

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

**17 JANUARY 2018**

**REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OPERATIONAL AND PARTNERSHIP SERVICES**

**THE MEMBER MENTORING PROCESS**

**1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Democratic Services Committee of the Member Mentoring process and the progress that has been made to identify and train Member Mentors.

**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 Mentoring is a voluntary, confidential, one to one relationship in which an individual uses a more experienced or more senior person as a sounding board for guidance. It enables the mentee to “grow” in their role in skills, knowledge, understanding and behaviour. It can be a medium, long term or ongoing relationship. It is not a prescriptive or directive relationship but rather one which allows the mentee to find their own way, assisted by the mentor.

3.2 Prior to the 2012 Local Government Elections the Authority established a Member Mentoring process. Approximately 20 Member Mentors were trained in advance of the Local Government Elections. This was intended to provide a small pool of Mentors who would be able to support the newly elected within their political group following the Election.

3.3 This process was considered beneficial to the newly Elected Members but was not

progressed when Council determined that it would not renew its Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Charter in 2014.

- 3.4 Following the 2017 Local Government Elections Council determined to submit an application to the WLGA for the Charter for Member Support and Development. The criteria for achieving the Charter included the need to provide a Member Mentoring process which could be offered to all Members.
- 3.5 The Head of Democratic Services has reviewed the process and role of Member Mentors to ensure that it is fit for purpose. The role description for a Member Mentor was approved by Council on 20 December 2017 and is shown at **Appendix 1**.

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

- 4.1 The WLGA Charter for Member Support and Development identifies that Members should be offered the opportunity to be mentored by member peers. It also indicates that any member who has requested a mentor is provided with one and that Mentors are trained in mentoring skills.
- 4.2 It is considered that the Elected Members currently undertake informal mentoring arrangements where newly elected or other members discuss issues with each other, member to member or have informal discussions with appropriate officers who provide suitable advice. It is anticipated that with a suitably trained number of Member Mentors this can then become a more formalised arrangement.
- 4.3 The role of the trained Member Mentors will provide opportunities to help the newly Elected Members to “grow” in their role in skills, knowledge, understanding and behaviour. The newly Elected Members could be for those:
- Members elected for the first time as a County Borough Councillor in 2017.
  - Members re-elected as a County Borough Councillor with a break in their service.
  - Members elected as a County Borough Councillor between the 2017 and 2022 elections.
  - Members elected following the 2022 Elections if the mentor retained their seat on the Council.
- 4.4 Previously the Head of Democratic Services and other officers were also trained as Member Mentors to enable those Independent Members who may not have easy access to another Elected Member Mentor to be mentored. This is not an ideal situation but is considered as a fall-back position if necessary.
- 4.5 Group Leaders have identified the following Councillors as potential mentors although there is a capacity for other Councillors to attend the training and become member mentors:

	Inits	Surname	Group
1	HJ	David	Labour
2	HW	Williams	Labour
3	CE	Smith	Labour
4	P	White	Labour
5	R	Young	Labour
6	D	Patel	Labour
7	CA	Green	Independent Alliance
8	DG	Owen	Independent Alliance
9	RM	James	Plaid Cymru
10	R	Penhale-Thomas	Lynfi Independents
11	J	Williams	Independent

NB: The Head of Democratic Services will also undertake the training as a mentor

- 4.6 Training is being provided by the WLGA on Thursday 01 February 2018 at 4:00pm. The training will be based on the WLGA Guidance for Member Mentors as attached at **Appendix 2**.
- 4.7 Following the training, each political group will be able to offer their new members a mentor to support them if they so wish. It was identified previously that initially meetings between mentors and mentees were held each week but as time progressed the meetings became less frequent until it was mutually determined that after approximately one year no further meetings were required. However mentors and mentees did continue their relationship and were a familiar source of advice and guidance even after the formal mentoring had ceased.
- 4.8 It is hoped that further training will be provided to additional Elected Member mentors in the lead up to the 2022 Elections to ensure that there are sufficient mentors available immediately after the election when the mentors are able to provide the greatest benefit.

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

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

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

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

## **7. Financial Implications**

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

## **8. Recommendation**

- 8.1 It is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee note the planned process for the use of Member Mentors.

**PA Jolley**  
**Corporate Director Operational and Partnership Services**  
**10 January 2018**

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**Background documents** – None