



# Complete Agenda

**Democratic Service**  
Swyddfa'r Cyngor  
CAERNARFON  
Gwynedd  
LL55 1SH

Meeting

**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Date and Time

**2.00 pm, TUESDAY, 22ND MARCH, 2016**

Location

**Siambr Hywel Dda, Council Offices, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 1SH**

Contact Point

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(DISTRIBUTED 15/03/16)

# **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

## **MEMBERSHIP (15)**

### **Plaid Cymru (8)**

Councillors

Annwen Daniels  
E. Selwyn Griffiths  
Annwen Hughes  
Dilwyn Morgan

Gweno Glyn  
Sian Gwenllian  
Charles Wyn Jones  
Michael Sol Owen

### **Independent (4)**

Councillors

Lesley Day  
Jean Forsyth

Thomas G. Ellis  
Anne Lloyd Jones

### **Llais Gwynedd (2)**

Councillors

Anwen J. Davies

Jason Humphreys

### **Labour (1)**

Councillor Sion W. Jones

### **Ex-officio Member**

Vice-Chairman of the Council

# **A G E N D A**

## **1. APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

## **2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

## **3. URGENT ITEMS**

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

## **4. MINUTES**

1 - 6

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the last meeting of this committee held on 24 November 2015, be signed as a true record.

## **5. HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16**

7 - 14

To consider the report of the Head of Democratic Services.

## **6. 2017 LOCAL AUTHORITY ELECTIONS**

15 - 16

To consider the report of the Senior Manager (Democracy and Delivery).

## **7. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR ELECTED MEMBERS**

17 - 18

To consider the report of the Senior Manager (Democracy and Delivery) and the Information Technology Senior Manager.

## **8. FINANCIAL REMUNERATION FOR ELECTED MEMBERS**

19 - 20

To consider the report of the Senior Manager (Democracy and Delivery).

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## DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE 24/11/15

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**Present:** Thomas G. Ellis (Chair)  
Anne Lloyd Jones (Vice-Chair)

**COUNCILLORS:** Annwen Daniels, Gweno Glyn, E. Selwyn Griffiths, Dilwyn Morgan, Michael Sol Owen, Lesley Day, Jean Forsyth, Anwen J. Davies and Jason Humphreys

**OFFICERS:** Arwel Ellis Jones (Senior Manager - Democratic and Delivery), Vera Jones (Democratic Services Manager) , Lowri Haf Evans (Members and Scrutiny Support Officer)

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Annwen Hughes and Sian Gwennlian, and Geraint Owen (Head of Democratic Services)

### 2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

All Members were requested to declare an interest in item 6, Consultation by the Consultation by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, but it was noted that this was not a prejudicial interest

### 3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note

### 4. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 29 September 2015 as a true record

### 5. STANDARDS COMMITTEE - REPORT ON THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE REMIT

- a) Dr Einir Young, Chair of the Standards Committee was welcomed to the Council to submit the annual report of the Standards Committee for 2014/15.

Dr Einir Young outlined the committee's main purpose and functions, namely to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the councillors and co-opted members of Gwynedd Council and community and town councils in Gwynedd. She referred to the committee's membership, and the work that had been achieved during 2014/15. She emphasised that they measured success through encouragement and success, rather than by dealing with complaints. She thanked Gwilym Ellis Evans, who had been the committee's Chairman for 10 years, for his hard work and commitment; Sam Soysa, as Vice-chair prior to the end of his period as a committee member, and Ms Linda Byrne for her support as a committee member. She also thanked the Monitoring Officer and the other officers who had provided support to the committee.

Dr Einir Young was thanked for presenting the report.

- b) Councillor Michael Sol Owen, a Member of the Standards Committee, emphasised that their work was challenging and set firm guidance for the Council and Community Councils.
- c) In response to an observation on the need to communicate a clear message to community councils in relation to the 'declaration of interest', it was noted that a series of training courses had been held in the Autumn with community councils to promote and raise awareness about the code of conduct's meaning. A further observation was made that the community councils, in their annual meetings, received the code of conduct - which was an annual opportunity to remind them, but it was obvious that this did not happen consistently.
- d) In bearing in mind the specific role of the Committee to consider services to members, a question was raised regarding whether more could be done to provide Council members with support in the context of conduct, or was the support already sufficient.

In response, the Monitoring Officer outlined two recent developments

- Public Interest Test
- The concept of the right to free speech in political Forums, where robust discussion and criticism can take place.

He noted that it was intended to hold a training workshop in the Spring to promote these developments. In relation to the Democratic Services Committee's work, it was intended to emphasise the role of the Standards Committee, and to forge a more prominent relationship with the members by raising awareness of the work and to maintain an engagement programme to share information, to ensure that the code remained at the forefront of everyone's mind.

RESOLVED to accept the report and to thank the Chair and the Committee for their important work.

## **6. CONSULTATION BY THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES**

- a) Submitted – the report of the Head of Democratic Services, to initiate a discussion on the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' draft proposals. In relation to the background to the report, it was explained that the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales was responsible for determining salaries and costs which were payable to councillors in respect of their duties. The Panel publishes draft proposals annually for consultation, but historically, the recommendations have not given rise to much discussion, as they take a generalised view of the salaries and costs paid to each councillor. The need to give further consideration to this year's proposals was noted, and attention was drawn to the recommendations in the report - the fundamental aspect was that there would be no increase in the basic salary.
- b) In relation to the other changes, it was noted that they varied in their views, but there was a need for a discussion on the suggestion of submitting two levels to the Cabinet; a suggestion of two levels for Committee chairs and a suggestion that the leader of the largest opposition party should be set at the same level as the second level of chairs.

- c) It was noted that one matter that had caused concern this year, which the Welsh Local Government had drawn attention to, was that the Public Services Minister had written to the Panel, drawing its attention to the need to be vigilant and to reduce public expenditure. The dissatisfaction of the Local Government Association was reiterated, and it was argued that it could appear that there had been political interference with the decision. The letter was acknowledged, but the panel would make an evidence-based decision.
- d) Observations arising from the discussion:
- It was suggested that the existing arrangements were acceptable
  - Acceptance that the responsibilities of chairs varied in terms of the frequency of meetings, and it was considered that the Panel's proposal was reasonable
  - That recognition should be sought for Vice-chairs that stood in for the Chair for a period of time

RESOLVED to accept the report and to authorise the officers to convey the observations in the report to the Panel

## 7. MEMBERS EMAILS

- a) Submitted – the report of the Head of Democratic Services, recommending that the Committee should confirm the original vision and decision regarding Members' official e-mail addresses. Members were reminded that this vision had been adopted by the Council Board on 27.3.2012 when it was decided that it would be mandatory for Elected Members to receive and use the Council's corporate e-mail. Reference was made to the reason for using the corporate address rather than a personal e-mail address. It was noted that the use of electronic methods was the main method of communication with Members - that it was part of the Council's brand and gave Elected Members an opportunity to operate under the same banner as Council staff.
- b) It had been noted that recently a few Members had made requests to receive correspondence through personal e-mail accounts, and that this had not been approved (mainly as there was no assurance of security if personal e-mails were used). Members were also reminded that the Councillors' corporate e-mail accounts would be closed if the member did not use it within a 12-month period.
- c) A question was asked on how to contact a member who did not use e-mail, and it was explained that those who had informed us of their decision could receive the information by letter / hard copy. However, in some cases, members' e-mail accounts had been closed as they had not been used for a period of 12-months, and the Department had been unaware of the lack of use, and as a result the member had not received any correspondence. In a further response to the recent changes and restrictions on the use of e-mails on personal computers, it was noted that all members had been sent a note through Rhaeadr to address this, and that the Technology Department had responded helpfully and effectively. In the context of accessing e-mails from a mobile phone, it was noted that the Technology Department had been working on a device to enable this (an update to be submitted in February).
- d) Matters arising from the discussion
- concern that some members were unwilling to use the Council's e-mail

- address
- difficult to understand how a Councillor can operate effectively without using / receiving information through e-mail
- corporate e-mail accounts ensure that communication is fair and accurate
- accept that there is a robust and secure framework in place

**RESOLVED to again confirm the Council's original decision regarding the vision and Members' official e-mail accounts:**

- **emphasise that the small number who do not use their corporate e-mail account should use it, and**
- **encourage those who have decided not to use the technology to reconsider their decision**

## **8. WEBCASTING**

- a) Submitted – the report by the Head of Democratic Services, to provide information on the use of the web-casting system which had been operational since 2015. It was noted that the Council had web-casted 23 meetings, with a total number of viewers of around 3400. It was reported that it was now appropriate to assess to what extent the Council wished to continue with the system from next year onwards. It was noted that the viewing figures were comparatively small, when compared with other Councils, with obvious differences between certain Meetings. It also appeared, from the analysis of the figures per meeting, that the 'subject area' was the driver for the viewing figures, and therefore, if it were to continue, that much could be done to raise awareness and increase interest.
- b) It was added that the system had been grant funded and that this grant was coming to an end. Following a recent survey, it was noted that some councils had voiced differing opinions regarding continuing with the provision, at a time when service cuts were a contentious issue. In Gwynedd, it was noted that there was an opportunity to improve the link between the video-conferencing provision and remote attendance that could save costs for the Council by redirecting existing resource to continue with the web-casting service.
- c) In response to a question regarding the cost of the system, it was noted that one company provided the service for the majority of Councils, and that it was possible to negotiate a price for the service.
- d) Matters arising from the discussion
  - support for the need to continue, but concerns about the cost
  - need to raise awareness and interest
  - the process was only in its infancy, and therefore to propose a further investment for at least another year

**RESOLVED to continue with the Council's Web-casting Service, to hold price negotiations on the costs, and further discussions on how to increase interest.**

## **9. MEMBERS ANNUAL REPORTS 2014-15**

- a) Submitted – a report by the Head of Democratic Services providing an update to members on the number of annual reports published in 2014/2015, and a request for observations to facilitate the arrangements for 2015/2016.

It was noted that the number of elected Members who had published an annual report had increased of past years, with 39 having completed one this year.

- b) In response to the report, it was noted there was a need to ensure that the report was a factual report about the Councillor. To ensure this, the legal guidelines had to be followed, to avoid the possibility of having to edit its content and what should be omitted. It was also proposed that the guidelines should be distributed with the template in order to make the arrangements easier. It was added, although the report could appear rather bland, that it was the Council's publication on the work of the Councillor, and that nothing prevented a councillor from publishing his or her own report, on social media for example.
- c) Matters arising from the discussion
- need to outline more of the context
  - need to re-examine the attendance percentages
  - a proposal to illustrate the number of meetings a year vs attendance
  - had any observations / responses been received from the public
  - would it be possible to include reasons for non-attendance?

In response to the observations, it was noted that no responses had been received from the public, but it could be possible to make further enquiries. In relation to attendance, it was noted that the *Mod Gov* system also recorded attendance percentages that were published on its website – it would be possible to include reasons for non-attendance on the template but not on the *Mod Gov* system.

**RESOLVED to amend the template to address the above observations and to distribute the guidance with the template.**

## 10. DIVERSITY SUB-GROUP

- a) Submitted – the report by the Chair of the Diversity Sub-group on the recent work undertaken by the sub-group and the information that has been collected to form a programme of work. Members were reminded that the Sub-group had been established in February 2015 in response to a national report and guidance in the Local Government Act 2012 to seek to increase diversity in local government.
- b) It was noted that the sub-group had been considering the current situation in Gwynedd, and had compared the profiles of Gwynedd's elected members with the profiles of the county's residents – statistics relating to age, sex, ethnic background and disability had been examined. Following an analysis of the situation, a work programme had been produced with the intention of delivering a change for the 2017 Elections.
- c) The work programme was discussed per heading.
- d) Observations arising from the discussion
- An opportunity here to promote / encourage / share information / train the County's young people through Youth Clubs, Young Farmers etc.
  - Need to promote good practice
  - Introduce people to specific subject areas to encourage their interest
  - A suggestion to encourage visits to Committees / watch web-casts
  - School Councils – accept that they are important but a need to increase their knowledge of Democracy
  - Encourage employers to be flexible in releasing individual who are



- considering a career in politics
  - A suggestion to consider evening meetings
  - A suggestion to offer training to those who are considering becoming councillors
- e) In response, it was noted that the Government had identified a lack of flexibility by employers as a barrier, and in the context of evening meetings, the Council would consult on this annually.

**Resolved to approve the proposed work programme.**

## **11. MEMBERS CHARTER - JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

- a) Submitted, for information, the report by the Head of Democratic Services providing an update on the progress towards achieving the Members Charter. It was recommended to proceed in two steps. The first step would be for officers to ensure clarity of the current situation and the second step would be for the Democratic Services Committee to establish a small group of Councillors to look at the work of achieving the Charter for Gwynedd Council commencing with the work on the job descriptions.

**Resolved to accept the report and to suggest that work should progress to seek to achieve the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development.**

The meeting commenced at 10:00am and concluded at 12:00pm

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**CHAIRMAN**

# Agenda Item 5

<b>MEETING</b>	Democratic Services Committee
<b>DATE</b>	22 March 2016
<b>SUBJECT</b>	Annual Report from the Head of Democratic Services on behalf of the Democratic Services Committee with regards to support for members
<b>PURPOSE</b>	Present a draft of the report to be presented to the Full Council meeting in May 2016 outlining the support available to elected members including the support currently being developed.
<b>AUTHORS</b>	Councillor Tom Ellis Chair – Democratic Services Committee
<b>RELEVANT OFFICER</b>	Geraint Owen Head of Democratic Services

1. A draft of the annual report which is to be presented to the Full Council meeting to be held on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016 is presented below, outlining the support available for elected members and any developments currently ongoing. You will see from the draft that a few subjects within the report will need to be finalised following the discussions held in the meeting today, 22/03/2016.
2. Under the new 2011 Local Government (Wales) Measure, the Democratic Services Committee is responsible for specific matters (Under Section 11), as follows:
  - Fulfil the local authority's role to appoint a Head of Democratic Services
  - Review the support available with regards to staff, buildings and other resources available to the Head of Democratic Services, in order to ensure they are sufficient for the requirements of the role
  - Produce a report, at least annually, to be presented to the Full Council in relation to the above.
3. The latest annual report was presented to the Full Council in its meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015, outlining the support available for the Head of Democratic Services (Geraint Owen) and elected members, including the support which was being developed.
4. Constant consultation is undertaken with the members of the Democratic Services Committee about the support available to elected members, and as representatives of their fellow members, their guidance is of utmost importance. This year, to ensure a chance for all members to present their views, it was decided to consult, in the form of an online questionnaire, with all elected members to establish their views on the support available and to ask for constructive comments on how to improve the support within the resources available.
5. The final report will include a summary of the results of the consultation including the number of responses and main messages.

6. The following provides an update of the current situation with regards to support for members.

**A. Supporting effective communication?**

**1. Information / Workshops/ Consultation** – Once again this year, several workshops have been held for Elected Members, with the main focus this challenging year on Her Gwynedd/ Gwynedd Challenge. A number of scrutiny workshops were held for all elected members under the guidance of the Chief Executive in order to establish a significant degree of shared understanding on the issues related to the Financial Strategy and the cuts in order to ensure that Members were armed with information to explain matters to their constituents. The workshops proved to be very important to establish an understanding of the matters presented, prior to the discussion of the issue at the Full Council in March. It should be noted that the workshops were held in various locations and at various times in response to concerns raised by members in the past of the difficulties faced by elected members in other employment to attend such workshops. Informal feedback which has been received is very positive, with work currently ongoing to learn lessons from the engagement undertaken with the elected members and the people of Gwynedd for the future.

**2. Champions** – The “champions role” in Gwynedd to support and advise the Cabinet Member who has direct responsibility for the field is continuing to develop. The following have been appointed:

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| • Older People                       | Selwyn Griffiths                       |
| • Carers                             | Eryl Jones Williams                    |
| • Autism                             | Elin Walker Jones                      |
| • Member Development                 | Chair of Democratic Services Committee |
| • Scrutiny                           | Chair of Scrutiny Committee            |
| • Disability                         | Peter Read                             |
| • The Welsh Language                 | Craig ab Iago                          |
| • Voice of Children and Young People | Annwen Daniels                         |
| • Equality and Diversity             | Gwen Griffith                          |
| • Fairtrade                          | R Hefin Williams                       |
| • Biodiversity                       | Angela Russell                         |
| • Mental Health                      | Beth Lawton                            |
| • Sustainability                     | Aled Evans                             |
| • Small Businesses                   | Sian Gwenllian                         |

**3 Area Forums** – The Area Forums continue to be held in the four areas, being Bangor/Ogwen, Gwyrfai, Dwyfor (Area Committee) and Meirionnydd. Generally, they are considered as a success, however the success and input from members varies from area to area.

- 4 **Electronic Information and Communication** – Electronic information and communications is one of the main issues that is discussed at the Democratic Services Committee since it was established. Following requests from members further training sessions have been held for those wishing to develop their use and skills with the iPad further. It was emphasised that those attending the further training had a role to share any information gained and to mentor their fellow members, as sharing information in an informal situation has been proved to be as effective as learning in specific training courses. In general, the sessions have been a success, with a number of members developing in their confidence to using the iPad, with some even progressing to sending electronic Christmas cards!

The final report may include an update on receiving official councillor emails to mobile phones in this section, depending on the discussions in the Democratic Services Committee on 22/03/2016.

On the other hand, however, it has become apparent during the year that the numbers requesting hard copies of committee agendas has risen. In addition, and of more concern, it has become apparent that a number of elected members who have an iPad, have not been using them to receive electronic mail, and due to a lack of using their official email account, the accounts were closed automatically. The Democratic Services Committee, in its meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015 that they wished to continue to support the Council's aim of communicating electronically with members where possible, and through the official email address provided by the Council.

Some have proved difficulties in changing their passwords or similar problems, but having contacted the IT helpdesk problems have been resolved. If members have technical difficulties, they should contact the IT helpdesk on 01286 679 114.

In addition, work has already started on trying to identify the best electronic device to meet the Council's and elected member's requirements for the period following the Local Government elections in May 2017. It may feel a long way away, but careful planning and consideration needs to start now to ensure the most suitable device.

- 5 **Modern.Gov** - Modern.gov was a new development during the year to assist Elected Members. It is a system to receive committee agendas in an easier way. The agendas for relevant meetings etc are loaded automatically onto the iPad thus ensuring that the member does not have to look for an email link to download information. This can all be done through the Modern.gov app. A training session was held for elected members in November 2015 with approximately half of elected members present. It has come to our attention that some members do not use Modern.gov, and officers have been trying to assist members on its use.

A number of members have stated that the new website is much improved, and much easier for Gwynedd residents to gain information about their local elected member. The individual page for each member has been praised. Note that information about all members' attendance is now published automatically on these pages, with the information updated regularly. Note that we are continuing to develop the site, and more information about additional committees will be included in the future. Attendance rates (except in circumstances of sickness/ long term sickness) has been a topic of discussion in a number of different forums, and political leaders receive information if individual members have not been present for a specific time.

- 6 **Information Bulletin – *Rhaeadr*** – *Rhaeadr* was originally established in response to a request from members to receive information swiftly and timely, through electronic means from one source (rather than emails from various sources).

Articles included in *Rhaeadr* contain information about the Cabinet and Cabinet Members, support for elected members, what is happening within the council (latest news, press releases) and issues within wards (roadworks, land disposal, planning issues etc). In the final report we will report on

- XXXXX – number of articles (which is an average of XXXX a month) have been published,
- with XXXXX visits per month to the site.

In February a review of *Rhaeadr* was held, asking all members to present their views on how to improve the bulleting, and to try and ensure a full understanding of how many members use *Rhaeadr* and why some members choose not to. In addition, a short information gathering session was held at the end of the Democratic Services Committee to try and share a few ideas about improving *Rhaeadr*. The final report will include the main messages from the consultation as well as any improvements.

- 7 **Cabinet members Reports to the Council** - It is an intention for the Cabinet Members to resume presenting individual report to full Council meetings (when possible) on an element of their work, with a chance for questions to follow. The reports will focus on achieving results for the people of Gwynedd.
- 8 **The relationship between Scrutiny and Cabinet** – The relationship between Scrutiny and Cabinet continues to develop, with all members agreeing for the need to ensuring respect and collaboration in order to achieve the best for the residents of Gwynedd. Meetings were held between the Scrutiny Chairs and Cabinet to discuss in an open and constructive manner the lessons learned so far, and future improvements. Scrutiny items have already changed over the last year, with a number of items being presented for scrutiny prior to discussions at the Cabinet meetings.

In addition, a new development is the formal arrangements for the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees to present their recommendation to Cabinet members in Cabinet meetings. The Cabinet Member will then either agree or reject the recommendation, stating his/her reason. This leads to transparency in the scrutiny arrangements, and a clear path for the various recommendations. The final report will include information from the current scrutiny arrangements review which is taking place, and the recommendations from the review – see 15 below.

## **9 Web-casting from Council meetings**

The Council has web-cast a number of its main committee meetings since January 2015, in order to try and promote and improve democratic accountability and the public's awareness of the Council's work. The viewing figures have increased during the last 18 months, as more and more Gwynedd residents become aware of the facilities following promoting the webcasting in news papers and on the Council's twitter and facebook accounts. The viewing figures obviously vary from committee to committee, and it appears that a number make use of the archive facilities rather than viewing the live feed.

It is nearing the end of the Council's current webcasting agreement, and in the spirit of promoting democracy and transparency, the Democratic Services Committee is eager to continue with the service, especially in light of the recent consultation on the Local Government Bill, which will promote more web-casting.

The web-casting can be seen through following the link below:  
<https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Council/Councillors-and-committees/Councillors-and-committees.aspx>

- 10 Remote attendance to Council meetings** – Elected members are already accustomed to holding informal meetings through video-conferencing facilities, and this practice has worked very well over the years, enabling members to attend the nearest location rather than travelling to the Council headquarters on each occasion. This year, a pilot was held of a full committee meeting through video link between the Hywel Dda chamber, and the video-conferencing rooms at Dolgellau and Pwllheli. The pilot was a success, however a few lessons were also noted to be learnt. We will continue with trying to improve this service over the next year.

## **B. Support for elected members to undertake their specific duties**

- 11 Personal Development Interviews** – the Personal Development reviews are a chance for members (excluding Cabinet members) to assess their individual development needs in a confidential one to one conversation, with the outcome of the conversations used to influence the training programme for all elected members or to arrange specific training sessions for the individual. A number of the themes

raised in previous reviews were addressed in the 2015/16 training programme, and the reviews were also a way of raising the awareness of members of some courses already provided and available for all. Members were invited to take part in individual reviews again this year, with invitations sent through *Rhaeadr* on a number of occasions. Unfortunately, the uptake this year was very low.

- 12 **Developments in local areas on specific matters (enquiries or complaints)** – We saw this year that Cabinet members and officer have been true to their word and included elected members early in any discussions. Individual members have also committed to respect trust and confidentiality until any proposals for change were mature enough for public consultation and release.

Operational contact arrangements – we are fully aware of the frustration faced by members on identifying contact points within services, and we are currently developing ‘contact’ sheets in response. Members should continue to make contact through Galw Gwynedd as they are very efficient at tracking enquiries. If there is a specific enquiry or complaint, members should try and contact the service in the first place for a response, and if the response is inadequate, the query should be sent to the relevant Cabinet member. We continue to encourage members to use the appropriate avenues available to them.

- 13 **Individual Member’s Right in Cabinet meetings** - The local member is invited to be present if a local matter arises. It is the Cabinet Team’s responsibility to identify local members for local items and the local member’s responsibility to ensure that he / she is aware of the content of the Cabinet’s agenda.

**Promoting the role of an Elected Member (preparations for May 2017 elections) –**

The Local Government White Paper, Local Government Reform: Power to Local People, noted that there is a lack of diversity of elected Members in Local Government, especially in terms of young people, ethnic minority, disabled and females. Whilst there is national work progressing in the field, a small group of members have been working on trying to understand the situation in Gwynedd, raising awareness of Gwynedd residents what is democracy, what the Council does, and what opportunities exist to take part, in the hope of encouraging more individuals (young people and females) from different backgrounds to stand in the local elections in May 2017. They are also working on trying to identify the obstacles facing individuals which prevent them from standing in elections, which will then lead to specific projects to respond to the obstacles, where possible. The Council have recognised the work, which has been included in the Council’s Strategic Equality Plan, 2016 – 2020.

Preparing for the May 2017 elections – Part of the above work programme includes preparing for the Local Elections to be held in May 2017. After listening to the

comments of a number of elected members who have joined the Council since May 2012, a clear message is that a number were not fully aware of what to expect following success at the polling station. In response to these comments, the following work is underway to

- a) Develop awareness raising sessions for potential candidates prior to the elections in May 2017. These sessions will be an opportunity for potential candidates to develop a fuller understanding of the situation prior to elections – aiming at ensuring that individuals are aware of the opportunities available, the expectations on them, the support available for elected members following successful elections.
- b) Develop an induction programme for elected members following May 2017 elections. Again, members have shared their experiences with us of sessions held at the beginning of the current Council term, and work is underway to plan the induction sessions and the subsequent training sessions in a meaningful and rational way, whilst considering the comments received so far and consulting with current members.
- c) Electronic Equipment. At the same time we need to start to consider the requirements of elected members and the Council for the future, and start considering the various forms of IT equipment available and what best to provide for elected members following the elections in May 2017.

### **C. Support for scrutiny members and other committees**

- 14 **Scrutiny arrangements review in Gwynedd** – as is reported in a separate report to the Council today, a review of the Scrutiny arrangements has been undertaken, and the recommendations are reported to the Full Council today.

During 2015/16 training for scrutiny chairs and vice-chairs was held, which was successful. The training will now be offered to all elected members to ensure a joint understanding of the purpose of scrutiny and the new arrangements amongst all members.

- 15 **Administrating committees – publishing agendas and recording minutes (all committees)** – The Democratic Services Team administers the agendas and minutes of over 40 different committees, publishing bilingually on the Council's website. We continue to review the work constantly, working to ensure clarity in the minutes at all times. Work has been ongoing with the chairs of various committees to try and summarise decisions/ recommendations at the end of each item to ensure clarity amongst all members present.

- 16 **Scrutiny Investigations** – the purpose of the Scrutiny investigations is to look in depth at the true effect of different policies on the residents of Gwynedd, looking in



more depth than can be done compared with scrutinising an item in Committee. With a small number of members per investigation, along with professional officers who specialise in specific fields to support the work and support from the Democratic Services Unit, a number of 'start and finish' scrutiny investigations have been undertaken during 2015/16.

#### Services Scrutiny Committee

- Welsh Language Education - completed
- Education support services - just started
- From Hospital to Home
- Alltwen – just started

#### Pwyllgor Craffu Cymunedau

- Homelessness - completed
- Street enforcement – just started

#### Corporate Scrutiny Committee

- Holiday Homes and taxes
- Engagement – ongoing

### **Ch. Support for all members – administrative, practical and developmental**

- 17 **Administrative support for the political groups** - Administrative support for political groups is implemented in accordance with the Council's decision in May 2012 with the three largest groups receiving administrative support according to their size.
- 18 **Administering, processing and paying wages and travelling costs** - Wages and travelling costs are administered, processed and payed in line with the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales's guidelines. Information with regards to members remuneration will be published on the Council's website annually in accordance with the guidelines. The claiming guidelines are on the website. I will take this opportunity to remind members of the guidelines and the need for them to submit their applications on a monthly basis.
- 19 **Annual reports from elected members** – The Council must make arrangements to enable elected members to produce and publish annual reports but it is not compulsory for any member to prepare such a report. Members will remember that the Council responded positively to a suggestion that Members Annual Reports be made compulsory as part of a recent consultation.

A further increase in the number of annual reports published was seen in 2014/15 (published July 2015) with 39 members choosing to produce a report. The guidelines for producing an annual report in 2015/16 have already been distributed through *Rhaeadr*.

20 **A comprehensive programme of training** – 2016/17 is the last year prior to the Local Government elections of 2017, and we were therefore aware that the training requirements of Local Members may be different this year. Consultations with officers took part as usual to ensure that the most important elements were included in the training programme. In addition, a consultation session was held at the end of the Democratic Services meeting on 22/03/2016 in order to seek opinion from members on the content of the programme for 2016/17. The views of the Democratic Services Committee has been incorporated in the 2016/17 training programme.

Attendance on training courses remains a concern. Members are expected to try and attend training sessions in order to ensure that they possess the latest information as there are a number of changes in various fields. It is understandable that attending training courses can be a challenge to a number of members due to work commitments and so forth, and therefore the Learning and Developing Services are currently developing web based learning, which will, hopefully, provide an alternative and additional way for members to partake in training and increase participation in training.

# Agenda Item 6

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	22 March 2016
SUBJECT	2017 Local Authority Elections
PURPOSE	Present an update of the work of the diversity sub-group along with an outline of the preparatory work to prepare for the Local Authority Elections in 2017.
AUTHOR	Arwel Ellis Jones Senior Manager (Democratic and Delivery)
RELEVANT OFFICER	Vera Jones Democratic Services Manager

1. With the Local Authority elections a little over a year away, it is important that the Council begins to prepare for a number of different considerations in relation to the Local Authority Elections of 2017.
2. Members of the Committee are already aware that a sub-group has been at work to respond to the Government of Wales' White Paper, Local Government Reform: Power to Local People, which noted that there is a lack of diversity of elected Members in Local Government, especially in terms of young people, ethnic minority, disabled and females.

#### Work of the Diversity sub-group

3. The group has previously reported on the inconsistency between the profile of elected members in Gwynedd with the profile of the County, with the main inconsistency in the number of females and young people in the County compared with the number which are elected Members. The work programme established by the sub-group has been presented to the committee, and Members of the sub-group have also raised awareness amongst their fellow-members in the Area Forum meetings during March 2017.
4. In addition, the Council has shown its support to the project, which has been included in the Council's Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2020, with the aim of raising the number of individuals from less represented backgrounds (young people and females) standing in the Local Authority elections in 2017.
5. The work programme includes a number of different factors, including raising awareness of the people of Gwynedd to what is democracy, what the Council does, and what opportunities exist to take part, in the hope of encouraging more individuals from different backgrounds to stand in the local elections in May 2017. The sub-group plans to do this in an uncomplicated but effective series of short clips to be released on the website, which will be promoted through twitter and facebook.
6. In addition, following raising awareness, a questionnaire has been devised to try and identify the obstacles facing individuals which prevent them from standing in elections, and hold focus groups to try and ensure a fuller understanding of the obstacles. This will then lead to specific projects to respond to the obstacles, where possible.
7. Hand in hand with the work of the diversity sub-group, work is ongoing to prepare possible candidates who wish to stand in the May 2017 elections. Following comments raised by a

number of elected members who joined the Council since May 2012, we understand that a number of elected members were not fully aware of what to expect, or the expectations on them following their success at the elections.

#### Awareness raising sessions for potential candidates

8. In response to the comments received, work is currently ongoing to develop awareness raising sessions for individuals who wish to stand in the elections in May 2017. These sessions will be an opportunity for potential candidates to develop a fuller understanding of the situation prior to elections – aiming at ensuring that individuals are aware of the opportunities available, the expectations on them, the support available for elected members following successful elections.
9. The intention is to provide sessions with information on the following subjects:
  - Council's responsibilities,
  - The role of the Local Member and the institutional role within the Council
  - Requirements on time, including hearing the experiences of existing Members,
  - The interim situation of the Council before the reorganisation
  - Expectations and support with regards to IT etc.
  - How the Council committee's work and a presentation to the Member's Code of Conduct,
  - Practical considerations such as salaries and the election process

#### Induction Programme for Elected Members following May 2017 elections.

10. The natural step following the elections in May 2017 will be an induction programme for newly elected members. Again, members have shared their experiences with us of sessions held at the beginning of the current Council term, and what else would have been beneficial for newly elected members. Again, work is underway to plan the induction sessions and the subsequent training sessions in a meaningful and rational way, whilst considering the comments received so far and consulting with current members. Although the elections may feel a long time away, it is important that the Council starts planning ahead now.

#### Electronic Equipment.

11. At the same time we need to start to consider the requirements of elected members and the Council for the future, and start considering the various forms of IT equipment available and what best to provide for elected members following the elections in May 2017.
12. The preparation work ongoing in relation to the awareness raising sessions prior to the elections, the induction programme and the subsequent training programme, along with the IT considerations are key elements for the consideration of the Committee over the coming months. We also believe that listening to the views of Elected Members who were elected from May 2012 or later will help us develop the above.

We therefore ask the Committee to identify 4 or 5 members who are willing to share their views on the matters raised as we continue to develop the work streams. We will report on progress to the Committee when suitable.

# Agenda Item 7

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	22 March 2016
SUBJECT	Information Technology for Elected Members
PURPOSE	Present the latest information on IT matters to the Committee.
AUTHORS	Arwel Ellis Jones Senior Manager (Democracy and Delivery) Huw Ynyr Information Technology Senior Manager
RELEVANT OFFICER	Vera Jones Democratic Services Manager

1. A number of different elements with regards to IT were discussed in the last meeting of the Democratic Services Committee, and an update is presented below.

### **I-pad Training**

2. Invitations have been sent asking members to declare if they require further training on how to make better use of the ipads (following a successful pilot held in 2015). The training is provided at two different levels, basic or higher, with many already registered for the sessions. The sessions have been arranged for
  - 22/04/2016 - basic
  - 28/04/2016 – higher

### **Update on receiving councillorxx@gwynedd.gov.uk e-mails on mobile devices**

3. The Senior IT Manager reported at the last meeting that he was working on resolving an issue of frustration to a number of members, being the current situation of being unable to link their councillor emails to their personal phones
4. We can now confirm that following discussions with our PSN/CESG accreditors that we will be in a position where we can provide a solution where officers and members can send/receive official Council e-mail on their mobile device. This is permissible on the condition that it is undertaken in a secure manner and in means agreed with the accreditor.
5. Our PSN/CESG accreditors are happy for us to use our mobile device management (MDM) software to secure the service, MobileIron being the product that is used by the Council. This will allow the IT Support Desk to manage the mobile device remotely if appropriate, including deleting information from the device if the user was to report to the Help Desk that the device has been lost/stolen. We shall use the MDM software to download and install a specific “app” for Council e-mail, allowing Help Desk operators to safely delete the “app” and its contents without affecting other “apps” and/or personal data. In addition to these changes, it will be mandatory for the user to upgrade their password to an appropriate level in order to secure the device.
6. There will be a £40 cost in year one and £10 yearly afterwards for the MDM software. The cost is attributed per device, therefore multiple devices will be apportioned additional costs.

**Preparing for the 2017 elections.**

7. As reported in the 'elections 2017' report, it is time to start considering the most suitable equipment for elected members following the elections in May 2017. It is an ever-evolving field, with a number of different devices currently available on the market which were not available in 2012. We will need to assess what are/ what will be the requirements of elected members and the Council to the future, the influence of external factors, the different options on the market, and the budget available, in order to begin work to consider the most suitable device for members following May 2017.
8. The matter will receive attention over the following months in order to ensure that a reasonable timetable is in place to ensure a timely decision if further procurement is required.

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>22 MARCH, 2016</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>FINANCIAL REMUNERATION FOR ELECTED MEMBERS</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>To seek the Committee's views on options with financial remuneration for elected members</b>
<b>AUTHOR (S)</b>	<b>Arwel E Jones, Senior Manager, Democracy and Delivery</b>

## **BACKGROUND**

1. Members will recall that there was a consultation over the winter about draft proposals for next year by the Independent Panel on elected members' remuneration.

2. By now, the final report has been published. Here is the link to the page where the Independent Panel report can be found.

<http://gov.wales/irpwsb/home/publication/2016-17/irp-annual-report-2016-17/?lang=en>

3. Here are the main points of substance:-

- a. No change to the basis salary for the majority of members
- b. No change to the salaries for the Leader and Deputy Leader
- c. Each individual council to decide on setting Cabinet Members on one of two levels, Level 1, £29,000 (as at the moment) or Level 2 (£26,100)
- ch. Each individual council to decide on setting Committee Chairs on one of two level, Level 1, £22,000 (as at the moment) or Level 2 (£20,000)

## **THE MATTER UNDER CONSIDERATION**

4. The decisions of the Independent Remuneration Panel bind councils to make the payments set by them. The only practical way of not making those payments is for an individual member to state that they will not accept all of the payments.

5. However, this issue is different since the Council has the right to decide on the points in 3c and 3ch above. and, in making that decision, the Council should consider not only at which level to set these posts but also whether there is any difference in the responsibilities shouldered in different posts. With regard to the levels of responsibility shouldered by different Cabinet Members, it should be noted that, as a Council, we have made a deliberate effort to share out Cabinet responsibilities as equally as possible. The Council will also need to consider whether there is a difference in the responsibilities shouldered by the committee chairs noted below and, indeed, the chairs of some other committees who do not receive special remuneration, such as the Pensions Committee, Language Committee and, indeed, this committee.

6. At the moment, all Cabinet Members are at Level 1 (£29,000) and all the following committee chairs are on the higher level of payments (£22,000):-

- Scrutiny Committees (X3)
- Audit Committee
- Planning Committee
- Licensing Committee
- Employment Appeals Committee

#### **DECISION**

7. The committee's views are sought in order to submit a recommendation to the full Council on what should be paid during the Council's final year, at its next meeting.