BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

13 JULY 2017

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE UPDATES

1.   Purpose of Report

1.1   The purpose of this report is to update the Democratic Services Committee on the performance of services provided to Elected Members.

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   Member Referrals

4.1.1   A referral is a complaint / request / query which a Councillor has received from their constituent which Democratic Services 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 a deadline.

4.1.2 The process for referrals has been electronic since November 2011. The table below outlines the number of referrals received for each year and the percentages of completed referrals:

Year	Referred	Completed	Ongoing	Percentage Completed
2011 - 2012	1229	1212	17	98.62%
2012 - 2013	3142	3119	23	99.27%
2013 - 2014	3020	3012	8	99.74%
2014 - 2015	2167	2158	9	99.58%
2015 - 2016	2061	2026	35	98.30%
2016 - 2017	2261	1908	353	84.39%
Totals	13880	13435	445	96.79%

4.1.3 The following table shows the number and percentage of referrals since 2011 for each Directorate:

Year	Directorate	Chief Executive	Education and Family Support	Communities	Operational and Partnership Services	Social Services and Wellbeing	External	Totals
2011-12	Referrals	16	32	858	86	61	176	1229
	%	1.3	2.6	0..8	7.0	5.03	1.4	
2012-13	Referrals	36	121	2290	209	119	367	3142
	%	1.1	3.9	72.9	6.7	3.8	11.7	
2013-14	Referrals	49	183	2175	209	106	298	3020
	%	1.6	6.1	72.0	6.9	03.5	9.9	
2014-15	Referrals	40	106	1545	171	97	208	2167
	%	1.8	4.9	71.3	7.9	4.5	9.6	
2015-16	Referrals	20	56	1559	162	98	166	2061
	%	0.97	2.7	69.0	7.9	4.8	8.1	
2016-17	Referrals	26	39	1604	134	115	213	2131
	%	1.15	1.7	71.0	05.9	5.1	9.4	
All	Referrals	187	537	10031	971	596	1428	13880
	%	1.3	3.9	72.3	7.0	4.3	10.3	

4.1.4 The following table shows the number of referrals made between 8 May 2017 and 30 June 2017. The total number of referrals is 961 which compares to 258 for the same period in 2016 and to 518 in the last post-election period in 2012.

Directorate	Total Referred	Total 10 Days	% In 10 Days	Total 20 Days	% In 20 Days	Total Completed	Total Percentage Completed
Chief Executive	2	1	50.00%	1	50.00%	2	100.00%
Communities	763	347	45.48%	441	57.80%	519	68.02%
Education & Family Support	14	4	40.00%	8	80.00%	10	71.43%
Operational and Partnership Services	100	69	69.00%	76	76.00%	80	80.00%
Social Services & Wellbeing	24	5	20.83%	8	33.33%	13	54.17%
External	58	17	29.31%	22	37.93%	26	44.83%
Totals:	961	443	46.10%	556	57.86%	650	67.64%

4.15 Provisional plans to update the referrals system are now being considered to ensure that the service is providing value to members and the departments who support the process and procedures for referrals.

4.2 <u>Member Development Programme</u>

4.2.1 The following member induction activities have been held since the election:

Induction Training			
Topic	**Date**	**Total attendance**	**Percentage attendance**
Role of Committees and Scrutiny	11 May 17 16 May 17	23	42.59%
Overview of the Authority	11 May 17 16 May 17	24	44.44%
Intro to Local Government & Code of Conduct	15 May 17 18 May 17	39	72.22%
Licensing/Act 2003 Committee Training	19 May 17 12 Jun 17	13(7)	92.86%
Development Control Committee Training	22 May 17 14 Jun 17 03 Jul 17	18 (4)	100.00%
Appeals Panel Training	8 Jun 17 05 Jul 17	12	100.00%
Corporate Parenting Training	12 Jun 17 19 Jun 17	26	48.15%
Rights of Way Sub-Committee Training	14 Jun 17	4(1)	66.67%
Treasury Management Training	26 Jun 17	7(6)	58.33%
Audit Committee Training	26 Jun 17	7(6)	58.55%
Education and Family Support Service Briefing	04 Jul 17	18	33.33%

4.2.2 The following member workshops have been held since the election:

Workshops			
Topic	Date	Total attendance	Percentage attendance
Waste Workshop	31 May 17	31	57.41%
Active Travel Plans (DC Committee)	06 Jul 17	18	100.00%

4.2.3 The following Pre-Council briefings have been held since the election:

Pre-Council Briefing			
Topic	Date	Total attendance	Percentage attendance
Policing the County Borough	28 Jun 17	40	74.07%

4.2.4 The draft member development programme is attached at **Appendix 1**. The programme identifies the member development sessions which are scheduled for delivery this year.

4.2.5 The following topics are being considered for inclusion on the Member Development Programme:

- Risk Management (September 2017)
- Equalities & Diversity Training for all Members
- Development Control Training for Members
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act
- Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act
- ICT Training for Members
- Member Mentoring Training
- Community Action Fund
- Social Media Training
- E-Learning modules
- Elective Home Education
- Highways & Depot Rationalisation
- Data Protection
- Procurement Portal
- Anti-slavery & Human trafficking
- Update on Gypsy / Travellers
- Carers Update
- Council Tax / Housing Benefits / Universal Credit, and Digital Channel Shift

4.2.6 The Democratic Services Committee is requested to identify any additional topics for delivery either as a Member Development sessions or as a round robin event. The Committee is requested to prioritise these activities accordingly.

4.2.7 The following topics are being considered for Pre-Council briefings:

- Pupil Referral Unit   -   School Improvement Group
- Additional Learning Needs – Autism -   School Improvement Group
- Halo Update   -   Communities Directorate
- Medium Term Financial Strategy   -   Section 151 Officer (Nov 2017)

- Update on the Awen Trust - Democratic Services Committee
- Domestic Violence Update - Democratic Services Committee
- National Autistic Society Cymru - Cabinet Member Resources
- Ty Elis Counselling Service - Cabinet Member Resources
- Dark Skies - Cllr E Venables
- Community Health Council - Chief Executive
- Carers Update - Social Services and Wellbeing Act
- Web-based Planning Facilities - Development Control Officers

4.2.8 The Committee is requested to identify any additional topics other than those listed in paragraph 4.2.7 to be delivered as Pre-Council briefings and to prioritise those topics accordingly.

4.2.9 The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) is providing Regional Induction Training for new members and the events will include the following items:

o **The shape of things to come:** What does the Welsh Government expect from councillors? Mark Drakeford AM, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government.
o **5 years in office but a lifetime's legacy.** Sophie Howe, Future Generations Commissioner.
o **Secrets of success: What works for councillors?** Ian Bottrill, Former leader, researcher and national trainer.
o **The state of the nation.** Steve Thomas CBE, WLGA Chief Executive.
o **Everybody's doing it: Using social media successfully.** Mel Doel, national trainer, former BBC Wales journalist and National Park Authority chair 2016/17.
o **Meeting other new councillors,** sharing early experiences and discussing your aspirations with colleagues in your region.

4.2.9.1 The event date and location allocated to Bridgend is the 10 November in the Swansea Marriott, although there may be an opportunity for some new members to attend the event on 17 November at the Cardiff All Nations Centre. Transport will be arranged centrally by Democratic Services.

4.2.10 Development Control Committee
The following training sessions have been planned by the Development Control Department but are open for all Members to attend:

- Workshop on draft Open Space SPG 17 Aug 17
- Review of Historic Environment Records guidance 28 Sep 17
- Enforcement 09 Nov 17
- Community transport 21 Dec 17
- Advertisement control TBC
- Trees and development TBC

4.3 Annual Reports

4.3.1 The Committee is advised that all Elected Members are provided with the opportunity to complete an Annual Report for the previous year's activities but all senior salary holders are expected to complete annual reports. Details of the

number of members who have published their Annual Reports are reported to the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for Wales.

4.3.2 In the 2014/15 period, 21 Elected Members completed their Annual Reports which were subsequently published on the Bridgend County Borough Council website. For the 2015/16 period 10 Annual Reports have been received.

4.3.3 The percentage of Annual Reports completed since the 2012 Local Government elections is as follows:

2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
96.15%	56.60%	41.18%	18.52%

4.3.4 An example of an Annual Report is attached at **Appendix 2.**

4.3.5 The Democratic Services Committee previously agreed to cease the publication of Members Annual Reports on the internet due to the low number of Annual Reports that had been completed and submitted, the cost of translation and the workload of Democratic Services. The publication of Annual Report for senior salary holders is considered necessary to achieve the WLGA Charter for Member Support and Development.

4.4 Webcasting

4.4.1 This Authority broadcast a total of 20 hours and 44 minutes of meetings in 2015-16 and a total of 14 hours to-date in 2016-17. The following table shows the meetings which have been webcast and the respective viewing information for each meeting and includes updated viewing figures:

Serial	Meeting Date	Committee	Total Views
1	07-Jan	DC Committee	896
2	14-Jan	P&G OSC	514
3	21-Jan	CYP OSC	431
4	27-Jan	CEL OSC	354
5	28-Jan	Audit Committee	415
6	09-Feb	CRI OSC	378
7	11-Feb	ASC OSC	267
8	18-Feb	DC Committee	280
9	01-Mar	Cabinet	324
10	10-Mar	Council	442
11	31-Mar	DC Committee	210
12	04-May	DC Committee	131
13	12-May	DC Committee	257
14	09-Jun	DC Committee	217
15	04-Aug	DC Committee	31
16	01-Sep	DC Committee	105
17	29-Sep	DC Committee	100
18	05-Oct	Council	303
19	27-Oct	DC Committee	59
Total Views			**5714**

4.4.2   Following a change of webcasting provider the following meetings were webcast:

Ser	Date	Meeting	Live	On Demand	Total Views
20	21 Nov 16	P&G OSC	52	70	122
21	24 Nov 16	DC Committee	7	27	34
22	06 Dec 16	P&G OSC	35	120	155
23	22 Dec 16	DC Committee	4	16	20
24	19 Jan 17	DC Committee	5	6	11
25	16 Feb 17	DC Committee	0	19	19
26	16 Mar 17	DC Committee	4	26	30
27	13 Apr 17	DC Committee	0	28	28
Totals			**107**	**312**	**419**

4.4.3   The following table shows the total views and the average number of views of each meeting which has been webcast since the webcasting service began:

	29-Apr-16	31-Oct-16	06-Jul-17
Totals	4,121	5,697	6133
Average per meeting	375	300	227

4.4.4   Funding for webcasting was initially provided as part of the £40,000 webcasting grant from the Welsh Government. There is sufficient budget from the grant to webcast approximately 8-10 further meetings in 2017-18.

4.5   I-Call

4.5.1   I-Call is a check call management system designed to monitor and provide reassurance to people working alone. Due to the criteria for the use of I-Call this facility has not been offered to Elected Members.

4.5.2   Although there will be some initial limitations on the use of the I-Call system, it has been agreed that a trial of the system with Elected Members can be undertaken. The trial will provide an opportunity to ensure that those members who may feel vulnerable when visiting constituents are able to be supported by the Authority. If the trial is successful it will be made available to all Members.

4.5.3   It is hoped that 3 Elected Members from the Democratic Services Committee could be identified to participate in a trial of the I-Call system. Members of the Democratic Services Committee willing to volunteer for the I-Call trial are requested to inform the Head of Democratic Services at the earliest opportunity. This opportunity will be offered to all members in due course.

4.6   Member Development Budget

4.6.1   The budget for 2017-18 for Member training is £13,650. This will fund any training identified by the Democratic Services Committee which may require external providers. There is also the possibility of providing some funding for individual training. It is proposed that a sum from the budget (approx. £2,700) will be allocated for individual training.

4.7   Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for Elected Members

4.7.1 Following the Local Government Elections, Elected Members were issued an
       induction pack which included an ICT self-assessment survey.   Many members
       completed the ICT survey (51 responses/94.44%) and the outcome of the ICT
       survey is shown below.

4.7.2 Given the criteria, members assessed themselves either non user, novice,
       intermediate or experienced in the use of email, word processing and the internet

	Email		Word Processing		Internet	
	Number	%	No	%	No	%
Non User	1	0	3	5.88%	1	1.96%
Novice	3	5.88%	4	7.84%	6	11.76%
Intermediate	11	21.57%	11	21.57%	14	27.45%
Experienced	36	70.59%	29	56.86%	29	56.86%

4.7.3 The number and percentage of respondents who said they were familiar with the
       software packages as listed were as follows:

Word		Excel		PowerPoint		Outlook	
Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
49	96.08%	38	74.51%	33	64.71%	40	78.43%

4.7.4 The ICT Department has rolled out the new equipment for Elected Members. Some
       simple user guides have been developed and circulated to assist with the
       equipment and software. Elected Members have been requested to log a call with
       the ICT Service Desk if there are any issues with their equipment or software.

4.7.5 Members have also been requested to identify any immediate ICT training needs.
       Initial feedback has indicated that some Elected Members have requested Windows
       10, word and outlook training. A provider is being sought to deliver a combination
       of individual and group training.

4.7.6 Higher level software training will be considered in the future but the initial focus is
       to get all Members using the equipment and software to a workable standard.

4.8   Visit of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW)

4.8.1 The IRPW is responsible for determining the allowances payable to Elected
       Members of principal councils, national park authorities, fire and rescue authorities,
       and community and town councils in Wales.

4.8.2 The Panel hopes to seek the views of all 22 Local Authorities in Wales in advance
       of the publication of its Draft Annual report for 2018 which is expected to be
       available from December 2017.

4.8.3 The Panel will be visiting the Authority on 22 September 2017 and should include

meetings with: Chief Executive, Leader & Deputy Leader, Executive Members, Opposition Leader(s), backbenchers, Chairs of various committees (particularly scrutiny, regulatory), Mayor, co-opted members, relevant policy officers and councillors who serve as Town and Community Council councillors.

4.8.4   Further detail will be circulated and Elected Members are requested to note the date of this visit in their calendars.

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:

   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.   Receive any nominations to undertake a trial of the I-Call system

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31 October 2016

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Background documents – None