



Gwasanaeth Democraidd
Democracy Service
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Cyfarfod / Meeting

PWYLLGOR GWASANAETHAU DEMOCRATAIDD
DEMOCRATIC SERVICE COMMITTEE

Dyddiad ac Amser / Date and Time

10.00 a.m. DYDD MAWRTH, 11 RHAGFYR, 2012

10.00 a.m. TUESDAY, 11 DECEMBER, 2012

Lleoliad / Location

SIAMBR ARFON/CHAMBER
SWYDDFEYDD Y CYNGOR/COUNCIL OFFICES
PENRALLT, CAERNARFON

****Noder y man cyfarfod os gwelwch yn dda/Please note the meeting place****

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Dosbarthwyd/Distributed 4.12.12

**PWYLLGOR GWASANAETHAU DEMOCRATAIDD
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

AELODAETH / MEMBERSHIP (15)

Plaid Cymru (7)

Y Cynghorwyr / Councillors

Selwyn Griffiths
Dyfrig Jones
Dilwyn Morgan

Charles Wyn Jones
Linda Ann Wyn Jones
Gareth Thomas

Mandy Williams-Davies

Annibynnol / Independent (4)

Y Cynghorwyr / Councillors

Lesley Day	Tom Ellis
Anne Lloyd-Jones	Dewi Owen

Llais Gwynedd (3)

Endaf Cooke

Jason Humphreys

Anwen Davies

Llafur / Labour (1)

Y Cynghorydd / Councillor Sion Wyn Jones

Aelodau Ex-officio / Ex-officio Members

Cadeirydd ac Is-Gadeirydd y Cyngor / Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council
Y Cynghorwyr / Councillors Selwyn Griffiths a / and Huw Edwards

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

4. MINUTES

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the last meeting of this committee held on 11 September, 2012 be signed as a true record (copy herewith – **yellow** paper).

5. MEMBERS TRAINING

To consider the report of the Chair of the Training Sub-group, (copy herewith- **pink** paper).

6. MEMBERS' REPORTS

To consider the report of the Democratic Services Manager, (copy herewith – **cream** paper).

7. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

To consider the report of the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee, (copy herewith- **lilac** paper).

8. UPDATE ON THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

To consider a verbal report by the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee.

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE, 11.09.12

Present: Councillor Dewi Owen (Chair);
Councillor Anne Lloyd Jones (Vice-chair).

Councillors: Lesley Day, Tom Ellis, Jason Humphreys, Charles Wyn Jones, Dilwyn Morgan and Mandy Williams-Davies.

Cabinet Members: Councillors Dyfed Edwards (Cabinet and Council Leader) and Ioan Thomas (Cabinet Member – Customer Care).

Officers: Arwel Ellis Jones (Senior Manager – Corporate Commissioning Service), Huw Ynyr (Senior Manager – IT and Business Transformation), Vera Jones (Democratic Services Manager) and Eirian Roberts (Members' Support and Scrutiny Officer).

Apologies: Councillors Endaf Cooke, Anwen Davies, Selwyn Griffiths, Dyfrig Jones, Linda A.W. Jones, Sion Wyn Jones and Gareth Thomas.

Geraint George (Head of Strategic and Improvement Department) was wished a speedy recovery following his recent illness.

1. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any member present.

2. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 29 May, 2012 as a true record, conditional on noting that Councillor Jason Humphreys was present at the meeting.

3. SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS – MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS

Submitted – the Chairman's report summarising the observations he had received in response to a letter sent by him to his fellow members, explaining the role of this committee in respect of supporting members.

The Democratic Services Manager elaborated on the observations that had been received.

The Chairman called for training for the new members in the fields of work examined by the scrutiny committees.

The Senior Manager – IT and Business Transformation gave an update of the situation with regard to introducing iPads to the members.

The views of the Cabinet Member – Customer Care and the Council Leader were received on trialling the use of iPads over the past two months. It was noted that some difficulties had emerged and that there were some restrictions, but that training was key for members who were more comfortable with paper. However, it was emphasised that

the Council's ambition was for not using paper to be the norm. This would take time, but there was no reason why that could not be achieved.

The Senior Manager – IT and Business Transformation replied that problems with opening documents could be resolved, and the Chairman emphasised the importance of instructing all departments to submit documents to members in the most compressed form at all times.

The Chairman expressed his concern that a substantial number of the members would still wish to receive paper copies of documents, and the members present had varied opinions on the matter.

It was noted that it could be difficult to follow a document on the iPad if the pages were not numbered, and that every document should be of the same standard in terms of template, page numbering etc.

The Chairman noted:-

- (1) That the clear message here was that the training and the conviction were extremely important. The Senior Corporate Commissioning Service Manager suggested that advantage could be taken of the experience of those members who already used the new technology to carry out their work as members of other bodies, such as the Police Authority, when deciding how best to structure the training.
- (2) That it was important to schedule the training as soon as possible so that members could keep those dates free.
- (3) That it was important to ensure that there was someone at the end of the phone to help members, and the Senior Manager – IT and Business Transformation elaborated on the support provided by the Council's Helpdesk.

A member enquired about the possibility of providing 3G iPads. The Senior Corporate Commissioning Service Manager answered that he did not anticipate that the majority of members would need 3G as they had broadband connection at home, and that Wi-fi was available in all the Council's meeting rooms etc. However, if the nature of the members' work meant that they attended numerous external meetings, perhaps there was an argument for having some 3G models, and he agreed to look in to the situation.

RESOLVED to move on with the Council's ambition of not using paper as the norm, bearing in mind the messages from the discussion above.

4. SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS

Submitted – the report of the Head of Democratic Services, presenting information about support to members, and inviting the committee to challenge progress on developments.

The Senior Corporate Commissioning Service Manager reported that the Leader wished to emphasise that the Cabinet was well aware that other members felt they did not know what was going on and that they had no influence, and that the move towards holding surgeries, workshops etc. was a means of overcoming this.

The Democratic Services Manager elaborated on the various points as she went through the report.

Concern was expressed that Cabinet Members talked to the press about matters that affected particular wards, without contacting the local member.

Members also expressed dissatisfaction with regard to the rights of the local member at Planning Committee meetings, on the grounds that there was no means for them to respond during, or at the end of the discussion.

RESOLVED

- (a) **To submit this report to the next meeting of the full Council on 4 October in order to raise members' awareness of the support available to them, or the support being currently developed.**
- (b) **To include an additional part to the report about the role and rights of the local member, explaining how the local member can obtain information about what is going on in their ward, their rights in relation to the Cabinet and how to contact a Cabinet Member if they are not satisfied with an officer's response. It should also be emphasised that a Cabinet Member (or anyone acting on their behalf) is expected to contact the local member with respect to matters affecting their ward.**
- (c) **To refer the comment regarding the local members' rights at Planning Committee meetings to the Head of Regulatory Department and the Monitoring Officer, asking them to discuss it together and bring a response back to the members.**

5. MEMBERS' REPORTS

Submitted – the report of the Chairman and the Democratic Services Manager giving details of the likely requirement in the Welsh Local Government Measure (2011) for every elected member to produce an annual report on his/her activities as a member of the authority, and asking the committee to offer initial guidance on the nature and format of the report in order to complete further work on it.

RESOLVED

- (a) **To include the matter in the report to the next meeting of the full Council on 4 October in order to raise all members' awareness of the likely expectation for them to publish annual reports, and suggest that everyone starts keeping a record of their main activities.**
- (b) **To invite the members' observations on the annual report model developed by Bridgend Council.**
- (c) **That the Democratic Services Manager produces a further report recommending the way forward for this committee, and that her recommendations:-**
 - **Respond to the considerations noted in part (3) of the report submitted to this meeting;**
 - **Follow/respond to the further guidelines that are to be published by the Welsh Government;**
 - **Are based on further research work into what happens currently in Wales.**

6. MEMBERS' TRAINING

Submitted – the report of the Chairman and the Democratic Services Manager inviting the committee to recommend the way forward with training developments.

In response to complaints about a recent clash between a meeting of the Council's Local Consultative Joint Committee and a North Wales Councils Induction Session for members, and the time of the session having changed, apologies were given for the situation and it was noted that all officers were now asked to check the Council's electronic diary before arranging any meeting for members.

RESOLVED

- (a) **To establish a sub-group of this committee (namely the Chairman along with Councillors Lesley Day, Dilwyn Morgan and Mandy Williams-Davies) to discuss additional training for members and future requirements, as well as any other matters relevant to training, with the Learning and Development Manager and the Democratic Services Manager, and to report back to the next meeting on 11 December, 2012.**
- (b) **That the Democratic Services Manager contacts Councillor Jason Humphreys (who had had to leave the meeting early) to ask if he, or another member of Llais Gwynedd on the committee, would be interested in serving on the sub-group.**

7. RESOURCES TO SUPPORT MEMBERS' WORK

Submitted – the report of the Head of Strategic and Improvement Department which recommended making a request to abolish a plan to secure a saving of £54,000 in the budget of the former Democracy and Legal Department in 2013/14. The Senior Corporate Commissioning Service Manager explained that, in light of transferring the Democratic Services to the Strategic and Improvement Department and looking again at the needs, it had become evident that it would not be possible to realise the saving and continue to provide the necessary support to the members of the Council.

RESOLVED to accept that the savings scheme cannot be realised while delivering the need to give Council Members the necessary support, and to therefore make a request to the Cabinet Member – Resources that the Savings Strategy be revised to recognise this.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 11.50am.

MEETING	Sub-group (training) DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
DATE	13/11/2012
SUBJECT	MEMBERTS TRAINING
PUPROSE	Agree criteria for attending training courses outside the corporate training matrix.
AUTHOR	Chair of the Training Sub-Group

1. What is the current situation?

1.1 The Council has recognised that it wishes to train and develop elected members to help them to fulfill all elements of their role effectively.

1.2 The statutory guidance under the 2011 Local Government Measure notes

"..the Democratic Services Committee has general responsibility for deciding what should be considered as reasonable training and development opportunities as part of their remit to ensure support for elected members to fulfill their roles."

1.3 A full training programme for elected members has been developed and produced for 2012/13. The programme was shared with all elected members at the beginning of the new Council. The programme is a combination of internal courses, training provided by outside bodies, and others developed with the other authorities in North Wales. Any update to the programme is communicated with the elected members.

1.4 In addition to the above mentioned programme, a number of electged members have noted various fields of imprtance to them to develop and ensure better understanding in order to fulfill their roles as elected members better. They are a combination of courses, seminars and conferences.

1.5 This training is outside the elected members development programme. For the purpose of this report, they will be referred to as 'additional courses'. There is an additional cost to the Council for these courses/ seminars – be it cost of the course and/ or travelling and subsistence cost which must be remembered.

1.6 Currently, there is no formal procedure to ensure fairnes and consistency in deciding who should be allowed to attend 'additional courses'. Whilst the Council welcomes the eagerness of members to develop, the financial considerations must also be taken into account, therefore we must work within perimeters.

2. Draft Criteria

2.1 In order to try and ensure consistency, and value for money, it is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee adopt the draft criteria to assess whom should be allowed to attend 'additional courses'.

2.2 A sub-group (training) was established following the Democratic Services Committee meeting on 11th September, 2012, and the above has received attention by the group. The group decided to recommend a) draft criteria, seen in 2.3 below and b) a procedure to follow with regards to 'additional courses' which can be seen in 2.4.

2.3 The following questions/ criteria have been developed by the sub-group, and it is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee adopt the criteria.

- Elected Members should hold a job or responsibility in the field on behalf of the Council, and should be able to demonstrate that attending the “additional course” will enable them to undertake their work better.

The job or responsibility could include:-

- Scrutiny Chair or Vice-chair,
- Cabinet Member
- Champion
- Member of the Pensions Committee
- Chair or Vice-chair of any other committee.
- Represent Gwynedd Council as a member on an outside body
- Individual elected member who is part of a Scrutiny Review, where attending the course would lead to substantial gains for the Scrutiny Review.

(Please note, any visits by a number of members as part of a Scrutiny Review would be considered as part of the review and not ‘additional course’)

- The ‘additional course’ should not be available within the Elected members training programme or that it could be arranged in another way internally for a number of elected members to reduce costs.
- Cost of the course should be considered, and does it provide value for money.
- Travel should be avoided where possible, by participating in the additional course through different mediums eg video conferencing or webinar.
- Aim for a maximum of 2 ‘additional courses’ per member annually
- The relevance of the course to the member’s individual training programme should be considered.

2.4 Additionally, it is recommended that a formal procedure should be developed for submit requests and authorise. It is recommended:

- That all elected members give written notice (letter or email) explaining how they reach the criteria
- Members should ensure that they have a seconder for the request, eg the Chair or vice-Chair of a specific committee who is able to support the request as part of their role
- Present the request at least two weeks in advance to the Head of Democratic Services, who will consult with the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee, prior to deciding to allow the request or not

- The above to assess the request against the criteria and let the elected member know the result. Arrangements for reporting back and summarise / sharing the additional information should be made (arrangements will vary per field/ request).

3. Recommendation

3.1 It is requested that the Democratic Services Committee:-

- adopt the criteria noted in 2.3 and the procedure noted in 2.4 for implementation

MEETING	Sub-group (training) DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
DATE	13 November 2012
SUBJECT	Members' Reports
PURPOSE	To submit the requirements and to discuss how Gwynedd deals with the requirement.
AUTHOR	Vera Jones, Democratic Services Manager

1. What are the requirements?

1.1 The Welsh Local Government Measure (2011), notes the following:-

(1) A local authority must make arrangements -

(a) for each person who is a member of the authority to produce an annual report about the person's activities as a member of the authority during the year to which the report relates,

(a) for each person who is a member of the authority's executive to produce an annual report about the person's activities as a member of the executive during the year to which the report relates, and

(c) for the authority to publish all annual reports produced by its members and by members of its executive.

(2) The arrangements may include conditions as to the content of a report that must be satisfied by the person making it.

(3) A local authority must publicise its arrangements.

(4) In exercising its functions under this section, a local authority must have regard to the guidelines provided by Welsh Ministers."

1.2 The purpose of the Annual Report by Elected Members is to improve communication between Elected Members and the public. The Minister for Local Government notes that the reports will be a means of improving the public's understanding of what local members do and the important role which they have. He has also noted that every local authority will be free to choose its own format for the reports.

1.3 In addition to the Measure, the Welsh Government has also published a guidance document to assist local authorities in incorporating the act, namely, "*Statutory Guidance for the Local Government Measure 2011 – June 2012*". – See **Appendix A**.

2. What have other authorities done thus far?

- 2.1 'Annual Reports' by elected members have existed in England for some years but every authority has a different interpretation of what should be included and what format should be used. It varies from giving elected members a clean sheet to write anything they consider to be of interest to the public about their work. In the case of a clean sheet, some elected members have used the reports for political propaganda and for discrediting other political parties. Consequently, several local authorities have favoured more structure to the reports.
- 2.2 It is always useful to seek good practice and to consider current developments in other local authorities. In Wales, Bridgend is currently the authority which has invested the most time in investigating and developing arrangements. We have asked other authorities about what they are planning with regards to the annual reports, and are still awaiting responses.
- 2.3 Bridgend has developed a model to complement the guidelines below:
- A factual, interesting and non-political document
 - Two pages in length at the most
 - To report on five specific fields
 - Role and responsibility
 - Events within the electorate
 - Initiatives and special activities
 - Learning and Development
 - Other events and Issues
- 2.4 A sample document by Bridgend is in **Appendix B**.

3. Considerations for the sub-group

- 3.1 The Democratic Services Committee decided during its meeting on the 11th September to establish a sub-group to look at training and requirements for the future.
- 3.2 With regards to the elected member's annual reports, the sub-group discussed whether a template should be provided for elected members to use. The group decided to recommend the development of a template for the members wishing to produce an annual report as it would be of assistance to the member and reader, would be uniform, and would ensure members reported on facts. The group also noted that members could include further information should they deem it important, as long as it is within the legal guidelines.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee develops a template based on the Penybont template along with specific guidelines to assist members in producing their annual reports rather than all members developing their own reports.

ANNUAL REPORTS BY MEMBERS OF A LOCAL AUTHORITY

Introduction

Part 1 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (“the Measure”) contains provisions intended to strengthen local democracy. Chapter 1 of that Part concerns the support provided to members of a local authority and section 5 within that chapter provides for the production of annual reports for these members.

This statutory guidance is issued under section 5(4) of the Measure. The guidance relates to local authorities making arrangements for the production of annual reports.

What the Measure requires.

Section 5 requires county and county borough councils (local authorities) to ensure that all their elected members are able to make an annual report on their council activities during the previous year. This includes enabling any member of the council’s executive to be able to report on their executive activities also. Any reports produced by members of a county or county borough council must be published by that council.

A local authority is free to set conditions/limits on what is included in a report.

A local authority must publicise what arrangements it has for publishing annual reports and in drawing up these arrangements must have regard to this guidance in so doing.

Guidance

Duties of a local authority

A local authority must make the arrangements enabling its members to produce annual reports. This means it must tell its members how and by when to do this. The Measure, at section 8 *et seq*, provides for a Head of Democratic Services (HDS) to carry out democratic services functions as defined in section 9. This includes the provision of support and advice to members to assist them in the carrying out of their functions and organisation of the annual report process would fall within this. The Measure prevents the HDS from providing support and advice to a member of an executive in relation to the carrying out of that member’s executive functions, but production of an annual report, even if it made reference to the member’s executive activities, is not an executive function in itself.

It is anticipated that the first annual reports would be published no later than the end of June 2013.

Publication of reports

How a local authority decides to publish is a matter for that authority to decide upon. The minimum requirement would be for the authority to include a link to a member's annual report on that part of the authority's website which carries details of individual members. There is no requirement for any publicity beyond this, and authorities should be careful that, if they decide to provide any further publicity for the reports, the same provision is provided for all members. Therefore, should a member request that his/her report is given any greater publicity, that request should be declined unless carried out in respect of all members.

Local authorities should ensure also that their website includes information about the introduction of annual reports and how members of the public can access them.

Content of reports

The central purpose of the reports is for members of the public to find information about their local councillor's activity.

Local authorities may place their own restrictions on content in reports. Annual reports should include only factual information. In the main that would suggest information on meetings, events and conferences etc. attended, training and development received. While it might be acceptable to record information such as "made representations on behalf of the campaign to save the local hospital in the following ways", it would not be acceptable to say "succeeded in saving local hospital by my efforts on my constituents' behalf".

Similarly, care should be taken to avoid including in reports information concerning activities when the member concerned is not operating in the role of councillor. So, whereas it would be acceptable to include information concerning, for instance, a speech made at a conference where the member was attending because of their council role, it would not be acceptable to refer to a speech made to, for instance, a Party conference, where the member was a delegate from their local party organisation.

Care should also be taken not to include information which could be interpreted as critical of another member. For instance, it would not be acceptable for a member to compare his/her attendance or activities with that of another member or members.

The following areas are proposed as standard items to be included:

- Role and responsibilities – to include details of membership of committees and outside bodies, attendance records for these and full council.
- Local activity – details of surgeries held, representations made on behalf of electors and the results of these

- Major projects – involvement in local, county or regional initiatives or projects.
- Learning and development – details of training and development events attended or undertaken, conferences and seminars attended.

BCBC Councillor's Annual Report ~ Sample

This is the report by the Councillor below regarding their key activities over the year ending 30th April 2012. It is provided for the information of all constituents and for no other purpose.

Completion instructions.

Councillors are free to include as much or as little information as they wish in each section, however the report is to be kept to this 2 page (maximum) format.

Councillor: A N Other

Party: Central Party

Ward: Southtown

Section 1: Role & Responsibilities

I sit on the following committees:

Town & Community Council Forum	Attendance X/X*
Community Safety & Governance Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Attendance X/X*
Health & Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Attendance X/X*
Corporate Resources & Improvement Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Attendance X/X*

I sit on the following external committees

Bridgend Town Hall Trust	Attendance X/X†
Local Service Board Scrutiny Panel	Attendance X/X†
Southtown Comprehensive School Governing Body	Attendance X/X†
Westview Community Council	Attendance X/X†
Southtown Community College Management Committee	Attendance X/X†
Southtown Litter Management Group	Attendance X/X†
Bridgend Citizens Advice Bureau Steering Group	Attendance X/X†

† figures supplied by Councillor

* figures supplied by BCBC

Section 2: Constituency Activity

I hold weekly constituency surgeries on Friday Lunchtimes between 1pm and 3pm in the Westview Community Centre

Attendance at the local PACT meetings regularly and am able to address any complaints or queries in a timely manner.

I compile and deliver a quarterly newsletter to each address in my constituency - this is based on the topics which I believe my constituents would like information on.

I support individuals who contact me on a wide range of issues and have acted as an advocate in Planning matters, Neighbourhood disputes involving the Police and Bridgend Council, the Environment Agency, Highway matters and Social Services requests.

I receive a considerable number of telephone calls from residents seeking advice and assistance on a range of personal issues and I am always prepared to listen to their concerns and offer appropriate support.

I have given a talk at the Southtown Town & Community Council meeting on 'My role as a Councillor' and have taken part in 'What's your Opinion' as a member of a panel.

Section 3: Initiatives and Special Activities

Through communications with the Vale of Glamorgan Transportation Committee I have been successful in generating a new bus service between Corporation Street in Southtown and the Central Bus Station in Bridgend. The service runs 4 times each weekday morning affording residents public transport into Bridgend and the same frequency in the early evening.

I was requested to organise a survey regarding the potential introduction of a one-way system for Cardiff Road and Town Square in Southtown. The response to the survey was not large in terms of numbers in favour of the proposal which has subsequently been shelved. I wrote personally to each of the residents who responded to the survey conveying my thanks for their efforts and outlining the results.

With the help of local youngsters and BCBC's Leisure Department I have supported the development of the new skateboarding zone within Southtown Park, between May and September each year.

I have also supported the renovation of the outdoor Bowling Green at Southtown Community Centre which now has more than 120 regular members of Southtown Bowling Club. The club is aiming to open a junior section during the summer months of this year - so constituents should keep an eye open for more news on this subject in the local press and publications.

Section 4: Learning & Development

I have attended the following Learning & Development initiatives during the past year:

Corporate Parenting Training

Risk Assessment for Children's Directorate Training

Night-time Economy Training

ICT - Internet & Intranet Training

Project & Programme Management Training

Media Awareness Training

Budget Analysis & Interpretation Training

I have attended the following pre-Council Briefings:

Rota Visits for Residential Care Establishments

Bridgend Care & Repair

Reserve Forces and Cadets Association

Section 5: Other Activities and Issues

There are serious concerns amongst the residents of Southtown that the land adjoining Southtown Park will be developed as a Retail Park. I have supported local residents in protest against any such development as I believe it would fundamentally alter the characteristics of the local community and cause considerable impact on the existing traffic problems in the area. I have attended both appeal enquiries and will continue resisting any such plans for development along these lines.

I am a strong supporter of the 'Keep our Playing Fields' action group and have gone on record in opposing the recent sale of part of the Southtown School Playing Fields for a new Residential Estate. Whilst the sale will result in a small number of affordable housing opportunities I believe other local sites would have been a better option and could have afforded the opportunity to develop brown-field land.

I plan to support the Southtown Community Council in its efforts on fund raising for new festive lights in the town this Christmas. I will be approaching local businesses for modest contributions to this worthy cause in the next few months which provides a welcoming sight on cold winter nights.

Signature of Councillor:

Date:

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	11/12/2012
SUBJECT	Information Technology
PURPOSE	Update on the situation with regards to distributing the i-pads to elected members
AUTHOR	Councillor Dewi Owen Chairman, Democratic Services Committee

What is the current situation?

- 1.1 Since the elections on the 3rd of May, 2012, Gwynedd Council has moved towards being a Council which communicates (as much as possible) through electronic means. This promotes accessibility to the information available, ensures information is received timely and swift, and reduces costs. The Council has made a commitment to offer personal electronic devices to elected members.
- 1.2 Since its report to the Council on 4th October, 2012, the Council has offered and provided i-pads for the elected members who wish to receive the devices.
- 1.3 The current situation is as noted below:
 - Devices have been received / using own devices 66
 - Have expressed an interest, an additional introduction session to be arranged 4
 - Unsure whether they wish to receive an i-pad 2
 - Do not wish to receive an i-pad or the provision is not suitable for the individuals 3
- 1.4 In addition to the introduction sessions, a few 1 to 1 sessions with individual members have also been held, with the intention of providing
 - a) Follow up sessions, a chance for members to ask for more information as to how to make the best use of the i-pads (optional) and
 - b) Making the best use of the website
- 1.5 From the above, it is noted that a maximum of 5 (possibly less) who do not currently wish to use the devices.
- 1.6 In order to move forward with the best use of our resources, it is recommended that most correspondence and meeting requests will be sent to members by electronic means.
- 1.7 The 5 individuals will receive paper versions. Note that members of the public are welcomed to attend public meetings, and therefore it is good practice to ensure hard copies of committee papers are available for them. Copies for the 5 will be produced concurrently.
- 1.8 In addition, a note will be sent to the council services informing them of the following
 - Electronic communication with 69 members
 - Hard copies of all communication to 6 members (stating their names)
 - A reminder to ensure communications are in pdf format
 - A reminder that messages must not be larger than 2MB
 - Whilst arranging meetings, ensuring that a wi-fi connection is available, otherwise noting clearly that there is no wi-fi provision and therefore documents must be opened prior to arrival at the meeting (hence saved on the i-pads).

2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee approves the following:
- most correspondence and meeting requests will be sent to members by electronic means, with the remainder receiving hard copies.
 - A note be sent to the Council officers with regards to the above as mentioned in 1.8