

# CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

**Report to:** Council

**Date of meeting:** 14 December 2023

**Title:** Chair's Announcements

**Purpose of the report:** For Council to consider the proposed amendment to the Council Agenda from 'Personal Matters' to 'Chair's Announcements'

**For:** Decision

**Cabinet Portfolio and Cabinet Member:**

**Councillor Bryan Davies, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Democratic Services, Policy, Performance and People and Organisation**

**Introduction**

During a meeting of Group Leaders it was proposed that the 'Personal Matters' item on the Council Agenda is changed to 'Chair's Announcements'. This was considered by the Democratic Services Committee during its meeting dated 09/06/2023 and it was recommended for approval by Council. It was also considered by the Constitution Working Group during its meeting dated 26/09/2023.

The Democratic Services Committee considered a review of practice at other Local Authorities, and the consistency and appropriateness of matters raised.

**Review of practice by other Local Authorities**

A review of all Wales Local Authority practice was carried out during May of this year. The sample included one standard Council agenda per Local authority, published on the internet. It was noted that from this sample no other Local Authority include 'Personal Matters' as a Council agenda. Below are a sample of alternative agenda items noted:

- a) To receive announcements from the Chairman, Leader, Members of the Cabinet or the Chief Executive.
- b) to receive announcements from:
  - (i) Mayor (or Presiding Officer)
  - (ii) Cabinet Members
  - (iii) Chief Executive
- c) Chair's Announcements
- d) Reports from the Chair
- e) Announcements / Personal Issues
  - (i) Presiding Member
  - (ii) Chairman / Deputy Presiding President
- f) Announcements from the Leader or Chief Executive

## **Consistency and appropriateness of matters raised**

The Democratic Services Committee noted that a considerable amount of the Council's meeting is taken up with personal matters, with the majority of items relating to congratulations and condolences for residents on a ward by ward basis. It was noted that there are considerable inconsistencies, especially in relation to birthday wishes and wishing staff well upon their retirement.

## **Ceredigion County Council Constitution**

The Council's Constitution references Chair's announcements as follows:

### Annual Meeting of the Council, 1.1 Timing and Business

*The annual meeting will:*

*1.1.6 receive any announcements from the Chairperson and/or Chief Executive*

### Ordinary Meetings

*Ordinary Meetings will*

*2.4 receive any announcements from the Chairperson, Chief Executive, Leader and/or Cabinet Members*

Members of the Constitution Working Group considered the wording of the Constitution in relation to the proposed amendments during its meeting dated 26 September 2023 and concluded that no amendment was required.

## **Proposal**

It is therefore recommended that the Personal Matters agenda item is superseded by a 'Chair's Announcements' on all of the Council Meeting agendas. All Members will be asked to notify the Chair via the relevant Democratic Services Officer of any matters that they may wish to put forward for consideration by the Chair. All matters will need to be presented at least 2 clear working days prior to the meeting, and the Chair will consider these matters for inclusion in a summary of these announcements during the Council meeting.

The Chair will have the final discretion in considering the relevance of matters put forward, and whilst this is not an exhaustive list, it should provide a guide to Members. Items for the Chair's Announcements may include:

- Congratulating individuals selected to represent Wales or winning a National competition. Members should however try to avoid excessive duplication e.g. each time an individual is selected to the team, per game;
- Personal matters relating to Members, e.g. condolences on the death of a close relative, to wish them a speedy recovery or congratulations on a wedding, or the birth of a child or grandchild

It is recommended that the Chairman's Announcement avoids anything related to staff, except congratulations on winning awards related to the work of the Council, or condolences with Chief Officers if a member of staff has died in office. It is also recommended that the Announcements avoids local matters such as birthday congratulations, winning local competitions, passing examinations etc which are best dealt with at Ward level or by the relevant Town/Community Council.

It is acknowledged that some matters may arise at the last minute and that it may not be possible to provide 2 clear working days for presenting this information. In such

circumstances, it is proposed that the Member notify the relevant Democratic Services Officer at the earliest possible opportunity, prior to the commencement of the meeting, who will then discuss it with the Chair.

**Wellbeing of Future Generations:**

**Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why.**

No, this is not a policy or change to strategy.

**Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:**

Long term: N/A  
Collaboration: N/A  
Involvement: N/A  
Prevention: N/A  
Integration: N/A

**Recommendation(s):**

**For Council to approve the amendment to the Council Agenda from 'Personal Matters' to 'Chair's Announcements'**

**Reasons for decision:**

**To ensure consistency and appropriateness of matters raised, and reduce the amount of time spent on this item.**

**Overview and Scrutiny:** N/A

**Policy Framework:** Ceredigion County Council's Constitution

**Corporate Well-being Objectives:** N/A

**Finance and Procurement implications:** N/A

**Legal Implications:** N/A

**Staffing implications:** N/A

**Property / asset implications:** N/A

**Risk(s):** N/A

**Statutory Powers:** N/A

**Background Papers:** N/A

**Appendices:** N/A

**Corporate Lead Officer:** Lowri Edwards, Corporate Lead Officer, Democratic Services

**Reporting Officer:** Nia Jones, Corporate Manager, Democratic Services

**Date:** 01/10/2023