

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD  
AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, POWYS ON  
WEDNESDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 2018**

**PRESENT**

County Councillor M J Dorrance (Chair)

County Councillors L V Corfield, D Rowlands, J Charlton, D E Davies, D O Evans, D Jones-Poston, D R Price, K S Silk and R Williams

County Councillor J Evans, Portfolio Holder Corporate Governance, Housing and Public Protection.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor G Breeze.

**2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 9 July, 2018 as a correct record.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

This Committee considered the recommendations of the Scrutiny Development Board relating to a revised scrutiny committee structure.

**Audit Committee**

The Committee noted that it was recommended that the Audit Committee should undertake regulatory functions only and no longer have a scrutiny function.

<b>Recommendation to the Full Council</b>	<b>Reason for recommendation</b>
i. that the Audit Committee should undertake statutory regulatory functions only, and that the scrutiny functions be transferred one of the new scrutiny committees. (See Appendix 2 – Column 4 for the amended Terms of Reference).	To review the scrutiny committee structure.

The Committee considered the Committee size and it was noted that the Scrutiny Development Board had recommended that the membership be reduced from 21 to 9 plus the Lay / Independent Member(s). The Board had considered that this would encourage only those Members with an interest being involved in the Committee and would enable them to develop and gain expertise. It was

acknowledged that in some cases Members are put on Committees to fill places but with reducing the opportunities for membership some backbenchers may not be involved on any committees. It was noted that it was proposed that working groups would be established for Scrutiny Committees to undertake specific pieces of work and Members, if not on the Scrutiny Committee, could be co-opted to these.

It was proposed and duly seconded that the Committee be comprised of 9 Members on a politically balanced basis (plus the Lay / Independent Member(s)). An amendment was moved and duly seconded that the Committee be comprised of 14 Members on a politically balanced basis (plus the Lay / Independent Member(s)).

<b>Recommendation to the Full Council</b>	<b>Reason for recommendation</b>
ii. that the Committee be comprised of 14 Members on a politically balanced basis (plus the Lay / Independent Member(s)).	To review the scrutiny committee structure.

<b>Recommendation to the Full Council</b>	<b>Reason for recommendation</b>
iii. that the Committee determines its own schedule of meetings (approximately 6 per year).	To review the scrutiny committee structure.
iv. that in principle, meetings of the Audit Committee should be webcast, subject to a review of the financial implications of webcasting additional meetings.	To review the scrutiny committee structure.

### **Finance Scrutiny Panel**

The Committee noted that it was recommended that the Finance Scrutiny Panel should undertake a strategic role.

<b>Recommendation to the Full Council</b>	<b>Reason for recommendation</b>
i. that the Finance Scrutiny Panel be retained but that it be renamed Finance Panel (“FP”).	To review the scrutiny committee structure.
ii. that the Terms of Reference be amended to reflect that the Panel scrutinise strategic financial issues only i.e. MTFS, development of the overall Council budget,	

<p><b>budget out-turn, rather than service specific financial issues which would be within the remit of individual scrutiny committees. (See Appendix 3 for the amended Terms of Reference).</b></p> <p>iii. <b>that the composition of the FP remains as at present (i.e. not politically balanced) with the addition of the Portfolio Holder for Finance as a member of the Panel. (See Appendix 3 – amended Terms of Reference)</b></p> <p>iv. <b>that the Terms of Reference be amended to reflect that the Panel will appoint its Chair from its Membership. (See Appendix 3 – amended Terms of Reference)</b></p> <p>v. <b>that meetings of the FP be held in public wherever possible except where confidential matters are to be discussed.</b></p> <p>vi. <b>that the Chair of the FP would not be a remunerated role.</b></p>	
---	--

### **Scrutiny Committees**

The Committee noted that the proposed structure was based on Vision 2025.

Recommendation to the Full Council	Reason for recommendation
<p>i. <b>That the Council establish the 3 scrutiny committees (excluding Audit) based on Vision 2025 as set out below, but amended to move the “governance” functions currently undertaken by Audit (See Appendix 2)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Economy, Residents, Community and Governance Committee</b></li> <li>• <b>Health and Care Committee</b></li> <li>• <b>Learning, Skills and Culture Committee.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>To review the scrutiny committee structure.</b></p>

The Committee considered the size of the Committees.

It was duly moved and seconded that the committees size should be a maximum of 14 [inclusive of statutory co-opted members] and that the Councillor membership should be based on a politically balanced basis.

Recommendation to the Full Council	Reason for recommendation
<p>ii. the committees size should be a maximum of 14 [inclusive of statutory co-opted members] and that the Councillor membership should be based on a politically balanced basis.</p>	<p>To review the scrutiny committee structure.</p>

Prior to considering the frequency of scrutiny committee meetings the Committee considered the proposal to establish Working Groups.

### Working Groups

The Committee noted the proposal was that the Co-Ordinating Committee would establish time limited Working Groups to consider specific pieces of work.

Officers advised that evidence from across Wales indicated that the best scrutiny takes place in smaller working groups rather than large committees.

Recommendation to the Full Council	Reason for recommendation
<p>(iii) that Working Groups (including cross-cutting groups) should be established as and when required by the Co-Ordinating Committee (see below) only and any requests from Committees to establish Working Groups would need to be considered by the Co-Ordinating Committee together with a justification for establishing that group</p>	<p>To review the scrutiny committee structure.</p>
<p>(iv) that the reports of Working Groups be referred to the Co-Ordinating Committee for approval prior to submission to the Cabinet (if appropriate)</p>	
<p>(v) that Working Groups should comprise a maximum of 4 or 5 members on a non-political basis</p>	

<p>(vi) that up to 2 Members who are not on a Scrutiny Committee but who have a particular skill or expressed an interest in any Working Group subject can participate in Working Groups</p> <p>(vii) that there should not be more than 2 Working Groups held per committee in a 6 weekly committee cycle</p> <p>(viii) that the Chairs of Scrutiny Committees are required to attend all Working Groups for their respective Committees, but do not have to Chair the Working Groups with another Member leading the group to allow for development of individual members. Where a cross cutting Working Group is established, the Chairs from all the Committees involved will participate in the Working Group.</p>	
---	--

In respect of the involvement of Member Champions it was moved and duly seconded to amend the wording to that Member Champions could assist scrutiny working groups but not be formal members of those groups, if not already a member of the Working Group.

Recommendation to the Full Council	Reason for recommendation
<p>(i) that Cabinet Members should not be members of Scrutiny Working Groups.</p> <p>(ii) that Member Champions could assist Scrutiny Working Groups but not be formal members of those groups, if not already a member of the Working Group.</p>	<p>To review the scrutiny committee structure.</p>

The Committee then returned to consider the other issues relating to Scrutiny Committees.

## Scrutiny Committees

Recommendation to the Full Council	Reason for recommendation
<p>(iii) that meetings of the committee be held on a <b>6 weekly basis</b></p> <p>(iv) that meetings of committees be held in public (unless required to move into confidential session) and that the Council moves to webcast those committee meetings, subject to a review of the financial implications of webcasting additional meetings</p> <p>(v) that the <b>Terms of Reference</b> of each committee include <b>Vision 2025 responsibilities, relevant service areas, as well as partnerships to be scrutinised e.g. Brecon Beacons National Park, ERW, RPB.</b></p>	<p>To review the scrutiny committee structure.</p>

## Co-Ordinating Committee

Recommendation to the Full Council	Reason for recommendation
<p>(i) that the Co-Ordinating Committee determine the <b>Forward Work Programme for scrutiny as well as reports from Working Groups prior to submission to the Cabinet</b></p> <p>(ii) that the Committee does not undertake any “corporate” scrutiny functions and that these functions be transferred to the Economy, Residents, Community and Governance Committee</p> <p>(iii) that the Committee determines whether items should be considered by a committee or working group as well as the focus of the review to be undertaken.</p>	<p>To review the scrutiny committee structure.</p>

<b>Recommendation to the Full Council</b>	<b>Reason for recommendation</b>
<p>(i) that the proposals as amended above be approved</p> <p>(ii) that a review of the new structure be undertaken in 6 or 12 months following implementation.</p>	<p><b>To review the scrutiny committee structure.</b></p>

**County Councillor M J Dorrance (Chair)**