

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY - VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026 AT 10:00

Present Virtually

Councillor T Thomas – Chairperson

Present Virtually

S Aspey
I M Spiller

RM Granville
T Thomas

D T Harrison
G Walter

M L Hughes
E D Winstanley

Apologies for Absence

H Bennett

RM James

Declarations of Interest

None

Officers:

Stephen Griffiths
Rachel Keepins

Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Democratic Services Manager

37. Approval of Minutes

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> That the minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee dated 20/11/2025 were approved as a true and accurate record.
---------------	--

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

Date Decision Made	25 June 2026

38. Member Development Programme Update

Decision Made	The purpose of this report was to: - Provide the Committee with an update on the delivery of the Council's Member Training and Development Programme and related activities. - Request the Committee to identify any further topics for inclusion in the Member Development Programme. Appendix A of the report set out details of the training and development sessions that took place as part of the Member Development Programme since this was last reported to the Democratic Services Committee on 20 November 2025. Training requests continued to be regularly forthcoming from both Members and Officers, which are always extremely welcomed and encouraged as it enables the programme to be specifically targeted to needs. Appendix B set out a schedule for continued training over the next few months and includes some external training as a result of recommendations from the Scrutiny Review undertaken earlier this year. In response to the report, Members discussed a number of issues, including the following: - That following a motion at Council on 24 June, which sought to encourage all elected members to promote respectful conduct both online and in public meetings, it was felt that Members could be supported in this regard with some training on social media skills and the use of data and information. - The importance of providing as much notice as possible of upcoming briefings for Members. - The briefing on Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) had had to be postponed because responsibility for housing had moved between directorates. The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing was now responsible for the service. The Head of Democratic Services indicated that she would endeavour to re-book the briefing shortly. - That a briefing had taken place on the regional Exploitation Strategy, operated by the Council, in partnership with the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board, and that the recording could be shared with Members.
---------------	--

	• The work being undertaken to implement the provisions in the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's Law, which strengthens the security of public premises and events. • The Head of Democratic Services indicated that it was essential that all Members attend one of the briefings by South Wales Police scheduled for July in relation to personal safety. The sessions would be particularly helpful to establish what other needs there are in relation to Member personal safety. If some Members were not able to attend one of the sessions, there would be some mopping up sessions. Further, she indicated that she was looking at a separate training programme on Member safety, involving South Wales Police, some external training and online sessions. • In terms of future briefings, it was felt that one needed to be organised on Porthcawl Harbour, perhaps involving the Harbour Master. Although Members of the Governance and Audit Committee received balance sheets and some technocratic information about the Harbour, Members did not understand how it operated. • Some Members were struggling to access online training, and it could be worth putting in additional resources to ensure that they are able to do so, and this could include one-on-one help. • That the Head of Democratic Services and her team deserved recognition for the significant improvements that have taken place in terms of member development over the last four years but that there were still Members who have not completed what is supposed to be a mandatory programme. It remained an issue that there are no consequences for not completing the mandatory programme. A Member suggested that, in terms of the new term, starting in May 2027, some thought could be given to changing the Constitution to include a requirement for all Members to complete all mandatory training within a specific timeframe, with the possibility of sanctions if this is not done. The Chairperson indicated his support for sanctions, although he was inclined to advocate for supportive measures. Another Member thought it was a matter of public accountability to have completed training programmes. • The Head of Democratic Services noted that it was within the remit of the Committee to recommend to Council which training was essential and mandatory and that she would explore whether sanctions could be put in place and welcomed suggestions by Members. She also indicated that it was an issue that could be explored with her fellow Heads of Democratic Services, in their joint group. It was proposed that the Monitoring Officer could be asked for her views on sanctions, and the matter could be discussed further at the next meeting of the Committee in November. • In terms of ensuring new members undertake mandatory training, the Head of Democratic Services suggested that one idea was to have a session during induction where members could bring in their laptops to the Civic Offices and undertake some of the mandatory training modules. It was also possible to supply members with booklets for the training, as an alternative to the digital format.
--	---

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026

	She suggested that these ideas could be discussed at the next meeting of the DSC Member Development Working Group. <u>RESOLVED:</u> The Committee: a. Noted the report and appendices. • Proposed training on social media skills and the use of data and information and a briefing on Porthcawl Harbour as well as follow up on the DFG and Housing briefings that had been recently postponed. b. Requested that the Head of Democratic Services explore whether possible sanctions could be put in place for Elected Members regarding undertaking mandatory training. c. Noted the work of the DSC Member Development Working Group.
Date Decision Made	25 June 2026

39. Democratic Services Committee Annual Report

Decision Made	The purpose of the report was to provide the Democratic Services Committee with the Annual Report for the period May 2025 to May 2026. The report outlined the work of the Committee during that period. In response to the report, Members discussed a couple of issues, as follows: • Whether it was possible to record a reason why a Member might have had to send their apologies for a meeting. The Head of Democratic Services indicated that she would explore what was possible with members of her team, especially in respect of what might be possible in the Mod.Gov software used by the Council. • The report recorded only three instances where Members had had to send their apologies for meetings of the Committee but that it might be helpful if the Members concerned were contacted by the Head of Democratic Services to establish the reason and for this to be recorded in the report to Council. <u>RESOLVED:</u>
---------------	--

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026

	The Committee noted the Annual Report for submission to Council for information, subject to the addition, following clarification, of the reason for apologies given over the year for various members at paragraph 3.3.
Date Decision Made	25 June 2026

40. Democratic Services Committee Forward Work Programme

Decision Made	The purpose of this report was to present Members with a proposed Forward Work Programme (FWP) for the Democratic Services Committee for consideration and further development. In response to the report, Members discussed a number of issues: • The Chairperson noted his satisfaction with the proposed FWP. • The Head of Democratic Services encouraged all Members to share the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru's (DBCC) Annual Remuneration Report 2026-27 report within their groups and get their input when it is published. She indicated that she would send it to out to all members as soon as it comes out for consultation and would seek to gather all feedback and send recommendations to the Commission. <u>RESOLVED:</u> Members considered the proposed draft Forward Work Programme for the Democratic Services Committee attached at Appendix A and requested the following: • Feedback in respect of the discussion about training and sanctions, and whether there were options for the Committee to make recommendations to Council. • That the minutes or notes associated with meetings of the Member Development Working Group could be shared with Members of the Committee.
Date Decision Made	25 June 2026

41. Urgent Items

Decision Made	None
Date Decision Made	25 June 2026

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#).

The meeting closed at 10.46.