



City and County of Swansea

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

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Monday, 11 July 2022 at 4.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor L James (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

P N Bentu  
M Jones  
J D McGettrick

**Councillor(s)**

A Davis  
W G Lewis  
B J Rowlands

**Councillor(s)**

J A Hale  
P N May  
L V Walton

**Officer(s)**

Allison Lowe  
Huw Evans  
Debbie Smith

Democratic Services Officer  
Head of Democratic Services  
Deputy Chief Legal Officer

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): Nil

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**1 Election of Vice Chair for the Municipal Year 2022-2023.**

Resolved that Councillor Wendy Lewis be elected Vice Chair for the Municipal Year 2022-2023.

**2 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.**

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

**3 Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Democratic Services Committee held on 14 February 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.

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

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

**5 Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2021-2022.**

The Head of Democratic Services provided the Democratic Services Committee with the Annual Report 2021-2022 for the period 20 May 2021 to 23 May 2022. The report outlined the work of the Democratic Services Committee during that period.

**Resolved** that the report be forwarded to Council for information.

**6 Review of Councillors Induction & Training Programme 2022.**

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report in order to review the Councillors Induction & Training Programme 2022.

He outlined the Councillors Induction & Training Programme 2022 which was outlined at Appendix A, together with details of the Market Place Event, outlined at Appendix B.

Comments from the Committee were mainly supportive, and whilst it was a very busy programme, it was acknowledged training had to be delivered as soon as Councillors were elected.

Positives comments mainly focussed on the Market Place Event, which was deemed a resounding success, with many suggesting the time of this event could have been extended or another session scheduled. In relation to the training programme it was pleasing that presentations had been circulated following the sessions for Councillors to refer back to and that at least 2 sessions on different days / times had been provided.

Negatives comments included the fact that some of the sessions were too long, 60-90 minutes should be the maximum. Most sessions were delivered by powerpoint, without many other options. More interactive sessions would have been more engaging. Some of the sessions were too complex, with not enough of the basics being delivered. Often slides were read out by officers as if they were imparting knowledge rather than training.

Other comments included a request for Emergency planning protocol refresher training in respect of Councillors role in an emergency. Practical information for new members would have been useful eg attending meetings for the first time, the process of going through an agenda, how to vote, the cabinet system, how to manage casework. It was acknowledged however, that subject matter experts were not trainers.

The Committee were disappointed that not all Councillors had attended the training provided, including mandatory training. The Head of Democratic Services explained that the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 now placed a duty on Group Leaders to ensure they monitored Councillor training attendance. A further report providing more detail would be provided to the next Democratic Services Committee.

The Head of Democratic Services would contact Councillors to establish whether they would be interested in attending basic Committee training which could be delivered on a group or 1-2-1 session basis. Alternative Market Place events would also be considered, such as Departmental or Team sessions.

**Resolved** that the above comments be utilised in order to form the next Induction Programme for 2027.

## **7 Workplan 2022-2023. (Verbal)**

The Head of Democratic Services sought items for the Committee to consider during the 2022-2023 Municipal Year:

The following items were suggested:

- Councillor Training (beyond Induction);
- Revisit the Induction Programme – attendance / lessons learnt;
- Multi-location Meetings;
- Timings of Meetings survey - this would be circulated to all Councillors in January 2023;

**Resolved** that the following items be included in the Work Plan for 2022-2023:

- Councillor Training (beyond Induction);
- Revisit the Induction Programme – attendance / lessons learnt;
- Multi-location Meetings;
- Timings of Meetings Survey.

The meeting ended at 4.49 pm

**Chair**