

Report to	Council
Date of meeting	7th December 2021
Lead Member / Officer	Cllr Hugh Evans – Leader/Cllr Julian Thompson-Hill, Lead Member for Finance & Property
Report author	Alan Smith, Head of Business Improvement & Modernisation/ Gary Williams, Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services
Title	Proposals for Members to adopt New Ways of Working

1. What is the report about?

1.1. This report summarises proposals generated by the work of the Members' New Ways of Working Task & Finish Group, and which are intended to apply to the new Council following the elections in May 2022. The report considers two elements: Firstly, how Members should conduct meetings and secondly, what ICT equipment do they need to do so.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. To ask Council to consider the proposals generated by the work of the Members' New Ways of Working Task and Finish Group as to the conduct of meetings in the future and the ICT equipment to be made available to Members to support them in this work.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. That Council agrees, in accordance with the recommendation of Democratic Services Committee, the method by which to hold different categories of meeting on the basis of the proposals set out in the report presented to the Members' New Ways of Working Task and Finish Group and attached to this report as Appendix 1

- 3.2. That Council agrees, in accordance with the recommendation of Democratic Services Committee, that the ICT equipment to be provided to Members in the new Council should be as set out in Section 2 of the report presented to the Members' New Ways of Working Group and attached to this report as Appendix 1.
- 3.3. That Council adopts, in accordance with the recommendation of Democratic Services Committee, a Protocol in respect of the conduct of Hybrid meetings in substantially the same terms as those set out in Appendix 2 to this report

4. Report details

- 4.1. On 19th October 2021 the Members New Ways of Working Task and Finish Group (the Group), met to consider a report in respect of proposals for the conduct of member meetings in the new Council, and the ICT equipment that should be made available to Members to assist them in their work.
- 4.2. These proposals had been generated in response to the aspiration that there should be a move towards a greater degree of virtual and hybrid working expressed following an earlier meeting of the group.
- 4.3. The Group was presented with a report, attached to this report as Appendix 1, which contains the detailed background to this matter.
- 4.4. The Group endorsed the proposals set out in Appendix 1 both as to the methods by which meetings should be conducted and the equipment that should be provided to members.
- 4.5. A Protocol has been drafted to set out the procedural and conduct issues relating to hybrid meetings. A copy of this Protocol is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.
- 4.6. At its meeting on 5th November 2021 the Democratic Services Committee considered the proposals contained within Appendix 1 and resolved to recommend that Council should adopt the proposals both in terms of the meeting arrangements and the ICT equipment to be provided to members after the May elections.

4.7. The Democratic Services also considered the content of the draft Protocol and suggested some minor amendments which have been incorporated into Appendix 2. The Committee recommended that the Protocol, as amended, should be adopted by Council.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1. This decision will have a potentially positive impact upon the priority related to the environment.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1. As all Members' laptops are relatively new it's unlikely that there will be any cost incurred in their provision. Mobile phones will be sourced under the Council's existing mobile telephony contract and by utilising existing provision within the contract this is likely to be cost neutral.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1. A Well-being impact assessment has not been prepared in respect of this report.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1. There have been no consultations with Scrutiny. The Task and Finish Group developed the proposals and endorsed them for consideration by the Democratic Services Committee. The Committee considered the proposals at its meeting on 5th November 2021 and resolved to recommend them to Council.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. As highlighted in section 6 it is anticipated that the changes will be able to be maintained within existing budgets, however this will need to be monitored closely over the coming months.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1. There is a risk that the benefits of the advances in remote meeting technology and practice are lost without a structured approach to the use of remote and hybrid meetings and the provision of adequate equipment to enable such meetings.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. s111 Local Government Act 1972

11.2. s47 Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021