



# Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2021-2022

## City & County of Swansea



**Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2021-2022  
(20 May 2021 to 23 May 2022)**

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

- 1.1 During 2021-2022, the Democratic Services Committee undertook a considerable amount of preparation work in advance of the Local Government Election 2022. It also provided advice and guidance to Councillors on the work of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales via their Annual Report for 2022-2023.
- 1.2 The Committee met 5 times during the 2021-2022 Municipal Year.
- 1.3 I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to the whole Committee for their time, dedication and support during this very busy period.
- 1.4 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 whole Democratic Services Team for their support and professionalism.

**Councillor Lynda James**  
**Chair of Democratic Services Committee**

## 2. Membership of the Democratic Services Committee

2.1 The membership of the Democratic Services Committee for the period 20 May 2021 to 23 May 2022:



Councillor Lynda James  
**Chair**



Councillor June Burtonshaw



Councillor Nick Davies



Councillor Mike Durke



Councillor Joe Hale



Councillor Matthew Jones



Councillor Susan Jones



Councillor Erika Kirchner



Councillor Wendy Lewis  
**Vice Chair**



Councillor Brigitte Rowlands



Councillor Gloria Tanner



Councillor Linda Tyler-Lloyd



Councillor Lesley Walton

2.2 Councillor Lynda James was re-elected Chair of the Democratic Services Committee at Council on 20 May 2021.

### **3. Dates of the Democratic Services Committee Meetings**

3.1 The Democratic Services Committee met remotely via Microsoft Teams on the following dates in 2021-2022:

19 July 2021	27 September 2021
8 November 2021	10 January 2022
14 February 2022	

### **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 2021-2022 the Democratic Services Committee considered the following:

## **5.2 Councillor Induction & Training Programme 2022**

5.2.1 The Committee considered the training requirements for Councillors following the 2022 Local Government Election.

5.2.2 A Working Group was set up to consider any additional requirements.

5.2.3 A final report was presented and approved by Council on 4 November 2021

## **5.3 Councillor Questionnaire**

5.3.1 The Committee considered a councillor questionnaire seeking feedback on remote attendance at committee meetings during the Covid-19 pandemic.

5.3.2 The results of the questionnaire were utilised in order to develop a Hybrid meeting policy.

## **5.4 Interim Statutory Guidance on Multi-Location Meetings**

5.4.1 The Committee considered the Interim Statutory guidance published by Welsh Government which would be utilised in order to prepare a Multi-Location Meetings Policy for Swansea Council.

## **5.5 Democratic Services Committee Annual Reports 2019-2020 & 2020-2021**

5.5.1 The Committee approved the Annual Reports for 2019-2020 and 2021-2022 which had recently been reformatted.

5.5.2 Both reports were presented to Council “for information” on 7 October 2021.

## **5.6 Councillors ICT Allowances Policy – May 2022 & Beyond**

5.6.1 The Committee considered an updated version of the previous Councillors ICT Allowances Policy to ensure it was up to date and fit for purpose.

5.6.2 The updated version was approved by Council on 27 January 2022.

## **5.7 Diversity in Democracy Action Plan**

5.7.1 The Committee considered and amended a Diversity in Democracy Action Plan, which set out how the Council could support the Diversity in Democracy Programme.

5.7.2 The Diversity in Democracy Action Plan was presented to and adopted by Council on 2 December 2021.

## 5.8 Councillor Safety & Support

5.8.1 Due to recent unfortunate incidents involving politicians in the UK, the Committee considered a report in order to provide support to all Councillors in discharging their role, by agreeing in principal to the council funding appropriate security measures where councillors were at personal risk or significant threat.

5.8.2 The report was approved by Council on 2 December 2021.

## 5.9 Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) - Draft Annual Report 2022-2023 - Consultation

5.9.1 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.

## 5.10 Review of Councillors Handbook

5.10.1 The Committee considered an amended version of the Councillors Handbook, in advance of the Local Government Elections 2022.

## 6. Member Development

6.1 The following member training was provided in 2021-2022:

Date	Training
29 June 2021	Member Seminar – Economic Recovery Strategy
20 & 22 July 2021	Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)
11 January 2022	Member Seminar – Swansea Bay University Health Board “Changing for the Future”

6.2 All Members are encouraged to complete various e-learning training, including mandatory Safeguarding training via the Learning Pool platform.

## 7. Democratic Services Team 20 May 2021 – 23 May 2022

7.1 The Team Structure for Democratic Services and Scrutiny for the period 2021-2022 are set out below. The Posts are all 1 Full Time Equivalent (fte) unless otherwise stated.

### 7.2 Democratic Services Team

Job Title	Officer Name
Head of Democratic Services	Huw Evans
Democratic Services Officer (0.5 fte)	Samantha Woon (F/T from 21 March 2022)
Democratic Services Officer (0.5 fte)	Kate Jones (up to 16 March 2022)
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

7.2.1 The Democratic Services Team supports Full Council and all its Committees and the formal decision-making and good governance of the Council. This includes the preparation and publication of agendas, minutes & reports packs using the Modern.Gov committee administration system and booking rooms for meetings and pre-meetings. Support is provided to the following meetings.

- Council and Cabinet.
- Regulatory: Planning, General and Statutory Licensing Committees including Sub Committees.
- Governance: Appeals & Awards Committee, Appointments Committee, Audit Committee, Chief Executive's Remuneration & Appraisal Committee, Constitution Working Group, Corporate Parenting Board, Democratic Services Committee, Pension Fund Committee, Standards Committee.
- Joint Committees: Local Pension Board, Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee, Swansea Public Services Board Joint Committee.
- Other: Armed Forces Covenant Signatories Panel, Community / Town Councils Forum, Corporate Briefing, Development Advisory Group, Gower Area Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership Steering Group, Joint Consultative Committee, Sustainable Development Fund Panel and Trustees Panel.

7.2.2 The Democratic Services Team arrange suitable dates, prepare agendas, co-ordinate report approval, circulate documents, draft minutes, record decisions and attendances and publish appropriate information on the various websites.

7.2.3 The team also co-ordinates the delivery of the audio visual and webcasting facilities for Cabinet, Council, Audit Committee, Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership Steering Group, Planning Committee, Pension Fund Committee, 5 x Policy Development Committees, Scrutiny Programme Committee, Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee, Swansea Public Services Board Joint Committee.

7.2.4 All of the above meetings are streamed live and a recording placed on the Council's website once each meeting has concluded.



## 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

