appendix 1.</p> <p>(v) That a workshop for Members be held to explain the new processes prior to their implementation.</p>	<p>(i) To allow Members to ask formal questions of Portfolio Holders at any time rather than waiting for meetings of the Council.</p> <p>(ii) To allow nominated speakers to speak on Council agenda items.</p> <p>(iii) To explain the new processes to Members before implementation.</p>

2. Finance Panel

At a meeting of Group Leaders it had been considered that by meeting in public, the Finance Panel could not have a full and frank discussion on issues, such as the draft budget. The Committee noted that the membership of the Finance Panel was as follows: Opposition Group Leaders, Scrutiny Committee Chairs and Audit Committee Chair and Vice Chair.

Concerns were expressed that the Finance Panel should be open and transparent in its discussions. If there were issues which needed to be considered in private the Panel could agree to move into a closed session, as allowed under the Constiution.

After discussion, the Committee considered that the Finance Panel was best placed to consider whether it should meet in public or private. The Chair advised that, as he would be attending the Finance Panel meeting on 2 October, as an opposition Group Leader, he would relay the Committee's concerns regarding this issue.

RESOLVED	Reason for Recommendation
That the Finance Panel is asked to consider whether to hold meetings in private and if it recommends that it should that this issue is brought back to the Democratic Services Committee for consideration.	To review how meetings of the Finance Panel are conducted.

3. Constitution

Section 4 – Full Council

Amendments to Motions – Rule 4.49

The Committee noted that the proposed changes.

Recorded vote – Rule 4.66

The Committee noted that the proposed changes were minor amendments.

Section 16 – Financial Procedure Rules

The Committee noted that the proposed changes reflected the Committee's decision in respect of virements agreed at its meeting in July 2019.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL	Reason for Recommendation
That the amendments to Sections 4 and 16 of the Constitution be approved.	To review and update the Constitution.

4. Review of the Local Resolution Protocol

The Committee reviewed the protocol and considered whether meetings should be chaired and if so, by whom and whether notes of the meeting should be made.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised that the Protocol already identified the Monitoring and Deputy Monitoring Officers as acting as facilitators within the Local Resolution process. After discussion the Committee agreed that there was no need for anyone to chair such meetings. The Committee discussed the process and considered that a note of the outcome of such meetings should be made.

The Local Resolution Policy would be amended and circulated to the Committee prior to the revised draft being considered by Council.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL	Reason for Recommendation
That in respect of the Local Resolution Protocol a record of the outcome of such meetings should be kept.	To review and update the Constitution.

Business case to add an additional two members to the Cabinet.

The Committee noted that a business case was not yet available for discussion.

County Councillor E Vaughan (Chair)