

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

Democratic Services Committee
15th July, 2013**REPORT AUTHOR:** Interim Head of Democratic Services**SUBJECT:** Promoting Local Democracy

REPORT FOR: Information / Decision

- 1.1 Welsh Government in May 2012 issued a White Paper entitled “Promoting Local Democracy” for consultation. Following the consultation process this has now become the Local Democracy (Wales).
- 1.2 The provisions of the Bill include the following:
- Reform the organisation and function of the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales to include:
 - changing its name to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales,
 - amending its constitution, functions and remit,
 - amending the duties of the Commission to monitor the arrangements for local government and conduct reviews where appropriate,
 - the provision to review the membership of certain public bodies;
 - Provisions regarding the duties of principal councils to monitor the arrangements for communities in their area and to conduct reviews where appropriate;
 - Amend the provisions of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 in relation to:
 - the functions of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales and how it prepares reports - including the need for Councils to publish details of all income received by councillors in relation to public offices held by them;
 - Audit Committees – amending the provisions to require that councillor membership on an Audit Committee reflects the political balance within that Council;
 - Democratic Services Committee – extending the provision allowing Democratic Services Committees to undertake other matters which might be considered supportive of Members and their development such as training and development, annual reporting, remuneration and family absence of members;
 - Amending Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 to allow local authorities to establish joint Standards Committees;
 - Provisions enabling the Standards Committee or monitoring officer of a relevant authority to refer cases relating to conduct to the Standards Committee or monitoring officer of another relevant authority;
 - Improving access to information about Town and Community Councils on the internet and that they are contactable by email by May 2015 – i.e. contact and membership details and records of proceedings available on the internet and the clerk available by email;

- Allow an amendment to the Local Government Act 1972 allowing principal councils to appoint different members from their membership to act as a Presiding Member or Deputy Presiding Member – i.e. separating the role of Mayor / Chairman who will conduct purely civic functions and the Presiding Member to preside over meetings of the Council;
- Restating and extending the powers of local authorities in relation to promoting and opposing private Bills;
- Provisions relating to remote attendance at meetings of principal councils;

1.3 The Bill has been passed by the Welsh Assembly at its Plenary Session on 18th June, 2013 and will be presented for Royal Assent following the expiry of the period of intimation. Further updates will be provided to the Committee as specific guidance / regulations arising from the Bill are issued by Welsh Government.

1.4 The Council will need to consider the requirements of the Bill together with any associated Regulations and Guidance and review its Constitution accordingly to take account of these requirements.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
(i) That the report be noted. (ii) That the requirements of the Bill and associated Regulations / Guidance be taken into account in reviews of the Council's Constitution.	(i) To advise the Committee of new Legislation / Regulations from Welsh Government. (ii) To update the Council's Constitution to take account of new Legislative requirements and guidance.

Relevant Policy (ies):	
Within Policy:	Y / N
Within Budget:	Y / N

Relevant Local Member(s):	
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Clive Pinney
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	When Bill receives Royal Assent / As Regulations / Guidance is issued

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Background Papers used to prepare Report: