

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Democratic Services Committee held at Council Chamber - Council Chamber on Monday, 7th April, 2025 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT: County Councillor David Jones (Chairman)

County Councillors: Tomos Davies, Tony Kear, Su McConnel,
Peter Strong, Armand Watts, Laura Wright, John Crook,
Rachel Buckler, Tudor Thomas and Malcolm Lane

Also in attendance, County Councillor Angela Sandles

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

John Pearson Local Democracy Manager
Paul Sullivan Head of Customer, Communications and Engagement

APOLOGIES:

Councillors Meirion Howells

1. Apologies for Absence

It was noted that Cllr Lane was attending the meeting as a substitute for Cllr Brown.

2. Declarations of Interest

None received

3. To approve the minutes of the following meetings:

4. Minutes of the meeting held on the 13 January 2025

The minutes of the meeting on held on the 13 January 2025 were approved as an accurate record.

5. Minutes of the meeting held on the 10 March 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on the 10 March 2025 were approved as an accurate record.

6. Improvements to Consultations - Verbal Discussion

The chair introduced the item as coming to the committee for review as a result of a discussion at the previous full council meeting where it was recommended that the Democratic Services Committee review the effectiveness of the consultation processes held by the Council.

The chair welcomed Paul Sullivan, Head of Customer, Communication and Engagement, to the meeting who provided an overview of the Lets' Talk programme which is Monmouthshire's new platform for digital consultations and how it will be used in the future and embedded into standard practice. It was also noted that a recent members seminar was held to give members a detailed overview of the platform and how it intends to be used.

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Members provided their views which included supporting the shift to the new platform but were keen to ensure there are many mechanisms for engaging with the Council in the way that allows for face to face engagement to continue for those that prefer that way of communicating with the council. It was also noted that its important to encourage residents to register with the platform to maximise its effectiveness.

Members were advised that the community hubs have equipment and staff have been trained to ensure the facilities and knowledge are available to allow users to register easily.

The committee questioned the synergy between Lets Talk and other council platforms such as My Monmouthshire and whilst they are different systems that require separate accounts, the Lets Talk platform can use the My Monmouthshire system to share information with over 15,000 residents and link them into the Lets Talk platform.

Councillor Watts joined the meeting at 14:39.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/IZ7WfOffwZw?feature=shared&t=150>

7. To note the Final Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Report 2025/26

The Local Democracy Manager introduced the item and informed the committee that the attached report is the final proposals by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales detailing the level of remuneration councillors will receive for 2025/26. The committee received the draft report in late 2024 and it was noted there are no changes between the draft report and the final report it was just for the committee to note the final proposals.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/IZ7WfOffwZw?feature=shared&t=2416>

8. To note the date of the next meeting as the 14th July 2025

The meeting ended at 14:45