ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
Committee:	Democratic Services Committee
Date:	20 March 2024
Title of report:	Democratic Services Update
Purpose of report:	To update the Committee on the work of the service in relation to member support and governance.
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Background

1. Reports were presented to the Committee in 2023 on a number of matters relating to governance and member support, including member training, member annual reports, and the hybrid meetings protocol.

2. With the civic year coming to an end, this report provides an update on those matters and an explanation of the arrangements for the year ahead.

Protocol for Hybrid Meetings

3. The Protocol was revised during summer 2023 in order to combine two documents and to provide clear and current guidance to members of Council committees. During the process of developing the new protocol, we consulted with the Democratic Committee, Group Leaders and the Standards Committee.

4. The aim of the Protocol is to support and complement the guidance and procedures contained in the Council's Constitution, by providing additional information on hybrid meeting arrangements. It also aims to support the Member Code of Conduct by explaining the expectations on Members when they take part in remote meetings.

5. The Protocol was shared with members in October and was published on the Council's intranet. Following this, the statement at the start of each committee meeting which is read by the Chair was also revised to reflect the main changes / messages in the Protocol. For example, it highlights the requirement for

members attending remotely to keep their cameras on during meetings and to inform the Chair if they need to leave the meeting.

6. It is almost six months since the new Protocol was shared and it seems to be well embedded in Council committee arrangements. We are currently reviewing the Protocol to consider whether it needs further reform or to raise awareness among members. We would welcome any comments from Committee members as we do so.

Elected members' Annual Reports

7. Considerable effort was made in 2023 to encourage and facilitate annual reports by elected members on their work during the year. The reports are not a statutory requirement, but they are a useful way of informing constituents about the work members do on behalf of the Council and the community.

8. Twenty-six reports were received from members for the period 22/23. That was a significant increase on 21/22. All reports have been published on the Council's website.

9. We will send a reminder to members about the process and schedule for 23/24 soon and share a modified template.   Following comments in this Committee and from other members, we have tried to simplify the template and use links to information already on the Council's website.

Member register of interests

10. The register of interests of each elected member has been published on the Council's website.

11. A message was sent by democratic services to all members in September reminding them to check the information and review it regularly to ensure it is up to date. Members were also reminded to register any changes in circumstances within 28 working days.

12. The Standards Committee has been reviewing the registers recently and we will continue to remind members of the need to keep them up to date.

Annual Development Review

13. It's good practice for all members to be offered an annual development conversation with the leader of their political group or another person with the appropriate skills. The conversations should take place before the end of April

so that any comments about training requirements can be considered in developing the member training plan for 24/25.

14. A template was recently shared with group leaders with a suggested structure for the conversation. It includes questions about members' skills, knowledge and well-being.

Member Training and Development

15. The following training has been offered to members over 33 sessions throughout the year:

Training	Number attended
Fraud and corruption awareness for Elected Members	17
Code of Conduct	6
Data Protection	14
Introduction to Climate Change	21
Complaints	11
Safeguarding awareness	15
Chairing skills	4
Safe Leadership and Personal Safety	11
Dealing with the Press	3
Gypsies and Travellers Cultural awareness	13
1-1 IT skills	7
Principles of Effective Scrutiny	1
Trauma Informed Island	5
Anti - Racism	21
Personal Safety for Councillors	1
Progressive Community Leadership Training	14
Council Constitution	1

16. Further training sessions on Risk Management, Strengthening Leadership and Rent Smart Wales have been organised before the end of March.

17. There are still some members who have not attended all the required mandatory courses:

Training	Number
Safeguarding	6
Data Protection	6
Health and Safety	9
Equalities	4
Cyber Awareness	2

18. We have established a process of submitting quarterly reports to group leaders on the training of their group members. That is intended to improve the information available about any training gaps, particularly mandatory training.

19. The training team will present a draft member training programme for 24/25 at the Democratic Services Committee meeting in June. By then the plan will have been developed considering any issues raised from members' annual development meetings. We also welcome the Committee's views on any training that should be prioritised.

Recommendation

20. For the Committee to note the content of the report and provide comments on any of the issues raised.