

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Democratic Services Committee held  
at Conference Room - Usk, NP15 1AD on Monday, 1st April, 2019 at 2.00 pm**

**PRESENT:** County Councillor D. Evans (Chairman)  
County Councillor T. Thomas (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: J. Treharne and S. Woodhouse

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

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

### **APOLOGIES:**

Councillors J. Watkins

#### **3. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **4. Public open forum**

There were no matters for the public open forum.

#### **5. Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report 2019/20**

The Local Democracy Manager presented the IRP Annual Report to advise the determinations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for the civic year 2019/2020.

We received the draft report in October and responded to the consultation. The Panel are looking into care fees for 2020/2021 report.

The Chair flagged up an issue around Members who are also Town and Community Councillors. The Local Democracy Manager agreed to clarify via email communication.

The Committee resolved to accept the report.

#### **6. Mobile Phone Policy**

Members were required to consider the Mobile Phone Policy to support Members in their role as a Councillor.

Members were content that the policy covered all points raised during previous discussions. It was noted that costs would be covered within the existing budget. This will be reviewed annually.

## **MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the meeting of Democratic Services Committee held at Conference Room - Usk, NP15 1AD on Monday, 1st April, 2019 at 2.00 pm**

The Chair raised concerns around current IT equipment. It was agreed that this would be looked into, and training arranged if necessary. Members agreed training, on a number of issues would be useful.

**The Committee resolved to accept the recommendation:  
To approve the Mobile Phone Policy for Councillors which formalises agreements made by the committee at previous meetings.**

#### **7. Member Support**

Members received, for consideration the Councillor Competency Framework in order to identify how best the Council can support Members in delivering their role.

As a form of self-assessment against the framework, the document highlights the support democratic services has put in place to assist members in gaining the relevant skills and knowledge against the various elements associated with the role.

The plan is to break the framework down into sections and post on The Hub.

One area for development is media training and personal development reviews. It was suggested that training around live streaming would be beneficial to newly elected members.

We acknowledged the intensity of training after the previous election and noted that E-Learning may be an option after the next election.

A departmental list of officers would be a useful tool for Members.

#### **8. Future Generations Framework for Scrutiny**

The Head of Governance and Policy presented a report to provide members with a copy of the recently published Future Generations Framework for Scrutiny, and to seek views on how it could be improved.

The framework is in place to assist those in bringing forward recommendations and will be used as a future training tool for scrutiny.

The importance of communicating this to all Members was stressed, as was the importance of scrutiny. Increasingly the electorate want to see when decisions are made, particularly controversial decisions, ensuring they are made in a fair and considered way.

In terms of training it was requested that a session be held both morning and afternoon to encourage attendance, and an electronic version be posted on The Hub.

#### **9. Sub Group - Verbal Update**

The Head of Policy and Governance provided the Committee with an update from the most recent sub-group meeting.

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### **Minutes of the meeting of Democratic Services Committee held at Conference Room - Usk, NP15 1AD on Monday, 1st April, 2019 at 2.00 pm**

Discussions had identified areas to progress as:

- Forward Work Planners
- Improve section on website
- Made Open Platform
- Develop toolbox of engagement tools to be used by officers

We recognised the challenges around public engagement and it was agreed that, to progress, the meeting needs to be more specific.

**10. To confirm the minutes of the previous meetings:**

**11. 3rd December 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2018 were approved and signed by the Chair.

**12. 7th January 2019**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

**13. Date of next meeting: 20th May 2019 at 2pm**

Noted.

**The meeting ended at 3.30 pm**