

Report to	Democratic Services Committee
Date of meeting	30 September 2022
Lead Officer	Steve Price
Report author	Democratic Services Manager
Title	Role of the Democratic Services Committee

1. What is the report about?

1.1. This report outlines the statutory duties and powers of the Democratic Services Committee.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. Local authorities are required to have a Democratic Services Committee to oversee the democratic services of the Council. Today's meeting is the committee's first meeting since the Council elections in May and it is therefore appropriate to consider the committee's role and responsibilities.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. That the Committee notes the statutory duties and powers of the Democratic Services Committee.

4. Report details

4.1. A local authority must appoint a democratic services committee to:

(a) designate a statutory head of democratic services. The Head of Democratic Services is the Democratic Services Manager Steve Price, and a summary of the functions of the statutory role is shown in appendix 1;

(b) review the adequacy of provision by the authority of staff, accommodation and other resources to discharge democratic services functions, and

(c) make reports and recommendations to the authority in relation to such provision.

- 4.2. It is for the Democratic Services Committee to determine how to exercise those functions.
- 4.3. The chair and membership of the committee are appointed by full Council and can consist of no more than 1 member of Cabinet. Council previously decided that the committee membership would not include members of the Cabinet. The chair of the committee cannot be a member of an executive (Cabinet) group which in Denbighshire means the chair cannot be from the Labour or Plaid Cymru groups.
- 4.4. Similar to the powers of a Scrutiny committee the Democratic Services Committee may require members and officers of the authority to attend before it to answer questions. If a member or officer is required to attend they must answer any questions unless the question is one which they would be entitled to refuse in a court. The committee may invite other persons, bodies or organisations to attend meetings of the committee. The committee must meet at least once in every calendar year.
- 4.5. The committee's business and forward work programme is likely to feature the following topics (this list is not exhaustive):

- Member training and development
- Support arrangements for members to fulfil their roles
- Support for the Scrutiny function of the Council
- Reviewing resources available to members (for example accommodation and technology)
- Welsh Government initiatives, legislation and consultations on local democracy issues including diversity, equality and participation
- Members' Remuneration

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

- 5.1. The committee undertakes statutory duties that are aimed at strengthening local democracy.

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

6.1. This report is for information only and does not have any cost implications.

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

7.1. A Well-being Impact Assessment is not required for this information report.

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

8.1. None.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. A Statement is not required for this information report.

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

10.1. No risks have been identified from this report.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011