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## **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

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### **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

#### **Reason for this Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to propose topics for inclusion on the Democratic Services Committee Forward Work Programme.

#### **Background**

2. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, Part 1, Chapter 2, requires local authorities to appoint a Democratic Services Committee to oversee the Democratic Services functions of the Council, ensure that the work is adequately resourced and report to the full Council accordingly.
3. The Forward Work Plan gives notice of, and transparency to, matters under review and for decision during the municipal year and reflects the Committees Terms of Reference as set out in the Legal implications of this report.
4. The Forward Work Plan needs to reflect the time commitment required for Committee Members and the resources available within the Council to meet the Committee's ambitions.

#### **Issues**

5. The main work streams of the Committee are to provide the framework to support Democratic Services functions and the work of Elected Members, as well as supporting Elected Members with learning opportunities in their specific roles within the Council and for their personal development.
6. The proposed business items for consideration at meetings of the Democratic Services Committee are shown at **Appendix A**.
7. The Committee is requested to consider the draft work programme and advise the Head of Democratic Services of any changes required to the programme. The Committee is also requested to consider if they wish to invite any persons to attend its meetings to support the items identified.

#### **Financial Implications**

8. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report. In the implementation and delivery of the Democratic Services Committee Forward Work

Programme any costs will need to be identified and found within existing financial resources.

## Legal Implications

9. The terms of reference for the Democratic Services Committee are:
  - 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.
10. The Democratic Services functions (which must be discharged by the Head of Democratic Services) are defined (in section 9 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011) as follows:
  - a. to provide support and advice: to the authority in relation to its meetings; to committees of the authority and the members of those committees; to any joint committee which a local authority is responsible for organising and the members of that committee; in relation to the functions of the authority's scrutiny committees, to members of the authority, members of the executive and officers; to each member of the authority in carrying out the role of member of the authority (but excluding a member's role as an Executive member);
  - b. to promote the role of the authority's Scrutiny Committees;
  - c. to make reports and recommendations to Council in respect of the number and grades of staff required to discharge democratic services functions and the appointment, organisation and proper management of those staff; and
  - d. any other functions prescribed by the Welsh Ministers.
11. In considering its Work Programme, the Committee should have regard to its terms of reference, the Welsh Government's Statutory Guidance for Democratic Services Committees: [Statutory and non-statutory guidance on democracy within principal councils: governance and scrutiny \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#) (in Part 4) and available resources.

## RECOMMENDATION

12. It is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee considers the proposed Work Programme appended as **Appendix A** to this report; identifies any additional topics for consideration at future meetings of the committee; and approves its Work Programme.

**GP JONES**  
**HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**9 April 2024**

**APPENDIX A - Proposed Work Programme**

Background Papers:

Welsh Government's Statutory Guidance for Democratic Services Committees: [Statutory and non-statutory guidance on democracy within principal councils: governance and scrutiny \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#) (in Part 4)