

MEETING OF	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	11 December 2013
SUBJECT	Websites for Town and Community Councils
PURPOSE	To submit an update on the scheme to support town and community councils to develop a web presence.
AUTHOR	Geraint George, Head of Democratic Services

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Welsh Government has supplied a fund to enable Local Authorities to issue a grant of up to £500 each for Town and Community Councils to establish a website.
- 1.2 The purpose of this grant is to assist Town and Community Councils to prepare for the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Bill, which contains provisions which would require each community council to publish information on a website, and the grant is to be used to help them prepare for that.
- 1.3 The Economy and Community Department has been commissioned to administer and identify the level of interest in developing a website by Town and Community Councils.

2. UPDATE

- 2.1 In July, the Town and Community Councils were invited to express an interest in receiving a grant of up to £500.00 to develop a website. As the sum available is comparatively low, it was resolved to offer two options, namely:
 - a) Option 1
A Council to establish an individual website, committing to maintain the website for a minimum of three years.
 - b) Option 2
Work with other Town and Community Councils in the county to set up a new joint website that would include a section for every individual Council with a joint commitment to maintain the website for a minimum of three years.

Option 1

- 2.2 It was resolved that Cist Gwynedd would administrate the grant process for developing Town and Community Council websites in Gwynedd.

- 2.3 In September, further clarity was received from the Welsh Government that Town and Community Councils would be able to use the grant for the following purposes:
- a) Create new web presence
 - b) develop existing web presence

- 2.4 At the end of October, the Town and Community Councils expressed an interest as follows in the grant to develop a website:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 1+2	Not Interested	No Response
Town and Community Councils	21	19	2	10	14

- 2.5 In November, application forms were sent to the Town and Community Councils with the closing date for the application process being 10 January 2014. As part of the process, the need to spend and claim the grant before the end of March 2014 was stressed.

- 2.6 To coincide with the application process, a basic guide was submitted to the Town and Community Councils which provided guidance on the technical issues to be included in a specification to invite quotes from providers.

- 2.7 **Option 2**
The IT Unit, in the Customer Care Department is leading on Option 2.

- 2.8 The intention of the IT Unit is to bring stakeholders together, namely the Town and Community Councils, so as to ensure clarity of their requirements and decide on a provider.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee:-
- a) continues to support the work of facilitating the development of a web presence for Town and Community Councils, and to receive an update on the numbers who have applied for the grant at the next meeting on 18 March 2014.