

# Public Document Pack

## Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr

### Bridgend County Borough Council



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

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Rhowch wybod i ni os mai Cymraeg yw eich  
dewis iaith.*

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let us know if your language choice is Welsh.*



#### **Cyfarwyddiaeth y Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive's Directorate**

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Gofynnwch am / Ask for: Michael Pitman

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Eich cyf / Your ref:

**Dyddiad/Date:** Friday, 6 March 2020

Dear Councillor,

#### **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Democratic Services Committee will be held in the Committee Rooms 2/3, Civic Offices Angel Street Bridgend CF31 4WB on **Thursday, 12 March 2020 at 10:00**.

#### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence  
To receive apologies for absence from Members.
2. 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.
3. Approval of Minutes 3 - 8  
To receive for approval, the minutes of the 17/10/2019
4. Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill 9 - 12
5. Supplementary Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales 2020-2021 13 - 20
6. Personal Safety For Councillors 21 - 28
7. Member Referrals 29 - 32
8. Member Development Programme 33 - 38
9. Webcasting of Council, Cabinet and Committee Meetings 39 - 44
10. 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.

**By receiving this Agenda Pack electronically you will save the Authority approx. £0.88 in printing costs**

Yours faithfully

**K Watson**

Chief Officer, Legal, HR & Regulatory Services

Councillors:

S Aspey  
RM Granville  
DG Howells  
RM James

Councillors

KL Rowlands  
B Sedgebeer  
SG Smith  
G Thomas

Councillors

E Venables  
SR Vidal  
A Williams

## DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - THURSDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2019

### MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 2/3, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2019 AT 10:00

#### Present

Councillor DG Howells – Chairperson

S Aspey  
B Sedgebeer

RM Granville  
SG Smith

DG Howells

RM James

#### Apologies for Absence

KL Rowlands, G Thomas, E Venables, SR Vidal and A Williams

#### Officers:

Michael Pitman  
Andrew Rees

Business Administrative Apprentice  
Democratic Services Manager

#### 168. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

RESOLVED: That in the absence of Cllr E Venables, the committee elected Cllr G Howells as the Chairperson for this meeting.

(Cllr DG Howells in the Chair)

#### 169. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

#### 170. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting of the 06/06/2019 be approved as a true and accurate record.

#### 171. REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Democratic Services Manager requested that with the permission of the Chairperson that this item be considered lastly as the Monitoring Officer was required at another meeting but endeavoured to attend. The Chairperson agreed to consider the item lastly.

The Democratic Services Manager presented a report which outlined the findings of the Constitution Working Group which had reviewed elements of the Constitution.

He explained that the Monitoring Officer received a request from an Elected Member for a review of the Constitution. In accordance with Article 15 of the constitution the Monitoring Officer will monitor and review the operation of the Constitution to ensure that the aims and principles of the Constitution are given full effect. Any changes will need the approval of Council based on the recommendations of the Monitoring Officer.

The review of the Constitution specifically requested the following to be considered:

- 1) The time period for questions and motions be re-instated at 5 days, now that suitable resources are in place to allow timely translation to Welsh;

- 2) That following the presentations and announcements by Cabinet members, the Leader, and Chief Executive, Members be allowed to ask non tabled questions for a period of 15 minutes;
- 3) That the three largest opposition groups, be given 3 minutes (taken from Development Control Committee 3-minute rule) to make announcements or presentations to Council;
- 4) The timing of Council meetings

The following topics were discussed at the meetings at the Constitution Working Group:

- Time period for questions and motions
- Announcements at Meetings of Council
- Replies to Written Questions
- Announcements by the 3 Largest Opposition Group Leaders
- Timing of Council Meetings
- Call-in Process
- Period of Notice for the Publication of the Cabinet Decision Notice and Call-in
- Time Period for Holding an Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Members Calling in a Decision

The Committee considered the following recommendations made by the Constitution Working Group.

That the time period for the submission of questions and motions remain at 10 clear working days. That announcements made at Council, recommended that an amendment be made to the Constitution to re-title the Leader's Report to that of Leader's Announcements and that the current announcements made by the Cabinet be shortened. That all Members of Council receive replies to written questions 24 hours prior to the meeting of Council where practicable. The reply will be recorded in the minutes of that meeting of Council. That announcements by Opposition Group Leaders could give rise to political statements being made and did not wish to pursue announcements being made by the Leaders of the 3 largest Opposition Groups. That as the electronic vote taken on the conclusion of the meeting of Council on 24 July 2019 was lost, the holding of evening meetings be not explored further until the next administration. The period of notice after publication of a decision be extended from the current 3 clear working days to 5 clear working days in order to have greater transparency and for backbench Members to have a greater opportunity to call-in a decision. The time period for holding an Overview and Scrutiny Committee remains at within 5 clear working days. That any Member including a Chairperson who calls-in a decision is excluded from the decision making at that Committee meeting, but would be invited to give evidence to the Committee in support of the Call-in request.

A Member of the Committee considered that supplementary questions were often lengthy and occasionally did not relate to the original question. The Democratic Services Manager explained that if a question was deemed inappropriate and not relating to the original question, the Monitoring Officer and Mayor would rule the question out of order.

A Member asked if the above could be reinforced to Members to ensure that questions and supplementary questions are short and concise and related to the subject matter. The Democratic Services Manager confirmed he would feed this back to the Monitoring Officer.

The Committee requested that in relation to paragraph 4.7.2 of the report that a request be made to Council that future meetings of the Democratic Services Committee be held at 4.00pm.

- RESOLVED:
1. Noted the research and work undertaken by the Working Group and thanked the Monitoring Officer, Democratic Services Manager and Business Apprentice for their work in conducting research and providing support to the Constitution Working Group;
  2. Noted the recommendations of the Working Group;
  3. That the Committee approved the recommendations of the Constitution Working Group for recommendation to Council with the addition of the following:
    - (i) in relation to paragraph 4.3.9 of the report, added that there be clearer policing of supplementary questions to ensure they are relevant to the original question and that they short and concise;
    - (ii) in relation to paragraph 4.7.2 of the report, that a request be made to hold future meetings of the Democratic Services Committee at 4.00pm.

172. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Democratic Services Manager presented a report which updated the Democratic Services Committee on the delivery of the Council's Member Training and Development Programme and related activities. He requested the Committee to identify topics for inclusion on the Member Development Programme and Pre Council Briefings.

The Democratic Services Manager explained the member development training, Development Control Committee Training and Pre Council Briefing Sessions that had been provided since 6<sup>th</sup> June 2019 which were listed at 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 of the report.

He provided the future schedule of Pre Council Briefing Sessions to date, these included:

- 23 October 2019: Strategic Development Plan
- 20 November 2019: Local Area Energy Strategy and Smart Energy Plan
- 18 December 2019: New Curriculum Changes
- 11 March 2020: Education Outcomes
- Welfare & Benefits System – TBC

He advised that January/February had been intentionally left free as this was the time of the year that the budget was considered. He explained that there had been some ambiguity with the schedule of this so had not planned any briefing sessions for the time being.

The Democratic Services Managed outlined the scheduled Development Control Committee Training Sessions which were detailed at section 4.5 of the report.

He also outlined the future proposed Member Training sessions which included:

- 31 October 2019 – Managing Abusive and Aggressive Telephone Calls, Conflict Management & Personal Safety Awareness
- Using Bridgemaps
- Scrutiny Questioning Skills – TBC

- Scrutiny Charing Skills – TBC

The Democratic Services Manager advised that the scheduled training for the 31<sup>st</sup> October would be delivered twice for that day, with one session being delivered in the morning and a repeat session in the afternoon. This was to ensure that Members who may have struggled to make a morning session could attend an afternoon session, and vice-versa.

The Democratic Services Manager informed the committee of the E-Learning service that had been made available to them via the Learning Pool. He advised that work had been undertaken through the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Heads of Democratic Services / Member Support Officer Network to develop national E-learning modules to be available on the All Wales Academy. Further details were provided at section 4.7 of the report.

A Member asked for clarification regarding the proposed Welfare & Benefits System training on the content of this training and what Councillors would be expected to do as a result of it. The Democratic Services Manager explained that the training would be purely for knowledge to be able to signpost a constituent in the right direction. He stressed that Councillors would not be expected to give advice on benefits but should have greater knowledge in the services available so that constituents could be advised on where to seek further information.

The Democratic Services Manager explained that he had been in contact with the Benefits and Financial Assessments Manager who agreed that a fact sheet and list of agencies would be beneficial and could be provided at a later date.

**RESOLVED:** That the Democratic Services Committee:

1. Noted the contents of the report
2. Agreed to wait for recommendations from Development Control Committee on further Pre Council Briefings and Member Development Training Sessions
3. That members identify any additional topics for pre-Council briefings to the Head of Democratic Services;
4. That members identify any additional Member Development topics for inclusion in the Member Development Programme to the Head of Democratic Services;
5. That members identify any additional e-learning topics for inclusion in the Member Development Programme to the Head of Democratic Services;
6. That the proposed pre-Council Briefing on the Welfare & Benefits System be instead taken forward with Members receiving a factsheet on the types of benefit that are available.

173. **WEBCASTING OF COUNCIL, CABINET AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The Democratic Services Manager presented a report which provided the committee with an update on arrangements for the webcasting of Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings and asked the Democratic Services Committee to provide their views on which meetings should be webcast.

He advised the Committee on the current webcasting arrangements set out in section 4.2 of the report.

The Democratic Services Manager advised Members that Officers would look at the feasibility during the next contract period for exploring alternative solutions for webcasting, namely through Skype and YouTube. Officers from Democratic and the ICT Department had visited Monmouthshire Council to view their solutions for webcasting

**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - THURSDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2019**

meetings. He advised that this option was being considered as there could be a cost saving associated with it.

He provided the statistics of the webcasted meetings for 2018/19 which were listed below:

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting Name</b>	<b>Live Views</b>	<b>On Demand Views</b>	<b>Total Views</b>
1	30-Aug-18	Development Control Committee	38	51	99
2	17-Sep-18	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 3	11	131	142
3	16-Oct-18	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1	0	42	42
4	18-Oct-18	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2	22	47	69
5	18-Dec-18	Cabinet	27	31	58
6	03-Jan-19	Development Control Committee	10	28	38
7	14-Feb-19	Development Control Committee	70	72	142
8	25-Feb-19	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 3	6	10	16
9	18-Mar-19	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 3	10	32	42
10	19-Mar-19	Development Control Committee	55	120	175
<b>Average Views</b>			<b>25</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Total Views</b>			<b>249</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>823</b>

The Democratic Services Manager listed the following meetings that had been webcast for the year 2019/20 so far, which also included the breakdown of views:

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting Name</b>	<b>Live Views</b>	<b>On Demand Views</b>	<b>Total Views</b>
1	29-Apr-19	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1	3	49	52
2	09-May-19	Development Control Committee	6	29	35
3	04-Jun-19	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1	42	64	106
4	03-Jul-19	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2	4	31	35
5	05-Sep-19	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 3	15	52	62
<b>Average Views</b>			<b>14</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Total Views</b>			<b>74</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>309</b>

The Democratic Services Manager advised the committee of the proposed meetings for webcasting until March 2020:

- Development Control Committee – 5 December 2019
- Cabinet – 17 December 2019
- Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee TBC - (Budget)

He advised that October 2019 and November 2019 were intentionally left free as new HD cameras were scheduled to be installed early November to replace the current cameras that were in place in the Council Chamber.

A Member asked who decides what meetings are webcast. The Democratic Services Manager explained that meetings are primarily chosen by the Democratic Services Team on the basis that the item or items on that meeting's agenda are of possible interest to the public.

He explained that Members were always welcomed to put their views in to the Democratic Services Team on meetings they wish to be webcasted and these would be considered.

A Member stated that a change in the term used to describe webcasting may make it easier for members of the public to locate the link for recorded meetings on the website. She explained that 'webcasting' does not really explain what it is we do, or may not be understood to an older audience. She added that changing the name to 'view a Council meeting' or something similar may help the general public understand more easily. The Democratic Services Manager agreed to progress this issue.

RESOLVED: That the Democratic Services Committee:

1. Noted the update on arrangements for the webcasting of Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings as detailed in section 4 of the report.
2. Commented on the list of meetings that are proposed as detailed in section 4.4.4 of the report and provided its views on what future meetings should be webcast.
3. Requested that the Head of Democratic Services explore alternative solutions for the webcasting of meetings which are most cost effective and to make them more accessible to the public.

174. URGENT ITEMS

None



## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

12 MARCH 2020

#### REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

##### LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ELECTIONS (WALES) BILL

###### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide Members with the key proposals in the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill.

###### 2. Connection to Corporate Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate objectives / corporate priority/priorities:

Smarter use of resources – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

###### 3. Background

- 3.1 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill was presented in November 2019 to the National Assembly for Wales. It will reform and strengthen local government and improve electoral arrangements.

###### 4. Current situation / proposal

- 4.1 The key proposals in the Bill are outlined at paragraphs 4.2 to 4.9 for information.

###### 4.2 Local Government Electoral Arrangements

- 4.2.1 The voting age for local government elections will be lowered from 18 to 16 and the right to stand and vote in local government elections will be extended to qualifying foreign citizens resident in Wales.

- 4.2.2 Local authorities and community councils will be put on a permanent five year electoral cycle, powers will be given to the Welsh Government to establish an all Wales digital electoral register and pilots of new ways to hold local elections will be allowed (i.e. all postal voting, new voting hours, electronic voting, electronic counting).

###### 4.3 Disqualification criteria to stand as a councillor

- 4.3.1 People who have been declared bankrupt, are registered sex offenders, have served a prison sentence (suspended or not) of 3 months or more will be disqualified.

4.3.2 Council staff will be allowed to stand in elections for their employer local authority but will be required to resign if elected.

#### 4.4 Governance Arrangements

4.4.1 The Bill will introduce a general power of competence for local authorities and eligible community councils, giving the power to act in their respective community's best interests, generate efficiencies and secure value for money.

4.4.2 Local authorities will still need to appoint a Chief Executive but must publish arrangements for managing their performance. The Bill introduces job sharing for Cabinet level positions and places a requirement on councils to have provision for maternity leave for councillors.

4.4.3 Standards Committees will be required to publish an Annual Report, while community councils will need to draft and publish a training plan for councillors and staff.

#### 4.5 Mergers

4.5.1 There will be provision for regional working by more than one local authority through corporate joint committees. It also gives the Welsh Government the power to intervene or order one local authority to assist another one if it is believed a council is not meeting performance requirements (based on self-assessment and peer review).

4.5.2 Any mergers will be wholly voluntary. Two or more local authorities can apply to Welsh Government with a merger application. The Bill sets out the formal public consultation process and regulations required to create a merged local authority. Councils can also request to be abolished.

#### 4.6 Public engagement

4.6.1 Local authorities will be required to publish a public participation strategy. There will also be a duty placed on local authorities to encourage local people to participate in local government.

4.6.2 Local authorities will need to introduce public petition schemes, webcast all public meetings (subject to regulations) and make arrangements for remote attendance by councillors. These provisions will not apply to community councils.

4.6.3 Community Councils will be required to allow members of the public to make representations during meetings and publish annual reports at the end of each financial year.

#### 4.7 Two Voting Systems

4.7.1 The Bill proposes a change to allow Councils to choose their own voting system in which elections can be contested, either the existing first past the post system or single transferable vote system. Councils would need a majority of two thirds to

change the voting system, the system could not be changed back for the period of two ordinary elections.

#### **4.8 Governance and Audit Committees**

4.8.1 The Bill proposes changes to reform Audit Committees, renaming it the Governance and Audit Committee.

4.8.2 The Bill also proposes that one third of the Committee must be lay members and also that the Chairperson must be a lay member.

#### **4.9 Duty on principal councils to publish official addresses**

4.9.1 The Bill proposes a duty on Councils to publish an electronic and postal address where councillors can be contacted by their electorate to ensure councillors are freely accessible to local people. The duty however allows these contact details to be a general council address, rather than councillors' personal addresses, which is an approach this Council has already adopted on request from individual Members.

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

5.1 None.

### **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 None.

### **7. Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Implications**

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. As the report is for noting only, it is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

### **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 It is unclear at this stage how much the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill will cost the Authority.

8.2 The total cost of the Bill's provision is expected to be around £17.2 million spread over 10 years. Most of this will fall on Welsh Government, with around £3 million falling on local government.

### **9. Recommendation**

9.1 Members are recommended to note the report.

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Democratic Services Manager

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**Background Documents**  
None

## BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

12 MARCH 2020

#### REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

#### SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES 2020-2021

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Democratic Services Committee of a Draft Supplementary Report issued by the Panel relating to the reimbursement of Costs of Care which is the subject of consultation.

#### 2. Connection to corporate improvement objectives /other corporate priorities

- 2.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales has acknowledged the need to ensure that financial barriers do not stand in the way of attracting more people to serve in local government. The active participation of all Members contributes to all the following Corporate Priorities.

1. **Supporting a successful economy** – taking steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all people in the county.
2. **Helping people to be more self-reliant** – taking early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.
3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 The Local Authorities (Allowances for Members) (Wales) Regulations 2007 provided for the establishment of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.
- 3.2 In addition to the publication by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales of its Annual Report for 2020-21, which is being reported to Council on 11 March 2020, the Panel has also issued a draft supplementary report relating to the Reimbursement of Costs of Care.

#### 4. Current Situation / Proposal

- 4.1 Draft Supplementary Report on the Reimbursement of the Costs of Care

- 4.1.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales has issued a draft supplementary report relating to the Reimbursement of Costs of Care. The Panel has endeavoured to find ways to increase the take up of the financial support for members of councils who have care responsibilities or personal needs. The Panel believe that this provision is an important factor to increase and sustain diversity of membership of local authorities.
- 4.1.2 The Panel proposes a set of principles that should be adopted by all relevant authorities and has issued a consultation document requesting that responses be submitted to the Panel by 9 April 2020, prior to the publication of the final Report. The draft supplementary report sets out the Panel's proposals for consultation which is attached at **Appendix 1** and sets out the minimum authorities should do and how this could be done with regard to the Reimbursement of the Costs of Care. The purpose of the proposal is to enable all members and co-opted members of relevant authorities to carry out their duties effectively.

## **5. Effect Upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules**

- 5.1 There is currently no impact of the Policy Framework or Procedure Rules.

## **6. Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 6.1 This report is supportive of the equalities implications for Elected Members by including care, family and other allowances.

## **7. Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Implications**

- 7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of wellbeing goals/objectives as a result of this report

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The budget set for the remuneration of Elected Members in 2020-21 is £1,152,930. The additional cost of care will be met from within the existing budget.

## **9. Recommendations**

- 9.1 The Committee is requested to consider the set of principles for the Reimbursement of the Costs of Care and respond accordingly to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Draft Supplementary Report by the deadline of 9 April 2020.

**Head of Democratic Services**  
**4 March 2020**

**Contact Officer:** Andrew Rees  
Democratic Services Manager

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Bridgend  
CF31 4WB

**Telephone:** 01656 643147

**E-mail:** [Andrew.rees@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.rees@bridgend.gov.uk)

**Background documents:** None

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# Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales

## Draft Supplementary Report

The Principles relating to the Reimbursement  
of Costs of Care

February 2020

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.  
This document is also available in Welsh.

## **Draft Supplementary Report**

### **The Principles in respect of the Reimbursement of Costs of Care (RoCoC)**

#### **Introduction**

The Panel's core principles have been a fundamental feature of its work since it was established and are contained in each Annual Report. These include:

#### **Remuneration**

1.3 The Framework provides for payment to members of relevant authorities who carry a responsibility for serving their communities. The level of payment should not act as a barrier to taking up or continuing in post. There should be no requirement that resources necessary to enable the discharge of duties are funded from the payment. The Framework provides additional payments for those who are given greater levels of responsibility.

#### **Diversity**

1.4 Democracy is strengthened when the membership of relevant authorities adequately reflects the demographic and cultural make-up of the communities such authorities serve. The Panel will always take in to account the contribution its Framework can make in encouraging the participation of those who are significantly under-represented at local authority level.

The provision of financial support for members with care responsibilities or personal needs is an important factor in improving and sustaining the diversity of membership. It is essential that there is clarity in the availability of and the access to this support. We therefore propose to supplement our core principles with additions specifically relating to the costs of care. This draft Supplementary Report sets out our proposals for consultation.

#### **The purpose is:**

To enable all members and co-opted members of relevant authorities to carry out their duties effectively

#### **The Relevant Authorities are:**

22 Local Authorities, 735 Town and Community Councils, 3 National Park and 3 Fire and Rescue Authorities

The Minimum Authorities should do		How this could be done
1 Be clear who it is for	<p>1.1 Members with primary caring responsibilities for a child or adult and or personal support needs where these are not covered by statutory or other provision.</p> <p>1.2 For personal support. This might also include a short term or recent condition not covered by the Equality Act 2010, access to work, Personal Payments, insurance or other provision.</p>	Democratic Services Committees and or Staff to review members' needs annually and when circumstances change
2 Raise Awareness	2.1 Ensure potential candidates, candidates and current members are aware that RoCoC is available to them should their current or future circumstances require.	Ensure clear and easily found information is available on website and in election and appointment materials, at Shadowing and at induction and in the members' "handbook". Signpost to IRPW <a href="#">Payments to Councillors</a> leaflets.
3 Promote a Positive Culture	3.1 Ensure all members understand the reason for RoCoC and support and encourage others to claim where needed.	Encouragement within and across all parties of Relevant Authorities to support members to claim. Agree not to advertise or make public individual decisions not to claim.
4 Set out the approved duties for which RoCoC can be claimed	<p>4.1 <b>Meetings</b> – formal (those called by the Authority) and those necessary to members' work (to deal with constituency but not party issues) and personal development (training, and appraisals.)</p> <p>4.2 <b>Travel</b> – in connection with meetings.</p> <p>4.3 <b>Preparation</b> – reading and administration are part of a member's role. Some meetings and committees require large amounts of reading, analysis or drafting before or after a meeting.</p> <p>4.4 Senior salary holders with additional duties may have higher costs.</p>	<p>Approved duties are usually a matter of fact. Interpretation of the IRPW Regulations are set out in the Annual Report.</p> <p>"Any other duty approved by the authority, or any duty of class so approved, undertaken for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the authority or any of its committees."</p>

<p>5 Be flexible about the types of care that can be claimed</p>	<p>5.1 Members should not be “out of pocket”</p> <p>5.2 Models of care and needs vary</p> <p>5.3 Members may use a combination of several care options</p> <p>5.4 Patterns of care may alter over the civic and academic year</p> <p>5.5 Not all care is based on hourly (or part hourly) rates</p> <p>5.6 Where a whole session must be paid for, this must be reimbursed even where the care need is only for part of a session</p> <p>5.7 Members may need to:</p> <p>5.7.1 book and pay for sessions in advance</p> <p>5.7.2 commit to a block contract: week, month or term</p> <p>5.7.3 pay for sessions cancelled at short notice</p> <p>5.8 Where care need straddles two sessions both should be reimbursed</p>	
<p>6 Have a simple claim process</p>	<p>6.1 Members should know how to claim.</p> <p>6.2 The claim process should be clear, proportionate and auditable.</p>	<p>Check claim at members’ appraisals and regular review</p> <p>Flexibility to accept paperless invoices</p> <p>On line form</p> <p>Same or similar form to travel costs claim</p>
<p>7 Comply with IRPW Publication rules</p>	<p>7.1 The IRPW Framework states:</p> <p>“In respect of the publication of the reimbursement of the costs of care, the Panel has decided that relevant authorities should only publish the total amount reimbursed during the year. It is a matter for each authority to determine its response to any Freedom of Information requests it receives. However, it is not intended that details of individual claims should be disclosed.”</p>	

**BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**12 MARCH 2020**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**PERSONAL SAFETY FOR COUNCILLORS**

**1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide guidance to Councillors on issues of Personal Safety and Lone Working.

**2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities**

2.1 The support provided to Councillors via the Council's Member Training and Development Programme assists in the achievement of the following corporate priorities:

- **Supporting a successful economy** - taking steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all the people in the county.
- **Helping people to be more self-reliant** – taking early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human, and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

**3. Background**

3.1 This report sets out some useful guidance so that Councillors understand the steps they should take to keep themselves safe.

**4. Current situation / proposal**

4.1 Councillors should be mindful of the risks involved when carrying out their role, for example: Visiting people in their homes; Receiving callers to your home; Holding surgeries; Travelling, whether on public or private transport and when alone; and Communicating online.

4.2 Attached as **Appendix A** to this report is a useful guide relating to the Personal Safety of Councillors, which has been developed by Swansea Council and the Welsh Local Government Association. This guide aims to help Councillors carry out their role safely and effectively.

- 4.3 The purpose of the Personal Safety of Councillors guide is to set out what personal safety measures can be taken to prevent and to deal with those rare circumstances when they might find themselves in situations where they become anxious for their safety. In general terms the guidance follows advice given to others who, by virtue of public duties or employment, meet many people whom they do not know.
- 4.4 Some Councillors are concerned that their home address is published on the Authority's Website. Should a Councillor wish for their home address to be removed, they should contact the Head of Democratic Services. The Head of Democratic Services will then arrange for the home address to be replaced by the Democratic Services Team details. However, the Councillors email address and telephone number should remain on the Authority's website and promoted as necessary save in exceptional circumstances which should be raised with the Monitoring Officer.
- 4.5 Councillors are urged to familiarise themselves with this Guidance in order to ensure their own personal safety.

## **5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules**

- 5.1 The report does not have any impacts on Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

## **7. Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Implications**

- 7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there is no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **9. Recommendation**

- 9.1 The Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report and the guide relating to the Personal Safety of Councillors which has been developed by Swansea Council and the Welsh Local Government Association and that the Personal Safety for Councillors be emailed to all Councillors.

**Head of Democratic Services**

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**Background documents:** None

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## Appendix A

### Personal Safety - Councillors Guide

The relationship between Councillors and their communities is at the heart of what being a Councillor is all about. The face-to-face contact when constituents can share problems and concerns is vital to enhancing that relationship. This guide aims to help Councillors carry out their role safely and effectively.

An important role of Councillors is to keep in touch with their communities. This includes helping individuals with any problems they might have. Often this extends beyond just the delivery of Council services. These contacts are usually rewarding and non-adversarial. Councillors become experienced in calming down and treating with respect and sympathy angry and frustrated residents who often resort to their elected representative when they feel that they are getting nowhere in resolving their problems through other channels.

The purpose of this guide is not to make Councillors nervous, but to set out what personal safety measures can be taken to prevent and to deal with those rare circumstances when they might find themselves in situations where they become anxious for their safety. In general terms the guidance follows advice given to others who, by virtue of public duties or employment, meet many people whom they do not know.

#### Car Safety and Parking

You need to take the same precautions as most car owners do:

- Have your keys in your hand or easily accessible;
- Consider whether an area will be dark and isolated when you return to your car;
- Park where possible, under street lighting;
- Lock the car doors when you get into the car;
- Take boxes/bags to the car when other people are around;
- Try to park on the left hand side of the road facing the way you want to drive off;
- In a cul de sac do not park facing the dead end;
- Try to park in a space where you will not be blocked in;
- At service stations always lock the car when you go to pay.

#### Dealing with Emotional Constituents

It is inevitable that some of the people Councillors will meet will be angry or upset. You need to be prepared to handle all types of emotion. For example, it is worth having some tissues on hand.

Councillors have to develop the quiet skill of being concerned about constituents' problems without being so involved that they become too emotional to be of help. Calmness in the face of whatever comes up will help you and your constituents.

Councillors may find that racist or offensive remarks are made. If they are directed at you - do not respond - this will only make the situation worse. Instead, bring the interview to an end as quickly as possible. If they are more general remarks, you should state that this is not acceptable and that you cannot continue the interview. Often this will elicit an apology. Otherwise ask the person to leave. However, you must use your own judgement and if you are alone and in a vulnerable situation do not put yourself at risk no matter how angry the remarks make you.

### **Ward Surgeries**

Where ward surgeries are held, the arrangements each Councillor makes will vary according to local circumstances and it will be a fortunate Councillor who can find premises for their surgery which meet every aspect of good practice and are also accessible to their constituents. What follows are suggestions about how to make a surgery safe and effective. Most Councillors will go through their entire service on the Council without experiencing any problems but a little time given to preparation and planning can reduce the already small risk further.

### **The Basics**

- 1 Do not hold surgeries alone in an otherwise empty building. Try to get someone to act as receptionist. This not only makes you safer, but also makes it much easier to manage a busy surgery. If you are currently doing surgeries alone, discuss how this can be changed with fellow Councillors or Council Officers.
- 2 If you cannot avoid doing surgeries on your own, make sure you remember a few simple guidelines. The layout of the room should suit you, i.e. you should sit nearest to the door with the constituents seated on the other side of the table. Seating is best set out at an angle of 45 degrees (seating directly opposite can be confrontational).
- 3 If there is no separate waiting room, try to ensure that the waiting constituents are as far as possible away from those whom you are talking to.
- 4 Make sure there are no heavy items in the room that could be used as weapons.
- 5 Inform the Police when and where your surgeries are held.
- 6 If you are at the stage of looking for suitable premises in which to hold a surgery, try to get a space with as many as possible of the following features:
  - Council premises (e.g. community centres) during opening hours or other premises
  - where there are many other people about.
  - Premises where the names of any visitors for Councillors are recorded.
  - Premises where there is a comfortable waiting area.
  - Try to ensure the surgery (interviewing) room:
    - Is in view of the reception or public area;

- Is connected to the reception by an alarm and there is a procedure for dealing with call for assistance;
- Has a vision panel in the door;
- Has a swift means of escape and any visitors are not able to lock the door from the inside.

### **Personal Callers**

Most Councillors seek to maintain a balance between their personal and public lives and do not want to encourage any callers at their private homes. Good publicity as to how to contact Councillors and details of ward surgeries reduces the chances of unwanted callers.

### **Mail**

As with telephone calls, Councillors on rare occasions can become the target of malicious anonymous letters. Any such letters should be given immediately to the Police.

### **Home Visits**

Councillors do sometimes visit residents in their homes, especially those who are elderly, disabled or where they simply want to see for themselves the conditions that are the subject of complaints.

It is for each Councillor to decide whether a particular visit should be made, especially if the person to be visited is unknown to the Councillor. Most Councillors trust their own instincts as to whether to meet someone alone. Sometimes the Councillor might prefer to be accompanied by a ward colleague or invite the person to a more public place. It is always advisable for you to keep a record of your whereabouts. If necessary, you can let the person whom you are visiting know there is such a record or that you are expected at another place by a certain time etc. or make a call on your mobile phone during the visit.

### **Malicious and Nuisance Telephone Calls**

Councillors occasionally get the odd nuisance or abusive call. Although such calls are likely to be rare, you might become the target of a persistent, anonymous caller with a grudge against the Council. These calls need to be dealt with in accordance with Police advice:

- Keep the caller talking;
- Note any clues the caller may provide as to sex, age, accent, etc.;
- Listen for any clues as to the caller's motive and intention;
- Write down the details immediately to assist police at a later stage;
- Listen for background noise that may provide valuable information (e.g. railway sounds, industrial noises, machinery, music, animals);
- Inform the Police;
- Inform the Council.

**Reporting Incidents**

Any incidents of concern, even if fairly minor or 'near-misses', should be reported to the Police and Head of Democratic Services. This enables the authority to undertake proper monitoring and decide if any action is needed to prevent a recurrence. You may also consider it advisable to warn ward colleagues.

**Emergency Contact Details**

It is advisable to provide this information to the Head of Democratic Services should it be necessary to contact your family / next of kin in the event of an emergency.

**Additional Useful Guidance**

<https://www.wlga.wales/personal-safety-for-members> Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) guidance Personal Safety for Members.

**BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**12 MARCH 2020**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**MEMBER REFERRALS**

**1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Democratic Services Committee on the performance of Member Referrals.

**2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities**

2.1 The support provided to Elected Members assists in the achievement of all the Corporate Priorities.

1. **Supporting a successful economy** – taking steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all people in the county.
2. **Helping people to be more self-reliant** – taking early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.
3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

**3. Background**

3.1 The Democratic Services Committee has the following functions and is supported by the Head of Democratic Services as necessary:

- Review the adequacy of provision by the Authority of staff, accommodation and other resources to discharge Democratic Services functions, and
- Make reports and recommendations to the Authority in relation to such provision

**4. Current situation / proposal**

4.1 A referral is a complaint / request / query which a Councillor has received from their constituent which the Democratic Services Team forward to the relevant department / external organisation for attention. This process is

carried out so that each part of the referral process is logged and to ensure that a response is received by an agreed deadline.

4.1.2 The following table shows the number of referrals made between 1 March 2019 and 29 February 2020 per Directorate. The table also shows the totals and percentages of referrals completed within 10 and 20 days timescales.

Directorate	Total Referred	Total 10 Days	% In 10 Days	Total 20 Days	% In 20 Days	Total Completed	Total Percentage Completed
Chief Executive	545	316	57.98%	365	66.97%	164	30.09%
Communities	1869	792	42.38%	1009	53.99%	1613	86.30%
Education and Family Support	152	48	31.58%	79	51.97%	138	90.79%
Social Services and Wellbeing	83	27	32.53%	47	56.63%	71	85.54%
External	140	33	23.57%	39	27.86%	78	55.71%
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>2789</b>	<b>1216</b>	<b>43.14%</b>	<b>1539</b>	<b>54.70%</b>	<b>2064</b>	<b>86.31%</b>

4.1.3 The following table shows the number of referrals made per month between 1 March 2019 and 29 February 2020.

Month	Referred	Completed	Ongoing	Percentage
March	268	264	4	98.51
April	241	234	7	97.10
May	278	269	9	96.76
June	198	184	14	92.93
July	306	284	22	92.81
August	235	212	23	90.21
September	212	190	22	89.62
October	247	218	29	88.26
November	179	146	33	81.56
December	180	136	44	75.56
January	246	178	68	72.36
February	220	109	120	49.55
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>2810</b>	<b>2424</b>	<b>395</b>	

4.2 A Member Referrals Project Board has been established to consider whether the current system is fit for purpose and to explore any opportunities to improve the system. In pursuance of this, an online referral form is in the process of being developed by ICT and once ready will be trialled with the members of the Democratic Services Committee and the Project Board and

amongst the Democratic Services Team, prior to its implementation as a method of making referrals. A revised Member Referrals Protocol has been drafted and this will be sent to all Members. Additionally, in order to support Members in making referrals, training slides will be put together and made available electronically.

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

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

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

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

## **7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Implications**

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there is no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no financial implications in respect of this report.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 The Democratic Services Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report.

### **Head of Democratic Services**

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**Democratic Services Manager**

**28 February 2020**

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**Background documents: None**

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**BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**12 MARCH 2020**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Democratic Services Committee with an update on the delivery of the Council's Member Training and Development Programme and related activities. The Committee is requested to identify topics for inclusion on the Member Development Programme and Pre-Council Briefings.

**2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities**

- 2.1 The support provided to Councillors via the Council's Member Training and Development Programme assists in the achievement of the following corporate priorities:

- **Supporting a successful economy** - taking steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all the people in the county.
- **Helping people to be more self-reliant** – taking early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human, and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 The Democratic Services Committee has the following functions and is supported by the Head of Democratic Services as necessary:
- i. Review the adequacy of provision by the Authority of staff, accommodation and other resources to discharge Democratic Services functions, and
  - ii. Make reports and recommendations to the authority in relation to such provision.

**4. Current situation / proposal**

#### 4.1 **Member Training and Development Sessions**

4.1.1 The following Member Training and Development Sessions have been provided since the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee held on 17 October 2019.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>
31 October 2019	<b>Managing Abusive &amp; Aggressive Phone Calls, Conflict Management &amp; Personal Safety Awareness</b>	Safety Solutions Training Limited
28 November 2019	<b>Scrutiny Questioning Skills</b>	Welsh Local Government Association
8 & 13 January 2020	<b>Elected Member Referral &amp; GDPR Training</b>	Group Manager Legal & Democratic Services
15 January 2020	<b>EU Settlement Scheme</b>	Community Cohesion Officer & Regional Community Cohesion Coordinator

#### 4.2 **Pre-Council Briefing Sessions**

4.2.1 The following Pre-Council Briefing Sessions have been provided since the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee held on 17 October 2019.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>
24 October 2019	<b>Strategic Development Plan</b>	Group Manager Development & Development Planning Manager
20 November 2019	<b>Local Area Energy Strategy and Smart Energy Plan Budget Consultation</b>	Team Leader Sustainable Development & Energy Systems Catapult
18 December 2019	<b>Medium Term Financial Strategy</b>	Interim Section 151 Officer
26 February 2020	<b>Medium Term Financial Strategy</b>	Interim Section 151 Officer

#### 4.3 **Development Control Committee Training Sessions**

4.3.1 The following Development Control Committee Training Sessions have been provided since the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee held on 17 October 2019.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>
24 October 2019	<b>Education Contributions – New Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance</b>	School Programme Manager
16 January 2020	<b>Development Control</b>	Group

	<b>Committee Protocol review and Year End Statistics</b>	Manager Planning & Development and Development & Building Control Manager
27 February 2020	<b>Main Findings from the Law Commission’s Review of Planning Legislation in Wales and Next Steps</b>	Development & Building Control Manager

#### 4.4 **Future scheduled Pre-Council Briefings**

4.4.1 The following Pre-Council Briefings have been scheduled:

- 9 March 2020: Universal Credit
- 11 March 2020: Community Asset Transfer
- 8 April 2020: Changes to New Curriculum
- 17 June 2020: Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations
- 16 September 2020: Post 16 and Learner Travel

#### 4.5. **Future Scheduled Development Control Committee Training Sessions**

4.5.1 The following Development Control Committee Training Session has been scheduled:

- 9 April 2020: Wellbeing & Future Generations Act 2016 and Planning Policy Wales 10 – A Direction of Travel

#### 4.6 **Future Proposed Member Training and Development Sessions**

4.6.1 The following Member Training and Development Sessions and Pre Council Briefings are proposed to be scheduled:

- 22 April 2020: Scrutiny Questioning Skills
- 22 April 2020: Scrutiny Charing Skills
- Using Bridgemaps - TBC

4.6.2 The Committee is requested to identify topics for inclusion on the Member Development Programme and Pre-Council Briefings.

#### 4.7 **E-Learning**

4.7.1 The Committee was advised at its previous meeting of the development of national E-learning modules, whereby this Council will be delivering modules on Planning for Planning Committee Members and Planning for all Members. Work is continuing with the Development and Building Control Manager and Learning and Organisational Development Manager to develop the training modules. The timescale for delivery of the modules is September 2020.

4.7.2 The Council has devised a range of e-learning courses for Members to support their learning and development needs. The provision of e-learning courses gives

Members the opportunity to undertake their learning and development remotely at a convenient time at their own pace.

4.7.3 Since the start of the current term the following courses below been provided, the number of Members that have completed each course is shown in brackets:

- Corporate Induction (11 Members)
- General Data Protection Regulations (4)
- Display Screen Equipment (3)
- Fire Safety Awareness (4)
- ICT Code of Conduct (9)
- Safeguarding Children and Adults (14)
- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (3)

4.7.4 In total 20 Members have accessed e-learning courses since the start of the current term.

4.7.5 In order to encourage Members to make greater use of the available e-learning facilities, two drop in sessions have been arranged to be facilitated by the Learning and Development Team to support Members. The drop in sessions will take place on 17 March and 1 April 2020 to be held at the IT Suite, Raven's Court. Members will be able to drop in between the hours of 9.30am – 3.00pm.

## **5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules**

5.1 The report does not have any impacts on Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

## **7. Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Implications**

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there is no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 Elected Member learning and development is resourced from the allocated Member Development budget (£13,650 for 2019-20). Reasonable allocation will be made as part of the annual budget round and applied with regard to the corporate needs of the Authority. The Democratic Services Committee will monitor appropriate spend on the budget. In house training will be provided by Directorates if the topic relates to their service areas. The costs for this type of event will be met from within Directorate budgets and not from the Member Development budget.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1 The Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report and to:

- i. Identify any additional topics for pre-Council briefings and prioritise them accordingly;
- ii. Identify any additional member development topics for inclusion in the Member Development programme and prioritise them accordingly;
- iii. Identify any additional e-learning topics for inclusion in the Member Development Programme and prioritise them accordingly.

## **Head of Democratic Services**

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**26 February 2020**

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**Background documents:None**

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**BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**12 MARCH 2020**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**WEBCASTING OF COUNCIL, CABINET AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

**1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Democratic Services Committee with an update on arrangements for the webcasting of Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings and provide views on which meetings should be webcast.

**2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives /Other Corporate Priorities**

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate objectives / corporate priority/priorities:-

- **Supporting a successful economy** - taking steps to make the county a good place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all the people in the county.
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human, and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

**3. Background**

3.1 The Democratic Services Committee has the following functions and is supported by the Head of Democratic Services as necessary:

- i. Review the adequacy of provision by the Authority of staff, accommodation and other resources to discharge Democratic Services functions, and
- ii. Make reports and recommendations to the authority in relation to such provision.

**4. Current situation / proposal**

**4.1 Benefits of Webcasting Council, Cabinet and Committee Meetings**

4.1.1 A webcast is a transmission of audio and video over the Internet. This enables the public to view meetings from any location with internet access. It has been recognised that the following benefits can be achieved from the webcasting of public Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings:

- Transparent governance and accountability.
- Citizen engagement and understanding of the democratic process, for example understanding of planning decisions.
- Enablement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requirement for engaging members of the public in Scrutiny.
- Incentive for high standards of member attendance, engagement and conduct at meetings.
- Effective means of communicating information and decisions to officers and other members. Archived meetings can also be a useful part of officer induction and training.
- Opportunities for members to learn from peer observation and inform potential candidates about their role to encourage democratic renewal.

## 4.2 **Current Webcasting Arrangements**

4.2.1 The Council procured and introduced an innovative webcasting service for 2017/18 that combined the existing electronic facilities within the Council Chamber and available broadband technology to webcast Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings. The service arrangements included live streaming, recording and publication of webcast meetings with links to the Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) internet website.

4.2.2 With the previous contract expiring on 30 September 2019, the service required re-procuring and quotations were invited for the provision of webcasting services during 2019/20. Quotations were invited from 3 suppliers for webcasting services for 30 hours per annum to commence on 1 October 2019 until 30 September 2020, with the option to extend the contract for a further 12 months duration. Following the closure of the mini competition, 2 bids were received from suppliers, which were then evaluated, based on 40% Quality and 60% Commercial. On conclusion of the evaluation of the quotations, an award was made to the existing supplier.

4.2.3 The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill, which is the subject of a report on this agenda, includes a provision for the webcasting of all public meetings. In the event of that provision becoming law, officers will look during the next contract period at the feasibility of exploring alternative solutions for webcasting, namely through Skype and YouTube. It is anticipated that, subject to successful passage through the Assembly, the Bill would receive Royal Assent by the end of the Summer of 2020, with some provisions being commenced immediately and others being introduced for the start of the 2022 municipal term.

## 4.3 **Webcasting of meetings 2018/19**

4.3.1 The following webcast statistics are shown covering the 2018/19 year:



	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting Name</b>	<b>Live Views</b>	<b>On Demand Views</b>	<b>Total Views</b>
1	30-Aug-18	Development Control Committee	38	51	89
2	17-Sep-18	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 3	11	131	142
3	16-Oct-18	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1	0	42	42
4	18-Oct-18	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2	22	47	69
5	18-Dec-18	Cabinet	27	31	58
6	03-Jan-19	Development Control Committee	10	28	38
7	14-Feb-19	Development Control Committee	70	72	142
8	25-Feb-19	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 3	6	10	16
9	18-Mar-19	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 3	10	32	42
10	19-Mar-19	Development Control Committee	55	120	175
<b>Average Views</b>			<b>25</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Total Views</b>			<b>249</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>813</b>

#### 4.4 Webcasting of meetings 2019/20

4.4.1 The following meetings have been webcast in 2019/20 to date and webcast statistics are shown:

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting Name</b>	<b>Live Views</b>	<b>On Demand Views</b>	<b>Total Views</b>
1	29-Apr-19	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1	3	49	52
2	09-May-19	Development Control Committee	6	29	35
3	04-Jun-19	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1	42	64	106
4	03-Jul-19	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2	4	31	35
5	05-Sep-19	Subject Overview & Scrutiny Committee 3	15	52	67
6	13-Nov-19	Special Cabinet	133	360	493
7	05-Dec-19	Development Control Committee	3	18	21
8	16-Jan-20	Development Control Committee	17	23	40
9	27-Feb-20	Development Control Committee	9	8	17
<b>Average Views</b>			<b>26</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Total Views</b>			<b>232</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>866</b>

4.4.2 Democratic Services continue to work with the Communications Department to ensure that Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings that are to be webcast are promoted by the Council via its Social Media platforms to encourage citizens to view the webcasts. A link to webcasts is available on the home page of My Council on the Council's website.

4.4.3 Democratic Services are also working with the Council's webcasting services provider and Modern.gov to provide links on the Council website:

- On the 'Browse meetings' web page
- On the specific agenda page for the meeting to be webcast

4.4.4 Various forward work plans and committee work programmes have been reviewed with a view to establishing what meetings are proposed to be webcast over the next three months. In developing proposals consideration has been given to items that are considered of significant interest to the public. The following meetings are proposed for webcasting until the Annual Meeting of Council:

- Combined Meeting of Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 and 2 – 19 March 2020 (Learner Travel and Post 16 Education)
- Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 – 23 March 2020 (Working Towards Plastic Free Bridgend)
- Development Control Committee – 9 April 2020
- Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 – 27 April 2020 (Waste Management / Waste and Recycling Centres)

4.4.5 The schedule of meetings to be webcast after the Annual Meeting of Council will be reported to the next meeting of this Committee.

4.4.6 The Democratic Services Committee is requested to comment on the above list and provide its views on what future meetings should be webcast.

## **5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules**

5.1 The report does not have any impacts on Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

## **7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Implications**

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there is no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 All financial implications contained within this report will be met from existing budgets.

## **9. Recommendation**

9.1 That Democratic Services Committee:

- i. Note the update on arrangements for the webcasting of Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings as detailed in section 4 of the report.
- ii. Comment on the list of meetings that are proposed to be webcast as detailed in section 4.4.4 of the report and provide its views on what future meetings should be webcast.

**Head of Democratic Services**

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**26 February 2020**

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**Background documents:** None

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