CYNGOR SIR *POWYS* COUNTY COUNCIL.

County Council – 20th April, 2016

REPORT BY: **Solicitor to the Council**

SUBJECT: **Composition of Committees**

REPORT FOR: **Decision**

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1.   Introduction.

1.1   The budget agreed by Council on 25th February, 2016 includes a reduction in the democratic budget including reducing travelling expenses by increased use of video conferencing and car sharing, reduction in meetings and reduction in membership of committees. This report considers the reduction in the membership of committees. The report was considered by the Democratic Services Committee at its meeting on 30th March, 2016.

2.   Committee Membership.

2.1   In the allocation of Members by the political groups to membership of certain committees, notably the Employment, Audit and Scrutiny Committees, it is becoming apparent that these are not committees on which Members prefer to sit. In recent years there have been consistent vacancies on these committees particularly Employment and Audit Committees.

2.2   As part of a specific exercise relating to the Audit and Employment Committees, a comparison of the size of the Powys Committees by comparison to similar committees elsewhere in Wales has indicated that the size of Powys committees far exceeds similar committees in Wales. (See Appendix 1)

2.3   In order to progress the budgetary saving as required by the Council as set out in the budget, discussions have been held with Group Leaders to gauge the "political temperature" in taking proposals forward. The Group Leaders have accepted that as the Council's budget is having to be reduced, the Democratic budget will inevitably have to take a share of the burden of reductions and therefore change is required. However, there was not an unanimous view amongst group leaders as to whether the changes would lead to any savings being made. In addition as the Council restructures its operation the need for the various committees and the way that the democratic process is operated will need to change to align with the revised organisation and continue to be "fit for purpose".

3.   Proposal.

3.1   The Group Leaders concluded that whilst some authorities had reduced its committees to less than 10 members, it would be more appropriate for this

Council to reduce committees by a third (for 5 committees only, 1 Member reduction for 2 committees). Therefore it was suggested that committee membership be set at 14 Members per committee except for the Pensions and Investment Committee which would remain unchanged at 5 Members.

3.2　Setting the committee membership at 14 means that the political balance on committees, based on current group numbers, would be as follows:

Powys Independent Alliance	Conservatives	Liberal Democrats	Labour	Independent Group	Non-Political Group	Total
5	2	2	1	2	2	14

3.3　The revised committee memberships would be as follows:

People Scrutiny Committee (currently 21 County Councillors) 3 Parent Governor Representatives 1 Church in Wales Representative 1 Roman Catholic Church Representative	14 County Councillors 3 Parent Governor Representatives 1 Church in Wales Representative 1 Roman Catholic Church Representative
Place Scrutiny Committee (currently 21 County Councillors) 1 Co-Opted Member for Crime and Disorder Matters	14 County Councillors 1 Co-Opted Member for Crime and Disorder Matters
Planning, Taxi Licensing and Rights of Way Committee (currently 21 County Councillors)	14 County Councillors
Employment and Appeals Committee (currently 21 County Councillors)	14 County Councillors
Audit Committee (currently 21 County Councillors) 1 Independent 'Lay' Member	14 County Councillors 1 Independent 'Lay' Member
Licensing Act Committee 2003 (currently 15 County Councillors)	14 County Councillors
Democratic Services Committee (currently 15 County Councillors)	14 County Councillors
Pensions and Investments Committee (currently 5 County Councillors) Employers Representative Staff Representative	5 County Councillors Employers Representative Staff Representative

3.4　The membership of the Standards Committee would remain unchanged.

3.5　Based on an estimated saving of £300 per meeting x 35 meetings (5 committees with a reduction of 7 members each) this would provide a saving of £10,500 per annum.

3.6 Should the proposal be accepted by the Council at its meeting on 20th April, 2016, it is suggested that the revised structure be implemented as from the Annual Meeting on 11th May, 2016. The Constitution will also need to be amended to reflect these changes.

Recommendation to the County Council:	Reason for Recommendation:
(i) that the membership of the Council's committees be amended to 14 Members (with the exception of the Pensions and Investments Committee) as set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report; (ii) that the revised membership takes effect from the Annual Meeting on 11th May, 2016; (iii) that the Solicitor to the Council amend the Constitution to reflect the amended membership of committees.	To progress the Council's budget reduction in reducing the membership of committees.

Person(s) To Action Decision:	Clive Pinney, Solicitor to the Council.		
Date By When Decision To Be Actioned:	May, 2016		
Relevant Policy (ies):	Council's Constitution.		
Within Policy:	Y	**Within Budget:**	Y
Contact Officer:	Wyn Richards, Scrutiny Manager Tel: 01597 826375 Email: wyn.richards@powys.gov.uk		

A.   Audit Committee.

1.   The comparative information is set out below:

Audit Committee Membership in Welsh Councils				
	Councillors	Lay	Committee Total	Total No of Members of Council
Anglesey	8	2	10	40
Blaenau Gwent	16	1	17	42
Bridgend	12	1	13	54
Caerphilly	12	1	13	73
Cardiff	7	4	11	75
Carmarthenshire	8	1	9	74
Ceredigion	6	1	7	42
Conwy	16	1	17	59
Denbighshire	6	1	7	47
Flintshire	7	1	8	70
Gwynedd	18	1	19	74
Merthyr	10	1	11	33
Monmouthshire	11	1	12	43
Neath Port Talbot	12	1	13	64
Newport	7	1	8	50
Pembrokeshire	6	1	7	60
Powys	21	1	22	73
Rhondda Cynon-Taff	15	1	16	75
Swansea	12	1	13	72
Torfaen	6	1	7	44
Vale of Glamorgan	7	1	8	47
Wrexham	12	1	13	52
Breakdown:				
20+	1			
15 to 19	4			
10 to 14	9			
5 to 9	8			
	22			

2. The breakdown groups are as follows:

20+ Members	1			
	Councillors	**Lay**	**Committee Total**	**Total No of Members of Council**
Powys	21	1	22	**73**

15 to 19 Members	4			
	Councillors	**Lay**	**Committee Total**	**Total No of Members of Council**
Gwynedd	18	1	19	74
Blaenau Gwent	16	1	17	42
Conwy	16	1	17	59
Rhondda Cynon-Taff	15	1	16	75

10 to 14 Members	9			
	Councillors	**Lay**	**Committee Total**	**Total No of Members of Council**
Bridgend	12	1	13	54
Caerphilly	12	1	13	73
Neath Port Talbot	12	1	13	64
Swansea	12	1	13	72
Wrexham	12	1	13	52
Monmouthshire	11	1	12	43
Cardiff	7	4	11	75
Merthyr	10	1	11	33
Anglesey	8	2	10	40

5 to 9 Members	8			
	Councillors	**Lay**	**Committee Total**	**Total No of Members of Council**
Carmarthenshire	8	1	9	74
Flintshire	7	1	8	70
Newport	7	1	8	50
Vale of Glamorgan	7	1	8	47
Ceredigion	6	1	7	42
Denbighshire	6	1	7	47
Pembrokeshire	6	1	7	60
Torfaen	6	1	7	44

B.   Employment Committee.

Employment Committee Membership in Welsh Councils			
Council	**Councillors**	**Committee Type**	**Total Membership of Council**
Anglesey	10	Appeals	40
	10	Appointments	
	6	Pay and Grading Review	
Blaenau Gwent		None	42
Bridgend	12	Appeals Panel	54
	5	Appeals Committee	
Caerphilly	3	Appeals Committee	73
	8	Appointments Committee	
Cardiff		No information available	75
Carmarthenshire	7	Appeals	74
	14	Appointments A	
	9	Appointments B	
Ceredigion	7	Shortlisting	42
Conwy	12	Senior Employment Committee	59
Denbighshire		Special Appointments Committee	47
Flintshire		None	70
Gwynedd		Chief Officer's Appointments	74
Merthyr	6	Appeals Panel	33
	9	Objections and Appeals	
		Recruitment and Appointments Committee	
Monmouthshire		None	43
Neath Port Talbot	6	Appeals Panel	64
	12	Personnel (5 non voting)	
Newport		None	50
Pembrokeshire	14	Disciplinary Investigations Committee	60
	7	Senior Staff Committee	
Powys	21	Employment and Appeals Committee	73

Rhondda Cynon-Taff	5	Appeals / Employee Appeals / Chief Officer Appeals	75
	5	Appointments	
Swansea	7	Appeals and Awards	72
	11	Appointments	
Torfaen	10	Appointments Committee	44
Vale of Glamorgan	6	Appeals	47
	7	Early Retirement	
	6	Senior Management Appointments (+Cabinet Members)	
Wrexham		None	52