Cyngor Tref Trallwng Welshpool Town Council

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Title	Lead Councillors - Sept 26
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OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

1. **To approve the introduction of a lead councillor scheme for Council events and projects on the basis set out in this report.**
2. **To authorise the committee responsible for a qualifying event or project to elect, remove or replace up to two lead councillors, subject to its terms of reference.**
3. **To confirm that the Town Clerk will determine whether an activity qualifies as an event or project for the purposes of the scheme.**
4. **To confirm that lead councillors will act solely as a liaison between officers and elected Members, will report to their appointing committee alongside officers, and will have no authority to issue instructions, incur expenditure or make decisions on behalf of the Council or committee.**

1. Purpose

1. To seek approval to introduce lead councillor roles for individual Council events and projects, providing a clear liaison point between the responsible committee and officers.

2. Background

1. The Council delivers a range of events and projects through its committees and officers. Members may contribute ideas and local knowledge during their development, but there is currently no general arrangement for appointing councillors to act as a consistent liaison throughout delivery.
2. The Council has previously established project boards, special committees and working groups for particular areas of work. The proposed lead councillor scheme would provide a simpler and proportionate arrangement where a separate formal group is not required and would help to solve weaknesses currently in governance around Council events.
3. Under the proposed scheme, the committee responsible for an event or project could elect up to two lead councillors. The Town Clerk would determine whether an activity qualifies as an event

or project for which lead councillors may be appointed.

4. Lead councillors would liaise between officers and the appointing committee, enabling ideas and initiatives to be discussed, tested and refined. They would be expected to remain informed about progress and to report updates to the appointing committee alongside the relevant officers.

5. The role would not carry any executive, supervisory or decision-making authority. Lead councillors would not be entitled to issue instructions to officers, commit expenditure, vary an approved project or event, or make decisions on behalf of the Council or committee.

3. Advice

1. The scheme would give officers and committees identified points of contact for individual events and projects. This could assist continuity between committee meetings and provide an appropriate route for early member input while proposals are being developed.

2. The distinction between liaison and decision-making must remain clear. **Decisions would continue to be made by the Council, the relevant committee or an officer acting under an approved delegation.** Officers would remain accountable through the Council's management structure and would receive instructions through the Town Clerk or the appropriate line manager.

3. Appointments should be recorded by a resolution of the relevant committee. The committee should also retain the ability to remove or replace a lead councillor where appropriate, including where availability, conduct, conflicts of interest or the needs of the event or project require a change.

4. Any information shared with lead councillors would remain subject to the usual requirements relating to confidentiality, data protection and declarations of interest. Appointment as a lead councillor would not provide authority to speak publicly on behalf of the Council.

5. Officers consider that a maximum of two lead councillors for each event or project provides sufficient member involvement without creating uncertainty over roles or duplicating officer responsibilities.

4. Links to Strategic Objectives and Interim Strategic Plan

1. The proposal relates to the Interim Strategic Plan 2025-2028 theme of Improving the Council, particularly the strategic aim to improve communication, transparency and accountability.

5. Resource & Legal Implications

1. No direct additional expenditure is anticipated. The roles would involve councillor and officer time, which should be managed proportionately so that liaison arrangements do not duplicate routine reporting or place an unnecessary administrative burden on officers.

2. Committee and officer powers would remain governed by the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Scheme of Delegation and committee terms of reference. The relevant terms of reference should therefore authorise committees to elect and remove lead councillors for qualifying events and projects.

6. Specific Implications

1. **Risk Management** - The principal risk is confusion between the representative role of Members and the operational responsibilities of officers. This relates to the recorded risks concerning decision-making without authority and conflict between staff and councillors. The risk would be managed by clearly limiting the role to liaison, retaining all existing delegations and reporting lines, recording appointments formally, and confirming that lead councillors cannot issue instructions or make commitments on behalf of the Council.

7. Recommendation

1. To approve the introduction of a lead councillor scheme for Council events and projects on the basis set out in this report.
2. To authorise the committee responsible for a qualifying event or project to elect, remove or replace up to two lead councillors, subject to its terms of reference.
3. To confirm that the Town Clerk will determine whether an activity qualifies as an event or project for the purposes of the scheme.
4. To confirm that lead councillors will act solely as a liaison between officers and elected Members, will report to their appointing committee alongside officers, and will have no authority to issue instructions, incur expenditure or make decisions on behalf of the Council or committee.

8. Decision

1. To resolve to approve the recommendations as above.