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**Date: 9th December 2014**

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Democratic Services Committee** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Monday, 15th December, 2014** at **5.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Chris Burns'.

**Chris Burns**  
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

## A G E N D A

- 1 Apologies for absence.
- 2 Declarations of Interest.  
Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

To approve and sign the following minutes: -

- 3 Democratic Services Committee held on 17th September 2014.

To receive and consider the following reports: -

- 4 Draft Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report 2015/16.
- 5 WLGA Charter for Member Support and Development.

A greener place Man gwyrddach



6 Navigating the New Caerphilly County Borough Council Website (Verbal Update and Demonstration).

**Circulation:**

Councillors G. Bevan, P.J. Bevan, H.W. David, W. David, D.T. Davies (Vice Chair), R.T. Davies, Mrs C. Forehead, Mrs P. A. Griffiths, Ms J.G. Jones, G. Kirby, C.P. Mann (Chair), Mrs D. Price, A. Rees, Mrs M.E. Sargent, Mrs E. Stenner and J. Taylor,

And Appropriate Officers



## DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH (SIRHOWY ROOM) ON WEDNESDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 2014 AT 5:00 PM

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PRESENT:

Councillor D.T. Davies Vice-Chair

Councillors:

Mrs G. Bevan, P.J. Bevan, H.W. David, W. David, R.T. Davies, Mrs C. Forehead,  
Ms J.G. Jones, G. Kirby, Mrs M.E. Sargent, Mrs E. Stenner and J. Taylor.

Together with:

J. Jones (Democratic Services Manager), A. Price (Interim Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Research Officer) and E. Sullivan (Democratic Services Officer).

#### 1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P. Bevan, Mrs P. Griffiths, C.P. Mann (Chair), Mrs D. Price and A. Rees.

Having received apologies from Councillor C.P. Mann (Chair), Councillor D.T. Davies (Vice Chair) presided as Chair for the meeting.

#### 2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the course of the meeting.

#### 3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 28th May 2014 (minute nos. 1-7) be approved as correct records and signed by the Chair.

## REPORTS OF OFFICERS

### 4. PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE STANDARD SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

The Scrutiny Research Officer introduced the report which outlined proposals to amend scrutiny committee agendas in order to make them consistent with the new consultation arrangements for scrutiny committee forward work programmes as well as changes to the printing of scrutiny committee information reports.

It was noted that since the introduction of the new forward work programme arrangements it had become apparent that the format of scrutiny committee agendas needed to be reconsidered. The standard request for report agenda item was not consistent with the new arrangements for developing forward work programmes on a rolling 12 week cycle. In order to ensure clarity and consistency with the management of the forward work programmes the report suggested that this item be removed from scrutiny committee agendas.

In terms of information reports it was noted that these were currently printed and included in the committee agenda pack. Members were advised of the costs associated with the printing of committee documents and the need to make savings in this area. It was noted that of the 105 information reports presented to scrutiny committees over the last 6 months only 4 were called in for discussion.

The Officer confirmed that information items would continue to be included on the committee agenda but would not be printed. Instead Councillors and members of the public would be advised on the agenda that these reports would be made available electronically and should the report be called forward for discussion printed copies would be made available at the meeting.

The Chair thanked the Officer for her report and full discussion ensued.

Members were mindful that the number of information reports being brought forward for discussion was low and the need to make savings against printing costs. However it was felt that the information contained within these reports was important to Members, irrespective of whether it warranted calling forward. The difficulties some people experienced reading a particularly large report or high volume of documents on screen was referenced and concerns were also expressed that any loss of internet connectivity or server failure could prohibit access to reports.

Officers confirmed that printed copies could still be made available on request and advised that the proposed changes could be revisited should the transition proved impractical.

It was moved and seconded that an additional recommendation be referred to Council in that the provision of only electronic 'for information' reports be implemented for a trial period with the transition reviewed at the end of the financial year and by a show of hands this was agreed by the majority present.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations contained in the Officer's report and the additional recommendation of the Democratic Services Committee be recommended to Council for approval and by a show of hands this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations be approved by Council: -

1. To remove the 'requests for reports agenda item' from the standard scrutiny committee agenda.
2. To discontinue the printing of information reports and include advice on the agenda that copies of the reports are available electronically on the Council's website and Members Portal.

3. The Monitoring Officer be given delegated powers to make the necessary amendments to the Council's Constitution.
4. That the provision of only electronic information reports be implemented for a trial period with the transition reviewed at the end of the financial year.

**5. DEVOLUTION, DEMOCRACY AND DELIVERY WHITE PAPER - REFORMING LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

The Democratic Services Manager introduced the report which informed Members of the Welsh Government White Paper 'Devolution, Democracy and Delivery - Reforming Local Government' as part of the consultation process.

The White Paper contained a number of very significant potential issues for local government and the key proposals were highlighted for Members information. The proposals for the further strengthening of scrutiny arrangements to ensure greater openness, transparency and accountability were outlined. These were noted to include a requirement for auditors and regulators to report directly to scrutiny committees; putting Local Service Boards on a statutory footing and a greater emphasis on providing effective challenge on performance.

Members were referred to page 37 of Appendix 1, which contained a series of questions for response as part of the consultation process. The Officer confirmed that Chris Burns (Interim Chief Executive) would be submitting a report to Council on the 29th September 2014 and had requested Members comments on the 26 questions to assist him in his response to the consultation. It was noted that should Members wish more time to consider their response they could be made following the meeting to the Democratic Services Manager or at Council. Members wanting to respond individually could do so directly to Welsh Government.

The Chair thanked the Officer for his report and Members comments were welcomed.

Proposals to strengthen scrutiny were welcomed but concerns were expressed as to how this could be achieved considering the depth of the cuts facing local authorities. Concerns were also expressed in terms of the increase workload facing Councillors as a result of the changes and the need to ensure that the role was appropriately remunerated going forward in order to attract younger people.

In terms of funding for scrutiny the Officer confirmed that grant funding was available from Welsh Government for specific scrutiny development activities as was the case with the recent Gwent Scrutiny Challenge event. However, bids were quite competitive and must have achievable outcomes.

Members discussed scrutinising performance management and how this could be accommodated within an already extremely busy meeting cycle. The Officer confirmed that a report would be coming forward to the next meeting on how scrutiny could become more involved in performance management and how this could be more easily presented to Members on a regular basis.

Members requested that the Democratic Services Manager re-circulate the White Paper to all Councillors.

Having fully considered the report the Democratic Services Committee noted the consultation requirements on the White Paper 'Devolution, Democracy and Delivery - Reforming Local Government'.

## **6. SOCIAL MEDIA PROTOCOL FOR ELECTED MEMBERS.**

The Interim Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer introduced the report which presented a draft Social Media Protocol for Members consideration and endorsement prior to its presentation at Council.

Members were referred to Appendix 1 of the report and the draft protocol which set out how Elected Members should interact with social media both as Councillors and private individuals. The Officer confirmed that Section 2.1 of the protocol referred to the use of Social Media by Elected Members. It was noted that the protocol sought to provide examples of good social media use as well as the risks and where possible breaches of the code of conduct could arise.

The Chair thanked the Officer for her report and full discussion ensued.

Concern was raised on paragraphs 2.1.5 and 2.1.6 which stated that Members should not use social media during meetings and should use mobile devices sparingly and discreetly during meetings.

A difference of opinion arose in this regard with some Members in favour of the prohibition of social media use during meetings and other Members in favour of its use. The main concern expressed by the majority of those present was that updating social media during a meeting would divert Members attention from the matter under debate which should be their primary focus.

The Officer noted the points raised and referenced the WLGA Guidance on Social Media and a recent statement by the then Local Government and Government Business Manager, Lesley Griffiths on the use of Social Media. Members were asked to consider carefully the use of social media at meetings and how this could be perceived.

Concerns were also raised in regard to paragraph 2.1.8.5 which stated that members should be aware that any person they include as a contact on a social media site should be regarded, for the purposes of the Code of Conduct, as a close personal associate. A Member expressed the concern that they might not have had actual contact with a particular 'facebook friend' or 'twitter follower' and due to the potential volume of contacts involved Members may not even be aware that they would have a declaration to declare. Clarification was sought as to whether this lack of awareness would be a suitable defence should this become an issue for the Standards Committee.

The Officer noted the concerns raised and confirmed that it would not be possible to give Members a definitive list of examples as to when a relationship should be declared, but what the protocol sought to do was highlight the possibility that a conflict could arise. Members were referred to guidance from the Public Ombudsman for Wales on the definition of a 'close personal associate' and were advised that this had to be translated into the associations that were made using social media. Therefore contacts on a social media site should be regarded as close personal associates. The Officer agreed that there were clear benefits to using social media to communicate with members of the public but as described in the protocol different professional and personal sites could be used to differentiate between friends and constituents.

The Officer reminded Members that the public perception of the connection could be different to that of the Member and this should be kept in mind.

It was moved and seconded that for the reasons given in the Officer's report the recommendation contained therein be approved and Council be informed of the endorsement of the Democratic Service Committee and by a show of hands this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the Social Media Protocol set out in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report be adopted by Council.

## **7. PROTOCOL FOR THE WEBCASTING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS**

The Democratic Services Manager introduced the draft report which sought the views of the Democratic Services Committee on the protocol for the webcasting of Council meetings prior to its consideration at Council on the 7th October 2014.

The Officer summarised the progress made with regard to the implementation of webcasting and electronic voting and confirmed that the company 'Public-i' had been awarded a 3 year contract to facilitate webcasting and provide electronic storage of the webcast recordings.

The Officer confirmed that webcasting provided an unedited audio and visual recording of a meeting which would be available via the Council's website to view either live or in an archive format. It was noted that there were exceptions where editing would be allowed but this would require approval from the Monitoring Officer and viewers informed that they would be watching an edited version at the start of the webcast. Webcasts would be archived and available on the website for 18th months. Storage after which that period would be on a digital disk. The number of individual hits for both live and recorded meetings would be logged and analysed in order to gauge the level of interest generated. It was noted that Councils' already webcasting were experiencing a steady increase in the number of hits experienced.

In relation to electronic voting, it was noted that the system in the Chamber had been replaced and was now fully functioning and would link into the webcasting software. This allowed the vote to be displayed on the screens in the Chamber and be included in the webcast. The vote would then be printed ready for publication on the Council website.

Members were advised that meetings of Council over the next 3 months would be recorded, as if live but would not be publicly available. This would enable Members to become accustomed to the cameras position and operation and allow them to reflect on the process.

The Chair thanked the Officer for his report and full discussion ensued.

Concerns were expressed with regard to the proposed change to the minute style of webcast meetings. Members felt it important that the minute style remain unchanged in order to properly reflect the discourse of the meeting. Concern was also expressed that should there be an equipment failure a full set of minutes would be a vital back-up.

It was noted that the reduction in minutes to reflect decisions rather than debate was to ensure consistency with the webcast. A written minute being subjective to the minute taker and the webcast being objective. A Member expressed his confidence in the experience of the Council Committee Clerk to accurately summarise the main topics of debate and expressed his preference that the written minute style remain in detail and unchanged going forward with webcasting.

The archiving of minutes and digital recordings and the role of the Glamorgan Archive was discussed. Members requested that the Democratic Services Manager contract the Archivist with regard to the inclusion of digital webcasts.

Members noted the 3 month trial period for webcast meetings and expressed concern that this did not provide many meetings of Council. Clarification was sought as to whether webcasting would be rolled out to any other committees and the Officer confirmed that at the moment only Council would be webcast. He advised that the cost involved in kitting out another meeting room such as the Sirhowy Room were prohibitive but other meetings/events held within the Chamber had the potential to be webcast.

It was moved and seconded that the minute style for webcast meetings of Council remain unchanged and the view of the Democratic Services Committee be reflected in the report presented to Council on the 7th October 2014 and by a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that the minute style for webcast meetings of Council continue to be a full record and this be reflected in the report presented to Council on the 7th October 2014.

Approved as a correct record subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 15th December 2014 they were signed by the Chair.

The meeting closed at 6:30 pm.

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CHAIR





## DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - 15TH DECEMBER 2014

**SUBJECT: DRAFT INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES  
ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16**

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

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To report the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' (the Panel) draft determinations relating to councillors and co-opted members for 2015/16.
- 1.2 To seek Members views on the Panel's draft determinations for 2015/16.

### **2. LINKS TO STRATEGY**

- 2.1 Members are entitled to receive remuneration prescribed by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales ("the Panel").

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Panel is a statutory body established by Welsh Government in January 2008 to determine the scope and salaries, allowances and expenses payable to Councillors and Co-opted Members.
- 3.2 The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 gave the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales additional powers to prescribe Members remuneration. This was a significant change to the well established practice of Members determining their own scheme of allowances within the maximum sums prescribed by the Panel. The Panel subsequently received further powers following the introduction of the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, including the ability to make recommendations about the pay of heads of paid service for county and county borough councils and fire and rescue authorities.
- 3.3 This report reflects the Panel's draft determinations for 2015/16.

### **4. PRESCRIBED SCHEME OF REMUNERATION 2015/16**

- 4.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales is not suggesting any increases in payments made to Councillors and Co-opted Members for 2015/16:

### **5. BASIC SALARY**

- 5.1 All Members are entitled to receive the Basic Salary. The proposed Basic Salary for 2015/16 remains at £13,300.

## 6. SENIOR SALARIES

- 6.1 Senior Salaries are payable to Members that hold certain prescribed roles and, for this authority are limited to a maximum of 18 posts. Senior Salaries are paid inclusive of the Basic Salary.
- 6.2 The proposed Senior Salaries for 2015/16 remain the same as 2014/15 and are outlined below:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Proposed Senior Salaries 2014/15 £</b>
Leader	48,000
Deputy Leader	33,500
Cabinet Member	29,000
Committee Chairs (e.g. Scrutiny, Planning, Licensing, Audit, Democratic Services)	22,000
Leader of the Largest Opposition Group	22,000
Leaders of other Political Groups (not less than 10% of members). This currently not payable by the Council due to the political make up of members.	17,000

- 6.3 The Panel have stated that Senior Salaries of Council Leaders and Executive Members are based on the assumption that the roles are equivalent to full time. To underline this, the Panel have determined that a Cabinet Member can not receive a salary from any National Park Authority or Fire and Rescue Authority to which they have been nominated. In addition, a Member cannot receive more than one Senior Salary (there are certain exceptions for Chairs of Joint Scrutiny Committees and their sub committees) nor a Senior Salary and a Civic Salary.

## 7. CIVIC SALARIES

- 7.1 Payments made to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are also under the remit of the Panel but are not included as part of the Council's 18 Senior Salary posts. Civic Salaries are paid inclusive of the Basic Salary. Last year the Panel introduced greater local flexibility by introducing 3 levels of remuneration for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor roles. It is proposed that these remain the same for 2015/16:

	<b>Mayor</b>	<b>Deputy Mayor</b>
Level 1	£24,000	£18,000
Level 2	£21,500	£16,000
Level 3	£19,000	£14,000

- 7.2 The Panel allow local determination for Civic Salaries as activity and responsibilities of the Civic Office holders vary greatly across the country. Last year the Council determined to pay Civic Office holders Level 2.

## 8. JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

- 8.1 Last year the Panel introduced senior salaries for chairs of joint overview and scrutiny committees. Chairs of joint overview and scrutiny committees maybe remunerated in addition to the Council's 18 senior salaries. That said, it should be noted there is a statutory limit in place precluding no more than 50% of the Council's overall membership to be in receipt any type of senior salary. The Panel have proposed that for 2015/16 senior salaries for chairs of joint overview and scrutiny committees remain aligned with payments to chairs of council committees, namely a senior salary of £8,700 (plus the basic salary).

- 8.2 It is proposed that for 2015/16 chairs of joint scrutiny committees already in receipt of a senior salary in band 3 (committee chair), band 4 (Leader of the largest opposition group) or band 5 (Leader of other political groups) can receive an additional payment of £4,350.
- 8.3 It is proposed that for 2015/16 chairs of a sub committee of a joint scrutiny committee can receive an additional payment of £2,175 (plus the basic salary).
- 8.4 It is proposed that for 2015/16 chairs of a sub committee of a joint scrutiny committee already in receipt of a senior salary in band 3 (committee chair), band 4 (Leader of the largest opposition group) or band 5 (Leader of other political groups) can receive an additional payment of £1,090.
- 8.5 It is a matter for the constituent authorities to decide if they wish to award an additional payment to a chair of a joint scrutiny committee or sub committee and at which level the salary should be set. The payments for joint scrutiny committees and sub committees are to be pro rated for the duration of the committee or sub committee. The Council of the Member elected as Chair must pay for the above allowances unless there is an agreement to apportion costs by the partner authorities.

## 9. PENSIONS

- 9.1 The Panel have reaffirmed the entitlement of elected members to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

## 10. ENTITLEMENT TO FAMILY ABSENCE

- 10.1 Members are reminded that they are entitled to the following periods of family absence:
- **Maternity Absence** – Available to pregnant Members who can take an absence period of up to a maximum of 26 weeks.
  - **Newborn Absence** – Available to a Member who is married to, the civil partner or partner of a child's mother and expects to have responsibility for the upbringing of the child. Up to two consecutive weeks are available to be taken within 56 days of a child's birth.
  - **Adopter's Absence** – Available to a Member who adopts a child. Up to two consecutive weeks are available to be taken within 56 days of a child being adopted.
  - **New Adoption Absence** – Available to a Member who is married to, the civil partner or partner of a person adopting a child and expects to have responsibility for the upbringing of the child. Up to two consecutive weeks are available to be taken within 56 days of a child being adopted.
  - **Parental Absence** – Available to a Member who has or expects to have responsibility for the care of a child and does not satisfy the criteria for Maternity Absence, Newborn Absence, Adopters Absence or New Adoption Absence. Up to 90 days can be taken in a single or a series of absences from the date a councillor assumes responsibility for the care of a child under the age of 14 and ends 1 year later.
- 10.2 Members are entitled to retain their basic or senior salary during any period of family absence. Should a senior salary holder take a period of family absence, a substitute appointment can be made to that senior salary post and a senior salary paid.

## 11. CO-OPTED MEMBER PAYMENTS

- 11.1 The Council must make payments to co-opted members with voting rights. Co-opted members can receive a payment for attending committee meetings, authorised training events, conferences, pre-meetings with officers, other formal meetings where co-opted members are requested to attend, travel time to and from a meeting and reasonable preparation time. Payments to co-opted members remain as a daily fee (with provision for a ½ day payment) and are set at the rates paid to members of Welsh Government Band 2 sponsored bodies.
- 11.2 The proposed fees payable to co-opted members with voting rights remain the same for 2015/16:

Role	Fee
Co-opted Chair, Standards Committee and Audit Committee	£256 daily fee (£128 ½ day)
Co-opted Member of Standards Committee who Chairs Standards Committees for Community Councils (Not applicable for CCBC)	£226 daily fee (£113 ½ day)
Co-opted Member of Standards Committee, Education Scrutiny Committee, Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee	£198 daily fee (£99 ½ day)

- 11.3 A full day is defined as a meeting lasting over 4 hours and a half-day as up to 4 hours.

## 12. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 12.1 The Panel expects every Member 'to undertake such training and personal development opportunities as are required to properly discharge the duties for which they are remunerated'.

## 13. CARE EXPENSES

- 13.1 The Panel is keen to promote the care allowance. This relates to dependent children below the age of 15 where costs are incurred in providing care while Members or Co-opted Members are engaged on Council business and, to a dependent over the age of 15 years who requires care while Members or Co-opted Members are away from their home on Council business.
- 13.2 It is proposed for 2015/16 the maximum care expenses payable remain at £403 per month. The monthly maximum is considered a reimbursement of care expenses and cannot be annualised.
- 13.3 Care expenses shall only be payable for actual and receipted costs.

## 14. TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES

- 14.1 The Panel are proposing to keep the current HMRC mileage rates for 2015/16 for Councillors and Co-opted Members with voting rights:

Motor vehicles up to 10,000 miles – 45p per mile

Motor vehicles over 10,000 miles – 25p per mile  
Passenger supplement – 5p per passenger per mile  
Motor cycles – 24p per mile  
Pedal cycles – 20p per mile

- 14.2 In 2012 the Panel introduced an additional definition of 'official business' to allow for the reimbursement of travel claims for Members undertaking constituency business (official business is defined as 'a duty undertaken by members of principal councils in connection with constituency or ward responsibilities which arise from the discharge of local authority functions). Allowing travel claims for journeys made within Members wards is a matter for local determination. To date the Council made the decision not to allow such travel claims.
- 14.3 All other claims for travel such as bus/train/taxi fares (when authorised by the Democratic Services Manager) must be accompanied by appropriate receipts showing the actual expense. Members should always be mindful of choosing the most cost effective method of travel. Members should also be aware that tickets for public transport can be organised by Democratic Services staff.

## **15. SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES 2015/16**

- 15.1 The proposed subsistence allowances for 2015/16 for Councillors and Co-opted Members with voting rights are outlined below:
- 15.2 The maximum subsistence allowance is set at £28 per day (including breakfast when not provided as part of overnight accommodation). This is paid as a reimbursement of actual costs for approved duties with receipts provided.
- 15.3 The allowances available for an overnight stay whilst undertaking an approved duty are set at £150 for London and £95 elsewhere with receipts to be provided.
- 15.4 A maximum of £25 is available for an overnight stay with friends or relatives whilst on approved duty.

## **16. FOREGOING PAYMENTS**

- 16.1 Members or Co-opted Members may forego any part of their remuneration entitlement by giving notice in writing to the Chief Executive.

## **17. IMPLEMENTATION**

- 17.1 It is expected that the Panel's determinations will take effect from the date of the Council's Annual General Meeting.

## **18. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 18.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this report.

## **19. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 19.1 An EqIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and supplementary guidance and no potential for unlawful discrimination and/or low level or minor negative impact have been identified, therefore a full EqIA has not been carried out.

## **20. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 20.1 Members' salaries and expenses will be funded from the Democratic Services budget. If the Panel's proposals are implemented there will be no additional costs for 2015/16.

## **21. CONSULTATION**

- 21.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in the recommendations of this report.

## **22. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 22.1 Democratic Services Committee comment on the Panel's draft determinations for 2015/16. The comments will be used to respond to the Panel's consultation exercise.

## **23. STATUTORY POWERS**

- 23.1 Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Local Government Act 2000, Local Government Wales Measure 2011, Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 and the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Reports and Regulations. This is a Council function.

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Jonesj16@Caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive  
Nicole Scammell – Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer  
Stephen Harris – Acting Head of Corporate Finance  
Gail Williams – Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer  
Angharad Price – Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer  
David Thomas – Senior Policy Officer (Equalities and Welsh Language)



## DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE - 15TH DECEMBER 2014

**SUBJECT: WLGA CHARTER FOR MEMBER SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT**

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

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek endorsement to the attached draft Member Support and Development Strategy 2015/18 (attached at appendix 1) and confirm commitment to re-apply for Wales Charter for Member Support and Development prior to its presentation to Council.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report seeks endorsement to continue operating member support and development activities in accordance with the WLGA's Wales Charter for Member Support and Development. The Charter is a public statement and quality standard benchmark for delivering effective member support and development.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Member support and development opportunities assist members to discharge their community leader, decision-making and scrutiny roles effectively.

### 4. WALES CHARTER FOR MEMBER SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 On 21st February 2006, full Council agreed that a work programme should be developed to implement the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development. The Charter aims to develop, recognise and share good practice in the support and development of elected Members.
- 4.2 The Charter was developed by the WLGA, in partnership with Members and officers from across Wales. Each section of the Charter contains specific actions to be undertaken. It is divided into the following 4 sections:
- Members roles and responsibilities
  - Member development
  - Member support
  - Member facilities
- 4.3 The Council was the first in Wales to be awarded the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development in 2007. The Council's member development activities were subsequently reassessed by a Peer Review Team led by the WLGA in 2011 and Charter status was reconfirmed. The next review will be include a self assessment and audit of documentary

evidence by the WLGA. Following the results of this desktop assessment additional evidence may be requested or alternatively, the Charter will be awarded. Members may wish to note that the Welsh Government has announced its grant funding which supports the WLGA member development initiatives, including Charter, will not be renewed for 2015/16. Therefore, the future of the WLGA's Member support staff is uncertain beyond the end of this financial year.

- 4.4 The Council's Member Development Strategy underpins the Council's approach to Member Support and Development. This has been reviewed to coincide with the re-assessment of Charter status and is attached at appendix 1. A full list of the Charter requirements is attached at appendix 2.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This Charter will assist members in their Councillor role and training and development opportunities are open equally to all councillors.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There is a specific budget allocated to fund Member development activities. For 2014/15 a total of £14,000 was available for conferences and training courses.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no consultation responses which have not been reflected in the recommendation of this report

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Members are asked to recommend that Council re-affirm their commitment to the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development and endorse the Members' Development Strategy 2015/18 attached at appendix 1.

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

- 10.1 To provide an agreed recognised standard of member support and development.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

Author: Jonathan Jones, Democratic Services Manager  
Consultees: Cllr Christine Forehead, Cabinet Member for Human Resources and Governance.  
Nicole Scammell, Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer  
Gail Williams, Interim Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer.  
Angharad Price, Interim Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer.

Appendices:  
Appendix 1 Members' Development Strategy 2015/18  
Appendix 2 The Wales Charter for Member Support and Development





# **CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2015/18**

## FOREWORD FROM GROUP LEADERS

Local Authorities have an obligation to ensure that they support effective elected Members' working to provide and improve corporate governance, local democracy and local services.

Caerphilly County Borough Council recognises that Councillors have a pivotal role in taking forward the improvement agenda and that its success will depend on elected Members having the capacity to provide best possible services to its residents.

The Council is committed to providing the vital democratic arrangements and support services to ensure that Members are able to effectively fulfil the requirements of their office and develop a culture where learning and development are "the norm".

Effective Member Development is essential to ensure that Councillors update their knowledge and learn new skills, because all Members have a common need for continuing development to meet the ever increasing and changing challenges of their individual and political roles as well as contributing to national, local and community demands. The authority wishes to help Members recognise and develop skills and knowledge to help them fulfil their Councillor role and assist them in preparing for more senior positions.

As leaders of the political groups represented on the Council and with the full support of our elected colleagues, the Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team, we are committed to ensuring that the Council provides the best development opportunities for Members to enable them to fulfil the expectations of the electorate. We believe that this strategy will assist Members in providing strong leadership for both the Council and improving services for our communities.

Councillor Keith Reynolds  
Leader of Council and the Labour Group

Councillor Colin Mann  
Leader of the Plaid Cymru Group

Councillor Dave Rees  
Leader of the Independent Group

## **MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Where ever possible, Caerphilly County Borough Council aims to provide continuously improving services which inevitably means the need for Councillors to learn and embrace new roles and responsibilities.

1.2 The Council is operating in a constantly changing environment, having to respond to reducing budgets while taking on new responsibilities. This requires elected Members and a workforce that is flexible and responsive to change. Recent Welsh Government announcements have presented the Council with an extremely challenging and demanding programme which includes:-

- The possibility of local government re-organisation.
- Responding to significant budget cuts year on year.
- Collaborating with other local authorities and agencies to improve service delivery.
- New and challenging roles for elected Members.
- The expected new duty to scrutinise other public service providers.

1.3 In embracing these challenges, the Council must continue to develop its Members so that they:

- Are responsive to change and able to prioritise.
- Maximise the use of all available resources.
- Can challenge the Council and other organisations fairly and identify best practise.
- Are focussed on maximising the outcomes provided by public services within the challenging climate of diminishing financial resources.
- Are influential and effective community leaders.

### **2. Purpose**

2.1 To enable Councillors to operate efficiently and effectively in fulfilling their various roles it has been the Council's policy to identify the learning and development needs of all Councillors.

2.2 For a number of years Caerphilly County Borough Council has adopted a proactive approach towards Member Development and support in the form of internally and externally facilitated presentations, seminars and workshops as well as through specific training courses. The Council has supported Members' development through the allocation of a specific budget and applied its policy on an equal basis to all 73 Members as well as supporting co-opted members of the standards and scrutiny committees. This system was formalised in 2007 when the Council was awarded the WLGA's Charter for Member Support and Development.

2.3 The Council recognises the need to provide opportunities and support for members and their learning and development needs. Charter status underlines the continuing importance of training and development for Members and ensures future provision will be based on need, provided by suitably qualified personnel where the quality of training is monitored for quality and provided to members on an equal basis,

### **3. Member Development Strategy – Aims and Objectives**

3.1 Member Development refers to any development activities or training programmes specifically designed to improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of elected Members in their varied roles.

3.2 This strategy aims to equip Members with the skills and knowledge they need in their current (as set out in their role descriptions) and future roles. To ensure that this strategy meets the needs of members and the Council, activities will be properly planned, resourced, monitored and evaluated.

3.3 The strategy's main objectives are:

- To achieve a clear and shared understanding of the various Member roles;
- To improve the performance of senior post holders aided by annual Personal Support and Development Interviews;
- To provide an integrated induction and on going role skills and knowledge programme of development opportunities for all Members;
- To provide support tailored to the needs of Members based on individual training needs analysis;
- To monitor the impact of the strategy and use feedback to improve over time and celebrate success.

3.4 The Council will provide elected Members with flexible and responsive training and development that is based on individual and organisational needs. This will maximise the effectiveness of Members in their various roles to ensure that Caerphilly County Borough Council will be regarded as a leader in the provision of support to elected Members and deserving of Charter status.

3.5 On 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2014 full Council approved the introduction of 3 specific levels of member training; Mandatory, Recommended and Requested.

- a. Mandatory Training involves training associated with Members' statutory responsibilities, Audit Committee and regulatory committee membership and committees with personnel functions to ensure all councillors have the necessary

knowledge to enable them to operate within the Council's Code of Conduct, have an understanding of the Council's constitution, undertake common essential duties and, where appropriate, discharge regulatory or personnel committee functions.

- b. Recommended Training is training targeted at specific roles, and will include; chairing skills for committee chairs, scrutiny training for scrutiny committee members, cabinet member training on their roles and responsibilities, performance review training for those in receipt of a senior salary, members of committees will receive specific training on the changes to legislation and committee skills.
- c. Requested Training – This type of training would be identified by individual Members as part of the councillor training needs analysis undertaken every 2 years.

#### 4. **Implementing the Charter Requirements**

- 4.1 It is fundamental to its success that Members take a leading role in its development, will oversee its implementation, willingly participate with the requirements of the Charter and play a full role in evaluating and monitoring its progress and effectiveness.
- 4.2 The Wales Charter for Member Support and Development sets out a rigorous and structured approach for member development. Set out below are the Charter's main requirements and the Council's approach to their implementation:
- 4.3 **Members committing support to the strategy and a learning culture by participating in Charter requirements** – At a meeting of full Council in February 2006 Members unanimously agreed that the Council should aim for Charter status. Members re-affirmed their commitment to the provisions of the Charter at full Council in October 2010 and (date to be inserted). Members will be fully involved in the development and monitoring of this strategy going forward.
- 4.4 **Undertaking a training and development needs analysis with each Member to identify individual and collective development requirements.** These will be undertaken through personal development questionnaires and an invitation to attend a subsequent interview if this is preferred. This exercise will be undertaken with Members, every 2 years to ensure that the authority remains up-to-date with Member requirements and can be responsive to new organisational changes as they emerge.
- 4.5 **Creating Personal Development Plans for all Members within six months of the Charter submission.** This will be completed following each biennial training needs analysis survey.
- 4.6 **Responding to the development needs of Members** identified in their Personal Development Plans on the basis that activities may need to be prioritised according to demand and within available resources.

- 4.7 **Devising and publishing a biennial Member Development Programme** that is based on Members training needs analysis and sets out development opportunities available to Members. The programme will be approved by the Democratic Services Committee.
- 4.8 **Personal Support and Development Interviews (PSDIs)** will be undertaken on a Member to Member basis. These will begin with Cabinet Members having PSDIs and followed by all Members in receipt of a Special Responsibility Allowance. There is an agreed cascading structure for undertaking the PSDIs. The outcome of the PSDIs will inform Members' Personal Development Plans and, subsequently, the training programmes provided by the Council.
- 4.9 **Members are Supported with Role Descriptions** – These have been drafted and agreed for the following roles; Leader; Deputy Leaders; Cabinet Members; Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny, Planning, Licensing, Rights of Way, Democratic Services and Audit Committees and all other Members to include their local ward role.

## 5. **Strategy Delivery**

- 5.1 The Member "Champion" for this strategy is Councillor Christine Forehead, Cabinet Member for Human Resources and Governance. The Democratic Services Committee will oversee the implementation of this strategy and agree and review training and development activities for elected Members by:
- Ensuring that Member Development becomes part of the overall mainstream organisational activity.
  - Providing advice on Members Support Services, particularly Member Development.
  - Coordinating the Member Development Programme.
  - Monitoring progress against the Strategy's objectives and the implementation of members training, support and development more widely.
- 5.2 All Member training and development activities provided as a result of this Strategy will:
- Be secured from effective and appropriate training providers or facilitators from within or outside the authority.
  - Respond to the needs of Members for method and style of delivery.
  - Be provided taking into account the principles of the Council's Equality of Opportunity Policy and be arranged at convenient times and locations.

## **6. Evaluation of the Strategy**

- 6.1 Progress within the strategy will be monitored and evaluated by the Democratic Services Committee.
- 6.2 The development of Members as a result of the activities will be assessed by themselves with support of senior members if participating in the Personal Support and Development Interviews.

## **7. Resources**

- 7.1 A amount is included in the Member Services budget for Members Training and Development activities. The Head of Democratic Services has statutory responsibility for Member Development and is supported in this on a practical day-to-day basis by the Democratic Services Manager and Democratic Services Officer. Other officers will be expected to support this Strategy by providing in-house development activities.

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# **The Wales Charter for Member Support and Development**



<b>A. Member Roles and Responsibilities</b>	<b>Charter Requirement</b>
<b>1. Members are supported with role descriptions.</b>	<p>Role descriptions are adopted for the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader</li> <li>• Deputy Leader</li> <li>• Cabinet Members</li> <li>• Scrutiny members</li> <li>• Scrutiny Chairs</li> <li>• Scrutiny Co-optees</li> <li>• Chairs of statutory committees</li> <li>• Chairs of area committees</li> <li>• Chair of the Audit Committee</li> <li>• Members of Audit Committee</li> <li>• Chair of Democratic Services</li> <li>• Member of Democratic Services</li> <li>• Ward Member, including community leadership and case work</li> <li>• Chair of Standards committee</li> <li>• Member of Standards Committee</li> <li>• Leader of the Opposition</li> <li>• Member Champion</li> </ul> <p>Guidance is provided to members on their role on outside bodies.</p>
<b>2. Members are supported in undertaking their duties according to high standards of conduct.</b>	<p>All members are provided with training and development in the detail of the local code of conduct, taking into account any changes in the model or local codes as they emerge.</p>
<b>3. Members are supported in understanding their roles and responsibilities as set out in the Constitution.</b>	<p>All members have received training on and understand the contents of the constitution, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the roles, responsibilities and limits to the roles of committees</li> <li>• the role of individual members and officers</li> <li>• Member/officer protocols</li> <li>• meeting practice</li> <li>• standing orders</li> <li>• rules of debate</li> </ul>
<b>B. Member Development</b>	
<b>B1. A member learning and development strategy has been adopted.</b>	<p>A local member development strategy is in place. The strategy sets out the approach that the authority and the Democratic Services Committee takes to member development. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a commitment to and methodology for undertaking development needs analyses through a PDR scheme or TNA for those members not requesting a PDR, which identifies the local and national, collective and individual development</li> </ul>

	<p>needs of all members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a commitment to and methodology for developing members according to the needs of the organisation.</li> <li>• a commitment to and methodology for creating personal development <u>plans</u> for all members.</li> <li>• a methodology for responding to the development needs of members identified in their personal support and development reviews or TNAs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>B2. Arrangements are in place for <u>all</u> members to be offered a PDR.</b></p>	<p>Personal support and development reviews which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• based on role descriptions</li> <li>• contribute to personal development plans</li> <li>• are conducted by senior members or other deemed suitably qualified as set out in the Measure guidance</li> <li>• are <u>made available</u> for all members and <u>must</u> be undertaken by members in a receipt of a senior/civic salary.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note</b>, although the measure does not require the leader to undertake a review, the Charter does. The Charter requires that all members in receipt of a senior salary undertake this. The Measure is voluntary but for all members.</p>
<p><b>B3. A development programme for councillors is in place with a mechanism for its annual review.</b></p> <p><b>All councillors are made aware of, guided to and are able to access the development activities equally.</b></p>	<p>An annual development programme informed by the member development strategy is in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The annual development programme is planned and publicised in advance.</li> <li>• Members are made aware of development opportunities provided in response to their needs.</li> </ul> <p>The timings and settings of activities are varied to enable equal access by all, including those members who are working, are carers or have child care responsibilities.</p>
<p><b>B4. Prospective candidates, candidates and new members are informed of their role and responsibilities.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Council uses the national guidance and support materials available for candidates and prospective candidates.</li> <li>▪ All new or returning members are provided with a programme of induction.</li> </ul>
<p><b>B5. Development activities are relevant and of high quality.</b></p>	<p>Learning activities are provided in appropriate styles and settings based on the learning needs and styles of individuals and committees. The authority has a systematic and effective approach to commissioning, developing, providing and evaluating its training and development activities. This could include internal, external and collaborative arrangements.</p>

<b>B6. There is a clear responsibility for leading the programme, driving the strategy and monitoring the out comes.</b>	The Authority has clearly defined the arrangements for developing, implementing and monitoring its strategy for member support and development. Individual members and officers have clear roles in leading and championing this area. The needs of all political groups and independent members are taken into account regardless of political affiliation.
<b>B7. Resources are identified and provided for member development.</b>	Dedicated resources are identified and provided for member development activities.  The authority provides the "reasonable level" of development required by the Measure.
<b>B8. Members are offered the opportunity to be mentored by member peers.</b>	The authority is exploring the needs of members to be mentored. Any member who has requested a mentor is provided with one. Mentors are trained in mentoring skills.
<b>C. Member Support</b>	
<b>C1. Officer support is provided for member development, support and scrutiny.</b>	Every member committee, panel, forum etc. has officer support provided. Members are also supported in their case work.  Overview and scrutiny committees have dedicated support from officers who can provide impartial research, support and advice.  The nature of the support has been clearly articulated to members
<b>C2. Arrangements made for the business of the Council are flexible and enable members to participate fully regardless of personal circumstances</b>	A review of the arrangements for council business has taken place and as a result, meeting times, arrangements and venues reflect the needs of members as closely as possible.  Members have been involved in developing the approaches to remote attendance as set out in the standing orders as/when required by the Measure.
<b>C3. Contact management and communication</b>	Systems are in place to enable members to liaise with council officers regarding services provided both within and outside the authority. Community groups and individuals are also assisted in contacting local members. Members are able to contact stakeholders.
<b>C4. Annual reports</b>	The authority makes arrangements for all members to be able to publish annual reports, according to the guidance in the measure.
<b>C5. Personal support for members</b>	Members are provided with access to guidance on their rights and benefits as members.
<b>D. Member Facilities</b>	
<b>D1. All members are provided with adequate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Members are provided with the equipment, or connectivity required to undertake their role.</li> </ul>

<p><b>access to ICT.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Basic training is provided in its use and help desk facilities are available.</li> <li>▪ Members are supported in remote working through the use of remote access codes and Skype etc.</li> <li>▪ Members are provided with support to enable them to remotely attend meetings according to the standards set out in the standing orders (when implemented through the Measure).</li> <li>▪ Members are able to communicate with the council and the public electronically.</li> </ul>
<p><b>D2. Information resources are provided</b></p>	<p>A central collection of information dedicated to member needs is provided as part of the information and research support available to members.</p>
<p><b>D3. Facilities for members to work in the Council are available.</b></p>	<p>Member needs have been reviewed and where required the following are provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Shared areas for example for each political group.</li> <li>▪ Private rooms for meetings.</li> <li>▪ Offices for senior office holders.</li> </ul>



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