

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD
AT COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL - COUNTY HALL ON MONDAY, 21
JANUARY 2019**

PRESENT

County Councillor M J Dorrance (Chair)

County Councillors L V Corfield, J Charlton, D O Evans, D Jones-Poston, D R Price,
D Rowlands, K S Silk and R Williams

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors D Davies and S Lewis and County Councillors G Breeze who was on other Council business.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14 November, 2018 as a correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

County Councillor M Dorrance declared a personal interest in relation to Item 10 Review of Senior Salaries as he is in receipt of a Senior Salary as Chair of the Committee.

4. REVIEW OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Committee considered the review of the Public Participation at Council meetings commenced in October 2017.

The Committee noted the positive comments from participants. However, the Committee made the following comments:

- some responses to questions are very short and responses need to be such that they assist in the management of expectations,
- the process used by other Councils should be reviewed again, as they may have developed their processes etc. since the original review in 2016,
- consideration should be given to the public having the opportunity to submit questions direct to Cabinet meetings,
- the role of the local member should be considered,
- an analysis of the age, locality etc. of questioners should be included in the questionnaire sent to them after the Council meeting and
- some Members feel that the questions from the public are given a higher status than questions from Members.

It was moved and duly seconded that it be recommended to Full Council that the Public Participation in Council meetings continues and that questions be allowed to Council and Cabinet meetings. On the casting vote of the Chair the motion was lost. It was considered that extending public participation to Cabinet meetings required discussion with the Cabinet, prior to the development of a process and consideration by Council.

RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL THAT	Reason for recommendation
1. the Public Participation in Council meetings continues, 2. officers review the information relating to the scheme and the process for involvement and 3. the Democratic Services Committee monitors the use of the scheme on an ongoing basis and undertake reviews, as required, with the possibility of extending public participation to Cabinet meetings.	To provide the public with an opportunity to put questions to Council.

5. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP [MDWG]

5.1. Mentoring Scheme

The Committee considered the revised “Framework for Member mentoring”.

It was acknowledged that the scheme may have been of use to new Members in 2017, it could still be used as Members take on new roles in the Council. It would also support Members in considering their development needs. The Committee noted that if approved the scheme will be promoted with Members.

RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL THAT	Reason for recommendation
1. the revised “Framework for Member mentoring” be approved and 2. the scheme be promoted with Members and training and support be provided as required and 3. the Democratic Services Committee reviews the scheme one year after its implementation.	To support Members in their current and future roles.

The Member Development Working Group minutes were taken next, as a decision at this meeting related to the Mandatory Development report.

5.2. Member Development Working Group minutes

The Committee received the notes of the Member Development Working Group held on 26 November, 2018.

5.3. Mandatory Development

The Committee noted the recommendation from the Member Development Working Group and also the further discussions officers had regarding the provision of mandatory Corporate parenting and Corporate safeguarding development. The Chair advised that he had not been briefed on these discussions and on the new recommendation.

The Committee noted the extra demands on officers but also referred to the demands on Members and the cost of travelling to County Hall for sessions. It was questioned whether eLearning development could be provided and it was noted that where available these will be used, but developing them is a specialised role. The Committee considered that the Council needed to be more innovative and it was suggested that the sessions could be videoed and Members allowed to watch this in their own time and answer questions to test their understanding. It was noted that if videoed, subtitles should be included and also the provision of a Welsh version should be considered.

RESOLVED THAT	Reason for decision
<p>1. as a trial, the two mandatory Corporate safeguarding and Corporate parenting development sessions be videoed and be made available to Members who will be required to watch these and complete a questionnaire within one month</p> <p>2. the Members views on the trial be obtained and the costs be reviewed.</p>	<p>1. To trial a different way of providing Member development sessions.</p> <p>2. To support the continuous development of Members and address issues raised in recent Care Inspectorate Wales [CIW] reports.</p>

6. MEMBERS' FACILITIES IN COUNTY HALL

The Chair welcomed Neil Clutton, Property Manager to the meeting who updated the Committee on the possible changes to the usage of the Ground floor at County Hall. The Committee noted the requirements in the Welsh Member Support and Development Charter regarding the need to provide Members with appropriate facilities and also to review their needs. The Committee commented that the Members' Lounge was underutilised in its current layout and that accessibility to and usability of the Chamber for individuals with disabilities should be improved.

The Committee asked that it be kept up to date of plans on an ongoing basis.

7. APPRAISAL OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS' EFFECTIVENESS - PILOT

The Committee considered the report and agreed that a Working Group be established to develop the process for appraisal of Committee Chairs' effectiveness.

RESOLVED THAT	Reason for decision
County Councillors J Charlton, L Corfield and M Dorrance participate in a Working Group.	To develop the process for appraisal of Committee Chairs' effectiveness.

8. CONSTITUTION

The Committee considered the amended Section 27 – Protocol on Civic and Executive Matters.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL THAT	Reason for recommendation
the amended Section 27 – Protocol on Civic and Executive Matters be approved.	To update Section 27 of the Constitution as part of the ongoing review of the Constitution.

9. DEMOCRACY WORKING GROUP

The Committee noted the current Membership of the Democracy Working Group.

RESOLVED THAT	Reason for decision
Members, who are not on the Democratic Services Committee, can be co-opted onto the Democracy Working Group where they have an interest in the work being undertaken.	To enable non Committee Member's to participate in the Working Group.

10. REVIEW OF SENIOR SALARIES

In response to a request from the Political Group Leaders request that a review be undertaken of senior salaries, prior to the Annual Council meeting in May 2019, it was agreed that a Working Group be established to undertake this.

RESOLVED THAT	Reason for decision
County Councillors D Evans, K Silk, R Williams and D Jones-Poston participate in the Working Group.	To undertake a review of senior salaries, prior to the Annual Council meeting in May 2019.

11. WORK PROGRAMME

The Work Programme was noted.

County Councillor M J Dorrance (Chair)