

Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Council – 24 August 2017

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 19 MAY 2016 – 24 MAY 2017

Purpose:	To provide the Democratic Services Annual Report for the period 19 May 2016 to 24 May 2017. The report outlines the work of the Committee during that period.
Policy Framework:	None.
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
FOR INFORMATION ONLY	
Report Author:	Huw Evans - Head of Democratic Services
Finance Officer:	Carl Billingsley
Legal Officer:	Tracey Meredith
Access to Services Officer:	Phil Couch

1. Introduction

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

2. Format of Annual Report

- 2.1 Councillors are asked to comment on the style and format of the Annual Report informally to the Head of Democratic Services as he is keen to ensure that it becomes an informative, easy to read report.

3. Equality and Engagement Implications

- 3.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening process took place prior to the consultation period. The outcome indicated that it was low priority and a full report was not required.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

5. Legal Implications

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

Background Papers: None.

Appendices:

Appendix A	Democratic Services Annual Report 19 May 2016 – 24 May 2017
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**Democratic Services Annual Report
19 May 2016 – 24 May 2017**

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1. Foreword by the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee

- 1.1 During 2016-2017, the Democratic Services Committee focussed its work on technology and its potential to assist Councillors. It also reviewed the allowances in order to assist Councillors in carrying out their duties.
- 1.2 The “Councillor ICT - May 2017 and Beyond” report led to a wider discussion at Council prior to it being adopted by Cabinet. This report set out the allowances for Councillors in relation to ICT together with the other allowances available to Councillors.
- 1.3 The big innovative lead from the Democratic Services Committee during the period was the drive for Councillors to take up the mantle of the Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future programme for Councillors to embrace the Self Service model. Following a recommendation from the Committee, Council adopted this policy meaning that Councillors now submit their allowance and expenses claims via the Oracle system.
- 1.4 Councillor Annual Reports are another area on which the Committee has focussed its attention. It is pleasing to note the steady progress in the number of Councillors making use of the facility.
- 1.5 During the year, we examined how to make greater use of digital technology with an aim to assisting Councillors in their roles. This meant the standardisation of the use of Modern.gov software for all agendas and minutes including those of scrutiny.
- 1.6 This has been a busy period for the Democratic Services Committee. I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to the Committee for their time, dedication and support.
- 1.7 A number of officers have helped considerably with the work of the Committee. In particular, I would mention Huw Evans, Head of Democratic Services, Allison Lowe, Democratic Services Officer and the Democratic Services Team.

Councillor P Black
Chair of Democratic Services Committee

2. Membership of the Democratic Services Committee

- 2.1 The membership of the Democratic Services Committee for the period 19 May 2016 – 24 May 2017:

Councillor	Councillor
Peter Black (Chair)	Jeff W Jones
Bob Clay	Erika T Kirchner
Anthony C S Colburn	David J Lewis
Jan Curtice	Keith E Marsh
Nick J Davies (Vice Chair)	Geraint Owens
Joe Hale	Lesley V Walton

3. Dates of the Democratic Services Committee Meetings

- 3.1 The Democratic Services Committee met 3 times during this period.

28 June 2016	20 December 2016
18 October 2016	

4. Attendance Figures by the Members of the Democratic Services Committee

- 4.1 The attendance figures for each member of the Democratic Services Committee are set out below.

Councillor	Possible	Actual	Attendance by Percentage
P Black	3	3	100%
B Clay	3	0	0%
A C S Colburn	3	3	100%
J P Curtice	3	0	0%
N J Davies	3	3	100%
J Hale	3	2	66%
J W Jones	3	2	66%
E T Kirchner	3	2	66%
D J Lewis	3	1	33%
K E Marsh	3	3	100%
G Owens	3	1	33%
L V Walton	3	3	100%

5. Democratic Services Committee - Terms of Reference

The remit of the Democratic Services Committee is set out in **Section 11 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011** and is to:

- 5.1 Exercise the function of the local authority under section 8(1)(a) Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (designation of Head of Democratic Services).
- 5.2 Review the adequacy of provision by the authority of staff, accommodation and other resources to discharge Democratic Services functions, including:
 - a) Achievement of the Welsh Local Government Association's (WLGA) Member Support and Development Charter;
 - b) Councillor Training;
 - c) Improvements and innovations such as electronic voting, web casting etc.
- 5.3 Make reports and recommendations to the authority in relation to such provision.
- 5.4 It is for a Democratic Services Committee to determine how to exercise those functions.
- 5.5 To determine whether or not the Councillors period of family absence should be cancelled in accordance with Regulation 34 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.
- 5.6 To determine whether or not to withhold a Councillor's Remuneration should they fail to return following a period of family absence on the date specified in the notice provided.

6. Activities of the Democratic Services Committee

- 6.1 During the municipal year 2016-2017 the Democratic Services Committee has undertaken a range of activities. The activities are listed below together with a brief synopsis of the work.

6.2 Councillor ICT – May 2017 & Beyond

The Committee received a presentation from the Interim Chief Transformation Officer and ICT Strategic Performance Manager outlining the Future provision of ICT for Councillors from May 2017 onwards.

They outlined the current arrangements, the Digital Strategy for Councillors, what currently works well, together with the known issues that had been identified.

Meetings with the Political Groups were arranged and further updates provided.

6.3 Councillors – Self Service

The Head of Democratic Services reported on the Authority's intention to move Councillors to the ISIS (now Oracle) Self Service package, which would include:

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

6.4 Modern.gov

The Committee received information in relation to the Modern.gov app that was available in order to view agenda packs electronically. This was deemed excellent progress in assisting the modern Councillor to carry out their duties.

6.5 Councillors Broadband and Telephone, ICT and Mobile Phone Allowances – May 2017 & Beyond

(Further to 6.2 above) The Head of Democratic Services, Chief Transformation Officer and ICT Strategic Performance Manager presented a report which sought to review the "Councillors ICT May 2012 and Beyond" policy thereby ensuring that Councillors are provided with an ICT provision suited to their needs and is compliant with the determination of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW).

The recommendations were then forwarded to both Council prior to Cabinet in order to obtain additional comments from other Councillors.

6.6 Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales – Draft Annual Report 2017-2018 - Consultation

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

6.7 Use of Modern.gov Software by Scrutiny Team.

The Head of Democratic Services provided a report outlining when the Scrutiny Team would commence using the Modern.gov software.

Training was provided to the Scrutiny Team in the New Year to ensure they were proficient in use of the Modern.gov software system prior to May 2017.

6.8 Democratic Services Annual Report 2015-2016.

The Head of Democratic Services presented the Democratic Services Annual Report 2015-2016 which outlined the work of the Committee during the period 19 May 2015 – 18 May 2016.

7. Work Programme 2017-2018

7.1 The Committee will consider its work programme at its first meeting.

8. Democratic Services Team 19 May 2016-24 May 2017

8.1 The Team Structure for Democratic Services and Scrutiny for the period 2016-2017 are set out below. The Posts are all 1 Full Time Equivalent (fte) unless otherwise stated.

8.2 Democratic Services Team

Job Title	Officer Name	Notes
Head of Democratic Services	Huw Evans	-
Democratic Services Officer (0.5 fte)	Samantha Woon	Part time from 21.11.2016
Democratic Services Officer (0.5 fte)	Kate Jones	Part time from 21.11.2016
Democratic Services Officer	Gareth Borsden	-
Democratic Services Officer	Jeremy Parkhouse	-
Democratic Services Officer	Allison Lowe	-
Democratic Services Support Officer	Caroline Davies	-
Democratic Services Administrative Assistant	Karen Thomas	-
Democratic Services Support Assistant	Diane Clatworthy	-
Democratic Services CCMS Support Assistant	Suzanne Mort	From 24.03.2016 Up to 24.05.2017

8.3 Scrutiny Team

Job Title	Officer Name	Notes
Scrutiny Manager	Dave Mckenna	-
Scrutiny Coordinator	Brij Madahar	Post changed to Scrutiny Team Leader (effective 1 May 2017) due to Scrutiny Manager's planned departure (30 June 2017) and deletion of post.
Scrutiny Officer	Delyth Davies	Up to 13.01.2017
Scrutiny Officer (0.8 fte)	Rosie Jackson	Up to 10.02.2017

Scrutiny Officer	Michelle Roberts	-
Scrutiny Research Officer (0.6 fte)	Jenna Tucker	-
Scrutiny Officer	Liz Jordan	From 01.05.2017
Scrutiny Officer	Bethan Hopkins	From 18.04.2017 (12 months temporary)

9. General Information

- 9.1 The Democratic Services Committee is keen to see members of the public attending its Meetings. With the exception of confidential items, all business is held in public. All of the public papers are published online www.swansea.gov.uk

Further information can be provided by Democratic Services:
Democratic.Services@swansea.gov.uk or on 01792 63 6923