

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 13th December, 2017

- PRESENT:** Councillor Robert Llewelyn Jones (Chair)
- Councillors Richard Griffiths, Vaughan Hughes, Carwyn Jones, Robert G Parry OBE, FRAGS, Dylan Rees (from 2.40 pm), Dafydd Roberts
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Head of Democratic Services
Committee Officer (SC)
- APOLOGIES:** Councillor Eric Wyn Jones
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1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

2 MINUTES

Submitted for confirmation - the draft minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee held on the 27th September, 2017.

Matters arising from the minutes:-

Item 3 – Welsh Government Consultation - Electoral Reform in Local Government in Wales

The Head of Democratic Services reported that following the Consultation on electoral reform, the Welsh Government proposes to reduce the voting age to 16 for local elections.

RESOLVED that the above minutes be confirmed as correct.

3 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES DRAFT REPORT 2018/19

Submitted - a report by the Head of Democratic Services on the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP)'s Draft Annual Report for 2018/19. Group Leaders were consulted on the proposals.

The following were proposed:-

- To increase the Councillor salary by 1.49% to £13,600. This represents an increase of £200 in the basic salary.
- No increase for senior salaries.

- Removal of the two levels of salary for Executive Members and Committee Chairs.
- The IRP remains concerned that many Members are still not claiming their entitlements for reimbursement of costs of care.
- Introduction of new sickness absence for senior Members.
- The IRP is concerned that Councillors do not consistently receive adequate IT or telephone equipment and/or support from Councils. (The Democratic Services Committee has responsibility in authorities to oversee these matters).
- Clarification of Job sharing Executive Members (an Executive salary can be split between 2 Members in a 'job share' arrangement).
- Community and Town Councils – proposals to allow and/or require the payment of special responsibility allowance based on the size of community/town council.

It was noted that Group Leaders have welcomed the removal of the two levels of salary for Executive and Committee Chairs.

RESOLVED to note the IRP's proposals for 2018/19 as detailed in the report.

4 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT CHARTER

Submitted - a report by the Head of Democratic Services on the WLGA's Wales Charter for Member Support and Development. The Charter was granted to the Council in 2014, and aims to provide a broad framework for local planning, self-assessment, action and review, and the sharing of good and innovative practice.

The Head of Democratic Services reported that the award was granted for a period of three years, and the Council will seek reassessment in 2018, by preparing a self-assessment against set criteria prepared by the WLGA. He stated that a further update will be provided to this Committee in March, 2018.

RESOLVED to endorse the action proposed in this report.

5 TIMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Submitted - a report by the Head of Democratic Services 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 review and survey Members at least once every term on the timing of meetings.

The Head of Democratic Services reported that following consultation with Group Leaders on 26th October, 2017, a survey was sent to all Member to obtain their views. Options included starting meetings at 10.00 am; 2.00 pm; 4.00 pm and 6.00 pm.

It was noted that 13 responses had been received (43%). Members of the Committee discussed the options available, and agreed to adhere to the present arrangement with both Scrutiny Committees commencing at 2.00 pm.

RESOLVED to recommend to the Council that no changes be made to the timing of meetings.

The meeting concluded at 3.00 pm

**COUNCILLOR ROBERT LL JONES
CHAIR**