

RESEARCH SUPPORT AND SERVICES PROTOCOL

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

<p>Are background papers available to help all Councillors understand key decisions?</p>	<p>The Council's report template provides a section on background papers to allow Members access to any additional information.</p> <p>Reports also often refer to where and when the item has previously been considered.</p> <p>Officers could be encouraged to provide direct links when referring to previous reports and consideration at Committees, for ease of reference.</p>
<p>Are all Councillors provided with regular performance management information, or is it readily available to them?</p>	<p>Yes, quarterly performance updates (backward looking) are provided to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (COSC) for detailed monitoring and scrutiny of progress against the corporate plan and this is also shared for information with all Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees. These are also then reported to Cabinet.</p> <p>All papers are available publicly on the Council's website.</p> <p>Self-assessment is reported annually to GAC (approach), COSC and GAC (pre-decision scrutiny) and finally to Cabinet and Full Council for sign-off.</p> <p>The development of the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan (forward looking) is reported to COSC at the start of the process, again for sign-off and then finally to agree targets.</p> <p>Less regular performance events (updates on the performance management improvement plan, new Corporate Plans and updates to the performance framework) are also led by COSC and reported to Cabinet and council for sign-off.</p>

<p>Is demographic information readily available to all Councillors, including information on local services and their usage?</p>	<p>There are links within the Councillor Portal to various information such as planning applications, roadworks, street crime statistics, Data Cymru's ward profile and Dewis Cymru (local organisations and services).</p> <p>The Communications team research and produce specialist briefings for members who are preparing to be interviewed for broadcast news.</p>
<p>Are Councillors signposted to useful sources of information?</p>	<p>Any relevant information received from WLGA, Data Cymru, Welsh Government Consultations, sent to the HDS, are shared with all Councillors.</p> <p>Regular briefings and training provided to all Members on relevant changes in policy or introduction of new legislation.</p> <p>Changes to performance requirements and the development of approaches to meet them (e.g. self-assessment and Panel Performance Assessment) are reported to COSC.</p> <p>The Councillor Portal provides links to Data Cymru's ward profile, Welsh Government's consultations as well as the aspects mentioned above.</p> <p>Useful sources of information across a range of different topics are also generally included as part of announcements from the Mayor, Leader and Chief Executive to meetings of full Council.</p> <p>In the event of a significant issue which warrants a wider update for members e.g. preparations for the arrival of severe weather, a briefing note will be issued via email to all members to ensure they are aware and are supported in responding to enquiries from constituents.</p>

	<p>Briefing notes for Cabinet Members e.g. serious case reviews, media interviews, background briefings on high profile issues are produced when required.</p> <p>Weekly briefing meetings with Leader and Cabinet Members including news grid (media and social media) and campaign information is also provided eg Budget Awareness Campaign.</p> <p>Weekly bulletin for Elected Members to include latest news releases, marked days/dates/events.</p>
<p>Are Councillors able to request specific research requests, and are the parameters clearly set out?</p>	<p>Process and clear criteria need to be established as part of Elected Member Research Protocol.</p> <p>Until recently, there has been capacity in the policy and performance team to assist with research requests (4 graduates), but this will cease from November 2024.</p>
<p>Is there regular circulation of local and national events which Councillors may be interested in?</p>	<p>Weekly bulletin for Elected Members which includes latest news release, marked days/dates/events.</p>