



DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

9.00 AM - FRIDAY, 18 DECEMBER 2015

COMMITTEE ROOMS 1/2 - PORT TALBOT CIVIC CENTRE

PART 1

1. To receive any declarations of interest from Members
2. Minutes of the last meeting on 17 July 2015 (*Pages 3 - 8*)
3. To receive the Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services re: the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales - Draft Annual Report 2016/17 (*Pages 9 - 20*)
4. To receive the Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services re: the Members' ICT Guidance and Usage (*Pages 21 - 24*)
5. To receive the Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services re: Members' Annual Survey 2015/16 (*Pages 25 - 28*)
6. Any urgent items at the discretion of the Chairman pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972

S.Phillips
Chief Executive

Civic Centre
Port Talbot

11th December, 2015

Committee Membership:

Chairman: Councillor Mrs.L.H.James

Vice Chairman: Councillor Ms.C.Morgans

Members: Councillors C.P.Golding, M.Harvey, E.E.Jones,
R.G.Jones, D.Lewis, J.D.Morgan, H.G.Rawlings,
A.J.Siddley, A.L.Thomas and A.N.Woolcock

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms 1/2 - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

Members Present:

17 July, 2015

Chairperson: Councillor Mrs.L.H.James

Vice Chairperson: Councillor Ms.C.Morgans

Councillors: M.Harvey, E.E.Jones, R.G.Jones and
A.N.Woolcock

Officers In Attendance Mrs.K.Jones, D.Michael, S.John, R.George,
Mrs.A.Manlipp, Miss.S. Sullivan and
Mrs.T.Davies

1. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING ON 12 FEBRUARY 2015**

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 February, 2015, be confirmed as a correct record.

2. **MEMBERS IT REFERENCE GROUP**

Members received an overview of the work undertaken by the Members' IT Reference Group, which included an update on the implementation of the software system Mod.Gov.

In particular, it was noted that

- the e mail notification had been switched on, allowing Members to be advised that a report pack had been published and was available to view either through Mod.Gov or on the Website;
- the Mod.Gov. App had been rolled out to a trial number of Members, which would allow them to access public Committee papers on the iPad - access to private reports would be available in due course via a separately purchase licence;

- feedback from the Members' IT Reference Group would be reported to the next meeting of Committee;
- the availability of equipment within the Democratic Services Section allowing Members access to advice on problems or issues relating to the new system;
- the switching on of the Members attendance/apologies statistics, which would in turn provide information to Members for inclusion within their Annual Reports.
- In relation to the rolling out of ipads to both Members and Officers, Committee was advised that it was important to test the system/equipment thoroughly prior to the roll out in order to minimise any issue that could arise.

Members then responded as follows:

The recording of Members' apologies on the Mod.Gov system was questioned. Officers agreed to look at this again and update Members at the next meeting. In relation to recording the percentage of attendance at meetings, it was noted that the system would be checked to ensure cancelled meetings were not included in the figures.

Members asked whether the Mod.Gov app would be available on iphones, but were advised that the app would only be available on ipads.

Generally Members were pleased with the new software , although there had been a few teething problems but these had been dealt with by Officers. Some Members expressed the view that papers were easier to read on the ipad.

It was felt that all Members should be provided with the link to access all papers, including private reports, whether they sat on the meeting or not. In response the Head of Legal Services gave Committee a brief overview of the legal position in relation thereto.

The Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services advised Committee that the Members' IT Scheme would also be reviewed in order to take into account the use of ipads by Members.

Following the discussion Members agreed that the new use of the Mod.Gov software was the way forward, both in terms of efficiency and also in contributing to the savings required in the Forward Financial Plan.

3. **MEMBER'S FACILITIES**

Members received an overview of the programme of improvement work carried out to Member facilities, in the Council Chamber and Committee Rooms in the Port Talbot Civic Centre, which had not been updated since 1996. The improvements, which included the renewal of the sound system in the Council Chamber and its installation in the Committee Rooms, would facilitate the use of the rooms for Members, Officers and Members of the public. Screens had also been installed.

Improved Wi-Fi access had also been installed by way of additional hot spots, which would support the work currently underway in introducing the Modern.Gov software, as referred to above.

Member noted that additional work would be carried out, such as vertical blinds and chair replacement, all of which had not been updated since at least 1996.

Members expressed concern at the lighting in the Council Chamber and were advised that this would also be addressed as part of the improvement work.

RESOLVED: that the report in relation to Members' Facilities, be noted.

4. **ANNUAL MEMBER SURVEY**

Members were advised that the Annual Member Survey was underway and that Officers from the Democratic Services Section would be contacting all Members to undertake the survey face to face. To date 43 surveys had been completed. (This figure was updated verbally at the meeting).

RESOLVED: that Members note the progress to date in under taking the Annual Members' Survey and that a Special Meeting be convened in the Autumn to consider the findings and develop an action plan.

5. **ANNUAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS AND MEMBER DEVELOPMENT 2015/16**

Committee noted the report in relation to Members' Annual Development Reviews (ADR's) and Member Development and noted, attached as an Appendix to the circulated report, a copy of the draft Schedule of Member Seminars and a copy of the training available via the WLGA. A copy of the draft Schedule of Seminars would be circulated following agreement by Committee today.

Members suggested that the training section be approached regarding the training being provided either internally to Officers or by Officers in relation to, for example, new legislation etc, with a view to this being extended to include Members, where appropriate.

Some Members felt that the ADR process helped Members focus on their development to date and to also identify any future training needs. Members also asked whether the training sessions provided were accredited. It was confirmed that they were not, however Officers would look into the provision of accredited training and report back to Committee.

Members raised the times of Seminars (9am and 3pm) and requested an analysis of attendance at the Seminars. In addition Members requested that consideration be given to surveying all Members to ascertain the preferred times for the start of meetings and seminars.

- RESOLVED:**
- a. that the Draft Member Development Programme, enclosed at Appendix 1 to the circulated report, be approved and circulated to all Members for information;
 - b. that Members of the Committee promote the participation in the second round of Member Annual Development Reviews, in line with the revised scheme;
 - c. that Officers undertake a review of attendance figures at Seminars, and also consider undertaking a survey of all Members in relation to preferred start times of meetings/seminars;

- d. that Officers look into providing accredited training for Members;
- e. that discussions be held with the Training Section, in relation to Members being included in the training provided, if appropriate.

6. **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

RESOLVED: that the Organisational Structure of Electoral and Democratic Services, as contained in the circulated report, be noted.

7. **DELIVERY OF COUNCIL AGENDAS BY COURIER SERVICE**

Members received the report of the Head of Legal Services in relation to the above wherein it was noted that the Courier Service to Members could not be undertaken during the working day without causing serious disruption to the service provided by the section in, for example, mail dispatch and printing, etc.

RESOLVED: that the report of the Head of Legal Services, be noted.

CHAIRPERSON

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NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

18 December 2015

Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services – Karen Jones

Matter for Information

Wards Affected:

All Wards

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES - DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform Members of the publication of the Independent Remuneration Panel's for Wales draft annual report for 2016/17.

Background

2. In 2013 the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) revisited the local authority to discuss how its determinations were working in practice. This resulted in a number of significant changes to the Panel's remuneration framework in its Annual Report published in February 2014, including a small increase in the Basic Salary.

3. For the financial year 2015/16 the panel decided that given the continuing constraints on local government spending there would be no increase in remuneration, and will take the same approach in 2016/17.
4. Prior to the publication of its draft report, the Panel was given a remit letter by its sponsor Minister in which the Minister drew the Panel's attention to the desire of Welsh Government to reduce the cost of politics to the public purse and pointed to a number of aspects of the current remuneration framework that it was felt needed to be given consideration.
5. Within the Minister for Public Services' letter reference is made to the White Paper, Reforming Local Government: Power to Local People and queries have been raised as to the legitimacy in providing the panel with directions prior to the publication of its Annual Report. Furthermore, concerns have been expressed as to the effect of this correspondence impinging on the independence and impartiality of the panel.
6. The panel has also given further consideration to the remuneration of members of community and town councils in the light of additional information it has obtained about their work, and have decided to make some amendments to the remuneration framework as it applies to these councils.
7. In terms of the support provided to members to discharge their functions effectively the Panel remains concerned about inconsistency across local authorities and that some councillors have not always fully utilised the support provided through the Panel's framework, including the Care Allowance.
8. The Local Government (Wales) Bill currently being considered by the National Assembly proposes additional powers and responsibilities for the Panel. These will on a temporary basis, extend their functions relating to Heads of Paid Service to Chief Officers or principal local authorities.
9. In addition, the Bill provides that the Panel be given powers to determine remuneration for members of shadow authorities and newly forming principal councils.

10. The Panel has also stated that it is aware of the way Welsh Government is progressing the work of the Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery and will be liaising closely with the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales in preparation for the implementation of the various Acts that will determine the future shape of local government in Wales.

Key Determinations

11. The key determination made by the panel relate to retaining the basic salary in 2016/17 of an elected member at £13,300.
12. In addition, the Panel have chosen to introduce a new 'two-tiered' banding for Executive Members. Up to four Members will be eligible to claim a senior salary (inclusive of basic salary) of £29,000. All other Executive Members will be eligible to a statutory maximum limit of £26,100. This Council currently operates a Cabinet model with seven Cabinet Members (excluding the Leader and Deputy Leader).
13. The panel has also taken the view that the responsibility and function of chairing a committee is not generally influenced by population of the authority and it is believed that workload of some chairs is greater than others, which had been a topic of ongoing dialogue and debate.
14. As such, the panel is introducing two levels of remuneration for Chairs of Committees: £22,000 (Level 1) and £20,000 (Level 2).
15. Each Individual authority will be left to decide which of the Chairs (if remunerated) are level 1 or level 2. However, the panel has stated that the payment of a level 1 salary would be to recognise exceptional responsibility.
16. In relation to the Leader of the largest opposition group (who represents at least 10% of the council membership) the panel have determined that local authorities must make a senior salary available which will be set at £20,000. This is a reduction of £2,000 from the panel's determination for the financial year 2015/16.

17. In relation to Community and Town Councils authorisation has been given to make a payment to each of their members of a maximum of £100 per year for costs incurred in respect of telephone usage, information technology and consumables.
18. Community and town councils are also authorised to make an annual payment not exceeding £500 to up to three members in recognition of specific responsibilities.
19. The full list of 2016/17 determinations made by the panel is outlined in Appendix 1.

Financial Impact

20. There will be a financial impact and potential cost saving to the authority due to the introduction of a two tier payment scheme for Executive Members.

Workforce Impacts

21. Following consideration there are no workforce impacts.

Legal Impacts

22. Following consideration there are no legal impacts.

Risk Management

23. Following consideration there are no significant risks.

Consultation

24. There is no requirement for external consultation under the Constitution.

Recommendations

25. To note the Independent Remuneration Panel's determinations for 2016/17.

Reason for Proposed Decision

26. Matter for information, no decision required.

Appendices

27. Appendix 1 - Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales - Determinations 2016/17

List of Background Papers

28. Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales - Draft Annual Report 2016/17

<http://gov.wales/irpwsb/home/publication/2016-17/?lang=en>

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Annex 1: The Panel's determinations for 2016/17

1. Basic salary in 2016/17 for elected members of principal councils shall remain at £13,300.
2. The Panel has determined that senior salary levels in 2016/17 for members of principal councils shall be as set out in table 2.
3. The Panel has determined that (where paid) civic salaries at the following levels are payable (Table 3) and will be applied by principal councils as each considers appropriate, taking account of the anticipated workloads and responsibilities.
4. The Panel has determined that, where appointed and if remunerated, a presiding member must be paid a Band 3 Level 1 senior salary. This post will count towards the cap.
5. The Panel has determined that the post of deputy presiding member will not be remunerated.
6. The Panel has determined that each authority, through its Democratic Services Committee, must ensure that all its members are given as much support as is necessary to enable them to fulfil their duties effectively. All elected members should be provided with adequate telephone and email facilities and electronic access to appropriate information.
7. The Panel has determined that such support should be without cost to the individual member. Deductions must not be made from members' salaries by the respective authority as a contribution towards the cost of support which the authority has decided necessary for the effectiveness and/or efficiency of members.
8. All authorities must provide for the reimbursement of necessary costs for the care of dependent children and adults (provided by informal or formal carers) up to a maximum of £403 per month. Reimbursement shall only be made on production of receipts from the carer.
9. An elected member is entitled to retain a basic salary when taking family absence under the regulations irrespective of the attendance record immediately preceding the commencement of the family absence.
10. When a senior salary holder is eligible for family absence, he/she will continue to receive the salary for the duration of the absence.
11. It is a matter for the authority to decide whether or not to make a substitute appointment. The elected member substituting for a senior salary holder taking family absence will be eligible to be paid a senior salary, if the authority so decides.

12. If the paid substitution results in the authority exceeding the maximum number of senior salaries which relates to it, as set out in the Panel's Annual Report, an addition to the maximum will be allowed for the duration of the substitution. However, this will not apply to the Isle of Anglesey or Merthyr Tydfil Councils if it would result in the number of senior salaries exceeding fifty percent of the Council membership. Specific approval of Welsh Ministers is required in such circumstances.
13. When a Council agrees a paid substitution for family absence, the Panel must be informed, within 14 days of the date of the decision, of the details including the particular post and the duration of the substitution.
14. The Council's schedule of remuneration must be amended to reflect the implication of the family absence.
15. The chair of a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee is eligible for a salary equivalent to that part of a Band 3 Level 2 senior salary that remunerates a committee chair of a principal authority, (£6,700).
16. In cases where the chair is already in receipt of a senior salary for a Band 3, 4 or 5 role the payment will be £3,350.
17. The chair of a sub committee of a JOSC is eligible for a salary of £1,675.
18. In cases where the chair of the sub committee is already in receipt of a senior salary for a Band 3, 4 or 5 role the payment will be £837.
19. Payments to chairs of task and finish sub committees are to be pro-rated to the duration of the task.
20. Payments made to a chair of a JOSC, or a chair of a sub committee of a JOSC, are additional to the maximum proportion of the authority's membership eligible for a senior salary. It should be noted that the statutory limit of no more than 50% of a council's membership receiving a senior salary applies (Section 142 (5) of the Measure).
21. A deputy chair of a JOSC or sub committee is not eligible for payment.
22. Co-optees to a JOSC or to a sub committee are not eligible for a co-opted member fee unless they are appointed by an authority under Section 144(5) of the Measure.
23. The entitlement to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) shall apply to all eligible elected members of principal councils.
24. The basic salary for NPA ordinary members should be £3,600 ($42/156 \times £13,300$).

25. An NPA senior salary can be paid to the chair, deputy chair, and up to two committee chairs.
26. The senior salary of the chair of an NPA should be £12,300.
27. The senior salary of a deputy chair and chairs of NPA committees can be paid at either of the following levels to be decided by the authority to reflect the appropriate responsibility:

£6,000 or £7,300
28. Members must not receive more than one NPA senior salary.
29. An NPA senior salary is paid inclusive of the NPA basic salary.
30. Members of principal local authorities in receipt of a Band 1 or Band 2 senior salary cannot receive a salary from any NPA to which they have been appointed.
31. The basic salary for FRA ordinary members should be £1,700 ($20/156 \times £13,300$).
32. A Fire & Rescue Authority senior salary can be paid to the chair, deputy chair, and up to two chairs of committees.
33. The senior salary of the chair of an FRA should be £10,400.
34. The senior salary of a deputy chair of an FRA, with significant and sustained senior responsibility, should be £5,400.
35. The senior salary of a chair of an FRA committee should be £5,400.
36. Members must not receive more than one FRA senior salary.
37. An FRA senior salary is paid inclusive of the FRA basic salary.
38. Members of a principal council in receipt of a Band 1 or Band 2 senior salary cannot receive a salary from any FRA to which they have been nominated.
39. Principal councils, NPAs & FRAs must pay the following fees to co-opted members (Table 4) (who have voting rights).
40. Reasonable time for pre meeting preparation is eligible to be included in claims made by co-opted members the extent of which can be determined by the appropriate officer in advance of the meeting.
41. Travelling time to and from the place of the meeting can be included in the claims for payments made by co-opted members (up to the maximum of the daily rate).

42. The appropriate officer within the authority can determine in advance whether a meeting is programmed for a full day and the fee will be paid on the basis of this determination even if the meeting finishes before four hours has elapsed.
43. Meetings eligible for the payment of fees include other committees and working groups (including task and finish groups), pre-meetings with officers, training and attendance at conferences or any other formal meeting to which co-opted members are requested to attend.
44. The Panel has determined to include a provision for specific or additional senior salaries that do not fall within the current Remuneration Framework.
45. Community and town councils are authorised to make a payment to each of their members of a maximum amount of £100 per year for costs incurred in respect of telephone usage, information technology, consumables etc.
46. Community and town councils are authorised to make an annual payment not exceeding £500 to up to 3 members in recognition of specific responsibilities.
47. Community and town councils are authorised to provide a civic allowance to the mayor/chair and deputy mayor/chair of the council at an amount that they deem appropriate to undertake the functions of that office.
48. Community and town councils are authorised to make payments to each of their members in respect of travel costs for attending approved duties both within and outside the area of the council.¹⁵ Such payments must be the actual costs of travel by public transport or the HMRC mileage allowances as below:
 - 45p per mile up to 10,000 miles in the year.
 - 25p per mile over 10,000 miles.
 - 5p per passenger per mile – passenger supplement.
 - 24p per mile for private motor cycles.
 - 20p per mile for bicycles.
49. Community and town councils are authorised to reimburse subsistence expenses to their members for attending approved duties outside the area of the council at the maximum rates set out below on the basis of receipted claims:
 - £28 per day allowance for meals, including breakfast where not provided.
 - £200 – London overnight.
 - £95 – elsewhere overnight.
 - £30 – staying with friends and/or family overnight.

¹⁵ Authorities should pay mileage at the prescribed rates to a member who has been a passenger in a vehicle driven by someone else provided the authority is satisfied that a cost has been incurred by the member.

50. Community and town councils are authorised to pay an Attendance Allowance to each of their members for attending approved duties outside the area of the council as follows:

£16.23 for a period not exceeding 4 hours.

£32.46 for a period exceeding 4 hours but not exceeding 24 hours.

51. Community and town councils are authorised to pay a Financial Loss Allowance to each of their members where such loss has actually occurred, for attending approved duties outside the area of the council as follows:

£30.05 for a period not exceeding 4 hours.

£60.11 for a period exceeding 4 hours but not exceeding 24 hours.

£60.11 plus such amount as is payable under (a) and (b) above as appropriate for a period exceeding 24 hours.

52. Community and town councils are authorised to provide for the reimbursement of necessary costs for the care of dependent children and adults (provided by informal or formal carers) up to a maximum of £403 per month. Reimbursement shall only be made on production of receipts from the carer.

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

18 December 2015

Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services – Karen Jones

Matter for Information

Wards Affected:

All Wards

MEMBERS ICT GUIDANCE AND USAGE

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Member approval to amend the current Members ICT Guidance and Internet Usage Policy.

Background

2. The original Members IT Guidance Note, including Internet Usage Policy, was prepared and circulated to Members in August 2012.
3. With the introduction and transition onto the new Committee Document Management System, Modern.Gov, in October 2014, the ability to offer elected Members improved digital communication channels via mobile software and hardware has now become viable.

4. The current system can now offer significant benefits in terms of receiving Council Papers in a timelier manner, rapid access to the Council's document archives and improved organisation and annotation functionality.
5. In addition, the increased use of Digital Communication tools and technology will also assist the department in meeting its Forward Financial Plan targets by reducing over time the significant costs around print production and courier/postage of Council Papers.

Proposal

6. To enable Members greater flexibility and choice to maximise the use of mobile communication devices and the rapid development in application based software packages, it is proposed to include the following clause within the current guidance and policy document:-
7. "To facilitate use of the Modern.Gov system that has been installed to improve access to the Council's Committee business, Members wishing to operate Modern.Gov as an alternative to receiving information through traditional channels will be eligible for an iPad, additional to the laptop/desktop PC that they opted for at the beginning of their term of office."

Financial Impact

8. The cost of providing Members who chose to opt out of receiving information via traditional channels will be funded via Member ICT reserves. Over the longer term, some savings will be achieved with the reduction in print production and courier/postage costs. (check)

Workforce Impacts

9. Member development activities have been piloted during the trial phase of Modern.Gov. From this trial phase, a good understanding of the support that will need to be in place to support Members electing to move to electronic receipt of papers has been achieved and this support can be delivered between the ICT and Democratic Services teams. .

Legal Impacts

10. The Local Government Measure 2011 places a responsibility on the Head of Democratic Services to ensure that there is sufficient resource in place to support Members in carrying out their roles.

Risk Management

11. There are none.

Consultation

12. There is no requirement for external consultation under the Constitution.

Recommendations

To endorse the proposed amendment of the current Members IT Guidance Notes, Including Internet Usage Policy and rename the policy document the Members ICT Scheme, including Internet Usage Policy and to commend that change to Council in the New Year.

Reason for Proposed Decision

13. To allow Members to discuss the proposed change to the Members ICT Guidance Notes and if applicable approve the relevant amendment.

Appendices

14. Appendix 1 - Members ICT Scheme, Including Internet Usage Policy.

List of Background Papers

15. None.

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NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

18 December 2015

Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services – Karen Jones

Matter for Information

Wards Affected:

All Wards

ALL MEMBER ANNUAL SURVEY 2015/16

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members with the results of the All Member Survey 2015/16.

Background

2. The All Member Survey was conducted between the 1st June and 7th August, 2015 and was designed to seek views on all aspects of administrative and developmental support provided to Elected Members.
3. The survey covered the core governance arrangements of the Council and asked Members to feedback their comments in relation to such areas as Scrutiny Committees, Pre-Briefings , Agenda Planning, Budget Involvement as well as the functioning of the Executive.

4. In addition, Members were also asked to comment on their own personal development and training, administrative support processes (including the provision of Council Papers via online applications) and the suitability of relevant facilities.
5. A total of 49 members out of 64 (76%) completed the survey which was conducted via the Council's corporate online consultation portal and with the assistance of Democratic Services team.
6. Research and analysis of the results data has now been undertaken and a detailed report outlining the relevant findings prepared. It is expected that the survey will assist in ensuring the continuing development of the Council's support and development of elected Members.

Financial Impact

7. Actions agreed from the survey findings will need to be contained within the existing cash limit for Democratic Services.

Workforce Impacts

8. It is expected that the survey findings will inform the Member development programme

Legal Impacts

9. The survey assists in discharging duties set out in the Local Government Measure 2011.

Risk Management

10. An assessment of risk will be carried out once the actions to be taken from the survey findings have been identified.

Consultation

11. There is no requirement for external consultation under the Constitution.

Recommendation

12. To consider the results of the All Member Annual Survey 2015/16.

13. To agree the priorities for action arising from the survey so as to information the priorities for Democratic Services over the remainder of the term of this administration.

Reason for Proposed Decision

14. To build on progress made on modernising democratic arrangements across the Council.

Appendices

15. Appendix 1 - All Member Annual Survey 2015/16.

List of Background Papers

16. None.

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Please note that the full survey report will be sent out to all Members on Monday, 14 December, 2015.

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