



City and County of Swansea

Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

Democratic Services Committee

At: Remotely via Microsoft Teams

On: Monday, 10 January 2022

Time: 4.00 pm

Chair: Councillor Lynda James

Membership:

Councillors: J E Burtonshaw, N J Davies, M Durke, J A Hale, M Jones, S M Jones, E T Kirchner, W G Lewis, B J Rowlands, G J Tanner, L J Tyler-Lloyd and L V Walton

Watch Online: <https://bit.ly/31ZTSSl>

Agenda

	Page No.
1 Apologies for Absence.	
2 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests. www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests	
3 Minutes. To approve & sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.	1 - 4
4 Councillors ICT Allowances Policy - May 2022 & Beyond.	5 - 19
5 Review of Councillors Handbook.	20 - 38
6 Workplan 2021-2022.	39

Next Meeting: Monday, 21 March 2022 at 4.00 pm

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Huw Evans'.

Huw Evans
Head of Democratic Services
Thursday, 23 December 2021

Contact: Democratic Services - (01792) 636923

Agenda Item 3



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Democratic Services Committee**

Remotely via Microsoft Teams

Monday, 8 November 2021 at 4.00 pm

Present:

Councillor(s)

J E Burtonshaw
L James
W G Lewis
L V Walton

Councillor(s)

N J Davies
M Jones
B J Rowlands
L J Tyler-Lloyd

Councillor(s)

M Durke
E T Kirchner
G J Tanner

Also Present: L S Gibbard

Officer(s)

Allison Lowe
Tracey Meredith
Huw Evans

Democratic Services Officer
Chief Legal Officer / Monitoring Officer
Head of Democratic Services

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): S M Jones

Councillor W G Lewis (Vice Chair) Presided

19 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 J E Burtonshaw, N J Davies, M Durke, L S Gibbard, L James, M Jones, E T Kirchner, W G Lewis, B J Rowlands, G J Tanner, Linda J Tyler-Lloyd and L V Walton declared a personal interest in Minute 21 "Councillors ICT Allowances Policy – May 2022 & Beyond" and Minute 25 "Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Draft Annual Report 2022-2023 – Consultation"

20 Minutes.

Resolved that the Minutes of the Special Democratic Services Committee held on 27 September 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record subject to Councillor Louise Gibbard being marked as present.

21 Councillors ICT Allowances Policy - May 2022 & Beyond.

The Head of Democratic Services and the Chief Transformation Officer presented a report to review the "Councillors ICT Allowances Policy – May 2017 and Beyond" and recommend a May 2022 & Beyond version to Council. This would ensure that Councillors & Statutory Co-opted Members received ICT provision suited to their needs and was compliant with the determinations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW).

It was recommended that the item be referred to a Group comprising the Political Group Leaders and other Councillors (identified by the Group Leaders), relevant ICT Officers and the Head of Democratic Services prior to it being re-presented to the Democratic Services Committee.

The Head of Democratic Services stated that as a result, his report scheduled for Council in December would be delayed to 27 January 2022 and he would seek to call an additional Democratic Services Committee in December / early January.

Resolved that the item be referred to a Group comprising the Political Group Leaders and other Councillors (identified by the Group Leaders), relevant ICT Officers and the Head of Democratic Services prior to it being re-presented to the Democratic Services Committee.

22 Diversity in Democracy Action Plan.

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report to set out an Action Plan setting out how the Council can support the Diversity in Democracy Programme. To recommend the Diversity in Democracy Action Plan to Council for adoption.

The following issues were raised and amendments suggested:

- Diversity Champions be amended to Diversity Spokesperson or Diversity Lead to avoid confusion with the Diversity Member Champion;
- Reference be made to all the protected characteristics in the Equality Act to show the breadth of underrepresented groups;
- Try to avoid using too much jargon and acronyms when working with the wider community;
- All Councillors had a responsibility, not just Political Leaders.

The Head of Democratic Services explained that the Action Plan set out the actions to be taken by the Authority. When dealing with the wider community, the language used would be more suited to the target audience.

Resolved that the Diversity in Democracy Action Plan be supported and recommended to Council for adoption subject to the above points (where appropriate) being incorporated into the Action Plan.

Councillor L James (Chair) Presided

23 Draft Multi-Location Meetings Policy.

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report to consider the Draft Multi-Location Meetings Policy.

He explained that this would be an evolving Policy which would be regularly updated due to experience and knowledge gained. The Policy would also be shared with the Corporate Management Team and Political Group Leaders in order to formulate it further prior to it eventually being presented to Council.

Resolved that:

- 1) Etiquette at remote meeting guidance be re-circulated regularly to Councillors;
- 2) Councillors forward any other comments in relation to the Policy to the Head of Democratic Services or Monitoring Officer.

24 Councillor Safety & Support.

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report to provide support to all Councillors in discharging their role by agreeing in principal to the council funding appropriate security measures where councillors are at personal risk or significant threat.

He also explained that work was ongoing in respect of removing Councillors home addresses from their published Declaration of Interests and addresses from candidate information prior to the Local Government Election 2022.

Resolved that the Democratic Services Committee:

- 1) Recommends to Council that where a Councillor is at personal risk or significant threat of harm in carrying out their role that consideration is given to funding appropriate security measures.
- 2) Recommends to Council that authority is delegated to the Head of Democratic Services and the Chief Finance Officer to consider and Determine any requests for such funding;
- 3) Information on Councillor Safety be re-circulated to Councillors by email;
- 4) A training event on Councillor Safety be included in the Councillor Induction & Training Programme.

25 Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Draft Annual Report 2022-2023 - Consultation.

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report to consult and comment on the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Draft Annual Report 2022-2023. The comments of the Democratic Services Committee would lead to a Council report proposing a formal reply to the IRPW.

He explained that whilst the consultation period closed on 26 November 2021; the IRPW had given Swansea Council a week's extension until 3 December 2021. The final IRPW report would be published in February 2022.

The Committee discussed the negative feedback that some Councillors had experienced in relation to claims for mileage expenses and ICT allowances that were published on the Council's website. They acknowledged however, that they were entitled to claim these allowances and should be setting an example to support the "Diversity in Democracy" report in order to remove barriers for potential candidates.

Resolved that the Democratic Services Committee:

- 1) Noted the IRPW draft Annual Report 2022-2023 proposals;
- 2) Include a comment in the response to the IRPW regarding the publication of Councillor Expenses and ICT Allowances and its subsequent impact on Diversity in Democracy;
- 3) Recommends the amended consultation response to Council on 2 December 2021.

26 Workplan 2021-2022.

The Chair presented the Work Plan for 2021-2022.

- 1) An additional Meeting be scheduled in December 2021 / January 2022 to re-consider the Councillors ICT Allowances Policy – May 2022 & Beyond;
- 2) The Work Plan be amended to be as follows:

31 January 2022

Councillor Handbook.

The meeting ended at 5.41 pm

Chair

Agenda Item 4



Joint Report of the Head of Democratic Services & Head of Digital & Customer Services

Democratic Services Committee – 10 January 2022

Councillors ICT Allowances Policy – May 2022 & Beyond

Purpose:	To review the “Councillors ICT Allowances Policy – May 2017 and Beyond” and recommend a May 2022 & Beyond version to Council. To ensure that Councillors & Statutory Co-opted Members receive ICT provision suited to their needs and is compliant with the determinations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW).
Policy Framework:	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report. Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The Committee consider the current arrangements for Councillors ICT.2) The Head of Digital & Customer Services review the Councillors ICT Allowances amounts ensuring they are adequate for May 2022 & beyond and that the revised amounts be included in the budget process.3) The reviewed and amended Councillors ICT Allowances Policy – May 2022 & beyond be agreed and recommended to Council for adoption.4) The Head of Digital & Customer Services provide a “Good Habits” Helpful Guide to Councillors setting out subjects such as Back Up & Sync etc.5) Modern.gov software Training be added to the Councillors Induction Programme.
Report Authors:	Huw Evans & Sarah Lackenby
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Councillors ICT (Information, Communication & Technology) Allowances Policy – May 2017 & Beyond was adopted in December 2016 and amended following a review in September 2018.
- 1.2 ICT plays an essential part in enabling Councillors and Statutory Co-opted Members to undertake their roles. Modern digital equipment and systems ensure they work effectively and securely.
- 1.3 The Councillors ICT Allowances Policy includes payments for Councillors & the Statutory Co-opted Members relating to Broadband, Data, ICT, Voice communication and related support together with and any other aspect deemed appropriate by the Head of Democratic Services.
- 1.4 The Policy is reviewed regularly and a new version is set out for each Council Term. The forthcoming term being May 2022 to May 2027.
- 1.5 The review allows technologies to be made available and to align Councillors role to the any new Authority strategies. The Authority has a strong digital culture and an ambition aiming to make Swansea a lead Authority in the UK.
- 1.6 This approach links with the determinations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) by which the Authority is bound. Details of the latest IRPW Annual Report and other information may be viewed on their website. <https://gov.wales/independent-remuneration-panel-wales>
- 1.7 References to Councillors in this Policy should be read to also include the Statutory Co-opted Members unless specified otherwise.

2. Supporting the Work of Local Authority Elected Members – IRPW Determinations

- 2.1 Determinations 10 and 11 of the Draft IRPW Annual Report 2022 state:

“Determination 10: Each Authority, through its Democratic Services Committee, must ensure that all of its members are given as much support as is necessary to enable them to fulfil their duties effectively. All elected members should be provided with adequate telephone, email and internet facilities giving access to appropriate information”.

“Determination 11: Such support should be without cost to the individual member. Deductions must not be made from members’ salaries by the respective Authority as a contribution towards cost of support which the Authority has decided necessary for the effectiveness and / or efficiency of members.”

3. Current ICT Arrangements

- 3.1 The Authority provides each Councillor with an ICT Allowance in order to enable them to fulfil their duties. The ICT Allowance allows Councillors to purchase their own equipment and support. The ICT Allowance should be used to purchase items such as desktop or laptop PC, Tablet Computer, Printer and Software), ICT Peripherals (such as storage, backup facilities, printer paper and ink) etc.
- 3.2 In addition to the ICT Allowance, there are allowances for Data, Phone and Mobile Phones.
- 3.3 This current arrangement allows the flexibility that Councillors requested prior to the Local Government Elections in May 2012. It effectively provides bring your own device (BYOD) technology to Councillors. Councillors are able to purchase whichever device they find beneficial for their work.
- 3.4 Councillors agreed in 2017 to continue with the flexible arrangement of purchasing their own equipment. The principle of Councillors being able to use the equipment for their personal use, without the restrictions that a corporate device would impose was welcomed.
- 3.5 The Authority provides software for Councillors to access their emails and files via Microsoft Office 365. A WiFi network is also available in the main Council buildings enabling Councillors to use their personal devices.
- 3.6 A number of Council provided PC's are also provided in the Political Group Rooms and the Cabinet Rooms for Councillors use. The Council's Digital Services Team supports these devices.
- 3.7 Councillors in receipt of a Senior Salary and Political Group Leaders are also provided on request with a Council provided laptop. The Council's Digital Services Team supports these laptops.
- 3.8 Councillor Self Service allows Councillors to view, amend and apply for things via Oracle including:
 - Payslips, P60's and P11d's;
 - Changes to personal details (address, bank etc.);
 - Car Parking Permits;
 - Mileage and Expenses Claims.
- 3.9 This has reduced printing costs, saved administration time and costs. All of which will assist the Authority in managing its financial position. This approach compliments the Authority's Digital Strategy.

4. ICT Changes during 2017-2022

- 4.1 The Council's BYOD approach is popular with a number of Councillors; however, a number of backbench Councillors have asked for a Council provided device instead. This is not currently an option, but will need to be considered as part of the review for 2022 & beyond.
- 4.2 It is important to note that any Council provided device must be bound by rigid security settings, which will limit their use. This is not a negotiable point as the Authority is bound by the Government Security PSN (Public Services Network) compliance requirements.
- 4.3 The Covid-19 pandemic brought with it numerous challenges especially on seeking to manage hybrid meetings. The Head of Democratic Services and the Digital Change Co-ordinator spent weeks providing training to Councillors on the use of Microsoft Teams and eVoting, etc., so that they could participate in hybrid meetings. This proved challenging as Councillors had a number of differing devices and were running on differing software versions.
- 4.4 2021 also saw a directive with Council laptops being provided to those in receipt of a Senior Salary and Political Group Leaders. The intention being to assist those Chairing meetings etc.
- 4.5 The Covid-19 pandemic significantly affected the way that Councillors work. So much more is done electronically and remotely. This has led to a significant reduction in printing and delivery costs, as Councillors embrace new technology and changes. The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 also brought about change, allowing Multi-Location Meetings to take place.
- 4.6 These changes mean that a Councillors ICT requirement has changed. No longer, can we expect a Councillor to manage on one device over a 5-year term. Councillors may require two devices to participate in one formal Committee, with one device used as the audio / video solution and the other for reading the agenda, minutes and reports.
- 4.7 Additionally, the processing power and storage requirement of software to operate on devices is increasing. This often impacts the lifespan of equipment.

5. Consultation Process for Review of Councillors' ICT Arrangements

- 5.1 The Head of Democratic Services and Head of Digital & Customer Services consulted with all Councillors via email in relation to the future options available. Councillors favoured maintaining the status quo with Councillors being provided with an adequate ICT Allowance for them to carry out their duties.
- 5.2 The Councillors ICT Policy – May 2022 & Beyond report was submitted to the Democratic Services Committee held on 8 November 2021 for consideration; however, the Committee referred the report to a Group consisting of the Political Group Leaders and members of Political Groups for further consideration.

5.3 That Group met on 14 December 2021 and considered the report and Policy. They made the following recommendations to the Democratic Services Committee:

- i) The Current arrangement of all Councillors purchasing their own devices using the Councillors ICT Allowance continue; however in exceptional circumstance the Head of Digital & Customer Services in consultation with the Head of Democratic Services may permit a Councillor to receive Council provided equipment should they determine it is required.
- ii) The Head of Digital & Customer Services review the amounts payable under each aspect of the Councillors ICT Allowances to ensure that they are adequate for 2022 & beyond and to ensure that they are considered as part of the budget process. The allowances being:
 - a) Councillors / Co-opted Members Data Allowances.
 - b) Councillors / Co-opted Members Telephone Allowance.
 - c) Councillors Mobile Phone Allowance.
 - d) Councillors / Co-opted Members ICT Allowance.
- iii) The Head of Digital & Customer Services provide a “Good Habits” Helpful Guide to Councillors setting out subjects such as Back Up & Sync etc.
- iv) Modern.gov software Training be added to the Councillors Induction Programme.

6. Proposed Next Steps

6.1 The Committee are asked to consider the current ICT arrangement and the comments of the Group comprising the Political Group Leaders and to make a recommendation to Council as to their proposed Councillor ICT Arrangements for 2022 & beyond.

7. Councillors & Co-opted Members ICT Allowances

7.1 The types of ICT Allowances available to Councillors / Co-opted Members are defined in their relevant sections within the Policy:

- a) Councillors / Co-opted Members Data Allowance.
- b) Councillors / Co-opted Members Telephone Allowance.
- c) Councillors Mobile Phone Allowance.
- d) Councillors / Co-opted Members ICT Allowance.

7.2 As Statutory Co-opted Members do not have the same time commitment of a Councillor, the Co-opted Members Allowance has been set at 20% of that of a Councillor.

7.3 The Councillors' ICT Allowance shall be subject to Tax and National Insurance deductions as determined by HMRC.

7.4 For ease, the current level of Allowance is set out below; alternatively, they can be viewed in **Appendix A**.

Allowance (Per Month)	Councillor	Co-opted Member
Data	£15	£3
Telephone	£10	£2
Mobile Phone*	£25	£0

Note:

*1 **Mobile Phone Allowance.** The Mobile Phone Allowance is paid monthly to qualifying Councillors in order to supplement their mobile phone bills due to their increased use for Council business. There are 12 Qualifying Councillors: Cabinet Members, Presiding Member and the Leader of the Largest Opposition Group.

Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance Amounts	Councillor	Co-opted Member
In the Year immediately following the election / appointment of the Councillor / Co-opted Member	£1,008	£201.60
Each Year Thereafter (Councillor may take this in advance from Year 2, i.e. £800 (£200 x 4 year Remaining Term of Office). The Authority will not pay any additional monies until following the Local Government Election.	£200 p.a. (£800) over the term.	N/A
Each Year Thereafter (Co-opted Member may take this in advance from Year 2, i.e. £240 or £160 (£40 x 6 year / £40 x 4 year Remaining Term of Office).	N/A	£40 p.a. (£240 or £160) over the term.

8. Integrated Assessment Implications

8.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage.
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

8.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the ‘well-being goals’.

8.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

8.4 An IIA Screening Form has been completed and no adverse implications have been noted.

9. Financial Implications

9.1 Each of the Allowances referred to in this report shall be subject to Tax and National Insurance deductions as determined by HMRC.

9.2 The Allowances outlined in the report are contained within existing budgetary constraints; however, if the hybrid model was adopted, further costing work would be required as the costs could rise when considered against the provision of support, capacity to provide support and the ICT kit required. Since returning to the in-house delivery of ICT; the Council has realised annual savings of approximately £1.4M.

10. Legal Implications

10.1 The proposals identified are in accordance with relevant legislation.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices:

Appendix A	Councillors’ ICT Allowances Policy – May 2017 & Beyond.
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Councillors' ICT Allowances Policy - May 2017 & Beyond

Amended on 15 November 2018

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Data (Broadband), ICT and Voice Communications equipment and systems are essential to enable Councillors and Co-opted Members to carry out their responsibilities effectively and securely.
- 1.2 This Policy is regularly reviewed by the Head of Democratic Services and Democratic Services Committee in order to allow for new technologies to be made available and to align Councillors and Co-opted Members to the Digital strategy of the Authority. Councillors are part of the Authority's rollout of a Digital culture ambition aiming to make Swansea a lead Authority in the UK.
- 1.3 This Policy links with the determinations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) by which the Authority is bound. Details of the latest IRPW Annual Report and other information may be viewed on their website. <https://gov.wales/independent-remuneration-panel-wales>
- 1.4 In addition to the Councillors' ICT Allowances, the Authority also provides Office 365 for Councillors to use and the Authority's main buildings are covered by WiFi. Each Political Group Room is fitted out with PC's and Telephones.

2. Supporting the Work of Local Authority Members - IRPW Determinations

- 2.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales set out determinations each year in their Annual Report. A number of these determinations relate to how an Authority should support the work of Councillors and Co-opted Members.
- 2.2 The determinations set out rules to ensure that the Authority provides as much support as is necessary to enable Councillors / Co-opted Members to fulfil their duties effectively by provided them with adequate telephone and email facilities and electronic access to appropriate information. Deductions must not be made from members' salaries by the respective Authority as a contribution towards cost of support.
- 2.3 These determinations apply to Councillors and the Statutory Co-opted Members. The IRPW have also indicated that the Community / Town Council Representative on the Standards Committee is to be treated as a Co-opted Member for this purpose.
- 2.4 The Authority has 11 Statutory Co-opted Members and 1 Community / Town Council Representative:
 - Chair of Governance & Audit Committee x 1.
 - Chair of Standards Committee x 1.
 - Ordinary Member of the Governance & Audit Committee x 1.

- Ordinary Members of the Standards Committee x 4.
- Ordinary Members of Scrutiny Programme Committee x 4
- Community / Town Councillor Representative of the Standards Committee x 1.

3. Councillors' & Co-opted Members ICT Allowances

3.1 There are 3 types of ICT Allowances available to Councillors / Co-opted Members. They are defined in their relevant sections within this Policy:

- e) Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance;
- f) Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance;
- g) Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance.

3.2 As Statutory Co-opted Members do not have the same time commitment of a Councillor, the Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance and the Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance element for Co-opted Members has been set at 20% of that of a Councillor.

4. Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance

4.1 The digital era has led to people including Councillors / Co-opted Members working in different ways to address their various connectivity requirements. Some people choose to have a broadband connection at home, others choose to have access to the internet via 3G or 4G on their mobile device and others utilise a data dongle.

4.2 The Authority pays a monthly Data & Telephone Allowance to all Councillors / Co-opted Members providing:

- a) They produce proof on an annual basis of their Data and Telephone connection at their home;
- b) They are not in receipt of a payment for Data and Telephone at their home from a third party due to their employment or via an election;
- c) They allow for their telephone number to be published on the Authority's website and promoted as necessary save in exceptional circumstances.

4.3 As Statutory Co-opted Members do not have the same time commitment of a Councillor, the ICT Allowance and Data & Telephone Allowance for a Co-opted Member be set at 20% of that of a Councillor.

4.4 The Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance is currently set at £25 per Councillor / £5 per Co-opted Member per month. This is split as follows:

	Data	Telephone
Councillor	£15	£10
Co-opted Member	£3	£2

- 4.5 The **Telephone element** of the Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance, shall only be paid once per Councillor / Co-opted Member household (i.e. if there are 2 or more Councillors / Co-opted Members living at the address then only one person shall receive the Telephone element of the Allowance).
- 4.6 The **Data element** of the Councillors / Co-opted Member's Data & Telephone Allowance shall be paid for either one broadband or one mobile data contract per Councillor / Co-opted Member. This will be limited to one static broadband contract per household; however more than one Mobile Data Contract per household is permissible.
- 4.7 Under HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) rules, the Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance shall be subject to Tax and National Insurance deductions.
- 4.8 Should a Councillor / Co-opted Member cease to remain a Councillor / Co-opted Member the Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance shall cease and any Data / Telephone contract taken out by the Councillor / Co-opted Member shall remain their sole responsibility as will any repayments. Please also refer to the section relating to **“What happens if a Councillor / Co-opted Member ceases to hold Office?”**

5. Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance

- 5.1 The Authority currently pays a monthly Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance to qualifying Councillors in order to supplement their mobile phone bills due their increased use for Council business providing:
- a) Councillors produce proof on an annual basis of their Mobile Phone contract.
 - b) Councillors in receipt of the Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance must allow for their mobile telephone number to be published on the Authority's website and promoted as necessary save in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.2 Under HM Revenue and Customs rules, the Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance shall be subject to Tax and National Insurance deductions.
- 5.3 There are 12 Qualifying Councillors: Cabinet Members, Presiding Member and the Leader of the Largest Opposition Group. The Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance is currently set at £25 per Qualifying Councillor per month.
- 5.4 The Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance is payable from the date when the Councillor is appointed by Council / Leader of the Council to a Qualifying Councillor position.

5.5 Should a Councillor cease to remain a Qualifying Councillor (as defined above) the Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance shall cease and any Mobile Phone contract taken out by the Councillor shall remain their sole responsibility as will any repayments.

5.6 Should a Councillor cease to remain a Councillor the Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance shall cease and any Mobile Phone contract taken out by the Councillor shall remain their sole responsibility as will any repayments. Please also refer to the section relating to **“What happens if a Councillor / Co-opted Member ceases to hold Office?”**

6. Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance

6.1 The Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance allows Councillors / Co-opted Members to purchase their own ICT equipment such as desktop or laptop PC, Tablet Computer, Printer and Software, ICT Peripherals such as storage, backup facilities, printer paper and ink and ICT Support.

6.2 The Authority recommends that an element of this allowance be used to purchase an ICT support service. **ICT Support is defined as:** Either an ad-hoc or fixed contract with a third party (Not the Authority) aimed at providing ICT support should any element of your ICT equipment fail.

6.3 The Authority will only provide ICT Support for issues directly linked to the Authorities systems, such as Password Reset, Access to Office 365 and Oracle. The Authority will also provide general guidelines should the issue relate to an issue with the Councillors device, in order to aid them when having to contact an external ICT Support supplier.

6.4 The Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance system is effectively a “Bring Your Own Device” (BYOD) arrangement. Councillors / Co-opted Members are able to purchase whichever device they find beneficial for their work; however they should be mindful that it is highly recommended that their device is compatible with **Microsoft Office**.

6.5 Should a device not be compatible with Microsoft Office, Councillors / Co-opted Members may not be able to open documents sent to them by the Authority and in turn the Authority may not be able to open documents which the Councillor / Co-Opted Member sends them.

6.6 The Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance is paid to all Councillors / Co-opted Members on request providing:

a) They produce a receipt proving their purchase of relevant ICT items;

b) They submit their claim on the Councillors' and Co-opted Members ICT Allowance Claim Form which is outlined at **Appendix 1** and / or by providing the annual bill as proof.

- 6.7 Under HM Revenue and Customs rules, the Councillors' and Co-opted Members ICT Allowance shall be subject to Tax and National Insurance deductions.
- 6.8 The following table sets out the total amounts that can be claimed under the Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance:

Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance Amounts	Councillor	Co-opted Member
In the Year immediately following the election / appointment of the Councillor / Co-opted Member	£1,008	£201.60
Each Year Thereafter (Councillor may take this in advance from Year 2, i.e. £800 (£200 x 4 year Remaining Term of Office). The Authority will not pay any additional monies until the following Local Government Election.	£200 p.a. (£800) over the term.	N/A
Each Year Thereafter (Co-opted Member may take this in advance from Year 2, i.e. £240 or £160 (£40 x 6 year / £40 x 4 year Remaining Term of Office).	N/A	£40 p.a. (£240 or £160) over the term.

Note:

- 1) The **Councillor element** of the Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance over a 5 year period is £1,808 in total. This amount may be spent at any time during the 5 year term provided the claims are made using the Councillors / Co-opted Members ICT Allowance Claim Form and with relevant receipts.
- 2) **Councillors Only.** Any spend exceeding £200 in the final year of the Term of Office must be approved in advance by the Head of Democratic Services in conjunction with the Head of Digital & Customer Services. They may look at temporary solutions such as providing Authority owned ICT devices.
- 3) The **Co-opted Members element** of the Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance over a 4 and 6 year period is £361.60 and £441.60 in total respectively. This amount may be spent at any time during the 4-6 year term provided the claims are made using the Councillors / Co-opted Members ICT Allowance Claim Form and with relevant receipts;
- 4) **Co-opted Members only.** Any spend exceeding £40 in the final year of the Term of Office must be approved in advance by the Head of Democratic Services in conjunction with the Head of Digital & Customer Services. They may look at temporary solutions such as providing Authority owned ICT devices.

7. What happens if a Councillor / Co-opted Member ceases to hold Office?

- 7.1 If a Councillor / Co-opted Member ceases to hold Office for whatever reason during their Term of Office, the Authority will immediately cease payment of any Allowance that they had previously been entitled to.
- 7.2 Any contract taken out by the Councillor / Co-opted Member during their period of Office will be their sole responsibility. The Authority will not make any payments towards the remaining period of the contract(s).
- 7.3 Any ICT equipment and ICT support purchased during a Councillors / Co-opted Members Term of Office shall automatically become their property. The Authority shall have no legal claim to it.
- 7.4 Should the Councillor / Co-opted Member cease to hold Office within the first 12 months of being elected / appointed they must repay any ICT Allowance which they received on a complete month pro rata basis. This paragraph is waived should a Councillor / Co-opted Member die during their Term of Office.

8. Data Protection Act / Security Advice (Anti-Virus, Anti-Spam, Firewall and Encryption)

- 8.1 Councillors are likely to handle personal information about individuals; as such they have a number of legal obligations to protect that information under the Data Protection Act 1998. Should a Councillor fail to comply with this Act then they would be liable to a fine of up to £5,000.
- 8.2 The Authority strongly advises that Councillors / Co-Opted Members install Anti-Virus, Anti-Spam and Encryption software and use password protection on any PC, Laptop, Tablet, Mobile Phone etc. used for Councillor Business. The use of a personal Firewall should also be considered. For advice in this area, Councillors should take appropriate security advice from their external ICT Support provider.

9. Claiming of Allowances and Providing Receipts / Proof of Purchase

- 9.1 **Claiming the Councillors / Co-opted Members' Data & Telephone Allowance.** Councillors / Co-opted Members must produce proof of Data and Telephone connection at their home on an annual basis in order to receive this monthly allowance. Proof shall be required during May / June each year and should be given to the Cabinet Office / Democratic Services Team as appropriate.
- 9.2 **Claiming the Councillors' Mobile Phone Allowance.** Councillors / Co-Opted Members must produce proof of their Mobile Phone Contract on an annual basis in order to receive this monthly allowance. Proof shall be required during May / June each year and should be given to the Cabinet Office / Democratic Services Team as appropriate.

9.3 Failure to provide proof of a Data / Telephone / Mobile Phone contract during May / June each year will result in payments being stopped until proof is provided. The Authority shall not backdate any payments beyond 3 months.

9.4 **Claiming the Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance.** Councillors / Co-opted Members should purchase the ICT equipment they require and complete the Councillors / Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance Claim Form as shown in **Appendix 1**. The Claim Form should be returned to the Cabinet Office / Democratic Services Team as appropriate.

10. Councillors Self Service

10.1 Councillor Self Service allows Councillors to view, amend and apply for things via relevant software including:

- Payslips, P60's and P11d's;
- Changes to personal details (address, bank etc.);
- Car Parking Permits;
- Mileage and Expenses Claims.

10.3 Self Service, will reduce printing costs, save administration time and costs and allow Councillors to update their information in real time.

10.4 User Guides are available on the Authority's StaffNet site <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/staffnet/mileageandexpenses>

10.5 Modern.gov is the Authority's software solution for meeting management including placing agendas, reports and minutes online. It is an integrated package which aims to simplify websites for Councillors, Officers and the public.

Appendices:

Appendix 1	Councillors / Co-opted Members ICT Allowance Claim Form.
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Councillors / Co-opted Members ICT Allowances Claim Form

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Name:	
Address:	
Post Code:	

Provide details of ICT items or support purchased. In accordance with the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) determinations, Councillors' / Co-opted Members ICT Allowance payments will only be made to following the completion of this form **together with the relevant receipt(s) being attached.**

Date Purchased	Item / Service Purchased	Cost
Total Amount Claimed		£

Note:

- i) I have incurred these costs to enable me to fulfil my duties as a Councillor / Co-opted Member in accordance with the IRPW.*
- ii) Councillors' ICT Allowance. Year of Election is £1,008. Remaining Term of Office is £200 p.a. x 4 years (£800). The sum of £800 may be taken as a lump sum from Year 2 providing a receipt is provided. The Authority will not pay any additional monies until the following Local Government Election.*
- iii) Co-opted Members' ICT Allowance. Year of Appointment is £201.60. Remaining Term of Office is £40 p.a. The per annum sum may be taken as a lump sum from Year 2 providing a receipt is provided. The Authority will not pay any additional monies until the following Local Government Election.*

Councillor / Co-opted Member Signature:	Date:
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For Office Use

Checked By:	Payroll No.:	Month Paid:	
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Return to: Head of Democratic Services.

Agenda Item 5



Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Democratic Services Committee – 10 January 2022

Review of Councillors Handbook

Purpose:	To review Sections A-C of the Councillors Handbook and to recommend the amended version for adoption by Council.
Policy Framework:	None.
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that: 1) The amendments proposed by the Head of Democratic Services in the Appendices to the report be recommended to Council for adoption.
Report Author:	Huw Evans
Finance Officer:	Ben Smith
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Councillors Handbook provides information to Councillors / Co-opted Members. The Councillors Handbook was last reviewed by the Democratic Services Committee in 2018. Council adopted the reviewed changes at its meetings on 24 May 2018 & 22 November 2018.
- 1.2 The Councillors Handbook is split into 4 Sections:
 - a) Financial Information.
 - b) Support Services.
 - c) Protocols.
 - d) Role Descriptions & Person Specifications.
- 1.3 The Head of Democratic Services has reviewed Sections A-C of the Councils Handbook. Section D will be reviewed in the New Year.

1.4 The review aimed to ensure that the information was correct and also reflected any new working arrangements.

1.5 The entire Councillors Handbook may be viewed at www.swansea.gov.uk/cllrshandbook

2. Section A - Councillor and Co-opted Member Remuneration (Salaries, Allowances & Expenses)

2.1 **Appendix A** of the report sets out a tracked changes version of the proposals by the Head of Democratic Services.

3. Section B - Support Services

3.1 **Appendix B** of the report sets out a tracked changes version of the proposals by the Head of Democratic Services.

4. Section C - Protocols

4.1 There are no proposed changes to Section C. The current version of Section C may be viewed at www.swansea.gov.uk/cllrshandbook

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

7. Integrated Assessment Implications

7.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- 7.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.
- 7.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.
- 7.4 An IIA screening has been undertaken and no adverse implications have been noted.
- 7.5 The impact will be positive for all Councillors. The review will seek to ensure that many of the answers required by Councillors will be included within the Councillors Handbook.

Background papers: None

Appendices:

- Appendix A Councillor and Co-opted Member Remuneration (Salaries, Allowances & Expenses).
- Appendix B Support Services

Councillor Handbook, Section A - Financial Information

Content

1	Introduction
2	Councillor Salaries, Allowances and Expenses
3	Contribution towards Reimbursement of Cost of Care Costs of Care & Personal Assistance
4	Foregoing of Salary and / or Allowance
5	Approved Duties / Official Business
6	Travel
7	Travel by Rail
8	Travel by Private Car
9	Travel by Hired / Pool Car
10	Travel by Taxi
11	Travel by Air
12	Travel by Bicycle
13	Travel by Bus
14	Overnight Costs
15	Overseas (Foreign) Travel, Foreign Currency and Council Related Business Communication
16	Claiming
17	Car Parking Permits
18	Interests, Gifts and Hospitality of Councillors
19	Income Tax
20	National Insurance Contributions
21	Social Security Benefits
22	Insurance

1 Introduction

- 1 The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) determines the remuneration of Councillors on an annual basis. Whilst Councillors & Co-opted Members are not employees, the treatment of their remuneration for most purposes is the same as if they were employees.
- 2 This document provides Councillors and Co-opted Members with practical information relating to Salaries, Allowances and Expenses. For further information, please contact the Head of Democratic Services, Cabinet Office, Democratic Services or Payroll.



2 Councillors Salaries, Allowances and Expenses

- 1 The Council Constitution (Part 6 “Members Allowances Scheme”), sets out the Salaries, and Expenses set by the IRPW and the Allowances set by the Council.
- 2 Councillor Salary payments are paid automatically on a monthly basis.
- 3 Councillor / Co-opted Member Allowance claims must be made by completing the

appropriate forms:

- ICT Allowance;
- ~~Reimbursement~~ Contribution towards Costs of Care & Personal Assistance.

4. Claims for the following allowances must be made by providing the Cabinet Office / Democratic Services Team with evidence of the bill including your address and telephone number twice in a 5-year term of Office~~on an annual basis~~:

- Data Allowance.
- ~~Broadband &~~ Telephone Allowance;
- Mobile Phone Allowance.

5. Councillor Expenses claims must be made via the Authority's Oracle system www.swansea.gov.uk/staffnet/mileageandexpenses. Co-opted Members should submit their claims in writing via Democratic Services.

6. Councillors / Co-opted Members may claim for travel expenses incurred when undertaking an Approved Duty / Official Business (Defined below).

7. Further information relating to Councillors / Co-opted Members' Salaries, Allowances and Expenses are set out in:

- Published Schedule of Remuneration;
- Constitutional Matters Report;
- IRPW Annual Report.



3 Contribution towards Reimbursement of Costs of Care & Personal Assistance

1 The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) have determined that all Authorities must provide a Contribution towards Costs of Care & Personal Assistance to carry out their duties effectively~~for the reimbursement of necessary costs for the care of dependent children and adults (provided by informal or formal carers) and for personal assistance needs to a set maximum per month.~~

2 Further information ~~relating to the Reimbursement of Costs of Care~~ may be viewed at <https://gov.wales/independent-remuneration-panel-wales> the IRPW Annual Report Publication Page.

3 For Councillor / Co-opted Member reimbursement they must complete the Reimbursement of Contribution towards Costs of Care & Personal Assistance Claim form~~which must be accompanied by a receipt from the carer. These documents are available at [here](#).~~



4 Foregoing of Salary and / or Allowance

- 1 The prescribed salary and expenses must be paid in full to each member unless an individual has independently and voluntarily opted in writing to the Authority's Proper Officer to forego all or any element of the payment. It is fundamental that there is transparency in this process so that any possible suggestion that Members are put under pressure to forego some of the salaries is avoided.



5 Approved Duties / Official Business

- 1 Official Business is defined in Section 142 (10) of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.
- 2 The list of approved duties is laid out in each Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report which may be viewed at <https://gov.wales/independent-remuneration-panel-wales> ~~the~~ [the IRPW Annual Report Publication Page](#).
- 3 **Attendance at Meetings.** Councillors must sign the Attendance Book and should check the published minutes to ensure that their presence was recorded; otherwise, they will be deemed not to have attended the meeting. For ease of reference, Councillors are required to print their name along with their signature.
- 4 **Representation on Outside Bodies.** Councillors may not claim for meetings of 'Outside Bodies' unless they are the named representative or the named substitute. When claiming for attendance at [Outside Bodies](#) the onus is on the Councillor to be able to provide adequate evidence of attendance at the meetings claimed.
- 5 Examples where meetings would **NOT** constitute an approved duty:
 - Political, Political Group, Private Matters / Personal Meetings;
 - Electoral Division Meetings where Officers are not present;
 - An Invitation to a function;
 - School Governors meetings (Unless you are the Local Authority (LA) Representative. You may be able to claim from the school.



6 Travel

- 1 Councillors and Co-opted Members must always be mindful of choosing the most cost effective method of travel. This means that Economy Class Travel will be the norm for Rail, Road, Air or any other method of travel. The Chief Executive in consultation with the Section 151 Officer may allow an alternative class of travel in exceptional circumstances only.
- 2 Should a Councillor or Co-opted Member wish to pay to upgrade to a higher class of travel, they may do so, providing them pay for the total difference from Economy Class.



7 Travel for Rail

- 1 Councillors may not use First Class Rail Travel unless they have outlined a genuine business case in writing (preferably e-mail) to the Head of Democratic Services. The Head of Democratic Services shall review the request in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and decide accordingly.
- 2 Authorisation from the Budget Holder / Head of Service who will be paying for Rail Travel will be required in writing (preferably e-mail) prior to any bookings being made by the relevant Officers.
- 3 The Cabinet Office or Democratic Services Team should make all rail bookings for journeys beyond Cardiff on behalf of Councillors / Co-opted Members. Where possible, costs shall be paid by the use of the Authority's Corporate Purchasing Card. If the purchase card method is not possible, the council standard ordering and payment processes should be applied.
- 4 Should the event which led to the need for Rail Travel be cancelled or the Councillor can no longer attend then the cost incurred by the Authority will still be attributed to that Councillor and reported to Council via the annual "Councillors Allowances and Expenses" report.
- 5 **Rail Cards** may be purchased for Councillors who travel on Council business, if it reduces the cost to the Council. The Councillor must provide all necessary documentation for the railcard to the DS Team / Cabinet Office who will obtain the railcard on the Councillors behalf. Privately purchased rail cards may be reimbursed providing it is deemed to be of benefit to the Authority. Should a Councillor lose their Authority purchased Railcard, the Councillor will have to pay the charge for a replacement.
- ~~6 An Oyster Card has been purchased for Councillors to use for tube travel in London instead of having to purchase daily Travel Cards for this purpose. The Oyster Card can be "topped up" as and when necessary by the DS Team / Cabinet Office. Should a Councillor lose the Authority purchased Oyster Card they will have to pay the remaining balance currently on the card in order for a new card to be purchased.~~
- 76 Should a Councillor wish to repay any monies owed to the Authority in relation to travel, i.e. cancelled tickets, upgrading to first class travel or paying for a lost Railcard or Oyster Card then the payment MUST be by cheque or cash made payable to the City & County of Swansea (Salary deduction is not permitted).



8 Travel by Private Car

- 1 Councillors must consider what is the most cost effective and efficient form of travel prior to using their own car. They should seek the optimum match between

the efficient use of time, a fair reimbursement of costs and the economical use of public resources. Distances will be calculated using the RAC Route Planner website. <http://route.rac.co.uk/>

- 2 Councillors shall personally cover the cost of their travel:
 - For direct journeys between their home and private place of work;
 - When attending any venue in a private capacity;
 - When undertaking their Electoral Ward duties.
- 3 The Authority will hold a list of the distances relating to the most frequent or routine journeys undertaken by each Councillor (usually home to [Civic Centre Guildhall](#) and return). This list will be reviewed and updated at the First Annual Meeting of Council following an election. For all mileage claims checked using the RAC Route Planner, distances will be rounded up or down to the nearest mile.
- 4 **Mileage Claims from a Councillors Private Place of Work (excluding qualifying address)**
- 5 The maximum allowance for journeys from a Councillor's workplace to the location of approved duty will be for the amount the Councillor would have claimed if they were travelling from their home.
- 6 **Site Visits** - Councillors are expected to use the transport provided to attend Site Visits. Where the distance to the Guildhall would be in excess of the mileage to the Site Visit itself a car can be used and mileage claimed for that shorter journey. This must be made clear on the claim form. Councillors should travel together wherever possible. **Note: Mileage cannot be claimed if transport is provided, unless agreed in advance and in writing ([e-mail](#)) by the Head of Democratic Services.**
- 7 Authorised **journeys** are reimbursed at the approved mileage rates as set by the IRPW.
- 8 **For journeys over 150 miles in total** (from a starting point of the Guildhall, Swansea, SA1 4PE) then the Councillor should **consider the most financially viable and economic form of transport available**. If that Councillor chooses to use their own vehicle they would only receive the cost of the most financially viable and economic form of transport for that journey. If travelling outside of the Swansea & Neath Port Talbot areas, please check travelling arrangements with the DS Team / Cabinet Office in advance of the journey as train travel may be cheaper.
- 9 **Incidental costs** (e.g. fuel, tolls, ferries and parking fees) will be reimbursed subject to production of receipts and the completion of Oracle / claim form. Relevant VAT receipts for fuel are required to be kept by Councillors / Co-opted Members for a period of 7 years for all mileage claims for potential inspection by HMRC. Dates on receipts must reflect the period of the claim.
- 10 If using a private vehicle whilst on Council business, Councillors should ensure that they have comprehensive vehicle insurance specifically including business and commuting use. The Authority will be unable to financially support Councillors in the event of an accident without comprehensive cover.



9 Travel by Hired / Pool Car

- 1 Councillors and Officers may hire a B Class vehicle (currently Ford Focus style of car). A larger style car may be booked depending on distance travelled and number of passengers in the car. Authorisation to hire a larger car must be obtained in advance in writing (e-mail) from the Head of Democratic Services. Information regarding Pool Cars is available on StaffNet [here](#).



10 Travel by Taxi

- 1 Travel by Taxi claims for journeys taken **within** the City and County of Swansea shall only be allowed with the production of a relevant receipt and with prior authorisation in writing (e-mail) from the Head of Democratic Services in consultation with the Section 151 Officer.
- 2 Travel by Taxi claims for journeys taken **outside** of the City and County of Swansea shall only be allowed with the production of a relevant receipt and if it is a reasonable journey to have made i.e. from event to Train Station.



11 Travel by Air

- 1 Flights will be arranged via the DS Team / Cabinet Office. Councillors and Officers will travel Standard Class. Permission to fly must be obtained in advance and in writing (e-mail) from the relevant Head of Service. The relevant Service Unit shall fund the Airfare costs. **Note:** Foreign travel must be approved by the Chief Executive in advance and in writing (e-mail).



12 Travel by Bicycle

- 1 A cycling allowance is available as outlined by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.



13 Travel by Bus

- 1 Bus fares will be reimbursed subject to the production of the appropriate tickets.



14 Subsistence

- 1 Councillors are able to claim for subsistence expenses incurred when undertaking an Approved Duty. Subsistence is paid in addition to the Basic, Civic and Senior Salaries **and are subject to the following rules:**
- 2 Subsistence within the Authority's area will not be paid.
- 3 Subsistence for approved duties outside the Authority's area are payable up to a maximum and in line with the IRPW determinations. **Claims without a valid receipt will not be authorised.**
- 4 **Overnight Costs**
- 5 Where an approved duty involves an overnight stay the accommodation should be organised via the Cabinet Office / Democratic Services.
- 6 The Head of Democratic Services has discretion in this area but the decision is mainly based on:
 - Where the round trip is more than 250 miles and the relevant meeting / duty starts before 12.00 noon (for the night before) and / or where the relevant meeting / duty finishes after 4.00 pm (for the night after);
 - Where the round trip is more than 500 miles and the relevant meeting / duty starts before 1.00pm and / or finishes after 3.00pm.
- 7 Councillors should obtain prior written authorisation (e-mail) from the relevant Head of Service in relation to overnight expenditure.
- 8 **Accommodation**
- 9 Accommodation should be booked in advance by the Cabinet Office / Democratic Services Team.



15 Overseas (Foreign) Travel, Foreign Currency and Council Related Business Communication

- 1 Councillors **MUST** gain written (e-mail) authority from the Chief Executive prior to travelling abroad. A detailed itinerary of the trip giving the names of all people travelling, modes of transport between venues and specifying items of expenditure which have been paid in advance by the Authority or likely to be paid by the Authority or provided by an outside body must also be provided to the Chief Executive. In any cases of urgency, approval must be obtained under the Chief Executive's delegated powers, exercised after consultation with the Leader of the Council.
- 2 **Foreign Currency.** To obtain foreign currency a Councillor can obtain a cash

advance from Cashiers and arrange to have the money converted into the appropriate currency themselves. The expenditure receipt(s) should be retained for submission with the Oracle expense claim. Any surplus money left over from an overseas visit need not be returned to the Authority as the cash advance amount has already been deducted from the Councillors salary and reimbursed to Cashiers.

- 3 **Council related business communication.** The Head of Democratic Services will consider all reasonable requests for other valid business costs relating to the trip providing relevant receipts are attached.



16 Claiming

- 1 Councillor Expenses claims must be made via the Authority's Oracle system. Co-opted Members should submit their claims in writing via Democratic Services.
www.swansea.gov.uk/staffnet/mileageandexpenses
- 2 The responsibility lies with the Councillor / Co-opted Member for the accuracy of the claim. Councillors need to keep an accurate record of expenses claimed to avoid duplication of claims. They should ensure that they actually attended the events that they are claiming for otherwise it could be deemed as a fraudulent claim.
- 3 When attending more than one meeting a day and claiming more than one journey, the times and place of 'commencement' and 'completion' of duties must be inserted for every journey.
- 4 If the period between meetings spent is less than 1 hour then Councillors will only be entitled to claim one return journey.
- 5 Councillors must therefore judge whether it would be constructive whenever possible to remain within the area if meetings are within a reasonable period of one another. This also applies to rota visits. Councillors are requested where possible to visit establishments in the same vicinity at the same time.
- 6 No payment shall be made without a valid receipt.
- 7 Co-opted Member claims should be submitted no later than **5th of the month for payment on the 25th of the month** (or the previous working day if falling on a Saturday, Sunday or Bank Holiday). Councillor claims should be made via Oracle.
- 8 Claims must be submitted within 3 months of the meeting claimed for. Ideally Councillors should submit their claim forms on a monthly basis.
- 9 If a Councillor attempts to claim more mileage than set by Council, the mileage will be amended to the maximum level approved by Council.
- 10 **Checking of Travelling and Subsistence Allowances**
- 11 The Cabinet Office / Democratic Services Team will carry out a random 10% audit

check of submitted claims. They will check:

- Attendance Records at Outside Bodies and Officer meetings;
- Checks on other unclear entries.

12. Cash Advances

13. Cash advances of Travelling and Subsistence Allowances can only be obtained if the amount is £56 or over and must be authorised by the Section 151 Officer. The cash advance can then be made via the Cashiers Office.
14. Any unused monies from a cash advance must **not** be returned to the Authority (Cashiers) but kept by the Councillor as the original advance amount has already been deducted from their salary and reimbursed to Cashiers.



17 Car Parking Permits

- 1 ~~As a result of a scheme introduced by Cabinet in January 2011,~~ Councillors will have to apply for a permit to enable them to park in Council car parks, whilst on Council duties.
- 2 Councillors are entitled to reclaim the cost incurred for their car parking permit by using the [reclaim form](#). If Councillors re-claim this charge it will be included on the Councillors Annual Allowances & Expenses spreadsheet which is presented to Council and published on the City & County of Swansea website. All applications for car parking permits and any amendments or cancellations should be made via [the self-service option in Oracle](#).
- 3 There is a charge to be paid by Councillors to replace a lost car parking permit.



18 Interests, Gifts and Hospitality of Councillors

- 1 Information on Interests, Gifts and Hospitality of Councillors is laid out within the Council Constitution under Council Procedure Rules and within the [Councillors Code of Conduct](#).



19 Income Tax

- 1 Basic Salaries, Civic Salaries, Senior Salaries, Broadband and Telephone Allowance, Mobile Phone Allowance, ICT Allowance and the Reimbursement of Costs of Care are all taxable. Councillors will be automatically taxed under the normal Pay as you Earn (PAYE) system. The tax code applied will depend on the statement ticked on the Councillor Personal Information Sheet at the time of starting. Any changes to the initial code operated would be on instruction from

HMRC.

- 2 Additionally, Councillors should contact the Payroll section of the Service Centre if they are aware they should be taxed at a rate higher than the basic rate.
- 3 Currently there is no “profit” element on Mileage due to the fact that the Council pays the rate determined by the IRPW. As it is deemed there is no profit, no end of year report (P11D) is submitted.



20 National Insurance Contributions

- 1 Since the current levels of Councillors Allowances exceeds the current lower earnings limit for all Councillors under 65 years of age (Sliding scale from Age 60 for women depending on Date of Birth), there is a liability for Class 1 National Insurance contributions at the standard rate. Any Councillor over 65 years of age (Sliding scale from Age 60 for women depending on Date of Birth) will need to provide a copy of their passport or birth certificate for exemption from National Insurance.
- 2 Married women and certain widows who have exercised their right not to pay the full rate will need to produce their reduced liability certificate.
- 3 Each employment is considered separately for contribution purposes and no account is taken of the fact that a Councillor may have another job or be self-employed.
- 4 However, there is an annual maximum for contribution liability and in certain instances a Councillor may be entitled to a refund. Information regarding this can be obtained from the DWP.



21 Social Security Benefits

- 1 Social Security benefits is an area of growing complexity and detailed specialist advice must be obtained from the local office of the relevant Benefits Agency.
- 2 Councillors must notify the Department of Social Security Office from which they receive the benefits that they are an elected Councillor.
- 3 If a Councillor is minded to renounce his / her Basic Salary, Civic Salary or Senior Salary, because of the potential impact on benefit entitlement, s/he should consult the Benefits Agency before doing so. In most cases it is the amount to which a Councillor is entitled, not the amount actually claimed, which will be taken into account in calculating benefit.
- 4 The treatment of Councillor’s Allowances varies from benefit to benefit. For some benefits, the very fact that they are undertaking Council duties (whether or not they get paid for them) can affect their rights to claim. In other cases, it is the

level of income from the Allowance that affects entitlement.



22 Insurance

- 1 Brief details of the 'Personal Accident & Travel Policy' are as follows:

Under the Personal Accident section, this insurance provides cover to the Insured for accidental bodily injury to an insured person, which results in death, a permanent disability or temporary disability within 24 months of an accident. Under the Travel section, this insurance provides cover to the Insured for medical and emergency travel expenses, medical repatriation, political and natural disaster evacuation expenses, personal liability, loss of or damage to personal property, business equipment or money, cancellation, curtailment, alteration expenses and hijack, kidnap and ransom costs for an insured person. There are also sections providing cover for legal expenses, crisis containment expenses and vehicle rental expenses.

- 2 For full details of the policy and a copy of the Lifeline Plus Travel Pack to use on business trips away from the office and abroad contact:

Principal Insurance Officer

Insurance Team, Financial Services & The Service Centre, Civic Centre,
Swansea, SA1 3SN



Councillor Handbook, Section B - Support Services

Contents

- 1 [Cabinet Office and Democratic Services](#)
- 2 [Correspondence](#)
- 3 [Council Bodies Diary](#)
- 4 [Political Group Rooms](#)
- 5 [Identity \(ID\) Card](#)
- 6 [Receipt of Mail / Agendas etc.](#)
- 7 [e-mailing and Postage](#)
- 8 ~~[Councillors Microsite \(SharePoint\)](#)~~
- 9 [Administrative Support](#)
- 10 ~~[Photocopying, Fax Photocopying and Scanning Services](#)~~
- 11 [ICT Support](#)
- 12 [Training](#)
- 13 [Electoral Ward Surgery Support](#)
- 14 [Web Pages](#)
- 15 [Councillor Meeting Room](#)
- 16 [Further Information Contact List](#)

1 Cabinet Office and Democratic Services

The Cabinet Office provides a Personal Assistant role to the Cabinet (Executive) Members.

The Democratic Services (DS) Team provides general administrative support to all non-executive Councillors.



2 Correspondence

~~1 As part of the Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future programme, Councillors and Co-opted Members have become more self-sufficient. The self-serve agenda has seen Councillors embracing IT, associated software and the Oracle payments system.~~

1 Councillors are expected to manage their own e-mails, diary and correspondence. Should they require any support then training can be provided in certain areas by the Training Team.

~~2 The Cabinet Office / DS Team can assist with proof reading of documents on request.~~

~~32~~ The Cabinet Office / DS Team can send out general non-political mailings for Councillors Electoral Ward work. However, Councillors are expected to type their own letters although the Teams can assist with formatting. The Cabinet Office / DS Team will arrange for the letters to be printed via DesignPrint but any folding or postage costs will be taken from the individual's Councillors Community Budget.

43 The Cabinet Office / DS Team can't deal with correspondence that is political, contains information which could be deemed to be libellous or is of a personal nature.



3 Council Bodies Diary

- 1 The Council Bodies Diary may be viewed online at <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/councildiary>.
- 2 The Cabinet Office will assist with the management of diaries for Cabinet Members. All other Councillors and Co-opted Members are expected to manage their own diaries.



4 Political Group Rooms

- 1 Depending on the size of a Political Group, it is likely to have a room allocated to it. Rooms will be provided with the following items:
 - Pigeonhole for your ~~agendas~~, mail etc. to be left for your collection;
 - PC(s);
 - Telephone(s);
 - Storage facilities (~~currently 2 filing cabinet drawers per Councillor~~);
 - Office furniture.



5 Identity (ID) Card

- 1 All Councillors are required to wear their ID Card at all times. The Card allows access within the Civic Centre and Guildhall.
- 2 If your ID Card won't allow you access, visit <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/staffnet/replacementflexicard>.
- 3 If you lose or misplace your ID Card please inform the Cabinet Office / DS Team immediately. HR will "block" the card to ensure it is not misused by anyone else. A replacement can be ordered at a personal charge to the Councillor (~~currently £5~~).
- 4 Temporary passes can be obtained from ~~Security~~ ~~the DS Team~~ and must be returned prior to exiting the building on the same day.



6 Receipt of Mail / Agendas etc.

- 1 Incoming mail ~~including agendas for Council meetings will be normally be scanned and e-mailed; however, some will be distributed daily and left in pigeonholes provided for each Councillor.~~
- 2 ~~The Authority currently provides a mail delivery service for all Councillors on a Friday evening; however Councillors are asked to make every effort to collect any agendas / mail directly from their pigeonholes in order to reduce costs.~~
- 32 ~~A number of Councillors have opted out of the mail delivery service~~Councillors are encouraged to use the e. They have chosen to collect agenda(s) themselves and ~~utilise the Modern.gov app to download electronic versions of the agenda.~~ Agendas are also emailed out ~~directly~~ to all Councillors. The Councillors, Democracy and Elections web pages may be viewed at <https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/>.
- 4 ~~If you wish to Opt Out of the Mail Delivery Service, please inform the Cabinet Office / DS Team.~~

53



7 e-mailing and Postage

- 1 Councillors are advised to use electronic correspondence wherever possible. The Authority can send mail on behalf of a Councillors; however for bulk mail the cost will be deducted from their Councillors Community Budget.
- 2 The Cabinet Office / DS Team will not print out all e-mails for a Councillor. However training can be arranged so that the Councillor is taught how to do so.



8 Councillors Microsite (SharePoint)

Bookmark 8

~~A dedicated Councillors “micro-site” online tool is available to display useful information for Councillors.~~



9 Administrative Support

- 1 Both Teams will answer general telephone queries from members of the public, and signpost where necessary to the relevant Councillor or, provide Assembly Member / Member of Parliament etc. contact details.
- 2 Both teams will act as a central contact point for Councillors for their general enquiries for Departments and provide information regarding Officer contacts within Service Departments.



10 Photocopying, ~~Fax~~ and Scanning Services

- 1 Multi-Functional Devices (MFD's) are available in key locations throughout the Authority. All Councillors will be provided with a printer account which may be accessed via a Councillor ID card. Please note that personal printing is not permitted.
- 2 The MFD's also include a scanning facility which allows documents to be scanned and sent via e-mail.



11 ICT Support

1 Councillors can log calls / changes 24/7 on the service desk portal using the link <https://servicesdesk.swansea.gov.uk>

~~1 There are two ways to contact the ICT Service Desk~~

01792 63 6900

~~or ict.servicedesk@swansea.gov.uk -~~

ICT Service Desk Icon on your desktop



12 Training

- 1 The Authority will arrange or inform Councillors of training opportunities which will include Courses, Seminars, Conferences, Induction Training for all Councillors and Other training subject to resources / budgetary availability.



13 Electoral Ward Surgery Support

- 1 The Authority will pay a reasonable charge for surgery hire, following prior agreement from the Head of Democratic Services.
- 2 Invoices for surgeries should then be forwarded to the DS Team on a monthly or quarterly basis and by the end of March of the relevant financial year for processing.
- 3 Surgery Posters can be printed indicating surgery details for distribution within the electoral ward and displayed online.



14 Web Pages

- 1 Councillors are advised to take advantage of the “About You” section on the Council’s website as it allows an opportunity for you to highlight your interests etc. Information may be found at www.swansea.gov.uk/councillors.



15 Councillor Meeting Room

- 1 A Councillor Meeting Room is located in Room 235, Guildhall. The room will accommodate 12-14 people around a table.
- 2 Bookings will be allocated on a “first come first served” basis and meeting slots shall be restricted to 2 hours. Block bookings shall not be permitted unless it is for a purpose such as a regular Political Group Meeting. The Head of Democratic Services shall operate a reasonable use protocol for the room.
- 3 Bookings are to be made by contacting the Democratic Services (DS) Team on 01792 63 6923 or e-mail democracy@swansea.gov.uk.



16 Further Information Contact List

Title	Tel:
Cabinet Office	01792 63 6141
Democratic Services (DS) Team	01792 63 6923
Head of Democratic Services	01792 63 5757
Chief Executive	01792 63 7501
Section 151 Officer	01792 63 6423
Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal, Democratic Services and Business Intelligence	01792 63 6699
IT Service Desk	01792 63 6900



Agenda Item 6



Report of the Chair

Democratic Services Committee – 10 January 2022

Work Plan 2021-2022

Date	Item
27 September 2021 (Special)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillor Induction & Training Programme 2022• Results of the Questionnaire on Remote Meetings• Hybrid / Multi-Location Meeting Policy• Democratic Services Committee Annual Reports 2019-2020 & 2020-2021
8 November 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillors' ICT Allowances Policy• Councillor Expenses / Costs of Care• Hybrid / Multi-Location Meeting Policy• Diversity in Democracy Action Plan• Feedback from Councillor Champion• IRPW Draft Annual Report 2022-2023 - Consultation
10 (was 31) January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillors ICT Allowances Policy - May 2022 & Beyond• Review of Councillors Handbook
21 March 2022	