



## City and County of Swansea

### Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

## Democratic Services Committee

**At:** Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS Teams

**On:** Monday, 13 November 2023

**Time:** 4.00 pm

**Chair:** Councillor Lynda James

**Membership:**

Councillors: M Baker, P N Bentu, A Davis, K M Griffiths, J A Hale, M Jones, W G Lewis, P N May and B J Rowlands

**Watch Online:** <http://tiny.cc/DS1311>

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### Agenda

	Page No.
<b>1 Apologies for Absence.</b>	
<b>2 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.</b> <a href="http://www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests">www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests</a>	
<b>3 Minutes.</b> To approve & sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.	1 - 3
<b>4 Review of Councillors Handbook.</b>	4 - 23
<b>5 Workplan 2023-2024. (Verbal)</b>	

**Next Meeting:** Monday, 18 March 2024 at 4.00 pm

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

**Huw Evans**  
Head of Democratic Services  
Tuesday, 7 November 2023

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**Contact: Democratic Services - (01792) 636923**

# Agenda Item 3



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Democratic Services Committee**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Monday, 31 July 2023 at 4.00 pm

### Present:

#### Councillor(s)

M Baker  
K M Griffiths

#### Councillor(s)

P N Bentu  
W G Lewis

#### Councillor(s)

A Davis  
B J Rowlands

#### Officer(s)

Allison Lowe  
Huw Evans  
Debbie Smith

Democratic Services Officer  
Head of Democratic Services  
Deputy Chief Legal Officer

### Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): L James and M Jones

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## 1 Election of Vice Chair for the Municipal Year 2023-2024.

**Resolved** that Councillor W G Lewis be elected Vice Chair for the Municipal Year 2023-2024.

**Councillor W G Lewis (Vice Chair) Presided**

## 2 Condolences.

On behalf of the Committee, Councillor W G Lewis expressed her condolences on the recent passing of Helen, daughter of Councillor Lynda James. The Committee stood as a mark of sympathy and respect.

## 3 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

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

## 4 Minutes.

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Democratic Services Committee held on 7 November 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**5 What is the Democratic Services Function? (For Information)**

The Head of Democratic Services provided a "For information" report to provide context to the Democratic Services Function, the Head of Democratic Services and the Democratic Services Committee.

**6 Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2022-2023.**

The Head of Democratic Services provided the Democratic Services Committee with the Annual Report for the Municipal Year 2022-2023. The report outlined the work of the Committee during that period.

**Resolved** that the Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2022-2023 be forwarded to Council for information.

**7 Review of Guidance for Attending Remote Meetings.**

The Head of Democratic Services provided a report to review the Guidance for Multi-Location Meetings (MLM).

**Resolved** that:

- 1) The guidance be noted;
- 2) Any suggestions for improvement be forwarded to the Head of Democratic Services;
- 3) The Guidance be shared with all Councillors and Statutory Co-opted Members.

**8 Councillors Annual Report.**

The Head of Democratic Services provided a report reminding Councillors of their right to produce a Councillors Annual Report.

**Resolved** that:

- 1) The report be noted;
- 2) The template forms be re-circulated to all Councillors.

**9 Workplan 2023-2024. (Verbal)**

The Head of Democratic Services sought topics for future meetings.

**Resolved** that:

- 1) A demonstration on the Modern.gov app be provided at the next meeting;
- 2) The Head of Democratic Services investigate the possibility of running a Service Area / Departmental marketplace type event occasionally throughout the year. The event could be held in the foyer area outside the Council Chamber, Guildhall prior to Council meetings;
- 3) Any other topics be emailed to the Head of Democratic Services.

The meeting ended at 4.27 pm

**Chair**

# Agenda Item 4



## Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Democratic Services Committee - 13 November 2023

### Review of Councillors Handbook

<b>Purpose:</b>	To review the Councillors Handbook and to consider including guidance on the Use of the Council Logo in Section C “Protocols”.  To recommend the revised Councillors Handbook to Council for adoption.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	None.
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that:  1) The revised Councillors Handbook together with the additional section on guidance in respect of the Use of the Councillors Logo by Councillors be recommended to Council for adoption.
<b>Report Author:</b>	Huw Evans
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Ben Smith
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	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 January 2022. Council adopted the reviewed changes at its meetings on 27 January 2022.
- 1.2 The Councillors Handbook is split into 4 Sections:
- Financial Information.
  - Support Services.
  - Protocols.
  - Role Descriptions & Person Specifications.

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

1.4 The entire Councillors Handbook may be viewed at [www.swansea.gov.uk/cllrshandbook](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/cllrshandbook)

## **2. Section A - Financial Information**

2.1 Section A - Financial Information is set out in **Appendix A** of the report. The Head of Democratic Services has reviewed the section and suggests that no amendments are required.

## **3. Section B - Support Services**

3.1 Section B - Support Services is set out in **Appendix B** of the report. The Head of Democratic Services has reviewed the section and suggests that no amendments are required.

## **4. Section C - Protocols**

4.1 Section C - Protocols is available at [www.swansea.gov.uk/cllrshandbook](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/cllrshandbook) The Head of Democratic Services has reviewed the section and suggests that no amendments are required. However, he does recommend that a Protocol on the Use of the Council Logo by Councillors be added.

## **5. Section D - Role Descriptions & Person Specifications**

5.1 Section D - Role Descriptions & Person Specifications is available at [www.swansea.gov.uk/cllrshandbook](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/cllrshandbook) The Head of Democratic Services has reviewed the section and suggests that no amendments are required.

## **6. Use of the Council Logo by Councillors**

6.1 To ensure that the Council Logo is used appropriately, it is proposed that the Councillors Handbook contain a protocol / guidance on its use. The guidance / protocol being:

- “1. The Council logo is a symbol representing the services it provides and functions it offers and should only be used for this purpose.*
- 2. The use of the Council logo by Councillors for political or personal purposes shall not be allowed.*
- 3. Unauthorised use of the Council logo is deemed a breach of the Members Code of Conduct and may be reported to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.”*

## **7. Financial Implications**

7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **8. Legal Implications**

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

## **9. Integrated Assessment Implications**

9.1 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.

9.2 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'.

9.3 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.

9.4 An IIA screening has been undertaken and no adverse implications have been noted.

9.5 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      Financial Information.  
Appendix B      Support Services.



## Councillor Handbook, Section A - Financial Information

### Content

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4	<a href="#">Foregoing of Salary and / or Allowance</a>
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21	<a href="#">Social Security Benefits</a>
22	<a href="#">Insurance</a>

## 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;
  - 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:
- Data Allowance.
  - Telephone Allowance.
  - Mobile Phone Allowance.
5. Councillor Expenses claims must be made via the Authority's Oracle system. 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 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.
- 2 Further information may be viewed at <https://gov.wales/independent-remuneration-panel-wales>
- 3 For Councillor / Co-opted Member reimbursement they must complete the Contribution towards Costs of Care & Personal Assistance Claim form.



### **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>
- 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 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 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.

- 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 **5<sup>th</sup> of the month for payment on the 25<sup>th</sup> 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 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

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7	<a href="#">e-mailing and Postage</a>
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## 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 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 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.
- 3 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 mail etc. to be left for your collection;
  - PC(s);
  - Telephone(s);
  - Storage facilities);
  - 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).
- 4 Temporary passes can be obtained from Security and must be returned prior to exiting the building on the same day.



### **6 Receipt of Mail / Agendas etc.**

- 1 Incoming mail will normally be scanned and e-mailed; however, some will be left in pigeonholes provided for each Councillor.
- 2 Councillors are encouraged to use the Modern.gov app to download electronic versions of the agenda. Agendas are also emailed out to all Councillors. The

Councillors, Democracy and Elections web pages may be viewed at <https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/>.



## **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**

## **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 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>

01792 63 6900

[ict.servicedesk@swansea.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:democracy@swansea.gov.uk).



## 16 Further Information Contact List

<b>Title</b>	<b>Tel:</b>
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

