

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD
AT BY TEAMS ON TUESDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2021**

PRESENT

County Councillor E Vaughan (Chair)

County Councillors J Charlton, G Breeze, S C Davies, D O Evans, S M Hayes,
D Jones-Poston, D Rowlands, K S Silk and S L Williams

1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors M Barnes, L V Corfield and R Williams and County Councillor T J Van-Rees who was on other Council business.

2.	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)
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The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2021 as a correct record, subject to it being noted that Councillor K Silk having given apologies was not present at the meeting.

3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
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There were no declarations of interest.

4.	CONSTITUTION
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The Committee considered the report regarding proposed changes to the Constitution.

Section 4 – Full Council

It was moved and duly seconded to change Section 4 – Full Council as detailed in the report.

Recommended to the County Council:	Reason for recommendation
<p>1. That the amendment to Rule 4.18.28 of the Constitution (Full Council) is approved as set out in the draft Section 4 attached to the report.</p> <p>2. That the Monitoring Officer is authorised to make such other changes to the Constitution as may be required to reflect the change set out in Recommendation 1 above.</p>	<p>To review and amend the Constitution so that it aligns with the current requirements of the Council.</p>

Section 11– Officers

It was moved and duly seconded to change Section 11 – Officers as detailed in the report.

Recommended to the County Council:	Reason for recommendation
<p>3. That the amendments to Section 11 of the Constitution (Officers) are approved as set out in the draft Section 11 attached to the report.</p> <p>4. That the Monitoring Officer is authorised to make such changes to the Constitution as may be required to reflect the change set out in Recommendation 3 above.</p>	<p>To review and amend the Constitution so that it aligns with the current requirements of the Council.</p>

Governance and Audit Committee – Section 9 (Regulatory Committees)

The Committee noted that the recommended changes had been supported by the Governance and Audit Committee the previous day. The size of the Committee was discussed and it was noted that the legislation required that the number of councillors on the committee be reduced and the numbers of independent members increased to comprise one third of the Committee.

It was moved and duly seconded to change Section 9 (Regulatory Committees) – Governance and Audit Committee as detailed in the report.

Recommended to the County Council:	Reason for recommendation
<p>5. That Council approves an amendment to the membership of the Governance and Audit Committee to become 6 Councillors and 3 Independent Members as from May 2022.</p> <p>6. That the Monitoring Officer is authorised to make such amendments to Section 9 of the Constitution as are required to implement recommendation 5 above.</p>	<p>To meet the requirement of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 that as from May 2022, one third of the membership of the Governance and Audit Committee must be lay persons.</p>

Finance Panel and Section 7 (Scrutiny Procedure Rules)

Concerns were raised about the proposed changes to the Finance Panel, it having a scrutiny role in respect of monitoring budgets, a role in budget setting and also having meetings in public and in private. Comment was made that trying to improve communication between the main political group and opposition groups regarding budgets would not be achieved through a Finance Panel. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised that the Finance Panel had acknowledged that its current set up was not working and the proposals were supported. The Chair advised that a concern of the current Finance Panel was that often discussions, in public, had gone on a tangent to seek headlines, rather than considering the substance of the issues. He advised that this was the reason for proposing some meetings being held in private.

It was moved and duly seconded that it be recommended to the County Council that best practice for each function be reviewed and details be brought back to the Council for consideration. The motion was put to the vote and lost.

It was moved and duly seconded to change Finance Panel and Section 7 (Scrutiny Procedure Rules) as detailed in the report.

Recommended to the County Council:	Reason for recommendation
<p>7. That the revisions to the operation and composition of the Finance Panel in two phases as set out in Paragraphs 2.4.5 and 2.4.6 above be supported.</p> <p>8. That the revised Terms of Reference of the Finance Panel as set out in Rules 7.37 and 7.38 is approved and implemented with immediate effect.</p> <p>9. That the Monitoring Officer is authorised to make such changes to Section 7 of the Constitution as may be required to reflect the changes set out in Recommendations 7 & 8 above.</p>	<p>To review and amend the Constitution so that it aligns with the current requirements of the Council.</p>

County Councillor E Vaughan (Chair)