

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

28 MAY 2015

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE UPDATES

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Democratic Services Committee of the performance and updates in relation to the services provided to Elected Members.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

2.1 The support provided by the Democratic Services team to Elected Members at all levels assists in the achievement of all Corporate Priorities.

3. Background

3.1 At the previous meeting of the Democratic Services Committee a number of queries were raised regarding the provision of support to Elected Members. These queries were passed to the relevant departments and organisations for clarification and provision of information.

4. Current situation / proposal

4.1 Member Referrals

4.1.1 Service Performance – Member Referrals

4.1.2 The following table details the number of Member Referrals made to Directorates/Departments and the completion times for referrals created between 01 April 2014 and 31 March 2015.

Directorate	Total Referred	% In 10 Days	% In 20 Days	Total Completed	Total Percentage Completed
Chief Executive	20	60.00%	85.00%	20	100.00%
LARS	151	68.70%	79.86%	151	100.00%
Children's	106	51.89%	66.98%	106	100.00%
Communities	1470	53.03%	73.22%	1464	99.69%
Resources	109	45.82%	72.02%	109	100.00%
Wellbeing	97	64.95%	84.54%	97	100.00%
External	207	48.18%	59.82%	206	99.91%
Totals:	2160	48.58%	74.59%	2153	99.94%

4.1.3 The following table shows the overall monthly completion statistics for referrals between 01 April 2014 and 31 March 2015.

Month	Referred	Completed	Ongoing	Percentage
April	184	184	0	100.00
May	165	165	0	100.00
June	199	199	0	100.00
July	246	246	0	100.00
August	176	176	0	100.00
September	202	202	0	100.00
October	173	173	0	100.00
November	139	138	1	99.28
December	137	137	0	100.00
January	204	204	0	100.00
February	154	153	1	99.35
March	181	176	5	97.24
Totals:	2160	2153	7	99.66

4.1.4 This shows that 99.66% of referrals from the period were completed which compares to the 96.14% for the previous year. The 10 day and 20 day completion rates have increased from 41.01% and 72.96% respectively for a similar period last year to this year's 48.58% and 74.69%.

4.2 Member Development Programme

4.2.1 The following member development activities have been held since the last meeting of the committee:

25 Feb	- MTFs Update	Pre-Council briefing
18 Mar	- Dementia Awareness	Pre-Council briefing
27 Mar	- Young Carers	Member development
30 Mar	- Treasury Management	Audit Committee
02 Apr	- Future of the Planning Service in Bridgend	DC Committee
14 Apr	- Shaping the Future	Member development
21 Apr	- Shaping the Future	Member development
29 Apr	- Shaping the Future	Member development
30 Apr	Community Infrastructure Levy Update	DC Committee

4.2.2 The Pre-council briefing in April in respect of European Funding was postponed and Rescheduled due to a change in the Council meeting start time. This session will now be held on 15 July 2015.

4.2.3 As identified in the Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy the topics for inclusion in the member development programme are anticipated to include regional or national topics.

4.2.4 Pre council Briefings

4.2.5 The following Pre Council briefings have been arranged:

- 17 Jun 15 Supporting the Transgender Community
- 15 Jul 15 European Funding Briefing

4.2.6 The following Pre-Council briefings are being proposed:

- 02 Sep 15 Bullying in Schools
- 07 Oct 15 Local Transport Plan
- 25 Nov 15 MTFS update
- 16 Dec 15 Dark Skies
- 20 Jan 16 Domestic Violence update
- 25 Feb 16 (Budget) MTFS Update
- 16 Mar 16 Lessons from Fukushima
- 13 Apr 16 TBC
- 11 May 16 TBC

4.2.7 The Committee is requested to identify any additional topics other than those listed in paragraph 4.2.6 to be delivered as Pre-Council briefings and to prioritise those topics accordingly.

4.2.8 Member Development Activities

4.2.9 The following Member Development events have been scheduled:

- 26 Jun 15 Universal Credit & Welfare Reform 10.00 am
- 03 Jul 15 Universal Credit & Welfare Reform 10.00 am

4.2.10 The following member development activities are planned to be scheduled:

- Early June Children Sexual Exploitation
- Late July/September Round Robin Event (x2) to include:
 - Elective Home Education,
 - Highways & Depot Rationalisation
 - Equalities Data
 - Equalities and Diversity
 - Data Protection
 - Procurement Portal
 - Libraries Update

4.2.11 Specialist Member Development Activities

4.2.12 The following specialist Member Development Activities have been scheduled:

11 Jun	Committee protocols and procedures	DC Committee
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4.2.13 The following specialist member development activities are being planned:

- June/July Scrutiny Members/officers:
The potential topics include:
- The opportunities for overview and scrutiny in the light of the many pressures on council budgets
 - The importance of relationships - between scrutiny members, the cabinet and senior officers
 - The skills needed to manage the scrutiny process to get the most constructive results

- Managing external and health scrutiny and the scrutiny of partnerships
- Scrutiny of the commissioning of services and to explore all ways of achieving greater efficiencies and reducing costs.
- Question Techniques

Scrutiny Chairs

The potential topics include:

- Chairing Skills
- the relationships between scrutiny chairs and scrutiny officers
- the nature of scrutiny leadership
- innovative ways of collecting evidence
- how to plan and develop questions and get what you want from those who come to answer questions
- how to make recommendations effective

4.3 Annual Reports

- 4.3.1 The Committee is reminded that all Elected Members are provided with the opportunity to complete an Annual Report for the previous year's activities but all senior salary holders are expected complete annual reports. Details of the number of members who have published their annual reports are to be reported to the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for Wales.
- 4.3.2 In the 2013-14 period, 30 Elected Members completed and published their Annual reports to the Bridgend county Borough Council website.
- 4.3.3 Due to the staffing reductions within the Democratic Services Team the level of support previously provided for the completion of Elected Member Annual Reports will not be available for the forthcoming year. The Team will provide the report template and the Member development session information. However the formal committee attendance data is available on the BCBC website which members can use to compile their reports
- 4.3.4 Members are requested to complete their annual report and submit them to the Democratic Services Team using the membersbcbc@bridgend.gov.uk email address. The reports will be checked for formatting prior to publication to the BCBC website by 28 August 2015.

4.4 Role Description Portfolios

- 4.4.1 Following the Annual Meeting of Council significant changes were made in respect of the appointment to committees and to roles. Democratic Services will be updating the Elected Member Role Descriptions Portfolios as soon as possible in order for them to be used in the Personal Development Review Process.
- 4.4.2 It is anticipated that all the updated Role Descriptions Portfolios will be provided to elected Members by the 01 June 2015.

4.5 Personal Development Reviews (PDRs)

- 4.5.1 Elected Members also have to be provided with the opportunity to undertake PDR's.

The completion of PDRs is carried out as part of a peer review process with the allocation of appraiser and appraisee co-ordinated by political groups. Once PDRs are completed they are requested to be copied to the Head of Democratic Services to assess any training identified and which could be included in the Member Development Programme.

4.5.2 It is hoped that all PDRs will be completed by 01 September 2015. In the previous period very few completed PDR's were copied to the Head of Democratic Services but it is hoped that this number will increase in the forthcoming year.

4.6 Town & Community Council (TCC) Website Grants

4.6.1 Democratic Services is currently facilitating the administration of a Welsh Government Grant of £500 to each TCC within the County Borough to develop their web presence.

4.6.2 To date 12 of the 20 TCC have completed the grant agreement and have submitted claims which have been paid.

4.6.3 The closing date for applications for this grant was 31 March 2015. No further claims can be accepted without reference to the Welsh Government. With only 12 of the 20 possible claims being made a report will be submitted to the Welsh Government requesting that any residual funding be used by the Authority to fund Democratic diversity activities being planned by the Authority.

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. **Recommendations**

8.1 The Democratic Services Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report and to:

- Identify and prioritise any additional topics for pre-Council briefings;
- Identify and prioritise any additional member development topics for inclusion in the Member Development programme
- Approve the planned member development events shown in paragraph 4.2.

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Background documents – None