

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE:

05 February 2024

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Reason for this Report

1. To enable the Democratic Services Committee to consider the content of its Annual Report for 2023 and approve the arrangements for the report to be finalised and presented to full Council.

Background

2. In order to fulfil its terms of reference and to reflect on the support provided to Elected Members, the Committee prepares an annual report for presentation to full Council each year. The 2022 Democratic Services Committee Annual Report was approved by the committee at its meeting on 6 February 2023 before being presented to Council on 29 June 2023.

Terms of reference – Democratic Services Committee

3. The Committee's terms of reference 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.

Issues

4. The Draft Annual Report 2023 is attached at **Appendix A** with detailed information included to reflect the following headings:

- a. Membership of the Democratic Services Committee
 - b. The Democratic Services Team – Support, Services and Structures
 - c. Resources
 - d. Key Activities and Achievements
 - e. Collaborative Working and Networks
 - f. Performance Information
 - g. Forward Plan for 2024
5. Following consideration of this Draft Annual Report any changes will be made and the report will be presented to the next committee meeting for agreement prior to its submission to Council in June.

Financial Implications

6. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

7. Under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, section 11, the Democratic Services Committee's statutory responsibilities include responsibility to 'review the adequacy of provision by the authority of staff, accommodation and other resources to discharge democratic services functions', and to 'make reports and recommendations to the authority in relation to such provision'. This statutory responsibility is reflected in the Committee's terms of reference, set out in paragraph 3 of the report.
8. The Committee's annual report to Council provides an opportunity for the Committee to make any report and recommendations considered appropriate in relation to the Council's provisions for democratic services functions.
9. In considering this matter, the Committee should have regard to the statutory guidance on Democratic Services Committees included within chapter 13 of Part 4 of the Welsh Government's: [Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance for Principal Councils in Wales – supporting provisions within the Local Government Act 2000, the Local Government \(Wales\) Measure 2011 and the Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021](#), issued in June 2023.

Recommendation

10. The Committee is recommended to provide any suitable comments on the content of its Annual Report 2023 which will be used to update the report in readiness for consideration at the next meeting of the committee and prior to its submission to Council in June.

GP JONES
Head of Democratic Services
30 January 2024

Appendix A: Draft Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2023

Background papers:

- [Draft Democratic Services Committee - Annual Report 2022](#) report to Democratic Services dated 6 February 2023.
- [Democratic Services Annual Report 2022](#) presented to Council dated 29 June 2023.