



## Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Governance & Audit Committee – 14 September 2021

### Lay Members on the Governance & Audit Committee

<b>Purpose:</b>	To comply with Part 6 Chapter 2 “Governance & Audit Committees: Membership and Proceedings” of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 by ensuring that the membership of the Governance & Audit Committee shall consist of one third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) Lay Members.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	None.
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that:  1) The Governance & Audit Committee recommend their Committee size preference to Council to consider.
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#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Part 6 S 116 of the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 provides that the membership of the Governance & Audit Committee shall consist of one third ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) Lay Members. It also provides that the Committee Chair must be a lay person.
- 1.2 The Governance & Audit Committee currently comprises 15 Members (13 Cllrs & 2 Lay Members). The Committee needs to consider its new size and the implication that  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the Committee would be Lay Members. If the Committee remained at 15, then it would consist of 10 Councillors and 5 Lay Members.

## 2. Political Representation & Committee Size Impact on the Governance & Audit Committee

- 2.1 The table sets out the Political & Lay Member representation on the Committee based on differing Committee sizes. The top line sets out the current membership, prior to the  $\frac{1}{3}$  Lay Members being introduced.
- 2.2 Note that the “Breakdown by Political Group” column could change at any time, should a Councillor change Political Group Membership or following a Local Government Election.

Cttee Size	$\frac{1}{3}$ Lay Members	No. Cllrs	Breakdown By Political Group			
			Labour	Lib Dem / Ind	Con	Uplands
15	2	13	9	2	2	0
15	5	10	7	2	1	0
14	5	9	6	2	1	0
13	5	8	5	2	1	0
12	4	8	5	2	1	0
11	4	7	5	1	1	0
10	4	6	4	1	1	0
9	3	6	4	1	1	0

**Note:** When the Committee size is not divisible by one third to allow a whole number result (14, 13, 11 & 10) the figures have been rounded up as legislation states that the Lay Membership must be one third. It is therefore logical, that the Committee size should be divisible by 3 (9, 12 or 15).

- 2.3 The Governance & Audit Committee are asked to review the above table and to recommend their preferred Committee size to Council. Audit Wales suggests that smaller Committee sizes are beneficial. It should also be noted that the more lay members required the more difficult it may be to recruit into the vacancy.

## 3. Next Steps

- 3.1 Once the Committee has recommended to Council their preferred Committee size; Council will need to determine what the size shall be. This in turn will lead to a formal advertising, interview and advertising process with the new Lay Member(s) commencing in May 2022.

## 4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The additional cost of a Lay Member or Lay Members will be met within existing budget.

**5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1 Failure to comply with this legislation would put the Council in breach of legislation. The Governance & Audit Committee cannot legally meet post May 2022 unless  $\frac{1}{3}$  of its membership are Lay Members.

**6. Integrated Assessment Implications**

- 6.1 There are no integrated assessment implications in relation to this report.

**Background Papers:** None.

**Appendices:** None.