

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	3 June, 2014
SUBJECT	Engagement with Members
PURPOSE	To report on recent discussions and further proposals on improving engagement with members
AUTHOR	Geraint George Head of Democratic Services

1. Members will be keenly aware of the key role that they play in the relationship between the Council and the residents of the county. This role will become increasingly important over the coming months and years as the Council faces difficult choices about the way forward. Consequently, good communication and engagement with members is crucial.

2. A report was submitted to the last meeting of this committee on the results of initial work on how to improve communications and engagement with members. Members will recall that this included a questionnaire to members and also two workshops held at Porthmadog and Bethel.

3. The result of the discussion at the last meeting was that there was scope to improve the arrangements to communicate and engage with members, building on some examples of good practice. Part of that was for each member to be able to receive copies of press releases by the Council and each member has received an e-mail from the Communications Unit to facilitate that.

4. In addition there was agreement with the suggestion of bringing a group of councillors and officers together to hold more discussions and plan any further steps jointly. A report to that effect was presented to the Management Group that welcomed this move and nominated some key officers to sit on the Group.

5. Arrangements are being made to convene that group at the moment. In the meantime, there are plans to hold a training / development session on the role of councillors in a time of great change. It is hoped that this will help members in their role of leading their communities over the difficult next few years. The session will take place on 2nd July; more information will be sent out in advance of the date.

6. The committee's views are sought on the above proposals.