

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
NAME OF COMMITTEE:	DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING:	30 September, 2015
TITLE:	WEBCASTING
PURPOSE OF REPORT:	TO SEEK THE COMMITTEES VIEWS ON FUTURE WEBCASTING OF MEETINGS
AUTHOR:	HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1.0 Background and context

- 1.1 As part of the Welsh Government agenda to modernise local government and promote openness, each Local Authority in Wales received a one off grant of £40k towards webcasting of meetings. Confirmation has been received that there is no commitment to fund associated costs in the future.
- 1.2 The County Council awarded a 2 year contract to Public- i (which is providing a webcasting service for most authorities in Wales). The current contract ends in March 2016.
- 1.3 The Council has agreed to pilot the webcasting of:
- County Council,
The Executive
Planning and Orders Committee
- 1.4 In relations to meetings that are streamed live the situation across Wales is similar – most authorities either webcast the above meetings or a combination thereof.
- 1.5 The webcasting of meetings commenced in June 2014 with the Executive following a period of testing and staff training.
- 1.6 Progress reports have been submitted to the Democratic Services Committee since the roll out of the pilot and statistics provided on the number of hits. Overall, as is evident from the latest analysis, viewing figures are encouraging, more so when there are specific issues of public interest discussed in committee. Analysis provided in **Enclosure 1** with over 32,000 hits (either live or archive)

1.7 It is clear that Welsh Assembly Government wish to enhance the use of technology to promote openness and cultural change in local government. The White Paper Reforming Local Government: Power to the People(February 2015) makes specific reference to legislating in the future requiring Authorities to broadcast meetings of full Council and Executive meeting on line and encourage the broadcasting of other committees .

2.0 Current context

2.1 The current contract is based on the broadcasting of 90 hours per year. This was based on the assumption that meetings listed above would last up to 3 hours. However, it has become clear that this was an overestimate and, in general, having assessed the length of meetings during the past 12 months meetings last around 1.5 hours. Also, it is important to note that some meetings or part thereof are held in private (especially special meetings when single issues are discussed), therefore, webcasting is kept to a minimum.

2.2 The current total number of hours of webcasting is roughly 40 hours per year which is far less than what was planned originally. Variations can occur e.g. when meetings last beyond 2 hours depending on subject matter and also the convening of special meetings when business is dealt with in public.

2.3 It is estimated that there will be a number of unused hours at the end of the current contract that could be rolled forward into 2016/17 to offset costs in part should webcasting continue.

2.4 Analysis of number of meetings during municipal year 2015 /16:

Meeting	Number of Meetings
Council	5
Executive	13
Planning and Orders Committee	12
Total	30 x 1.30hrs = 45 hours

2.5 The number of meetings referred to above does not factor in, any special/extraordinary meetings which are convened. Subject to the views of this committee on the extent of webcasting in the future. Assumptions are based on around 50 hours of streaming per year, if current arrangements are to continue, allowing for some contingency.

3.0 Demands on resources and potential usage

- 3.1 There are also staffing implications and demands on staff time associated with webcasting .There is a need for Democratic Services staff to be present at all meetings that are webcast - to operate the cameras and align the microphones.
- 3.2 Group Leaders and the Senior Leadership Group support the continuation of webcasting meetings that are currently piloted in order to promote transparency and openness in decision making.
- 3.3 It will be necessary to report on financial aspects to the Executive once this Committee has taken a view on the way forward. There is no budget beyond a balance of approximately £7k available from the Welsh Government Grant to meet in part costs for 2016/17.
- 3.4 Officers have been tasked to consider options and costs of webcasting meetings e.g. use of social media etc. to minimise costs.

Recommendation

The Committee's views are requested on webcasting meetings in the future.

Huw Jones
Head of Democratic Services
15/09/15

Enclosure 1**The Executive: June 2014 – July 2015**

Date Meeting	Live	Archive	Total Hits
9 th June, 2014	161	2854	3015
14 th July, 2014	64	1363	1427
8 th September, 2014	32	888	920
20 th October, 2014	25	462	492
3 rd November, 2014	45	497	542
1 st December, 2014	12	775	787
15 th December, 2014	29	770	799
12 th January, 2015	32	693	725
9 th February, 2015	21	638	659
16 th February, 2015	22	704	726
16 th March, 2015	30	1527	1557
20 th April, 2015	0	643	643
26 th May, 2015	9	389	398
15 th June, 2015	14	341	355
2 nd July, 2015	54	506	560
20 th July, 2015	24	355	379

Planning and Orders Committee: September 2014 – July 2015

Date Meeting	Live	Archive	Total Hits
3 rd September, 2014	32	1136	1168
1 st October, 2014	57	1108	1165
5 th November, 2014	42	757	799
3 rd December, 2014	32	775	807
7 th January, 2015	63	1110	1173
4 th February, 2015	26	814	840
4 th March, 2015	32	1042	1074
1 st April, 2015	26	714	740
13 th May, 2015	72	656	728
3 rd June, 2015	110	995	1105
1 st July, 2015	18	451	469
29 th July, 2015	112	735	847

Isle of Anglesey County Council: July, 2014 – May, 2015

Date Meeting	Live	Archive	Total Hits
29 th July, 2014	28	1061	1089
30 th September, 2014	74	676	750
9 th October, 2014	No record		
4 th December, 2014 (10:00am)	82	700	782
4 th December, 2014 (2:00pm)	48	646	598
20 th January, 2015	2	517	519
4 th February, 2015	3	555	558
26 th February, 2015	60	127	780
30 th March, 2015	5	474	479
7 th April, 2015	5	581	586
14 th May, 2015 (10:30am)	53	561	614
14 th May, 2015 (2:00pm)	32	639	671
			Total
			32325