

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
20 MARCH 2018

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 an agreed deadline.

4.1.2 The following table shows the number of referrals made between 1 October 2017 and 28 February 2018.

Directorate	Total Referred	Total 10 Days	% In 10 Days	Total 20 Days	% In 20 Days	Total Completed	Total Percentage Completed
Chief Executive	23	12	54.4%	16	83.3%	19	86.9%
Communities	1062	536	57.3%	688	73.1%	906	82.7%
Education and Family Support	40	18	51.4%	29	82.9%	35	87.5%
Operational and Partnership Services	92	40	47.2%	60	70.4%	78	80.3%
Wellbeing	43	16	62.1%	30	93.9%	34	82.7%
External	56	27	47.9%	35	57.9%	49	79.8%
Totals	1316	649	53.4%	858	76.9%	1121	83.3%

4.1.3 The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Scrutiny requested that the following queries and recommendations be referred to the Democratic Services Committee for consideration:

1. Responses to referrals differ between Directorates, some respond much quicker than others and also provide a written response outlining a timeframe for resolution.
 - (a) What Directorates are compliant with timelines?
 - (b) Are Member Referrals monitored for dissatisfaction?
 - (c) How do other LAs deal with Member Referrals?
 - (d) recommends that all referrals are allocated a resolution timeline, detailing what action will be taken and that this be fed back to Members on completion.
2. It is further recommended that an annual report be provided to Members detailing an analysis of the themes originating from Member Referrals to improve their knowledge and daily understanding of the needs and priorities of the public including future budget setting needs.

4.1.4 The last review of the Member Referral system was reported to the Democratic Services Committee at its meeting on 6 November 2013. The review identified that approximately 45% of referrals were completed within the 10 day target period with the overall percentage of completed referrals averaging between 90 - 95% at the end of a three month period. Monitoring of these statistics has continued and these figures have been used as a benchmark for the subsequent completion times of

referrals. The completion data has remained consistent as identified in the 2013 review.

- 4.1.5 As reported on 13 July 2017 the number of referrals made between 8 May 2017 and 30 June 2017 was 961 which compares to 258 for the same period in 2016 and to 518 in the last post-election period in 2012. The annual rate of member referrals is as follows:

Year	Number of referrals
2012-13	3138
2013-14	3012
2014-15	2158
2015-16	2052
2016-17	2293
2017-18	3885
Average	2756.33

The figures for 2017-18 are as logged on 12 March 2018. The data indicates that there is a 40% increase in the referrals made in 2017-18 compared to the average number of referrals received each year.

- 4.1.6 Following the receipt of these Scrutiny recommendations and the concerns previously expressed by the Democratic Services Committee a review of the Member Referral system is planned to be undertaken and will consider the following matters:

- Appropriate subjects for consideration as a Member Referral
- The timelines for responses to referrals to be made
- The escalation process when responses are not received with the agreed timescales
- How do other Local Authorities manage their Member Referrals
- Provision of training to Elected Members in the use of Member Referrals and Open-source Ticket Request System (OTRS.)
- Difficulties and barriers for officers dealing with Member Referrals
- Undertaking analysis of Member Referrals to identify trends or key topics
- Is OTRS the most suitable software package for Member Referrals?
- Is a Member Referrals system needed?
- Providing a suitable response to the scrutiny queries and recommendations

- 4.1.7 The Democratic Services Committee is requested to identify any additional concerns in order to ensure that the full scope of the review is identified before being progressed.

4.2 Member Development Programme

- 4.2.1 The following member induction activities have been held since the since October 2017:

Topic	Date	Total attendance	Percentage attendance
Budget Workshop	26 Oct 17 09 Nov 17	35	62.96%
Dementia Awareness	09 Oct 17	11	20.37%
Community Action Fund	09 Oct 17 12 Oct 17 01 Nov 17 31 Jan 18	54	100%
Appeals Panel (Highways)	26 Oct 17	7	58.33%
Regional Induction	10 Nov 17	14	44.83%
Scrutiny of Performance Reports	14 Nov 17	10(4)	50.00%
Wellbeing of Future generations	27 Nov 17	19	35.19%
Social Media	18 Dec 17 09 Jan 18	17	31.48%
Boundary Commission Briefing	09 Jan 18	32	59.26%
LGBT Awareness	29 Jan 18 06 Feb 18	27	50.00%
Member Mentors	01 Feb 18	7	46.15%

Note: The figures in brackets denote the number of other Elected Members who attended the training in addition to those who were required to attend.

4.2.2 The following Pre-Council briefings have been held since the Election:

Topic	Date	Total attendance	Percentage attendance
Digital Transformation	20 Dec 17	25	46.30%
Implementation of Universal Credit	31 Jan 18	43	79.63%
Local Development Plan	28 Feb 18	21	38.88%

4.2.3 The following e-learning modules have been completed by Elected Members:

Topic	Number Completed	Percentage Completed
Corporate Induction	3	5.56%
Data Protection	27	50.00%
Fire Safety Awareness	2	3.70%
ICT Code of Conduct	6	11.11%
Safeguarding Children and Adults	9	16.67%

4.2.4 The following training has been undertaken by the Development Control Committee:

Topic	Date	Total attendance	Percentage attendance
Trees and development	09-Nov-17	10	55.56%
LDP review info workshop	21-Dec-17	10	55.56%
Advertisement control	01-Feb-18	13	72.22%

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

- Annual Reports (April 2018)
- Personal Development Reviews (May 2018)
- Autism Awareness/ALN/NASC (June 2018)

4.2.6 The following Member Development topics are being provided to the Development Control Committee:

Date	Topic
26 April 2018	Community Transport
24 May 2018	Section 106 legal agreements – basics and limitations
04 July 2018	Cenin Renewables at Stormy Down Member training site visit at Cenin Renewables to view wind turbine, solar panels, cement labs, anaerobic digestion plant, battery bank.

4.2.7 The following are the list of topics for possible consideration for inclusion in the Member Development programme:

- Highways & Depot Rationalisation
- Procurement Portal
- Anti-slavery & Human trafficking
- Update on Gypsy / Travellers
- Elective Home Education
- Ty Elis Counselling Service - Cabinet Member
- Housing and engagement with the RSL - Cabinet Member
- Pupil Referral Unit - School Improvement Group
- Domestic Violence Update - Democratic Services Committee
- Dark Skies - Cllr E Venables
- Community Health Council - Chief Executive
- Carers Update - SS and Wellbeing Act
- Web-based Planning Facilities - Development Control Officers
- PSB Scrutiny Training - Head of Democratic Services

4.2.8 The Democratic Services Committee is requested to identify any additional topics for delivery as a Member Development sessions and to prioritise the activities accordingly.

4.2.9 The Democratic Services Committee is requested to confirm that the following E-learning topics be completed by all Elected Members before 01 Jun 2018:

- 1) Data Protection Act
- 2) Safeguarding Children and Adults
- 3) Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- 4) Equalities & Diversity Training

4.2.10 A series of drop in sessions will be provided to support Elected Member to log into

the Learning and Development website and the learning topics identified.

4.2.11 The following topics are being planned for Pre-Council briefings:

- 28 Mar 18 V2C (Provisional)
- 25 April18 The Central South Consortium (Provisional)
- 13 Jun 18 The Bryncethin Campus (Provisional)
- 11 Jul 18 Young Carers (Provisional)

4.2.12 The Committee is requested to identify any additional topics other than those listed in paragraph 4.2.11 to be delivered as Pre-Council briefings and to prioritise those topics accordingly.

4.3 Webcasting

4.3.1 The following webcasting statistics have been compiled as at 08 March 2018:

Ser	Meeting	Date	Live Views	On Demand	Total
1	DCC	13-Apr-17	0	83	83
2	Licensing Sub-Committee A	14-Sep-17	21	60	81
3	SOSC 3	22-Nov-17	80	124	204
4	Corporate Parenting	24-Jan-18	7	43	50
5	Cabinet	30-Jan-18	19	27	46
6	SOSC 2	07-Feb-18	18	61	79
7	SOSC 3	12-Feb-18	16	44	60
8	Cabinet	13-Feb-18	11	40	51
9	Cabinet	27-Feb-18	14	18	32
10	Council	28-Feb-18	41	53	94
		Totals	227	553	780
		Average	22.7	55.3	78

4.3.2 The following meetings are planned to be webcast:

Committee	Date	Topic
Development Control	15-Mar-18	Tondu Development
SOSC 3	21-Mar-18	Empty Properties
Cabinet	27-Mar-18	Various

4.4 Members ICT Forum

4.4.1 At its meeting on 2 November 2017 the Democratic Services Committee appointed the following three members to form part of the Members ICT Forum:

- Cllr G Thomas Labour
- Cllr B Sedgebeer Labour
- Cllr S Vidal Conservative

4.4.2 The Head of Democratic Services was requested to identify three members to complete the formation of the Members ICT Forum and to ensure that it had an suitable level of cross party representation. The following members volunteered for the Members ICT Forum:

- Cllr J Radcliffe Plaid Cymru
- Cllr E Venables Independent Alliance
- Cllr J Williams Independent

4.4.2 The first meeting is being planned for early April. Councillors will be advised to contact one of their representatives on the Members ICT Forum or the Head of Democratic Services to raise any ICT issue they may have. The Democratic Services Committee will be advised of any updates from the Members ICT Forum as necessary.

4.5 Member Support Officer (MSO) Network

4.5.1 The Head of Democratic Services will be attending the MSO Network on 15 March 2018. The meeting is facilitated by the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and is attended by the Heads of Democratic services and Member Support Officers from across Wales.

4.5.2 The agenda is planned to include:

- An update from the Welsh Government on the Local Government (Wales) Bill.
- Guidance for councillors prepared by the WLGA on online abuse and personal safety
- The General Data Protection Regulation, the network is invited to share any plans for guidance for members on the new legislation
- Discussion with members of the Independent Review Panel considering the role of community and town councils
- Member Support and development consultants and trainers
- Diversity in Democracy update.

4.5.3 The Head of Democratic Services will provide a verbal update to the committee of the outcomes of the MSO Network.

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. 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. Identify any additional e-learning topics for inclusion in the Member Development programme and prioritise them accordingly.

GP JONES
HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
14 MARCH 2018

Contact Officer: Gary Jones Head of Democratic Services
Telephone: (01656) 643385

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

Postal Address Democratic Services,
Civic Offices
Angel Street
Bridgend
CF31 4WB

Background documents – None