



MERTHYR TYDFIL  
County Borough Council  
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
MERTHYR TUDFUL

# **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES** **COMMITTEE MEETING**

**2.15 PM MONDAY, 15TH SEPTEMBER, 2014**

## **COUNCIL CHAMBER**

This Agenda has been prepared by the Democratic Services Department. Any member of the public requiring information should contact the department on (01685) 725203 or email [democratic@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@merthyr.gov.uk).

Any reference documents referred to but not published as part of this agenda can be found on the Council's website or intranet under Committee Documents/Library Background Papers.

## **A G E N D A**

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members of the Democratic Services Committee are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members Code of Conduct.

### Note:

- a. Members are reminded that they must identify the item number and subject matter that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the personal interest; and

- b. Where Members withdraw from a meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of a prejudicial interest they must notify the Chair when they leave.
3. Broadcasting of Meetings: Advice Note for Elected Members  
To consider a report of the Head of Democratic Services. **(Pages 1 - 10)**
4. Democratic Services Structure  
To consider a report of the Head of Democratic Services. **(Pages 11 - 14)**
5. Members' Personal Development Plans (PDP's)  
To consider this matter.
6. Any Other Business Deemed Urgent by the Chair

**COMPOSITION:**

Councillor Richard Thomas (Chair)  
Councillor G Jones (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: T Chaplin, G Davies, D L Jarrett, C T Jones,  
G Lewis, T Lewis, B E Mansbridge and K Moran

Together with appropriate officers

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Os byddai'n well gennych gopi o'r agenda hwn mewn iaith arall, cysylltwch a [democratic@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@merthyr.gov.uk) neu ffoniwch 01685 725203

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## **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT**

Date Written	8 <sup>th</sup> August 2014
Report Author	Karen Vokes
Service Area	Democratic Services
Committee Date	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2014

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

## **Broadcasting of Meetings: Advice Note for Elected Members**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:** To agree a protocol for circulation to all members and officers.

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 In accordance with the principles of openness and transparency set out in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and utilising grant funding made available from Welsh Government, it was agreed by Full Council on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2014 to proceed with the broadcasting of all / some of the Authority's Council Meetings / other Committee meetings.
- 1.2 Any meetings recorded will not be broadcast live but will be uploaded on the Authority's website via the Document Management System (Modern.gov).
- 1.3 The broadcasting equipment, e.g. cameras, recording equipment and digital microphones have now been installed in the Council Chamber and staff in the Democratic Services Department have gone through the necessary training.

### **2.0 PROTOCOL**

- 2.1 Attached at Appendix 1 is a suggested protocol and it is hoped that this document will be a useful reference point for Councillors involved in meetings that are being broadcast.

2.2 The Council meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2014 has been recorded purely for the purposes of training for the providers (Auditel) and the Democratic Services Department to ensure there are no technical issues. It is hoped that October's Full Council meeting will be recorded and broadcast on the Authority's website.

2.3 Training sessions will be available throughout September/October to all Councillors by the Democratic Services Team.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

3.1 There are no cost implications of agreeing this protocol.

### **4.0 RECOMMENDATION(S) that**

4.1 Training be made available by the Democratic Services Department to all Members

4.2 The attached webcasting protocol be agreed and circulated to Members of the Council in readiness for the appropriate training.

**ANN TAYLOR**  
**HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
Letter from Welsh Government regarding award of funding	21 <sup>st</sup> February 2013	Democratic Services
E-mail confirmation from Welsh Government	4 <sup>th</sup> October 2013	Democratic Services
Council Report re: Welsh Government Funding	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	Democratic Services

# **MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **PROTOCOL FOR WEBCASTING**

### **Introduction**

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (the Council) agreed on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2014 that some Council and Committee meetings would be broadcast through the authority's website.

It was recognised that because budgets are such an emotive issue at the moment, the Council would be unable to continue 'live' webcasting meetings beyond the grant funding money due to there being no ongoing budget. A decision was made, therefore, not to 'live' webcast but to rather purchase the new equipment through the grant money for the Council Chamber, enabling the authority to introduce 'live' webcasting in future if the need arises.

Following installation of the cameras in the Council Chamber, Full Council and the Planning, Regulatory and Licensing Committee are to be recorded with effect from September 2014 and uploaded following the meetings on the authority's website.

This protocol has been produced to assist the conduct of broadcasting of meetings and to ensure that in doing so the authority is compliant with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998. Accordingly the following will apply to all meetings to be recorded and broadcast by the Authority:

### **Main Provisions**

The Chair of the meeting has the discretion to request the termination or suspension of the recording if continuing to record would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting. This would include:

- Public disturbance;

- Decision to exclude public and press for one of the usual legal reasons;
- Any other reason decided and supported by the Council.

### **Cessation of Webcasting for Private Sessions**

No part of any meeting held will be webcast after Members have passed a resolution excluding the public and the press because there is likely to be disclosure of exempt or confidential information, and the Chair of the meeting will be advised of this prior to any discussion of exempt or confidential matters.

#### **Please note:**

Archived broadcasts or parts of broadcasts shall only be removed from the authority's website if the Monitoring Officer considers that it is necessary because all or part of the content of the broadcast is or is likely to be in breach of any statutory provision or common law doctrine, for example Data Protection and Human Rights legislation or provisions relating to privacy, defamation, confidential or exempt information.

It is anticipated, however, that meetings will be conducted lawfully and that the need to exercise this power will occur only on an exceptional basis.

#### **What is a webcast?**

Webcasting is the **live or recorded** transmission of video over the Web. Everyone should be aware that the transmission will not be edited in any way before transmission and will be a permanent record of what is said and done at the meeting.

Video cameras have been set up in the Council Chamber and will capture the information. Therefore, the authority should aspire to the highest standards of conduct for both Members and officers.

#### **What is the Legal position?**

Members are governed by the Code of Conduct and the proceedings of meetings are governed by the Council Procedure Rules (Standing Orders).

The recording/broadcasting of meetings is also governed by these standards and rules.

Members should participate in meetings which are broadcast, as they would in meetings which are not being broadcast, with due regard to the Constitutional requirements of the Authority and the Law.

Members should pay particular attention to the law in respect of defamation, equalities, human rights and the possible disclosure of any personal information in respect of other people (Data Protection Act).

***Once you have spoken it cannot be undone!***

### **DOS AND DON'TS WHEN ATTENDING A MEETING THAT IS BEING WEBCAST**

An Induction Loop is available within the Council Chamber. If you use a hearing aid, please switch it to the T position when you arrive.

If you have difficulties before or during the meeting then please draw it to the attention of the Democratic Services Officer in attendance so that it can be rectified rather than bringing it to the attention of the Chair during the meeting.

#### **Speaking**

Firstly and most importantly remember that the cameras are automatic and will become active when you press your 'speak' button on your microphone.

The digital microphone system has a queuing mechanism so if you wish to speak you need to press your 'speak' button. If the light on your microphone is green you will then be in a queue which will turn red automatically when you are able to speak.

It is imperative that before you speak, allow a couple of seconds for the camera to focus in on you and then commence your speech. If you do not follow this practice, some or all of what you say will not be included in the recording. When using the

microphone, try to speak directly towards it. When you have finished speaking, switch your microphone off.

### **Moving when speaking**

Try to avoid moving unduly whilst speaking and using expansive hand gestures.

### **BE AWARE when colleagues are speaking**

Please be advised that conversations or comments you make may be picked up even if your personal microphone is not switched on. The equipment is extremely sensitive and you should **be aware of the possibility** of your voice, expressions and gestures being picked up elsewhere, particularly when other people near you are speaking. Any comments you make or actions that you may make could be picked up by their microphone and also by the cameras.

Bear in mind also that even when there are no members of the public and press present in the public gallery, they will nonetheless be able to view the meeting once it has been uploaded onto the Authority's website. It is therefore important to ensure that you give the meeting your full attention at all times.

### **Sound Interference - microphones**

Please ensure that all mobile phones are switched off during the meetings as these will cause interference through the microphones.

### **Declarations at Meetings**

All Members are aware of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and prejudicial interest in respect of matters contained in agendas in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Members' Code of Conduct.

If members wish to make a declaration at a meeting, please ensure, when your microphone becomes active, that you follow the procedure outlined:



- Identify the item number and subject matter that their interest relates to
- Signify the nature of the personal interest

### **Electronic Voting**

Electronic voting is now available as a result of the new wide range of facilities installed within the Council Chamber and it is important that full potential is achieved through maximum use.

When a vote is requested, the Monitoring Officer/Democratic Services Officer will commence the start of voting. At this point three green lights will flash on your microphone.

On your microphone you will see:

+	For the recommendation
0	Abstain
-	Against the recommendation



When prompted you need to cast your vote.

During the voting process, you are able to change your vote.

The voting will be closed by the Monitoring Officer/Democratic Services Officer and the votes will be listed on the screen showing how each individual voted, who has yet to vote, and the overall result.

**Please note that when the voting process has ended you will be unable to change your vote.**

I, the undersigned, have read and agree with the contents of the attached protocol for Webcasting and will act in accordance with the Authority's Members' Code of Conduct.

..... (print name)

..... (Signature)

..... (Date)

## **Conduct of Meetings**

At the start of each meeting to be recorded, an announcement will be made as follows:

**CHAIR:**

***Before proceeding today, I have to remind everyone that the proceedings of today's meeting are being recorded for subsequent broadcast via the authority's internet site and in the archive record of the meeting.***

***The images and sound recording may also be used for training purposes within the authority.***

***I should also explain that the public seating areas will be in view of the camera and by entering the Chamber and using the public seating area, members of the public are consenting to being filmed and those images appearing on the authority's internet site and in the archive record of the meeting.***

***I should also remind all present that the Chair has the discretion to terminate or suspend filming if, in their opinion, continuing to do so would prejudice the proceedings, or that continued filming might infringe the rights of any individual.***

## **Agenda Front Sheets**

On the front of each relevant agenda and on signs inside and outside the Council Chamber, the following notice will appear:

PLEASE NOTE: THIS MEETING MAY BE RECORDED FOR SUBSEQUENT BROADCAST VIA THE AUTHORITY'S INTERNET SITE.

THE IMAGES AND SOUND RECORDING MAY ALSO BE USED FOR TRAINING PURPOSES WITHIN THE AUTHORITY.

AT THE START OF THE MEETING THE CHAIR WILL CONFIRM IF ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING IS BEING RECORDED.

THE PUBLIC SEATING AREAS WILL BE IN VIEW OF THE CAMERA, AND BY ENTERING THE CHAMBER AND USING THE PUBLIC SEATING AREA, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE CONSENTING TO BEING FILMED AND TO THE POSSIBLE USE OF THOSE IMAGES AND SOUND RECORDINGS AS OUTLINED ABOVE.

**IF YOU SHOULD HAVE ANY QUERIES REGARDING THIS, PLEASE CONTACT THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**



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## **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT**

Date Written	28 <sup>th</sup> August 2014
Report Author	Ann Taylor
Service Area	Democratic Services
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2014

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

### **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES STRUCTURE**

#### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

To provide Democratic Services Committee with an update on the structure and workload of the Democratic Services Department.

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Chapter 2 of Part 1 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (“the Measure”) contains provisions for the strengthening of local democracy that specifically relate to the role of the Democratic Services Committee and Head of Democratic Services.
- 1.2 As part of these provisions, the Democratic Services Committee must keep under review the provision of staff, accommodation and other resources in order to ensure that they are adequate for the responsibilities of the post.
- 1.3 The Head of Democratic Services also has a responsibility to make recommendations in respect of:
  - The number and grades of staff required to discharge democratic services functions;
  - The appointment of staff to discharge democratic services functions; and
  - The organisation and proper management of staff discharging democratic services functions.

## **2.0 PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES SECTION**

- 2.1 As part of the authority's drive to make financial savings without compromising efficiency, Corporate Management Team have made decisions in principle to progress the detail of a Corporate Spine.
- 2.2 The plans include the establishment of a Democratic Services and Executive Support Group. The purpose of the group would be to provide support for the Democratic Services role including committee, electoral and other specialist project work, and also includes the PA roles to the Chief Executive and Directors, cross-authority duties such as agenda preparation and action notes and general support to senior management.
- 2.3 The outcome would be a group of officers with the skills to cover a greater number of tasks, providing a more flexible service and less reliance on single points of dependency.
- 2.4 Within this arrangement, the opportunity would then be available to identify new job roles and job descriptions in line with appropriate job evaluation and development training.

## **3.0 LINE MANAGEMENT AND ACCOMMODATION**

- 3.1 Effective line management and supervision for quality assurance and meeting of statutory responsibilities is essential to successfully embed this new arrangement.
- 3.2 Initial discussions favoured moving the management of all staff within the proposed group to the Business Services Department, appointing a supervisor to oversee the day to day organisation.
- 3.3 The Chief Executive, Directors, the Head of Democratic Services and Scrutiny Support Officer would then commission these staff to carry out specific functions.

## **4.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

- 4.1 The establishment of a Democratic Services and Executive Support Group is fully supported and welcomed. There are a number of initiatives that Democratic Services would like to introduce to improve the service, but the small size of the team prohibits this. A larger team would mean less reliance on single points of dependency and greater opportunities for succession planning.
- 4.2 There are, however, reservations in relation to the management of the service being moved to Business Services. Although the work Democratic Services does has been recognised as administrative, much of it has a high knowledge base and statutory responsibilities. Before any changes are implemented, there needs to be a clear understanding of how the support will be co-ordinated on a day to day basis.

## 5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

5.1 Whilst there are no discernible financial implications at this stage, at the end of the process there will undoubtedly be a call to identify any cost savings achieved by improved methods of working with a larger support group.

## 6.0 RECOMMENDATION(S) that

6.1 Democratic Services Committee note the concerns of the Head of Democratic Services.

6.2 If Committee feels it appropriate, the Democratic Services Committee take a report and recommendation(s) to Full Council on the provision of staff and accommodation as applicable.

**ANN TAYLOR**  
**HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<i>Title of Document(s)</i>	<i>Document(s) Date</i>	<i>Document Location</i>

***Consultation has been undertaken with Executive Board in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***

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