

# DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

## Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2014

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillor Vaughan Hughes (Chair)  Councillors Victor Hughes, R LI Jones, R G Parry OBE and Dylan Rees
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Interim Head of Democratic Services (JHJ), Head of Function (Resources) and Section 151 Officer (CW), Committee Officer (MEH), Administrative Assistant/Committee Officer (SC).
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	Councillors Derlwyn Rees Hughes, R.Meirion Jones, Dafydd Rhys Thomas
<b>ALSO PRESENT:</b>	Councillors Trefor Lloyd Hughes, Aled Morris Jones

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The Chair expressed his deepest sympathy with Mr Ieuan Wyn Jones, the former Assembly Member and previous Member of Parliament for Ynys Môn in the loss of his wife Eirian. Members and officers stood in silence as a mark of respect.

### **1 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

It was agreed that due to the lack of attendance at the meeting it was RESOLVED to postpone the election of Vice-Chair until the next meeting.

### **2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

No declaration of interest received.

### **3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2013 were confirmed as correct.

### **4 CONSULTATION ON BUDGET PROPOSALS 2014/15**

The Interim Head of Democratic Services gave a summary of the proposed savings in relation to Democratic Services. He noted that the Corporate Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> January, 2014 has scrutinised the budget savings affecting Corporate Services and an extract from the minutes was attached to the report to this Committee for information.

Members of the Committee raised the following main issues with regard to proposed savings :-

- Concerns raised at the proposals affecting the civic and ceremonial budget and impact on the annual civic events programme. In relation to this budget the Interim Head of Democratic Services advised that the main expenditure relates to the Chairman's Civic Sunday Service and the Annual re-enactment of the Freedom of the County Ceremony to the RAF. Members considered that there was scope to review the expenditure by reducing associated catering costs;
- Concerns raised at the proposals affecting the Anglesey Show. The Interim Head of Democratic Services advised that the main area of expenditure was the hiring of the Councils marquee at the Show and associated service costs. Members considered that there was scope to review expenditure associated within this budget;

- The deletion of the vacant post of Scrutiny Officer was raised. It was noted that the Williams Report published recently highlighted the importance of scrutiny, and the Councils scrutiny arrangements should be adequately supported. In addition reference was made to a need to review the number of items on Scrutiny Committee agendas to allow for meaningful scrutiny. It was advised that this would be discussed further with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of each Committee as part of reviewing work programmes.

**RESOLVED to accept the report and to forward the above issues raised to the Executive.**

## **5 WEBCASTING OF MEETINGS AND REMOTE ATTENDANCE**

Submitted -The report by the Interim Head of Democratic Services. A report setting out the context and proposals for webcasting of meetings and remote attendance was considered by this Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2013.

The Interim Head of Democratic Services reported that the County Council resolved on 10<sup>th</sup> October to proceed with the webcasting of meetings for a 2 year pilot. It is proposed to commence webcasting of the Executive on 17<sup>th</sup> March followed by the Planning and Orders Committee and the full Council. Training will need to be arranged for Members and Staff on the webcasting provision. Following a competitive tendering process Public-i was awarded the contract. Public-i are already providing a service for Cardiff, Carmarthenshire and Wrexham Councils.

He further stated that final guidance on remote attendance was expected by the end of the month by Welsh Government. This will need to be reported to the Executive and Council in due course to make provision in the Constitution which allows remote attendance for members so they can take part in meetings if required.

**RESOLVED**

- **To note progress as detailed within the report on the broadcasting of meetings to commence in March 2014.**
- **To note the current position in relation to remote attendance.**

## **6 TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT**

Submitted - The report by the Interim Head of Democratic Services stating that the Welsh Government has allocated funding to County Councils to offer a grant of up to £500 each for town and community councils, including those who already have a website, to be spent on website development.

The purpose of this grant is to assist town and community councils to prepare for the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, which contains provisions which would require each community council to publish information on a website.

The Interim Head of Democratic Services at the meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 reported that £20,000 of funding had been allocated to assist Anglesey's town and community councils to develop websites and the allocation was being distributed.

The Interim Head of Democratic Services explained the current position regarding the grant:-

- 23 councils out of 40 have claimed the grant;
- 6 had intending to claim the grant or are considering the matter;
- 11 did not intend to claim the grant.

He explained that the Welsh Government may be relaxing the guidelines terms of using of the grant and further guidance was expected from the Welsh Government.

**RESOLVED - To note the current position.**

## **7 MEMBER TRAINING DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Submitted -The report by the Senior Human Resources Development Officer providing an update of the progress of the development opportunities offered to Elected Members since their election in May 2013.

The Development Plan for 2013/14 adopted in May 2013, is an evolving document, amended to reflect the needs of Elected Members and the Authority. The training included sessions for Elected Members, Lay Members, Town and Community Councils on the Code of Conduct.

The majority of training identified on the development plan has been completed. A total of 34 formal sessions were organised between May and December 2013.

As previously reported, the Authority is committed to further support Members in their roles, by introducing Personal Development Reviews (PDR), this will also meet the requirements of the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development.

The Senior Human Resources Development Officer provided an update on the report on the Development Plan submitted to Council last May.

In relation to delivery she noted that some training has been provided by Unllais Cymru for Town and Community Councils. In respect of training for elected members, officers have been delivering some of training, thereby reducing costs and also the WLGA.

Members questioned the possibility of providing training through the medium of Welsh. The Officer responded that the training was provided through the WLGA, which is free of charge. Every effort will be made to arrange Welsh speaking training provision.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

**COUNCILLOR VAUGHAN HUGHES  
CHAIR**