

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 5, GUILDHALL, SWANSEA ON
TUESDAY, 15 DECEMBER 2015 AT 5.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor P M Meara (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

R A Clay
J W Jones
L V Walton

Councillor(s)

A C S Colburn
E T Kirchner

Councillor(s)

N J Davies
K E Marsh

Officer(s)

H Evans - Head of Democratic Services
J Harley - Information and Strategy Manager
A Lowe - Democratic Services Officer
T Meredith - Deputy Head of Legal and Democratic Services
K Prince - Corporate Learning and Development Manager

16 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Councillor(s): J P Curtice and D J Lewis

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

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

18 **MINUTES.**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Democratic Services Committee held on 6 October 2015 be approved and signed as a correct record.

Matters Arising:

12 Democratic Services Annual Report 2014-2015

- The number of Annual Reports submitted by Councillors had decreased considerably to those submitted for the 2013-2014 period. Only 51 out of 72 Annual Reports had been received for the 2014-2015 period.
- The Chair reported that he and the Head of Democratic Services had met with the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) on 19 October 2015 as part of the consultation on the IRPW Draft Annual Report 2016.

19 **DISCUSSION ON FUTURE ICT PROVISION FOR COUNCILLORS FROM 2017 (VERBAL).**

The Information and Strategy Manager attended to commence discussions on the future ICT provision for Councillors from 2017.

The Head of Democratic Services provided background information on previous arrangements whereby prior to 2012 some Councillors were "opt in" and some were "opt out". From 2012 all Councillors opted out of the in-house ICT provision and have been eligible to claim the ICT Allowance to purchase their own equipment.

General discussions centred on the following:

- Whether Councillors wanted to continue to be "opt out" or whether they wanted to back to being provided with ICT equipment via the Authority – ("opt in").
- Review the level of the ICT Allowance.
- The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales should commence discussions with HMRC regarding receipted claims for Councillors ICT Allowance being subject to tax and national insurance deductions.
- The amount of large emails (in file size) sent to Councillors by Officers within the Authority should be reduced to prevent mailboxes exceeding their size limit. This could be done by sending web links.
- All Councillors be consulted on their views via drop-in sessions.

RESOLVED that the Head of Democratic Services and the Chair of Democratic Services Committee consult with all Councillors regarding their views on the future ICT Provision for Councillors from May 2017.

20 **COUNCILLOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT 2016-2017**

The Head of Democratic Services outlined the report to consider the responses of the Councillors / Co-opted Member Training Needs Analysis and to outline a Councillor Training and Development 2016-2017 programme.

A discussion ensued regarding "mandatory" training and the inability for the Council to enforce attendance at such training. It was also suggested that the topics identified in the table on page 6 be split into:

- Those that were required by legislation and those;
- that the Authority would like to class as mandatory.

RESOLVED that the Democratic Services Committee recommend to Council that:

- 1) The 14 training sessions for Councillors and Co-opted Members as listed in paragraph 2.2 of the report be deemed mandatory;
- 2) Regular reports on attendance or non-attendance of Councillors at training / development events be passed to the relevant Political Group Leaders / Political Whips by the Head of Democratic Services in order to encourage increased attendance;
- 3) All training sessions, where possible, be timetabled with both a daytime and

- an evening session in order to encourage better attendance;
- 4) Training sessions be adapted into e-learning programmes wherever possible to compliment the Councillors / Co-opted Members Training Programme;
 - 5) Training be divided into 3 categories namely Mandatory, Recommended and Councillor / Co-opted Requested;
 - 6) There be greater use of e-learning;
 - 7) The Head of Democratic Services work closely with the Corporate Learning & Development Manager in order to commence work on an e-learning programme targeting as many of the necessary courses as possible;
 - 8) Councillors / Co-opted Members should attend relevant / mandatory training or development sessions at least once per electoral term or more frequently should the content of the training change significantly due to legislation / guidance etc.
 - 9) The Head of Democratic Services in consultation with the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee prioritise which of the following courses should form the formal Training Programme and also which ones need to be initially added to the additional training programme.

21 **WORKPLAN.**

RESOLVED that the Workplan be updated as follows:

DATE	ITEM
15 March 2016	Councillor Induction 2017
15 March 2016	Future ICT provision for Councillors from 2017

The meeting ended at 6.04 pm

CHAIR