

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE  
HELD AT COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS  
ON FRIDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2013**

**PRESENT:** County Councillor Mrs S. Davies [Chairman]

County Councillors P.J. Ashton, Mrs D. Bailey, Dr G.J. Bowker, Mrs L.V. Corfield, S. Davies, D.O. Evans, D.C. Jones, P.C. Pritchard, Mrs D.G. Thomas, T. Turner and D.H. Williams.

<b>1.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES</b>	<b>DSC39-2013</b>
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors M.J. Jones and P.E. Lewis.

<b>2.</b>	<b>MINUTES</b>	<b>DSC40-2013</b>
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The Chairman was authorised to sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2013.

The following was noted:

- The 2014 Council diary had been produced and would be distributed to Members.
- New Model Constitution – to manage this process changes would be considered in small sections by officers and brought to Committee as required.
- Family Absences – training for members regarding family absences would be provided on receipt of the legislation.
- Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees arrangements – the Independent Review Panel Wales had recently issued its report for 2014. Officers undertook to review whether the question had been addressed in this report.
- Personal Development Reviews [PDRS] – 16 Members received senior salaries, two had undertaken their PDRs in the pilot, six others had completed their PDR to date, four further meetings had been arranged and it was hoped to complete all by mid October.

<b>3.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>	<b>DSC41-2013</b>
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County Councillor D.O. Evans declared a prejudicial interest in DSC45-2013 as his daughter was a lay member of the Standards Committee.

Wyn Richards, Scrutiny Manager left the meeting when the following item was considered.

<b>4.</b>	<b>INTERIM HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES</b>	<b>DSC42-2013</b>
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The Solicitor to the Council advised that a new job description was being developed to take account of this role and once agreed would be advertised for expressions of interest. The Committee would appoint to this role. The Solicitor to the Council recommended that Wyn Richard's appointment as Interim Head of Democratic Services be extended for a further three months.

**RESOLVED that Wyn Richards, Scrutiny Manager be re-appointed for a further three months as the Interim Head of Democratic Services.**

Wyn Richards, Scrutiny Manager returned to the meeting room.

County Councillor P. Pritchard arrived.

The Chairman agreed to change the order of the Agenda.

<b>8.</b>	<b>DESIGNATED PERSONS ORDER (NUMBER PARA 1) – CONSULTATION DOCUMENT</b>	<b>DSC46-2013</b>
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The Committee considered the report of the Interim Head of Democratic Services (copy filed with the signed minutes).

The Committee noted that the Welsh Government's view was that scrutiny of the way public services worked together as a whole would provide effective challenge to and governance of, collaborative projects. The Committee made the following comments:

- It seemed this was scrutiny for the sake of scrutiny.
- It was not in the "gift" of one authority to seek changes in another authority
- The availability of members to undertake this role was questioned and the cost of the proposed system was of concern and how this extra cost would be met, especially in respect of collaborative scrutiny between Councils.
- Many of the organisations included in the proposals undertook their own scrutiny. Members questioned whether the Council's role should be to ensure that other organisations had scrutiny arrangements in place.
- Scrutiny was suggested of the health service in Wales but many health service users in Wales received health services from Trusts in England.
- The Authority should concentrate on scrutinising its own services and if the Welsh Government wanted scrutiny of wider services it should do this.
- There would need to be assistance provided by other organisations for some of this scrutiny e.g. Community Health Councils and Health Services.
- Partnership arrangements already exist with Registered Social Landlords.
- Town and Community Councils – accountability is secured by the democratic process.
- Town and Community Councils do not need such additional responsibilities.

It was noted that the proposals would also be discussed by the Joint Chairs and Vice Chairs Steering Group next week.

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<b>REASON FOR DECISION:</b>
<p><b>(i) That the Draft Designated Persons Order from Welsh Government be noted.</b></p> <p><b>(ii) that the draft comments be emailed to the Democratic Services Committee and Group Leaders for consideration prior to submission to Welsh Government as part of the consultation process.</b></p>	<p><b>(i) To update the Committee on new Legislation / Regulations / Guidance affecting the Council.</b></p> <p><b>(ii) To respond to the Consultation Exercise.</b></p>

<b>6.</b>	<b>MEMBERS' DIARY AND MEMBERS' SURVEY</b>	<b>DSC44-2013</b>
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The Committee considered the report of the Interim Head of Democratic Services (copy filed with the signed minutes).

Members were advised that in discussion with other Councils, it was found that most no longer produced paper diaries and operated electronic diaries. The Committee was asked to consider a review of the way the diary was produced with options being presented to the Committee.

The Committee noted that the Members' Survey had been emailed to Members the previous week.

In respect of the Members' diary a range of comments were noted and these and all associated costs would be considered as part of the review.

County Councillor G.W. Ratcliffe, Portfolio Holder, Corporate Delivery reported that as a result of the IT Scrutiny Review various IT equipment options for members were being tested.

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<b>REASON FOR DECISION:</b>
<p><b>(i) That the Committee approve a review of the Members' diary, looking at different options and associated information.</b></p> <p><b>(ii) That the results of the Members' Survey be collated and presented to the Committee once completed.</b></p>	<p><b>To review the information requirements of Members in diaries and associated information and to update processes for the production and delivery of that information.</b></p>

<b>5.</b>	<b>DISCONTINUATION OF PROVISION OF DESK TOP PRINTERS FOR MEMBERS</b>	<b>DSC43-2013</b>
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The Chairman welcomed County Councillor G.W. Ratcliffe, Portfolio Holder, Corporate Delivery to the meeting to discuss the decision to discontinue the provision of desk top printers for members.

The Committee noted that the decision to stop issuing printers to members was made by a previous Portfolio Holder in 2011. No provision had been made in the budget and no printers were provided to new members at the 2012 Election. As the decision had not been recorded by a previous Portfolio Holder, the current Portfolio Holder wanted to ensure that the appropriate record was made.

Members expressed a range of concerns regarding the loss of printers including the lack of information regarding the change, the fact that printers should be considered as an essential part of the equipment for members, the cost for members purchasing their own printers and the potential array of different printers used, the cost of replacement ink cartridges, whether this was equitable for all councillors, the impracticality of members travelling to collect their printing.

The Committee was concerned that a Portfolio Holder's decision had not been recorded appropriately. It was also considered that the Members' Induction Pack should also include details of the equipment Members would receive to enable them to undertake their role. It was noted that this Pack would be reviewed by the Member Development Working Group prior to the 2017 election.

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<b>REASON FOR DECISION:</b>
<p><b>That the Democratic Services Committee</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Recommends to Council that the previous policy to provide desk top printers to Councillors be reinstated</b></li> <li><b>2. Recommends to the Council's Management Team that when Portfolio Holders' decisions are made that the Democratic Services section must be advised of these decisions.</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. To enable Councillors to undertake their roles and to ensure equality</b></li> <li><b>2. To ensure that Portfolio Holders' decisions are recorded as required under the Council's Constitution</b></li> </ol>

County Councillor D.O. Evans having declared a prejudicial interest left the meeting room for the next item.

<b>7.</b>	<b>PAYMENTS TO CO-OPTED MEMBERS</b>	<b>DSC45-2013</b>
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The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director – Resources (copy filed with the signed minutes).

<b>RESOLVED:</b>	<b>REASON FOR DECISION:</b>
<b>To recommend to the County Council</b>	<b>To set the maximum number of</b>

<p>that following the review as agreed at the April meeting:</p> <p>(i) That the maximum number of days for which the Standards Committee Lay Members (excluding the Chair of the Committee) and Standards Sub-Committee Town and Community Council Representatives may be paid from the Annual Meeting in 2013 remain at 10 days.</p> <p>(ii) That the maximum number of days for which the Standards Committee Lay Member who is the Chair of the Committee may be paid from the Annual Meeting in 2013 be increased to 12 days.</p> <p>(iii) That the maximum number of days for which the Church Representatives may be paid from April 2013 remain at 15 days.</p> <p>(iv) That the maximum number of days for which the Parent Governor and the Audit Committee Lay Member may be paid from April 2013 be increased to 20 days.</p>	<p>days for which co-opted members may be paid in any one year as required by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Report – December 2012.</p>
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County Councillor D.O. Evans returned to the meeting room.

9.	<b>JOINT CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS STEERING GROUP</b>	<b>DSC47-2013</b>
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The Committee received the notes of the Joint Chairs and Vice Chairs Steering Group held on 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2013 [copy filed with the signed minutes].

County Councillor Mrs S. Davies  
Chairman