

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

(Civic Centre, Port Talbot)

Members Present: **31st January, 2014**

Chairman: **Councillor Mrs. L.H.James**

Vice Chairman: **Councillor Ms.C.Morgans**

Councillors: M.Harvey, E.E.Jones, R.G.Jones, H.G.Rawlings,
A.J.Siddley and A.N.Woolcock

Officers in Attendance: Mrs. K.Jones, D.Michael, S.John, R.George, N.Evans
and Mrs. A.Manchipp

1. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON THE 13TH JUNE, 2013**

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Democratic Service Committee held on the 13th June, 2013, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.

Report of the Head of Change Management and Innovation

2. **ANNUAL REPORTS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

The circulated report contained an update on the Scheme to support Members with the production of Annual Reports. Members had been invited to training sessions with Officers and to date 18 finalised Annual Reports had been received, checked and published on the Authority's website.

Members requested details of the number of "hits" each Annual Report had received and the Head of ICT would look into whether this information was available and, if not, to put in place a mechanism to allow for this.

- RESOLVED:**
- (a) that, following discussions, the timetable for submissions of reports to the Democratic Services Section, as contained in the circulated report, be brought forward in that Members are reminded of the option to write a report immediately by way of Notices in Members Room and providing copies of previously published Annual Reports, for Members' information;
 - (b) that further information be sought regarding the publishing of Annual Reports in other Local Authorities.

3. **ANNUAL MEMBER DEVELOPMENT REVIEW SCHEME**

Committee received a progress report on the implementation of the Member Development Scheme. Twelve Members had received a review.

Members noted the Draft Member Development Programme, to 21st February, 2014. There was a need to identify the training requirement of Members to allow if possible small working groups to be established to progress this. It was raised that, in addition to the training needs arising from individual Member Development Reviews, the Committee concluded that there was scope for wider inputs to the Member Development Programme, in particular for Chairmen of all Committees to identify desirable learning, development and support activities.

- RESOLVED:**
- (a) that the update in relation to implementing the Annual Member Development Review Scheme, be noted, and the points outlined be given consideration with a further report thereon being presented to Members.
 - (b) that Members receive training/knowledge in all other functions of the Authority and in particular Part 4 of the Constitution.

4. **TOWN/COMMUNITY COUNCIL WEBSITE GRANT FUNDING**

Members received the above report and noted the current position in relation thereto. Enquiries would be made with the Welsh Government to extend the deadline for County Councils to sign up for the grant as one of the area's community councils had been unable to participate before the prescribed deadline.

RESOLVED: that the above report, be noted.

5. **WEBCASTING AND REMOTE ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS**

Members received an update in relation to the Welsh Government grant funding made available for the development of webcasting and remote attendance at principal councils. Members were reminded that the Authority had decided not to pursue the above therefore, following clarification from the Welsh Government, the Chief Executive had advised that the grant had been refused in part, but that the £9,500 would be passported to the relevant Community Councils as outline in Minute No. 4 above.

The Council was however still required to amend its Constitution affecting governance, which had been agreed at Council on 22nd January, 2014.

RESOLVED: that the above report, be noted.

6. **REVISED STAFFING STRUCTURE – DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

Committee received, as an Appendix to the circulated report, the updated Organisational Structure for the Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services Division.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted and that the structure be forwarded to all Members of Council following the changes to be made in March, 2014.

7. **COMMITTEE/DECISION MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE SOLUTION “MODERN GOV”**

Committee was given an update on the purchase of the new Committee/ Decision Management package – Modern Gov. In particular it was noted that the package would streamline the work of the Section, whilst hopefully resulting in the Section being a less paper based service. It was noted that 190 Democratic Services Teams throughout the Country had signed up to Modern Gov, including the Welsh Government.

The system was currently being installed with an anticipated phased roll out in May 2014.

RESOLVED: that the above report be noted.

Report of the Head of Legal Services

8. **COUNCIL REPORT – 22ND JANUARY, 2014 ON DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Members noted that a report had been submitted to, and agreed by Council held on 22nd January, 2014, reflecting the statutory changes and slight increase in the scope of the Committee.

RESOLVED: that the above report on changes to the Authority’s Constitution in relation to the Democratic Services Committee, be noted.

9. **PRESENTATION – MEMBER’S ICT SUPPORT**

RESOLVED: that the above presentation be noted.

10. **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE – WORK
PROGRAMME/ACTION PLAN AS AT 17TH JANUARY, 2014**

RESOLVED: that the above Work Programme/Action Plan for the Democratic Services Committee, as at 17th January 2014, be noted.

CHAIRMAN