

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Democratic Services Committee
held remotely via video-conference on Friday, 31 May 2024**

PRESENT; Councillors Elizabeth Evans (Chair), Councillors Endaf Edwards, Eryl Evans, Gwyn James and Gareth Lloyd

Officers in attendance: Elin Prysor and Nia Jones

(10.00am - 11.00am)

Councillor Elizabeth Evans, Chair of the Democratic Services Committee gave an outline of the role and function of the Democratic Services Committee. She welcomed Councillor Eryl Evans to her first meeting, and thanked Councillor Caryl Roberts for her contribution to this committee over the past two years.

1 Apologies

Lowri Edwards, Corporate Lead Officer, Democratic Services apologised for her inability to attend the meeting due to other Council commitments.

2 Disclosure of personal / prejudicial interests

None.

3 To consider the Minutes of the previous meeting and any matters arising

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm as true the minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2024.

Matters arising

Item 4: It was noted that the broadcasting of the Development Management Committee commenced in May 2024.

Item 5: It was noted that a recommendation had been sent to Officers of the Development Management Committee to consider the application of the time-allowance for Councillors representing Multi-Member wards, and that this would be considered as part of the current work being undertaken to review operational procedures by the Task and Finish group. It was also noted that the Protocols for Councillors representing Multi-Member wards had been circulated to the relevant Members.

Item 8: It was noted that the Councillor Guide on Well-being and Personal Safety had been circulated to all Members.

Item 9: It was noted that the Guidance for Chairs/Vice-Chairs on adjourning, suspending or terminating a meeting had been circulated to all relevant Members.

4 To consider a report on an addition to the Constitution - Part 4 Document D - Cabinet Procedure Rues - Emergency Decisions

Elin Prysor, Corporate Lead Officer for Legal and Governance presented the report to the Committee outlining the background, and the considerations given to the proposed amendments to the Constitution, which are highlighted in Appendix 1 of the report.

She noted that at the outbreak of the Covid pandemic, it had not been possible to conduct in-person Cabinet meetings for a short period, and that

Records of Urgent Decision Notices signed by the then Leader and Deputy Leader in event of their absence were published on the Council's website.

Advances in technology and legislative changes during this time, facilitated remote meetings which allowed for public meetings to be resumed. Subsequently, it was considered that there was a need for a review the Cabinet Procedure Rules in order to strengthen the Cabinet emergency delegation process within the Constitution.

A proposed amendment was drafted and had been considered by the Constitution Working Group, the Leader and Deputy Leader of Cabinet, Group Leaders and the Leadership Group.

Following discussion, Members noted that the draft text clearly stipulated the separation between the political mandate aspect of Executive decision making, and that of the operational aspects of emergency response which are covered by the Civil Contingencies Act.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the contents of the report, and to recommend that Council approve the addition of the text in Appendix 1.

5 To consider a report on Chair's Announcements - other Committees

Nia Jones, Corporate Manager, Democratic Services presented the report to the committee noting that the proposal by the Democratic Services Committee to supersede the 'Personal Matters' item on the Council agenda with 'Chair's Announcements' was approved by Council on 14 December 2023 by a majority vote.

During a subsequent meeting of the Cabinet, Members asked whether this amendment should be extended to include all Committees. She noted that the purpose of this report was to facilitate a discussion, to glean the views of Members of the Democratic Services Committee.

Members noted that there is currently disparity between committees, and that there should be a standard approach across all. They noted that the Council is the appropriate forum for all announcements, and that Members should be encouraged to filter their messages via the Chair of Council and avoid duplication by announcing at other committees also. However, they noted that they did not wish to restrict Members from submitting items for the consideration of the Chair at other committees if they are urgent, for instance noting their condolences following a death.

Councillor Elizabeth Evans noted that the Chair does have discretion in terms of the announcements, and it was agreed by all Members that Councillors should notify the Chair in advance of the meeting of any urgent matters that they wish to include, as per the Council meeting.

Following discussion is was **REOLVED** to recommend to Council that:

- The protocol for Chair Announcements is replicated by the Cabinet and all other Committee structures, and that the relevant Chairs are ably to apply their own discretion where there are exceptional

circumstances, and that Chairs are notified of all announcements in advance of the meeting.

To consider the Democratic Services Committee Annual Report

Nia Jones, Corporate Manager, Democratic Services presented the report to the Committee, noting that subject to comments by Members of the committee, the report will be presented to Council during its meeting on 17 July 2024.

Members thanked the Officers for preparing the Annual Report that is attractive and easy to read. Councillor Elizabeth Evans also thanked Members of the Committee for all their hard work during the year which has contributed to the delivery of this report.

7 To consider items for the Forward Work Programme

A report on the guidance for Members representing External Bodies will be presented at the next meeting of the Democratic Services Committee.

8 Any other matter which the Chairperson decides is for the urgent attention of the Committee

None.

**Confirmed at the Meeting of the Democratic Services Committee held
on 5 December 2024**

Chairman:_____

Date:_____