

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
25 OCTOBER 2012

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Democratic Services Committee of the current member development activities and plans for future member development events.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The provision of relevant and topical Member Development activities increases elected members awareness of topical issues and improves their skills and knowledge to enable them to be effective in the achievement of all corporate priorities.

3. Background

- 3.1 Previously, member development activities have been co-ordinated through the Member Development Group (MDG). This was an officer led group that worked in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Resources and the Member Development Champion to determine and deliver appropriate member development activities.
- 3.2 The role of the MDG was enhanced by support provided by the Elected Member Development Group (EMDG). This was a cross party group of elected members that provided direction to the MDG with suggestions for learning activities and identifying support activities that were needed to be improved.
- 3.3 The provision of training and support for the ICT systems provided by the Authority to elected members was co-ordinated by the ICT for Members Steering Group.

4. Current situation / proposal

- 4.1 With the introduction of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 the role of these groups is intended to be subsumed by the Democratic Services Committee. The Committee will be consulted in all aspects of member development and support.

4.2 The WLGA Charter for Member Support and Development

- 4.2.1 The foundation for many of the support and development elements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, were taken from the WLGA Charter for Member Support and Development. The Charter sets out the criteria and high standards of support that Local Authorities should provide to elected members.

Bridgend County Borough Council was awarded the "Charter" in 2010 which is due for renewal in 2013.

4.2.2 With the introduction of the Measure, the criteria for each of the 3 levels of the award are being reviewed to ensure that the charter reflects the above average support that is expected to be provided to elected members. It is anticipated that once the updated charter criteria is confirmed a decision will be made regarding the most appropriate level to which this Authority will renew its charter status.

4.2.3 Two officers have currently volunteered to assist the WLGA in the assessment of other Authorities applying for charter status. This Authority was previously represented by the former Member Development Champion but other volunteers to assist in this process would be welcomed.

4.3 The Member Development Strategy

4.3.1 Officers have been working on a Member Development Strategy that will bring together all aspects of member development and support during this administration including the achievement of the WLGA Charter. This document is anticipated to be presented to a subsequent meeting of the Committee for consideration.

4.4. Member Induction

4.4.1 After the Elections in May 2012 a member induction programme was put in place to assist new and returning members to be effective councillors. The induction was carried out in several stages these included:

- Phase 1 - Administration
To ensure that all elected members fulfilled the activities required and were integrated effectively into the organisation.
- Phase 2 - Essentials
To provide elected members with the essential skills and knowledge in preparation for the Annual Meeting of Council
- Phase 3 - Core Functions
This phase provided elected members with skills and knowledge to assist them to carry out roles on committees and as ward members

4.4.2 All members have been encouraged to complete Personal Development Portfolio's (PDPs) particularly those involved with the member mentoring process. The PDPs will form an integral part in recording the development of individual members, achievement of the WLGA Charter and will assist in the completion of Annual Reports.

4.4.2 Evaluation of each of the events provided as part of the induction has been carried out. Indications show that the events and activities were well received and were of benefit to those attending.

4.5 Member Mentoring

- 4.5.1 To assist newly elected members to undertake their role as councillors a Member Mentoring scheme was initiated. Nine experienced elected members participated in training to develop their mentoring skills. Newly elected members were offered the opportunity to be mentored by those that had been suitably trained. To date 80% of new members have identified suitable mentors to assist their development as councillors.
- 4.5.2 Regular meetings for mentors have been scheduled to review progress, share good practice and identify any issues that arise during the mentoring process.

4.5 Member Development Programme

- 4.5.1 The Member Development Programme details the member developments activities that have already been scheduled and potential future events that are being planned. A pragmatic approach has been taken to identify activities that will be topical, relevant and beneficial to elected members. It is anticipated that a list of proposed activities be identified for consideration by the Democratic Services Committee. It is intended that the Committee confirms the activities to be delivered during the next three month period and identifies the priority of proposed events to be delivered in the subsequent three months.
- 4.5.2 The following are the examples of member development activities that can be undertaken:
- Pre- Council briefings – A 40 minute session prior to a Council meeting that is of interest to all members.
 - Bespoke Training - These are topics that require a 2 hour session with the session being repeated to maximise the opportunity for members to attend, i.e. Budget and Business Planning.
 - One off events - These are usually consultation activities where elected members are advised or consulted on events that are happening on a regional or national basis, i.e. C4B presentation from the LHB.
 - Regional/National - The WG and the WLGA are promoting the collaboration between authorities to deliver regional and national development events i.e. a regional induction for new members being held in Swansea.
 - Individual training - training identified by individual councillors that are specific to their role or requirements i.e. ICT training.
- 4.5.3 The current member development programme is shown at Appendix 1 and the Committee is requested to consider their priority for the delivery of member development activities to be held between March and May 2013.

4.6 Annual Reports

4.6.1 In accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure, members are to be provided with the opportunity to compile and publish annual reports. Bridgend is a leading Authority in this matter and has provided the model that is likely to be adopted across Wales. Annual reports are currently being piloted in this Authority with the expectation that we will be able to publish annual reports for the 30 returning members by the end of November 2012. This would mean that we would be the first local authority in Wales to complete this requirement.

4.6.2 The annual report process will be evaluated in December 2012 and it is hoped to provide an update to the committee before training begins for all new members in February 2013.

5. **Effect upon Policy Framework& Procedure Rules**

5.1 There is no effect on the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

6. **Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 There are no equalities implications in respect of this report.

7. **Financial Implications**

7.1 All activities described in this report will be met from existing budget provisions.

8. **Recommendation**

- 8.1 That the Democratic Services Committee
- notes the content of this report.
 - determines the priorities of topics for:
 - Pre-Council Briefings
 - Member Development activities for the March-May 2013 period

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19 October 2012

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Background documents – None

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMEPre-Council Briefings

14 Nov 12	The Budget Process
12 Dec 12	Communities First or Foodbank (to be confirmed)
09 Jan 13	Presentation by Dash (to be confirmed)
06 Mar 13	Available
03 Apr 13	Available
01 May 13	Available

Suggested topics

- Performance Management
- The Adoption Service
- The Implications of Welfare Reform
- The Local Service Board
- The Environment Agency
- Police and Crime Panels/
- Police Commissioner – The Policing vision for South Wales
- Oral Health in Bridgend County Borough

Member Development Sessions

25 Oct 12	School Performance Briefing
9 & 12 Nov 12	Business and Budget Planning Workshops

Suggested Topics

- Service Overviews
- Dealing with Conflict (this topic could be used for a regional event hosted by BCBC)
- The 3rd Sector
- The analysis of statistical data
- Risk Management
- Effective media skills
- Performance Management
- Understanding Equalities and Diversity
- Annual Reports (to be held in February/March)

Events

23 Oct 12	NHS Consultation Change for the Better (C4B)
22 Nov 12	WLGA Regional Induction for New Members (Swansea)
26 Nov 12	Information Briefing MSc Public Service Management