

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2014

- PRESENT:** Councillor Vaughan Hughes (Chair)
- Councillors Victor Hughes, R Meirion Jones, R G Parry, OBE, Dylan Rees, J Arwel Roberts (from 2.45pm), Dafydd Rhys Thomas
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive
Interim Head of Democratic Services
Committee Officer (SC)
- APOLOGIES:** None
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1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th September, 2014 were confirmed as correct.

3 INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE ANGLESEY INTERVENTION

The Chief Executive reported on the findings of a study commissioned by the Welsh Government on the Anglesey intervention. UK Research and Consulting were commissioned to assess the effectiveness of the intervention measures in Anglesey: impact and progress, strengths and weaknesses, and lessons learned. The report summarises a number of key conclusions and opportunity for learning.

RESOLVED to note the key conclusions and recommendations in the report.

4 WEB-CASTING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Interim Head of Democratic Services provided an update on webcasting since reporting to Committee on 19th September, 2014. He stated that there have been over 2,500 live or archived hits since September.

The Interim Head of Democratic Services noted that overall, the statistics continue to be encouraging to promote openness and accountability with greater participation in the Council's democratic arrangements.

RESOLVED to note the progress on webcasting as detailed in the report and that an update be submitted to the Committee in March, 2015.

5 TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT GRANT - UPDATE

Submitted - a report by the Interim Head of Democratic Services in relation to the Welsh Government funding to County Councils to offer a grant of up to £500 each for Town and Community Councils, including those who already have a website, to be spent on website development.

The current position with regard to the allocation of the grant :-

- 36 Councils have claimed the grant;
- 1 Council has notified their intention to claim the grant;
- 3 Councils have notified that they do not intend to claim the grant (one already has a website).

RESOLVED:-

- **To accept the report;**
- **To write to and re-submit the offer of grant funding to the 3 Town and Community Councils who have refused the grant;**
- **To report back to this Committee in March, 2015 on progress to date.**

6 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Interim Head of Democratic Services provided an update on the progress of the development opportunities offered to Elected Members:-

The Development plan for 2014/15 was presented to Council and adopted in April, 2014. The plan is an evolving document and is amended to reflect the needs of Elected Members and the changing demands on the business.

The Interim Head of Democratic Services referred to two focus groups held in June, 2014 to gain feedback from Members on Member support issues. Feedback from these meetings highlighted the need for more training on technology, including I-pads.

He referred to the Personal Development Reviews (PDR) for Members and how the timeframe has been rearranged to coincide with staff annual appraisals. PDR's were now planned to be completed by February, 2015.

The Interim Head of Democratic Services also reported that the Minister for Local Government had recently announced the ending of the WLGA's Improvement Grant in March, 2015, and this will have a direct impact on the Charter for Member Support and Development.

RESOLVED to accept the recommendations in the report and that this Committee expresses its concerns at the ending of the Welsh Local

Government's Improvement Grant and implications on Member support and development.

The meeting concluded at 3.00 pm

**COUNCILLOR VAUGHAN HUGHES
CHAIR**