
DEMOCRACY SERVICES COMMITTEE, 17/06/2025

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Anne Lloyd-Jones (Chair), Annwen Hughes, Arwyn Herald Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Dewi Owen, Ioan Thomas, Edgar Wyn Owen, Llio Elenid Owen, Beca Roberts.

Officers present:

Vera Jones (Democracy and Language Service Manager), Annes Sion (Democracy Team Leader), Mari Edwards (Learning and Development Manager), Cara Williams (Member Development Officer), Ian Jones (Head of Corporate Services) and Iwan Edwards (Democracy Services Officer).

1. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor Dewi Owen was elected as Vice-Chair of the Democracy Services Committee for 2025/26.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Anwen J. Davies, Cai Larsen, Stephen Churchman and Sian Williams.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

4. URGENT ITEMS

No urgent issues were noted.

5. MINUTES

The Chair accepted the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 18 February 2025, as a true record.

6. DRAFT OF THE ANNUAL REPORT BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRACY SERVICES

An annual draft report was submitted by the Head of Democracy Services. It was explained that the Head of Service is required to report annually to the Full Council, outlining the support available to Councillors.

It was noted that this year's annual report was concise and focused on the developments made during the year rather than outlining all the support available to Members. In addition, it was explained that the report outlined the main priorities for the year ahead.

It was explained that it was currently a draft report with an opportunity to comment on its content and form. It was emphasised that the report submitted to the Full Council would include a recommendation to establish an eighth Core Training Area for Elected Members, namely Violence against women, as supported by the Committee in February 2025. Committee members were thanked for their constructive comments during the meetings over the past year. It was noted that several teams were assisting the Head of Department in providing the best possible support and all were thanked for their hard work.

It was reported that work was being done to look at modernising the provision in the chambers . It was noted that a considerable amount of work had to be done in the background to hold multi-location meetings from the chambers.

Thanks were given for the report and for the straightforward and effective way it had been presented.

A Member noted that there was a lack of public reporting on the good work being carried out by the Democracy Service. It was mentioned that the service had been extremely helpful to him following his sight loss and that he would not have been able to continue in his role as a Councillor without this support. The member was thanked for his comments, and it was noted that his comments would be added to the report at his request.

It was noted that it was very useful to have the photographs and names of officers in the Democracy Service as part of the report.

Concern was expressed about scrutiny meetings due to the lack of time to scrutinise issues in depth. The comment was accepted, and it was noted that it would be of assistance to the department if the Member provided examples to look at them individually. It was noted that this was a problem across the Council and was not specific to one scrutiny committee.

DECISION

To accept the report and agree to make minor modifications before recommending it to Full Council for adoption.

7. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROVISION

A report was submitted by the Learning and Development Manager, providing an update on the Learning and Development provision for Members. It was explained that 7 core areas have been identified for Members, namely the core training that all Members need to undertake to be able to carry out their work effectively.

It was noted that consistent encouragement had been given to Members to complete core training, however, there had been very little increase in the numbers that had completed these since February 2025. It was explained that recordings of the 7 core titles were available on the members' intranet and this resource was on-line to make things easier for Members to access the titles to complete them in their spare time.

It was clarified that the Violence training, which was the eighth core area, would be operational following the Full Council's decision in July 2025. Recordings of the training would also be available on the members' intranet.

A Member expressed their astonishment that so many core courses remained uncompleted, particularly as recordings were available on the Members' intranet. It was noted that information about which members had completed the core training had been live on the Council's website since April and was therefore in the public domain.

DECISION

To accept the report, noting the observations submitted.

The meeting commenced at 2.00pm and concluded at 2.40pm.