



## Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Council - 29 August 2019

### **Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2018-2019 (24 May 2018 – 8 May 2019)**

<b>Purpose:</b>	To provide the Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2018-2019 for the period 24 May 2018 to 8 May 2019. The report outlines the work of the Committee during that period.
<b>Report Author:</b>	Huw Evans
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Ben Smith
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Tracey Meredith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Rhian Millar
<b>For Information</b>	

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 required each Principal Council to establish a Democratic Services Committee. The Annual Meeting of Council held on 24 May 2012 originally established the Democratic Services Committee.
- 1.2 Councillor P M Black was originally elected Chair of the Democratic Services Committee at the Annual Meeting of Council on 19 May 2016 and has been re-elected annually ever since.
- 1.3 The Democratic Services Committee is serviced by the Head of Democratic Services, Huw Evans.
- 1.4 The Democratic Services Annual Report is attached as **Appendix A**.

#### **2. Equality and Engagement Implications**

- 2.1 There are no equality and engagement implications associated with this report.

### **3. Financial Implications**

3.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

### **4. Legal Implications**

4.1 There are no legal implications other than those set out in the body of the report.

**Background Papers:** None.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A - Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2018-2019  
(24 May 2018 to 8 May 2019)

**Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2018-2019  
(24 May 2018 to 8 May 2019)**

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## **1. Foreword by the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee**

- 1.1 During 2018-2019, the Democratic Services Committee focussed its work on Social Media, Councillor Safety and a Review of Councillors' Broadband and Telephone, ICT and Mobile Phone Allowances - May 2017 & Beyond.
- 1.2 The "Social Media - Guidance" was shared with Councillors and it is hoped that this will allow greater use of these platforms by Councillors in order to engage with the public. The ready flow of information, allows Councillors to update their constituents quickly and easily.
- 1.3 The safety of Politicians generally has been an area of concern throughout the UK. This led to the Head of Democratic Services putting together useful guidance for Councillors in order to ensure that they understand the potential risks and the actions that they can take to reduce them.
- 1.4 This has been a busy period for the Democratic Services Committee. I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to the Committee for their time, dedication and support.
- 1.5 A number of officers have helped considerably with the work of the Committee. In particular, I would like to thank Huw Evans, Head of Democratic Services, Allison Lowe, Democratic Services Officer and the Democratic Services Team for their support and professionalism.

**Councillor P M Black**  
**Chair of Democratic Services Committee**

## 2. Membership of the Democratic Services Committee

- 2.1 The membership of the Democratic Services Committee for the period 24 May 2018 to 8 May 2019:

Councillor	Councillor
Peter Black <b>(Chair)</b>	Wendy G Lewis <b>(Vice Chair)</b>
Nick J Davies	Sam Pritchard
Mike Durke	Brigitte J Rowlands
Louise S Gibbard	Gloria J Tanner
Joe A Hale	Linda J Tyler-Lloyd
Susan M Jones	Lesley V Walton
Erika T Kirchner	

## 3. Dates of the Democratic Services Committee Meetings

- 3.1 The Democratic Services Committee met on these dates during 2018-2019:

31 July 2018	29 January 2019
6 November 2018	

## 4. Democratic Services Committee - Terms of Reference

- 4.1 The remit of the Democratic Services Committee is set out in **Section 11 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011** and is to:
- 4.2 Exercise the function of the local authority under section 8(1)(a) Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (designation of Head of Democratic Services).
- 4.3 Review the adequacy of provision by the authority of staff, accommodation and other resources to discharge Democratic Services functions, including:
- a) Achievement of the Welsh Local Government Association's (WLGA) Member Support and Development Charter;
  - b) Councillor Training;
  - c) Improvements and innovations such as electronic voting, web casting etc.
- 4.4 Make reports and recommendations to the authority in relation to such provision.
- 4.5 It is for a Democratic Services Committee to determine how to exercise those functions.
- 4.6 To determine whether or not the Councillors period of family absence should be cancelled in accordance with Regulation 34 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

- 4.7 To determine whether or not to withhold a Councillor's Remuneration should they fail to return following a period of family absence on the date specified in the notice provided.

## **5. Activities of the Democratic Services Committee**

- 5.1 During the municipal year 2018-2019 the Democratic Services Committee has undertaken a range of activities. The activities are listed below together with a brief synopsis of the work.

### **5.2 Democratic Services Annual Report 2017-2018.**

- 5.2.1 The Head of Democratic Services presented the Democratic Services Annual Report 2017-2018 which outlined the work of the Committee during that period.

### **5.3 Review of Councillors' Broadband and Telephone, ICT and Mobile Phone Allowances - May 2017 & Beyond**

- 5.3.1 The Committee considered the above policy prior to its submission to Cabinet, and suggested various changes in order to modernise and update it and make it easier for Councillors and Co-opted Members to read.

### **5.4 Social Media - A Guide for Members - WLGA First Draft**

- 5.4.1 The Committee considered a report circulated by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) seeking their comments on their Draft Social Media - A Guide for Members. Relevant comments were fed back to the WLGA and incorporated. The guide has subsequently been published on line and the link circulated to all Councillors.

### **5.5 Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) - Draft Annual Report 2019-2020 - Consultation**

- 5.5.1 The Committee considered the draft Annual Report published by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales and provided a draft response, which was considered by Council prior to submission to the IRPW.

### **5.6 Personal Safety for Councillors**

- 5.6.1 The Committee were provided with guidance on issues of Personal Safety and Lone Working in relation to their role as Councillors. This was shared with all Councillors.

## **6. Democratic Services Team 24 May 2018 - 08 May 2019**

- 6.1 The Team Structure for Democratic Services and Scrutiny for the period 2018-2019 are set out below. The Posts are all 1 Full Time Equivalent (fte) unless otherwise stated.

## 6.2 Democratic Services Team

Job Title	Officer Name
Head of Democratic Services	Huw Evans
Democratic Services Officer (0.5 fte)	Samantha Woon
Democratic Services Officer (0.5 fte)	Kate Jones
Democratic Services Officer	Gareth Borsden
Democratic Services Officer	Jeremy Parkhouse
Democratic Services Officer	Allison Lowe
Democratic Services Support Officer	Caroline Davies
Democratic Services Administrative Assistant	Karen Thomas
Democratic Services Support Assistant	Diane Clatworthy

## 6.3 Scrutiny Team

Job Title	Officer Name
Scrutiny Team Leader	Brij Madahar
Scrutiny Officer	Michelle Roberts
Scrutiny Officer	Liz Jordan
Scrutiny Officer	Bethan Hopkins
Scrutiny Research Officer (0.6 fte)	Selma Abdalla

## 7. Governance

- 7.1 The Head of Democratic Services is content with the good work of the Committee during this term. Some significant work has been done, which should ensure clarity, ease and safety to the Councillors and the Co-opted Members.

## 8. General Information

- 8.1 The Democratic Services Committee is keen to see members of the public attending its Meetings. With the exception of confidential items, all business is held in public. All of the public papers are published online [www.swansea.gov.uk/democracy](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/democracy)
- 8.2 Further information can be provided by Democratic Services: [Democratic.Services@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@swansea.gov.uk) or on 01792 636923