



## STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 26TH FEBRUARY 2014

**SUBJECT: MEMBER TRAINING AND SUPPORT**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151 OFFICER**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek the views of the Standards Committee on proposed arrangements for reporting Members who fail to attend mandatory training.
- 1.2 Seek agreement for a reporting protocol contained in this report.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report proposes a new process for reporting Members who fail to attend mandatory training. This would be a new role for the Standards Committee in monitoring attendance of mandatory training. Specifically, should a Member fail to attend Mandatory Training they will be required to attend a meeting of the Standards Committee to explain their absence. It will be a matter for the Standards Committee to consider what course of action it considers appropriate, but could result in a Member being sanctioned.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The report assists in the implementation of the Council's Governance Improvement Action Plan and makes recommendations to improve Members training and support arrangements.

### 4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Attached at appendix 1 is a report which is to be considered at the next meeting of the Democratic Services Committee. The report has been subject to consultation with Corporate Management Team and discussions at a Cabinet Policy Development Meeting.
- 4.2 The report recommends that the Council introduces a Training and Development Framework to provide a consistent process for identifying and delivering training based on Members individual roles and responsibilities. A key step change for Members will be the introduction of 'Mandatory Training'. This will be made up of the following:

#### **Mandatory Induction Training**

- 4.3 The Induction Training will be delivered to all Members within the first month of a new Council. Mandatory Induction training will be made up of two 2½ hour modules held in the daytime and repeated in the evening:

## Module 1 - Governance

- Code of Conduct – Understanding the Council's Code of Conduct and the role of the Council's Standards Committee and Public Service Ombudsman.
- The Council's Constitution – Understanding the key procedures for the operation of full Council and Council Committees.
- Electronic Voting and Webcasting – A guide to the operation of the Council's electronic voting system installed in the Council Chamber and to inform Members of the operation of webcasting of Council meetings.

## Module 2 - Equalities and Information Management

- Information Management and Data Protection - Requirements of data protection legislation, awareness required to handle all personal information safely and freedom of information legal obligations.
- Equalities and Welsh Language – To provide Members with an overview of the Council's Equalities and Welsh Language obligations.

### **Mandatory Regulatory and Personnel Committee Training**

4.4 The Council has 4 regulatory and 3 personnel related committees, namely

- a. Planning Committee
- b. Licensing Committee
- c. Rights of Way Cabinet Committee
- d. Audit Committee
- e. Pension and Compensation Committee
- f. Appointments and Appeals
- g. Investigating and Disciplinary Committee

4.5 It is proposed that Members serving on these committees receive mandatory training twice per Council term to ensure that they understand the role of the committee, any considerations to be taken into account before coming to a decision and any appeals processes. Membership of these committees will be dependant on Members undertaking the mandatory training. The training will be made up of a 2 x 2½ hour training module for each committee.

4.6 As the above mandatory training subjects are considered essential, feedback about the quality and usefulness of the training will be reported to the Democratic Services Committee and any non attendance will be reported to the Standards Committee. It is proposed that any Member who fails to attend the mandatory training will be required to attend a meeting of the Standards Committee to explain their absence. It will be a matter for the Standards Committee to consider what course of action it considers appropriate, but could result in a Member being sanctioned.

### **PROTOCOL**

4.7 Should the Standards Committee agree to monitoring attendance of Mandatory Training, the following process is suggested for reporting non attendance:

- a. The Head of Democratic Services will write to any Member who fails to attend a Mandatory Training course to request an explanation for non attendance.
- b. Members who have failed to attend for whatever reason will automatically be referred to the Standards Committee to explain their reasons.
- c. Standards Committee will require any Member referred to them for failing to attend mandatory training to attend a future meeting to explain their absence. The Standards Committee will seek an explanation for non attendance and come to a conclusion on whether the Member's explanation is reasonable or censure the Member for not

complying with Council's Training Scheme for Members. The Standards Committee will write to the Member with their conclusions as soon as possible after the meeting and send copies to the Head of Democratic Services and Chair of the Democratic Services Committee. The decision of the Standards Committee is final.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Should additional meetings be required as a result of this report there could be associated additional meeting costs which can be accommodated from existing Democratic Services budgets.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no consultation responses which are not included in this report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That the Standards Committee agree that Members who fail to attend Mandatory Training events should be reported to the Standards Committee in accordance with the protocol outlined at paragraph 4.7.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 To further strengthen the Council's corporate governance framework by providing additional support for Members.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 The Local Government Act 2000

Author: Jonathan Jones  
Democratic Services Manager

Consultees: Stuart Rosser, Interim Chief Executive  
Sandra Aspinall, Acting Deputy Chief Executive  
Dave Street, Corporate Director of Social Services  
Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer  
Gail Williams, Interim Monitoring Officer  
Gill Lewis, Seconded, Aneurian Bevan Health Board  
Emma Sullivan, Democratic Services Officer

Appendices:  
Appendix 1 – Draft report 'Member Training and Support'.