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CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF

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## **SUPPLEMENTAL PAPERS - 1**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description and Page Number(s)</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Democratic Services Annual Report - (Pages 3 - 52)</b>

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Friday, 24 January 2020

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# City & County of Cardiff Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2019



Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd /  
This document is also available in Welsh

WORKING FOR CARDIFF,  
WORKING TOGETHER



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## Chair's Foreword

The last twelve months turned out to be extremely busy! Following the sad death in office of three of our colleagues, Councillors Jim Murphy, Wendy Congreve and Tim Davies, three by-elections were held, only one of which was known about this time last year. In addition to that, there was the by-election called following the resignation of Cllr Phil Bale, the unexpected European Election and the equally unexpected General Election, in November, just three weeks after a by-election. These put a tremendous workload onto the Electoral Services team and I take this opportunity of recognising their dedication and professional approach to running six successful elections, in addition to carrying out the Annual Canvas process and the Polling Station review. Hopefully, the next twelve months will see only the expected PCC election, for which there has been plenty of practice!

The year has seen staff leave and new staff arrive, including the retirement of Gill Nurton who served the council, and members, for many years, and I take this opportunity to express the thanks and gratitude of all of us to her, for her work on our behalf. I'd also like to congratulate Kate Rees on her appointment, taking over from Gill, and I'm sure that she will be excellent in the role.

This report covers the work of Democratic, Member, Electoral and Scrutiny Services in the last year. It also explains, that whilst efficiencies are being targeted, including further reductions in printing and the increased use of digital documentation, to maintain the services in each of the above areas, there is little scope for further reductions, without commensurate reductions in meetings, which must be maintained if the good governance arrangements we have, are to continue. The importance of the various Scrutiny Committees and their Task and Finish groups, along with the areas of work of Member Services is clear.

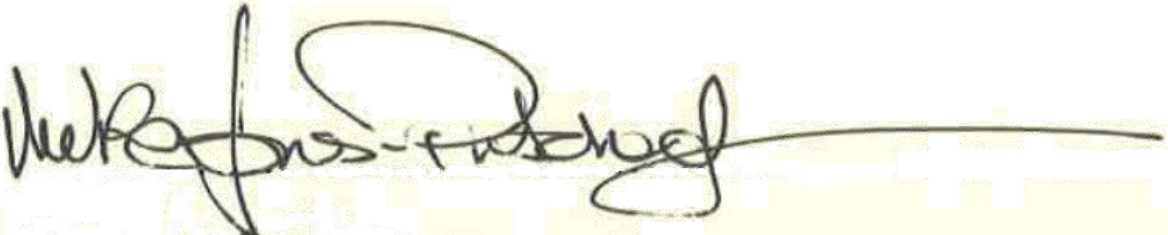
As requested last year, there has been a focus on and improvements to, the provisions for member's safety and well-being. In addition, there has been considerable work on the vitally important area of Member Development. The programme provides essential guidance and knowledge, to enable members to know their responsibilities and the roles of council officers. The importance of this was highlighted last week. I can't stress enough how important it is that members make use of these opportunities.

To help everyone better understand the development opportunities being provided, there has been a change in the way Member Development sessions are categorised. There are now four categories, Mandatory, Recommended, Beneficial and Useful and every session will be colour coded for each level of councillor roll. There have also been improvements to, and the re-instatement of, on-line training through E-Learning.

This year's IRPW report covered many areas with one area seen as particular importance, that of ensuring that no member is financially disadvantaged in carrying out their roles. The IRP has stressed that no elected representative should have to pay for anything needed to undertake their democratic role of serving residents, especially costs incurred for caring, from their taxed income.

The next year will see changes being brought in by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill, the continuation of the Member Role Descriptions, development of a mentoring scheme and the Personal Review process. In these areas, and others, we are always interested in suggestions from members that can improve the performance of Democratic Services and ways in which member's well-being, security and development can be improved, to further benefit their service to the citizens of Cardiff.

Last year, members made valuable suggestions, which the committee has responded to and I thank councillors, committee members and all in Democratic Services for their dedication, support and involvement in ensuring that we continue to work towards achieving a standard of excellence. This report, prepared by the Head of Democratic Services and agreed by the committee, shows just how much work has been undertaken and how important that work is to the delivery of the Democratic Services of this council, and I commend it to you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Jones Pritchard', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right. The signature is set against a light yellow background.

**Councillor Mike Jones Pritchard**  
**Chair, Democratic Services Committee**



**Membership of the Democratic Services Committee.**

The Democratic Services Committee have worked together to develop the support and services provided to all Elected Members, Independent Members, Registered Representatives, Lay Members and Co-optees.



**Councillor Jones-Pritchard**



**Councillor Burke-Davies**



**Councillor Fenella Bowden**



**Councillor Goddard**



**Councillor Goodway**



**Councillor Kelloway**



**Councillor Chris Lay**



**Councillor McKerlich**



**Councillor Naughton**



**Councillor Parry**



**Councillor Sandrey**



**Councillor Wong**

## Committee Attendance.

Councillor	Possible	Actual
Councillor Mike Jones-Pritchard (Chair)	3	3
Councillor Jennifer Burke-Davies <sup>1</sup>	3	0
Councillor Fenella Bowden	2	2
Councillor Susan Goddard	2	1
Councillor Russell Goodway	3	1
Councillor Kathryn Kelloway	3	2
Councillor Chris Lay	2	2
Councillor Rod McKerlich	3	3
Councillor Dan Naughton	3	3
Councillor Keith Parry	3	2
Councillor Emma Sandrey	3	3
Councillor Peter Wong	3	3
Councillor Ashley Lister <sup>2</sup>	1	1

## Terms of Reference.

The remit of the Democratic Services Committee is:

- (a) To carry out the local authority's function of designating the Head of Democratic Services;
- (b) To keep under review, the adequacy of provision of staff, accommodation and other resources made available to discharge the democratic services functions of the Authority;
- (c) To make reports, at least annually, to the full Council in relation to these matters.

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<sup>1</sup> Maternity Leave from September 2018

<sup>2</sup> Ceased to be a Member of the committee following the 14 Jan 2019 meeting.

## **The Democratic Services Team – Support, Services and Structures**

### **Head of Democratic Services**

The Head of Democratic Services has management responsibility for Committee, Electoral, Member and Scrutiny Services. An organisational structure diagram of the Democratic Services Team can be seen at **Appendix A**.

The following is an overview of the Democratic Services Team. A full list of the functions undertaken by the team can be found at **Appendix B**.

### **Committee Services**

At present, the team currently consists of five members of staff made up of the Committee and Member Services Manager, one Senior Committee and Member Services Officer, two Committee and Member Services Officers and a temporary Committee Services Officer.

Committee Services supports the Full Council and its Committees, the formal decision-making and good governance of the Council. This includes preparation of agendas, minutes & reports packs using the Modern.Gov committee administration system; publishing; booking rooms for meetings and pre-meetings; support to Lord Mayor as Chair of Council; Chairs of Committees. Support is provided to the following meetings.

- Full Council;
- Regulatory: Council Appeals, Planning, Planning (Policy), Public Protection and Licensing and Licensing Sub Committees;
- Governance: Appointments, Audit, Constitution, Corporate Parenting, Democratic Services, Employment Conditions, Pension, Standards and Ethics Committees – including Standards & Ethics Hearing Panels; Bilingual Cardiff & Local Authority Governor Panels;
- Scrutiny: Economy and Culture, Environmental, Children and Young People, Community and Adult Services and Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committees;
- Joint Committees: Glamorgan Archives; Prosiect Gwyrdd & Joint Pension Board;
- Officer Meetings: Investment Review Board, Joint Partnership Board (Trade Unions), Election Project Team.

This equates to 223 meetings a year for which they arrange suitable dates, prepare agendas, co-ordinate report approval, circulate documents, draft minutes, record decisions and attendances and publish appropriate information on the various websites. This section also co-ordinates the delivery of the audio visual and webcasting facilities for Council, Planning, Audit and Scrutiny Committees.

**Member Services**

The Member Services Team supports all 75 Elected Members and provides them with a first point of contact to address any queries they may have. At present, the team currently consists of three Member Support Officers who are managed by the Committee and Member Services Manager.

- Members Enquiry System (MES)

This is one of the key services support provided by the Members Services team and which is used by 70/75 (93.3%) Elected Members. The MES is an important tool to effectively deal with the issues raised by residents with their Councillor. Logging enquiries provides Senior Managers with data on the key service issues, logging frequency and trends.

The agreed performance target is that responses to enquiries raised by Elected Members will be provided within 10 working days and the Members Services team is continually monitoring MES for responses to and from councillors, chasing and escalating matters as necessary. The team liaise closely with agents in Directorates and regularly meet with teams to deal with specific issues in particular in relation to Requests for Service. The complexity and multi-service nature of some enquiries means that response times can exceed the 10 working days. Table 1 provides an update on the number and method of reporting Member Enquiries:

**Table 1**

<b>Enquiry Type</b>	<b>Q4 2018/19</b>	<b>Q1 2019/20</b>	<b>Q2 2019/20</b>	<b>Q3 2019/20</b>
<b>Total Enquiries</b>	1854	1848	1977	1128
<b>Member Self-serve</b>	694	744	875	530
<b>Logged by Officer</b>	1160	1104	1102	598
<b>Time taken to close in days.</b>	9.2	9.4	9.9	8.6

- Supporting Community Councils

Cabinet formally adopted the Community Council Charter on 13 December 2018 and it was agreed that the MES service will be provided to Community Councils on a permanent basis with the use of the service being monitored and reviewed as and when necessary.

### **Electoral Services**

The Council's Electoral Services Team provides services to approximately 243,000 electors and 43,000 postal voters spanning 4 parliamentary constituencies, 6 community councils, and a unitary authority comprising 75 members in 29 wards.

At present, the team currently consists of six members of staff made up of two Electoral Services Officers, two Electoral Administrators, one Electoral Assistant and one Electoral Services Manager.

The team has worked to deliver the following tasks during the year:

- Completion of the IER Annual Canvass Process
- Management of Community Council Casual Vacancies
- Polling Station Review
- Boundary Commission Review
- European Election
- By-Elections in Ely, Cyncoed, Whitchurch & Tongwynlais and Llanishen.
- General Election

A full description of the activities of the Elections team during this year is described in in the key activities section of this report.

### **Scrutiny Services**

At present, the team currently consists of six members of staff made up of five Principal Scrutiny Officers and a Principal Research Officer. The team is managed by the Head of Democratic Services.

Scrutiny Services support the following Scrutiny Committees.

- Children and Young People (CYP) Scrutiny Committee
- Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee (CASSC)
- Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee (ECSC)
- Environmental Scrutiny Committee (ESC)
- Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee (PRAP)

There were 53 Scrutiny Committee meetings held in 2019 and included one joint Scrutiny Committee meeting. The team also has a research facility which is used by the Scrutiny Committees and for any task and finish groups established by them.

Each Scrutiny Committees provides a detailed Annual Report to Council on the activities they have undertaken during the year. A summary of the activities of the Scrutiny Service is included in the Key Activities section of this report.

**Corporate Apprentices – Democratic Services**

The Scrutiny and Committee & Members Services teams are supporting two Democratic Services Corporate Apprentices. The apprentices are progressing well with their Business Administration Level 2 Foundation Apprenticeship that they are undertaking in collaboration with Cardiff & Vale College. These apprenticeships will be completed by March 2020.

The next round of corporate apprentice recruitments will begin in January 2020 but due to the overlap with the existing apprentice cohort the Democratic Services team will be unable to support any apprentices in 2020/21.

**Resources**

The budget allocation for 2019/20 for the Democratic Services Team was £3.206m which was allocated as follows to the relevant service areas.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Net Budget £000</b>
<b>Democratic Services</b>	396
<b>Electoral Services</b>	587
<b>Member Services</b>	1,765
<b>Scrutiny Services</b>	458
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,206</b>

The latest financial projection indicates that the Democratic Services Team will achieve a small underspend in this financial year due to the staffing changes that have occurred during the year.

The Budget Strategy 2020/21 sets out a budget gap for next financial year and over the following four years (April 2020 to March 2024). To contribute to the budget gap it

has been proposed that the Council will make significant savings through efficiency, transformation and growing income.

To meet these targets Governance and Legal Services have been asked to identify possible efficiency savings of 7.5% or £219,000, an additional £14,000 of income, and other service change and transformation opportunities. Democratic Services' element of these savings make up £64,000, for which the Director has indicated that with current meeting levels, the service is unable to identify these savings. However, some options have been put forward for further consideration including a review of the meetings cycle and the scrutiny function. Without the possibility of holding fewer meetings and the level of staffing resources necessary to support them the savings targets are unlikely to be met.

The Committee acknowledged the view of the Director of Governance and Legal Services regarding the need to reduce the number of formal meetings for Democratic Services to meet its savings target. The Committee considered that the scale of the reductions needed to make this target were unacceptable if the good governance arrangements of the Authority were to be maintained.

The Resources Directorate would re-profile the budget of Democratic Services with only low level non-staffing budget reductions which can be met from planned efficiencies. Plans to amalgamate some of the budgets within Democratic Services are currently being progressed in order to reduce the administrative burden.

## Key Activities

### Member Development

A Member Development Programme was developed to support all Councillors and provide opportunities for collective and individual learning. The programme included specialist areas of development reflecting the needs of Members in developing skills and understanding in both corporate governance; statutory requirements and thematic or service related areas.

The programme offered a variety of learning opportunities during the year and were attended as follows: -

- Main Sessions

Date(s)	Event	Attendance		Remarks
		Actual	%	
10 Jan 19	Wellbeing and Future Generations	4/74	9.46%	Pilot Session
4 Feb 19 5 Feb 19 6 Feb 19	Financial management and budget preparation	21/74	28.38%	
4 Feb 19	EU citizen settlement scheme	11/75	14.67%	
13 May 19	Children's Rights in Practice Pt 1	20/75	26.67%	
14 May 19	Children's Rights in Practice Pt 2	16/74	21.62%	
24 Jun 19 26 Jun 19	Corporate safeguarding guide	35/73	47.95	

- Briefing Sessions

Date(s)	Event	Attendance		Remarks
		Actual	%	
23 Oct 19	Children's services update	11/74	14.86%	
12 Sep 19	Cardiff 2030	13/74	17.56%	

- Welsh Language

Cardiff Academy is providing the following free Welsh Language courses:

- Beginner to advanced



- One morning a week for the duration of the course
- Option to gain a WJEC qualification
- Clear pathway to becoming bilingual (Level 3+)

Elected Members have been informed of these courses and how they can book onto them. A number of Elected Members have signed up to these courses and it is hoped that these courses will continue to be made available.

- E-Learning

Difficulties with the All Wales Academy (AWA) E-Learning facility, administered by the NHS, has restricted the ability of Elected Member to undertake E-Learning activities. To address these issues, a dedicated Elected Member E-Learning portal supported by the Cardiff Academy has been developed and launched. The portal provides Elected Members with access to the key topics identified by the Democratic Services Committee for completion during this municipal year. In addition, the AWA has been improved sufficiently to resume its use and links have been established from the Elected Members portal to the AWA.

The new portal also provides monthly reports to the Head of Democratic Services detailing the completion status of E-Learning modules. This information will be shared with Group Whips and Elected Members will be encouraged to maximise the use of this facility.

It should be noted that the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) in collaboration with the 22 local authorities in Wales, have agreed to update and develop additional E-Learning modules to the AWA in order to improve the support available to Elected Members. The updated and additional modules are due to be made available for use by September 2020.

- Annual Reports

All Elected Members are provided with the opportunity to complete an Annual Report in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011. The Annual Report details the work of the Councillor over the Municipal Year and is published bilingually on Members' individual webpages. The number of Members who produce Annual Reports are reported annually to

the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for Wales. For the Municipal Year 2017/18, 15 individual Annual Reports and 11 Councillors as Ward Groups were published during 2019.

### **Personal Safety for Elected Members**

Awareness of Elected Members receiving online, verbal and other forms of intimidation and abuse has increased. This has required the establishment of processes and procedures to ensure that any personal safety concerns which a Councillor may experience can be reported and assessed. A log of personal safety incidents reported by elected members has been developed and is being used to record incidents and their nature. This is an ongoing role requiring liaison and co-ordination with Democratic Services, Elected Members, the Corporate Security Manager and the Police. Reported incidents are reviewed and updated to ensure that appropriate actions are taken to mitigate any concerns. Personal Safety assessments can be undertaken with the Corporate Security Manager to determine any appropriate mitigating actions that may be needed. A range of support is available and may include of provision of advice, noise generators or more interactive safety devices.

The processes and procedures developed by the Council have been shared with other Local Authorities across Wales as an exemplar of good practice.

### **Staffing**

During this year, two members of the Committee and Members team have left the Authority and recruitment exercises for both posts has been undertaken. The recruitment processes took longer than expected and increased the workload for the Committee and Members Services Teams.

The Members Services Officer post has been successfully filled by an employee from the redeployment pool.

The role of Committee and Member Services Manager was initially filled using an acting-up arrangement whilst the external recruitment process was undertaken. Following this recruitment, Kate Rees was appointed as the new Committee and Member Services Manager. This appointment required the recruitment of a temporary

employee from Cardiff Works to backfill the vacancy of the Senior Committee & Member Services Officer to maintain service provision. Options for further recruitments are being considered and will be developed early in 2020 to ensure that the needs of the service are met.

The Elections team have one team member on maternity leave and the post is being backfilled using acting up arrangements. Additional support was provided during the election period by the Corporate Apprentices from across the Directorate with additional corporately funded staff being drafted into the team to assist throughout the election period.

One of the Principal Scrutiny Officer posts is currently being filled on a temporary/acting up basis. A recruitment process for a permanent employee is expected to start in January 2020.

### **Committee & Member Services**

The following outlines the key activities of the Committee and Member Services Team:

- Education Appeals

The Team currently supports the education appeals process by providing a note-taker which is part-funded by the Education Directorate. A total of 398 admission appeals have been received, of which, 255 are expected to be held. Up to five admissions appeals are usually held on a single day with each appeal taking approximately one hour to complete although some appeals take considerably longer. This equates to approximately 51 days where a member of the team is supporting an appeal hearing. The note taker is required to complete the notes of the hearing to the necessary standard within 3 working days. Agreements have been made which enables the note-taker to complete their notes more quickly than previously achieved but this may require an additional time commitment from team members.

There have been four Exclusion Appeals held to date, with a team member committed to support each day-long appeal. The minutes of these meetings

are more detailed and often require a significant amount of time to complete within the required timescales.

The support to education appeals has been prioritised and is one of the factors that has led to the team being unable to achieve its 80% target for publishing draft minutes of committee meetings within 10 working days of the meeting. This performance indicator is currently being reviewed as the initial target set was not wholly within the control of the team.

- Office 365

Office 365 is the latest version of Microsoft Office which includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook. It utilises the benefits of “the cloud” to make savings in infrastructure costs which includes a reduction in server space, the removal of license costs for “Blackberry Works” which would no longer be required and provides more collaborative features which should enable users to work more effectively.

The initial plans for a pilot for Elected Members was delayed following early meetings which identified technical challenges for those Elected Members who already had a managed Office 365 account on their devices and which prevented the Council’s Office 365 software from being installed.

The migration of Elected Members would allow the withdrawal of the “Blackberry Works” software and its associated costs. Following the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee on 15 October 2019 the migration of Elected Members was prioritised for completion by 31 October to optimise some of the potential savings.

The migration of 72 Elected Members to Office 365 was completed as directed with the remaining 3 Elected Members awaiting solutions to their technical difficulties before they can be migrated. Blackberry Works was withdrawn for those members who were migrated achieving a minimum saving of £2,764.80. Some of these savings were then used to purchase additional equipment as

some of the older devices used by Elected Members were not compatible with the Office 365 software.

The activation of additional functionality will be made in a phased process with the first being the ability to self-serve network password resets which will be rolled out early in 2020.

An unexpected outcome of the implementation of Office 365 was the inconsistency of the records of the ICT equipment currently being used by Elected Members. This prompted the instigation of an ICT audit to accurately record the equipment that was being used, identify any equipment that was faulty or not being used. It is anticipated that this audit will be completed early in 2020.

- Implementation of Microsoft SharePoint

Microsoft SharePoint is a browser-based software system which supports collaborative document management. It enables departments to set up a protected space for document sharing using cloud technology. The Authority is progressing the corporate implementation of SharePoint with Governance and Legal Services being one of the latest directorates to undertake the transfer to this new system.

The first stage of this process was to “cleanse” the data currently held on the team’s drives before the transfer to SharePoint takes place. This entailed reviewing thousands of files to ensure that only necessary and relevant information was retained. This has been a time consuming process and the teams are making steady progress to meet the deadline to complete the cleansing process.

During this period, new SharePoint websites have been created to reflect the data storage and collaboration needs of each of the teams and to enable the cleansed data to be transferred into SharePoint. New processes are being developed to support the effective provision of services and the ongoing efficient operation of SharePoint in the future.

- Printing

Printing is one of the costs which Democratic Services is able to influence. The team has access to a centralised printing service which is providing a fast and effective service for the larger and more complex printing needs of the team including committee reports and members letters. This service has provided cost savings compared to Printsmart facility and the teams have been directed to maximise the use of this facility. It is anticipated that the use of this service will reduce the previous year's printing costs of £19,047 by approximately £6,000.

With the increased use of the print service a review of the printers funded by the Democratic Services has been undertaken. Options were considered and the Committee agreed to the removal of one of the Member's room printers and to change the larger printer to one which is more cost effective for the volume of printing. The level of savings that will be achieved from these changes are still being determined.

Although, the overall volume of printing has significantly reduced over a number of years particularly for Committee papers it is considered that the further savings are achievable. Those Members identified by Group Whips as having a particular need and requiring access to a hard copy of committee papers are provided with them accordingly. However, it is hoped that the windows version of the new Modern.gov app will become available before March 2020. The new app is a significant improvement on the current version with greater stability, wider functionality and it's easier to use. Once this new app is available appropriate training will be provided to maximise its use and reduce the need for paper copies.

### **Electoral Services**

The following activities were undertaken by the Elections Team in 2019:

- Completion of the IER Annual Canvass Process

The performance target for the 2019 Register of Electors was set at obtaining a 90% response rate from all residential households within the local authority

area. Achieving this target relied significantly on residents engaging with the Electoral Registration Officer and providing the necessary information required during the audit period. The final household response rate attained for the canvass was 93%, and, following the addition of approximately 1,500 new residential properties to the electoral roll.

- Management of Community Council Casual Vacancies

A small number of Community Council casual vacancies have arisen during the year with assistance being provided to each Community Council as required.

- Polling Station Review

The Representation of the People Act 1983 requires local authorities to conduct a review of parliamentary polling districts, places and stations at least every five years. The reason for conducting a review is to ensure that polling is accessible for all electors and the Council must:

- seek to ensure that electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances, and
- seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable, polling places are accessible to all electors including those who are disabled.

A public notice was published and included on the Council's website. All ward members, AMs, MPs, MEPs, Community Council clerks, Disability Forum, 50+ Forum and Cardiff Citizens Panel members as well as the South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner and the (Acting) Returning Officer for the Vale of Glamorgan, were consulted.

The review identified a number of responses where practical alternative arrangements are required or improved arrangements could be made to the current polling arrangements.

The recommendations were considered and approved by Council on 24 October 2019 and authorised the Returning Officer to make the agreed changes.

- Boundary Commission Review

In 2016 the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government published a written statement requiring the Boundary Commission to restart its review

programme with a prioritised timetable. There was an expectation that all 22 electoral reviews be completed in time for new arrangements to be in place for the 2022 local government elections. The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales advised that the electoral review for Cardiff would commence in 2019. As part of their pre-review procedure the Commission conducted a series of meetings with Officers and Group Leaders, culminating in a briefing to all Members on 28 March 2019. The briefing provided Members with an overview of the statutory basis of the exercise and the anticipated timetable.

The Boundary Commission provided information showing the existing variance from the Council's average representation. Relevant data was collected from the Office of National Statistics and a methodology was agreed with Cardiff Research to project population increase for the five year period until 2024. This methodology was also informed by strategic development sites identified in the Local Development Plan and in consultation with planning officers.

A series of proposals were developed which would result in a net increase of two Members overall with the Council membership increasing from 75 to 77. This would be subject to the Commission considering whether due to Cardiff's unique circumstances and high levels of population growth the commission consider the increase as justification to extend the current maximum size constraint rule. These proposals were approved by Council on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and submitted to the Boundary Commission for their consideration.

It is anticipated that the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission will develop and publish its proposals in 2020 based on the responses received as part of its initial consultation.

- European Parliamentary Election

An election to the European Parliament was held between 23 and 26 May 2019 to elect a total of 751 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). In February 2018, the European Parliament had voted to decrease the number of MEPs from 751 to 705 if the United Kingdom were to withdraw from the European Union on 29 March 2019. However, the United Kingdom participated alongside



other EU member states after an extension of Article 50 to 31 October 2019. As a result of this decision preparations for an unscheduled European Parliamentary election had to be put into place at short notice to enable the democratic process to be conducted.

- By-Elections in Ely, Cyncoed, Whitchurch & Tongwynlais and Llanishen.

During the course of the year four County Council casual vacancy elections took place. This was due to the deaths of three sitting Members and the resignation of a further member. The initial casual vacancy took place in the Ely Electoral Division on 21 February 2019. This was followed by vacancies in Cyncoed (16 July 2019), Whitchurch and Tongwynlais (3 October 2019) and Llanishen (21 November 2019).

- Parliamentary Election

On 29 October, the UK Government introduced an election bill to the House of Commons to trigger an early General Election. After amendments to change the proposed date were voted down the scheduled election date was set as Thursday, 12 December, 2019. This required the standard administrative arrangements (booking polling stations, appointing staff, despatching poll cards and postal votes and printing ballot papers) all to be undertaken and completed within a six week period, during the annual canvass period and while county council by-elections were also having to be administered.

## **Scrutiny Services**

The following outlines the key activities of the Scrutiny Services Team:

- Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee has a key governance role in assessing service performance, informing service and policy development across a range of Council services, including Education, Social Care for Children, Children's Play and the Youth Service. The Committee also monitors the relevant work streams of the Public Services Board.

The Committee has undertaken the pre-decision scrutiny of a number of Cabinet reports relating to school organisational proposals, and the Schools Admission Policy. It has supported the development of the Education Strategic

Plan “Cardiff 2030” and the monitoring and challenge of the performance of Cardiff Schools, Child Friendly Cardiff, and the implementation of the Additional Learning Needs and Tribunal Act 2018. The Committee expressed its concern regarding the resource implications of the implementation of the Act and the Cabinet Member responded that further clarification from the Welsh Government on aspects of the proposals will be sought.

In addition, the Committee also considers the support and services provided to looked after children and children in need. The Committee has undertaken the pre-decision scrutiny of draft cabinet reports on Local Authority Social Services Annual Report 2018/19, the Children’s Services Commissioning Placement Strategy and the Strategic Plan to Deliver Excellent Outcomes for all our Children. The Committee received a response to its suggestions to support the implementation of the strategy with the Cabinet Member ensuring that the suggestions are taken into account as they move forward with the strategic plan. The Committee agreed to focus its September meeting on Safeguarding of Children, receiving reports on performance, Wales Audit report, Signs of Safety and the Safeguarding Annual Report. The Committee challenged a number of areas within each of the reports and had full responses from the Cabinet Member and the Wales Audit Office.

Finally, on a quarterly basis, the Committee monitors the performance of Children’s Services for children who are looked after, children in need, the youth offending service and staffing. The Committee helped develop a new monitoring report, which has better highlighted, areas of improved performance and those areas identified as causing concern and requiring improvement. The Committee regularly seeks clarification on areas of concern and expectations for improvement, which are always responded to.

#### Task and Finish

- **Out of County Placements**

The Committee completed an inquiry into “Out of County Placements” of children who are looked after, with the Committee regularly monitoring the Directorate’s progress in implementing the report’s recommendations. The Committee was pleased to see that they were included in the Directorate delivery plan, highlighted in the Strategic Plan and referenced in the

Commissioning Placement Strategy. This monitoring will continue with a full update in March 2020.

- **Child Mental Health**

The Committee prioritised an inquiry into the support and service for Child Mental Health. The Task Group which includes, members of the Committee, other interested Councillors, Young People (from the Youth Council), representatives from Education, Social Services and the University Health Board, have met over a series of meetings, hearing evidence from Health Professionals, a Welsh Assembly Committee Chairperson, Young People, Parents, Teachers, Charities and the Children's Commissioner. The Task group is currently developing its final report for presentation to Committee in January 2020.

- Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee

The Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee plays an important role in assessing service performance and informing service and policy development across a range of Council services including all aspects of housing, neighbourhood renewal and adult social care. It also provides Members with the opportunity to challenge, hold to account and question proposals put forward, along with monitoring of council performance. The Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee is also the Council's crime and disorder scrutiny committee.

During 2019, Committee Members considered a range of topics including the relationship between the Council and registered social landlords and how they engage, the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Adults with a Learning Disability, the effectiveness of the council's single person gateway scheme and how the development of the Council's digital strategy is being aligned with the needs of an ageing community. During consideration on these topics, Members were pleased to welcome various witnesses including key representatives from registered social landlords, third sector organisations and young adults with learning disabilities in order to receive their knowledge, views and perspective to best inform the Committee's scrutiny.

## Task and Finish

- **Preventing Young People's Involvement in Drug Dealing**

During 2018, a joint task and finish inquiry was completed by this Committee and Children and Young People addressing young people's involvement in drug dealing. Out of the 19 recommendations made to Cabinet, 18 were either partially or fully accepted. During 2019, Members have been monitoring the directorate's progress and received an action plan detailing how the directorate plans to implement the recommendations. Monitoring of its implementation will continue with a further update is due in the new financial year.

- **Closer to Home Project**

This year, the Committee has prioritised an inquiry into out of county placements for adults with a learning disability. The Task Group, which includes current and former members of the Committee have met over a series of meetings and visits, meeting a range of service providers, key professionals, parents and young adults with learning disabilities. Inquiry Members have also commissioned independent research into this area, tasking Scrutiny's Research Officer to address, through consultation with parents and advocates, the current pathway in place for transitioning identified individuals in order to identify possible areas for improvement.

During the course of the year, an independent consultant inquiry was commissioned by the service area as a response to the issues under investigation by the group. Members are due to receive the findings from the consultant's inquiry in January 2020.

The Task Group will look to present its final report to Committee in early 2020.

- Environmental Scrutiny Committee

The Committee considered a range of topics including Waste Management, Highways Resurfacing, LED Street Lighting, Cardiff's Local Development Plan, Parking Enforcement and the Food Strategy. In doing this, Committee Members scrutinised and influenced the detail behind a number of important

proposals including Public Space Protection Orders for Control of Dogs, the 2019/20 Budget Proposals and the Air Quality Final Business Case.

A constant theme throughout the year has been the Committee's concern in relation to the high sickness rates and overspend in the Planning, Transport & Environment Directorate. These were referred to on several occasions during the year, notably at budget scrutiny, when reviewing Directorate Delivery Plans and as a part of performance monitoring. For example, the Committee raised concerns about the Planning, Transport and Environment Directorate savings shortfall of 40% during budget scrutiny, and in October commented on the return to work process that failed to reduce the 17.6 FTE sick days per employee in 2018/19.

### Task and Finish

During 2019 the Environmental Scrutiny Committee concluded two significant task & finish inquiries into 'Litter & Fly Tipping in Cardiff' and 'Managing Biodiversity & Natural Environment in Cardiff'. They were also provided with a Cabinet response to the task & finish report on 'Improving Cardiff's Air Quality'. The responses and feedback received to date on these inquiries have been very positive, a brief summary is set out below:

- **Improving Cardiff's Air Quality**

The inquiry made a total of 34 recommendations that were designed to improve Cardiff's air quality. The Cabinet response that was published in November 2019 accepted 27 of the recommendations, including: 1) citing the reduction of nitrogen dioxide from diesel vehicles as one of its key aims; 2) a review of existing planning guidance to ensure that it is consistent with the aims of the new Clean Air Strategy; 3) that the Council should increase its focus on the affordable short-term measures within its control to better manage transport and air quality, and 4) to reinvest monies raised from traffic and parking control measures directly back into transport infrastructure.

- **Litter & Fly Tipping in Cardiff**

The inquiry made a total of 68 recommendations that were designed to reduce litter and fly tipping in Cardiff. The Cabinet response that was published in October 2019 accepted 62 of the recommendations, including:

- 1) the better use of litter and fly tipping data to allocate cleansing resources;
- 2) to focus upon better work force planning across the service and link into the Council's wider workforce planning exercise;
- 3) to develop a dedicated Litter & Enforcement Team;
- 4) to refresh the 'Love Where You Live Campaign';
- 5) to use social media to deliver better targeted litter and fly tipping messages, and
- 6) to provide support to grow the 'Cardiff Tidy Network'. In addition to the positive response to the recommendations the task & finish exercise also included a well-attended volunteer workshop, job shadowing by Elected Members and a litter & fly tipping survey that was completed by 3,433 local residents.

- **Managing Biodiversity & Natural Environment in Cardiff**

The inquiry made a total of 39 recommendations that are designed to help better support biodiversity and the natural environment in Cardiff. The report has been very well received by organisations who contributed to the inquiry, for example, Swansea Council, Natural Resources Wales and the Welsh Government. The document has been finalised and submitted to the Cabinet office for future inclusion in a Cabinet meeting.

- Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee

During 2019, Committee Members focused on economic development, culture, tourism, events, libraries & hubs, employment services, leisure, sport and Cardiff Harbour Authority. Committee Members scrutinised high-profile proposals including the Indoor Arena, Dumballs Road Regeneration, New Theatre and the Economic Development White Paper. Following their scrutiny of Dumballs Road regeneration, Councillor Goodway, Cabinet Member Investment & Development, stated '*we have taken on board the various views expressed both at the meeting and in your letter*'. He went on to state that '*we*

*will certainly ensure that Vastint link with the city's universities as well as other industry networks to consider how they can meet demand. We will also share with Vastint the work of the Scrutiny Committee on innovation and workshop space.'*

A constant theme throughout the year has been the Committee's concern to ensure that proposals for economic development are compatible with the Council's commitment to sustainable development. Members have consistently questioned proposals through the lens of the Well Being & Future Generations Act as well as the Climate Emergency motion, passed by Council in March 2019.

### Task and Finish

- **Events in Cardiff**

Following a request from Councillor Bradbury, Cabinet Member Culture & Leisure, Members undertook an inquiry into events in Cardiff. The inquiry report was submitted to Cabinet in March 2019 and a response from the Cabinet was agreed in June 2019. Out of 12 recommendations, Cabinet agreed 6 in full and 5 partially and Councillor Bradbury thanked the Committee for a useful report with welcome ideas, including the re-establishment of the Events Focus Group.

- **Tourism in Cardiff**

In September 2019, Members commenced an Inquiry into Tourism in Cardiff, at the request of Councillor Goodway, and in October 2019 started a short scrutiny on Culture in Cardiff; both of these are due to conclude in early 2020.

- Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee

A significant proportion of the Committee's work has focussed on scrutiny of the *Capital Ambition Delivery Programme (CADP)*. Members received in-depth updates of the Modernisation and Resilient Services portfolios, and responded to a WAO proposal for improvement to strengthen the role of scrutiny in engaging with the CADP programme with proposed 6 monthly scrutiny oversight and monitoring of the Programme. In addition the Committee undertook a deep dive into the programme's *Smarter Working* project

The Committee has scrutinised the *Budget Consultation 2020/21*, *Brexit preparations*, the *WAO Annual Improvement Report*, *Cardiff's Bi-lingual*

*Strategy* and the *Corporate Property Strategy*. It continues to focus on *Sickness Absence* given that it remains a key challenge for the Council. It has also delivered its statutory responsibility to scrutinise the Public Services Board draft *Well-being Plan Annual report for 2018-2019*, as prescribed by the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.

The Committee held one Call-in to consider the Cabinet's decision to grant a loan to Cardiff Bus from the Council for £2.0 million for the purchase of electric vehicles.

This year the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee has re-affirmed the benefit of scrutiny member engagement in *corporate planning*, hosting an informal session where all five scrutiny chairs brought their committee concerns to the table to inform corporate plan target setting. In an open and constructive discussion the Leader and Cabinet welcomed the breadth of informed scrutiny member views, and in response delivered a more meaningful and inclusive Corporate Plan 2019-22 for the citizens of Cardiff.

Finally, this year the Committee has received evidence of effective action planning from the Customer and Digital Services team following a positive Cabinet response to its *Customer Service* inquiry in 2017/18. How changing the culture within the Council to improve customer focus continues to develop will remain a central focus for the Committee's work.

#### Task and Finish

- **Impact of scrutiny**

With the impact of scrutiny in mind the Committee is committed to ensuring that the value and usefulness of scrutiny's work in informing the Council's decision-making is recognised. To that end, an inquiry is on-going exploring models of capturing the impact scrutiny delivers. It will also seek to recommend appropriate systems for measuring the impact of scrutiny and monitoring how well recommendations accepted by the Cabinet are implemented.



- **The Waste Management Service**

The Committee has joined forces with the Environment Scrutiny Committee to scope future scrutiny of the Waste Management service, recognising that the challenges faced by this service relate to both their Terms of Reference.

- Joint Scrutiny

Scrutiny Services undertook the following Joint Scrutiny activities:

- Policy Review & Performance - Performance Panel

Once again in a spirit of co-production the Leader enabled the Committee's Performance Panel to host an informal joint scrutiny of the Corporate Plan target setting process. A valuable cross committee session ensured policy development scrutiny impact for all five scrutiny committees within the Corporate Planning process. The session considered proposed targets in detail, providing an opportunity to feed cross scrutiny committee observations into Cardiff's final draft Corporate Plan 2019- 22, before it was presented to formal Cabinet.

Members were able to ensure that any changes to the detail of the Corporate Plan Performance Indicators and Targets, made as a consequence of discussion with scrutiny chairs, were captured and thereby had a strong validating impact of the value of scrutiny.

- Internal Audit of Scrutiny

An internal audit of the scrutiny function was undertaken in Autumn 2019 with the objective being to provide assurance that *Scrutiny Committees demonstrate effective outcomes from Scrutiny activities that represent good value*. The audit considered Scrutiny planning, delivery and performance through discussions with Lead Scrutiny Members, Officers and a desktop review.

The auditor met with all the Scrutiny Chairs and three Principal Scrutiny Officers to obtain an understanding of how work programmes were developed, the extent to which Scrutiny outcomes were reported and reviewed, and the opinion of the respective Chair on the effectiveness of training and support to deliver their role.

The results likely to be made available for comment early in 2020.

- Young People's Participation in Scrutiny

The inclusion of Youth Council Representatives initiated by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee has been extended to include regular invitations for youth representation on the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee. Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee Members unanimously agreed to the Chair's suggestion to invite a representative of the Youth Council to observe and contribute to the work of the Committee. Consequently, Naz Ismail attended her first meeting in December 2019.

The Chairperson of the Environment Scrutiny Committee has also agreed that a young person's representative will be invited to provide for topic specific representation at future meetings.

Members of the Youth Council have also supported the Child Mental Health task and finish inquiry.

- Regional Scrutiny Activity

- **Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) – Joint Scrutiny Committee**

Scrutiny Services and the other Authorities within the region have supported the CCRCD – Joint Scrutiny Committee and collaborated with Bridgend Council who were the appointed facilitators of the Joint Scrutiny Committee.

The Environment Scrutiny Committee and the Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committees (ECSC) receive regular updates on the work of the City Deal Cabinet and Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Ramesh Patel was appointed as the Council's representative on the Joint Scrutiny Committee. He has expressed his concerns in a letter to the Chairperson of the CCRCD Cabinet regarding the resources and support provided to the Joint Scrutiny Committee. The Scrutiny Chairpersons from Cardiff Council agreed that the arrangements of the Joint Scrutiny Committee need to be developed and adequately resourced. The letter from Councillor Patel was collectively supported by the other Scrutiny Chairs and

the ECSC Members offering their support to the argument by sending a supportive letter to the Chair of the CCRCD Joint Cabinet. The Chair of the CCRCD Joint Scrutiny Committee was informed of this letter who then also raised similar concerns to the Joint Cabinet.

It was also agreed that a development session with the committee members would be set-up to identify how the joint Scrutiny of the CCRCD could be undertaken and resourced. This event was subsequently delayed due to the General Election but was hoped to be rescheduled early in 2020.

- **Central South Consortium**

The Chairman and Scrutiny Officer are members of the Central South Education Consortium's Scrutiny Panel which cover five local authorities, Cardiff City Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough and Bridgend County Borough Council. The Panel meets once a term to hold the Consortium to account for its work across all the Councils and its policies, processes and performance of the Consortium. The Committee also undertakes a Governance role for the Regional Adoption Service.

- Wales Audit Office (WAO) - Overview and Scrutiny Fit for the future

Following the WAO review an action plan was developed to achieve the identified proposals for improvement. All proposals for improvement have been progressed. A update of the action plan is now required and some of the actions will need to be rescheduled to provide a realistic timeline for completion.

## **Democratic Engagement 2019**

- National Democracy Week (14 -20 October 2019)

This national event celebrated democracy in society and was an opportunity to celebrate progress and champion future democratic participation in this historic centenary year of suffrage. This included a Social Media Campaign - with post updates, pics and clips published on Facebook, Instagram and Facebook

highlighting the importance of registering to vote, getting more involved in democracy and letting people have their say.

- Engagement with Cardiff Metropolitan University

The team attended Cardiff Metropolitan University's Fresher's Fayre (18 September 2018) to encourage eligible students living with the Cardiff Council area to register to vote and to provide additional information about the process of voting. In addition, staff also took the opportunity to speak to students highlighting the forthcoming voting franchise reform allowing 16 year olds to vote in future Welsh Assembly and Local Government Elections.

## **Collaborative Working and Networks**

### **Member Support and Development Lead Member and Officers network**

This 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 Member Support element of network are the Heads of Democratic Services or Member Support Officers, with Councillors forming the Development Lead (Elected) Member element of the network. The two networks have joint meetings on a regular basis to share views and ideas.

### **Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW)**

The Annual Meeting of the IRPW with the Chairs of Democratic Services Committee and the Heads of Democratic Services was held on 29 October 2019 to discuss the Draft Annual Report for 2020/21 and proposed determinations in relation to Elected Members.

The Head of Democratic Services and the Committee and Member Services Manager participated in discussions on the report including: the schedule of remuneration; reimbursement of the Cost of Care and personal safety of Elected Members. The IRPW urged Democratic Services Committees to take steps to encourage and facilitate greater use of the remuneration framework so that Members are not financially disadvantaged in undertaking their roles.

The final IRPW report for 2020/21 will be published in February 2020 and a report will be submitted to Council in March 2020 setting out the key determinations for approval.

## **Officer Networks**

The Democratic Services Team actively participate in other officer networks which assist in developing good practice, sharing information and facilitating the effective provision of support to the Elected Members of Cardiff. These include: the National Scrutiny Network, South East Wales Regional Scrutiny Network, Association of Democratic Services Officers and the Association of Electoral Administrators. Details of these networks can be seen at **Appendix C**.

## **Performance Information**

### **Webcasting**

In 2019, the Authority increased its contracted hours for webcasting in 2019/20 from 100 to 200 hours. The webcasting provision allocated to Council, Planning Committee was extended to enable the webcast of all Scrutiny Committee meetings and facilitate pilots of Cabinet and Audit Committee webcasts.

The following table describes the duration of webcasts and the number of views both live and archived that these meetings have achieved:

Webcast title	Live date	Duration	Live views	Archive views	All views
Council	14-Feb-19	01:06:34	63	484	547
Council	28-Feb-19	04:26:21	209	365	574
Council	28-Mar-19	04:59:48	110	271	381
Council	17-May-19	00:18:33	16	87	103
Council	23-May-19	00:59:26	26	245	271
Council	20-Jun-19	03:45:29	88	274	362
Council	18-Jul-19	04:42:14	142	263	405
Council	12-Sep-19	02:41:26	109	234	343
Council	24-Oct-19	04:02:21	135	323	458
Council	28-Nov-19	01:30:02	66	189	255
<b>Totals</b>		<b>28:32:14</b>	<b>964</b>	<b>2735</b>	<b>3699</b>

Webcast title	Live date	Duration	Live views	Archive views	All views
Planning Committee	23-Jan-19	02:22:20	80	97	177
Planning Committee	13-Feb-19	04:32:26	117	215	332
Planning Committee	20-Mar-19	04:36:12	0	107	107
Planning Committee	17-Apr-19	01:05:50	18	113	131
Planning Committee	15-May-19	01:22:11	23	149	172
Planning Committee	19-Jun-19	04:27:56	89	284	373
Planning Committee	17-Jul-19	02:32:59	67	221	288
Planning Committee	14-Aug-19	03:09:11	122	241	363
Planning Committee	18-Sep-19	04:16:25	80	214	294
Planning Committee	16-Oct-19	02:01:54	59	273	332
Planning Committee	20-Nov-19	01:26:02	27	97	124
Planning Committee	18-Dec-19	03:13:38	57	38	95
<b>Totals</b>		<b>35:07:04</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>2049</b>	<b>2788</b>

Scrutiny					
Webcast title	Live date	Duration	Live views	Archive views	All views
Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee	11-Jun-19	02:29:24	18	77	95
<b>Totals</b>		<b>02:29:24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>95</b>
Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee	05-Jun-19	02:52:06	10	96	106
Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee	03-Jul-19	02:31:20	4	74	78
Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee	11-Sep-19	02:18:59	5	57	62
Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee	02-Oct-19	01:34:21	6	63	69
Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee	06-Nov-19	01:57:32	14	50	64
Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee	16-Dec-19	02:23:58	1	15	16
<b>Totals</b>		<b>13:38:16</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>395</b>
Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee	09-May-19	01:21:22	7	61	68
Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee	06-Jun-19	02:14:52	7	43	50
Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee	04-Jul-19	00:23:49	6	78	84
<b>Totals</b>		<b>04:00:03</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>202</b>
Environmental Scrutiny Committee	07-May-19	02:33:58	12	63	75
Environmental Scrutiny Committee	12-Jun-19	01:51:17	6	59	65
Environmental Scrutiny Committee	02-Jul-19	02:06:50	4	40	44
Environmental Scrutiny Committee	17-Sep-19	02:27:14	2	56	58
Environmental Scrutiny Committee	01-Oct-19	02:55:29	9	62	71
<b>Totals</b>		<b>11:54:48</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>313</b>
Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee	20-Feb-19	03:30:05	34	77	111
Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee	08-May-19	02:13:38	14	73	87
Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee	25-Sep-19	02:04:35	6	46	52
Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee	13-Nov-19	01:27:51	7	30	37
<b>Totals</b>		<b>9:16:09</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>287</b>

<b>Scrutiny Totals</b>		<b>41:18:40</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>1120</b>	<b>1292</b>
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Webcast title	Live date	Duration	Live views	Archive views	All views
Wales Pension Partnership Joint Governance Committee	28-Jun-19	00:33:45	4	13	17
<b>Totals</b>		<b>00:33:45</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>

Webcast title	Live date	Duration	Live views	Archive views	All views
Audit Committee	10-Sep-19	02:22:59	37	104	141
<b>Totals</b>		<b>02:22:59</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>141</b>

<b>Grand Totals</b>		<b>107:54:42</b>	<b>1916</b>	<b>6021</b>	<b>7937</b>
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### **Publication of Draft Minutes**

A target of 80% was set for draft committee minutes being published on the Council website within 10 working days of the meeting being held. As explained previously the priorities of the Team have meant that this target has not been met. The production of minutes is being reviewed by the team with new performance indicators being developed which will better reflect the performance of the Democratic Services team.

### **Forward Plan for 2020**

The Democratic Services Team has a range activities that it will need to undertake in 2020.

- **Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill**

The Local Government Bill was published on 18 November 2019 and includes a number of topics which will have a direct impact on the Democratic Services Team. These include:

- The requirement for petition and e-petition schemes
- An increase in the number of Council meetings that are broadcast.
- Reducing the minimum voting age for the National Assembly for Wales elections to 16.
- The establishment of a Participation Strategy

- **The Implementation of SharePoint**

The Democratic Services Team are scheduled to complete the implementation of the SharePoint software and identify opportunities to make efficiencies in the handling and sharing of data.

- **Recruitment**

The outstanding recruitments for the Democratic Services Team will be progressed as a matter of urgency to minimise the impact on the services provided by the Team.

### **Committee & Members Services**

- **Member Role Descriptions**

Complete the review of Member Role descriptions for approval by Full Council by March 2022.

- Cardiff Council Mentoring Scheme  
Review and enhance the current Mentoring scheme to support the opportunities for Councillors to become Mentors ahead of the next Local Election in 2022.
- Review and Develop the Personal Review process for Elected Members  
Review and develop the process which enables Elected Members to undertake a Personal Review to support their personal development and learning in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.
- Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy  
Complete the review of the Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy as planned when the strategy was approved by Council in 2019.

### **Electoral Services**

- UK Government (Electoral Registration Reform Programme)  
The UK Government has announced its intention to introduce legislation which would change the procedures to be carried out by Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) at the canvass. They would be given more flexibility and discretion regarding the registration process and to make better use of data matching and mining technology. If introduced this would have a significant impact on the service with changes likely to be needed to software systems and work practices relating to the Electoral Register and the administration of electoral events.
- Boundary Commission Review  
The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales has begun its review of its draft proposals for Cardiff have been scheduled to be available in January 2020 and final proposals published by December 2020.
- Parliamentary Boundary Review  
In September 2018, the Boundary Commission for Wales submitted its final recommendations for the review of all Parliamentary Constituencies in Wales to Parliament. It is expected that a draft order will be debated, at some point in the near future. If approved the Electoral Registration Officer will be required to make significant alterations to the current four Cardiff Parliamentary Constituencies as they are reorganised into three new constituencies to be named Cardiff West (Gorllewin Caerdydd), Cardiff North (Gogledd Caerdydd) and Cardiff South and East (De a Dwyrain Caerdydd), taking effect on the date of the next UK Parliamentary General Election. If the draft Order in Council is not approved, the



Government may then amend the draft and lay an amended draft before Parliament for approval in due course.

- Annual Canvass Electoral Registration & Postal Vote Refresh Exercises

The annual canvass electoral registration review process will commence in July 2020 with the revised register scheduled for publication on 1 December 2020. The performance response target for the 2020 Register of Electors is currently scheduled to be 90%.

- Police and Crime Commissioner Election

The Electoral Services Team will be required to administer the election for the Police and Crime Commissioner currently scheduled for 7 May 2020.

### **Scrutiny Services**

- Progress and Review of the WAO – Fit for the Future Action Plan

This is a significant piece of work which should assist the Scrutiny services to meet the future requirements of the service. Progress has been made on the action plan but a review of the completed actions will assist in determining positive outcomes for the Team.

- Progressing the outcomes of the Internal Audit of Scrutiny Services

Once the outcomes of the Internal Audit of Scrutiny Services have been identified and agreed the Team will be required to progress any recommendations which arise.

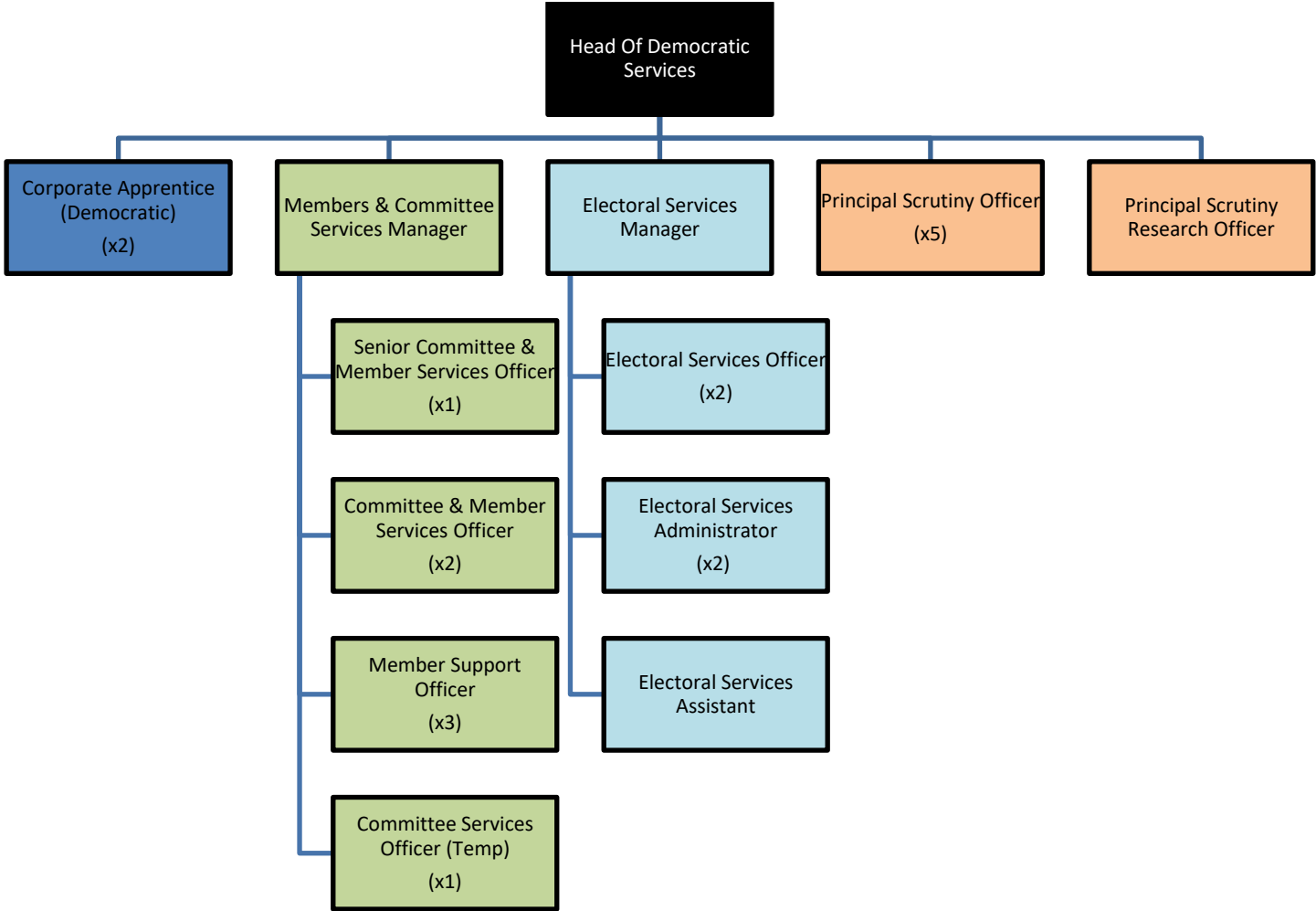
### **Summary**

The Democratic Services Team has had a successful year where the priorities and workloads of the Team have been adversely impacted by unexpected events but good outcomes have still been achieved.

It is acknowledged that there are areas of the service which can be improved and efficiencies can be made to the support available to Elected Members and the governance arrangements of the Council.

**Appendices**

Structure – Democratic Services 2019



Roles and Functions

The roles and functions undertaken by each element of the Democratic Services Team is as follows:

- Committees Services

In addition to Committee administration the team support the following functions:

- a. Council Governance: custodians of the:
  - Constitution;
  - Declaration of Acceptance of Office;
  - Cardiff Undertaking;
  - Register of Political Groups.
- b. Member Governance: maintain up to date records of:
  - Register of Individual Member Interests;
  - Conference and Events Register;
  - Hospitality Register;
- c. Outside Bodies Membership administration of Register and notification;
  - Attendance & Apologies Register
  - Arrange welsh translation in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Welsh Language Standards;
  - Provide guidance and support in the preparation, publication & translation of Members Annual Reports and Member Information.
- d. Public Engagement: support given to:
  - Public questioners at Council;
  - Hosting attendees and visitors;
  - Petitioners & public at Committee meetings.
- e. Liaison with Members and External Bodies:
  - Produce & issue the Members Diary;
  - Issuing of Member Electronic Briefs;
  - Members of Parliament and Assembly Members;
  - Welsh Local Government Association Networks & projects;
  - Report to & liaise with Independent Remuneration Panel;
  - Wales Audit Office with inspections; providing information & reports; & at meetings;
  - Liaise with a range of Outside Bodies.
- f. Corporate Support:
  - Emergency Management on call on a rota basis;

- Representing Committee & Members Services at corporate meetings such as Welsh Language Co-ordinators.
  - g. Management and development of systems:
    - Modern.Gov;
    - Conference System;
    - Webcasting;
    - Facebook Live.
  - h. Member Development:
    - Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy;
    - Member Development Programme;
    - Arranging /Liaising with Trainers/ Speakers;
    - Co-ordinating venues & technology;
    - Evaluation of activities and providers
    - Member Development material;
    - Issue notification of Member briefings, information & signposting.
- Electoral Services
    - a. Electoral Registration

In order to be able to vote in elections in the United Kingdom, a person's name must be included in a register of electors. Responsibility for compiling the register of electors lies with the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO). In Wales, the appointment of the ERO is made by the county or county borough council. The current appointed ERO for Cardiff Council is the Corporate Director for Resources.

The ERO has a duty to maintain a register of Parliamentary and local government electors, as well as other relevant registers. In addition, the ERO must also produce an edited (or 'open') version of the registers. The open register contains only the names and addresses of those on the full register who have not taken the decision to opt out of their details appearing on the edited register. As part of their legal responsibilities EROs are required to take all necessary steps to publish and maintain registers that are as accurate and complete as possible.

This responsibility is supported by the Electoral Services Team conducting an annual refresh exercise (often referred to as the Annual Canvass) where the staff of the ERO are obliged to carry out an audit of approximately 151,000 residential properties within the County Council area, as well as undertaking various monthly update processes to the relevant Registers of Electors.

b. Electoral Administration

Every County and County Borough in Wales is required to appoint an officer of the council to undertake the role of Returning Officer (or Counting Officer for Referendums) for the various types of electoral events held within the county borough area. The current appointed Returning Officer for Cardiff Council is the Corporate Director for Resources.

This includes:

- UK Parliamentary General Elections
- European Parliamentary Elections\*
- National Assembly for Wales Elections
- Welsh Local Government Elections
- Police and Crime Commissioner Elections
- Referendums<sup>3 4</sup>

The core role of the Electoral Services team is to fully support the Returning Officer in conducting their statutory responsibilities in administering well-run electoral events, carrying out all necessary procedures and process as prescribed by legislation.

This includes:-

- Electoral Event Project Planning (incl. verification and count processes)
- Candidate and Agent Liaison
- Communications and Media Liaison
- Management and Booking of all Polling Stations
- Appointing all Presiding Officers and Poll Clerks (incl. staff training)
- Publishing all relevant Statutory Notices
- Print production of all Electoral Stationery (incl. Poll Cards and Ballot Papers)

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<sup>3</sup> Subject to the UK's Membership of the European Union

<sup>4</sup> Subject to appropriate electoral legislation

- Member Services

The Members Services Team assists all 75 Elected Member by:

- providing face to face contact with Elected Members;
- allocating a dedicated Members Services Officer to support with enquiries concerning Council Services;
- tracking and monitoring Members Enquiries and chasing responses with agents;
- providing general administrative and secretarial service including handling correspondence and emails; typing, scanning, mail merges etc.;
- providing advice on data protection and GDPR;
- maintaining an up to date contact list of all 75 Elected Members;
- maintaining an electronic record of Members Surgeries; preparing data for publication on website; and preparing surgery notices;
- arranging room bookings for meetings relating to ward matters; with constituents or outside body representatives
- arranging welsh translation in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Welsh Language Standards;
- providing stationery and office supplies; and
- overseeing Members' business offices including offices for Chairs of Committees and communal members areas;
- the first point of access for Members ICT/Telephone; allocation of IT equipment; and early stage troubleshooting support;
- provide signposting to other information and services relating to the role of Councillor.

- Scrutiny Services

a) **General**

Within their terms of reference, Scrutiny Committees will:

- review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Authority's functions;
- make reports and/or recommendations to the Council and/or the Cabinet;
- consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants; and

- exercise the right to 'call-in', for reconsideration, decisions made but not yet implemented by the Cabinet, Cabinet Members and designated senior officers.
- Receive and consider reports from statutory external inspectors or auditors referred to them.
- Act in accordance with the Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

### **Specific functions - Policy Review and Performance**

The Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee will:

- (i) assist the Council and the Cabinet in the development of its budget and policy framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues;
- (ii) conduct research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues and possible options;
- (iii) consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options;
- (iv) question relevant people and organisations about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area;
- (v) liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working; and
- (vi) adjudicate on any areas of overlap between the functions of the Scrutiny Committees and allocate any additional areas of responsibility which are not already included within the terms of reference of any particular Scrutiny Committee.

The Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee is the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee as required by the Police and Justice Act 2006 and any re-enactment or modification thereof; and as full delegate of the Council to exercise all the powers and functions permitted under that Act.

#### **b) Scrutiny**

Scrutiny Committees will:



- (i) review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the Cabinet and/or committees and employees both in relation to individual decisions and over time;
- (ii) review and scrutinise the performance of the Authority in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or service areas;
- (iii) question members of the Cabinet and committees and/or employees about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects;
- (iv) make recommendations to the Cabinet and/or appropriate committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process;
- (v) review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the scrutiny committee and local people about their activities and performance; and
- (vi) question and gather evidence from any person (with their consent).

**c) Resources**

Scrutiny Committees may exercise overall responsibility for the resources made available to them.

**d) Annual Report**

Scrutiny Committees must report annually to the Council on their workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate.

## Officer Networks

- Association of Electoral Administrators

There are eleven regional branches of the Association covering the United Kingdom with the Wales branch being chaired in 2019 by the Electoral Services Manager from Cardiff. The Welsh branch meets three or four times a year and provides electoral officers with an opportunity to discuss matters relating to the conduct of elections and electoral registration. This network also support the engagement with the various Welsh Electoral Stakeholder Forums to embed consistency of messaging and allow for early and regular consultation on future legislative change.

- Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO)

ADSO was established as a professional association to represent, promote and develop excellent democratic services, for the benefit of all those working within the sector. It is a nationally recognised body with over 900 members across the United Kingdom including the five representatives in Wales who are currently working for Cardiff Council.

Members of the Team regularly participate in Regional Workshops in the South West of England to engage with colleagues. ADSO also provides opportunities for training and development for Democratic Services Officers including a Certificate in Democratic Services Knowledge and a Diploma in Local Democracy.

- National Scrutiny Network

With support from Local Authorities the WLGA agreed to facilitate this network and its first meeting was held on 22 October 2018.

It was agreed that the WLGA organise and facilitate two meetings of the Network per year. Participants suggested that the following should be the priorities for future agendas:

- Practice sharing
- Training opportunities
- Scrutiny improvement activities
- Joint Scrutiny

- South East Wales Scrutiny Officer Network (SEWSON)

The ten authorities on the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal footprint (Blaenau Gwent; Bridgend; Caerphilly; Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Newport, Rhondda Cynon Taff; Torfaen; and Vale of Glamorgan) agreed to the establishment of SEWSON.

This network meets twice yearly and its meetings dovetail with the National Scrutiny Network. To date a number of meetings have been held and information has been shared to develop an understanding of each other structures, staffing and capacity.

A Scrutiny Good Practice sharing event was organised by the Network and was attended by 23 scrutiny officers from across the region. The event provided an opportunity to share current good scrutiny practice with Local Authorities across the SE Wales Region and to share UK Wide examples of good practice provided by the facilitator.

The success of this event has encouraged the development of a Scrutiny Day for Elected Member to be held in 2020. Suggestions for inclusion at this event include: Unconscious bias, Meeting dynamics, improving the impact of scrutiny, Scrutiny Engagement, Chairing skills and analysing data.

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