

CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Democratic Services Committee

Date: 16.12.2022

Title: Timing of Meetings - Survey

Purpose of report: To consider a report on a proposed Survey of Members in relation to the timing of Meetings

Background

Section 6 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires that all Local authorities undertake a survey of Councillors regarding the timing and frequency of Council meetings at least once during each term of administration. The last survey by Ceredigion County Council was held in 2017/18. The outcome of this survey was as follows:

32 Members responded to the survey (76% of all Members).

The main survey conclusions are as follows:

Timing of meetings

- 87.5% of respondents stated that meetings should continue to be mainly held on Wednesdays and Thursdays;
- 47% of respondents stated that they would prefer Council meetings to start at 10.00am; 38% stated that they would prefer them to start at 9.30am;
- 69% of respondents stated that they would prefer Committee meetings to start at 9.30am.

Recent Developments

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires that principal councils make and publish arrangements for the purpose of ensuring that local authority meetings are able to be held by means of any equipment or other facility which enables persons who are not in the same place to attend the meetings. Due to the additional time required to set up hybrid meetings and testing the majority of meetings have commenced at 10.00am with the exception of the Governance and Audit Committee which commences at 9:00am. Whilst the 2022/23 survey does include an option for holding meetings during the evening, consideration will need to be given to additional costs associated with keeping the building open and heated for a longer period of time, and additional staffing costs including Democratic Services Officers, ICT support Officers, Facilities Officers, First Aiders and Fire Marshalls before any decision can be made to hold meetings outside of normal working hours. Currently the Harbour Users Groups meet during the evenings, however these meetings are held remotely and do not have an option for attendance in person.

Recommendations: That a survey of Members be undertaken in order to assess their preferences for the timing of meetings, as per Appendix A of the report

Appendices: Appendix A – proposed survey 2022/23

Background documents: Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

Name: Lowri Edwards

Job Title: Corporate Lead Officer: Democratic Services

Date: 21.10.2022

CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE – SURVEY OF MEMBERS 2022/23

In accordance with the statutory guidance issued by the Welsh Government under Section 6(1) of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, the Council is required to survey Members in respect of the times and intervals at which meetings of a Local Authority are held.

Q1. Name: _____

Q2a. What weekdays are you available to attend Meetings?

Monday	yes/no
Tuesday	yes/no
Wednesday	yes/no
Thursday	yes/no
Friday	yes/no

Q2b. If you answered NO above, please explain why you cannot attend on those days (e.g. due to any employment commitments, caring responsibilities, age, gender, disability, religious beliefs etc.)

Q2c. Please state in order of preference with 1 being the highest and 5 being the lowest which are your preferred dates for attending meetings?

Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	

Q3a. What times of the day would you prefer the following meetings to start? (please tick ✓ for your preference)

Full Council Meetings:

Morning	9.30am	
	10.00am	
Afternoon	2.00pm	
	2.30pm	
	3.00pm	
Evening	5.00pm	
	5.30pm	
	6.00pm	
	6.30pm	
	7.00pm	

Committee Meetings (Overview and Scrutiny; Development Control; Licensing; Governance and Audit)

Morning	9.30am	
	10.00am	
Afternoon	2.00pm	
	2.30pm	
	3.00pm	
Evening	5.00pm	
	5.30pm	
	6.00pm	
	6.30pm	
	7.00pm	

Q3b. Please explain why you have selected your preferences above and if particular times are not convenient for you (e.g. due to any employment commitments, caring responsibilities, age, gender, disability, religious beliefs etc.)

The findings of the survey will be considered by the Democratic Services Committee with recommendations presented to Council in due course.