

Meeting of:	Democratic Services Committee
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 25 July 2022
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Corporate Performance and Resources
Report Title:	Annual Report of the Head of Democratic Services
Purpose of Report:	To outline for Members work of the Committee and activities undertaken within the section throughout the year.
Report Owner:	Head of Democratic Services
Responsible Officer:	Jeff Rees, Head of Democratic Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	No consultation has been necessary
Policy Framework:	The terms of reference of the Democratic Services Committee include "to have regard to Welsh Ministerial guidance when exercising its functions"
Executive Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a summary of the wide range of duties undertaken within the service area throughout the year, ongoing developments and plans for the future.

Recommendation

1. THAT the report be noted.

Reason for Recommendation

1. To keep Members informed.

1. Background

- 1.1 Members will be aware of the requirements under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (“the Measure”) for the Council to appoint a Democratic Services Committee. The Measure also requires the Council to designate one of its officers to the statutory post of “Head of Democratic Services” and to provide that officer with sufficient resources to discharge these statutory functions.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 The Democratic Services division as a whole comprises two distinct sections:
 - (i) Democratic, Scrutiny and Committee Services together with Records Management and Land Charges; and
 - (ii) the Registration Service.
- 2.2 This report, by its very nature and its linkage with the requirements of the Measure, covers the work undertaken by the Democratic, Scrutiny and Committee Services section.
- 2.3 The functions of the Head of Democratic Services are set out in the Measure and relate particularly (but not exclusively) to the provision of advice and support to non-executive Members. The Committee, at its first meeting in July 2012, agreed that the Operational Manager for Democratic Services be designated as the Council's Statutory Head of Democratic Services. The Welsh Government Guidance associated with the Measure specifically provides for the Head of Democratic Services to perform other roles apart from the statutory functions. This recognises the fact that the creation of the position would have been an unacceptable burden on the budget of most, if not all, Councils at a time of economic pressures.
- 2.4 The following paragraphs set out the various elements within the service area, within the remit of the Committee and the activities undertaken to date for the Committee’s information.

Staff Structure

- 2.5 For the reasons set out below and taking into account the extremely difficult (and ongoing) economic pressures facing the Council generally and the need for the Division to continue to identify / deliver / contribute to further savings, the staffing structure of the Scrutiny and Committee Services team is considered to be sufficient for current service demands.

- 2.6** In addition to myself, as Operational Manager and Head of Democratic Services (statutory role), the team comprises the following officers:
- x 1 - Principal Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer;
 - x 3- Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officers;
 - x 1 - Cabinet and Committee Services Officer;
 - x 1 - Assistant Democratic Services Officer;
 - x 1 - Members' and Committee Services Assistant;
 - x 2 - WP / Administrative Support officers
 - x 3 - Administrative Assistants (NB These three officers are not entirely dedicated to Members support as indicated towards the end of paragraph 2.9 below).
- 2.7** The Assistant Democratic Services officer post was recently filled following a recruitment exercise. The officer took up post recently and is receiving induction and development training.
- 2.8** The team therefore consists of 12 staff members with 5 working in the office on a regular basis and 7 working from home and coming into the office as and when required.
- 2.9** The team deal with a wide range of activities, which include, but are not limited to:
- Maintaining and developing the Council's decision-making processes to include the preparation of agendas, reports and minutes, facilitating accountability and transparency for all Council meetings;
 - Managing and providing Scrutiny and Committee Services support to the Council and its various Committees; a range of support to Elected Members, including advice on the Council's Constitution and Members' Code of Conduct, Member Development and Members' Services, Maintaining the Register of Members' Interests;
 - Overseeing appeals relating to school admissions and school permanent exclusions;
 - Developing and updating the content of MemberNet;
 - Managing the Council's committee room bookings; Corporate responsibility for all Council inbound and outward bound mail, the provision of administrative support for processing activities relating to TransAct, Council Tax, Housing Benefits, C1V, Land Charges and the Records Management Unit.
- 2.10** The following paragraphs also provide a summary of work undertaken in the last twelve months and ongoing work / initiatives in which the section is actively engaged. The Democratic Services Committee will continue to be kept fully informed on progress of these, and other initiatives going forward :-

Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (“LG&E (Wales) Act”)

- 2.11** The LG&E (Wales) Act received Royal Assent on 20th January, 2021. The Act is substantial and covers a range of topics from electoral reform, public participation, governance and performance through to regional working. An Action Plan and a working group of officers was established to progress the action plan, with regard to the provisions in the Act and the timescales for implementation. Reports have been presented on a regular basis to the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet. The document was also reported to the Community Liaison Committee in view of the implications for Town and Community Councils (TCCs), and shared and discussed with TCC Clerks at meetings with the Monitoring Officer.
- 2.12** Throughout 2021 a number of reports were also submitted to Full Council meetings regarding provisions within the legislation and the Council’s Constitution amended accordingly.
- 2.13** A detailed report on the policies required to be in place by 5th May, 2022 was submitted to Council on 25th April 2022 and the Council’s Constitution subsequently updated as a result.
- 2.14** The Council’s Constitution remains under review and reports to Council are submitted when changes are deemed necessary, with the Constitution therefore being updated as and when required. The LG&E (Wales) Act placed a further duty on Local Authorities to also publish a **Guide** to the Constitution which can be found on the Council’s website.
- 2.15** The all-Wales Monitoring Officers Group engaged a consultant to prepare a model constitution Guide and a model constitution guide, as a result of the requirements of the 21 Act to be further developed and tailored to individual Local Authority needs.
- 2.16** There remain some aspects of the Act that further guidance is awaited for and the Action Plan working group will continue to meet as required with any further suggested changes to the Council’s Constitution being reported in due course.
- 2.17** On 23rd June 2022 and on 13th July Cabinet and Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee considered Council's response to the latest consultation regarding Statutory Guidance and Directions made under the Local Government Act 2000, the 2011 Measure and the 2021 Act. The responses covered a number of areas including for example Timing of Council Meetings, Training, Development and support for Elected Members, Research Support and Services for Elected Members, Petition Schemes, Participation Strategies, Constitutions ,Constitution Guide, Exercise of Functions by Councillors, Council Executives and Securing Effective Overview and Scrutiny.
- 2.18** Following consideration by the CPR Scrutiny Committee comments have been referred back to Cabinet for consideration on 21st July 2022 in time for a final response to Welsh Government by 22nd July 2022. Such comments include the need to ensure sufficient resources for the Democratic Services Team in order to

address areas such as additional information, research and support services for all Elected Members in order to hold Cabinet and the Council to account and to discuss key issues in a more effective manner; the importance of ensuring that the Welsh language was not treated any differently or any less favourably than English i.e. the use of an interpreter at hybrid meetings and the importance of bilingual participation; the importance of reviewing the timings of meetings, work life balance, diversity, feedback, training and development for Members.

- 2.19 Council Meetings and Live Streaming:** From March 2020 to June 2020 Council committee meetings were suspended as a result of the pandemic with Council decisions being undertaken by the Chief Executives (Managing Director at that time) use of Emergency Powers COVID 19 procedure. Some Council meetings however, did take place in July 2020 i.e. Cabinet, Planning, Licensing Sub-Committee and a Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee meeting. The Full Calendar of Council meetings was reinstated in September 2020, to be undertaken on a virtual basis and the Council's previous Emergency Powers procedure as detailed in the Council's Constitution was reinstated.
- 2.20** Prior to 1st May, 2021 all Council virtual meetings, were recorded and uploaded to the Council's website for the public to view following the meetings (save for where confidential/ exempt matters were reported).
- 2.21** In May, 2021 it was agreed that all Council meetings would not only be held on a virtual basis but also be **live streamed** (i.e. meetings are able to be viewed on the website as they take place) and recorded for archive purposes on the Council's website, having regard to Welsh Government (WG) restrictions.
- 2.22** It is important to note that following the introduction of virtual meetings, members of the public have, and continue to, be able to speak at and receive a link to attend Council meetings, where public participation is in place, following the completion of an online registration process.
- 2.23** For the Committee's information, details of the unique views of virtual Council meetings since livestreaming has been in place from 1st May, 2021 to March 2022 can be found at Appendix 1 to this report.
- 2.24** The LG&E (Wales) Act also provided that from May 2022 a Principal Council must make and publish its arrangements for the broadcasting of meetings so that members of the public not in attendance can see and hear the proceedings. As a result on 25th April, 2022 the Council agreed its [Multi-Locations Meeting Policy](#) in line with WG's statutory interim guidance on multi-locations meetings May 2021 which can be found in the Council's Constitution and on the Council's website. Further guidance is awaited and will be reported to Committee in due course.

Public Speaking at Planning Committee and Scrutiny Committee

- 2.25** The arrangements for public speaking at meetings of the Council's Planning Committee have been in place since February 2015, with public involvement at the majority of meetings. The process provides an opportunity for increased public engagement in the planning application process. On 26th July, 2021, Full

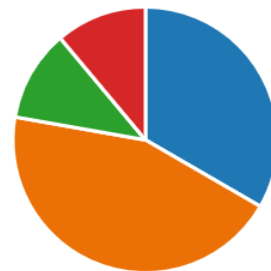
Council approved a revised version of the Guide to Public Speaking at Planning Committee.

2.26 The Council will continue to undertake a review of its public speaking arrangements as appropriate, however during the period July 2021 to March 2022 when meetings were held on a virtual basis, 34 people registered to speak at Planning Committee meetings with 9 respondents completing the questionnaire. Below are the analytics relating to 9 satisfaction responses received:

1. The information available regarding public speaking at planning committee meetings

[More Details](#)

Very Satisfied	3
Satisfied	4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	1
Dissatisfied	1
Very dissatisfied	0



2. The registration process

[More Details](#)

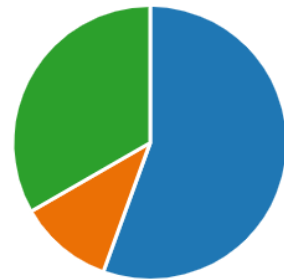
Very Satisfied	4
Satisfied	4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	1
Dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	0



3. The support provided by staff on the day of the meeting

[More Details](#)

Very Satisfied	5
Satisfied	1
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	0



4. The time you were allowed to speak at the meeting

[More Details](#)

Very Satisfied	2
Satisfied	2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0
Dissatisfied	1
Very dissatisfied	4



5. How well the committee listened to your comments

[More Details](#)

Very Satisfied	2
Satisfied	1
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0
Dissatisfied	3
Very dissatisfied	3



6. The overall process for public speaking at Planning Committee

[More Details](#)

Very Satisfied	3
Satisfied	0
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0
Dissatisfied	2
Very dissatisfied	4



7. Do you have any suggestions for improvement ?

Out of the 7 Members of the public who provided suggestions for improvement these related to increasing the time allowed for each public speaker to more than three minutes, opportunities to be afforded to repond to officer / Member comments and Members providing more information for the public to hear as to why they considered an application should be approved. A comment relating to Democratic Services Officer support to assist the public at meetings was extremely positive.

2.27 The arrangements for public speaking at Scrutiny Committees was introduced in 2016. Following a review of the guide on 26th July, 2021, Full Council approved a revised version of the Scrutiny Public Participation Guide. The Council will continue to undertake a review of its Public Speaking arrangements and report to Cabinet / Committee / Council as appropriate.

2.28 For the Committees information during the period July 2021 to March 2022, 13 people registered to speak at Scrutiny Committee meetings, with 2 responses to the satisfaction questionnaire being received. Below are the analytics relating to satisfaction responses:

1. The information available regarding public speaking at scrutiny committee meetings

[More Details](#)

Very Satisfied	1
Satisfied	0
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0
Dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	1



2. The registration process

[More Details](#)

Very Satisfied	1
Satisfied	1
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0
Dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	0



3. The support provided by staff on the day of the meeting

[More Details](#)

Very Satisfied	1
Satisfied	0
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0
Dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	1



4. The time you were allowed to speak at the meeting

[More Details](#)

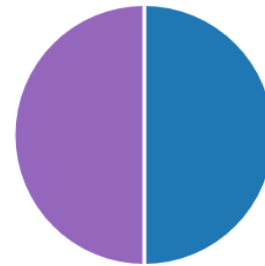
Very Satisfied	1
Satisfied	0
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0
Dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	1



5. How well the committee listened to your comments

[More Details](#)

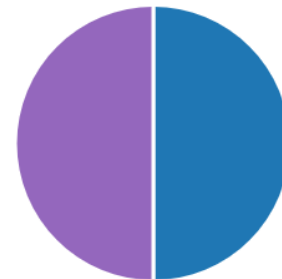
Very Satisfied	1
Satisfied	0
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0
Dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	1



6. The overall process for public speaking at Scrutiny Committee

[More Details](#)

Very Satisfied	1
Satisfied	0
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0
Dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	1



7. Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

Out of the two responses received to this question one member of the public commented that they would have appreciated being advised of a legal presence at the meeting the other stated they found the experience to be a very positive one.

Member Development

- 2.29** As set out in the previous report on the agenda a refreshed Member Development Strategy was endorsed by the Committee 12 months ago.
- 2.30** The Scrutiny and Committee Services Team also supported and assisted Members in the use of a number of virtual meeting platforms during the pandemic and having regard to the requirements of the 21 Act the Council's webcast provider CIVICO has been commissioned to provide the hybrid software solution for hybrid meetings.
- 2.31** A training module on the use of the system has been uploaded to the Council's I-Dev system and all Members, including Cabinet Members, have been requested to undertake the training in readiness for the introduction of hybrid meetings. It is the intention that from September 2022 following the completion training of all Members and officer's to hold formal Committee meetings in accordance with the MLM's policy.

- 2.32** The Council Chamber has also been upgraded to allow the provision of the system to provide Welsh language translation with equipment having been purchased to support this function
- 2.33** The provision of virtual, hybrid and livestreaming meeting solutions has been a resourcing challenge for Democratic Services and ICT Services teams and for the second year running I would like to place on record my personal thanks to colleagues in both teams who have, in my view, gone above and beyond what can be reasonably expected to ask officers to get the necessary and various facets of virtual meetings established.

Scrutiny Activities During the Year

- 2.34** The Council's five Scrutiny Committees develop their own forward work programmes for the Municipal year having regard to the Cabinet's Forward Work Programme. A number of items are monitored on a quarterly basis e.g. performance, financial management, Committee recommendations together with consideration of any call in requests and requests for consideration of a matter either put forward by Members of the Council or Members of the public. Ad hoc reports are also requested, as appropriate as well as the consideration of referrals from Cabinet and / or any other Committees. The link to the work programmes of the Scrutiny Committees agreed can also be found at https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/scrutiny/scrutiny_committees.aspx.

Key Issues of Interest During the Year for Each Scrutiny Committee

- 2.35** Scrutiny Committees must also submit an annual report of their work to Full Council and it is intended that this will be submitted to the Council meeting in September 2021 covering a two year period as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic.
- 2.36** For the Committee's information the below sets out some examples of the key interests for each Committee during the current year together with details of some public engagement that took place at various meetings.

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

- 2.37** The Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee considered a highly anticipated update from Natural Resources Wales regarding flood alleviation schemes planned or being undertaken across the Vale of Glamorgan. This was following consideration of the Council's response to a major flooding event which occurred in December 2020 and which greatly affected properties and homes in the Dinas Powys and Sully areas. The Committee meeting allowed several public speakers to outline their concerns and their expectations for the future, as well as allowing local Ward Members to pass on concerns of residents and worries around a major flooding event occurring again. During the Committee meeting, there were concerns regarding those home owners who had yet to respond to the Council's survey asking how the flood event had affected them and who would be applicable to receive property level flood

protection. In addition, plans for flood risk management schemes for Dinas Powys, Sully and other parts of the Vale of Glamorgan were assessed.

- 2.38** During 2021/22, the Scrutiny Committee also considered the Council's Project Zero – Delivering the Climate Change Challenge Plan and was asked to consider plans setting out what was needed to effect a reduction in carbon emissions across the Council and the wider community as well as the key areas that needed to be addressed around this, such as energy, procurement, transport and green spaces. The Committee endorsed the Council's plans and was keen to assess progress in delivering reduction targets.

Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny Committee

- 2.39** The Homes and Safe Communities considered a number of key issues in 2021/22 including:
- 2.40** The work that had been undertaken on setting up and the implementation of the Housing Advice Hub / 'One Stop Shop' between the Vale of Glamorgan Council and Pobl. The service model provided immediate and on the spot support for when service users needed it (for example at the point of crisis) and could offer brief, limited intervention for those users who did not need long term or floating support.
- 2.41** The Committee also scrutinised the work around drafting a new Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy, in order for all council tenants and leaseholders to have an opportunity to take part and have the opportunity to shape the services they receive.
- 2.42** The Committee continued to monitor and scrutinise the work undertaken by the Youth Offending Service both in terms of its performance and the Youth Justice Plan and monitored and considered updates around key areas of housing and safe communities, i.e. the Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2018 – 2022, Community Safety Action Plan and Housing and Building Services 2021/22 Housing Improvement Work.
- 2.43** The Committee received presentations on key areas such the Civil Protection Unit, Disabled Facilities Adaptations, Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit and the new Housing and Building Services / C1V Digital Solution and updated on key issues impacting the lives of tenants and other residents within the Vale, such as the roll out of Universal Credit and the ongoing effects of COVID-19 on rents, etc.
- 2.44** Via a Task and Finish Group, the Committee concluded a report on Housing and Homelessness Provision within the Vale of Glamorgan. The report outlined the key areas and themes around current and future housing and homelessness provision for the Vale, with the challenges faced in progressing this by the Council, Welsh Government, other Local Authorities and partners during the pandemic and beyond also set out. The report was subsequently referred to Cabinet for its consideration, who not only congratulated the Committee for the work undertaken but endorsed the recommendations advising that they would help to inform the homelessness and housing strategies. It is anticipated an

update report will be provided to Cabinet and the Committee in 12 months' time.

Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee

- 2.45** The Committee continues to monitor the Council's vital Social Care and Leisure Services that have a direct impact on the lives of all Vale of Glamorgan residents and have been significantly affected by the Covid-19 National pandemic:
- 2.46** The **Adult Services** Division has provided services for people with a learning disability, autism, mental health problems, frailty because of aging, a physical disability or sensory impairment and adults who need protecting from abuse. **Children and Young People Services** provide help to children and young people who are eligible for care and support. These include children requiring support, who are looked after by the Council, who have left care, who have additional needs and /or disabilities or who need to be safeguarded. The **Resource Management and Safeguarding Service** provides support to the Directorate in the key areas of leadership and culture, financial stability and resources, planning and partnerships, commissioning and contracting, residential services, workforce development, performance management, and protecting children and adults at risk. **Leisure Services** has maintained and improved the levels of participation and physical activity in the Vale of Glamorgan to encourage and promote active and healthy lifestyles as well as provide quality public urban parks, public open space, recreation fields and play facilities throughout the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 2.47** Through detailed Officer reports, the Committee has witnessed the critical way in which Council Staff have responded to immediate challenges as a result of the national pandemic as well as meeting the requirements of the Council's Covid-19 recovery strategy by evolving and adapting services in a rapidly changing and uncertain landscape and communicating effectively with partners, communities and service users. The Committee has scrutinised how services have been delivered to meet statutory roles and functions and how resources have been directed to where they are most needed.

Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee

- 2.48** Through detailed officer reports and guest speakers, the Committee continues to monitor progress on Schools (Pupil Support, School Improvement and School Support), Post 16 Education and Training, Libraries, Community Education and Youth Service, Equalities, Welsh Language, and Arts Development.
- 2.49** The Committee has scrutinised the findings of discussions held between improvement partners from Central South Consortium (CSC) and school leaders in the Vale of Glamorgan regarding the use of the **Recruit, Recover, Raise Standards: Accelerating Learning Programme grant (the RRRS grant)** in schools. This grant is to support learners who have been impacted most by the pandemic. Discussions have involved scrutiny of school development plans and plans relating to the deployment of the RRRS grant as well as its impact in schools across the local authority.
- 2.50** The Committee has monitored the development of the **Curriculum for Wales Framework** as a result of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 becoming law after receiving Royal Assent in April 2021. The Act states the new

curriculum requirements for all learners aged 3 to 16 in maintained or funded non-maintained nursery education in Wales over four purposes. To realise the requirements of the Act, schools must design, adopt and implement a curriculum by September 2022 which must fulfil the Welsh Curriculum requirements set out in legislation and provide the learning it defines.

Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee

- 2.51** The Committee continued to review the work on Project Zero undertaken by the Council (around decarbonisation, etc.) from the draft climate change challenge plan through to have regular updates on its overall progress, three times a year. The Committee also continued to be updated and scrutinised work undertaken by the Council in the implementation of the UK Government's Welfare Reform agenda and sought seeking clarification on the support that could be offered to Vale residents.
- 2.52** Other areas considered included the monitoring of sickness absence, a review of the Senior Management Structure relating to senior management in the context of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 as well as key learning arising from the covid-19 pandemic and the Council's current arrangements to respond and recover from the pandemic.
- 2.53** Various constitutional and electoral arrangements were also discussed i.e. the County Borough of the Vale of Glamorgan (Electoral Arrangements) Order 2021, Polling Places and Polling Stations: Mini-Review, and again the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 which included the Standards of Conduct Statutory Guidance.
- 2.54** Other key areas of scrutiny included the draft Public Participation Strategy, and Unacceptable Actions by Citizens and Social Media Policies, around relationships between the Council and the public, finance, pay and the Council's budget, including the Closure of Accounts, Revenue and Capital Monitoring, Treasury Management, Housing Revenue Account, Initial Revenue Budget Proposals, and the Vale's Pay Policy for 2022/23, with questions raised around the WLGA Food Poverty Grant and Good Shed repayment to Welsh Government (WG), the impact inflation on revenue expenditure, queries on pay grading / banding and narrowing the gender pay gap within the Council.
- 2.55** The Committee in considering the Draft Welsh Language Promotion Strategy, felt humanity, interaction and to do this informally was important, with a sense fun and the importance of reflecting real life experiences and how people lived their lives through the medium of Welsh.

Collaborative Working and Networks

- 2.56 Officer and Member Network (MSO)** – The Network is facilitated by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) with the intention to improve the services and Member development opportunities provided to Councillors. The meetings are also attended by Heads of Democratic Services and / or a Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer.
- 2.57 South East Wales Scrutiny Officer Network** – The Network provides opportunities for Local Authorities to share information, develop good practices,

raise and discuss issues of mutual concern and make suggestions for improvements.

2.58 Heads of Democratic Services Network supported by the WLGA – This Network also provides opportunities for Local Authorities to share information, develop good practice, raise and discuss matters of mutual concern and make suggestions for improvements. Recent meetings have included opportunities to discuss matters directly with WG representatives having regard to the provisions of the LG&E (Wales) Act and related consultations regarding guidance developed in respect of various provisions of the Act e.g. Corporate Joint Committees (CJCS) and multi – location meetings.

2.59 Attendances at the above Networks offer opportunities for the Team Members in Democratic Services to also facilitate the effective provision of support to Elected Members.

Independent Bodies

2.60 Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) – The IRPW is responsible for determining the level of payments to elected Members of Councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales. The Panel’s Draft Annual Report was considered by this Committee in November 2021 following consultation. On 9th May, 2022, new municipal arrangements came into effect following Local Government elections. The IRPW Annual Report therefore had two different effective dates as set out below:

- (i) For the period 1st April, 2022 to 8th May, 2022, all the Determinations contained in the IRPW’s [Annual Report 2021/22](#) continued to apply in respect of Principal Councils and Town and Community Councils.
- (ii) For National Park Authorities and Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities the determinations in Sections 7 and 8 of the IRPW Report would apply from the new financial year, 1st April, 2022.
- (iii) With effect from 9th May, 2022 (the new Municipal year) the determination set out in the IRPW Report in Sections 3 and 13 would apply to Principal Councils and Town and Community Councils.

2.61 The report references the IRPW’s consistently expressed view that maintaining the democratic values of local government could not be cost free. Payments to Members and Co-opted Members are made available to encourage a diversity of willing and able people to undertake local governance through their elected, appointed or co-opted roles. The report also includes reference to Reimbursement of Costs of Care and the promotion of awareness raising of the scheme so that Members with caring responsibilities for other dependents such as the elderly are encouraged to claim.

2.62 Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) – The PSOW has legal powers to look into complaints about public services and independent care providers in Wales. The Ombudsman also investigates complaints that members of local government bodies have breached their Authority’s code of conduct. Following a request from the PSOW, the Council has also introduced a Local Dispute

Resolution Procedure to deal with low level allegations by a Member against a fellow Member. The current PSOW Code of Conduct guidance for Members of Local Authorities has been forwarded to all Members for their information. The Monitoring Officer and officers within the Democratic and Scrutiny section also continue to provide guidance to elected Members in this regard. The guidance can be found at <https://www.ombudsman.wales/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Code-of-Conduct-Guidance-CC-CBC-NPA-PCP.pdf>

2.63 A similar guide was also issued by the PSOW for Town and Community Councils.

The Year Ahead

2.64 The Democratic and Scrutiny Services Team have regard to a number of activities that will be undertaken in 2022, within the Committees remit, as follows:

- Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 - Some aspects of this Act have already been implemented which have had a direct impact on the Team that have been highlighted earlier in this report however the Team will also:
- Continue to address and review any further statutory and / or other guidance received and the sharing of good practice and make arrangements in conjunction with the Monitoring Officer for amendments to the Council's Constitution where necessary
- Work in partnership with Policy & Business Transformation colleagues to deliver aspects of the Public Participation Strategy
- Work with colleagues in HR and OD to further develop succession planning arrangements in Democratic Services in order to retain expertise and skills especially in business-critical areas for the long term.
- Work with colleagues in HR and OD to further develop succession planning arrangements in Democratic Services in order to retain expertise and skills especially in business-critical areas for the long term
- Monitor the provision of hybrid and remote meetings including the use of the Welsh Language Translation service.

2.65 In conclusion this report highlights that the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Team have had an extremely challenging year where the priorities and workloads of the Team as a result of the provisions of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 21 and the coronavirus pandemic have impacted significantly. However, the Team have adapted and continued to develop to meet the needs of the service and to comply with the provisions of new legislation. The Team have been successful in service resilience and through creativity have delivered the desired outcomes that have supported Elected Members and the Council's governance arrangements.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act sets out effective transparency as a key part of improving the delivery of public bodies.
- 3.2** The Act requires public bodies to communicate and explain the processes of selecting its well-being objectives and how these objectives have been chosen, how decisions are taken in line with these objectives and what difference these objectives have made.
- 3.3** The importance of presenting the report is to ensure that transparency has taken place and to inform the Council and the public of the above arrangements which are required to be undertaken to comply with the terms of reference of the Democratic Services Committee include "to have regard to Welsh Ministerial guidance when exercising its functions".
- 3.4** The Measure makes arrangements for changes to the political structure of local government in Wales and the way in which local government operates.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** None as a direct result of this report.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** As set out above.

Employment

- 5.2** As set out above.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.3** The Council is required to comply with the relevant provisions of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 with regard to the provision of Democratic Services and support for such.
- 5.4** Comply with other legislation and Statutory Guidance e.g. Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

6. Background Papers

[Local Government \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#)

YOU TUBE VIEWS OF MEETING RECORDINGS

(1) Live Streaming and Views as at May 2021 – March 2022

Committee	Meeting Date	Number of Live Stream Views	Number of Views since Publication
MAY 2021			
Annual Meeting	10 th May	127	22
Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny	11 th May	14	7
Cabinet	12 th May	27	29
Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny	12 th May	2	14
Learning and Culture Scrutiny	13 th May	20	
Public Protection Licensing	18 th May	8	9
Environment and Regeneration	18 th May	8	190
Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny	19 th May	19	11
Cabinet	24 th May	9	18
Governance and Audit	24 th May	17	4
Planning	26 th May	61	15
Standards	27 th May	6	14
JUNE 2021			
Cabinet	7 th June	15	13
Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny	8 th June	23	11
Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny	9 th June	11	12
Learning and Culture Scrutiny	10 th June	39	20
Welsh Church Act Estate	14 th June	8	7
Public Protection Licensing	15 th June	8	2
Statutory Licensing	15 th June	8	2
Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny	15 th June	30	19
Corporate Performance and Resources	16 th June	13	12
Cabinet	21 st June	64	12
Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison	28 th June	5	10
Shared Regulatory Services	22 nd June	21	
Planning	24 th June	17	5

JULY 2021			
Cabinet	5 th July	14	24
Community Liaison	5 th July	9	29
Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny	6 th July	14	25
Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny	7 th July	9	39
Learning and Culture Scrutiny	8 th July	27	24
Democratic Services	12 th July	8	13
Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny	13 th July	9	14
Planning	14 th July	35	133
Standards	15 th July	9	15
Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny	15 th July	12	19
Cabinet	19 th July	17	42
Governance and Audit	20 th July	8	--
Planning	21 st July	24	77
Learning and Culture Scrutiny	22 nd July	22	13
Council	26 th July	92	191
SEPTEMBER 2021			
Planning	1 st Sept	154	307
Standards	9 th Sept	6	14
Cabinet	13 th Sept	37	40
Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny	14 th Sept	Issue with live stream	12
Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny	15 th Sept	15	21
Learning and Culture Scrutiny	16 th Sept	10	47
Council	20 th Sept	93	101
Public Protection Licensing	21 st Sept	10	16
Statutory Licensing	21 st Sept	3	15
Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny	21 st Sept	10	22
Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny	22 nd Sept	37	103
Governance and Audit	23 rd Sept	7	19
Cabinet	27 th Sept	28	31
Shared Regulatory Services	28 th Sept	9	21
Council	28 th Sept	66	96
Planning	29 th Sept	22	34
OCTOBER 2021			
Welsh Church Act Estate	4 th Oct	4	22
Community Liaison	4 th Oct	10	39
Cabinet	11 th Oct	19	38
Council	11 th Oct	37	38

Licensing Sub	12 th Oct	18	26
Senior Management Appointment	12 th Oct	7	21
Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny	12 th Oct	6	13
Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny	13 th Oct	11	28
Learning and Culture Scrutiny	14 th Oct	20	30
Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison	18 th Oct	6	16
Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny	19 th Oct	113	82
Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny	21 st Oct	22	15
Cabinet	25 th Oct	19	25
Planning	27 th Oct	30	56
NOVEMBER 2021			
Community Liaison	4 th Nov	6	17
Cabinet	8 th Nov	19	
Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny	9 th Nov	7	8
Homes and Safe Communities	10 th Nov	19	36
Learning and Culture Scrutiny	11 th Nov	6	14
Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny	16 th Nov	15	31
Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny	17 th Nov	11	24
Cabinet	22 nd Nov	17	17
Democratic Services	22 nd Nov	5	15
Planning	24 th Nov	55	40
Standards	25 th Nov	16	41
Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison	30 th Nov	12	10
DECEMBER 2021			
Local Access Forum	2 nd Dec	Not live streamed	9
Cabinet	6 th Dec	13	8
Council	6 th Dec	92	126
Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny	7 th Dec	5	15
Learning and Culture Scrutiny	9 th Dec	7	26
Governance and Audit	13 th Dec	7	19
Shared Regulatory Services	14 th Dec	13	27
Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny	14 th Dec	22	28
Planning	15 th Dec	25	38
Homes and Safe Communities	16 th Dec	11	33
Cabinet	20 th Dec	19	39

Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny	22 nd Dec	27	55
JANUARY 2022			
Cabinet	10 th Jan	83	56
Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny	11 th Jan	9	23
Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny	12 th Jan	34	39
Public Rights of Way	13 th Jan	17	69
Learning and Culture Scrutiny	13 th Jan	11	46
Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny	18 th Jan	9	58
Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny	20 th Jan	12	15
Cabinet	24 th Jan	26	28
Council x 2	24 th Jan	29	100
Community Liaison	25 th Jan	44	28
Standards	26 th Jan	68	54
Planning	26 th Jan	48	94
Standards	27 th Jan	10	25
Welsh Church Act Estate	31 st Jan	27	15
FEBRUARY 2022			
Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison	7 th Feb	11	13
Statutory and Public Protection Licensing	8 th Feb	13	16
Learning and Culture Scrutiny	10 th Feb	74	116
Cabinet	14 th Feb	37	38
Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny	15 th Feb	17	46
Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny	17 th Feb	13	33
Cabinet	28 th Feb	35	24
MARCH 2022			
Governance and Audit	1 st March	19	28
Planning	2 nd March	20	71
Council	7 th March	82	108
Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny	8 th March	11	10
Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny	9 th March	11	21
Learning and Culture Scrutiny	10 th March	2	25
Licensing Sub	11 th March	5	12
Cabinet	14 th March	30	37
Welsh Church Act Estate	14 th March	17	24

Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny	15 th Marc	11	22
Standards	17 th March	7	6
Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny	17 th March	32	20
Shared Regulatory Services	23 rd March	4	17
Cabinet	28 th March	19	29
Planning	30 th March	10	29
APRIL 2022			
Democratic Services	4 th April	10	18
Homes and Safe Communities Scrutiny	6 th April	13	35
Learning and Culture Scrutiny	7 th April	10	10
Cabinet	11 th April	32	60
Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny	12 th April	3	24
Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny	14 th April	11	24
Cabinet	25 th April	19	31
Council	25 th April	29	77
Planning	27 th April	64	86