Agenda Item No: 7

Meeting of:	**Democratic Services Committee**
Date of Meeting:	**Monday, 16 November 2026**
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	**No Relevant Scrutiny Committee**
Urgent Decision Procedure Used **(If yes, why)**	Not Applicable
Item Type	Part I
Report Title:	Democratic Services Committee Forward Work Programme
Portfolio Holder:	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
Strategic Leadership Team:	Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)
Lead Officer:	Head of Democratic Services

1.0 What is this report about?

1.1 In order for the Committee to have a clear direction a travel, a provisional draft Forward Work Programme has been designed for the 2026-2027 Municipal year, available in Appendix A.

1.2 Items for consideration have been categorised to allow for ease of understanding: “Cyclical” and “Other”.

1.3 This draft Forward Work Programme represents current known items, and will likely be updated on an ongoing basis, with agreement between the Chair and Head of Democratic Services, based on wider Council or National developments, alongside suggestions from Councillors and members of the public (If appropriate).

2.0 What are the Recommendations?

	Recommendations – What and How?	**Reason for Recommendation – Why?**
2.1	T H A T the Democratic Services Committee agrees the provisional Forward Work Programme for the 2026/27 Municipal year.	To allow for the Committee to have a clearly structured programme of work to support their ongoing work.

3.0 What is the background to this report?

3.1 As outlined within 14.16a of the Council's Constitution, Democratic Services Committee has a range of functions, including:
(1) To designate the Head of Democratic Services.
(2) To keep under review the provision by the Authority of adequate resources to discharge Democratic Services functions.
(3) To make reports and recommendations in respect of (2) above to Full Council at least annually.
(4) To have regard to Welsh Ministerial guidance when exercising its functions.
(5) To be responsible for overseeing the Council's approach to Member Development.

3.2 To support the Committee in enabling these functions, as the Committee meets multiple times a year, a Forward Work Programme has been drafted based upon a proposed schedule of activity, as no such document previously existed.

3.3 It is proposed that is reviewed on a regular basis by the Chair and Head of Democratic Services to allow for the Committee to have a robust schedule of activity based upon local and national updates.

4.0 What issues are there to be considered?

4.1 The Forward Work Programme has been developed to consider items as "Cyclical" and "Other".

4.2 The Forward Work Programme will be considered as a standard item at all Committee Meetings to ensure constantly kept under review.

4.3 Cyclical items are to be considered as items which are shared with the Committee with a scheduled regularity (such as six monthly or annually), including items such as Annual Reports.

4.4 Other items are agenda items which are scheduled on an ad hoc basis, and can be suggested by the Chair, Heads of Democratic Services, Committee Members, other Elected Members and residents of the Vale of Glamorgan.

4.5 Dates currently identified within the Forward Work programme are now confirmed for the upcoming municipal year following Cabinet approval on 5th February 2026 and have subsequently been published on the Council's Website.

5.0 How has evidence been used to inform the report, including the views of others?

5.1 Evidence used to inform this report including previous agendas, Member feedback and shared practice from Welsh Local Government Association and Local Government Association.

6.0 What are the next steps if the recommendations are approved?

6.1 If agreed, this will form the basis of the Committee's work activity for the forthcoming year.

7.0 How does this report support Vale 2030 and Reshaping?

7.1 The role of Democratic Services Committee is ensuring that Councillors are equipped to support in their various roles in delivering all aspects of Vale 2030.

8.0 How does this demonstrate the Five Ways of Working?

8.1 The proposed approaches taking a long-term view of the support required for Members and seeks to prevent future challenges in undertaking their role through involving them in the design of proposed future approaches, and has been developed in collaboration with a range of internal and external stakeholders.

Resources

9.0 Finance

9.1 The update outlines a range of activity to be undertaken by the Committee, with resources allocated as appropriate. Any additional activities and related expenditure identified because of any of the areas included in the above will be subject to the Council's usual finance processes.

10.0 Workforce

10.1 There are no direct impacts to the workforce as a result of this report.

11.0 Legal and Equalities

11.1 **Does an Equalities Impact Assessment need to be completed? If not, why?** An Equalities Impact Assessment has been not completed because this is an internal policy decision which does not have a direct impact upon residents within the Vale of Glamorgan.

11.2 Member Training and development is required by the Local Government Act 2000 and Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011.

11.3 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 places new duties on Local Government in relation to Member knowledge and development.

11.4 A determination within the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru (DBCC) Annual Renumeration Report 2025-2026 states that "Each authority, through its Democratic Services Committee or other appropriate committee, must ensure that all its elected members are given as much support as is necessary to enable them to fulfil their duties effectively."

Key Contacts

12.1 **Who are the primary officers to contact with any comments and/or queries on the report?**

Lead Officer: James Langridge-Thomas, Operational Manager (and Statutory Head of) Democratic Services jlangridge-thomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk 01446709457	Democratic Services Officer James Langridge-Thomas, Operational Manager (and Statutory Head of) Democratic Services jlangridge-thomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk 01446709457

Appendix

Appendix A – Draft Forward Work Programme 2026/27

Background Documents

Local Democracy and Member Development, Welsh Local Government Association

Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance for Principal Councils in Wales, Welsh Government

Appendix A

Democratic Services Committee Provisional Forward Work Programme 2026/27

Date	Cyclical Items	Other Items
Monday, 16th November 2026	1. Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru Annual Report 2027-28 2. WLGA Heads of Democratic Services Update	1. Draft Member Induction and Development Programme 2027
Monday, 1st March 2027	1. Member Annual Survey Results 2026-27	1. Member Induction and Development Programme 2027 2. Update on 21st Century Democratic Services
Monday, 12th April 2027	1. Annual Report of Head of Democratic Services 2. WLGA Heads of Democratic Services Update	