

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING:	COUNTY COUNCIL
DATE:	8 MAY 2014
TITLE OF REPORT:	Democratic Services Committee – Annual Report 2013/14
REPORT BY:	Chair of the Democratic Services Committee
PURPOSE OF REPORT:	To report on the Work of the Committee during 2013/14

1) **Introduction**

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 places a duty on the Council to establish a Democratic Services Committee and to appoint one of its Officers as Head of Democratic Services.

The main purpose of the Committee is to review the adequacy of provision within the Authority in terms of staff, accommodation and other resources to fulfill the duties and functions of Democratic Services. Under the Measure the Committee is obliged to meet at least once per annum and to report on such matters to Council.

This is the second annual report prepared by the Committee since its establishment in 2012.

2) **Work Programme of the Committee**

This report summarises the issues discussed by the Committee during 2013/14 and also provides commentary on current status.

In general the Committee has focused on the following areas:

- Member Development Programme
- Application for Wales Charter for Member Support and Development
- Webcasting of meetings, remote access and Town and Community Council websites
- Members Annual Reports

The table below summarises the issues discussed at each meeting during the past year.

Date of Committee	Subject	Current Status
24/04/2013	Draft Annual Report	The Annual Report for 2012/13 was submitted to the County Council on the 23 rd May and approved by Members.
02/07/13	<p data-bbox="507 443 906 913">Member Development Plan 2013/14</p> <p data-bbox="507 925 906 1417">Wales Charter for Member Support and Development</p> <p data-bbox="507 1440 906 1765">Broadcasting of Meetings and Remote Attendance</p> <p data-bbox="507 1798 906 2056">Members Annual Reports</p>	<p data-bbox="922 443 1476 891">The Member Development Plan was approved by the County Council on the 23rd May 2013. Phase 1 of the programme focused on compliance aspects and Phase 2 on more service specific elements. At the Committee the Chair was nominated Member Development Champion. Reference was also made to the personal development reviews and further work scheduled in the Autumn of 2013 supported by the WLGA.</p> <p data-bbox="922 925 1476 1406">A report detailing the progress made to date was considered following the completion of a self-assessment template by the Council submitted to the WLGA earlier in 2013 as part of the submission for Charter Status. The report detailed that some further evidence was requested following feedback from the WLGA and this was detailed in the report. The reported noted that the aim was to receive the Charter Mark recognition during 2013/14.</p> <p data-bbox="922 1440 1476 1765">A report was considered detailing the financial allocation provided by Welsh Government to assist Local Authorities with the Broadcasting of meetings and also remote access. The report also referred to the grant provision for each Community Council to support the establishment of Community Council websites.</p> <p data-bbox="922 1798 1476 2056">This was a follow up report to the information submitted to the Committee on 4th February 2013. The report detailed the proposed timetable for completion of Annual Reports by Members during 2013/14. Guidance was subsequently issued</p>

		to Members for completing a template. Members were also offered a briefing session to assist with this task.
01/10/13	<p>Webcasting of Meetings and Remote Attendance</p> <p>Member Training and Development Plan</p> <p>Personal Development Reviews for Members</p> <p>Welsh Charter for Member Support and Development</p>	<p>A progress report was considered by the Committee following an initial report on the 2nd June 2013. The Committee recommended to Council to proceed with the webcasting of meetings for a two-year pilot period and that meetings of the Council, Executive and Planning Committee shall be broadcast. This was subsequently considered by the Council at its meeting on 10/10/13 and recommendations approved.</p> <p>On the issue of remote access, it was reported that final guidance was awaited prior to the need to amend the Council's Constitution.</p> <p>The Committee was updated on the training events arranged for Elected Members, Lay Members and Community Councils since the last meeting of this Committee.</p> <p>A report was submitted on the arrangements for conducting personal development reviews for Members to inform future member training and development requirements.</p> <p>A further progress report was considered by the Committee as part of the Council's submission for Charter status.</p>
30/01/14	Consultation on Budget Proposals 2013/14	The Committee considered proposed savings in relation to Democratic Services and also the views of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee held on 14 th January 2014 which had scrutinised budget savings.

	<p>Webcasting of Meetings and Remote Attendance</p> <p>Town and Community Council Website Development</p> <p>Member Training and Development Plan</p>	<p>The Committee's comments were subsequently considered by the Executive on the 10th February 2014 as part of deliberations on the final budget proposals.</p> <p>A progress report and proposed timetable for commencing webcasting of meetings was considered and updated information since reporting to Members on the 1st October 2013. In addition, the position concerning remote attendance was also referred to.</p> <p>A progress report was considered and updated information presented on the current position regarding utilisation of the Welsh Government grant offered to each Town and Community Council. The report also noted that further guidance was expected from Welsh Government on carryover arrangements to 2014/15.</p> <p>Progress was reported on the Member Training and Development Plan noting that a total of 34 formal training sessions had been organised between May and December 2013.</p>
26/03/14	Member Development Charter	<p>The Council had met the necessary criteria for Charter Status and this was recognised at the Council meeting on 6th March 2014. The report noted that the award had been granted for a period of three years and that future re-assessment would be through written submission. The Committee was also advised that there was scope for the Council to work towards meeting the Advanced Charter level which was a new award developed by the WLGA – The Good Practice and Innovation Award for Member Support and Development.</p>

	<p>Webcasting of Meetings and Remote Attendance</p> <p>Town and Community Councils Website</p>	<p>This report focused on the need to reschedule implementation proposals following the requirement to report to the Executive on 17th February on the procurement exercise undertaken. Installation, training and commencement of webcasting was now scheduled for the first quarter of 2014/15 and the Executive Committee scheduled in June earmarked for the commencement of webcasting. The report also dealt with remote attendance and made reference to the fact that a separate report would be submitted to the Executive in May 2014 to include provision in the Council's Constitution.</p> <p>A progress report was considered advising that the Grant provision would be able to be carried forward to 2014/15. The current position on take-up was also reported as follows:</p> <p>25 Councils had claimed the grant.</p> <p>4 Councils had not yet determine to take up the grant.</p> <p>11 Councils had advised they did not want to claim the grant.</p> <p>The Interim Head of Democratic Services has written to Town and Community Councils in order to advise on the greater flexibility for utilising the grant and carry over arrangements and the assistance of One Voice Wales has been sought to encourage greater take up of the grant.</p>
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	<p>Members Annual Report</p> <p>Member Development Programme and Personal Development Reviews (PDR's)</p> <p>Committee Work Programme 2014/15</p>	<p>This was a follow up report on information reported to this Committee on the 4th February 2013 and 2nd July 2013 on the Council's obligation to ensure that arrangements are in place for Members to make an annual report on their Council activity. Members were requested to prepare draft reports by 9th April 2014 for publication on the Council's website by June 2014 at the latest.</p> <p>An updated report was considered noting progress on both aspects and the need to prepare the member development programme for 2014/15 which should be presented for consideration of the Council on 8th May 2014.</p> <p>The majority of the Elected Members had attended/completed their Personal Development Review meetings and identified individual training needs forwarded to the Senior HR Development Officer. Generally, the requirements highlighted involved additional ICT training/Mentoring and discussions with Officers dealing with Finance and Planning matters. Where a number of similar training requirements have been identified, these will be incorporated into the overarching Development Plan for 2014/15.</p> <p>The Committee considered the scope for its work programme for 2014/15 and resolved that it would focus on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Member Development and Training Plan including • Personal Development Reviews; • Webcasting of meetings and remote attendance;
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011;• Independent Remuneration Panel Annual Report;• Modernising working practices;• Budget for 2015/16 and impact on Democratic Services. <p>The report also noted that the Interim Head of Democratic Services was also proposing to arrange a focus group for all Members during the first quarter of 2014/15 in order to receive feedback on working practices to further inform the Committees work programme.</p>
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3) Recommendation

The County Council is requested to accept the report and note the matters discussed as part of the Committee's Work Programme for 2013/14.

Chair of Democratic Services Committee
15/04/14