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Date: 10th March 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Democratic Services Committee** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Tuesday, 17th March, 2015** 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

	Pages
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 15th December 2014.

1 - 4

To receive and consider the following reports: -

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4	Scrutiny Developments.	5 - 8
5	Member Training and Development Programme 2015-17.	9 - 16

Circulation:

Councillors Mrs 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 15TH DECEMBER 2014 AT 5:00PM

PRESENT:

Councillor C.P. Mann Chair
Councillor D.T. Davies Vice-Chair

Councillors:

P.J. Bevan, H.W. David, W. David, R.T. Davies, Mrs P. Griffiths, Mrs E. Stenner, G. Kirby, A. Rees and J. Taylor.

Together with:

J. Jones (Democratic Services Manager), A. Price (Interim Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer) and E. Sullivan (Democratic Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs G. Bevan, Mrs C. Forehead, Ms. J. Jones, Mrs D. Price and Mrs M.E. Sargent.

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 17th September 2014 (minute nos. 1-7) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

4. DRAFT INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

The report highlighted the draft determinations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report relating to Councillors and Co-opted Members for 2015/16.

The Democratic Services Manager outlined the different elements of the annual report and confirmed that the Panel were not suggesting any increases in payments for 2015/16. Members were advised that any feedback on the draft proposals would be forwarded to the Panel as part of the consultation exercise.

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

Having considered its content the Democratic Services Committee noted the report and the Panels draft determinations and welcomed the consistency of approach to this years annual report and that no increases had been suggested.

The Democratic Services Manager agreed to feedback the comments of the Democratic Services Committee in response to the Panel's consultation exercise.

5. WLGA CHARTER FOR MEMBER SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

The Democratic Services Manager introduced the report which sought the endorsement of the Democratic Services Committee for the Member Support and Development Strategy 2015/18 and to confirm their commitment to re-apply for the Wales Charter for Members Support and Development prior to its presentation to Council.

The Members Support and Development Strategy 2015/18, as attached in appendix 1 of the report, underpinned the Council's approach to Member Support and Development and had been reviewed to coincide with the re-assessment of Charter Status. The Charter assisted Members in their Councillor role through a programme of training and development opportunities.

It was noted that Caerphilly was the first Council in Wales to be awarded the Charter and the Officer confirmed that the next review would include a self assessment and audit of documentary evidence by the WLGA. Members were advised that as the grant funding from Welsh Government for the WLGA would not be renewed for 2015/16 the future of the charter and WLGA Member support staff was uncertain beyond the end of this financial year.

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

Members noted and endorsed the Members Support and Development Strategy 2014/18, as attached in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report and having considered its requirements also supported the commitment to reapply for the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development.

The Democratic Services Committee having discussed the report fully endorsed the recommendations contained therein and it was proposed and seconded that they be recommended to Council for approval and by a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that Council be advised of the endorsement of the Democratic Services Committee and recommend that Council re-affirm its commitment to the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development and adopt the Member Support and Development Strategy 2015/18, as attached in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report.

6. NAVIGATING THE NEW CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL WEBSITE (VERBAL UPDATE AND DEMONSTRATION)

The Democratic Services Manager provided a verbal update on the launch of the redesigned Council website and its integration with the Mod.Gov document management and repository facility. Members were also advised that following a request from Councillor Davies page numbers would now be added to agenda's for ease of reference. These would be added to

agenda templates in a rolling programme and would be available on all committees by the end of January 2015.

Access to the website was demonstrated and the different areas of improved functionality highlighted. The document library search facility was illustrated and how to locate and access both historic and current documents was explained. The different links relating to elected Members were highlighted and it was noted that the logo for Plaid Cymru had been sourced and would be added to the site shortly.

The meetings calendar was accessed and the Officer confirmed that the site had been well received by the public with positive feedback given on its ease of use and functionality.

In concluding the update the Democratic Services Manager requested that Members make as much use of the site as possible and feedback any gaps or additions they would like to see.

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

Clarification was sought in relation to access to exempt data. The Democratic Services Manager explained and demonstrated how to use the intranet log on function to view exempt data and explained the different security safeguards in place. Members were advised that access was derived from a strictly controlled approved list and the system produces an audit trail of exempt information views.

Members had noted some initial problems with accessing historic exempt data and queried if this issue had now been resolved. Officers confirmed that this had been due to the different controls required for historic and current data, both systems had been updated and Members should now be able to view both historic and current exempt information once logged in.

Members reference webcasting and when this would be included on the website. The Officer confirmed that this would be integrated onto the site via links from Public I and Members would be able to navigate seamless between the two platforms. It was noted that the next meeting of Council would be recorded as a training exercise and following discussion with Members it was envisaged that full Council meetings would be broadcast live in early 2015.

A Member expressed concern that Caerphilly was falling behind other authorities with regard to webcasting. Officers confirmed that most authorities were in the very early days of webcast implementation and were experiencing varying degrees of success due to technical or quality issues with only Torfaen webcasting the majority of its meetings. Reassurances were given that all the necessary steps were being taken to ensure good quality webcasts in terms of video and audio production before moving to a live feed. The importance of leaving the public with a good impression and positive experience of webcasting was emphasised as this would allow them to appreciate and recognise the strength of the debate being undertaken by Councillors during the decision making process.

The meeting closed at 17:32pm

Approved as a correct record subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on the 4th March 2015 they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR

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DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE– 17TH MARCH 2015

SUBJECT: SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENTS

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES & SECTION 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To outline a work programme to identify improvement to the operation of scrutiny following the findings of the Wales Audit Office report 'Follow-up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest', dated January 2015.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report identifies the issues for improvement contained the WAO report, a suggested project group to oversee the improvement programme, how those issues can be explored, members and officers who will contribute to this review and the timeline of key milestones.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The operation of scrutiny is required by the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent Assembly legislation.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The Wales Audit Office report 'Follow-up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest', dated January 2015 has identified further improvements scrutiny. The report recognised the work carried out under the scrutiny improvement action plan and the structural arrangements put in place. However, the report identifies that the next stage is to develop the effectiveness of scrutiny and clarify its role.

- 4.2 The WAO's main findings can be summarised as:

- The Chairs and Vice Chairs of scrutiny committees have mixed views on the benefits of pre-meetings.
- Effectiveness of scrutiny's challenge role is limited.
- The role of scrutiny is confused.
- Meetings are long and agendas lack focus.
- 'For Information' agenda items could be handled more for efficiently outside of the formal scrutiny process.
- The Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference are very wide which restricts the time available to discuss subjects in depth.
- Agenda items need to be prioritised and focused on the Council's priorities.
- Information provided to scrutiny is good, however, Chairs and Vice Chairs would like more use of qualitative, historical and comparative information.

- Task and Finish Groups should be used more frequently to review specific issues in more depth.
- Members want to continue to improve their scrutiny role.

Responsibility and Oversight

- 4.3 The Improving Governance Project Board (IGPB) have overall responsibility for overseeing the improvements to scrutiny recommended by the Wales Audit Office report 'Follow-up of the Special Inspection and Reports in the Public Interest', which is chaired by the Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer. The Chief Executive and CMT have also asked to be kept informed of progress.

Project Group

- 4.4 In order to identify how improvements can be made it is proposed to set up a project group to oversee the improvement programme, they will report on the projects progress to the IGPB. The suggested members of the project group are:
- Gail Williams Interim Monitoring Officer & Head of Legal Services
 - Angharad Price Interim Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer
 - Councillor Hefin David Chair Scrutiny Leadership Group
 - Councillor Colin Mann Chair Democratic Services Committee
 - Councillor Christine Forehead, Cabinet Member HR, Governance and Business

- 4.5 Democratic Services Committee is responsible for keeping under review the resources available for Democratic Services. Therefore, it is proposed that the Chair of Democratic Services Committee will Chair the project group, and the Vice Chair of Democratic Services, Councillor D. Tudor Davies to act as substitute. Scrutiny Leadership Group provide oversight for scrutiny, therefore, it is proposed that the Chair, Councillor H. David is a member of the project group and the Vice Chair, Councillor S Morgan to act as substitute.

- 4.6 It is proposed that a project team consisting of Jonathan Jones, Democratic Services Manager and Catherine Forbes-Thompson, Scrutiny Research Officer supports the Project Group.

Improvement Programme Workshops

- 4.7 The aim of the improvement programme is to identify possible changes that may require recommendations to Council. In order to ensure that all interested parties are involved it is proposed to hold four workshops over a two-week period. Each workshop will consist of approximately 20 people made up of Members and Officers. The workshops will allow all the scrutiny issues identified in the WAO report to be debated within the context of what can be reasonably achieved in terms of capacity and resources. In order to ensure all Members and Officers are represented it is suggested that the following groups are invited to take part:

- Scrutiny Leadership Group and Democratic Services Committee Members = 23
- CMT, Heads of Services = 22
- Co-opted Members of Scrutiny Committees = 8
- Third Tier Officers (4 per directorate) = 16
- Backbench Members (4 per scrutiny committee) = 16
- Leader and Deputy Leaders = 3

- 4.8 There will be four workshop dates and each workshop will include, 1 Cabinet Member, 1 CMT representative and 1 Scrutiny Chair, the remainder to be mixed proportionately. Prior to the start of the workshops a briefing note will be circulated to all participants outlining the main findings of the WAO report (see 4.2 above) and also give an overview of the main issues facing scrutiny. These include Welsh Government proposals included in the White Paper Devolution, Democracy and Delivery – Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People.

4.9 The purpose of the workshop will be to discuss the WAO findings and to find a 'long list' of options to action those findings. At each workshop the attendees will be split into groups, and each group will debate the issues identified by WAO (see 4.2 above). The groups will be asked to consider the following questions with the assumption that there is likely to be reduced officer time available.

- What are we trying to achieve?
- How can we do it?
- What are the benefits/constraints?

4.10 The project group will consider and agree the outcomes of the workshops and will carry out consultation with all Members and Senior Officers. Following the consultation the project group will then report to the IGPB who will make recommendations in a report to Scrutiny Leadership Group and Democratic Services Committee who in turn recommend to Cabinet and then Council for a decision.

Timetable

4.11 The deadline agreed by Council for the findings of the WAO report was agreed for October 2015. In order to ensure that sufficient time is allowed it is proposed that the following timeline is agreed at the outset.

Action	Responsibility	Deadline
Agree Project Plan	SLG Members, Democratic Services Committee & CMT	20 March 2015
Plan Workshop Programme	Project Group	31 March 2015
Arrange 4 Workshops	Project Team	30 April 2015
Agree Workshop Outcomes	Project Group	8 May 2015
Consultation with Members and Officers involved	Project Group	22 May 2015
Develop Recommendations	Project Group	29 May 2015
Agree Report with recommendations	IGPB	12 June 2015
Report to CMT 18 June 2015	IGPB	15 June 2015
Report to Democratic Services Committee 1 July 2015 (Special) – SLG to be invited	Project Group	22 June 2015
Covering report to include comments from SLG and Democratic Services Committee	Democratic Services	3 July 2015
Report to Cabinet 15 July 2015	IGPB	6 July 2015
Report to Council 21 July 2015	IGPB	6 July 2015

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report is for information purposes, so the Council's EqIA process does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications not contained in the report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications not contained in the report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 There are no consultation responses not contained in the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That Democratic Services Committee agree the project plan.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 In order to respond to the recommendations in the follow up of the special inspection and reports in the public interest.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000

Author: Catherine Forbes-Thompson Scrutiny Research Officer
Consultees: Chris Burns, Interim Chief Executive
Sandra Aspinall Acting Deputy Chief Executive
Nicole Scammell Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer
Dave Street, Corporate Director Social Services
Gail Williams Interim Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal Services
Angharad Price Interim Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Jonathan Jones Democratic Services Manager



DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE– 17TH MARCH 2015

SUBJECT: MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2015-17

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES & SECTION 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report the outcome of the Members Training Needs Analysis (TNA).

2. SUMMARY

2.1 Caerphilly County Borough Council has held the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development since 2007. In order to maintain the Charter and in line with the Welsh Government's (WG) Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, the authority is required to undertake periodical training needs analysis and develop a forward programme of training and development.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The Council's member training and development programme is the key initiative in discharging the Council's responsibility and commitment to maintaining the Wales Charter for Member Development and carrying out its statutory duty under the WG Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requirements. Most importantly, it supports members to carry out their roles effectively. The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales state in their Annual Report published on February 2015 that it expects each member of a local authority to undertake such training and personal development opportunities as are required to properly discharge the duties for which they are remunerated.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 As part of the Charter, a Training Needs Analysis was developed and distributed to all councillors and co-opted members in December 2014. The outcome of this exercise will determine the priorities for future Member development activities over the next 2 years.

4.2 The Training Needs Analysis is based on that used in previous years and has been sent to members and co-opted members both electronically and in hard copy. In total 83 forms were distributed (73 to County Councillors, 10 to Co-opted Members) and 33 (40%) returned, of which 31 were completed and returned by councillors (42%).

4.3 An overview of responses to the Training Needs Analysis can be found at Appendix 1, a proposed programme of training courses based on the TNA will be the subject of a further report to the Democratic Services Committee. Appendix 2 demonstrates Members preferences in relation to meeting and training times.

- 4.4 It is proposed that the training sessions are held at 5.00pm, as the majority of Members indicated this to be the preferred time. However, if there is demand for a particular course to be held at another time, alternative arrangements will be made. It is suggested that the training sessions will be delivered by a mix of officers (for council specific knowledge subjects such as 'Equalities and Diversity') and externally (for more generic skills based issues e.g. 'Communication, Influencing and Negotiation Skills). Members' views would be particularly welcome on this suggestion.
- 4.5 Member Seminars are not included in the programme but will continue to be organised as and when necessary. The Members Development and Support Programme of Mandatory and Recommended Training arising from the report agreed by Council on the 22nd April 2014 is separate to this programme and has already been forwarded to Members. The mandatory training element of that programme is already underway and feedback on the success of those sessions will be reported to the Democratic Services Committee.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An EqlA is not needed because the issues covered have previously been considered by the Council.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Member Development Programme will be funded from the 2015/16 and 2016/17 Member Development budget.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no specific personnel implications arising as a result of this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 There are no consultation responses, which have not been incorporated into the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the Report and offer their views on the outcome of the Training Needs Analysis.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To support Members in their councillor role.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 The Local Government Act 2000

- 11.2 Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

Author: E. Sullivan (Democratic Services Officer)
Consultees: J. Jones (Democratic Services Manager)
G. Williams (Interim Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal Services)
A. Price (Interim Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer)
C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Research Officer)
Councillor C. Mann (Chairman Democratic Services Committee)
Councillor Mrs C. Forehead (Cabinet Member Human Resources and
Governance/Business Manager)

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Training Needs Analysis
Appendix 2 Meeting and Training Times

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Councillor Role Skills

Training Course Offered on Questionnaire	No. of Members That Selected Course
Ward Work and Surgeries	12 (39%)
Community Leadership/Engagement	19 (61%)
Equalities and Diversity	14 (45%)

Personal Skills and Knowledge

Training Course Offered on Questionnaire	No. of Members That Selected Course
Communication, Influencing and Negotiation Skills	17 (55%)
Pubic Speaking/Presenting to an Audience	16 (52%)
Speed Reading	22 (71%)
Creative Thinking and Problem Solving	15 (48%)
Mentoring	5 (16%)
Evidence Based Decision Making	17(55%)

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Meeting Times

Members were asked to complete preferred times for Committees on which they serve only.

Meeting Type	Meeting Time	No. Of Member Responses Received	Preferred Meeting Time Based On Responses
Full Council	Morning	4 (13%)	Evening
	Afternoon	3 (11%)	
	Evening	23 (76%)	
Cabinet	Morning	0 (0%)	Afternoon
	Afternoon	8 (100%)	
	Evening	0 (0%)	
Scrutiny Committees	Morning	4 (13%)	Evening
	Afternoon	2 (7%)	
	Evening	23 (80%)	
Planning Committee	Morning	1 (5%)	Evening
	Afternoon	1 (5%)	
	Evening	16 (90%)	
Licensing Committee	Morning	12 (55%)	Morning
	Afternoon	7 (33%)	
	Evening	3 (12%)	
Audit Committee	Morning	7 (33%)	Afternoon
	Afternoon	9 (43%)	
	Evening	5 (24%)	
Democratic Services Committee	Morning	4 (19%)	Evening
	Afternoon	4 (19%)	
	Evening	13 (62%)	
Standards Committee	Morning	6 (31%)	Evening
	Afternoon	6 (31%)	
	Evening	7 (38%)	
Sustainable Development Committee	Morning	5 (24%)	Evening
	Afternoon	7 (33%)	
	Evening	9 (43%)	

Training Times and Venues

Timing/ Venue	Member Responses
Morning	13 (41%)
Afternoon	10 (18%)
Evening	13 (41%)
Meeting Rooms	20 (65%)
Council Chamber	16 (51%)
External Facilities	4 (12%)
Office Based Training	3 (9%)

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