

# CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

## MINUTES OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 5, GUILDHALL, SWANSEA ON  
TUESDAY, 25 JULY 2017 AT 5.00 PM

**PRESENT:** Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

N J Davies  
K M Griffiths  
E T Kirchner  
L J Tyler-Lloyd

**Councillor(s)**

M Durke  
J A Hale  
W G Lewis  
L V Walton

**Councillor(s)**

L S Gibbard  
S M Jones  
S Pritchard

**Officer(s)**

Huw Evans  
Allison Lowe  
Debbie Smith

Head of Democratic Services  
Democratic Services Officer  
Interim Deputy Head of Legal , Democratic Services and  
Business Intelligence.

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): K M Roberts and B J Rowlands

1 **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2017-2018.**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Wendy Lewis be elected Vice Chair for the 2017-2018 Municipal Year.

2 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City & County of Swansea no interests were declared.

3 **MINUTES.**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Democratic Services Committee held on 20 December 2016 be approved and signed as a correct record.

4 **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - OVERVIEW (VERBAL).**

The Head of Democratic Services provided a verbal overview of the role of the Democratic Services Committee due to there being several newly elected Councillors on the Committee.

He explained that that both his role as Head of Democratic Services and the Democratic Services Committee had been formed as a result of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and outlined the requirements of each role.

Discussions centred around the following issues:

- Training and Development, including Induction training;
- Support for Councillors;
- IT requirements / issues;
- Councillors Handbook;
- Annual Reports;
- Local Democracy Bill;
- Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales;
- The Committee acting in a “Shop Steward” capacity for all Councillors;
- The role of the Head of DS in relation to Overview and Scrutiny;
- Modern.gov, including use of the “app”.

**RESOLVED** that the update be noted.

5 **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017.**

The Head of Democratic Services provided the Democratic Services Annual Report for the period 19 May 2016 to 24 May 2017. The report outlined the work of the Committee during that period.

He outlined the work that the Committee had undertaken the previous Municipal Year including:

- Councillor ICT – May 2017 & Beyond;
- Councillors – Self Service;
- Modern.gov, including use by the Scrutiny Team;
- Councillors Broadband and Telephone, ICT and Mobile Phone Allowances – May 2017 & Beyond;
- Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales – Draft Annual Report 2017-2018 – Consultation;
- Democratic Services Annual Report 2015-2016.

Completion of Councillors’ Annual Reports was once again highlighted. This year only the returning Councillors would be required to complete an Annual Report in relation to their activities undertaken during 2016-2017. Councillors were once again encouraged to complete their Annual Report during the next few weeks. These would be published on the Council’s website.

The Democratic Services Annual Report 2016-2017 would be reported to Council on 24 August 2017.

**RESOLVED** that:

- 1) The contents of the report be noted;
- 2) The wording in paragraph 1.1 of the Foreword be amended accordingly prior to submission to Council.

6 **WORKPLAN 2017-2018.**

The Chair and Head of Democratic Services provided topics for the 2017-2018 work plan as follows:

- Surveys in relation to:
  - ICT;
  - Support for Councillors;
  - Training and Development;
  - Timings of Meetings (requirement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011).
- Review of the Councillors' Handbook;
- Future Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Reports;

The Head of Democratic Services encouraged relevant Councillors and Co-opted Members to utilise the Reimbursement of Costs of Care that was available to those Councillors with caring responsibilities. A maximum of £403 per month was available.

The issue of Councillors currently being unable to access certain information remotely was highlighted. The Head of Democratic Services informed the Committee of the Councillors Microsite that had been created to hold some of the useful information required by Councillors. The information could be accessed via share-point in Office 365. Further details would be circulated in due course.

In addition, the Councillors' Casework Management System (CCMS) was discussed.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1) The Training Manager be invited to the next meeting scheduled for 31 October 2017;
- 2) The Head of IT be invited to a future meeting to discuss IT issues.

7 **DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS:**

The Head of Democratic Services stated that he had received a request to vary the dates of some of the future meetings as they clashed with certain Political Group Meetings.

**RESOLVED** that the Head of Democratic Services re-schedule the affected meetings.

The meeting ended at 5.46 pm

**CHAIR**