

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

26 MAY 2016

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – OPERATIONAL AND PARTNERSHIP 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 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 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 2015 and 31 March 2016.

Directorate	Total Referred	% In 10 Days	% In 20 Days	Total Completed	Total Percentage Completed
Chief Executive	2	0.00%	50.00%	2	100.00%
Education & Transformation	56	61.82%	74.55%	55	98.21%
Communities	1560	45.12%	75.87%	1474	97.00%
Resources	95	60.19%	87.95%	91	98.58%
Wellbeing	98	64.58%	87.50%	96	97.96%
LARS	127	47.61%	79.02%	125	99.44%
External	170	52.15%	67.55%	165	96.38%
Totals:	2052	53.54%	80.33%	2008	98.22%

4.1.3 The following table shows the overall monthly completion statistics for referrals between 01 April 2015 and 31 March 2016.

Month	Referred	Completed	Ongoing	Percentage
January	233	228	5	97.85
February	188	181	7	96.28
March	170	147	23	86.47
April	177	177	0	100.00
May	165	165	0	100.00
June	192	192	0	100.00
July	212	212	0	100.00
August	124	124	0	100.00
September	175	175	0	100.00
October	153	149	4	97.39
November	150	149	1	99.33
December	113	109	4	96.46
Totals:	2052	2008	44	

4.1.4 This shows that there were approximately 100 less referrals last year than the previous year. Completion rates in 2015/16 fell to 96.46% from the 99.66% for the previous year. However the 10 day and 20 day completion rates have increased from 48.58% and 74.69% in 2014/15 to 53.54% and 80.33% in 2015/16.

4.1.5 Provisional plans to update the referrals system have now been superseded by the corporate restructure which was implemented on 13 April 2016. There has also been a request that the referrals system be used to identify potential topics for Scrutiny consideration. It is hoped that the planned changes and the required revisions to the referrals system will be implemented as soon as possible.

4.1.6 To achieve these outcomes it may be necessary to revise the process used by Elected Members for the recording of referrals to enable a more detailed analysis of the referrals data to be undertaken.

4.2 Member Development Programme

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

Pre Council Briefings			
Topic	Date	Total attendance	Percentage attendance
City Deal	25-Nov-15	35	64.81%
Transport & Waste Update	16-Dec-15	29	53.70%
South Wales Fire and Rescue Service	20-Jan-16	37	68.52%
Citizens Advice Bureau - Communities First	17-Feb-16	32	59.26%
Welsh Language Standards	10-Mar-16	13	24.07%
Digital Transformation	13-Apr-16	32	59.26%
		Average	54.94%

Member Development Sessions			
Topic	Dates(s)	Total attendance	Percentage attendance
Workshop on Waste	27-Jan-16	24	44.44%
Treasury Management	10-Feb-16	15	27.78%
Local Government Bill	12-Feb-16	38	70.37%
Social Services & Wellbeing Update	16-Mar-16 23-Mar-16	28	51.85%
Carbon Reduction Training	07-Apr-16 24-Apr-16	15	27.78%
		Average	44.44%

4.2.2 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.

4.2.3 Pre council Briefings

4.2.4 The following Pre Council briefings are being planned:

- 8-Jun-16 Addressing Bullying in Schools
- 6-Jul-16 Central South Consortium
- 7-Sep-16 Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking

4.2.5 The following Pre-Council briefings have been identified for delivery in due course:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| a) Update on the Cultural Trust | - | (Democratic Services Committee) |
| b) Domestic Violence Update | - | (Democratic Services Committee) |
| c) National Autistic Society Cymru | - | (Cabinet Member Resources) |
| d) Ty Elis Counselling Service | - | (Cabinet Member Resources) |
| e) Dark Skies | - | (Cllr E Venables) |
| f) Lessons from Fukushima | - | (Cllr EP Foley) |

- g) Dementia Friendly Communities - (TCC Forum)
- h) Community Health Council - (Chief Executive)

4.2.6 The Committee is requested to identify any additional topics other than those listed in paragraph 4.2.5 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 topics have been identified:

- a) Wellbeing and Future Generations Act
- b) Elective Home Education,
- c) Highways & Depot Rationalisation
- d) Equalities Data
- e) Equalities and Diversity
- f) Data Protection
- g) Procurement Portal
- h) Libraries Update
- i) Anti-slavery & Human trafficking
- j) Update on Gypsy Travellers
- k) Radicalisation of Young People (PREVENT)

4.2.10 The Democratic Services Committee is requested to identify any additional topics for delivery either as a repeated Member Development session or as a round robin event. The Committee is requested to prioritise activities accordingly.

4.2.11 Development Control - Member Development Activities

The Development Control Committee have scheduled the following Development Control related development sessions:

The Historic Environment	-	23 May 2016	10.00am - 12.30pm
Designing out crime	-	09 Jun 2016	12.45pm – 1:30pm
Developments of National Significance	-	07 Jul 2016	12.45pm – 1:30pm
LDP review workshop	-	04 Aug 2016	12.45pm – 1:30pm

4.2.12 All Elected Members are able to attend these sessions but Planning officers would appreciate being informed of any Elected Members who are not on the Development Control Committee that wish to attend these events.

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 reported to the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for Wales.

- 4.3.2 In the 2014/15 period, 21 Elected Members completed their Annual reports which were subsequently published on the Bridgend County Borough Council website.
- 4.3.3 The percentage of annual reports completed since the 2012 Local Government elections is as follows:

2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
96.15%	56.60%	41.18%

- 4.3.4 Members are requested to complete their annual report for 2015/16 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 02 September 2016.

4.4 Personal Development Reviews (PDRs)

- 4.4.1 Elected Members are also 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 PDR's 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.
- 4.4.2 It is hoped that all PDRs will be completed by 02 September 2016. In the previous period very few members completed PDR's were copied to the Head of Democratic Services but it is hoped that this number will increase in the forthcoming year.

4.5 Town & Community Council (TCC) Website Grants

- 4.5.1 Democratic Services is currently facilitating the administration of a Welsh Government Grant to provide £500 to each TCC within the County Borough to develop their web presence.
- 4.5.2 To date, 14 of the 20 TCCs have completed the grant agreement and have submitted claims which have been paid.
- 4.5.3 The closing date for applications for this grant was 31 March 2015 but the Welsh Government has agreed that the deadline can be extended and all efforts are being made to encourage Town and Community Councils to submit appropriate grant applications

4.6 Webcasting

- 4.6.1 Webcasting facilities have now been installed and are operational. As at 31 March 2016 Bridgend had broadcast a total of 20 hours and 44 minutes of meetings. This is 29 hours and 16 minutes less than the expected 50 hours to be broadcast in 2015/16.
- 4.6.2 The following table shows the meetings which have been webcast and the respective viewing information for each meeting as at 29 April 2016.

Committee	Date	Total Views	Unique Views
Development Control Committee	07-Jan-16	851	486
P&G Overview and Scrutiny Committee	14-Jan-16	471	300
CYP Overview and Scrutiny Committee	21-Jan-16	415	318
CEL Overview and Scrutiny Committee	27-Jan-16	344	233
Audit Committee	28-Jan-16	376	261
CRI Overview and Scrutiny Committee	09-Feb-16	340	181
ASC Overview and Scrutiny Committee	11-Feb-16	242	179
Development Control Committee	18-Feb-16	261	153
Cabinet	01-Mar-16	285	208
Council	10-Mar-16	397	229
Development Control Committee	31-Mar-16	139	83
Total as at 29 April 2016		4121	2631

- 4.6.3 It has previously been agreed that every Development Control Committee meeting will be webcast. The programme of other meetings to be webcast is being reviewed with the intention to webcast those meetings which will be of significant public interest and which are likely to optimise the potential viewing figures. Efforts will also be made to effectively utilise the unused capacity from the 2015/16 period.
- 4.6.4 There will be approximately 65 hours available to webcasting meetings or other activities for each of the 2016/17 and 2017/18 periods.
- 4.6.5 There has been limited feedback from the public regarding the webcasting but initial comments have been positive and have included:-
“Thank you for sending the live web link for today’s Committee meeting, which I must admit was excellent”
Other positive anecdotal comments have been received and the Authority will continue its ongoing webcasting review and identify cost effective improvements to the webcasting service.
- 4.7 Lone Working Protocol
- 4.7.1 Work is progressing on addressing issues identified by the Elected Member Lone Working group. Procedural issues regarding the use of I-Call are still being considered. Once these matters are appropriately addressed it is hoped that the protocol will be made available to all Elected Members.
- 4.8 Modern.gov Update
- 4.8.1 The Modern.gov software continues to be developed with the latest update being the inclusion of data to provide a postcode search to “Find my Councillor”. The software postcode search facility is awaiting activation but should be available shortly.
- 4.8.2 The plan for the implementation of the e-report approval process is continuing but has been delayed due to the corporate restructure approved by Council on 13 April 2016. The implementation of the electronic process is expected to be completed during this financial year.

4.9 Members ICT Forum

4.9.1 Following the Annual Meeting of Council changes are likely to the membership of the Members ICT Forum. Group Leader's will be contacted shortly to confirm their representatives on the group. Elected Members will be to invited to inform their Group Leaders if they are interested in participating in this group.

4.9.2 The next meeting of the Forum is currently planned for 16 June 2016 but this date may need to be revised. It is anticipated that the next meeting will start the review of the ICT provision for Elected Members in readiness for the 2017 Local Government elections. Provisional plans include an assessment of the current provision, consideration of the possible ICT options which may be provided and a technical trial to prove any potential solution.

4.9.3 The Democratic Services Committee is requested to fully engage in the planned review of existing ICT provision following the next meeting of the Members ICT Forum.

4.10 Welsh Language Standards

4.10.1 The revised Welsh Language Standards came into force for the Authority on 30 March 2016 with the majority of the standards implemented.

4.10.2 A number of the standards were appealed by this Authority and were submitted to the Welsh Language Commissioner. The appealed standards are now in suspension until a determination by the Commissioner has been made.

4.11 Town & Community Council Charter

4.11.1 The Town and Community Council Forum recently endorsed the revision of the Town and Community Councils Charter. The revised Charter is designed to build on existing good practice and embrace feedback from all partners in Bridgend County Borough. It will reflect the shared principles of openness, honesty and our common priorities of putting citizens at the centre and encouraging democratic participation.

4.11.2 The following key changes to the Charter have been made:

- a) The revised Charter identifies focal points and methods of communication between Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) and the TCCs.
- b) The Charter would be reviewed annually to ensure that it remained current and reflected the developing relationships between Councils.
- c) The Charter to become a standard agenda item for the TCC Forum meetings.
- d) Officer representatives of BCBC and the TCCs to meet quarterly to provide share information and provide support on matters of mutual interest.

4.11.3 The re-design and translation of the revised charter document is being undertaken.

It is hoped that the revised charter will be approved by all Councils within Bridgend County Borough and a formal signing of the Charter will take place later this year.

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 any additional topics and prioritise all pre-Council briefings;
- Identify any additional member development topics for inclusion in the Member Development programme and prioritise them accordingly.

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Background documents – None