

Report

Democratic Services Committee

Part 1

Date: 9 November 2017

Subject Draft Work Programme

Purpose To present a suggested work programme for the Committee.

Author Democratic Services and Communications Manager

Ward All Wards

Summary The purpose of a work programme is to enable the Committee to plan, organise and prioritise its workload.

Previously, reports have been brought to the Committee on an ad hoc basis, as and when work was referred. By adopting the suggested work programme in this report, the Committee will be able to plan out its projects and meetings, be clear on its aims and objectives, and properly assess at the end of the year the extent to which its aims have been achieved.

Proposal To agree the Committee's Work Programme.

Action by Democratic Services and Communications Manager

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Chief Officers
- Monitoring Officer
- Head of Finance
- Head of People and Business Change

Background

The purpose of a work programme is to enable the Committee to plan, organise and prioritise its workload.

Previously, reports have been brought to the Committee on an ad hoc basis, as and when work was referred. By adopting the suggested priorities in this report, the Committee will be able to plan out its projects and meetings, be clear on its aims and objectives, and properly assess at the end of the year the extent to which its aims have been achieved.

The following priorities are suggested for the next year:

1. Constitution Review

In September 2015 the Committee agreed the format for a new model constitution. Part of this was agreeing the WLGA role descriptions, which have now been adopted by Council. This Committee now needs to oversee the reorganisation of the rest of the constitution.

2. WLGA Member Development Charter

The WLGA Charter sets out a framework for supporting effective Member Training and Development activity. With a new Cabinet lead for Member Development appointed, and the WLGA role descriptions adopted, we are well placed to embark on the self-assessment process with a view to achieving the Charter accreditation. It is suggested that, as a cross-party group with responsibility for Member support, the Democratic Services Committee could oversee and drive this process, in collaboration with the Cabinet Member.

3. Support for Councillors in their ward work

The Democratic Services team has recently reviewed the guidance for Members on ward meetings. The actual system of ward meeting support for Members was last updated in 2014, and focussed only upon ward meetings, not other ward activity. As ward meetings only take place in a small number of wards, a review is needed of this as well as the general support offered to all Members for ward work. This could also include the issue raised at the Committee's February meeting, highlighting the need for a protocol regarding enquiries from / about other wards.

4. Boundary Commission Review of Communities

A "Community" is the unit of local government that lies below the level of the principal council. From time to time, because of developments or shifts of population, it may be necessary to make changes to community areas and boundaries.

The Council has a duty to monitor the communities in its area and, where appropriate, the electoral arrangements of such communities. The Council also has a duty to report to the Boundary Commission for Wales every ten years on its community arrangements. A review is due, and it is suggested that the Committee would be an appropriate body to oversee the process and consultation for this, and report any necessary changes back to Council.

5. Democratic Services Annual Reports

Both the Committee and the Head of Democratic Services are required to produce an annual report to Council each year, so this will be built into the programme.

Once the Committee's priorities are agreed and adopted, the support team will plan the reports and meetings for the rest of the year.

Financial Summary

There is no direct cost to adopting a programme of work.

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
No action taken	M	L	Work programming arrangements are in place to ensure they are timely, meaningful, informative, and transparent, balanced, monitored, and joined up.	Head of Democratic Services
The process is not embraced by report authors and members	M	M	If there is proliferation of unplanned or late items, the opportunity to ensure work programming is timely, meaningful, informative, and transparent, balanced, monitored, and joined up will diminish	Head of Democratic Services

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

These proposals will help the Council provide the best possible service to members and will provide information to the public and elected members.

Proposal

To agree the Committee's Work Programme.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no financial implications in adopting a programme of work.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no legal implications in adopting a programme of work.

Staffing Implications: Comments of Head of People and Business Change

There are no specific staffing implications in adopting a programme of work.

Background Papers

None.

Dated: 2 November 2017