



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, 4 MEHEFIN 2013

10.00 a.m. TUESDAY, 4 JUNE 2013

Lleoliad / Location

SIAMBR DAFYDD ORWIG

SWYDDFEYDD Y CYNGOR

CAERNARFON

Pwynt Cyswllt / Contact Point

GLYNDA O'BRIEN

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Dosbarthwyd: 24.05.13

**PWYLLGOR GWASANAETHAU DEMOCRATAIDD
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

AELODAETH / MEMBERSHIP (15)

Plaid Cymru (7)

Y Cynghorwyr / Councillors

Selwyn Griffiths
Michael Sol Owen
Dilwyn Morgan

Charles Wyn Jones
Linda Ann Wyn Jones
Gareth Thomas

Mandy Williams-Davies

Annibynnol / Independent (4)

Y Cynghorwyr / Councillors

Lesley Day
Anne Lloyd-Jones

Tom Ellis
Jean Forsyth

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 / Councillor Huw Edwards a / and Dewi Owen

A G E N D A

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

To confirm the decision taken by the Council at its meeting on 2 May 2013 to elect Councillor Lesley Day as Chairman of this Committee for 2013/14.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

To elect a Vice-chairman for this Committee for 2013/14.

3. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for absence.

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

5. URGENT BUSINESS

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

6. MINUTES

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the last meeting of this committee held on 19 March 2013 be signed as a true record

(Copy herewith – **white** paper).

7. WEB CASTING AND REMOTE ATTENDANCE

To consider the report of the Head of Democratic Services and Head of Customer Care Department on the above.

(Copy herewith – **yellow** paper)

8. ELECTED MEMBERS' ANNUAL REPORTS

To consider the report by the Chairman of this Committee and the Head of Democratic Services on the above.

(Copy herewith – **green** paper)

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES) MEASURE 2011 – MEMBERS’ TRAINING

To consider the report by the Chairman of this Committee and the Head of Democratic Services on the above.

(Copy herewith – **lilac** paper)

10. MEMBERS’ CHARTER REQUIREMENTS

To consider the report of the Chair of the Committee and the Head of Democratic Services and the Head of Customer Care

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11. ELECTED MEMBERS’ BULLETIN

To update members on the above.

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE, 19.03.13

Present: Councillor Lesley Day (Chair);
Councillor Anne Lloyd Jones (Vice-chair).

Councillors: Anwen Davies, Tom Ellis, Selwyn Griffiths, Jason Humphreys, Charles Wyn Jones, Sion Wyn Jones, Dilwyn Morgan, Gareth Thomas

Cabinet Member: Councillor Ioan Thomas (Cabinet Member – Customer Care).

Officers: Geraint George (Head of Strategic and Improvement Department), Gwenan Parry (Head of Customer Care Department), Vera Jones (Democratic Services Manager), Huw Ynyr (Senior Manager – Information Technology and Business Transformation), Sion G. Williams (Communications Manager) and Gwyn Parry Williams (Members' Support and Scrutiny Officer).

Apologies: Councillors Jean Forsyth, Linda W. Jones, Michael Sol Owen and Mandy Williams-Davies.

Thanks

The Chair thanked the former Chairman, Councillor Dewi Owen, for his service over the recent months.

1. CHAIR

RESOLVED to confirm the Council's resolution at its meeting on 28 February 2013 to elect Councillor Lesley Day as Chair of this Committee for the remainder of 2012/13, to succeed Councillor Dewi Owen.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 11 December 2012 as a true record.

4. SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS

i) Submitted – the report of the Democratic Services Manager giving an update to members regarding the support available and developments realised and in the pipeline.

ii) The Committee members expressed their opinion and the following was noted:-

a) That Cabinet members had received details of the champions' job descriptions but that members of this committee had not received them.

In response, the Democratic Services Manager noted that she would draw this matter to the attention of the Monitoring Officer as she was responsible for developing the information etc. for the champions.

b) A member drew attention to the fact that the Cabinet considered having two other champions and it was asked whether it would be possible for the committee to have the details about them.

In response, the Head of Strategic and Improvement Department noted that, once the Cabinet had made its decision, the details of the two other champions would be submitted to this committee and all Council members.

c) In relation to the Area Assemblies, a member referred to the possibility of establishing cross-boundary sub-committees. He noted that he had raised the matter at the Council on 28 February 2013, when it was promised that this would be looked into.

In response, the Democratic Services Manager noted that work was currently being undertaken on the development of the Area Assemblies.

ch) A member referred to the intention of having two Area Assemblies in Arfon and it was asked whether a decision had been made on the geography of both areas.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Customer Care noted that further consideration was needed with the members on this, but that the Felinheli and Rhiwlas representatives had already suggested Bangor/Ogwen and Caernarfon/Dyffryn Nantlle as two areas.

A member proposed that the two areas should be known as Caernarfon/Gwyrfai and Bangor/Dyffryn Ogwen. The proposal was passed. The Cabinet Member for Customer Care noted that he would note this proposal as part of the consultation with Arfon Area members.

d) A member noted that the Meirionnydd Area Committee held the previous week had agreed unanimously to call it the Meirionnydd Area Forum rather than an Area Assembly and that it should meet at least six times a year starting in May 2013. He asked the Cabinet Member for Customer Care to note this as part of his discussions.

dd) A member referred to the need to establish groups within the areas to consider particular topics.

e) In relation to electronic information for members, the Democratic Services Manager noted that 13 member training sessions had been held on the iPads and that by now 69 members were using them. The helpdesk had received many

enquiries from members regarding the iPads. She encouraged the members to continue to contact the helpdesk if any problems arose.

f) A member was of the opinion that sending paper copies of meeting agendas etc. should stop in light of the fact that the majority of members now used the iPads.

In response, the Democratic Services Manager noted that this would be arranged and that paper copies of meeting agendas etc. would be provided for the remaining members without electronic provision.

ff) A member noted that any problems, such as diaries, receiving documents that were not editable should be reported.

In response, the Senior Manager – Information Technology reported that it was important for him to be told of any difficulties with the provision.

g) In light of the failure of the information portal, a member enquired whether it would be possible to upgrade “exchange”.

In response, the Head of Customer Care Department noted that steps could be taken to redefine gaps in the provision.

The Senior Manager – Information Technology noted that it was intended to upgrade “exchange” during the next year.

ng) In response to a question by a member regarding difficulties in receiving e-mails from the Planning Department involving planning applications, the Head of Customer Care Department noted that this would be addressed.

h) A member noted that reading documents on the iPad for long periods of time could be tiring for the eyes and that paper copies were much easier to read.

In response, the Senior Manager – Information Technology noted that it would be possible to dim the screen a little.

i) The Council Chairman drew attention to the fact that, by virtue of his post as Chairman, he received copies of every agenda and that this should be reviewed. He thanked staff of the Information Technology Department for all the assistance received from them.

l) In response to a question by a member regarding e-mails disappearing from the system, the Senior Manager – Information Technology noted that the matter would be addressed.

ll) In relation to information bulletins from Cabinet Members, a member referred to the fact that some departments provided information to local members about matters undertaken in their areas but that other departments were reluctant to provide information.

In response, the Communications Manager noted that research had started to find out where the gaps were. A message had been sent to members at the end of the previous week and the next stage would be to send out questionnaires during this week to identify where the gaps were locally and then the first issue would be produced and sent out in mid April.

m) A member noted that Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd (CCG) did not provide details of tenants to local members when houses were let within their wards and that there should be a better understanding between CCG and the members.

In response, a member who represented the Council of the Board of CCG noted that she had already asked for this information; however, due to the Data Protection Act it was not possible to provide information about tenants. The only information they were willing to disclose was details about the property that had been let.

n) In response to a question by a member regarding responding to enquiries or complaints by local members, the Head of Strategic and Improvement Department noted that they should use the appropriate systems in the first place as it was more likely to lead to a resolution to the enquiry.

o) A member was of the opinion that the champions as well as individual members should be permitted to attend Cabinet meetings.

RESOLVED to accept the report noting the observations made above.

5. WEB CASTING AND REMOTE ATTENDANCE

a) Submitted – the report of the Head of Customer Care Department noting that the Local Government (Wales) Bill 2011 aimed to promote local democracy and be more inclusive of the public's input and engagement. The Minister for Local Government and Communities had noted that local authorities were best placed to work with community/town councils to enable the public to have access to information concerning the business of their local council, and how to contact them. In addition, Section 4 of the Bill noted the requirement for authorities to allow for remote attendance at Council meetings i.e. all members did not have to be present at the principal meeting place in order to participate in the meeting. No specific guidance had been produced by the Welsh Government to date on how exactly the requirements of the act would be delivered.

She noted that, at the beginning of the year, information had been received from the Minister for Local Government and Communities about allocating grants to assist with responding to the aforementioned elements. On 21 February 2013, a copy of a grant agreement had been received with direction to sign and return it by 7 March 2013, which stated that up to £72,000 would be available to the Council, namely -

- £42,000 for web casting Council meetings and allowing remote access by elected members
- £30,000 for issuing grants of up to £500 each for community councils in Gwynedd to establish their own websites.

She referred to the fact that the grant was to be spent during the period between 1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013 and needed to be claimed in full by 31 March 2013. However, there was provision to transfer the expenditure to 2013/14. As the timescale for responding to the grant application had been very limited, it was agreed that the grant should be received, with further work to be undertaken within the Council with regards to how to broadcast meetings over the web.

She noted that the Council was in an advantageous situation as the infrastructure required for webcasting the meetings had been installed as part of the work in Siambr Dafydd Orwig during the last few weeks and was part of the scheduled work in Siambr Hywel Dda. This would allow members to join in meetings in these chambers from the video conferencing rooms in Dolgellau and Pwllheli.

In order to broadcast efficiently and bilingually, it appeared that the Council may have to purchase broadcasting/editing services. There was one prominent company operating the market in Wales and a quotation for £32,000 had been received for an agreement to broadcast meetings for a period of two years. We would continue to research the best and most cost effective approach, working with other authorities in Wales and seeking guidance from the Welsh Government regarding their requirements.

In relation to the grant allocation of up to £500 for every community/town council to provide websites, this Council was expected to administrate the grant for them. Discussions were currently underway with the Economy and Community Department with regards to undertaking this work.

b) The Committee members expressed their opinion and the following was noted:-

i) A member enquired whether it would be possible to contact the community/town councils as soon as possible to draw their attention to the grant.

In response, the Head of Customer Care Department noted that there was not much detail at present but in terms of financial planning for the next year, it would be beneficial for them to be informed.

ii) A member drew attention to the fact that the Planning Committee was held in the three areas in turn and, at times, local members, who were not necessarily members of the committee, were required to travel considerable distances to these meetings. With this new system, he referred to the possibility of local members, say from the Arfon Area, to participate in the discussion from Siambr Hywel Dda if the committee itself was held in Pwllheli or Dolgellau.

iii) A member asked for assurance that the capacity would be built into the Council to broadcast the meetings after the end of the two-year agreement with the company.

In response, the Head of Customer Care Department noted that the principle was important and that they sought to launch something sustainable and consideration would be given to this suggestion.

iv) The Cabinet Member for Customer Care noted that reference had been made to the possibility of having the capacity within the Council to continue to broadcast meetings and to assist the community/town councils; however, as it was a challenging time for the Council, care must be taken.

RESOLVED

a) To allow the relevant officer to undertake further research on the work involved with the requirements of the Bill when the full guidance is published, and the possibilities in terms of using the grant funding.

b) That relevant officers discuss the matter with the Chair of the Committee and submit a further report to the next committee on 4 June 2013.

6. MEMBERS' REPORTS

a) Submitted – the report of the Head of Strategic and Improvement Department on the requirements, schedule and risks in order to decide on a direction for the rest of the members.

He noted that the Council was required to make arrangements to enable members to publish an annual report but that no member was required to do so. It was optional for any member to publish an annual report and he recommended that the Cabinet Member for Customer Care and the Chair of this Committee could create an annual report for 2012/13 in order to experiment and learn from different examples. He referred to the items which should be contained in the report and also the risks. It was intended to publish the report annually in June.

b) The Committee members expressed their opinion and the following was noted:-

i) That it was important for every member to keep a record of all the meetings etc. that they had attended during the year.

In response, the Democratic Services Manager noted that trying to keep a record was very important. She noted that a lot of information was available within the Council e.g. member training, meetings attended etc. but there were no details of the meetings attended outside the Council.

ii) Consideration should be given to the resources available within the Council to undertake this work.

iii) In response to a question by a member in relation to including school governor reports within the annual report, the Democratic Services Manager noted that this would be possible, but that it was a matter for the members themselves to decide as to whether they wished to do so.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Customer Care and the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee create an annual report for 2012/13 to set out a direction and provide guidance, and the rest of the Council members to create reports for 2013/14 onwards, in accordance with their wishes.

7. MEMBERS' TRAINING

a) Submitted – the report of the Chairman of the Training Sub-group, Councillor Dilwyn Morgan.

He reminded members of the decision to establish a sub-group to consider members' training specifically. The sub-group decided to establish a focus group which included elected members in order to try to encourage members to take ownership of the training programme. He noted that a meeting of the focus group had been held in Porthmadog on 18 February 2013 and he drew attention to the main issues discussed which were to Define the Purpose of the Learning and Development Programme; what a Development/Training Programme meant to you and Which elements you would like a development/training programme to include. The focus group was of the opinion that it was important that individual members took personal responsibility for the development programme. The Learning and Development team would incorporate all the focus group's aspirations into a future training programme.

b) The Democratic Services Manager referred to the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Bill 2011 which required local authorities to ensure that reasonable training and development opportunities would be provided for members. Also, it must be ensured that all members were afforded the opportunity to receive an annual review of their training and development needs. She drew attention to the possibility of winning a Support and Development Charter for the Council. She noted that the Council had won the Charter in the past.

RESOLVED

a) That the Learning and Development Service proceeds with planning and adapting the training programme for members, based on the work of the Training Sub-group

b) To allow officers to undertake further research on the work associated with the Measure and the Charter, and discuss the matter with the Chair of this Committee and to report back to the next meeting of the Committee on 4 June 2013.

8. VOTING SYSTEM

The Democratic Services Manager referred to the various options available within the new voting system in Siambr Dafydd Orwig.

The members noted the following observations -

- That the vote should appear on the screen at the end of an ordinary vote and not while voting was underway.
- That this way of voting was complicated for a committee as the process of opening and closing the vote etc. took more time than a show of hands.
- That the name of every member should appear on the screen at the end of every vote to show how they had voted.
- That this system was not suitable for a small committee.

The officer promised to address these matters.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 12.00pm

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	4th June 2013
SUBJECT	Web Casting And Remote Attendance
PURPOSE	To submit the latest information regarding the requirements of web casting, remote attendance and developments relating to the grant for Community Councils
Authors	Gwenan Parry Head of Customer Care Department
	Geraint George Head of Democratic Services

INTRODUCTION

1. A report was submitted to the Democratic Service Committee on 19 March noting that the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 sought to promote local and inclusive democracy, and that the Minister at the time, Carl Sargeant, had noted his wish to act on this matter by means of:
 - Web casting
 - Enabling remote attendance for members
 - Working with town and community councils to ensure access to key information

2. It was also reported that the Council has signed an agreement to receive a grant of £72,000 available to Gwynedd Council, with the spending to be allocated as follows:
 - £40,000 for web casting Council meetings and allowing remote access by elected members
 - £32,000 for issuing grants of up to £500 each for community councils in Gwynedd to establish their own websites.

3. In receiving the grant, Gwynedd Council will commit to:

Do what?	By when?	Evidence
Broadcasting all or some Council meetings	31 March 2014	Broadcasts on the Council's website
Providing finance to community councils to support them to develop their websites	31 March 2014	Number of community councils with a website
Arranging remote attendance for members	31 March 2014	Written report noting number of meetings held and the success of the exercise

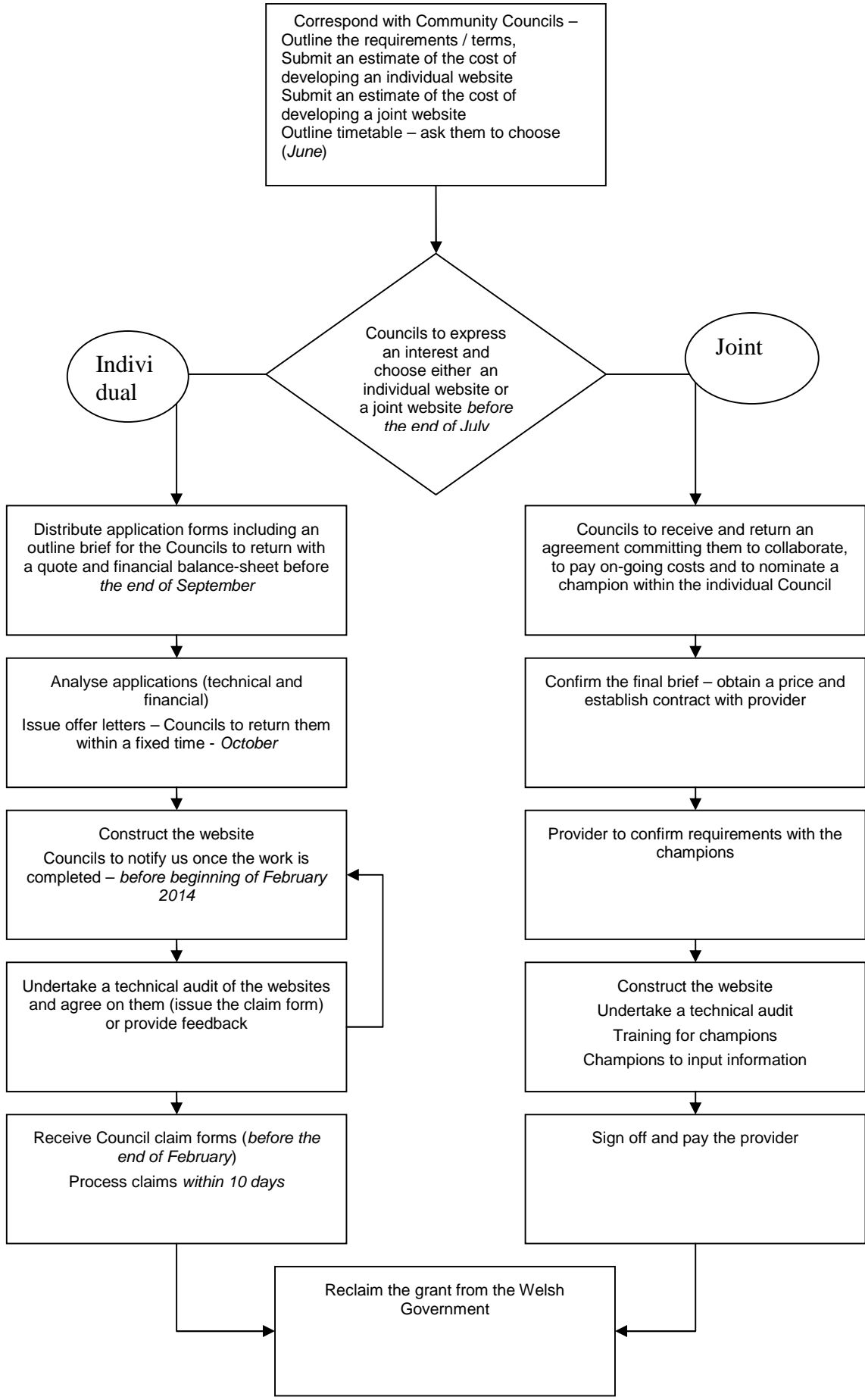
UPDATE

4. With regard to web casting, the developments at Siambr Dafydd Orwig have been completed, and work is continuing at Siambr Hywel Dda. The work completed thus far and that in hand will mean that we will be in a position to provide the materials to be broadcast but arrangements to arrange and support the broadcasting of those materials on the way are required.
5. At the last meeting, an initial report was submitted on the preliminary research work on the costs of bilingual broadcasts, and this research work is progressing, jointly with other North Wales authorities. The options will be in place by 15th July, and will involve buying a software package to broadcast on the pattern of other authorities (e.g. the Brecon Beacons National Park) but this does have revenue implications or, if it is possible, to develop a far more basic model that would have lower annual running costs.
6. One consideration the committee should be aware of is how we will deal with the requirements for translation. Clearly, at the moment, there is simultaneous translation at meetings when there are Non-Welsh speakers present but, if no Non-Welsh speakers are present, there is no simultaneous translation. Therefore, if there are no Non-Welsh speakers present at the meeting itself, there will be no translation and consequently no audio stream for Non-Welsh speakers wanting to watch and listen on-line. It is suggested that it would not be a good use of resources to provide a translation at every meeting “in case” a Non-Welsh speaker wanted to listen. Once the system is operational, it is proposed that we review the use of the Non-Welsh language stream to assess the demand before considering what provision if at all to make.
7. With regard to allowing remote member access to meetings, we are still awaiting the guidelines on this but, in the absence of the guidelines, it is suggested that the committee forms an initial opinion on the matter:-
 - a) To propose that the facility be available from the video conference rooms in the Council’s own offices at Dolgellau and Pwllheli (to safeguard the reliability of the provision)
 - b) Not to offer the provision for meetings where executive decisions are made (Cabinet and Council) for the time being in order to avoid and constitutional questions if the equipment failed to work and a member was therefore unable to exercise his / her right to vote (It is hoped that the guidelines, when published will resolve this)
8. Developing Community Council Websites. Work is ongoing on this element in order to facilitate the work for Community Councils and to ensure that they receive the best value for money. Unllais have agreed to the principle of

allowing Community Councils either a) to apply for some grant funding to develop their own website, or b) to develop joint websites for a more reasonable price. The procedure for applying and an outline schedule have been noted in Appendix A.

RECOMMENDATIONS

9. It is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee:-
 - a) Approve moving ahead the web-casting provision at the Dafydd Orwig Chamber and the Hywel Dda Chamber, and, subject to the scale of the costs, to provide for any establishment and running costs, over and above the value of the grant monies, from the Democratic Cost budget
 - b) With regard to simultaneous translation for web-casting, to accept the suggestion of not making provision beyond the Council's current provision at the meeting rooms themselves
 - c) Approve moving ahead with the provision for remote member Access to meetings, subject to the conditions in paragraphs 7a) and 7b) above
 - ch) To continue to support the work of facilitating the developments of web-sites for Community Councils



MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	4 May 2013
SUBJECT	Members' Reports
PURPOSE	To present the latest situation regarding developments with members' reports for 2012/13.
Authors	Councillor Lesley Day, Chair of the Democratic Services Committee
	Geraint George Head of Democratic Services

1. A report has already been submitted to the Democratic Services Committee on the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 to ensure that the Council makes arrangements for members to be able to form an annual report if they so wish.
2. The purpose of this report is to introduce the latest situation in terms of developments and action to the Democratic Services Committee.
3. Following a discussion on the matter at the last meeting of this committee, I corresponded with all the members on 8 April
 - reporting on our decision as a committee to undertake a pilot of the arrangement for 12/13
 - noting that any member is entitled to produce an annual report
 - asking members to declare if they intended to produce a report
 - and notifying members that more detailed guidelines would follow.
(See a copy in **Appendix A**).
4. Following the annual meeting of the full Council, where all members were updated on the developments in relation to annual reports (as part of the update report on member support), further guidelines were distributed to elected members on 9 May. The detailed guidelines had already been discussed and agreed by the Council's Business Group at the end of April. See a copy in **Appendix B**.
5. As this report was being published, six elected members had contacted to note their intention to publish an annual report. An oral report will be submitted at the Committee on the numbers who have presented by the end of May, as required.
6. Initial 'lessons learnt' could be discussed at this meeting, but it is suggested that the discussion on the way forward (to include lessons learnt from the perspective of the members and the Council) in the context of annual reports takes place at a more appropriate time during the next meeting of the Committee on 10 September 2013.

Adran Strategol a Gwella Strategic and Improvement Department

Cynghorydd / Councillor Lesley Day

Swyddfa'r Cyngor

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Gofynnwch am/Ask for: **Vera Jones**

(01286) 679267 Ein Cyf / Our Ref:

VeraJones@gwynedd.gov.uk Eich Cyf / Your Ref:

8th April, 2013

To: All Elected Members

Dear Co-Member

Annual Reports by Elected Members

As you are aware, the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011 requires that local authorities make provision to enable individual Elected Members to produce and publish an annual report. However, it is not compulsory for elected members to produce such a report.

The Democratic Services Committee discussed the matter during their meeting on 20/03/2013. Whilst it is optional for any member to publish an annual report, the Committee recommended that the Cabinet Member for Customer Care, along with myself as Chair of the Democratic Services Committee produce an annual report for 2012/13. The reports will be published, as per requirement, on the Council's website by the end of June 2013.

The above approach will enable us as elected members to experiment and learn from different experiences and examples. In addition, it will enable Council staff to identify and assess the appropriate resources required to support us as elected members undertaking this work. It will also give us an opportunity to learn lessons from the exercise undertaken in 2012/13 and prepare a clear direction and guidance to all members who wish to publish a report in 2013/14.

I would be very grateful, if you could contact Arwel Ellis Jones, Senior Manager Corporate Commissioning Service, or Vera Jones, Democratic Services Manager in the Strategic and Improvement Department as soon as possible if you intend to publish a report for 2012/13, to ensure the appropriate support is arranged for you.

I would also like to take this opportunity to encourage any member who intends to publish a report in the future, in 2013/14, to begin keeping a record of all the meetings and activities undertaken throughout the year.

The Democratic Services Committee will keep all members informed of experience gained in carrying out the exercise as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,
Councillor Les Day
Chair Democratic Services Committee

GUIDELINES FOR GWYNEDD COUNCIL ELECTED MEMBERS – ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 2012/13.

Requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

4. A local authority must **make arrangements** for
- *each person who is a member of the authority to make an annual report about the person’s activities as a member of the authority during the year to which the report relates,*
 - *each person who is a member of the authority’s executive to make an annual report about the person’s activities as a member of the executive during the year to which the report relates, and*
 - *the authority to publish all annual reports produced by its members and by the members of its executive.*
5. *The arrangements may include conditions with respect to the contents of the report that must be satisfied by the person producing it.*
6. *A local authority must publicise its arrangements.*
7. *In exercising its functions under this section a local authority must have regard to guidance given by the Welsh Ministers.*

Background

- The aim of the Annual Report by the Elected Members is to improve communication between Elected Members and the public, or in other words, present information to individuals from the ward.
- 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 that they have (i.e. they will enable the public to find information about the activity of their local councillor).
- He has also noted that every local authority will be free to choose its own format for the reports (i.e. local authorities can place their own restrictions on the contents of the reports).
- Annual reports should only include **factual information**.
- This suggests that information about meetings, events, conferences etc. attended by the councillor should mostly be included, along with any training and development activities.
- Although it might be acceptable to include information that a member “has made representations on behalf of the campaign to save the local hospital in the following ways”, it would not be acceptable to say that a member “has succeeded in saving the local hospital following his efforts on behalf of his electors.”
- Similarly, including information in reports about activities undertaken by the member that are **outside his role as a councillor** should be **avoided**. Therefore, although it would be acceptable to include information about a speech given by a member in a conference he attended as part of his role in the council, it would not be acceptable

to refer to a speech given by a member in a political party conference, for example, where he was present as a representative of the local branch of his party.

- It should also be ensured that the report does not include information that could be interpreted as criticism of another member. For example, it would not be acceptable for a member to compare his attendance or his activities with another member or other members.
- It should be ensured that the report does not include something that is not factual / is of a political nature.

Content – standard items to include:

- **Role and responsibilities** – including details of membership of committees and external bodies, attendance records at these committees and in the full Council.
- **Local activity** – details of any surgeries held and observations made on behalf of electors, and the outcomes of these.
- **Large projects** – details of any local, county or regional initiatives or projects that the member was part of.
- **Learning and development** – details of training and development events attended or followed, and conferences and seminars attended.

Timetable and restrictions

1. The information should be summarised to a maximum of two pages so that the public can read them easily (*it is expected that this will be within the statutory guidelines*).
2. The draft report must be submitted to the Senior Corporate Commissioning Manager (Arwel Ellis-Jones) by 31 May 2013. The Council will arrange to translate the report if the member wishes, and if he/she submits it within the timetable.
3. Requests for factual information regarding the number of committees/training sessions attended should be submitted to the Democratic Services Manager (Vera Jones) as soon as possible.
4. Members should be willing to discuss the content of the report with the Head of Democratic Services (Geraint George) should he be of the opinion that the report does not comply with the guidelines in the Measure, before the report is published. Only reports that comply with the guidelines will be published.
5. The final reports will be published by the Head of Democratic Services by the end of June 2013 on the Council's website, in electronic format only (*we are still awaiting confirmation of the publication date in the statutory guidelines*).

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	4 June 2013
SUBJECT	Members' Training – Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 in the context of members' training
PURPOSE	To submit the requirements of the Measure in order to decide on the way forward.
Authors	Councillor Lesley Day, Chair of the Democratic Services Committee
	Geraint George Head of Democratic Services

1. The Welsh Government's Statutory Guidelines (that accompany the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011) for reviewing personal development notes the following key principles:

- Every member of the authority must be offered the opportunity to have their training and development needs reviewed on an annual basis.
- The review must include an opportunity for a pre-planned interview between the member and a suitably qualified person.
- Local authorities may consider detailing the outcome of the interview in an agreed plan noting the training and development needs for the year ahead.
- The personal development plan is provided for the member and signed by both the member and the reviewer. This is a private document which is not expected to be published by the authority or the member, although the member is free to publish details in his annual report of any training and development opportunities he benefited from if he wishes to do so.
- Local authorities will need to adopt role descriptions for various posts, and the descriptions could be used as a guide as to the skills required by the relevant member.
- The review is an assessment of training and development needs, not a performance review or an assessment of how well or badly a member has fulfilled their duties.
- It is a matter for the local authority to determine who could be considered a suitably qualified person to hold interviews.

(See the full statutory guidelines in **Appendix A**)

2. The Council has previously stated that it is supportive of the principle of continuously developing elected members, and this is consistent with the work already undertaken by the training sub-group which met in February this year.

3. As a basis for the above, the Council has already established core competencies and behaviours for elected members, and they were presented

as part of the introduction pack at the beginning of this Council term. Additionally, some job descriptions exist. The above need to be reviewed to ensure that they are current.

4. In addition, it is intended for the Cabinet to pilot a procedure for developing the Personal Development Plans in the first instance. It is a possibility that the Cabinet will look at several elements, including development and training, and performance. However, it is envisaged that the 'training and development' elements will be sufficient for all other elected members. It is envisaged that the Cabinet will pilot the methodology and procedure during the September – November 2013 period.
5. At the same time, the Council needs to start preparing to ensure arrangements are in place for the remainder of the members to receive a personal development review should they wish so. We are aware that some members would like this to happen as soon as possible, however, some members have already indicated that they do not wish to part-take in such arrangements.
6. Therefore, it is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee contacts all members (except Cabinet members) to explain the opportunities arising from the Measure with regards to continuous personal development plans, and asking them to note whether
 - They currently foresee that they will wish to benefit from a review of their training and development requirements
 - They currently foresee that they will not wish to benefit from a review of their training and development requirements
 - That they are not currently able to express whether they wish to part-take in such a review or not.This would then allow the Council to start planning in realistic terms with regards to arrangements for such reviews.
7. In addition, it is recommended that a short presentation be given on the benefits of the Personal Development Reviews at the first local forums, which will allow all members a further understanding of the context of the reviews along with a chance to ask any questions.
8. Further, it is envisaged that a few members may wish to participate in a number of additional training courses. We will have to be realistic with regards to resources. You will already be aware that the Democratic Services Committee has previously developed and adopted principles and guidelines to prioritise resources and allowing members to participate in additional seminars in their meeting on 11 December 2012. See Appendix B.

9. It is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee adapt the principles to include externally provided development courses, and adopt the principles and guidelines.

Recommendations:

10. Contact all elected members (except for Cabinet members), along with a short presentation to the local forums, explaining the opportunities arising from the Local Government Measure with regards to Personal Development Plans and asking them to express an interest (or not) in receiving an annual review.
11. Adapt the principles and guidelines already produced for prioritising and allowing elected members to participate in seminars to make them relevant to externally provided training courses, and adopt the guidelines.

The Welsh Government's Statutory Guidance on reviewing Personal Development.

Annual Review

2.12 Every member of the authority must be offered the opportunity to have an annual review of their training and development needs (with the exception of an executive leader – see paragraph 23). It is recommended that much of the training and development needs of local authority members are noted in such reviews.

2.13 The review must include the opportunity for a pre-planned interview between the member and a suitably qualified person (see paragraphs 2.17-2.22). The interview could include a review of the training and development opportunities received by the member over the last year (or appropriate period if the local authority member has only been recently elected).

2.14 Local authorities may wish to consider detailing the outcome of the interview in an agreed plan which sets out training and development needs, if any, identified for the year ahead. It is recommended that this personal development plan is given to the member and signed by the member and the reviewer. This is a private document and the authority or the member are not expected to publish the document, although the member is free to publish details in his annual report regarding any training and development opportunities he benefitted from if he wishes to do so.

2.15 In achieving the standard required for the Charter, local authorities will need to adopt role descriptions for the posts of leader, deputy leader, executive member, scrutiny member, chair of scrutiny and chairs of statutory and area committees. The descriptions could be used as a guide as to the skills required by the relevant member.

2.16 The review is an assessment of training and development needs. A local authority may wish to consider making it clear to members that the review is not a performance review or an assessment of how well or badly a member has conducted their duties. This is not a statutory requirement and is a matter for the electorate to judge at the ballot box.

Suitably Qualified

2.17 It is a matter for the local authority to determine who could be considered a suitably qualified person to hold interviews with local authority members to discuss their training and development needs as part of their annual review. This responsibility could be allocated to the DSC within the authority. In most cases, this may not be a question of naming individuals, but of describing a post or office

holder, (but see paragraph 2.22 below). It would probably be neither suitable nor desirable for a single person to be made responsible for conducting all interviews.

2.18 Some local authorities already carry out various practices in relation to the review of the training and development needs of its members. Practices include group leaders conducting interviews with their members or interviews being conducted by the leader and the executive members. Both these practices are perfectly acceptable methods of complying with the requirements of the Measure.

2.19 Authorities may prefer, however, to divest the duty with their human resources officers. If this is the preferred option, local authorities may consider making the Head of Democratic Services (HDS) responsible for supervising human resources officers for this part of their work. If the Head of Paid Service was selected as a suitably qualified person to conduct an interview it would not be expected that they would work under the supervision of the HDS.

2.20 Some authorities may prefer to hire external consultants or peers to conduct interviews, which is also acceptable.

2.21 It is recommended that there should be no surprises in the system and that individual members know who they can expect to conduct their interview. Local authorities may wish to consider including an option in their arrangements for members to make a request to the HDS to arrange for a different person to conduct their interview if there is good reason for so doing.

2.22 Finally, authorities must ensure that anyone conducting an interview must themselves have received suitable training on how to do this and are advised to liaise with the WLGA to ensure the provision of this. Therefore, even if the authority has chosen to allocate the duty of conducting reviews to a post, rather than an individual, that post holder should have received the necessary training before conducting reviews.

Executive Leader of the Local Authority

2.23 Section 7 of the Measure does not apply to the executive leader (or elected mayor) of an authority. However, there may, of course, be occasions where the leader wishes to receive training or development and there is no suggestion that, by excluding them from the provisions of the Measure, they should not be able to receive training, nor, indeed, an annual review or an interview with a suitably qualified person.

CRITERIA FOR ATTENDING 'ADDITIONAL SEMINARS' AND PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW – Adopted by Democratic Services Committee on 11 December 2012

- 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.

2.1 It is recommended that a formal procedure should be developed for submitted 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).

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	4 June 2013
SUBJECT	Members' Training – Members Charter requirements
PURPOSE	To submit the requirements of the Members Charter in order to decide on the way forward.
Authors	Councillor Lesley Day, Chair of the Democratic Services Committee
	Geraint George Head of Democratic Services

1. The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) has set up the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development, which is known as 'the Charter'. The Charter was jointly reviewed in 2012/13 with political circles and the member support officers of every authority.
2. WLGA acknowledges that elected members today face increasing challenges, and that there are heightened expectations on them to undertake a diversity of roles ranging from that of a community leader to their special responsibilities within the Council. The Charter was developed to provide structure to the national programme of support throughout Wales in order to assist elected members within their roles.
3. There are three levels to the process, namely
 - The Charter – the majority of authorities could achieve the Charter following only a few months of work.
 - The Advanced Charter – which is more extensive as there is a need to undertake preparation work for a year to achieve the Charter having reached the basic level.
 - Award of Excellence – need to see very detailed support and clear outcomes to the work.

(See a summary of what achieving the charter will achieve for the Council in **Appendix A**)
4. To apply for the charter the Authority will need to follow the actions noted below:
 - a) Express its corporate commitment to applying for the Charter by signing the statement of intent at a meeting of the full Council.
 - b) Undertake a brief self assessment against the relevant criteria and establish an action plan for any development work to meet the Charter requirements.
 - c) To implement the action plan and submit the self assessment to the Association (The Welsh Local Government Association).
 - d) A peer team will review the application and provide constructive and supportive feedback. Some peers will make an informal visit to the authority as part of their application.

5. A number of the elements contained within the Charter build upon the requirements of the Local Government Measure, outlined in a previous report. Achieving the Charter, along with making arrangements for the Annual Personal Development Reviews endorse the Council's principle for continuously supporting the development of elected members to enable them to participate successfully in their roles.
6. The above also builds on the work achieved by the training sub-group as part of the Democratic Services Committee in the period up to February 2013.

Recommendations:

7. It is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee express an interest in applying for the Charter for Member Support and Development during 2013/14 and report this recommendation to the next meeting of the full Council to be held on 19th September 2013.

The Charter will:

- Include all aspects of member support, such as constitutional arrangements, a strategic and practical framework for member development, member services and member facilities.
- Be awarded according to agreed guidelines and be voluntarily monitored and assessed by Welsh Local Government through the Association. Progress will be shared with the Welsh Assembly Government.
- When awarded, provide a statement of the commitment by the authority to member support, which can be used to encourage people to stand for office.
- Recognise that each authority will have its own approach, structure and priorities, which are to be welcomed.
- Support the need for all members to have equal access to support and development activities regardless of political allegiance, and recognise the contribution of the political parties to the political development of members.
- Recognise that every elected member brings their own unique skills and attributes to the authority. The Charter initiative is not designed to “clone” members or restrict their behaviour to any “model” but to empower them with the knowledge, skills and opportunities to undertake their chosen role.
- Encourage authorities to examine the way that business is conducted to ensure the equality of access and involvement of all people as councillors.

(WLGA – A Wales Charter for Member Support and Development)