

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>20 NOVEMBER 2025</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>CONSULTATION ON EXTENDING THE DUTY ON LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO BROADCAST MEETINGS</b>
<b>Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member</b>	<b>HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>RACHEL KEEPINS DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>There is no effect upon the policy framework and procedure rules in respect of this report.</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<p><b>This report presents the Welsh Government ‘Consultation on extending the duty on Local Authorities to broadcast meetings’, requesting that the Committee consider and provide comment on the proposals, and agree a response to be submitted to Welsh Government as part of the consultation process.</b></p> <p><b>The consultation is to consider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>whether the duty on a Principal Council to broadcast meetings should be extended to include meetings other than that of the full council</b></li> <li><b>whether there should be a duty imposed upon Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) and/or National Park Authorities (NPAs) to broadcast their meetings</b></li> <li><b>whether there should be a retention period for recordings of broadcast meetings</b></li> </ul>

## **1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 The purpose of the report is to consider the Welsh Government consultation on extending the duty on local authorities to broadcast meetings, specifically:

- whether the duty on a Principal Council to broadcast meetings should be extended to include meetings other than that of the full council

- whether there should be a duty imposed upon Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) and/or National Park Authorities (NPAs) to broadcast their meetings
- whether there should be a retention period for recordings of broadcast meetings

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Section 46(1) and (2)(a) of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires a Principal Council to make arrangements for its full Council meetings to be broadcast electronically so that members of the public who are not in physical attendance at the meeting can see and hear the proceedings. This is sometimes referred to as the 'broadcasting duty'. Under section 46(1), proceedings must be broadcast as they take place, subject to any specified exceptions and the broadcast must be available electronically for a specified period after the meeting.
- 2.2 Section 47(1) of the 2021 Act also requires Principal Councils to make arrangements for their meetings to be held remotely. This is sometimes referred to as 'multi-location meetings duty'.
- 2.3 Whilst these are two separate duties, they have both provided the public with greater opportunities to access discussions about the issues Principal Councils deal with, and what factors they consider when making decisions which impact on people's daily lives.
- 2.4 Currently, there are no similar duties in legislation requiring FRAs or NPAs to broadcast their meetings, but they are required to hold multi-location meetings.

## **3. Current situation / proposal**

- 3.1 Currently this Authority live streams all meetings of full Council with the recordings then saved and available online indefinitely via our YouTube Channel. Other committee meetings are recorded and uploaded after the meeting for the public to view, again available indefinitely.
- 3.2 There have been instances, however, when there has been a high interest item going to a particular meeting such as the Development Control Committee for example, and the decision was made to live stream the meeting, to enable greater accessibility to those who might not be able to attend in person. Alternatively, any member of the public is able to contact Democratic Services and request a Microsoft Teams link to view any public meeting remotely.

### **Consultation**

- 3.3 Attached at **Appendix A** is the Welsh Government document: 'Consultation on extending the duty on local authorities to broadcast meetings'.
- 3.4 In considering the proposed changes to the arrangements for broadcasting Council meetings, the consultation seeks views about the following:
- What meetings of Principal Councils other than full Council meetings should be broadcast in the future?
  - Whether broadcasting provision should be extended to include meetings of FRAs and NPAs?

- The retention period for recordings of broadcast meetings.

3.5 There are also the following questions that are posed:

**Question 1**

Do you agree the duty to broadcast meetings live should be extended to additional meetings of a Principal Council?

**Question 2**

Are there other committees' meetings of a Principal Council you think the duty should be extended?

**Question 3**

Do you agree the requirement to broadcast meetings should be extended to NPAs and FRAs?

**Question 4**

Should the broadcasting of NPA and FRA meetings be extended to meetings beyond that of the full authority, e.g standards committees?

**Question 5**

In relation to Principal Councils, NPAs and FRAs, do you agree that recordings of meetings required to be broadcast should be retained?

**Question 6**

What, in your opinion, would be the likely effects of extending the duty to broadcast meetings on the Welsh language?

We are particularly interested in any likely effects on opportunities to use the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English.

Do you think that there are opportunities to promote any positive effects?

Do you think that there are opportunities to mitigate any adverse effects?

**Question 7**

In your opinion, could extending the duty to broadcast meetings be formulated or changed so as to:

- have positive effects or more positive effects on using the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English; or
- mitigate any negative effects on using the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English?

**Question 8**

Please explain how you think broadcasting of Council meetings impacts different social, economic and cultural groups, both positively and negatively and what measures can be undertaken to ensure equitable access and representation.

**Question 9**

We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

3.6 It is proposed that the Committee provide any relevant comments or suggestions for submission to Welsh Government by 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

#### **4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**

- 4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

#### **5. Well-being of Future Generations Implications and Connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

- 5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there is no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

#### **6. Climate Change and Nature Implications**

- 6.1 There are no Climate Change and Nature implications as a result of this report.

#### **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

- 7.1 There are no Safeguarding or Corporate Parent implications as a result of this report.

#### **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this report and the consultation, any future changes and extension to the broadcasting duty of meetings may involve additional resource and costs which would need to be met from existing budgets or an identified funding source.

#### **9. Recommendations**

- 9.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- a) consider the information contained within the report and **Appendix A** and identify any appropriate feedback to the Consultation on Extending the Duty on Local Authorities to Broadcast Meetings;
  - b) Approve that any response of the Committee be submitted by the Democratic Services Manager to the Welsh Government on behalf of the Authority.

#### **Background documents**

None