



# Complete Agenda

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

Meeting

**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Date and Time

**10.30 am, TUESDAY, 9TH APRIL, 2019**

Location

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

Contact Point

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(DISTRIBUTED 03/04/19)

# **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

## **MEMBERSHIP (15)**

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

Councillors

Annwen Daniels  
Charles Wyn Jones  
Olaf Cai Larsen  
Edgar Wyn Owen

Annwen Hughes  
Linda Ann Jones  
Judith Mary Humphreys  
Vacant Seat

### **Independent (5)**

Councillors

John Brynmor Hughes  
Dewi Wyn Roberts  
Eryl Jones-Williams

Anne Lloyd Jones  
Hefin Underwood

### **Llais Gwynedd (1)**

Councillor Anwen J. Davies

### **Gwynedd United Independents (1)**

Councillor Dewi Owen

### **Ex-officio Members**

Chair and Vice-Chair 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**

4 - 6

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the last meeting of this committee held on 12/2/19, be signed as a true record.

**5. HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES' ANNUAL REPORT**

7 - 12

To submit a draft of the report to be published to the Council in May 2019, outlining the support that has been developed and is being developed on behalf of members.

**6. FINANCIAL REMUNERATION FOR ELECTED MEMBERS**

13 - 14

To provide information from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Annual Report to elected members.

**7. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20**

15 - 16

To submit a draft work programme for 2019/20 to receive observations from the Members.

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## DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE 12/02/19

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**Present:** Dewi Owen (Chair)  
Anne Lloyd Jones (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Anwen J. Davies, Annwen Hughes, John Brynmor Hughes, Charles Wyn Jones, Olaf Cai Larsen, Catrin Elen Wager, Dewi Wyn Roberts, Hefin Underwood, Judith Mary Humphreys, Edgar Wyn Owen and Eryl Jones-Williams

**OFFICERS:** Geraint Owen (Head of Democratic Services) Vera Jones (Members Manager - Democracy Service), Carey Cartwright (Organisational Learning and Development Service Manager) Cara Williams (Members' Development Officer) and Sion Owen (Members Support Officer)

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Annwen Daniels and Linda Ann Jones

### 1. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

**RESOLVED:** To elect Councillor Anne Lloyd Jones as Vice-chair of this Committee.

### 2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

### 3. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 25 October, 2018 as a true record.

### 4. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROVISION FOR MEMBERS

Submitted - the report of the Learning and Organisational Development Manager providing an overview of the learning and development provision for members and noting the successes and the challenges they had experienced. He noted the following points:

- That the provision had received very positive feedback
- That the learning and development programme was continuing to evolve, including items that had been proposed by members.
- There was an opportunity to hold personal development conversations to discuss their needs, and a mentoring scheme was available.
- Attendance had been inconsistent at the sessions and the service was trying to be flexible in terms of the location and times of sessions and was experimenting with technology.

Observations from the discussion:

- That holding most of the sessions in Caernarfon had proven to be an obstacle for the Meirionnydd members and a wish was noted for more learning and development sessions to be held at Council offices in Dwyfor and Meirionnydd.
- There was a need for the mentoring scheme to be available to newly elected members.
- Had any members who had been identified and qualified as mentors had the opportunity to mentor?
- That the personal development conversations had been appreciated.

- Were there plans to expand the e-learning provision?
- That it was common amongst new members to be uncertain which officers should be contacted in relation to ward matters, and that specific training should be held on Council structures.
- Whilst the importance of learning and development had been acknowledged, that the fact that the sessions were not mandatory meant that members did not prioritise them. Was there any suggestion that the training sessions could become mandatory in future?
- The sessions held at the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019 to discuss the 2019-20 budget had been held in an effective manner, and a request was made to hold similar sessions regularly.
- The officers were thanked for their work and support.

In response the Learning and Organisational Development Manager noted the Committee's observations and added that he was aware that a mentoring relationship had been established between some members, and that the service's direction in future was to hold more learning and development opportunities through digital methods.

The Democratic Services Manager noted that a number of new members had made the same comment regarding confusion in trying to refer ward matters to the appropriate officers, and that this would need to be addressed when inducting new members. He suggested it would be beneficial for Members who had received good learning and development experiences to mention it to other members and to spread the message. He added that making members' training mandatory had been mentioned in consultation documents in local government work, but there was no assurance as to which requirements would be included in the final legislation.

## **5. ELECTED MEMBERS' ANNUAL REPORTS**

The Democratic Services Manager presented her report and stated whilst there was a statutory requirement for the Council to enable members to publish annual reports, there was no requirement for any individual member to do so. The Committee was invited to offer its observations on the reports and the process for creating them.

Observations from the discussion:

- That removing attendance statistics and the details of committees' work from the report and including them in a link was a step backwards.
- It was welcomed that the content of the report focused on the members' work in their wards, as this was important to the electors.
- There was a need to make the link to the reports more visible.
- There was no need to produce annual reports as the electors of conscientious members would already be aware that their members were serving them tirelessly.
- How many of the public read the reports?
- Would it be possible to include links to the members' local newsletters?
- Were there any additional costs to generating the reports?

In response, the Democratic Services Manager noted that the emphasis had changed to ward work as the latest details of members' attendance etc. were published on the Council's website. She added that the use of the web page that included the annual reports increased substantially as an election approached. She confirmed that there were no costs beyond staff members' time to produce the reports, and while she would look into sharing ward newsletters, any material would have to go through the Council's editorial processes before being published on the corporate website.

The Head of Democratic Services added that the annual reports were one of many methods of communicating with electors, and that individual electors received information in many different ways.

## 6. DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Submitted - the report of the Democratic Services Manager noting that the committee's workload followed a cycle that reached its peak around election time. In the time between elections, the workload was less and this was also in the workload of democratic services committees of other councils. She noted that there was a statutory requirement for the Committee to convene a minimum of once a year, however no maximum had been noted and there was a need to structure the years' meetings to meet Gwynedd's needs. Discussions regarding rationalising meetings had also been held at other committees.

Observations from the discussion:

- That three formal meetings a year was sensible in the middle of an election term.
- That the meetings needed to be timed so they were held at the right times for the Committee to fulfil its purpose.
- There was a need to revisit the work of promoting diversity in democracy.
- It was anticipated that the Committee's workload would increase when the Welsh Government's next local government legislation would be published.
- There was a need to evaluate the number of members on all Council committees, especially given it was likely that the number of Gwynedd Council members would fall following the next election.

In response, the Head of Democratic Services noted that members were welcome to propose items of the Committee, especially if there was a link to services for members. There would also be an opportunity for the diversity sub-group to work with the project group that was working on achieving the 'Women in Leadership' priority which had been proposed in the Council Plan for the 2019 review.

The Democratic Services manager noted that reducing the number of the Committee's formal meetings would lead to having more time available to drive forward the work of the Committee's sub-groups. She added that it would be possible to call an additional meeting of the Committee should the workload merit this.

It was proposed and seconded to hold three formal meetings a year from 2019-20 onwards

**RESOLVED: To change the scheduled meetings of the Democratic Services Committee from 4 meetings a year to 3.**

## 7. 2019-20 COUNCIL MEETINGS CALENDAR

Submitted - the report of the Head of Democratic Services presented by the Democratic Services Manager submitting the draft version of the calendar of Council meetings for 2019-20. She noted there would be a need to reorganise the dates of the meetings of this committee in light of their previous decision. She added that discussions had been held with other committees to rationalise the number of meetings, and whilst the Standards Committee had agreed to rationalise, the discussions of other committees were not mature enough to be able to reach a decision for the 2019-20 calendar.

A committee member noted that the date of the Aberdyfi Harbour Committee had been set too soon in the autumn and should be moved to a later date to give officers the time to produce a more comprehensive report on the activities of the holiday season.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 12.05 pm

**CHAIRMAN**

# Agenda Item 5

MEETING OF THE	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	9 April 2019
SUBJECT	Annual report by the Head of Democratic Services on behalf of the Democratic Services Committee with regards to support for members
PURPOSE	Submit a draft report to be submitted to the Full Council in May 2019 outlining the support that has been developed and is being developed on behalf of members.
AUTHOR	Geraint Owen, Head of Democratic Services

1. A draft report is presented below to be submitted to the Full Council in its May 2019 meeting. Under the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011, the Democratic Services Committee is responsible for specific matters (under Section 11), as follows:
  - Appoint a Head of Democratic Services on behalf of the local authority
  - Review the available support for the Head of the Democratic Services in relation to staff, buildings and other resources, ensuring they are sufficient for carrying out the requirements of the role
  - Produce a report, at least once a year, to present to the Full Council in relation to support for members.
2. The report is somewhat different this year - it is more concise. It focuses on the developments made during the year rather than outlining all support available to members, which can be repetitive.
3. From the report, you will see that some elements are still incomplete and some elements will need to be updated as a result of other discussions.
4. I continue to emphasise that an open dialogue with you as Elected Members is a necessity in order to ensure that the support provided to you responds to your needs in the role and, therefore, I encourage you to contact me or the Chair to raise any matters. I also wish to thank all members of the Committee for their support over the past few months and I look forward to collaborate further with you over the coming months and years.



# THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES (2018-19)

- Support for Gwynedd  
Elected Members



RHOI POBL GWYNEDD YN GANOLOG I BOPETH RYDYM YN EI WNEUD • PUTTING THE PEOPLE OF  
GWYNEDD AT THE CENTRE OF EVERYTHING WE DO

## FOREWORD

Reviewing the available support for Elected Members so that they can fulfil their role is a fundamental part of my work, and the input and support of members of the Democratic Services Committee assists me with this important work.

Following a very busy first year in 2017/18 in light of Local Government elections in May 2017, it is integral that 2018/19 has been slightly more stable, with an opportunity to reflect somewhat on the support that is offered. Once again this year, I encourage any member who wishes to discuss the available support to contact me or the Chair or the members of the Democratic Services Committee immediately.

It is an honour to present the annual report to Gwynedd Council Members. The report is somewhat different this year, focussing on 2018/19 developments and what will be developed in 2019/20 rather than outline the range of available support.

Once again, I am very grateful to everyone for their input and I look forward to collaborating over the years to come.



**Head of Democratic Services,  
Head of Corporate Support Department**

## What has happened during 2018/19

We are still providing all the usual support, which includes:

- ✓ Arranging, publishing and taking minutes of the Council meetings - in a timely manner and to a consistently high standard. 97% of programmes are published electronically within 5 clear working days by the Council.
- ✓ Compliance with the requirements of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, ensuring that the salaries and expenses of members are paid promptly.
- ✓ Political support for the eligible political parties
- ✓ Reviewing the political balance in line with the requirement
- ✓ Webcasting in accordance with the work programme
- ✓ Maintaining and supporting an extensive training programme for all members, including 1-1 sessions when required
- ✓ Offering 1-1 support for members to discuss their personal development
- ✓ Information Technology support through the Information Technology Service
- ✓ Our process of creating annual reports was simplified by members, and hopefully there will be further progress again this year

Additionally, I would like to draw your attention to the specific projects noted below:

### **Consult with Elected Members:**

Over the summer 2018 period, all Members were asked for their views on the service provided by the Democratic Services Team, as well as what can be done to improve. A number of responses were received, with many stating that they were very happy with the service, especially the assistance and the support by Team members.

A number of ideas were also offered on what could be done to improve. One of the matters that received most attention was support for new members. All of these matters have been noted, and they will certainly feed into the preparation work for the next Local Government Elections. In addition, areas for improvement with the "Porth" - Members' Portal were noted (see below), as well as observations regarding training (see below) and observations regarding IT provision (see below).

### **Transferring to Office 365:**

It became apparent that there was still some frustration with the Information Technology provision for Elected Members, and having listened to your views, a change in provision was made in order to satisfy requirements.

By moving to the Office 365 provision, Members can now gain access to their member e-mail account and any documents they have from any location. Many have reported that being able to take a quick look at their e-mails from their mobile phones has made a world of difference for them,

and it is much easier to respond to any brief enquiries swiftly. It has also enabled members who work to gain access to their Councillor account from any other device, in addition to being able to use the Surface device during Council committees meetings.

Obviously, developments in the Technology field are moving extremely quickly, and therefore we will continue to address this field. If any Member wishes to receive further support, please get in touch with the Information Technology Team for technical matters, or the Training Team for any support with using devices.

#### **Porth (Members' Portal):**

Use of the Porth by Members is still low. We have attempted to continue to raise members' awareness of the content however, once again, by listening to members' observations, we believe that we must change direction with this provision. We understand that the information on the Porth is valuable for you as members (especially any new member), but the means of reaching the information is cumbersome. We are currently working on simplifying this, aiming to provide you with a resolution in 2019/20.

#### **Reviewing Scrutiny Arrangements:**

The new scrutiny arrangements were established in March 2017, commencing with implementing the new model from May 2017 onwards. At that time, it was pledged that we would review the provision during 2018/19, and this work commenced in January 2019. The work is still currently ongoing, and the working group will report on the outcomes in due course.

#### **Specific Information Sessions:**

Sharing accurate information in a timely manner is a challenge that the Council must face and, in an effort to attempt to share information with all members, a number of information sharing sessions were held on specific topics this year. Some of the sessions had been identified through the scrutiny process, where there was a feeling that knowledge of the field is relevant to all members and, therefore, specific sessions were arranged, e.g. updates with the North Wales Economic Growth bid, developments in the world of Education and what was being done to prepare for Brexit. Additionally, specific sessions were arranged on the savings - these sessions were held across the County for all members.

#### **Induction and support arrangements for the new Cabinet Members**

You will be aware that two new Cabinet Members have been appointed from 1 April onwards. We have developed an induction programme for the new members as a result of discussions with other Cabinet members. We congratulate both members and wish them well in their new roles.

#### **Rationalising number of meetings**

Whilst reviewing the committee's work since May 2017, committee members decided that it would be wise to reduce the number of meetings held and use the time allocated to develop support for members. Therefore, the committee will meet three rather than four times during 2019/20.

## What is in the pipeline for 2019/20?

However, there is always room for improvement. There is always room for improvement, and the schemes below are in the pipeline to improve the provision for Elected Members in 2019/20.

### **Diversity Project:**

We are still aware that the Council's membership does not reflect the cross-section of the County's population. A sub-group of the Democratic Services Committee has already been formed to attempt to look at ways of encouraging more young people, women, disabled people and people from minority backgrounds to consider standing to become a Councillor. This work will continue in 2019/20.

### **Porth (members' Portal):**

It has already been noted that the use of the Porth is not very high, however members had noted that the information contained is very useful. As we are aware that the platform for using the porth is not user-friendly, it is intended to look at establishing a different platform, which is much more user-friendly.

### **Information Technology:**

The world of technology does not stay still for very long. It is certain that there will be technical considerations to be addressed during the year.

**As I noted above, much of what needs to be developed in terms of support for the Elected Members is in your hands. Therefore, I ask you to get in touch if you have any issue that, in your opinion, needs to be addressed or that would improve the provision that is available for all members.**

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>9 APRIL 2019</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>FINANCIAL REMUNERATION FOR ELECTED MEMBERS</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>To provide information from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Annual Report to elected members</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>Vera Jones, Democratic Services Manager</b>

## BACKGROUND

1. The annual report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales has been published (February 2019). Committee Members discussed and submitted a response to the draft consultation by the Panel at its meeting on 25th October 2018. The Panel's annual report will be implemented for the 2019/20 financial year.

### [Annual Report 2019-20](#)

- 1.2 The main points from the report are as follows:
  - Increase of £268 in the basic salary for all elected Members (increasing from £13,600 to £13,868 - equivalent to 1.97%) from April 2019. In its report, the Panel explains its reasoning, noting that *"backbench members' salaries have remained relatively static over the last 9 years and, in real terms, have fallen significantly."*
  - An increase in the salaries of the Leader, Deputy Leader and Executive Members by £800 (inclusive of the £268 increase in basic salary). The Panel notes *"Despite a slight increasing trend in senior salary levels since 2012, which has been lower than any measure of inflation, the senior salaries remain lower than they were ten years ago."*
  - The other senior salaries payable will receive the increase as per the basic salary increase as follows:
    - Chairs of Committees (£22,568)
    - Leader of the Largest Opposition Group (£22,568)
  - The civic salaries have also been set at £22,568 for Civic Head and £17,568 for deputy Civic Head.
- 1.3 As is reported annually, the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales decides the salary level for all Elected Members in Wales in an independent manner.

- 1.4 If an elected Member should decide not to accept the salary, then he/she must declare in writing to the Head of Democratic Services, see clause 3.19 which notes as follows:

*“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 there is transparency in this process so any possible suggestion that members are put under pressure to forego some of the salaries is avoided.”*

### **Reimbursement of the cost of Care**

- 1.5 The Panel once again this year wishes to encourage Elected Members who are entitled to claim the reimbursement of the cost of care.

*It is noted “From the discussions during our visits to the principal councils it is clear that very few members are utilising the provision in the framework to reimburse the costs of care. It appears that some members are still reluctant to claim all they are entitled to support them in their role, because of concerns about the adverse publicity this can attract (see Annex 4 for the publication options). We urge Democratic Services Committees to take steps to encourage and facilitate greater use of this element of our framework so that members concerned are not financially disadvantaged.”*

### **RECOMMENDATION**

3. Members are requested to note the above information.

# Agenda Item 7

MEETING OF THE	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	9 April 2019
SUBJECT	(Draft) work programme 2019/20
PURPOSE	Submit a draft of the work programme for 2019/20 to receive observations from the Members.
AUTHOR	Geraint Owen, Head of Democratic Services

1. At the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee on 12 February 2019, the members decided to hold three annual meetings of the Committee in order to ensure the best use of time and resources.
2. In considering this change, the need to plan the time sensibly was noted, and therefore to this end, the draft work programme below is submitted for the consideration of the Committee.
3. I continuously emphasise to members to report concerns about the support provided to you in your role or, indeed, any ideas on how it can be improved. Members can report to me or the Committee Chair, so that further consideration can be given to them.
4. Please note that a specific item is included on the programme below for the meeting held on 27 June 2019 to discuss matters arising by members.
5. Looking at the items that have been submitted to committee since May 2017, it is recommended that the following main items can be considered for the 2019/20 year.

<b>27/06/19 Meeting</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Election of Vice-chair</li><li>• Matters arising by members *</li><li>• Webcasting</li></ul>
<b>19/11/19 Meeting</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consultation of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales</li><li>• Annual reports of elected members (review the preparation for the next round) Members' Portal - an update on the development</li></ul>
<b>09/04/19 Meeting</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Annual Report of the Head of Democratic Services</li><li>• The final report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales</li><li>• The Council's annual calendar</li><li>• Member Training</li><li>• Personal Development interviews</li></ul>

There are some items that are not currently programmed, but it is anticipated that the below matters will be submitted:

- The developments of the diversity sub-group
- Information Technology
- Consultation on legislation involving Local Government