

# Public Document Pack



CYNGOR SIR  
YNYS MÔN  
ISLE OF ANGLESEY  
COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr Richard Parry Jones, BA, MA.  
Prif Weithredwr – Chief Executive  
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<b>RHYBUDD O GYFARFOD</b>	<b>NOTICE OF MEETING</b>
<b>PWYLLGOR GWASANAETHAU DEMOCRATAIDD</b>	<b>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DYDD IAU, 18 MEDI, 2014 am 2.00 o'r gloch</b>	<b>THURSDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER 2014 at 2.00 pm</b>
<b>YSTAFELL BWYLLGOR 1, SWYDDFEYDD Y CYNGOR, LLANGFNI</b>	<b>COMMITTEE ROOM 1, COUNCIL OFFICES LANGFNI</b>
<b>Swyddog Pwyllgor</b>	<b>Mrs. Mairwen Hughes (01248) 752516</b>
	<b>Committee Officer</b>

## **AELODAU / MEMBERS**

Cynghorwyr / Councillors:-

### **Annibynnol / Independent**

D R Hughes, Victor Hughes, Richard Owain Jones (Is-Gadeirydd/Vice-Chair) and Dafydd Rhys Thomas

### **Plaid Cymru / The Party of Wales**

Vaughan Hughes (Cadeirydd/Chair), R.Meirion Jones, R G Parry OBE and Dylan Rees

### **Llafur / Labour**

J A Roberts

### **Grwp Chwyldroad/Revolutionist Group**

P.S. Rogers

## A G E N D A

**1     DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

To receive any declaration of interest from any Member or Officer in respect of any item of business.

**2     MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)**

To submit, for confirmation, the minutes of the meeting held on 18 June, 2014.

**3     WEB-CASTING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS (Pages 5 - 26)**

To submit a report by the Interim Head of Democratic Services.

**4     MEMBERS ANNUAL REPORTS (Pages 27 - 28)**

To submit a report by the Interim Head of Democratic Services.

**5     TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT GRANT - UPDATE (Pages 29 - 30)**

To submit a report by the Interim Head of Democratic Services.

**6     COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15 (Pages 31 - 32)**

To submit a report by the Interim Head of Democratic Services.

## DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

### Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2014

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Councillor Vaughan Hughes (Chair) Councillor Richard O Jones (Vice-Chair)  Councillors Derlwyn Hughes, R Meirion Jones, R G Parry OBE, Dylan Rees
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Councillors Aled M Jones, Nicola Roberts, Trefor LI Hughes
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	Councillors Peter Rogers, Dafydd Rhys Thomas
<b>ALSO PRESENT:</b>	Interim Head of Democratic Services (JHJ) Senior HR Officer (MW) Scrutiny Manager (BS) Committee Officer/Admin Assistant (SC)

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#### 1 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor Richard Owain Jones was elected as Vice-Chair of this Committee.

#### 2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

#### 3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2014 were confirmed as correct.

#### 4 TIMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Submitted - a report by the Interim Head of Democratic Services referring to the Notice of Motion approved by Council on the 8<sup>th</sup> May, 2014 to further review the Timing of Meetings by this Committee.

**RESOLVED to recommend to Council that the Interim Head of Democratic Services prepare proposals from 2015 onwards including options to hold meetings on specific days of the week, and that a representative from each Group assist in this process.**

#### 5 DIVERSIFYING DEMOCRACY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN WALES

Submitted - a report by the Interim Head of Democratic Services referring to the key recommendations in the report published by the Welsh Government in March 2014 – ‘*On Balance: Diversifying Democracy in Local Government in Wales*’. It was noted that the recommendations would need to be addressed by central government and local authorities. It was further noted that the WLGA was addressing the recommendations. In addition, it was advised that the Minister for

Local Government and Government Business was establishing a network of Diversity Champions and a request has been received for the Council to nominate a Member to undertake this role.

**RESOLVED to accept the report and that progress be submitted to this Committee in due course.**

## **6 REMOTE ATTENDANCE**

Submitted - a report by the Interim Head of Democratic Services referring to the content of a report for submission to the Executive and Council in relation to the above. The report referred to the provisions in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, which have been enacted and that remote attendance is discretionary. The report also detailed a number of issues regarding implementation and various technical considerations and resource implications, which would need to be addressed.

The Committee was requested to consider the report prior to the Executive and Council and make observations.

**RESOLVED to recommend that the use of remote attendance be not supported in view of the technical concerns and potential resource implications detailed in the report.**

## **7 FAMILY ABSENCE**

Submitted - a report by the Interim Head of Democratic Services requesting the views of this Committee on a report for submission to the Executive and Council in relation to requirements under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 relating to family absence for Members of local authorities. It was noted that there would be a need to make certain changes to the Council's Constitution to meet requirements in the regulations and the report also made reference to the establishment of a Democratic Services Sub-committee for the purpose of hearing appeals under the Measure.

**RESOLVED to note the requirements detailed in the report and advise the Executive and Council accordingly.**

## **8 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT TRAINING PLAN 2014/15**

The Senior Human Resources Officer referred to the Annual Member Training and Development Plan approved by the County Council on 8<sup>th</sup> May. It was noted that this formed part of the Council's commitment to member development and in securing the Member Development Charter Award. It was also noted that there was a need to target training around specific needs and to provide details on the schedule of training proposed, taking account Member's workloads.

**RESOLVED to accept the report.**

## **9 TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS WEBSITE GRANT - UPDATE**

Submitted – a report by the Interim Head of Democratic Services providing an update on the number of Town and Community Councils who had claimed the grant. It was noted that at present 32 Councils had claimed the grant provided by Welsh Government and managed by the Council which was available during 2014/2015. Also, the Town and Community Council Forum Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2014 were given an update and reminded of the availability of funds for website development.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

The meeting concluded at 3.10 p.m.

**COUNCILLOR VAUGHAN HUGHES  
CHAIR**

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<b>ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL</b>	
<b>NAME OF COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>19/09/2014</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>WEBCASTING OF MEETINGS</b>
<b>AUTHOR:</b>	<b>INTERIM HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES</b>

The purpose of this report is to report on progress in relation to webcasting of meetings as reported to this Committee on the 26 March, 2014. Members will be aware that meetings of the County Council, Executive and Planning & Orders Committee are included in the pilot.

**Training**

As part of preparatory work, training was provided to Members on the following dates:

02 May, 2014

28 May, 2014

03 June, 2014

16 July, 2014

30 August, 2014

The meetings webcast to date at the time of preparing this report are:

Meeting	Date
The Executive	09/06/2014, 14/07/2014
County Council	29/07/2014
Planning and Orders Committee	03/09/2014

## **Statistics**

Total views for the meetings broadcast to date stand at 3,656 (this includes live and archive hits)

Meetings	Total Hits
The Executive 09/06/2014	2299 (161 live and 2138 archive)
The Executive 14/07/14	714 (64 live and 650 archive)
County Council 29/07/2014	485 (28 live and 457 archive)
Planning & Orders Committee 03/09/2014	158 (32 live and 126 archive)

Overall, the statistics are encouraging to promote openness and accountability and likewise greater participation in the Councils' democratic arrangements. Social media has been used predominantly to publicise webcasting of meetings.

## **Protocol**

A draft protocol on webcasting of meetings has been produced to ensure that the Council is compliant with relevant legislation. The draft protocol incorporates the WLGA's guidance on webcasting recently produced.

A copy of the draft protocol is attached in Appendix 1 together with guidance provided by the WLGA – Appendix 2 (for information)

Subject to any views the Committee may have it is proposed to issue the protocol to Members and Officers

## **Recommendation**

- 1) To note the progress on webcasting as detailed in this report, and that an update be submitted to the next meeting.
- 2) To consider the draft protocol on webcasting prior to issuing to Members and Officers.

**Huw Jones**  
**Interim Head of Democratic Services**  
**05/09/14**



# Isle of Anglesey County Council Web Casting Protocol

## 1. Introduction

The Council has agreed that certain meetings should be the subject of live web transmission 'webcasting' and recorded for subsequent transmission. Four fixed cameras are located within the Council Chamber for this purpose.

A webcast will be made routinely at the following meetings held in the Council Chamber:

- Council
- Executive
- Planning Committee

This protocol has been produced to assist the conduct of webcast meetings and to ensure that in doing so the Council is compliant with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998. Accordingly the following will apply to all meetings to be webcast by the Council.

## 2. General Provisions

The Chair of the meeting has the discretion to request the termination or suspension of the webcast if continuing to webcast would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting.

This would include:

- Defamatory or obscene comments being made
- Public disturbance or other suspension of the meeting;
- Exclusion of public and press being moved and supported;
- Any other reason moved and seconded and supported by the Chair/Committee.
- Any other act which breaches any applicable local, national or international law or regulations, or any act which is otherwise fraudulent or unlawful.

**2.1** No exempt or confidential agenda items shall be webcast.

**2.2** Images of children under the age of 18 shall not be webcast

**2.3** In the event of obscenities being shouted, the webcast will be paused under the direction of the Chair or edited post-production with the express permission of the Head of Function (Legal) as our webcasts are available to people of all ages. Please see item 10

### 2.4 Copyright

The Council is the 'author' of the webcast whether live or archived. As such, they own copyright. If anyone, including individual members or the public, wishes to use it they should ask permission of the council. However, it is unlikely that a council would invoke the law if the broadcast is used for legitimate and positive purposes such as information or training. If a broadcast is used

inappropriately, for example for political or satirical purposes the council could take legal action. Video sharing websites such as YouTube and Google Video already actively state in their terms and conditions that you must be the copyright owner and have the permission of all those involved in order to upload videos to their sites.

## **2.5 Data Protection**

It is not likely that the Data Protection Act will affect the broadcasting of council meetings as sensitive information relating to individuals should not be discussed at any public meeting, broadcast or otherwise. In the case of exempt items, where the public and press are excluded, the broadcast is switched off and replaced with a message saying why the broadcast has been temporarily suspended.

## **2.6 Freedom of Information**

The Freedom of Information Act should also not apply to broadcasts as it only applies to information which is not already in the public domain. If people request information under the FOI act which has been broadcast or is available on the website through the meeting archive the council is under no obligation to respond.

## **3. Prior to the meeting**

### **3.1 Signage at Meetings**

On signs inside and outside the Council Chamber there will be the following notice:

#### **WEBCASTING NOTICE**

*“This meeting will be filmed for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council’s website. The whole of the meeting will be filmed, except where there are confidential or exempt items, and the footage will be on the website for 6 months. A DVD copy of it will also be retained in accordance with the Council’s data retention policy.*

*If you make a representation to the meeting you will be deemed to have consented to being filmed unless you have contacted Democratic Services or the Chair prior to the meeting to express your wish not to be filmed. By entering the body of the Chamber you are also consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes. If you have any queries regarding webcasting of meetings, please contact Democratic Services on 01248 752514. “*

### **3.2 Meetings of the Development Control Committee and other ‘Quasi-Judicial’ Hearings**

In correspondence notifying applicants, supporters or objectors of the meeting date on which an application will be heard, the following advice will be included if the particular meeting is to be webcast:

*‘Please note that meetings of the Committee are filmed for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council’s website. The Authority is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act and data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with the Authority’s published policy. If you wish to attend the meeting but do not wish to be filmed please contact the Interim Head of Democratic Services on 01248 752108 to discuss alternative arrangements.*

### 3.3 Committee Agenda

The following note will also be added to each Committee Agenda:

*'Please note that meetings of the Committee are filmed for live and subsequent broadcast on the Council's website. The Authority is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act and data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with the Authority's published policy.'*

## 4. Conduct of Meetings

**4.1** Webcasts will commence at the beginning of a meeting when the Chair opens the meeting and will finish when the meeting is officially closed by the Chair.

**4.2** At the start of each meeting to be filmed, an announcement will be made to the effect that the meeting is being webcast, as follows:

*"I would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be broadcast live to the Internet and will be capable of repeated viewing.*

*If you are seated in the Council Chamber, it is likely that the cameras will capture your image. You are deemed to be consenting to being filmed and to the use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes. If you are speaking at this meeting, your contribution will be recorded and broadcast unless you have contacted Democratic Services or the Chair prior to the meeting to express your wish not to be filmed."*

### 4.3. Cessation of webcasting for private sessions

No part of any meeting held will be webcast after members have passed a resolution excluding the public and the press because there is likely to be disclosure of exempt or confidential information. The clerk of the meeting will ensure that filming and/or recording of the meeting has ceased and will confirm this to the Chair of the meeting before any discussion of exempt or confidential matters is commenced.

The Chair should ensure that the committee is paused between the public agenda items and the confidential items so that the operator be given sufficient time to ensure that the system has paused and that no confidential matters are recorded.

### 4.4 Speaking in the meeting

**4.4.1** Radio microphones do not activate the cameras so where speakers have a presentation they must either stand at the podium or use one of the static microphones at their allocated seat.

**4.4.2** If a technical fault develops, the Chair should agree a short delay to see if the problem can be resolved. If after 15 minutes the problem still exists the meeting should continue irrespective of it not being recorded. 7.1

The following procedure will be applied:

- The operator will inform the Chair as soon as practically possible

- The operator will also inform the Interim Head of Democratic Services so they can disseminate this information to political group leaders including an explanation of what went wrong, what is being done to recover any lost data and how we will mitigate issues in the future
- When any editing of content occurs then the same procedure as above will be followed. Please see item 10 below.

4.4.3 Councillors will be required to sit in the seats designated for them by a name plate. Specific seats have been assigned and Members must speak only from their allotted seat. This is important as, during the live streaming, the speaker's name will be indexed onto the webcast.

4.4.4 Members and Officers are asked to speak directly towards the microphone. Attendees are asked to avoid moving unduly whilst speaking and not to use expansive hand gestures; because the video stream is highly compressed all movement causes temporary pixilation and leads to a diminution of picture quality.

4.4.5 Members should speak only when directed to do so by the Chair resulting in only one person speaking at a time.

4.4.6 It is important to note that whilst other people speaking, attendees may still be on camera. People may be watching live on the internet.

4.4.7 It is recommended that bright colours and/or striped materials should not be worn as these may distort the images which are streamed live.

4.4.8 Instances of inappropriate behaviour may result in the termination of the live webcast.

4.4.9 Anything that is outside of the scope of the meeting will not be filmed. This includes reaction shots, walkouts etc. Where an operator is unsure on what to film or is in an unfamiliar situation, the operator should always select the default camera shot.

4.4.10 Speakers should be direct, to the point and as brief as possible. Jargon and "council speak" – should be avoided by members and officers

4.4.11 It is advisable to prepare contributions in advance (bullet points which enable natural speech rather than a prepared speech).

4.4.12 Speakers should be aware of how their messages could be interpreted by the public and the media.

4.4.13 All speakers may have to be more clear about some of the information that they give so that it is clear to a lay person what they are doing and why they are doing it. A good example of this is declaring interests. It will be helpful to say not only that they have an interest but what the interest is whether it is personal or prejudicial and also how they intend to act as a result.

4.4.14 Heckling doesn't work well on a webcast as usually it is only the chair and the member who has the floor who can be seen and heard. Other comments are often unintelligible as they are off microphone.

#### **4.5 Microphone and interference noise**

Microphone noise is an artificial sound that is introduced when an object touches the microphone. Speakers should therefore be careful not to touch the microphone head or the cable during the meeting. Members and officers should speak directly into the microphone and should not place objects in-between themselves and the microphone.

#### **4.6 Personal skills**

4.6.1 When considering what to wear, bear in mind all the possible camera angles and watch out for clothing or jewellery which might rub against the microphone and stop what you are saying being heard.

4.6.2 Be aware of the range of the camera view as talking with colleagues, eating, adjusting clothing can also be distracting if it is near the member who is speaking.

4.6.3 Watch your body language, slumping can be misinterpreted as disengagement .

#### **5 Chairing Skills**

The chair of the meeting is vital to the viewing experience of the public, just as if there was a full public gallery. Here are some tips for chairs to consider.

- Introduce the key players at the meeting so that viewers know who they are looking at. This might include the chair themselves, officers, and witnesses. It is important to say what their role is at the meeting too.
- The Chair should be prepared to explain some meeting procedures if these are not obvious to viewers.
- Be prepared to enforce time restraints on speakers, either formal ones if they apply or if someone's contribution is long and unproductive.
- The Chair must remind everyone that the meeting is being broadcast and will be available in future on the internet.
- Make clear the different elements of the agenda, such as what is for information or a decision, or a vote. Also if the Webcast is going to be suspended for exempt or confidential items the Chair will need to say when and why this will happen.

#### **6 Council Officer Attendees**

Officers who are required to speak at Cabinet or Council meetings will be advised that the committee meeting will be streamed on the internet and a copy of the meeting retained on DVD. If an officer does not wish to be filmed whilst speaking to the committee, the webcast operator will:

- Give guidance to the best place to sit
- Ensure no close-up images of the officer will be taken
- If the officer is speaking, the webcast operator will focus the camera on the default camera position.

## 7 Resident Attendees

As part of the process for registering to speak at Cabinet or Council meetings, residents will be advised that the meeting will be streamed on the internet and a copy of the meeting retained on DVD. If an attendee does not wish to be filmed whilst speaking to the committee, the webcast operator will:

- Give guidance to the best place to sit
- Ensure no close-up images of the attendee will be taken
- If the attendee is speaking, the webcast operator will focus the camera on the default camera position.

7.1 All speaking at a meeting must ensure that their contributions comply with applicable law in the UK and must not be defamatory, obscene, offensive, and discriminatory or infringe the copyright of any other person.

## 8. Voting

The process of voting is the same in a broadcast as in any other public meeting. Webcasting should simply be seen as an extension of the 'openness' of meetings which are already, by definition, in the public domain.

The camera will pan round the chamber when a vote is been taken. The Chair must ensure that hands are kept up until the camera has finished panning and the chair has counted the votes.

## 9. Archived Webcasts

All archived webcasts will be available to view on the Council's website for a period of six months. Council meetings are recorded on DVD, which will be stored in accordance with records management procedures.

Archived webcasts or parts of webcasts shall only be removed from the Council's website if the Monitoring Officer considers that it is necessary because all or part of the content of the webcast is or is likely to be in breach of any statutory provision or common law doctrine, for example Data Protection and Human Rights legislation or provisions relating to confidential or exempt information. It is anticipated, however, that meetings will be conducted lawfully and that the need to exercise this power will occur only on an exceptional basis.

Any elected Member who is concerned about any webcast should raise their concerns with the Interim Head of Democratic Services.

## 10. Editing of content

Clearly it is not possible to edit a live broadcast. Editing an archived broadcast is possible, because, once archived, the material is a publicly accessible digital file and making offensive material available such as inadvertent racist comments may amount to an offence. Editing of archived content should **ONLY** be undertaken if the Monitoring Officer considers that it is necessary because all or part of the

content of the webcast is or is likely to be in breach of the law; for instance the name of a person in witness protection was divulged by a public speaker, confidential personal information is inadvertently disclosed or obscene, libellous or defamatory comments are made. Editing of content may also be authorised in exceptional circumstance such as if an attendee is taken ill on screen.

In the undoubtedly rare instance where editing is required – an unedited copy of the recording should be retained as evidence should it be required for any future proceedings. The Interim Head of Democratic Services will ensure that a log is maintained of webcasts where content has been edited.

### **11. Other Recording or Broadcasting of Meetings**

No form of photography, filming, recording or broadcasting of meetings (other than webcasting for the Council's purposes) shall take place except with the express permission given in advance by the Chair at his/her discretion.

### **12 Review of protocol**

Once the system has been in operation for a period of 6 months, the above protocol will be reviewed to ensure its relevance.

### **13 Officer responsible for overseeing the Protocol**

Responsibility for the above Protocol will ultimately lie with the Chief Executive through the Deputy Chief Executive and Interim Head of Democratic Services.



# Guidance for Members: Webcasting

August 2014



# Contact

## Welsh Local Government Association

The WLGA's primary purposes are to promote a better local government, its reputation and to support authorities in the development of policies and priorities which will improve public service and democracy.

It represents the 22 local authorities in Wales with the 3 fire and rescue authorities and 3 national park authorities as associate members.

### Welsh Local Government Association

Local Government House  
Drake Walk  
Cardiff  
CF10 4LG

Tel: 029 2046 8600  
Fax: 029 2046 8601

[www.wlga.gov.uk](http://www.wlga.gov.uk)

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*We are indebted to the officers, members and professionals who have contributed to this guide, in particular the network of member support officers and Lawyers in Local Government (LLG). Also to Mel Doel, who provided training to elected members on behalf of the WLGA and contributed to this guide, and Kevin O'Keefe of EXCELA INTERIM MANAGEMENT AND CONSULTANCY LTD for his guidance on legal matters.*

## Preface



I am extremely pleased to present this guidance from the WLGA on the webcasting of council meetings. It provides members with a useful overview of the subject, and offers some important tips

on how to make the most of an exciting technological development that offers huge potential for improving how councils engage with their communities.

The webcasting of key council meetings and decisions represents a significant step forward in ensuring that the process of local government is both transparent and accessible to the public, and it is already helping people to engage with the decisions that affect their lives and community on a daily basis. We know that people trust their local council, more than any other level of government, to deliver on the issues that matter the most to them. As we enter one of the most challenging periods for local government in Wales, the active broadcasting of how

key decisions are made will play a vitally important role in helping to ensure that this level of public trust continues into the future.

Alongside a rising use of social media, the webcasting of council meetings is quickly becoming a well-established part of local government processes. This means that communities can view the business of their council as it happens, while also taking an active role within decision making through the use of social media tools like Facebook and Twitter. I hope that councils will continue to build on these initiatives to foster further transparency and encourage more people to actively participate in the local democratic process.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Fox', written in a cursive style.

**Councillor Peter Fox**

Leader Monmouthshire County Council  
WLGA spokesperson for ICT and Digital  
Inclusion

## What is a Webcast?

A webcast is a live or recorded transmission of a video on the internet. It is not edited prior to broadcast and can be viewed by anyone with access to the Internet, both during the live broadcast and for as long as an authority makes it available on their website.

Webcasting is now being introduced in councils across Wales to broadcast a range of council meetings to the public. This is clearly of significance to councillors as there is a potential for the public to be more widely involved in the democratic process, and for the business of local government to be made more transparent. It also means that the actions, opinions and positions taken by local councillors may potentially be more closely scrutinised by the public.

## Why Wales is Webcasting

Councils in Wales are committed to promoting local democracy and facilitating public participation. The Welsh Government has assisted councils to promote democracy and engagement in local government by providing £1,125,000 funding in 2013/14 to broadcast council meetings, introduce remote attendance and assist community councils to establish websites. Although there is currently no requirement on local authorities to webcast their meetings, the Minister for Local Government and Government Business has encouraged councils to webcast some or all of their meetings in the interests of public engagement and transparency. The White Paper - *Reforming Local Government*,<sup>1</sup> currently out for consultation, states that the Welsh Government intends to introduce

<sup>1</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/white-paper-reforming-local-government/?lang=en>

a mandatory requirement on all authorities to broadcast their meetings.

The draft *Revised Code of Recommended Practice in Local Authority Publicity*,<sup>2</sup> says that “*Society now expects to have far greater access to information than in the past, in particular in relation to the decision-making procedures of its elected bodies. This should be embraced by political representatives as providing an opportunity to communicate directly with their electorate. Local authorities are encouraged to make arrangements for their proceedings to be made more accessible to the public by allowing them to be broadcast.*”

## Progress

Webcasting is now underway in most authorities for those meetings which are judged to be of most interest to the public, particularly full Council, Cabinet and Planning Committee meetings. Some authorities are also broadcasting proceedings from their scrutiny committees.

Most authorities have commissioned commercial providers for this service, however, some have developed their own distinct approaches. For example Monmouthshire uses Google Plus and YouTube, Ceredigion uses Livestream to broadcast bilingually and Bridgend has developed a solution with Auditel and Vimeo.

Viewing figures for council webcasts vary according to the type of meeting and authority, but generally the number of website hits suggest that there is real and growing public interest in these broadcasts. Typically, there are more viewings of archived webcasts than live meetings.

<sup>2</sup>

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dsijg/consultation/130322revisedcodelapublicityen.pdf>

## The Benefits of Webcasting

Webcasting has produced a wide range of benefits which have been summarised below. Some were intended and anticipated, while others were unforeseen and identified by authorities from their webcasting experiences.

### Engagement and Transparency

- More open and transparent governance and accountability.
- Improved public engagement in and understanding of decision making.
- Easier public access to meetings minimising travel and allowing more flexible viewing times.
- Will facilitate the understanding of the overview and scrutiny function by the public in line with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.
- Can be used with social media to further promote public engagement. This is possible through a social media conversation which can run alongside the meeting when it is in progress.
- The public can access the papers and presentations made at the meeting as well as see the meeting footage.
- Provides good "PR" for the council as council meetings can be seen as more constructive than, for example, Prime Ministers question time.

### Benefits for the Council

- A step towards remote attendance at meetings - a requirement of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 which will allow members to attend meetings from a location which is convenient to them.

- Provides an incentive for high standards of member attendance, engagement and conduct at meetings.
- An effective means of communicating to officers and other members key information and decisions.
- A useful part of member and officer induction and training.
- Opportunities for members to learn good practice from peer observation and inform potential candidates about their role to encourage democratic renewal.
- Fewer press enquiries as journalists can now watch broadcasts rather than ask for quotes.
- A reduced need for space for the public at popular or controversial meetings.
- Equipment and venues can be used for purposes other than committees, such as staff training and inter authority meetings.
- Provides a true record of the meeting. This helps to supplement minutes and to counteract any misleading use of "edited highlights" by anyone filming the meeting.

## Challenges Associated with Webcasting

Some concerns have been expressed about the costs of webcasting, particularly as it is being introduced at a time when severe reductions are being made to council budgets. The main costs are that of equipment, whether purchased or hired, and also for the staff time required to operate the equipment.

The major challenge for authorities now, is to undertake cost benefit analyses to see if outcomes from webcasting are worth the expense. The Welsh Government is hoping

to work with the WLGA and local authorities to secure savings through a joint procurement of webcasting providers. In the future, webcasting may provide opportunities for saving money and generating income for example: minutes can be shortened and used to record actions rather than the full debate; equipment may be hired out, and there is some evidence to suggest that there are fewer time-consuming Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to councils when council meeting records can be so easily viewed.

## **Blogging, Tweeting and Filming During Meetings**

About half of the Local Authorities in Wales allow or encourage the use of social media by members in meetings. Filming by the public or journalists is less common, and where it is allowed, usually requires permission.

The Welsh Government is of the view that the use of Social Media is useful as long as members use it appropriately. Authorities who restrict it do so on the grounds that members might be accused of not concentrating on the matter under discussion. Members may wish to consider how the public might perceive their using social media in a meeting and their ability to concentrate on the matter at hand if they are blogging or tweeting during a debate, a vote, or a planning decision.

See also the WLGA guidance for members on using social media available at: <http://www.wlga.gov.uk/member-support-and-development-publications1/social-media-a-guide-for-councillors/>

## **The Law and Protocols Relating to Webcasting**

### **Data Protection**

It is not likely that the Data Protection Act will affect the broadcasting of council meetings as sensitive information relating to individuals should not be discussed at any public meeting, broadcast or otherwise. In the case of exempt items, where the public and press are excluded, the broadcast is switched off and replaced with a message saying why the broadcast has been temporarily suspended.

### **Freedom of Information**

The Freedom of Information Act should also not apply to broadcasts as it only applies to information which is not already in the public domain. If people request information under the FOI act which has been broadcast or is available on the website through the meeting archive the council is under no obligation to respond.

### **Copyright**

The Council is the `author` of the webcast whether live or archived. As such, they own copyright. If anyone, including individual members or the public, wishes to use it they should ask permission of the council. However, it is unlikely that a council would invoke the law if the broadcast is used for legitimate and positive purposes such as information or training. If a broadcast is used inappropriately, for example for political or satirical purposes the council could take legal action. Video sharing websites such as YouTube and Google Video already actively state in their terms and conditions that you must be the copyright owner and have the permission of all those involved in order to upload videos to their sites.

## Consent

In the early stages of webcasting it is advisable to consult with any potential meeting participants to ensure that they are comfortable with being filmed. Some people might wish to have opportunities for development or coaching before appearing.

Participants at every meeting should be informed that the meeting will be webcast and should be given notice of this when the meeting agenda is distributed. Meeting participants will be deemed to have agreed to consent to be filmed and to the future use of the film if they are present.

At the start of each meeting to be filmed, an announcement should also be made to the effect that the meeting is being webcast live and will also be available for future viewings. No exempt or confidential agenda items should be broadcast.

## Voting

The process of voting is the same in a broadcast as in any other public meeting. Webcasting should simply be seen as an extension of the 'openness' of meetings which are already, by definition, in the public domain. Voting will be undertaken either by a show of hands or by using the council's electronic system. Depending on the webcasting system used, the public may be able to see how each councillor votes.

## Terminating a Webcast

The Chair of the meeting has the discretion to terminate or suspend the webcast if, in his/her opinion, continuing to broadcast would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting. For example:

- (i) If the meeting is suspended due to a public disturbance.
- (ii) When it has been agreed that the public and press are to be excluded.

- (iii) When the Chair and committee agree that webcasting would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting.

## Editing a Webcast

Clearly it is not possible to edit a live broadcast. Evidence suggests that if a member accidentally says something inappropriate, offensive or illegal the chair should ask them to immediately apologise. Editing an archived broadcast is possible, because, once archived, the material is a publicly accessible digital file and making offensive material available such as inadvertent racist comments may amount to an offence. Making defamatory material available carries a civil law risk. In the circumstances, it is permissible to allow a 'bleep' to be inserted. In the undoubtedly rare instance where editing is required - an unedited copy of the recording should be retained as evidence should it be required for any future proceedings.

## Personal Skills

### Appearance

There are certain skills and behaviours that are helpful to be aware of when you are appearing in a webcast. You might find the following useful:

- Don't move too much! This can reduce the picture quality and may be hard for the camera to follow. Bending over to speak into a microphone looks awkward on screen, so some councils are considering changing their meeting procedure so that members may remain seated.
- When considering what to wear, bear in mind all the possible camera angles and watch out for clothing or jewellery which might rub against the microphone and stop what you are saying being heard. Mayoral chains are particular culprits!

- Don't watch the broadcast live on your own equipment as this may create sound interference.
- Be aware of the range of the camera view as talking with colleagues, eating, adjusting clothing can also be distracting if it is behind the member who is speaking.
- Watch your body language, slumping can be misinterpreted as disengagement and eye resting as sleeping.

### Speaking

Although the general rules about public speaking apply at all public meetings, there are some behaviours that will help you come over well in a broadcast and make the meeting more interesting and useful to the viewers. Above all be natural and be yourself!

- Be direct, to the point and as brief as possible.
- Don't speak too quickly, if you are stumbling over words you may be rushing too much.
- Prepare your contributions in advance (bullet points which enable you to speak naturally rather than a prepared speech which looks and sounds unnatural).
- Be aware of how your messages could be interpreted by the public, both what you say and how you say it.
- You may have to be more clear about some of the information that you give so that it is clear to a lay person what you are doing and why you are doing it. A good example of this is declaring interests. It will be helpful to say not only that you have an interest but what the interest is whether it is personal or prejudicial and also how you intend to act as a result.

- Avoid jargon and "council speak" - this applies to officers too!
- Heckling doesn't work well on a webcast as usually it is only the chair and the member who has the floor who can be seen and heard. Other comments are often unintelligible as they are off microphone.
- Make sure that you are in range of the microphone and keep your head turned towards it. Don't speak until your light comes on, or the first part of your contribution will be lost! Make sure that you turn your microphone off when you have finished speaking.
- Be aware of how what you say could be used by the media.

### Chairing Skills

The chair of the meeting is vital to the viewing experience of the public, just as if there was a full public gallery. Here are some tips for chairs to consider.

- Introduce the key players at the meeting so that viewers know who they are looking at. This might include the chair themselves, officers, and witnesses. It is important to say what their role is at the meeting too.
- Be prepared to explain some meeting procedures if these are not obvious to viewers. For example, if the meeting is going into recess, explain why this is and when the meeting will reconvene.
- Be prepared to enforce time restraints on speakers, either formal ones if they apply or if someone's contribution is long and unproductive.
- Don't forget to remind everyone that the meeting is being broadcast and will be available in future on the internet.

- Make clear the different elements of the agenda, such as what is for information or a decision, or a vote. Also if the Webcast is going to be suspended for exempt or confidential items you'll need to say when and why this will happen.
- As a chair you may be required to handle the equipment, for example operating a speaker queuing and permission system. Make sure that you have guidance in advance on how to do this.

## Future Opportunities

As webcasting use and technology develops, there is a potential to use webcasting facilities to improve and broaden a number of council activities.

These include:

- Live communication to officers and members over the internet, this might include briefings by the Leader or Chief Executive.
- Live and recorded training sessions for the home council and also potentially for all councils in Wales.
- Greater interactivity with broadcasts through social media which works alongside it.
- Live links in meetings to community groups and schools for debate and reaction to plans and policies.
- Opportunities to 'advertise' council services and provide public information broadcasts.

The technology required for webcasting also provides a foundation for councils introducing remote attendance by councillors at council meetings. By law, councils are obliged to state in their constitutions the circumstances under which they will make remote attendance at council

meetings available. More information is available on the following link.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/localgovernment/publications/statutory-guidance-section-4-remote-attendance/?lang=en>

## Watch other Authorities' Broadcasts

Blaenau Gwent

<http://www.blaenau-gwent.public-i.tv/core/>

Brecon Beacons

<http://www.breconbeacons.public-i.tv/core/>

Cardiff

<http://www.cardiff.public-i.tv/core/>

Carmarthenshire

<http://www.carmarthenshire.public-i.tv/core/>

Ceredigion

<http://new.livestream.com/ceredigion/events/2493787>

Conwy

<http://www.conwy.public-i.tv/core/>

Denbighshire

<http://www.denbighshire.public-i.tv/core/>

Flintshire

<http://www.flintshire.public-i.tv/core/>

Newport

<http://www.newport.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Pembrokeshire

<http://www.pembrokeshire.public-i.tv/core/>

Powys

<http://www.Powys.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Torfaen

<http://www.torfaen.public-i.tv/core/>



## Examples of Use in Local Authorities

### Torfaen County Borough Council

Torfaen County Borough Council took a decision to webcast meetings (starting with Council and Cabinet) in the spring of 2013. Following the usual contractual processes, the equipment needed (supplied by public-i) was installed in the Council Chamber during August 2013. We saw the training of all members and relevant officers (Democratic Services staff and officers who regularly present reports) as very important, and sought the expertise of Melanie Doel (of Brecon Beacons NPA) to provide training. The training was provided over several weeks and sessions, to small groups of members and officers, who were able freely and confidentially to share and discuss any concerns or issues they had with Melanie Doel (who, as a career journalist and member of the NPA, which had been webcasting for some time, was able to pass on many useful tips and a large degree of confidence).

We started webcasting Council and Cabinet meetings in October 2013, as well as webcasting a budget update from the Cabinet Member for Resources and 3 members' seminars which were deemed to be of particular "public interest". Our Democratic and Members Services staff operate the equipment, very successfully, with remote support from public-i as needed. To date there has been no failure of the webcast system. Before a webcast takes place, we promote it via our social media channels, along with a link to the agenda for that meeting, so that people are alerted to it in advance of the meeting.

As at 10 June 2014, our 8 Cabinet meetings which have been webcast attracted 6373 viewings (1641 live and 4732 via the archive). This is an average of 797 per meeting. Council (8 meetings) has attracted 9154 viewings (2987 live and 6167 archive);

an average of 1144 per meeting. The 3 seminars were viewed 1849 times (385 live and 1464 via archive); an average of 616 per meeting (albeit the budget seminar alone attracted 1097 viewings) and the budget update attracted 519 (1 live and 518 via archive). In January 2014, we decided also to webcast overview and scrutiny committees of particular public interest, with 4 meetings webcast so far and 987 viewings (156 live and 831 via archive); an average per meeting of 247.

We know many Council staff watch the meetings, to find out more about how Council, Cabinet and other meetings work, or because they are associated with or impacted upon by decisions being made. We also know that meetings are watched by the public and other people in local government across Wales and further afield. These people could of course be anywhere. We are unable to tell where or who our viewers are, but the system records that we have had 8992 unique visitor addresses (i.e. IP addresses) access the webcasts. Of those, 5358 people have watched once and 3634 people have watched several times/meetings. An IP address could represent an individual person, or a group of people (e.g. a local business).

With a very small public gallery in the Council Chamber (holding about 20 people) it is very clear that the business of the Council has reached thousands of people which it would not otherwise have reached. The Council believes webcasting to be a significant improvement in promoting openness, transparency and, as a result, the working of local democracy. The Council on 24 June 2014 is consequently expected to extend webcasting to all meetings of Scrutiny Committees, as well as the Planning and Licensing Committees. Meetings and the decisions made/events which occurred in them have been the result of significant public debate in Torfaen, as evidenced through our social media and other communication channels – and the initial concerns of many members and

officers have been all but forgotten by most people, as everyone concerned has got used to webcasting and begun to accept it as the norm. There is some perception that meetings are more business-like since webcasting was introduced (e.g. they are a bit shorter in most cases, repetition has reduced and they are more focussed), but no evidence that anyone has been put off speaking in any way. Otherwise, meetings take place exactly as they did before (albeit all meetings now have to take place in the same room), but they have been viewed nearly 19,000 more times than they would otherwise have been viewed.

In conclusion, webcasting meetings in Torfaen has been a huge success and has very clearly reached the parts which otherwise we didn't reach. The engagement of the public and staff has increased substantially as a result of webcasting. Leadership from the front, buy-in from all members and officers (via Council), the training and reassurance provided by others who've gone through it already and our determination to promote and open up democracy were all essential elements.

Torfaen would thoroughly commend webcasting and encourage others to take the plunge.

### **Powys County Council**

Webcasting in Powys developed following a successful "broadcast" of a Council meeting to approximately 2000 people outside the Welshpool Livestock Market in 2011 where a special meeting was held by the Council to discuss wind farm developments in Powys.

Based on the significant probability that future meetings considering wind farm proposals, which would be held at County Hall, would attract attendance by large numbers of the public, the Council investigated the possibility of webcasting as a means of both of controlling the numbers attending the venue and also of ensuring that interested members of the public could

have easy access to the Council's proceedings. This has also assisted the Council in planning these events which can be undertaken far quicker now due to the experience of the team of individuals involved in the process.

Subsequently Welsh Government provided the Council with £40,000 which was used for webcasting, to stimulate an increased use of webcasting by Councils in Wales and to provide greater transparency and accountability of the Council's work.

Overall Powys has had 23395 views based on 17 events. Some examples of total viewing figures for events are listed below:

Major wind farm developments	2705 2877
Planning Committee	1509 1301 1096 782
County Council	1878
County Council – budget meetings	1804 3175
Cabinet	1731 1037
Have Your Say Day (Budget Consultation)	1951
Scrutiny Committee	254

There have been 4 other meetings where viewing figures range from 150 to 490.

### **Brecon Beacons National Park Authority**

The National Park Authority has been webcasting the full Authority meetings, Planning Committee and Audit and Scrutiny Committee for just over two years now and total views stand at 31,500. On average, the National Park Authority meetings receive 671 views, Planning receives 556 and Audit and Scrutiny 436. Both the total and average views per meeting have continued to rise steadily over the two years and the cost per view has reduced from £2.40 to 81p.

We have found the following benefits from webcasting meetings.

- Webcasting encourages good governance and preparation for meetings (by both members and officers!)
- An opportunity to get some messages out into the public domain in the face of criticism on any specific issue
- An opportunity for members to give reports on meetings they have attended or events at which they have represented the Authority demonstrating the wider role of a member
- The public can see the Wales Audit Office presenting their Annual Improvement Reports and the members' responses (sometimes refuting the conclusions of the WAO!)
- We can now hire our meeting facilities complete with webcasting opportunities (we can host this or direct to customer sites)
- We can respond to claims that issues have not been considered or debated properly by sending links to points in meetings where items were debated. We can also prove the accuracy of minutes.
- We have used webcasting to broadcast presentations to meetings – recent examples include: a presentation by the Department of Culture Media and Sport, Welsh Water and Costain.

Future plans include

- Using webcasting to deliver our education programme
- Recording interviews with female members for the Welsh Government or the WLGA to use to encourage more women in public life
- Recording interviews/discussion with members on member development for the Advanced level of the Wales Charter for member support and development
- Exploring options for the use of social media to encourage interest in specific items
- Sharing our *State of the Park Report* with a wider audience
- Engaging more people in the strategic planning for the Park through involving the public in the review of the National Park Management Plan
- Webcasting seminars on topics such as mobile phone coverage and masts.

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<b>ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL</b>	
<b>NAME OF COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>18/09/2014</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>MEMBERS ANNUAL REPORT</b>
<b>AUTHOR:</b>	<b>INTERIM HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES</b>
<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>TO UPDATE THE COMMITTEE ON PROGRESS</b>

## 1. Background

I have previously reported to this Committee on Section 5 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 which places an obligation on the Council to ensure that arrangements are in place for Members to prepare annual reports.

In view of Local Elections held in 2013, the first year that Members were requested to produce an annual report was for the period up to March 2014.

I wish to advise the Committee that all Members prepared an annual report covering this period and reports were published on the Council's website by the 30 June 2014. Publicity was also arranged by the Press Office.

With regard to future reports, it is my intention to review best practice and, if necessary, update the guidance notes issued previously to Members.

In relation to reports for the period 2014/15 it is proposed that Members submit draft reports to Democratic Services by April 10, 2015 and that final reports be published on the Council's website by 30 June, 2015.

## 2. Recommendation

The Committee is requested to accept this report

**Huw Jones**  
**Interim Head of Democratic Services**  
**08/09/14**

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<b>ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL</b>	
Committee:	Democratic Services Committee
Date of meeting:	18 September 2014
Title:	Town and Community Councils Website Development Grant – update
Author:	Interim Head of Democratic Services

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The Welsh Government has allocated 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.
- 1.2 The purpose of this grant was to assist town and community councils to prepare for the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013, which contains provisions which would require each community council to publish information on a website.
- 1.3 I reported to this Committee on 1 October 2013 that £20,000 of funding had been allocated to assist Anglesey's town and community councils to develop websites and that the allocation was being distributed to community councils. Progress reports were submitted to this Committee on 30 January, 26 March and 18 June 2014.

## **2.0 Current Position**

- 2.1 The original guidance issued by the Welsh Government stated that the funding needed to be used before the end of the current financial year. Local authorities have now been authorised by Welsh Government to carry over the funding for use during 2014/15. This reason behind this is to offer more flexibility and to better prepare town and community councils for the requirement to have a website once the relevant sections of the Local Government Democracy (Wales) Act 2013 are brought into force in 2015.
- 2.2 The current position with regard to the allocation of the grant is as follows:
  - 35 councils have claimed the grant
  - 2 councils have notified us of their intention to claim the grant
  - 1 council has notified us that it is still considering the matter
  - 2 councils have notified us that they do not intend to claim the grant (one of which already has a website in place)

### **3.0 Recommendation**

The Committee is requested to note the current position.

**Huw Jones**  
**Interim Head of Democratic Services**

**11 September 2014**



<b>ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL</b>	
<b>NAME OF COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>19.09.2014</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2014 /15</b>
<b>AUTHOR:</b>	<b>INTERIM HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES</b>
<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>TO UPDATE THE COMMITTEE ON THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2014/15</b>

1.0 Members will be aware that the main function of the Committee in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, is to review the adequacy of provision within the authority in terms of staff, accommodation and other resources to fulfil the duties and functions of democratic services.

1.1 I reported to the Committee on the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2014 on the proposed work programme 2014/15. The Committee identified the following as part of its work programme for the year:

- Member Development and Training Plan including Personal Reviews;
- Webcasting of Meetings and Remote Attendance;
- Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011;
- Independent Remuneration Panel Annual Report;
- Modernising Working practices;
- Budget for 2015/16 and Impact on Democratic Services.

1.2 Subject to any views that the Committee may have, it is proposed to discuss the Member Development Training Plan including personal development reviews at the next meeting, and to reflect on issues raised by Members at the two focus groups held in June to review working practices.

### **Recommendation**

To review the Work Programme and receive feedback from the Committee

**Huw Jones**  
**Interim Head of Democratic Services**  
**11.9.14**

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