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County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

Friday, 14 September 2018

Notice of meeting

Democratic Services Committee

Monday, 24th September, 2018 at 2.00 pm,
Council Chamber, County Hall

AGENDA

Item No	Item	Pages
1.	Apologies for absence	
2.	Declarations of interest	
3.	Public Open Forum	
4.	Position of minutes	Verbal
5.	Councillor Mobile Phones	1 - 6
6.	Increasing Involvement in Local Democracy: Sub-Group Update	7 - 10
7.	Evaluation of decisions	11 - 14
8.	Democracy Week	Verbal
9.	To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting	15 - 18
10.	To note the date and time of next meeting as Monday 3rd December 2018 at 2pm	

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive / Prif Weithredwr

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillors:

D. Evans
T.Thomas
D. Dovey
L.Dymock
M.Groucutt
G. Howard
L.Jones
J.Treharne
S. Woodhouse
P. Clarke
F. Taylor
J.Watkins

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Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

Our purpose

Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Objectives we are working towards

- Giving people the best possible start in life
- A thriving and connected county
- Maximise the Potential of the natural and built environment
- Lifelong well-being
- A future focused council

Our Values

Openness. We are open and honest. People have the chance to get involved in decisions that affect them, tell us what matters and do things for themselves/their communities. If we cannot do something to help, we'll say so; if it will take a while to get the answer we'll explain why; if we can't answer immediately we'll try to connect you to the people who can help – building trust and engagement is a key foundation.

Fairness. We provide fair chances, to help people and communities thrive. If something does not seem fair, we will listen and help explain why. We will always try to treat everyone fairly and consistently. We cannot always make everyone happy, but will commit to listening and explaining why we did what we did.

Flexibility. We will continue to change and be flexible to enable delivery of the most effective and efficient services. This means a genuine commitment to working with everyone to embrace new ways of working.

Teamwork. We will work with you and our partners to support and inspire everyone to get involved so we can achieve great things together. We don't see ourselves as the 'fixers' or problem-solvers, but we will make the best of the ideas, assets and resources available to make sure we do the things that most positively impact our people and places.



REPORT

SUBJECT:	COUNCILLOR MOBILE PHONES
MEETING:	DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
DATE:	24th September 2018
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	N/A

1. PURPOSE:

To consider the most suitable telephony solution to be offered to councillors during this term of office.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That members of the committee agree to the most suitable solution for this term of office.

3. REASONS:

To respond effectively to the concerns of the committee and enable members to carry out their duties effectively.

4. KEY ISSUES:

BACKGROUND:

Upon being elected in May 2017 all County Councillors were provided with a Microsoft Surface Pro 4 to meet the relevant ICT tasks associated with the role of Councillor. This included the sending and receipt of emails, ability to utilise the modern.gov app to access papers for meetings in line with the authorities commitment to be paperless, access all information contained on the Councils Intranet (the Hub) and to meet their telephony needs via the built in Cisco VPN phone which allows calls to be made over the internet. This is in contrast to the previous term of Council who received a laptop, as well as an ipad to do all of the above, requiring two separate devices with restricted access, support and functionality due to security requirements to meet the same demands.

Members of the Democratic Services Committee have previously requested a review of the members telephony provisions with a belief that all Councillors should be provided with a mobile phone to keep in touch with constituents and officers when away from the device.

The current telephony arrangements through the Cisco VPN phone require members to be connected to the network and have a wifi connection in order for the phone to work. Whilst it restricts the use of a phone when 'on-site' it allows members access to the internal telephone directory to access officers telephones numbers directly and is a direct route between councillors and officers. Each councillor has been allocated an internal telephone number and voicemail facilities that they can use as their telephone between themselves and constituents to alleviate concerns on publishing personal telephone numbers to the public. Take up and use of the telephones has been relatively low with interest being dependent on how councillors prefer to carry out their role and how much of a concern having their own contact details in the public domain is to them and how they wish to interact with residents. Each licence to use the Cisco VPN phone costs £45 per councillors per year (£1,935 per annum).

CONTRACT:

The authority's mobile phone contract is through EE and the monthly cost of a contract is dependent on the term of the contract as well as the data limit required. Costs per contract are available below:

Term of Contract (Months)	Data Limit	Monthly Cost	Cost per year per Councillor	Total Annual Contract Cost	Non Smart Phone Handset (£59)	Smartphone Handset (£115)	Initial Annual Non Smartphone	Initial Annual Smartphone
36	2GB	£10	£120	£5,160	£2,537	£4,945	£7,697	£10,105
36	4GB	£12	£144	£6,192	£2,537	£4,945	£8,729	£11,137
36	8GB	£20	£240	£10,320	£2,537	£4,945	£12,857	£15,265
36	16GB	£30	£360	£15,480	£2,537	£4,945	£18,017	£20,425
24	2GB	£12	£144	£6,192	£2,537	£4,945	£8,729	£11,137
24	4GB	£14	£168	£7,224	£2,537	£4,945	£9,761	£12,169
24	8GB	£22	£264	£11,352	£2,537	£4,945	£13,889	£16,297
24	16GB	£32	£384	£16,512	£2,537	£4,945	£19,049	£21,457

Given the demand for ICT and the likelihood most members will utilise the telephone to also keep up to date with their emails through O365, use the My Monmouthshire App as well as social media platforms, it is unlikely that anything less than 4GB would be suitable given the size of some information that would be downloaded, particularly attachments to emails. Contractual penalties are in place for overuse of the data limit which would significantly increase the overall cost of the facility above the monthly fee. Capping use of the data limit is not available in the contracts that the authority has in place with its supplier. Additionally, if the committee recommends the use of mobile phones for all councillors it is recommended that the longer term of 36 months is used given how early in the term of office we currently are however, members would need to consider issues such as performance, battery life and storage capacity of devices over a longer term contract. All contracts are unlimited to calls and standard text messages.

For comparison, a private contract through a mobile phone supplier for the same model phone and data package is currently £28 per month with no upfront cost for

the handset over a 24 month period with £100 cashback. Comparative costs over the same period are £595 for the Council procured contract or £575 for a personal contract but the council contract would be for an additional 12 months with the handset needing to last for the additional period.

Alternatively, a sim only contract which could be used in an existing handset that councillors may have, is currently available with a much larger data package and unlimited calls at a cost of £20 per month for 12 months or a like for like package available at £15 per month.

HANDBSET & SUPPORT:

Each handset for the phone is additional on top of the monthly contract. A basic mobile (non-smartphone) is £59 plus the monthly contract. A smart phone, currently a Sony L1 model (<https://www.sonymobile.com/gb/products/phones/xperia-l1/#gref>) would be an additional £115 plus the monthly fee. This would be an additional £2,537 or £4,945 depending on the model that Councillors want, likely to be the smartphone for use of apps and social media platforms. Members should note that the smartphone model is not one that officers are familiar with so supporting councillors with issues and setting up applications cannot be guaranteed.

There is no insurance included with the contract for the handset so any breakages or loss would result in members needing to purchase their own handsets as replacements, particularly given the length of the contracts that are being entered into. At the end of the Term of Office or telephone contract, whichever occurs first, members must return the handset to the authority.

COVERAGE:

Coverage is always a major factor in Monmouthshire given how limited it can be in certain areas. Members can access the coverage provided by EE on the following link and should check to see how much coverage they have within their ward and whether it would be of benefit to them: <https://ee.co.uk/why-ee/mobile-coverage>. There are a significant number of areas within Monmouthshire that would receive limited, if any, connection. Those villages have been identified in Appendix A for information. In checking other suppliers however (O2, Vodafone & 3), members would experience similar connectivity issues in certain areas to that of the EE contract. For some councillors, they may not utilise an authority procured mobile, purely because there is limited connectivity in their area through EE rather than another provider and how should these members be supported?

OTHER INFORMATION:

In providing mobile phones, members would need to ensure that the equipment is being used for the purposes its being provided which is to carry out your duties as a County Councillor. The equipment should not be used for personal use and should not be used in any other capacity, for example in your role as a town councillor, as funding from the relevant body should be provided to cover their responsibilities. Any handsets given out to Councillors must be returned to the authority at the end of the term or contract whichever occurs first.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL:

Do nothing

Retain the VPN licences for the Cisco VPN phone and hold training sessions to encourage councillors to utilise the phone. Councillors to remain using their own personal devices for all purposes at their own costs.

Positives

- VPN calls are free other than annual licence fee
- Access to full council telephone directory with quick and direct access to officers

Negatives

- Wifi connection needed in order to access the network to be able to use the telephone so can't be used 'offsite'

Provide members with a procured contracted device

Councillors to be provided with a telephone and contract through the Council's procurement programme in line with the costs highlighted above. Actual budget implications depend on the preferred package.

Positives

- All members would have a dedicated telephone number and device to be used purely for Council business
- Device can be used 'offsite' provided that a network signal is available
- Same device for all members so whilst it may take time for officers to become familiar with device, long term support may be easier

Negatives

- Additional budget pressures
- A single network provider for all councillors regardless of location and signal quality
- Unfamiliar devices for members to use as well as receive support
- Limited to use for just County Council business
- Not always the cheapest option compared to private contracts

Reimburse an element of members personal mobile phone contracts

As some councillors are already tied in to personal contracts, it could be an option to reimburse an element of their own telephone contract which would cover the elements used for County Council business.

Positives

- Clear and balanced support provided to all members regardless of circumstances
- Allows members to continue using their own devices that they are familiar with
- Likely that members will receive better network coverage through

Negatives

- Unable to quantify portion of contract that should be reimbursed to members for County Council business
- Members personal contracts will all be different overall costs dependent on package and device

their own personal contracts for the areas they reside

Reimburse costs for a sim only package

Personal sim only contracts are available which allow for a separate number to be used in a device already owned. Data packages are similar to that of usual contract but without the costs of the device built in so are generally cheaper than a full contract.

Positives

- Councillors have a single dedicated number that can be used for Council business
- Package is similar to that of a usual contract but usually cheaper
- Councillors can choose which supplier gives them the best coverage in their area
- Can use a device that the user is familiar with
- Contracts are usually 12 months so councillors are not tied in to lengthy contracts.

Negatives

- Own device needed to use the sim
- Certain sim cards only fit certain phones
- Support could be limited due to the number of different devices members use

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Whilst there is some scope within the existing members budget to cover the costs of mobile phones some of the spare resource is dependent on the structure of the Council. For example, there are currently 8 Cabinet members which could be increased to 10 at the discretion of the Leader requiring additional budget of £25,400. Similarly there is an additional salary payable within the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales report which is not utilised due to the appointment of the independent chair of Audit which could ultimately lead to a pressure of £8,700 if circumstances were to change. These would be on top of pressures already in place including an uplift in the members basic salary (£8,600) and a corporate strategy of 10% reduction in mileage budgets across the authority (£2,620).

Whilst the current situation would allow for the pressures to be met within its existing budget, changes in circumstances over the three year term of the contracts may, by factors outside the control over the budget holder, lead to an overspend.

7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

None

8. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

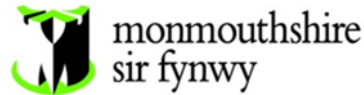
Members who utilise accessing emails and information through phone need to be responsible in keeping the data they access secure and confidential and report any loss of equipment or potential data breaches as soon as possible.

9. CONSULTEES:

Democratic Services Committee
Digital Team

10. AUTHOR:

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SUBJECT: Increasing Involvement in Local Democracy: Sub-Group Update
MEETING: Democratic Services Committee
DATE: 24th September 2018
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide an update on proposed changes to the way in which the council involves people in decision-making by prioritising issues of most interest to communities and making some minor changes to the report template and accompanying guidance to ensure concise and transparent reports.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the committee endorse the criteria that will be used to prioritise engagement activity, subject to any amendments agreed at the meeting, and keep this under continuous review.
- 2.2 That the committee agree to a future agenda item prioritising potential topics requiring more extensive public involvement using the criteria.
- 2.3 That the committee approve some minor changes to the report template for Council and Cabinet decisions.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Local government has a key role in helping communities define the futures to which they aspire and helping the public understand how decisions are made and also how they can participate in the democratic process.
- 3.2 The committee has begun to explore how it can broaden its role by improving public involvement in local democracy creating opportunities to engage with the authority in new ways, working collaboratively and involving people in building sustainable and resilient communities. A working group of the committee has been meeting with officers to take these issues forward.
- 3.3 At its meeting on the 4th June, and based on a recommendation from the sub-group, the committee agreed to take ownership of a forward plan of topics that will be discussed in the coming 12 – 18 months which are likely to be of interest to the public. A set of criteria has now been established to inform which issues are prioritised for public engagement:
- There is evidence of significant public interest in the proposed change or decision
 - It is an area where we anticipate a large number of complaints or negative press as a result of a service change or policy being implemented

- Changes are proposed which could be significantly enhanced by public involvement
 - The authority is facing a challenge and would benefit from developing a broader range of options
 - The proposal would have a major impact on one or more sections of the community
 - We would expect public involvement to add value and be able to shape and influence the final recommendation made to cabinet or council
- 3.4 Work is underway to improve the robustness of the forward planner to enable the committee to have better oversight of the issues that will be coming forward in the months ahead.
- 3.5 A new section of the website will clearly signpost the public how to get involved – for example, topics could be placed on the Made Open platform; questionnaires published on the website or the MyMonmouthshire app. Policy issues or key decisions may be scheduled for public meetings, with local issues being directed to the area committees. In some cases there will be a need to target particular groups or communities with proactive invitations to get involved. This could include groups such as CAIR who campaign on behalf of people with disabilities. A toolbox of engagement approaches will be established to ensure that officers have carry out engagement effectively and that they have access to support from the Communications, Marketing and Engagement Team.
- 3.6 Linked to these proposals will be a series of actions to improve the quality of reports. The report writing guidance for officers is being updated and training established through the authority’s in-house training service. Amongst other things this should result in a clearer statement of purpose, concise and clear language and an explicit statement of any recommendations from scrutiny made related to a particular report.
- 3.7 A series of changes were made to the report template twelve months ago. An officer working group has been looking at the impact of these. Some further revisions are proposed.
- Pushing the Future Generations Sections up so that it follows key issues – this is in response to member feedback
 - Dropping the ‘evaluation’ appendix and condensing key messages from this into the evaluation section. A scan of the evaluation appendices completed has found that these add little to the quality of the report. Robust evaluation will be secured through the adoption of the process identified in a separate paper to be discussed by the committee
- 3.8 These changes will be accompanied by the development of a regular member briefing which will cover important upcoming items as well as staffing updates, consultations and changes which are pertinent to the role of county councillors.
- 3.9 Challenging budgets settlements in the years to come will inevitably mean the Council will need to take harder and potentially more contentious decisions. Earlier involvement, clear reports and better evaluations will increase the public’s understanding and ownership of the proposals developed and the decisions made.

4. REASONS:

4.1 To create opportunities to work more collaboratively with communities to understand the issues that matter and work in new ways with people to develop solutions and promote engagement in local democratic processes.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 None at this stage

6. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)

6.1 This report does not propose any change in policy or service. However, it proposes improving how we involve people and this is one of the five ways of working identified in the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

7. CONSULTEES:

This proposal has been developed in conjunction with elected members who are acting as a sub-group of Democratic Services Committee

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

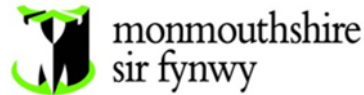
9. AUTHOR:

Matthew Gatehouse, Head of Policy and Governance

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SUBJECT: Evaluation of Decisions
MEETING: Democratic Services Committee
DATE: 24 th September 2018
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide an overview of the proposed process for the evaluation of decisions made by Council and Cabinet ensuring that the effectiveness and impact of changes to policies and services can be monitored.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the committee identify any unresolved issues or questions that they require officers to explore prior to implementation of the process.
- 2.2 That the committee endorses the proposed approach, subject to any amendments resulting from 2.1, to ensure political oversight of the evaluation of decisions.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 In March 2017 Wales Audit Office issued a report called 'Good governance when determining significant service changes.' One of the proposals it contained was 'Setting out at the point of decision on service change proposals how the impact of proposed changes is going to be measured and monitored'
- 3.2 From September 2017 changes were made to the report writing template which included the addition of a section on evaluation. These are required where there is a significant change to policy or the way in which services are delivered as determined by the report author. One year on we are at the point when we can expect evaluations to start being completed.
- 3.3 In principle it makes sense for evaluations to go back to the decision-maker. However if every single evaluation were to be considered at a political meeting it would create a log-jam on agenda's impacting on the amount of new business that could be debated. We need an arrangement that provides assurance that evaluations are being completed and which gives decision-makers and select committees the opportunity to look at evaluation in more detail on a risk-based approach.
- 3.4 The following process is proposed:
- An amendment to existing planners will see the addition of a column to log which reports/decisions require evaluation and when this is due.
 - A list of the evaluations recently completed and those scheduled for completion in the next quarter, is made available to:

- The decision-maker. This would feature largely for information and appear towards the end of meeting agenda
- The Chairs of Select Committees who may decide to add any upcoming evaluations to their work plans for future scrutiny which would trigger a fuller debate. The chair of Democratic Services Committee will also receive these in line with the committee's coordinating function.
- The Cabinet Member for Governance
- A biannual report to Audit Committee will be produced containing a summary of each evaluation completed in the previous six months and their findings. This will highlight any gaps where evaluations were scheduled but not completed. The evaluation should include the impact on any particular groups highlighted in the Future Generations Evaluation. This will form part of that Audit Committee's remit to oversee the effectiveness of internal controls and governance arrangements.

3.5 Criteria will be established to enable members to effectively and consistently prioritise the evaluations which are considered.

4. REASONS:

4.1 To ensure a more consistent approach to the evaluation of the impact of service changes

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 None

6. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)

6.1 None

7. CONSULTEES:

Cabinet Member for Governance
Chief Officer, Resources

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

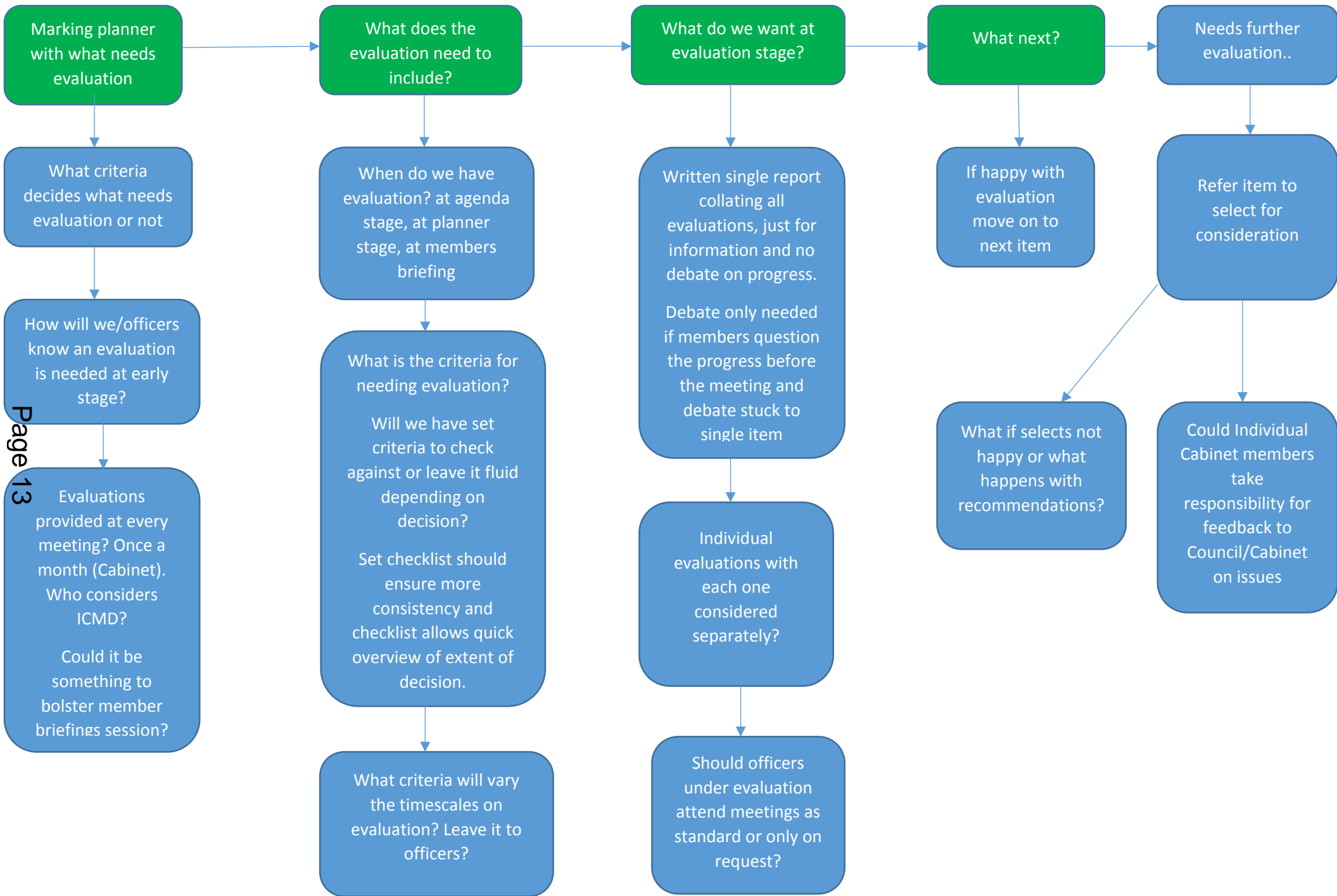
9. AUTHORS:

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Public Document Pack **Agenda Item 9**

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Democratic Services Committee held
on Monday, 16th July, 2018 at 2.00 pm**

PRESENT: County Councillor D. Evans (Chairman)
County Councillor (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: D. Dovey, M.Groucutt, S. Woodhouse, F. Taylor
and J.Watkins

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

John Pearson	Local Democracy Manager
Nicola Perry	Senior Democracy Officer
Matthew Gatehouse	Head of Policy and Governance
Paul Matthews	Chief Executive

APOLOGIES:

Councillors T.Thomas, L.Dymock, G. Howard, L.Jones and P. Clarke

1. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Public Open Forum

There were no matters for the public open forum.

3. To approve minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of Democratic Services Committee held on 4th June 2018 were approved and signed by the Chair.

4. Designated Head of Democracy

The Chief Executive was in attendance to present a report in order to comply with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 with regard to the requirement to designate an officer to undertake the statutory role of Head of Democratic Services following the recent senior leadership realignment.

It was recommended that the Head of Policy and Governance be designated as statutory Head of Democracy for the purposes of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

The Committee resolved to agree the recommendation.

5. Response to Assembly Inquiry on Diversity in Local Government

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Democratic Services Committee held on Monday, 16th July, 2018 at 2.00 pm

The Head of Policy and Governance presented a report to enable members to discuss the issue of diversity in local government and provide a response to the consultation issued by the National Assembly to inform its inquiry on the subject.

The response to the consultation is based on a small number of conversations with Monmouthshire councillors who have come forward to share their views of some of the difficulties they have experienced and how this could impact on our ability to attract and retain people in the role of councillor.

Councillors were also able to submit individual responses to the inquiry which will allow for more personalised experiences and perspectives to be shared.

During discussion:

Members recognised the importance of communicating with young people, and the benefits of reducing the voting age to 16. A suggested response to the inquiry was that as a Council we work with young people and their organisations to increase and promote their participation.

We were informed that the response captures the views of 6 councillors. Officers did not canvas councillors, but used shared experiences.

A Member expressed disappointment in the lack of interest from Welsh and Local Government. She felt it important to note that when we talk of diversity, it is not just protected characteristics but also diversity of experience, such as professional and personal, socio-economic differences.

It was felt that there should be a clear explanation around the calculation of the remuneration figure.

The Committee agreed the recommendation that subject to amendments, the response be submitted on behalf of the Council.

6. Car Parking Arrangements at County Hall

Response noted.

7. Council and Cabinet Forward Work plan

Members noted the Council and Cabinet Forward Work Plan. In doing so it was agreed that the Committee should further explore selected items, in terms of public engagement, particularly on contentious issues, and develop a relationship with Communications.

Cabinet Member, Councillor S. Jones was in attendance, to speak on Democracy Week 15th to 21st October 2018. Members had reflected on the positive event held with young people the previous year, and hoped to replicate in 2018. As well as a young person's democracy day, it was suggested that we hold a debating competition among primary schools. Further ideas were welcomed in readiness for a meeting with Engage 2 Change on 5th August 2018.

The Chair of CYP suggested that an item be added to the CYP agenda for the meeting due to take place during Democracy Week.

The Cabinet Member suggested that she would undertake a mapping exercise to identify opportunities, and report back to the Committee.

8. To note date and time of next meeting as Monday 24th September 2018 at 2pm

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Democratic Services Committee held
on Monday, 16th July, 2018 at 2.00 pm**

Noted.

The meeting ended at 3:00pm

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