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Bridgend County Borough Council
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr



Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB / Swyddfeydd Dinesig, Stryd yr Angel, Pen-y-bont, CF31 4WB

Legal and Regulatory Services /
Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Rheoleiddiol
Direct line / Deialu uniongyrchol: 01656 643250
Ask for / Gofynnwch am: Ruth Ronan

Our ref / Ein cyf:
Your ref / Eich cyf:

Date / Dyddiad: 12 February 2015

Dear Councillor,

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Democratic Services Committee will be held in Committee Rooms 2/3, Civic Offices Angel Street Bridgend CF31 4WB on **Thursday, 19 February 2015 at 2.00 pm.**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
To receive apologies for absence (to include reasons, where appropriate) from Members/Officers.
2. Approval of Minutes 3 - 8
To receive for approval, the minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee held on 2 October 2014.
3. Declarations of Interest
To receive declarations of personal and prejudicial interest (if any) from Members/Officers in accordance with the provisions of the Members' Code of Conduct adopted by the Council from 1 September 2008.
4. Service and Performance Updates 9 - 20
5. Democratic Diversity 21 - 32
6. Urgent Items
To consider any item(s) of business in respect of which notice has been given in accordance with Part 4 (paragraph 4) of the Council Procedure Rules and which the person presiding at the meeting is of the opinion should by reason of special circumstances be transacted at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Yours faithfully
P A Jolley

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Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services

Distribution:

Councillors:

DK Edwards
CA Green
P James
RC Jones

Councillors

JR McCarthy
M Reeves
CE Smith
JH Tildesley MBE

Councillors

E Venables
DBF White
RE Young

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2/3, CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND ON THURSDAY, 2 OCTOBER 2014 AT 2.00PM

Present:

Councillor J H Tildesley MBE - Chairperson

<u>Councillors</u>	<u>Councillors</u>	<u>Councillors</u>
C A Green	J R McCarthy	E Venables
P James	M Reeves	D B F White
R C Jones	C E Smith	R E Young

Officers:

G P Jones - Head of Democratic Services
R Ronan - Democratic Services Officer - Committees

69 CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairperson on behalf of Members passed on their best wishes for a speedy recovery to Councillor C J James.

70 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members/Officers for the reasons listed

Councillor C E Smith - Work Commitments

71 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting of the Democratic Services Committee held on the 15 May 2014 were approved as a true and accurate record.

72 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

73 SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE UPDATES

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report the purpose of which is to advise the Committee on the performance and updates in relation to the services provided to elected Members.

The table shown at paragraph 4.1.2 details the number of member referrals completed during the period 1 May 2014 to 31 August 2014. The Head of Democratic Services explained that the average five and ten day completion rates during this period were 53.91% and 78.10% respectively. This was an increase in the performance compared to the previous year and despite concerns that budget cuts and staff numbers within the Directorate would affect completion rates. The Head of Democratic Services advised that he was unsure however that this could be maintained in the long term.

A Member asked for clarification on this point as page 57 of the minutes noted that during the period of 1 May 2013 to 30 April 2014 96% of referrals had been completed.

The Head of Democratic Services advised that the figures reflected the fact that as the months progress the more complicated referrals that have not been closed remain as part of the statistics. Monitoring would continue and a report will come back to the Democratic Services Committee in February.

The Head of Democratic Services referred the Committee to paragraph 4.2.2 of the report and the pre-Council briefings that have been planned and scheduled. He explained that Corporate Management Board have indicated that these briefings would offer the most appropriate opportunity to provide elected Members with updates on the significant changes that are taking place within the Authority. The Democratic Services Committee were therefore requested to be flexible in respect of prioritising topics and the delivery dates of any pre-Council briefings.

The Head of Democratic Services requested that Members reviewed the pre-Council briefings listed in paragraphs 4.2.5 - 4.2.6 and proposed additional topics which they would like to be delivered between December 2014 and April 2015. To provide sufficient flexibility it is proposed that the Committee prioritise three topics with progress to be reviewed at its next meeting in February 2015.

A Member advised that he had been fortunate to visit the Bridgend Says End Bullying project and found it to be a very worthwhile and interesting initiative with proven successes. The Committee agreed that this topic should be prioritised and delivered as a pre-Council briefing in December.

The Committee suggested that Permanence Strategies for Looked After Children was something that should be considered by the Council as a whole not just by scrutiny especially as it was an area facing one of the biggest pressures. The Committee agreed to prioritise this topic for a pre-Council presentation in January 2015.

The Committee suggested that dementia and highways issues be scheduled as future pre-Council briefings. In respect of the topic 'Facilities at the Waterton Depot' it was asked that this be expanded to include the ongoing rationalisation of all the depots i.e. Fleet Maintenance Service and the South Wales Police.

A Member requested that the issue of Domestic Violence also be revisited sometime in 2015 as the previous training for Members was delivered in May 2013 and it was important that this topic be kept on the agenda.

The Head of Democratic Services explained that the Committee should consider how other topics initially requested to be delivered as pre-Council briefings can be provided to elected Members. This could be done in a number of ways, as a briefing note, a round robin event or as a single topic.

The Committee asked that Rotherham and its implications for Bridgend, Elective Home Education and Young Carers in the County Borough be incorporated into a Round Robin event.

The Head of Democratic Services explained that the budget workshop is currently scheduled to be provided only once and will be similar in structure to last year's session. He advised that paragraph 4.2.10 of the report lists the member development activities that have been requested.

“Show Racism the Red Card” is an all Wales project and involves top football players going into schools to talk about racism. It has been suggested by the Equalities Committee that a joint session with elected Members be arranged so that they are made aware of the issues and approaches of the project and can decide if they wish to promote this initiative within their schools. He explained that there would be an estimated cost of £300 involved in providing this session however the exact details of the i.e. venue etc. have yet to be finalised.

Members agreed that this was an important initiative especially in light of some of the issues currently prominent in the media and they were keen for elected Members to engage in any training that raised the awareness and profile of equalities and diversity.

A Member noted that the Welsh Government would be publishing a report in the near future which looks at the diversity of elected Members and suggests ways in which Councils can attract candidates from a broader demographic.

The Head of Democratic Services explained that the Council’s diversity champion had met with officers and a diversity action plan would be presented to the next Cabinet Committee - Equalities. He advised however that there would be no funding from Welsh Government to implement any recommendations and the Equalities Committee have therefore been requested to identify possible funding. The report will then be presented to the Democratic Services Committee for consideration.

The Head of Democratic Services informed the Committee that Equalities and Diversity training was in the process of being rolled out to officers. It has been requested that a couple of elected Members attend the first session of this training to assess the content and report back to the Democratic Services Committee. The Committee agreed that Councillor Tildesley MBE and Councillor P James would attend.

The Head of Democratic Services referred Members to paragraph 4.3 of the report - Improving Attendance at Member Development events. He advised that attendance at development control training for the previous 12 months had been 62%, the required level of attendance was 75%. The attendance at pre-Council briefings was 63% and Member Development Events 34%. It was understood that elected Members have a number of roles and commitments which can often conflict with attending Member Development activities, however it was imperative that attendance at events was improved as at times the number of officers in attendance was equal to the number of elected Members. In order improve the levels of attendance at Member Development activities the Committee were requested to consider the four options listed at paragraph 4.3.2 of the report.

Members agreed that with work commitments it was not always easy for them to attend Member Development events especially if these were scheduled for the middle of the day. They would therefore support option one which is to review the timings at which activities are scheduled to better reflect the needs of all elected Members. This option should also include arranging sessions for later in the day and suggestions for alternative venues to allow those Members who work to attend more frequently.

The Committee also supported improving the process for informing elected Members of activities and raising awareness of the benefits and importance of attending these sessions. Attendance data would be provided to Group Leaders in order to promote maximum attendance and opportunities to develop joint Member Development events with neighbouring authorities should be considered.

The Committee were keen not to cancel scheduled training if numbers were low as they felt that this penalised Members who did attend regularly, it was suggested that any hand outs and slides were circulated to Members who were absent.

The Head of Democratic Services explained to Members that the first sessions of WLGA leadership academy have taken place in Bridgend. A cross party group of 13 elected Members attended and Bridgend were one of only a handful of Welsh Authorities to be provided with this opportunity. There are also six elected Members who have expressed an interest in participating in the national academy which commences in January 2015, with only three places available political groups have been requested to prioritise their attendance accordingly. A consolidation session will take place at the end of the modules so that attendees can give their feedback to the Leader and Chief Executive.

The Head of Democratic Services advised the Committee that last year over 96% of elected Members completed and published their annual reports, to date Democratic Services have received approximately 50% of the reports back. Support will continue to be provided by Democratic Services staff. The Committee asked if they could be provided with a breakdown of the number of hits on the previously published annual reports, the Head of Democratic Services agreed that he would contact ICT and circulate the figures to Committee Members.

PDR templates have been circulated to elected Members for completion as part of a peer review process, it is hoped that all will be completed by 30 September 2014. To date several completed PDR's have been received by the Head of Democratic Services.

A Member asked if the PDR process was of value in relation to the amount of bureaucracy involved. The Head of Democratic Services answered that PDR's enable us to identify Members training needs and feed back into the Member Development programme of events.

The Head of Democratic Services explained to Committee that to date nine Town and Community Councils have completed the agreement for a website grant and four have submitted claims which have been paid. All Town and Community Councils have been advised to make appropriate claims before the 31 March 2015. The Committee asked if they could be provided with the list of Town and Community Councils who have submitted their claims.

The Head of Democratic Services updated the Committee on the Armed Forces Day event which was held on the 28 June, 2014. The event was considered a success and achieved the outcomes listed in paragraph 4.7.2. Feedback from the veterans support organisation was also very positive however the Head of Democratic Services advised the Committee that the Authority would be unable to provide the same level of support in future.

The Head of Democratic Services explained to Members that as part of the Agile Working Programme they are requested to note the location of staff within the Democratic Services Section. Contact details have not changed and the services they provide should not be affected.

The Head of Democratic Services advised Members that there are still only four elected Members who have expressed an interest in using social media via BCBC equipment. Without greater levels of usage the current Social Media Protocol is considered to be

sufficiently detailed and therefore it is proposed that no further elected Member activities relating to social media be pursued.

RESOLVED: That the Democratic Services noted the contents of the report, and;

- Prioritised the delivery of three topics for pre-Council briefings;
- Identified the method of providing information to all elected Members for those topics not prioritised as pre-Council briefings;
- Identified any additional member development topics for inclusion in the member development programme;
- Determined the member development topics to be delivered;
- Identified the preferred options for improving attendance at member development events.

74 MODERN.GOV UPDATE

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report to the Committee the purpose of which is to provide Members with an update on the progress made in respect of the Modern.gov committee administration system and to request its proposals in respect of how Members' related to information is provided on Bridgend County Borough Council's website.

He explained that the implementation of the system is progressing and Members have been receiving agendas and reports in the new format. The ICT Department are providing support and plans have been put in place to migrate the 40,000 plus Democratic Services documents currently held on stellent to EDRM before the end of October 2014.

The Committee received a short demonstration by the Head of Democratic Services which illustrated the elected Members, Committee and webpage functionality of the Modern.gov system.

Members asked that the option of a "find your Councillor" by post code function was looked into. They also asked that before the Members' Register of Interests was published a reminder be circulated so that all Members could ensure their details were up to date.

The Head of Democratic Services demonstrated how elected Members attendance at meetings would be displayed on the website and the available 'reasons for absence'. Members requested that the list of reasons for absence be amended if possible to include other council business and illness. They were concerned that if the minutes of meetings gave the reasons for absence this should be reflected in the attendance data. The Head of Democratic Services agreed to look into this with Modern.gov.

The Head of Democratic Services advised that the attendance at Member Development events was currently intended to be published on the intranet and only formal meeting attendance would be displayed on the external web pages. In future however this information could also be made public.

RESOLVED: That the Democratic Services Committee:

- Received a short demonstration of the Members, Committee and web page functionality of the Modern.gov system;

- Provided their views on the content and display of elected Members web pages;
- Provided direction for the ongoing development of the Modern.gov system prior to its implementation.

75 WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report to Members the purpose of which is to inform the Democratic Services Committee of the proposed items that will be considered at future meetings.

The proposed items for inclusion at the subsequent meeting of the Democratic Services Committee are shown at Appendix 1.

The Head of Democratic Services advised Members that the draft report of the Independent Remuneration Panel has just been published and the Committee requested that a report on its recommendations be added to the forward work programme.

The Head of Democratic Services informed the Committee that as part of the Estyn Inspection Members have been requested to take part in a survey on the information/data that is available to them. The Committee agreed for Members to undertake this survey.

RESOLVED: That the Democratic Services Committee considered:

- The proposed Work Programme;
- Any additional items for inclusion on the Work Programme
- Any changes required to the content and type of reports presented to the Committee.

The meeting closed at 4.15pm.

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

19 FEBRUARY 2015

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE UPDATES

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Democratic Services Committee of the performance and updates in relation to the services provided to Elected Members.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The support provided by the Democratic Services team to Elected Members at all levels assists in the achievement of all Corporate Priorities.

3. Background

- 3.1 At the previous meeting of the Democratic Services Committee a number of queries were raised regarding the provision of support to Elected Members. These queries were passed to the relevant departments and organisations for clarification and provision of information.

4. Current situation / proposal

4.1 Budget reductions and Staffing Changes

- 4.1.1 A re-structure of Legal & Regulatory Services is in the process of being completed. This has meant a number of staffing changes have been made in order to meet the requirements of the MTFS for 2015/16. Democratic Services is in the process of finalising the changes to its revised structures and members will be advised of outcome of these changes in due course.
- 4.1.2 Options to make savings include the reduction of the number of committee meetings. The Democratic Services Committee is requested to confirm that 3 meetings per year for the Committee is appropriate or confirm that it would consider reducing the number of meetings.

4.2 Member Referrals

4.2.1 The following table details the number of Member Referrals completed during the period 01 May 14 to 31 December 2014

Month	Referred	Completed	Ongoing	Percentage
May	166	166	0	100.00
June	193	193	0	100.00
July	235	234	1	99.57
August	173	172	1	99.42
September	193	193	0	100.00
October	168	166	2	98.80
November	139	138	1	99.28
December	137	132	5	96.35
Totals	1404	1394	10	Average 99.28

4.2.2 The average 5 and 10 day completion rates during this period are 48.11% and 71.88% respectively.

4.3 Member Development Programme

4.3.1 As identified in the Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy the topics for inclusion in the member development programme are anticipated to include regional or national topics.

4.3.2 Pre Council Briefings

4.3.3 The following Pre-Council briefings have been planned and scheduled:

18 Mar 15	Dementia Awareness
08 Apr 15	European Funding Briefing

4.3.4 The following topics have been requested to be provided as Pre-Council Briefings:

- Lessons learned from Rotherham and its impact for Bridgend
- Domestic Violence
- Lessons from Fukushima – a briefing from Mr Brian Jones to describe the post-disaster work and the responsibilities of the Local Authority following a Nuclear disaster.
- Dark Skies – a presentation from the Bridgend Astronomy Society to provide information in relation to concerns regarding crime and accidents associated with reductions in street lighting.

4.3.5 Members are requested to identify any additional topics for inclusion as potential pre-Council briefings and prioritise those listed above for delivery over the next few months.

4.3.6 Member Development Activities

4.3.7 At its last meeting, the Democratic Services Committee agreed that the Chairperson and the Head of Democratic Services would attend a pilot of the Equalities and Diversity training being provided to staff to determine its suitability for members. The delivery of the training was postponed but it is hoped to be rescheduled in the future.

4.3.8 The cross party group of 13 Elected Members have successfully completed the Bridgend Leadership Academy. The members attending the Academy found the sessions invaluable.

4.3.9 Three Elected Members are currently participating in the National Leadership Academy which commenced in January and will be completed by March.

4.3.10 The following Member Development events are being scheduled:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| March 15 | Young Carers |
| March 15 | Round Robin Event which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elective Home Education,• Highways & Depot Rationalisation• Procurement Portal• Data Protection• Equalities Survey |

4.3.11 The following development activities are being provided as follows:

- 23 Feb 15 Western Bays Scrutiny Seminar
The Princess Royal Theatre, Port Talbot from 09:30 -12:00
- 30 Mar 15 Treasury Management (for members of the Audit Committee)
Committee Rooms 2/3 from 10:00 – 12:00

4.3.12 The Committee is requested to identify additional topics for possible inclusion in the member development programme and to prioritise those topics as necessary.

4.2.14 At its previous meeting the Committee requested that a survey be developed to identify the volume, frequency and timings of Member Development activities. The draft survey is shown at **Appendix 1** and the Committee are requested to comment on its suitability for circulation.

4.4 Changes to the WLGA

4.4.1 Members may be aware that the Minister for Local Government announced that the WLGA's Improvement Grant will be cut from 31 March 2015. This funding has in previous years been passed onto Local Authorities to provide local improvement support and resources.

4.4.2 This cut to the improvement grant will mean that from next April:

- There will be up to 16 compulsory redundancies in the WLGA and Data Unit
- the ending of funded support directly to authorities in terms of dedicated on site capacity support; peer reviews; mentoring and peer support, self-assessment

support; scrutiny support; member and leadership development, support and training; funding of collaborative projects and posts; and corporate governance support and capacity.

- the closure of highly successful and well regarded WLGA programmes such as the Leadership Academy and the Charter for Member Development and Support.
- closure of their equalities unit and all support programmes around equalities and diversity.
- ending of the WLGA specialised support for welfare-reform
- the WLGA will no longer be able to provide extensive capacity and interim support to those authorities with corporate or service challenges or provide such resources to help authorities recover from special measures.
- the Data Unit will also be assessing what this means for performance information collection, collation and benchmarking and wider performance management support to councils and LSBs.

4.4.3 The WLGA are considering other possible funding options and Local Authorities will be advised of any progress in due course.

4.5 Annual Reports and Personal Development Reviews (PDRs)

4.5.1 Following the Annual Meeting of Council the Democratic Services Team have provided support to Councillors to assist them in completing their Elected Members Annual Reports for the period covering May 2013 – May 2014.

4.5.2 Last year over 96% of Elected Members completed and published their Annual Reports. It was hoped that with this additional support the number of completed reports would be exceeded and that all Annual reports would be published by 30 September 2014.

4.5.3 To date 31(57.4%) of Elected Members have completed and submitted their Annual Reports for publication. These have been published and are now available on the BCBC website.

4.5.4 Elected Members have also been circulated templates for the PDRs for completion as part of a peer review process. Last year 78% of members completed their PDR. Several completed PDRs have been received by the Head of Democratic Services. Members are reminded to ensure that completed copies of individual PDRs are passed to him at the earliest opportunity.

4.6 Town & Community Council (TCC) Website Grants

4.6.1 Democratic Services is currently facilitating the administration of a Welsh Government Grant of £500 to each Town and Community Council (TCC) within the County Borough to develop their web presence.

4.6.2 To date nine TCC's have completed the grant agreement and 8 have submitted claims which have been paid.

4.6.3. All TCCs have recently been reminded of the deadlines for making claims for this funding and have been encouraged to make appropriate claims before the deadline of 31 March 2015.

4.7 Agile Working and Committee Room Update

- 4.8.1 The agile working programme is progressing well. Level 2 in the Civic Offices has now been completed with many of the staff from the Sunnyside Offices re-located accordingly. Refurbishment of Level 4 of the Civic Offices is being finalised and it is anticipated that Legal & Regulatory Services (LARS) will start to return to the Civic Offices later this month. It is hoped that the return of the Democratic Services teams will be complete by early March.
- 4.8.2 Work has now commenced on Level 1 which has required the relocation of some of the Customer Contact Centre staff. This has led to the Members' Meeting Room being temporarily moved to Level 2 near to the public gallery. This meeting room can be booked as usual and access can be arranged in liaison with the Members and Mayoral Team. It is planned that this arrangement will cease in May and the rooms will be returned to their primary use.
- 4.8.3 The Parliamentary Elections are planned for 7 May 2015. The Committee Rooms have been allocated to the Elections team for postal vote opening. Meetings will be moved into the Council Chamber during this period.

4.9 Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP)

- 4.9.1 The IRP have identified that the Schedule of Remuneration used by Bridgend be used as an example of "Best Practice". This is a public document which will be used by them to inform other Councils of how the remuneration of Elected Members should be undertaken.
- 4.9.2 The Chairperson of the IRP has invited all Chairpersons of Democratic Services Committees and the Heads of Democratic Services to attend a meeting to assist in the development of their annual report. The meeting will be held on Wednesday 4th March, 10:30, Penllergaer Business Park, Swansea and key issues relating to the following will be discussed:
- Access to support, such as IT services and allowances.
 - How the care allowance is received in the Authority and what barriers might exist to prevent members claiming allowances to which they are entitled.
 - The distribution of senior salaries and whether the Authority has ever felt the need to apply for specific or additional senior salaries.
- 4.9.3 These queries have been circulated to all Elected Members. A reminder will be sent to confirm if there are any further views Members wish to be presented at the meeting with the IRP. The Committee is requested to consider these areas of discussion and if appropriate provide feedback to the Chairperson or the Head of Democratic Services to raise at that meeting.

4.10.1 Modern.gov Update

4.10.2 The implementation of Modern.gov is progressing with the site now publically available. Members will have noticed that agenda and reports are being currently circulated in 2 formats. The first is with the reports pack as a PDF attachment and the other as a link to the Modern.gov element of the BCBC or the intranet websites. The email links will take recipients to either the public website or to the intranet for those items which are exempted. The intranet provides an opportunity to allow those members and officers considering this type of information to view exempted information online.

4.10.3 It is hoped that the hyperlinks from the exiting BCBC website to the new modern.gov element of the BCBC website will be updated shortly and the use of the email with attachments will cease.

4.10.4 Work will continue to enhance the facilities of the system and is likely to include:

- Developing the report approval process
- Enhancement of the Welsh Language pages
- Introduction of e-petitions

4.11 Webcasting

4.11.1 The tender for the provision of webcasting facilities is being developed and a report will be submitted to Council following its award. The report will propose how webcasting will be taken forward over the next few years.

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. Recommendations

8.1 The Democratic Services Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report and to:

- Prioritise the delivery of topics for pre-Council briefings;
- Identify any additional member development topics for inclusion in the Member Development programme
- Approve the Member Development survey attached as Appendix 1 for circulation.

P A Jolley
Assistant Chief Executive – Legal & Regulatory Services

12 February 2015

Contact Officer: Gary Jones
Telephone: (01656) 643385

E-mail: Gary.Jones@Bridgend.gov.uk

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Civic Offices
Angel Street
Bridgend.
CF31 4WB

Background documents – None

Member Development Activities – Maximising Attendance

In order to continue to deliver effective development opportunities to members it would be helpful to re-establish their views on the most appropriate volume frequency and timings for these events to take place. This would also help to maximise attendance at these event and enhance their effectiveness

Currently we are working on the assumption that the best times for delivering these events fall into 2 general slots: 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm. We have also assumed that with the commitments of Elected Members that one paired training event per month is preferred i.e. One session repeated a week or so later.

In order confirm that these assumptions accurately reflect the requirements of members it would be appreciated if you could assist us by answering the questions overleaf and returning them to Democratic Services by ** March 2015.

We have also asked the Group Leaders to raise this issue in your group meetings to ensure that the all members are aware of the range of commitments faced by other members before submitting your completed forms.

Regards

Gary Jones

Head of Democratic Services

Name: Councillor (Please print)

1. How many training events would you prefer each month

- 1 topic
- 2 topics
- 3 topics
- Please comment if you have any alternative suggestions

2. How many sessions should be provided for each training topic:

- A single session per topic
- Paired sessions i.e. as currently provided
- A single round robin session with multiple topics
- Please comment if you have any alternative suggestions

3. Which days of the week are most acceptable to hold member development events:
(Please tick the 2 most preferred days of the week)

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday

4. Which days of the week are not acceptable to hold member development events:
(Please tick the 2 least preferred days of the week)

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday

5. Please rank from 1 to 4 (1 being your most preferred time slot and 4 being your least preferred time slot).

- 8am to 10am
- 10am to 12noon
- 2pm to 4pm
- 4pm to 6pm

Please comment if you have any alternative suggestions

6. Is the current timing for Pre-council briefings appropriate? Please rank from 1 to 4 (1 being your most preferred time slot and 4 being your least preferred time slot).

- A 45 minute briefing starting at 2.00pm
- A 30 minute briefing starting at 2:15pm
- A 30 minute briefing starting at 2:30

I am unable to attend these briefing sessions due to my work/Personal commitments and I would prefer them at (please include your preferred a day and time)

.....
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7. If you have any additional comments regarding the volume, timings and frequency of member development activities please add them below:

**Please return to 'Democratic Services' by
** March 2015**

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

19 FEBRUARY 2015

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

DEMOCRATIC DIVERSITY

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Democratic Services Committee of the action plan being developed to take forward the diversification of democracy initiated by the Welsh Government's Expert Group on Local Government and Diversity and set out in *On Balance: Diversifying Democracy in Local Government in Wales*.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 Working with the Head of Democratic Services and the Equalities and Engagement Officers will assist the Diversity Champion in the achievement of all priorities identified within the Corporate Plan and Strategic Equality Plan and enhance the representation of under-represented groups within the County Borough.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 introduced the requirement for a survey of candidates to be undertaken. The survey was carried out by Local Authorities following the Local Government Elections in 2012. The results were circulated to the Welsh Government for consideration by the Expert Group on Local Government Diversity.
- 3.2 The Expert Group analysed a survey of local councillors in Wales and set out a plan of action to encourage a greater diversity of candidates to stand for local office in 2017. On 5th March 2014 the group published its report entitled "On Balance: Diversifying Democracy in Local Government in Wales". The report outlined the actions required to increase the diversity of local councillors in Wales in respect of age, gender, disability and ethnicity.
- 3.3 On 27 May 2014 Cabinet appointed Councillor H J Townsend as the Diversity Champion. Councillor Townsend has met with Welsh Government representatives and other Diversity Champions to discuss plans for progressing the aims of the "On Balance" report.
- 3.4 On 16 October 2014 the Cabinet Committee – Equalities received a report providing an outline of the action plan developed in order to meet the intention to improve the diversity of local councillors in Wales.

4. Current situation / proposal.

- 4.1 The “On Balance” report identified a number of recommendations for a variety of bodies including the Welsh Government, political parties, One Voice Wales and Local Authorities. The intention is to ensure that the people who make decisions on our behalf are in tune with their local communities and reasonably reflect the diversity of the people that they represent. A full list of the Expert Panel recommendations can be seen at **Appendix 1**.
- 4.2 There are several recommendations that are likely to require involvement of local Authorities and Elected Members in particular. These include:
- The Welsh Government, local government, the WLGA and One Voice Wales to explain the purpose of the survey and its importance. This should include a highlight report from the first survey so that recipients of the questionnaire can better appreciate its purpose.
 - Local Authorities should be required to examine the data for their own area and develop strategies aimed at improving diversity at future elections.
 - Every councillor should be encouraged to mentor a potential successor candidate for their seat.
 - Local Authorities should conduct exit interviews with councillors standing down at an election, to assess the reasons for doing so. The WLGA should collect anonymised data and publish a report after each.
 - Local Authorities should encourage secondary schools, as part of the “Active Citizenship” goal in the Personal and Social Education Framework, to arrange for local councillors to speak to school students about their role. Councillors from under-represented groups should be encouraged to participate in this.
 - Local Authorities which do not already broadcast their meetings should commence doing so, as well as making full use of other social media outlets to engage with a wider public.
- 4.3 Discussions have been held with the Head of Democratic Services and the Equalities and Engagement Officer to determine possible courses of action which could facilitate these aims.
- 4.4 An initial action plan has been developed and is shown at **Appendix 2**. Key actions will include:
- the collection and analysis of current diversity information
 - the recruitment of suitable Elected Member mentors
 - identifying appropriate mentees to shadow elected members
 - identifying members to participate in secondary school briefings
- 4.5 Further work will be undertaken to develop the action plan and the Diversity Strategy to meet the requirements of the “On Balance” report and improve the Democratic Diversity within the County Borough.

4.7 It is anticipated that a Democratic Diversity event will be held in October 2015 as part of Local Democracy Week to showcase the work that has been undertaken and promote the Diversity Strategy.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

5.1 The report has no direct effect upon the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 No Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out as this report provides the Committee with information that will positively assist in delivering equality across the County Borough.

7. Financial Implications.

7.1 The Authority has not received any funding from the Welsh Government to progress the recommendations of the “On Balance” report, and is currently doing so within existing budgets. Following consideration of this report and confirmation of the proposed plans, more detailed costings will be drawn up and a request for additional funding will be made to the Welsh Government. Should no additional funding be forthcoming from Welsh Government, the action plan will be reviewed in order to progress the aims of the “On Balance” report within available funding.

8. Recommendation.

8.1 That the Democratic Services Committee notes the content of this report.

PA Jolley

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Background documents

None were used in the production of this report

EXPERT GROUP'S ACTION PLAN AND TIMETABLE

Recommendation	Timing
1. The Welsh Government, local government, the WLGA and One Voice Wales to explain the purpose of the survey and its importance. This should include a highlight report from the first survey so that recipients of the questionnaire can better appreciate its purpose.	Material to be produced in time for distribution with the survey for candidates at the 2017 elections.
2. The Welsh Government should ensure that the next survey questionnaire can be completed and returned on-line.	Design and administrative work will need to be completed before 2017 elections.
3. The surveys of candidates at county and community levels should be separated and conducted as two distinct surveys.	As above
4. The Welsh Government should establish a methodology which allows the survey questionnaires to be distributed at the time of handling nomination papers.	Will need to be addressed during 2015/16 to give time for agreement with electoral administrators and possibly amend Measure provisions.
5. The Welsh Government should agree with local government that a single research provider be employed to conduct the survey on behalf of local authorities at the next elections.	To be agreed at least one year before the next elections.
6. The Welsh Government should compare the question list with those used for surveys of councillors in other parts of the UK and should amend to bring about better comparability.	To be completed in 2015 in case of need to amend Measure.
7. The Welsh Government should commission research to enhance the next survey aimed at obtaining qualitative data from a sample of respondents as well as interviewing a sample of potential candidates who had subsequently decided not to stand.	Decision required by May 2016 in order for procurement exercise to take place.
8. Local authorities should be required to examine the data for their own area and develop strategies aimed at improving diversity at future elections.	Can proceed immediately and again after each election
9. Local authorities should conduct exit interviews with councillors standing down at an election, to assess the reasons for doing so. The WLGA should collect anonymised data and publish a report after each	To be conducted in 2016/17 once decisions on candidacy had been made. Report produced in

Recommendation	Timing
	2017
10. Political parties and local government itself should encourage successful female councillors to act as mentors, engaging with appropriate local networks.	Can be implemented immediately.
11. Each of the major political parties should be encouraged to develop strategies which will result at the next local elections in female members being nominated as candidates in at least 40% of those seats considered winnable by the party concerned.	To be implemented in good time for the commencement of candidate selection for 2017.
12. Leaders of the main political parties should make a public commitment in favour of this target.	To be considered within their responses to the Report.
13. The Welsh Government should collaborate with the WLGA, equalities groups and, if appropriate, the Assembly's Presiding Officer, to establish a shadowing/mentoring scheme in the period two years prior to the next local elections. This could be widened to include town and community councils, in cooperation with One Voice Wales.	Programme would operate in 2015 and 2016. Preparatory
14. Local authorities should encourage secondary schools, as part of the "Active Citizenship" goal in the Personal and Social Education Framework, to arrange for local councillors to speak to school students about their role. Councillors from under-represented groups should be encouraged to participate in this.	To be agreed at each local authority area
15. Community councils should take advantage of the provisions in the Measure to co-opt youth "councillors" in a non-voting role and county councils should consider the merits of adopting similar procedures, including the creation of "shadow" Youth Cabinets. There should be a campaign involving One Voice Wales and other interested parties to promote town and community councils to increase public awareness of their role and as a potential entry road into political life for under-represented groups.	Should be ongoing campaign following publication of Report.
16. Welsh Government should consider the evaluation of the Access to Elected Office project operated in English elections and consider operating a similar scheme for the next local elections.	To follow publication of evaluation by UK Government Equalities Office. Scheme would need to be put in place at least a year before elections.

Recommendation	Timing
17. “Member Champions” in each council should be encouraged to play an external role in encouraging greater participation in local government.	For each local authority to pursue following publication of report.
18. Every councillor should be encouraged to mentor a potential successor candidate for their seat.	For each local authority to pursue following publication of report.
19. Publicity and educational campaign, involving Welsh Government, local government and relevant equalities and civic partners, to ensure that information is received by the public about local government and that the idea of becoming active in local government is carried into the community	Campaign to focus on 2015/16, in order to arouse interest for 2017 elections.
20. On-going campaign, linked to 18 above, to ensure that the need to improve diversity in local government remains in the public eye and to maintain contact with networks of under-represented groups. This should include publicity for role models, targeted to reach appropriate audiences.	To commence in second half 2014 and be ongoing.
21. This campaign should also include approaches to employers to facilitate council membership by their employees. Public sector employers, including the Welsh Government, should become exemplars in facilitating their employees becoming and serving as councillors.	Ongoing campaign to commence in second half of 2014.
22. Private sector organisations, particularly those benefitting from Welsh Government procurement, should be encouraged to support staff wishing to serve as councillors, as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility programmes. The CBI should be asked to support this aim.	As above.
23. Local authorities which do not already broadcast their meetings should commence doing so, as well as making full use of other social media outlets to engage with a wider public.	For each local authority to to consider following publication of Report.
24. Welsh Government should evaluate the effectiveness of reforms introduced through the Measure to see how effective they have been in achieving the aims of the Expert Panel.	Evaluation of Measure to be conducted during 2014/15

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL DEMOCRATIC DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

	<i>Action</i>	<i>Target Date</i>	<i>HDS</i>	<i>CC-E</i>	<i>DC</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Diversity Report to Cabinet Committee Equalities covering							
	Initial Plans for recruiting/training Diversity Member Mentors Initial Plans for the recruitment of Diversity Mentees “Be a councillor event(s)” delivered in the community Initial Plans for to encourage TCC’s to co-opt young people with non-voting rights Initial plans for Democracy briefings by 3 councillors to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen • Porthcawl Comprehensive School • Pencoed Comprehensive School • Brynteg Comprehensive School • Bryntirion Comprehensive School • Cynffig Comprehensive School • Maesteg Comprehensive School • YGG Llangynwyd • Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School • Bridgend College Initial Plans for Local Democracy Week Event (12-16 October 2015 tbc)	16 Oct 14					Completed 16 Oct 2014
1.0	Gather appropriate Local Diversity Data						
1.1	Gather/Collate Democratic Diversity data from	31 Mar 15					Bridgend data is available on

	Action	Target Date	HDS	CC-E	DC	Status	Notes
	BCBC/TCC/Population in respect of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Gender • Ethnicity • Disability • Sexuality • Other 						the Bridgend Local Service Board website http://www.bridgendlsb.org.uk/bridgend-data-bank/ward-profiles.aspx Further work needs to be undertaken to determine how this data compares with the make-up of all Councils within the Bridgend County Borough area. TCC Champions to assist
1.2	Liaison with Political groups regarding plans and to gain support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour • Independent Alliance • Independent Annibynwr • Plaid Cymru 	30 Jan 15					Ongoing discussions
1.3	Identify Member Champions for diversity from each Town and Community Council	14 Mar 15					Recommendation 17
1.4	Analyse survey data and develop appropriate strategies	01 May 15					Recommendation 8
1.5	Develop the process for Exit interviews at BCBC/TCC levels	01 May 15					Recommendation 9 HDS to contact WLGA for sample Exit interview
1.6	Develop a Diversity Strategy	30 Jun 15					Consult with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMB

	Action	Target Date	HDS	CC-E	DC	Status	Notes
							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minority Groups • Political Parties/Groups • Feedback to Diversity Champions/WG/WLGA • Report to Council Sep 2015 • Launch at Local Democracy Week 2015
2.0	Assist in developing the WG Diversity Survey						
2.1	Assist in the promotion for the County Borough Councillor Survey						Recommendation 1 As directed by WG/WLGA
2.2	Assist in the promotion for the Town & Community Councillor survey						Recommendation 1 As directed by WG/WLGA
2.3	Assist in the procurement of a single source survey provider						Recommendation 1 As directed by WG/WLGA
3.0	Every councillor should be encouraged to mentor a potential successor candidate for their seat.						Recommendation 18
3.1	Recruit Diversity Member Mentors	30 Jan 15					
3.2	Consider existing Member Mentors	30 Jan 15					
3.3	WLGA to provide training	31 Mar 15					
3.4	Recruit Diversity Mentees						
3.41	Visit to key minority groups including Muslim Community Deaf Pact Group Women's Groups CF/BLG Diversity Champions re Youth Council;s						

	Action	Target Date	HDS	CC-E	DC	Status	Notes
3.42	Facebook campaign						
3.43	Twitter campaign						
3.5	“Be a Councillor” event in the community						
3.5.1	Identify dates and Venues						Subject to confirmation of Budget and resources
3.5.2	Develop relevant content/materials						
3.5.3	Develop outline training plans for mentees						
3.5.4	Deliver events and suitable information / materiel						
4.0	Active Democracy briefings to schools						Recommendation 14
4.1	Identify 3 Members to deliver briefings						
4.2	WG/WLGA to provide briefing materiel						
4.3	WG/WLGA to deliver training to Members						
4.4	Deliver plans to visit schools	01 Apr 15					
4.5	Rehearse Briefings for schools						
4.6	Deliver briefing to secondary schools	01 Apr 15					
5.0	Initial Plans for to encourage TCC’s to co-opt young people with non-voting rights						Recommendation 15
5.1	Liaise with Youth Council	31 Jan 15					
5.2	Draft Report to TCC Forum	30 Mar 15					
5.3	Letters to each TCC requesting support	20 Feb 15					
5.4	Confirm process for appointment of young people co-optees	20 Mar 15					
5.5	Provide briefings to TCCs	30 Mar 15					

	<i>Action</i>	<i>Target Date</i>	<i>HDS</i>	<i>CC-E</i>	<i>DC</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Notes</i>
6.0	Webcasting of Council meetings						Recommendation 15
	Upgrade Council Chamber	31 Dec 14					Completed 11 Nov 2014
	Procure webcasting facilities	01 Mar 15					
	Implement webcasting	31 Mar 15					
7.0	Local Democracy Week event 2015	12-16 Oct15					

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