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Date: 30th January 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Democratic Services Committee** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room - Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Wednesday, 6th February, 2019** at **5.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. Councillors and the public wishing to speak on any item can do so by making a request to the Chair. You are also welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, both these requests require a minimum notice period of 3 working days, and a simultaneous translation will be provided if requested.

All Committee meetings are open to the Press and Public, observers and participants are asked to conduct themselves with respect and consideration for others. Please note that failure to do so will result in you being asked to leave the meetings and you may be escorted from the premises.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chrissy'.

Christina Harrhy
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.
- 2 Declarations of Interest.

Pages

Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal

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and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

To approve and sign the following minutes: -

3 Democratic Services Committee held on 26th November 2018. 1 - 4

To receive and consider the following report(s): -

4 Notice of Motion - Parental Leave Councillors. 5 - 12

5 Review Mail Service Support for Agenda Despatch. 13 - 20

Circulation:

Councillors C. Andrews, P.J. Bevan, D. Cushing, W. David, D.T. Davies, Mrs C. Forehead, A. Hussey, L. Jeremiah, G. Kirby (Vice Chair), C.P. Mann (Chair), Mrs G.D. Oliver, Mrs M.E. Sargent, G. Simmonds, C. Thomas, R. Whiting and W. Williams,

And Appropriate Officers

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DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON MONDAY 26TH NOVEMBER 2018 AT 5:00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor C.P. Mann - Chair

Councillors:

C. Andrews, W. David, D.T. Davies, Mrs C. Forehead, A. Hussey, L. Jeremiah,
Mrs M.E. Sargent, G. Simmonds, C. Thomas and W. Williams.

Together with:

C. Forbes-Thompson (Interim Head of Democratic Services), C. Evans (Interim Scrutiny Officer).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.J. Bevan, D. Cushing, G. Kirby, Mrs G.D. Oliver and R. Whiting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on the 26th September 2018 be agreed as a correct record and by a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Democratic Services Committee held on the 26th September 2018 (Minute No. 1 – 5) be approved and signed as a correct record.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

4. DRAFT INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL REPORT 2019/20.

The Interim Head of Democratic Services provided the Committee with a report and sought the views of Members on the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' (The Panel) draft determinations, in relation to councillors and co-opted members for 2019/20, so that a response to their consultation could be sent.

The Committee noted that the Panel's final determinations for 2019/20 will be published in February 2019, following which a report will be presented to Full Council.

The report explained that the Panel is a statutory body established by Welsh Government in January 2008 to determine the scope and salaries, allowances and expenses payable to Councillors and Co-opted Members. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 gave the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, additional powers to prescribe Members' remuneration. This was a significant change to the well-established practice of Members determining their own scheme of allowances within the maximum sums prescribed by the Panel. The Panel subsequently received further powers following the introduction of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, including the ability to make recommendations about the pay of heads of service for county and county borough councils and fire and rescue authorities. The report reflected the Panel's determinations for 2019/20 and a copy of the Panel's Draft Annual Report was attached at appendix 1 of the report.

The report outlined that the proposed basic salary in 2019/20 for elected members of principal councils shall be £13,868. This is an increase of £268 per member which is equivalent to 1.97%, and is effective from April 2019. There are proposals to award an increase of £800 to the salaries for the Leader and Cabinet Members and also remove the option to select a salary level for civic salaries.

The Committee thanked the Officer for the report and discussion ensued.

Members queried the financial implications of the report on Local Authority Budgets, with particular reference to the Medium Term Financial Plan proposals. It was noted that the overall additional costs for 2019/20, as identified in the report, would equate to £25,852, however, Members were assured that there would be sufficient budget to accommodate this increase, within the annual increase in non-pay costs, for 2019/20.

Having consideration for the report, Members sought further information on the Reimbursement of Care Costs. It was noted that, in order to encourage more people to stand for public office, the Panel is keen to encourage the promotion of the reimbursement of the costs of care. This relates to dependent children below the age of 15 or to dependents over the age of 15, where costs are incurred in providing care, while members or co-opted members are engaged on Council business. However, it was noted that there is some sensitivity concerning the publication of this legitimate expense. Officers explained that the total claims submitted are published, and individual claimant details are not included in the publication. It was also noted however that this information may be available through a Freedom of Information request.

The Committee discussed the increase in the senior salary for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and it was noted that payments made to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are not included as part of the Council's 18 Senior Salary posts and are paid inclusive of the Basic Salary. Following representations made by councils, who preferred not to choose from previously set salary options, the Panel has proposed to remove the salary options and, if paid, salaries be set at Band 3 for the Mayor with a salary of £22,568 and Band 5 salary for the Deputy Mayor with a salary of £17,568. The Committee noted that in previous years, the Council has paid Civic Office holders at Band 2, which will result on a salary increase of £768 for the Mayor and £1268 for the Deputy Mayor.

Members queried whether it would be possible to forego the receipt of the increase in Allowances, as such it was advised that this would require individual Members to notify the Chief Executive.

The Democratic Services Committee thanked the Officer for the report and noted its content,

5. FINDINGS OF MEMBER I.T. QUESTIONNAIRE - PRESENTATION

The Interim Head of Democratic Services provided the Committee with a presentation on the recent Councillor IT Provision Questionnaire, which was undertaken earlier in the year.

The Committee were asked to note that of the 73 questionnaires sent out, 39 were returned, providing a response rate of 53%. Members noted that of the 39, 10 were anonymous.

The Questionnaire asked a series of questions, which aimed to determine the opinion of Members on current IT provision, future developments and the possibility of 'paperless' meetings.

Members were asked whether they would be willing to be 'paperless' for all meetings, should they be provided with a tablet device with the use of the Modern.Gov Application. The majority of Councillors (29) were willing to go 'paperless', 4 of which were already using the Modern.gov application and had gone 'paperless' in Committees, 19 would prefer to retain their home devices also and 6 would like a tablet and have no other device at home.

The Council can provide a Citrix Access Key Fob (Fob), which would allow Members to access their emails via any Wi-Fi from their tablet or laptop, and queried whether Members would be interested in this technology, and whether they would cancel their provided Broadband line. 56% were happy to cancel the provided broadband, whereas 20% preferred not to. Comments from the questionnaires included queries around increased costs to Members and reliability of the Fobs. Members were asked to note that a 4G tablet could also be provided, which would enable Members to access their email remotely, however there would be additional costs associated with this option.

Members were asked whether the Council provided adequate access to telephone, email and Internet facilities, as stated by the Independent Remuneration Panel. 77% said yes and 13% said no. However, comments around this question were all related to a lack of mobile phones and access to emails.

The questionnaire sought Members opinions on whether an allowance should be offered to Councillors to offset costs of telephone calls. 26% felt that they should and 64% felt that this would not be necessary; Members were also made aware that there could be tax implications associated with such an allowance.

Members were asked whether they thought the Council should provide mobile phones to all Councillors, 44% felt that they should and 44% felt that they shouldn't. Members raised concerns around costs being too expensive, another commented that they would be happy to use their personal phone with the use of an App to access their Council emails. The Committee were asked to note that the purchase of a mobile phone is estimated at £120, with an annual charge of £78.

The Committee noted that there are currently 3 Councillors trialling an application on their personal mobile devices, which allows access to Council emails. With this in mind, the questionnaire sought Members opinions on whether they would consider this option to have email access on their own devices. It was noted that 72% of respondents said that they would consider the option and 13% said that they would not. Comments from 2 of the Councillors trialling the application said it was very useful, other comments included requests for training and 3 were not comfortable to use the application.

Finally, Members were asked to note that Democratic Services spend £20,000 per annum on printing of Committee papers, which is an average cost of £273 per Member. It was noted that for every 10 Members who go 'Paperless', the Council saves an average of £2,730 per annum.

The Committee thanked the Officer for the presentation and discussion ensued.

Having consideration for the findings, Members discussed the Modern.Gov application and raised concerns that not all agendas were available on the application. Officers explained that the Modern.Gov is a system used by Committee Services, and all meetings arranged and minuted by Committee Services are available on the application. However, Members were informed that, should 'paperless' meetings be widely taken up, there could be scope to discuss offering the use of Modern.gov for those meetings.

Following consideration and discussion of the presentation and feedback from Members trialling the application, it was determined that proposals are developed on the use of Members own mobile phones, with access to Council emails and the cost implications for the use of Tablet devices to encourage paperless Committees. Members were keen to recommend training be provided to those requiring it on the use of the applications and devices.

The meeting closed at 18:08pm

Approved as a correct record subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 6th February 2019 they were signed by the Chair

CHAIR



DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE – 6TH FEBRUARY 2019

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF MOTION – PARENTAL LEAVE COUNCILLORS

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Democratic Services Committee is asked to consider the Notice of Motion as set out in Paragraph 4.1 of the report.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 A Notice of Motion has been received from Councillor A. Leonard and is supported by Councillors P. Marsden, E. Stenner and L. Phipps.
- 2.2 The Notice of Motion meets the criteria set out in the Council's Constitution and in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure is referred to Council for consideration.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Democratic Services Committee are asked to consider the notice of motion and make an appropriate recommendation to Council.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Councillor A. Leonard requests in her Notice of Motion that this Council:-
- Calls on Welsh Government to reconsider current maternity, paternity and adoption leave entitlements for Councillors as legislated within the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011 (Part 2) and
 - That Council forward the draft Parental Leave Policy for Councillors attached to this motion (Appendix 2) to Welsh Government for their consideration.

Reasons for the Motion

- 5.2 To give Councillors a more equitable entitlement to parental leave after giving birth or adopting and to ensure that Councillors with children and other caring commitments are supported as appropriate.

Supporting Information

- 5.3 Part 2 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 makes available to members of local authorities entitlement to a period of family absence. The Measure created five types of family absence: maternity absence, new-born absence, adopter's absence, new adoption absence and parental absence.
- 5.4 The Family Absence for Members of Local Authorities (Wales) Regulations 2013 sets out the provisions and conditions for each type of absence, which came into force on 5th December 2013.
- 5.5 Part 1 of the 2013 regulations states that Members are entitled to Maternity Absence of a period of 26 weeks, unless the Member gives notice to the Head of Democratic Services that the period of maternity absence will be shorter than 26 weeks. The Regulations also set out that Adopters Absence entitlement is two consecutive weeks.
- 5.6 Caerphilly County Borough Council has already highlighted this unfairness in its Consultation response to the Welsh Government Strengthening Local Government Green Paper which was reported to Council on 5th June 2018. The consultation paper (Chapter 6 question 7b) asked '*How could we better recognise the level of responsibility involved in being a local councillor? What changes to the remuneration and support councillors receive would enable a wider range of people to become involved in local democratic representation?*' Members supported the following response to this question:

Family Absence - the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 introduced Family Absence which allowed 26 weeks for maternity absence, 2 weeks for Adoption Absence and up to 3 months for Parental Absence. Surely it is unfair to only allow 2 weeks for adoption when families can be adapting to significant changes, and as Corporate Parents surely local authorities should be leading the way in supporting people considering adoption.

6. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

- 6.1 The procedural rules regarding a Notice of Motion are contained within Council's Constitution as adopted in May 2002. The Council's Constitution sets out the framework for the decision making roles and responsibilities which will impact on future generations.

7. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 7.1 The Notice of Motion is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the act as it complies with the rules and regulations of the Council's Constitution which sets out a clear framework for how the Council operates in particular decision making responsibilities which will consider the positive and negative impacts on future generations, long term resilience, economic, environmental and social capital.

8. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no specific equalities implications that directly affect the Council arising from the report.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

10. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this report.

11. CONSULTATIONS

11.1 There has been no consultation undertaken.

Author: Emma Sullivan, Senior Committee Services Officer

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Signed copy of Notice of Motion

Appendix 2 Draft Parental Leave Policy for Councillors

Notice of Motion

To consider the undermentioned Notice of Motion standing in the name of County Borough Councillor Arianna Leonard and supported by Councillor Philippa Marsden, Councillor Eluned Stenner and Councillor Lisa Phipps.

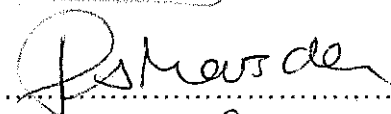
Ask Council

- to call on Welsh Government to reconsider current maternity/paternity and adoption leave entitlements for Councillors as legislated within the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011 (Part 2)
- and
- that Council forward the draft Parental Leave Policy for Councillors attached to this motion to Welsh Government for their consideration.

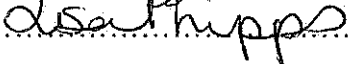
The reasons for this motion

- The parental leave policy attached to this notice will give Councillors a more equitable entitlement to parental leave after giving birth or adopting;
- To ensure that Councillors with children and other caring commitments are supported as appropriate.

Councillor Arianna Leonard 

Councillor Philippa Marsden 

Councillor Eluned Stenner 

Councillor Lisa Phipps 

Introduction

This policy set out proposals for Members' entitlements to maternity, paternity, shared parental leave and relevant allowances.

The objective of the policy is to ensure that insofar as possible Members are able to appropriate leave at the time of birth or adoptions, that both parents are able to take leave, and that reasonable and adequate arrangements are in place to provide cover for portfolio-holders and others in receipt of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) during any period of leave taken.

Improved provision for new parents will contribute towards increasing the diversity of experience, age and background of local authority councillors. It will also assist with retaining experienced councillors – particularly women – and making public officer more accessible to individuals who might otherwise feel excluded from it.

1. Leave Periods

- 1.1 Members giving birth are entitled to up to 6 months maternity leave from the due date, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by agreement if required.
- 1.2 In addition, where the birth is premature, the Member is entitled to take leave during the period between the date of birth and the due date in addition to the 6 months' period. In such cases any leave taken to cover prematurity of 28 days or less shall be deducted from any extension beyond the initial 6 months.
- 1.3 In exceptional circumstances, and only in cases of prematurity of 29 days or more, additional leave may be taken by agreement, and such exceptional leave shall not be deducted from the total 52 week entitlement.
- 1.4 Members shall be entitled to take a minimum of 2 weeks paternity leave if they are the biological father or nominated carer of their partner/spouse following the birth of their child(ren).
- 1.5 A Member who has made Shared Parental Leave arrangements through their employment is requested to advise the Council of these at the earliest possible opportunity. Every effort will be made to replicate such arrangements in terms of leave from Council.
- 1.6 Where both parents are Members, leave may be shared up to a maximum of 24 weeks for the first six months and 26 weeks for any leave agreed thereafter, up to a maximum of 50 weeks. Special and exceptional arrangements may be made in cases of prematurity.

- 1.7 A Member who adopts a child through an approved adoption agency shall be entitled to take up to six months adoption leave from the date of placement, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by agreement if required.
- 1.8 Any Member who takes maternity, shared parental or adoption leave retains their legal duty under the Local Government Act 1972 to attend a meeting of the Council within a six month period unless the Council meeting agrees to an extended leave of absence prior to the expiration of that six month period.
- 1.9 Any Member intending to take maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave will be responsible for ensuring that they comply with the relevant notice requirements of the Council, both in terms of the point at which the leave starts and the point at which they return.
- 1.10 Any Member taking leave should ensure that they respond to reasonable requests for information as promptly as possible, and that they keep Officers and Colleagues informed and updated in relation to intended dates of return and requests for extension of leave.

2. Basic Allowance

- 2.1 All Members shall continue to receive their Basic Allowance in full whilst on maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

3. Special Responsibility Allowances

- 3.1 Members entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance shall continue to receive their allowance in full in the case of maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave.
- 3.2 Where a replacement is appointed to cover the period of absence that person shall receive an SRA on a pro rata basis for the period of the temporary appointment.
- 3.3 The payment of Special Responsibility Allowances, whether to the primary SRA holder or a replacement, during a period of maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave shall continue for a period of six months, or until the date of the next Annual Meeting of the Council, or until the date when the Member taking leave is up for election (whichever is soonest). At such a point, the position will be reviewed, and will be subject to a possible extension for a further six month period.
- 3.4 Should a Member appointed to replace the Member of maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave already hold a remunerated position, the ordinary rules relating to payment of more than one SRA shall apply.
- 3.5 Unless the Member taking leave is removed from their post at an Annual General Meeting of the Council whilst on leave, or unless the Party to which they belong loses control of the Council during their leave period, they shall return at the end of the

their leave period to the same post, or to an alternative post with equivalent status and remuneration which they held before the leave began.

4. Resigning from Office and Elections

- 4.1 If a Member decides not to return at the end of their maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave they must notify the Council at the earliest possible opportunity. All allowances will cease from the effective resignation date.
- 4.2 If an election is held during the Member's maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave and they are not re-elected, or decide not to stand for re-election, their basic allowance and SRA if appropriate will cease from Monday after the election date when they would technically leave office.

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DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE – 6TH FEBRUARY 2019

SUBJECT: REVIEW MAIL SERVICE SUPPORT FOR AGENDA DESPATCH

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with background information on an MTFP savings proposal to cease Mail Service support for circulation of committee documents to Member's homes ('Agenda Despatch'). The report includes an explanation of alternative electronic and paper options should the savings proposal be approved.
- 1.2 The report is seeking the views of Members prior to this savings proposal being presented to Council on 21 February 2019 as part of the overall Council savings proposals.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Mail Service has traditionally supported distribution of hard copy committee documents to Elected Members via courier, but this costs £5000 per year, is increasingly difficult to resource and has a negative environmental impact.
- 2.2 More cost-effective secure delivery options are now available that will complement the Council's drive towards environmentally friendly digital working, whilst making available alternatives for a minority of members to continue to work using paper on an exception basis.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that support for agenda despatch by the Mail Service courier should cease on 31 March 2019 to achieve an MTFP saving in 2019/20 and in line with the direction of modern local government. The alternative options outlined in this report can be utilised instead to encourage electronic working, but the alternative options will also support continued working from paper where absolutely necessary.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the Council's constitution is reviewed to determine whether a modification is required, similar to neighbouring local authorities, to enable electronic agenda despatch.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To achieve a £5000 saving towards the Council's overall savings targets.
- 4.2 To reduce impact on the environment of vehicle journeys and printing.
- 4.3 To work in alignment with the Council's digital objectives, increase security of exempt committee documents by viewing them on encrypted and password protected devices, and reduce costs of confidential disposal of exempt hard copy committee documents.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Hard copy committee documents have traditionally been provided to elected members at their home address via a courier service provided by the Council's Mail Service. Over time a number of elected members have either opted to collect printed papers when they come to Penallta House or access papers electronically, but the majority continue to use the courier service.
- 5.2 Welsh legislation stipulates that the summons for a member to attend a meeting must be "left at or sent by post to the usual place of residence of every member of the council", but there is a facility for members to opt to receive the summons a different way. Other local authorities have adapted the Rules of Procedure in their Constitution to allow for electronic methods of delivering committee documents. For example Torfaen CBC's Constitution says "the Proper Officer will send an invitation and agenda to every Member of the Council" and goes on to say "Council have agreed that it will require Council and Committee meetings to move towards conducting business digitally with effect from June 2012".
- 5.3 The courier service costs the Council's Mail Service £5000 per year in staff overtime and vehicle fuel. There are clear environment impacts due to travelling the length and breadth of the county borough, and MTFP savings achieved due to staff retirement has made the courier service more difficult to sustain whilst also delivering a Mail Service for the whole Council. Printing costs and staff preparation time are also incurred by Democratic Services, and income is generated by the Print Unit.
- 5.4 A presentation was given to Democratic Services Committee on 26 November 2018 on outcomes of a member consultation on going paperless. Members welcomed the option to work electronically as long as options continue to be available for members that need to continue using paper formats.
- 5.5 This report proposes changes to the agenda despatch process but includes alternative options to satisfy Democratic Services Committee concerns, and to address other challenges that we have identified, whilst still achieving advantages for the majority of members.
- 5.6 The proposal is for all committee documents (open and exempt) to be sent to members within statutory timescales via Modern Gov, similar to arrangements in neighbouring local authorities. Members can utilise IT equipment supplied by the Council at their home address to securely access electronic versions of the committee documents. Modern Gov can be used on portable devices (e.g. laptops, tablets) to access papers during Council meetings, and also enables members to annotate papers as required. IT and Democratic Services will provide support on queries and training on utilising Modern Gov/IT equipment as necessary.
- 5.7 If the majority of members work this way we can achieve the following benefits:
- a. increased security for constituents, the Council and the individual elected member, as there is no need to securely store and transport printed papers, reducing risk of data breaches that could cause damage and distress to individuals and lead to substantial monetary penalties;
 - b. removes the cost of disposing of confidential waste (i.e. exempt hard copy committee documents); and
 - c. better for the environment, as reduces printing and fuel costs for a van to travel the length and breadth of the county borough.
- 5.8 However it is recognised that there may be some uncertainty about how to utilize the technology, some members may not yet have a portable device to use at a meeting, broadband speeds in certain parts of the county borough will vary due to service provider restrictions, and some members may have specific reasons why continuing with paper is necessary.

5.9 The Digital Cabinet project is the first step in supporting all members to work electronically, and both Democratic Services and Digital Services are on hand to assist with any queries or familiarisation required. In the meantime alternative options are available that will assist in achieving an overall financial saving on the courier service and environmental benefits. The alternatives are summarised in a diagram in Appendix 2, and described below:

- a. arrange for committee documents to be printed for the minority of members that cannot yet work electronically, to supplement the electronic documents that would have reached them via Modern Gov within statutory timescales. The member can collect from Penallta House or an alternative Council building close to their home – this option is suitable for both exempt and open papers. Concerns have been raised about limited opening times for some Council buildings in an elected member's locality, and but it should be emphasised that electronic documents will be available at home via Modern Gov, so there will be no delay in members accessing documents within that statutory timescales;
- b. for open papers only, a less desirable but low cost option is for members affected to arrange for papers to be printed and posted to their home address (costs are given in Appendix 1). However take-up of this option needs to be closely monitored to avoid courier cost savings being replaced by postage costs, so buy-in from the majority of members to work electronically is crucial.

Special Delivery would be required for exempt committee documents, at a cost of £6.90 per item. Given the greater security risks in printing exempt papers the cheaper, more secure option of printed exempt reports being available from a Council building is recommended, as the exempt papers will be accessible via Modern Gov at home.

- c. in exceptional circumstances members could print relevant papers only at home, as they are already provided with printers, paper and ink. However this would need to be monitored, as if all committee documents are routinely printed at home it will be more expensive than printing centrally on equipment designed for bulk printing. Democratic Services Committee noted at their meeting on 26 November 2018 that 74% of respondents to the questionnaire agreed that Members should not increase their printing at home.

5.10 The Mail Service courier also delivers supplies of paper and ink for members to use at home, and it is proposed that these could either be collected by the elected member from Penallta House when they attend a meeting, or from a council building close to their home.

Conclusion

5.11 Modernisation of the agenda despatch process is overdue, in light of security, cost and advances technology. Modern Gov and IT equipment provided to members should equip the majority with the ability to work from electronic committee documents, including annotating them for use at meetings. Buy-in from the majority of members is crucial to making this change a success, but we recognise some key challenges and have proposed some interim solutions.

5.12 Options are:

5.12.1 Continue with the status quo, and operate agenda despatch in the traditional way

5.12.2 Change to a digital way of working, to showcase members leading the way in the wider digital transformation project for the Council. If change is the proposed option, there are further options for timescales:

- a) Change now in order to meet proposed MTFP savings targets for 2019/20.
- b) Change gradually but continue to meet costs of traditional agenda despatch during 2019/20 financial year, and continue to accept security risks and environmental impact.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 All members have been or will be provided with portable IT devices for use at home and at meetings.

7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES

- 7.1 Constitution
Carbon Management Strategy
Sustainable Development Strategy
Data Protection Policy
Information Security Policy.

7.2 Corporate Plan 2018-2023

This proposal contributes to the Corporate Well-being Objective 4, part of which is to minimise adverse impacts on the environment:

Objective 4 - Promote a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promoted prosperity and minimises the adverse impacts on the environment.

8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

- 8.1 This proposal would contribute to Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 listed below.

- *A prosperous Wales*
- *A resilient Wales*
- *A globally responsible Wales*

It will reduce Council vehicle use, as a courier will no longer be required to drive the length and breadth of the County Borough. We also anticipate that over time increasing numbers of Members will opt for accessing papers electronically rather than receiving printed papers. Therefore the Council's environmental impact and costs will be reduced.

- 8.2 This proposal is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act.

- Long Term – reducing environmental impacts ensures that short-term needs are balanced against the need to safeguard the ability of future generations to meet their long-term needs.
- Prevention – reducing environmental impacts and increasing security of agenda despatch prevents problems occurring, or getting worse.
- Integration – the benefits of ceasing Mail Service support for the traditional agenda despatch process will positively impact the Council's objectives and goals, as well as the objectives of other public bodies to safeguard our environment.
- Collaboration – Democratic Services acting in collaboration with Customer and Digital Services will help to make this change, and achieve the benefits identified in this report.
- Involvement – involving all elected members, who have an interest in achieving the Council's well-being goals, and reflect concerns of constituents from the area which the body serves.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 An EqIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and supplementary guidance and no potential for unlawful discrimination and/or low level or minor negative impact have been identified, therefore a full EqIA has not been carried out.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Ceasing mail service support for agenda despatch will save £5000 per annum in fuel and staff overtime from the Central Services budget.
- 10.2 Alternative options while members become accustomed to working electronically will involve collection from council buildings or utilising post where absolutely necessary. Appendix 1 describes £372.88 estimated cost savings over a one month period of using post compared to courier for open papers only.
- 10.3 If post is used for exempt papers, costs will increase due to requirement for Special Delivery, so collection from Council buildings to supplement viewing on Modern Gov is recommended for exempt documents, otherwise any difference in cost savings will need to be found elsewhere, which are likely to have a front line service delivery impact.
- 10.4 There will be additional cost savings for members of securely disposing of printed committee documents.
- 10.5 There will be a reduction in paper printing costs.
- 10.6 Security of storage and transportation of exempt committee documents will be improved at no additional cost.
- 10.7 If the £5000 saving is not made via this route then alternative savings will need to be found elsewhere in the service area, which are likely to have a front line service delivery impact.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Overtime has been paid regularly to couriers for agenda despatch over many years, and HR advised that a consultation is carried out with the five employees that undertake agenda despatch courier tasks, and that if members decide that agenda dispatch should cease, a notice period is given.
- 11.2 Staff undertaking courier duties were made aware that changes were being considered some time ago, and a formal consultation took place on 30 January 2019 with staff and trade unions. Concerns were raised about the impact on staff of losing this element of their income and the effect on pension, as this group of staff are low paid and unlikely to recoup these hours. Trade Unions therefore asked for compensation payments and rota payments to be considered, as they are of the opinion that these hours appear contractual within the JD. Trade Unions also raised concerns about security of the technology proposed and cost of IT support to ensure technology was both in place and effective; and whether staff would be asked to undertake overtime in the event of a technical failure. The Corporate Information Governance Manager is working with HR to resolve these queries.

12. CONSULTATIONS

- 12.1 All responses from consultations have been incorporated in the report.

13. STATUTORY POWER

13.1 Local Government Act 1998 and 2003, and responsibility of full Council.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Snapshot of estimated courier spend compared to postage
Appendix 2 Summary of options for accessing committee documents

Appendix 1 – Snapshot of estimated courier spend compared to postage

1.0 In April 2018, there were 14 committee meetings, including 1 full council, 3 scrutiny committees and 2 cabinet meetings. Courier costs for April 2018 are estimated below. It is difficult to identify exactly how many calls are required for the following reasons:

- there will be some overlap, e.g. one member of multiple committees will receive one call with papers for more than one meeting; and
- a small run of 3 calls could involve travelling miles across the county borough if the elected members are located some distance away from each other.

2.0 Estimated courier costs for both open and exempt papers:

Fuel:

Wk 1 = 3 calls approx. 20 mile courier run @0.45p per mile = £9

Wk 2 = 50 calls approx. 140 mile courier run @0.45p per mile = £63

Wk 3 = 60* calls 140 mile courier run @0.45p per mile = £63

Wk 4 = 24 calls approx. 70 mile courier run @0.45p per mile = £31.50

**13 opted to collect/electronic*

Overtime = £370.78

Total courier costs = £537.28

3.0 Estimated postage costs (open papers only):

Wk 1 = 3 letters @£1.20 = 3.60

Wk 2 = 50 letters (approx.) @£1.20 = £60

Wk 3 = 60* letters @£1.20 =£72

Wk 4 = 24 letters (approx.) @£1.20 = £28.80

**13 opted to collect/electronic*

Total postage costs = £164.40

4.0 Therefore there is an estimated saving of £372.88 in one month for the Council.

5.0 Exempt reports would require Special Delivery at a cost of £6.90 per bundle. Printing of exempt reports poses a greater security risk than viewing them on Modern Gov, so it is recommended that for both cost and security reasons exempt reports should be viewed on Modern Gov both at home and at meetings wherever possible. If printed copies are required, they could be pre-ordered and collected from Ty Penallta, and only posted in exceptional circumstances.

Appendix 2 – summary of options for accessing committee documents

<p>Default – to avoid courier journeys</p>	<p>Options to <i>supplement</i> Mod Gov –</p> <p>Used temporarily wherever possible.</p> <p>Opening times of buildings, and speed of mail service will not delay members accessing documents - available via Mod Gov within statutory timescales.</p>	<p>Suitable for:</p>
<p>Mod Gov – Open and exempt committee documents available at home within statutory timescales.</p>	<p>1. Print committee documents for collection from Penallta House or an alternative Council building.</p>	<p>Members who do not yet have a portable device to access papers in a meeting.</p> <p>Members who do not feel confident using Mod Gov or technology, or have a specific reason why they still require paper formats.</p> <p>Both exempt and open documents.</p>
	<p>2. Open documents only - print and post to home address (cost savings are described in Appendix 1).</p>	<p>Members who do not yet have a portable device to access papers in a meeting.</p> <p>Members who do not feel confident using Mod Gov or technology, or have a specific reason why they still require paper formats.</p> <p>Open documents only.</p> <p>Exempts would need to be sent via Special Delivery which is costly, so member would need to collect from a Council building, or ideally seek support to use Mod Gov at home.</p>
	<p>3. In exceptional circumstances members could print <u>relevant papers only</u> at home, but this would need to be monitored and discouraged.</p>	<p>Emergency situations, if a member cannot collect documents from a Council building in time to attend a meeting.</p>