

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

County Council
7 March 2024

REPORT AUTHOR: Interim Head of Transformation and Democratic Services

REPORT TITLE: New Ways of Working and Council meetings – Member survey 2023

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

The Council is asked to consider the recommendations from the Democratic Services Committee held on the 8th of January 2024, regarding new ways of working and Council meetings.

2. Background

2.1 A report on the new ways of working was considered by Council on 18 May 2023 and after discussion it was resolved to refer the report back to the Democratic Services Committee for further consideration. Since then, the following have been undertaken:

- a survey of members [excluding Cabinet] regarding the timing and format of meetings
- a survey of Cabinet members regarding the timing and format of meetings and
- a member attendance log capturing the number of members attending online or in person (when a hybrid meeting is held).

2.2 The report considered by the Democratic Services Committee is attached as Appendix A.

3. Discussion

3.1 The Committee considered the report, and the following comments were made:

- councillors can only be encouraged to meet in person, rather than it being mandated to attend in person
- councillors can develop links with other councillors in a variety of different ways

- online meetings or hybrid meetings enable councillors to manage other commitments (including childcare and other commitments outside of the councillor role)
- when external speakers attend in person at a meeting in County Hall, it is important that a larger number of councillors also attend in person, and
- online meetings reduce the Council's travel costs and carbon footprint.

4. Recommendations to Full Council:

- **Current working arrangements and times for meetings continue**
- **Committee chairs (in discussion with their committees) can amend the timing of meetings to suit the Committee membership and also in response to particular agenda items, such as when external participants are required at a meeting**
- **Committee chairs are encouraged to hold at least one in person meeting a year**
- **Members are encouraged to attend meetings in person during the first six months at the start of a new Council term, to enable them to develop links with other members and**
- **Democratic Services Committee reviews the timing and format of meetings in mid-2025, so that any changes can be implemented from 2026 onwards.**

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