

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

**28 MAY 2015**

**REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES**

**OUTCOMES OF MEMBER SURVEYS**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Democratic Services Committee of the outcomes of the recent surveys undertaken in relation to maximising attendance at Member Development events and the distribution of agenda minutes and reports to elected members.

**2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities**

- 2.1 The support provided by the Democratic Services team and officers of the Council to Elected Members assists in the achievement of all Corporate Priorities.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 At the previous meeting of the Democratic Services Committee in February it was requested that a survey be carried out to determine the most appropriate timings and frequency for member development activities to ensure that participation could be optimised.
- 3.2 It was intended to determine if the existing protocol for the delivery of member development activities accurately reflected the requirements of members and would remove a potential barrier for members attending events.
- 3.3 Opportunities to achieve the savings required by the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) are continually being considered. With the introduction of the Modern.gov committee administration system the Democratic Services Team are able to tailor the requirements of elected members in respect of the provision of electronic rather than hard copy agenda and reports.
- 3.4 It was hoped that some savings could be achieved by the reduction of printed documents. Subsequent savings may have also been made in respect of the courier service due to the potential reduction in the volume of letters etc. required to be circulated.
- 3.5 Both surveys were presented to Elected Members at the Council meeting on 28 April 2015. Elected Members not in attendance at that meeting were sent a copy of the documents and requested to return them to the Democratic Services Team.

#### 4. Current situation / proposal

##### 4.1 Maximising attendance at member development activities.

4.1.1 The survey was completed by 37 (68.52%) of the 54 Elected Members which provided a reasonable cross section of representation in terms of political affiliation, gender and age. It should be noted that not all respondents answered all questions so the total figures may vary between responses.

4.1.2 The breakdown of responses is as follows:

<b><u>Number of topics per month:</u></b>	Preferred	Percentage	Notes
1	23	62.16	
2	10	27.02	
3	1	2.70	
Other	1	2.70	1 topic every 6 weeks

##### **Recommendation:**

1 Member development topic be provided each month

<b><u>Number of sessions per topic:</u></b>	Preferred	Percentage	Notes
1	12	32.43	
2	18	48.64	
Round Robin	7	18.92	

##### **Recommendation:**

The Committee's view was requested to confirm that 2 Member Development sessions per topic be provided.

<b><u>Most preferred days (2):</u></b>	Preferred	Percentage	Notes
Monday	17	45.95	
Tuesday	15	40.54	
Wednesday	17	45.95	
Thursday	13	35.14	
Friday	2	5.41	

<b><u>Least preferred days (2):</u></b>	Preferred	Percentage	Notes
Monday	9	24.32	
Tuesday	9	24.32	
Wednesday	4	10.81	
Thursday	7	18.92	
Friday	30	81.08	

##### **Recommendation:**

The Committee's view was requested to confirm that Member Development sessions be provided on weekdays other than Fridays

<b><u>Timings of Events:</u></b>	Most 1	2	3	Least 4
08:00-10:00	6	6	5	11
10:00-12:00	16	11	0	5
14:00-16:00	9	9	11	1
16:00-18:00	5	2	11	10

The Committee's view was requested to confirm that the preferred timings for Member Development sessions be provided.

<b><u>Pre Council Briefings:</u></b>	1	2	3
14:00 for 45 minutes	24	1	4
14:15 for 30 minutes	9	15	0
14:30 for 30 minutes	4	0	15

**Recommendation:**

That Pre-Council Briefing sessions be held at 14:00 for 45 minutes before Council meetings

4.2 Agenda & Reports Survey

4.2.1 The survey was completed by 37 (68.52%) of the 54 Elected Members which provided a reasonable cross section of representation in terms of political affiliation, gender and age. It should be noted that not all respondents answered all questions so the total figures may vary between responses.

4.2.2 The breakdown of responses is as follows:

	Preferred	Percentage	Notes
Hard & Electronic Copies:	35	94.60	10 members requested electronic copies of documents for committees for which they were not a member
Electronic Only	2	5.00	

**Recommendations:**

That reports and agenda be:

- circulated in hard and electronic format for those meetings for members of the committee
- circulated in electronic format to those members who are not on the committee but wish to receive documents for those committees

	Preferred 1	2	Least 3
Collect from Members Room	9	10	6
By post	15	7	3
By Email	6	6	12

### **Recommendations:**

Should the courier be unavailable that documents be circulated by post where it is cost effective.

4.2.3 The following additional comments were made in response to the survey:

- Additional supporting documents could be placed in the members room rather than being sent out to members
- Use smaller fonts in reports
- Reports could be more focused on the key issues of the topic
- Print on recycled paper
- Use the projector screen to display reports
- Any documents not collected from the Members Room by Friday AM be sent out 1st class or via the courier to ensure members get their mail on Saturday
- Hard copies are better for dyslexic people
- Primarily use OWA to electronic communication where attachments are difficult to open so regrettably hard copies are required
- Hard copies of the agenda and reports are useful to annotate
- Deliver Porthcawl members mail to Porthcawl Town Council for collection

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

5.1 There will be no immediate 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 funding in relation to this report will be met from existing budgets

## **8. Recommendations**

8.1 That the Democratic Services Committee considers the content of this report and make appropriate recommendations for the delivery of member development activities and formal meeting documentation

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**20 April 2015**

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Background Documents: None