

## ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL

<b>Meeting:</b>	Democratic Services Committee
<b>Date:</b>	18 September 2024
<b>Title of report:</b>	Consultation on the extension of job share provisions for elected members in non-executive roles.
<b>Report by:</b>	Head of Democratic Services
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To receive approval for the draft response.

### Background

1. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 contained provision to facilitate job-sharing arrangements in roles that form part of the executive of county councils.
2. This was implemented in Anglesey in March 2023 when the County Council agreed to change the constitution to allow one or more Members to share the position of Leader, Deputy Leader or as portfolio members of the Executive Committee. Subsequent job-sharing arrangements have been in place with two members sharing the position of deputy leader.
3. The Welsh Government has decided to consult on plans to expand the job-sharing provision to other senior roles as well, including committee chairs and vice-chairs. A link to the consultation can be found here - [Extension of job share provisions for elected members of principal councils to non-executive roles | GOV.WALES](#)
4. The Government believes that offering members options to share jobs can promote diversity, can establish career progression pathways and can help with work-life balance.

### Proposals

5. Executive committee job sharing arrangements are already in place, so the consultation does not deal with that issue. It also does not deal with job sharing in the case of all councillors (i.e. job sharing on the ballot paper). That is a

complex issue, and the Government intends to consult on the matter in the future.

6. Instead, this consultation deals specifically with the sharing of senior positions that are not part of the executive, for example the chair and vice-chair of the County Council, the chair and vice-chair of a committee of the Council, and the chair and vice-chair of a sub-committee of the Council.
7. The consultation explains what the practical arrangements would be in the event of job sharing. For example, it is proposed that those who job-share would have one vote between them and count as one person only for the purposes of quorum. Job sharers would also share allowances (if any are payable).
8. The law requires most county council committees to be politically balanced. That means committee seats should reflect the political make-up of the Council. The consultation explains that job-sharing arrangements should not affect the political balance of committees. So those who share jobs will need to be from the same political group, unless there are exceptional circumstances when that is not possible.
9. The Government intends to make regulations and publish guidance to provide more detailed guidance on the job-sharing arrangements.
10. If these arrangements come into force, Anglesey County Council's constitution will need to be amended to ensure consistency and appropriate guidance at a local level.

### **Draft response**

11. The draft response is in appendix 1, and indicates general support for the proposals. The principles of promoting diversity and the work-life balance of members are important and overall, the consultation deals successfully with the practical questions that arise with the job-share proposals.
12. The response states that further clarity is required on voting arrangements when two members share the position of Chairman, and both are also ordinary members of a committee. The Government is committed to producing further guidance, so that will be an opportunity to provide clarification.

### **Recommendation**

13. The Committee is asked to consider the contents of the draft response and agree for officers to submit the response by the 4 October 2024 deadline.

## Appendix 1

# Consultation on the extension of job share provisions for elected members of principal councils to non-executive roles

### Questions

Q1. We would be interested in any observations / comments you may have on the operation of job-share arrangements within executive roles within councils in Wales. Please insert in the box provided below.

At a Council meeting in March 2023, Anglesey County Council agreed to change its constitution to allow one or more Members to share the position of Leader, Deputy Leader or as portfolio members of the Executive Committee. Subsequent job-sharing arrangements have been in place with two members sharing the position of deputy leader.

Q2. Do you agree with the proposed approach for the voting arrangements for non-executive job-share partners and that the details of the approach should be set out in guidance?

Yes

No

If no, what alternative solution do you propose?

We agree with the proposed approach and welcome the commitment to develop guidance that will provide more detailed clarification.

Are there any further issues you would like to comment on in relation to voting?

The proposal is clear in circumstances where two members share the position of chair (or vice-chair) but are not otherwise members of a committee. I.e. one vote between the two members.

But it would be useful to have clarification on the proposal when two members share the position of chair (or vice-chair) and both members are also members of the Committee. I.e. in such a situation would both members would have a vote?

Q3. Do you agree that under normal circumstances job-share arrangements should not impact upon the political balance of committees?

Yes

No

Q4. Do you agree that in those cases where a job-share is made up of partners from different parties, the approach to calculating the membership of the committee should be agreed by all parties?

Yes

No

If no, please provide comments:

Agree, but the priority will be to try to ensure that job-sharing arrangements involve partners from the same political group.

Q5. We would like to know your views on the effects the proposed change would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

- What effects do you think there would be?
- How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

It is unlikely to have a significant impact in Ynys Mon where the vast majority of members are able to speak Welsh, and a simultaneous translation service is available at all County Council meetings.

Q6. We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

No further comments.