



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the Democratic Services Committee

Committee Room 3A - Guildhall, Swansea

Tuesday, 7 November 2017 at 5.00 pm

Present: Councillor P M Black (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

N J Davies
K M Griffiths
I E Mann
B J Rowlands

Councillor(s)

M Durke
J A Hale
S Pritchard
G J Tanner

Councillor(s)

L S Gibbard
W G Lewis
C Richards
L J Tyler-Lloyd

Officer(s)

Huw Evans
Andrew Francis

Alisha Lynch
Tracey Meredith

Jeremy Parkhouse

Head of Democratic Services
Organisational Training, Learning & Development
Manager
Corporate Learning and Development Officer
Head of Legal, Democratic Services and Business
Intelligence and Monitoring Officer
Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): S M Jones, K M Roberts and L V Walton

8 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City & County of Swansea, the following interests were declared: -

Councillors P M Black, N J Davies, M Durke, L S Gibbard, K M Griffiths, J A Hale, W G Lewis, I E Mann, S Pritchard, C Richards, B J Rowlands, G J Tanner and L J Tyler Lloyd declared a Personal Interest in Minute No. 12 "Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Draft Annual Report 2018-2019 – Consultation" due to there being reference to the Basic Salary of Councillors.

9 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Democratic Services Committee held on 25 July 2017 be approved and signed as a correct record.

10 Councillor Training. (Presentation)

The Organisational Learning, Training and Development Manager, supported by the Corporate Learning and Development Officer, provided the Committee with an

overview presentation of the current structure and changes to Organisational Learning, Training and Development and a summary of the E-Learning training available.

The Chair highlighted the different training requirements of Councillors compared to Officers and stated that this should be reflected in the training provided.

The Officers stated that training courses could be designed specifically for Councillors.

Resolved that:

- 1) The content of the presentation be noted;
- 2) The presentation be circulated to the Committee.

11 Review of Councillor Induction Programme 2017.

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report that reviewed the Councillor Induction Programme 2017, which was organised to inform both newly elected and returning Councillors of their roles and the services provided by the Council. The Councillor Induction and Training Programme 2017-2018 was attached at Appendix A of the report.

Fifty Three (53) training sessions were organised, including follow up sessions on each subject area provided. Where possible, the timings of these sessions were organised to allow either morning or afternoon attendance. Training providers were also requested to limit the sessions to approximately 2 hours. Meeting requests were also circulated for all sessions provided and while many Members accepted these invitations, some accepted but did not attend the training. This resulted in low attendance for some sessions, which could have been cancelled or re-arranged to a more convenient time for both Councillors and Officers.

As part of the Programme, a Market Place Event was held on 11 May 2017 which was attended by 39 Councillors and received lots of favourable feedback. At the event, Councillors received presentations from the Corporate Management Team and were able to browse the stalls set up in the George Hall, which included 21 different service areas from the Departments of Place, Resources and People. The Market Place Event Programme was attached at Appendix B of the report.

A list of compulsory training sessions for Councillors and Co-opted members was provided and it was noted that each Councillor was expected to attend each of the compulsory training areas within each term of office. In addition, certain specialist training was required to allow attendance at specific committees.

It was added that extra training sessions would be provided in the New Year and should Councillors not attend those sessions, the Head of Democratic Services would provide a list of those non-attendees to the relevant Political Group Leaders in order to encourage attendance.

The Committee were requested to provide feedback on the on the Councillor Induction Programme. The following was discussed:

- Providing e-learning training that would be cater for Councillor training requirements;
- Differentiating between Councillor and Officer training requirements the knowledge of Councillors being acknowledged;
- Using an alternative venue to the Council Chamber, Guildhall;
- Limiting Councillor training to 90 minutes maximum in order to improve attendances;
- Feedback sheets being provided at every training session;
- Chief Whips being made aware of training attendances on a regular basis;
- Training regarding rules of debate, the Council Constitution, casework management and data protection;
- Holding another market place event
- Different options / methods of delivery of training being made available;
- Identifying skills of Councillors;
- Limiting the initial amount of training provided when Councillors are first elected;
- The Induction Programme being too long;
- Repeating some training topics.

Resolved that:

- 1) The contents of the report and feedback be noted;
- 2) The Monitoring Officer circulates a briefing note to all Councillors regarding rules of debate and the Council Constitution;
- 3) Training sessions be limited to 90 minutes in total;
- 4) Feedback forms be provided for future training sessions.

12 Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Draft Annual Report 2018-2019 - Consultation.

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report regarding the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Draft Annual Report 2018-2019, which commented upon the determinations made affecting the City and County of Swansea and proposed responses.

The comments would form a report to Council followed by a formal reply to the IRPW by their deadline of 29 November 2017. The final IRPW report would be published in February 2018.

The Committee asked that the response include reference to the fact that the Reimbursement of Costs of Care should not be subject to tax and national insurance.

Resolved that:

- 1) Observations regarding taxation being added to the cost of care be added to the response;
- 2) The report be recommended to Council for approval.

13 Review of Councillors Handbook.

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report that outlined a review of the Councillors Handbook in order to streamline its content and to move towards a digital only version.

The review had seen the deletion of repetitive elements within the Handbook, a simplification of its content aiming at making it more user friendly for Councillor and Co-opted Members alike. It was also intended to turn it into a web-based document.

It was added that the current Councillors Handbook was broken into four sections. The report reviewed Section A "Financial Information" and Section D "Role Descriptions and Person Specifications." Sections B "Support Services" and C "Protocols" would be reviewed at a later stage.

Resolved that:

- 1) The report be recommended to Council for approval;
- 2) Additional sections of the handbook be reported to the Committee in due course.

14 Workplan 2017-2018.

The Head of Democratic Services stated that he had a duty to conduct a "Timings of Council Meetings Survey" which he intended issuing later in 2017. He added that it was important that the Authority was diverse and as open as possible to the needs of those Councillors with caring responsibilities and work commitments.

Councillors were also requested to provide feedback regarding the support they required to undertake their role. A survey would be designed to assist with this.

The Review of Councillors Handbook (Sections B and C) would be added to the Workplan.

Resolved that the Workplan be noted.

The meeting ended at 6.30 pm

Chair