

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>Standards Committee</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>13 April 2011</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Observations on Full Council Meeting</b>
<b>AUTHOR:</b>	<b>Monitoring Officer</b>
<b>ACTION:</b>	<b>For Information</b>

## **Background**

1. Three members of the Standards Committee attended a meeting of the full Council held on 1 March 2011 in order to get a better understanding of how the authority's meetings are conducted.

2. Below is a short report they have prepared for the Committee:

### **Observations on full Council meeting 1/3/11 David Clay, Gwilym Evans a Gwyn Williams**

We were pleasantly surprised with the conduct and courtesy of the Councillors and the standard of debate throughout the meeting. This was especially so considering there were two contentious issues on the agenda (Setting the Council budget and deciding on a location for the Bro Dysynni area school).

The three of us considered that every speaker was given a fair hearing and were shown respect by their co-Councillors and the Chairman didn't have to call the meeting to order more than once throughout the whole afternoon.

The fact that some members were seen to both speak, and vote, against their party lines was heartening. We felt that this was both good for democracy and further it showed that there was a healthy atmosphere, which allowed the freedom of opinion and expression within the parties.

We praise the self discipline of the members, as the Chairman didn't have to ask members to bring their comments to a close, the members themselves kept their speeches to a reasonable length.

The comments that we make below refer to the organisational side of the meeting from the perspective of a member of the public/visitor.

1. It would be good if there was a simple "Advice to members of the public" leaflet available, which would give directions as to where an agenda and meeting papers could be obtained and/or log-in details so that papers could be accessed from the web. It could also included other "housekeeping" items such as fire exits, toilets, use of mobile phones etc.

Copies of the leaflets with Councillors pictures and details should also be available to the public.

2. It was certainly not easy to hear every Councillor. There is no speaker in the public gallery, and if a Councillor speaks quietly, or if the microphone was not correctly positioned, it can be difficult to hear. It would seem that the translators have difficulty in hearing everything that is said as there were occasional gaps in translation, possibly where the translator could not hear.

We would like to congratulate all the councillors, and feel that if all Gwynedd Council and Committee meetings are held in such a positive atmosphere then the people of Gwynedd can be justifiably proud of their civic leaders.

### **Recommendation**

3. The Committee is asked to note this report for information.