BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

25 OCTOBER 2018

REPORT 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.

2.   Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives.

2.1   The support provided to Councilllors assists in the achievement of each of the Council's agreed 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, qualications 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   <u>**Benefits of Webcasting Council, Cabinet and Committee Meetings**</u>

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 public in Scrutiny
- Incentive for high standards of member attendance, engagement and conduct at meetings
- Effective means of communicating to officers and other members information and decisions. 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 CBC internet website. The service arrangements also enabled for webcast recordings to remain available/accessible to the public for a period of up to 12 months.

4.2.2   to The service was re-procured for 2018/19 and the same provider was successful. As part of the contract renewal process Dual Language webcasting facilities were procured.

4.2.3   The 2018/19 contract provides for up to 30 hours of Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings to be webcast by 31st March 2019. There is also an arrangement to extend the time period by a further 6 months in the event that the full 30 hour allocation of webcasting hours has not been used up. The webcasting of meetings under the 2018/19 contract started in late August 2018.

4.3   **Webcasting of meetings 2017/18**

4.3.1   The following webcast statistics are shown covering 2017/18:

	Date	Meeting Name	Live Views	On Demand Views	Total Views
1	13-Apr-17	Development Control Committee	0	83	83
2	14-Sep-17	Licensing Sub-Committee A	21	60	81
3	22-Nov-17	Scrutiny Subject Committee 3	80	125	205
4	24-Jan-18	Cabinet Committee Corporate Parenting	7	50	57
5	30-Jan-18	Cabinet Meeting	19	30	49

	Date	Meeting Name			
6	07-Feb-18	Scrutiny Subject Committee 2 + Scrutiny Subject Committee 2 Part 2	18	69	87
7	12-Feb-18	Scrutiny Subject Committee 3 + Scrutiny Subject Committee 3 Part 2	16	47	63
8	13-Feb-18	Cabinet	11	43	54
9	27-Feb-18	Cabinet	14	20	34
10	28-Feb-18	Council	41	75	116
11	15-Mar-18	Development Control Committee	52	131	183
12	21-Mar-18	Scrutiny Subject Committee 3	5	43	48
		Average Views	**23.67**	**64.67**	**88.33**
		Total Views	**284**	**776**	**1060**

4.4 Webcasting of meetings 2018/19

4.4.1 The following webcast statistics are shown covering 2018/19 year to date:

	Date	Meeting Name	Live Views	On Demand Views	Total Views
1	30-Aug-18	Development Control Committee	38	51	99
2	17-Sep-18	Scrutiny Subject Committee 3	11	142	142
3	16 –Oct-18	Scrutiny Subject Committee 1 (statistics unavailable at time of writing report)			
4	18-Oct-18	Scrutiny Subject Committee 2 (statistics unavailable at time of writing report)			
		Average Views	**24.5**	**96.5**	**120.5**
		Total Views	**49**	**193**	**241**

4.4.2 Democratic Services and ICT department are now working with the Council's agreed webcasting services provider to make it easier for the public to access webcasts on the Council website (both live streaming and recorded webcasts) and to maximise the number of views for each meeting. It is proposed that links to webcasts are put in 4 places on the Council website:

- On the Council website landing page
- On the 'Democracy and Elections' web page
- On the 'Browse meetings' web page
- On the specific agenda page for the meeting to be webcast

4.4.3 Democratic Services are also working with Communications department to ensure that Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings that are to be webcast are promoted by the Council via Social Media.

4.4.4 Various forward 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:

- Development Control Committee: 22nd November 2018
- Cabinet: 18th December 2018
- Scrutiny Subject Committee 3: 24th January 2019 (Community Asset Transfer)
- Scrutiny Subject Committee: Review of Fostering (to be scheduled)
- Scrutiny Subject Committee: Education Outcomes (to be scheduled)
- Scrutiny Subject Committee: Child Adolescent Mental Health Services (to be scheduled)
- Council – date TBC

4.4.5 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   There is no effect upon the 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 directly arising from this report.

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 webcast as detailed in section 4.4.4 of the report.

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Background documents: None