

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.**Democratic Services Committee [DSC]
14th January, 2016****REPORT BY: Head of Democratic Services****SUBJECT: Matters relating to Democratic Services issues**

REPORT FOR: Decision, Information and Discussion

1 Constitution

Following the introduction of the Council's new Constitution as from 1st September, 2015, the requirement for a number of amendments has become apparent. Accordingly those amended sections are included for the Committee's consideration as follows. The tracked changes are shown on each document:

Section 4 – Full Council [Appendix A]
Section 5 – The Cabinet [Appendix B]
Section 7 – Scrutiny Committees [Appendix C]
Section 9 – Regulatory Committees [Appendix D]
Section 13 – Responsibility for Functions [Appendix E]
Section 16 – Financial Procedure Rules [Appendix F]

It may be necessary to arrange meetings of the Constitution Working Group to consider the more complicated amendments. It is suggested that the simpler amendments be brought directly to the Committee.

2 Guidance regarding the future appointment of Vice Chair

In respect of provisions in the Local Government Bill 2 the following Guidance has been provided from Welsh Government relating to the above:

In the case of the Democratic Services Committee (DSC), section 14 of the Measure provides that the local authority, not the committee, shall appoint the chair – and that this person may not be a member of an executive group. There are no provisions for the appointment of a vice-chair, but that does not prevent an authority – or the DSC - deciding it wants one. They could decide to appoint a vice-chair who is a member of an executive group and there is nothing to stop them chairing a DSC meeting if the chair is absent. It would, however, not be in keeping with the "spirit" of the Measure and could lead to internal protest if the chair was absent for any period of time. So we would advise against it."

The Committee will need to bear this advice in mind when appointing a Vice-Chair.

3 Payment and support to Councillors

3.1 Payments to Chairs of Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees

To note the draft proposals recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel [IRP] for Wales on the arrangements for the remuneration of chairs of Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Sub-committees [extract from the IRP's draft Annual Report 2016] [Appendix G], following a question at a previous meeting regarding whether any payments could be made to Chairs of such Committees.

3.2 Family responsibilities

To receive an oral presentation by the Head of Democratic Services and County Councillor Gemma Bowker.

3.3 Support to Councillors

The Standards Committee has asked that “the Democratic Services Committee consider what would be acceptable for Members to claim for support in their role as Councillor including telephone, postage and IT equipment.”

Information is currently being sought and collated from other Welsh Authorities and will be reported to the next meeting.

3.4 Payments to Minority opposition group leaders

At the DSC meeting on 3rd October, 2014 the following was agreed:

RECOMMENDED to Group Leaders that the Council make representations to the Independent Remuneration Panel Wales that there be a single allocation for opposition group leaders which the Council could choose either to:

- a). split equally between all group leaders with groups over 10% membership of Council or
- b). split equally between all opposition group leaders irrespective of group size.

The response from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales is attached [Appendix H].

3.5 The future size of Committees

The issue of the size of Committees has been discussed at a Group Leaders meeting on 5th January, 2016. An oral report will be made to the DSC.

4 2017 Council Elections

4.1 Candidate information, Councillor Information Pack and Induction Programme

The Member Development Working Group will be undertaking a review of the following information, produced in 2012, during 2016 in preparation for the 2017 County Council elections:

- Candidate information
- Member Information pack
- Induction Programme.

This work will be completed to ensure that information is available at key times.

Contact Officer Name:	Tel:	Email:
Wyn Richards, Head of Democratic Services	01597 826375	wyn.richards@powys.gov.uk