

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Democratic Services Committee

11 November 2024

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services – Mr C. Griffiths

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Report Title:

Survey of Elected Members 2024/2025

Purpose of the Report:

To outline a proposed survey to conduct with elected members and for the Democratic Services Committee to agree the process for conducting the survey.

Background:

Previously, surveys have been undertaken with members to gain information, feedback and recommendations for improvement on a range of topics based on the support they receive from the Democratic Services Team. These have included-

1. Scrutiny arrangements and support
2. Member Development, seminars and training

3. IT and Mod.Gov issues
4. Facilities
5. General administration and support

It is a requirement to survey members annually on the timings of committee meetings, and the Member Survey gives the opportunity to do so while also capturing other valuable feedback from members. The responses allow members to reflect whilst providing officers with important feedback to allow them to continually improve and develop the services provided to them.

Additionally, information is gathered relating to the training and development needs of members which in turn feeds into the annual training and seminar programme.

It is proposed that a survey is conducted with members in winter 2024 with a view that any feedback/recommendations for improvement can be prepared ready for the 2024/25 civic year. Additionally, any training requirements identified can be built into the programme for the forthcoming year.

A draft survey is attached at Appendix 1 based on previous surveys conducted. Members of the Committee are asked to comment on the content and agree a final version to be conducted with all elected members.

Members are regularly surveyed on different topics throughout the year via email and the response rate is variable, and very rarely more than 50%. Therefore, in an attempt to obtain the highest possible response rate Members of the Committee are asked to approve that the proposed method for this survey is for Democratic Services staff to undertake the survey on a one to one basis with elected members. This is a model which has been utilised previously with good results.

Financial Impacts:

There will be no financial impacts from undertaking the survey. However, there could be costs associated with the implementation of any recommendations for improvement depending on the survey results.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

No implications.

Workforce Impacts:

There will be no workforce impacts from undertaking the survey. However, there could be impacts associated with the implementation of any recommendations for improvement depending on the survey results.

Legal Impacts:

No Impacts

Risk Management Impacts:

There are no risks associated with this report.

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that members agree:

- (a) That an annual survey be conducted with all elected members between November 2024 and January 2025.

(b) The content of the annual survey based on the draft attached at appendix 1.

(c) That the survey be conducted on a 1:1 basis by Democratic Services staff.

Reason for the Proposed Decision:

To approve the member survey for elected members for to inform arrangements for the 2024/25 civic year.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Draft Member Survey

Officer Contact:

Craig Griffiths - Head of Legal and Democratic Services
e-mail: c.griffiths2@npt.gov.uk

Stacy Curran - Democratic Services Manager
e-mail: s.curran@npt.gov.uk

Appendix 1

MEMBER NAME:

DATE OF SURVEY:

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER:

Scrutiny:

Questions for Scrutiny Members:

- Please rate the current overall scrutiny arrangements out of 10 and make any comments (If not 10 out of 10 then why not? If 10 out of 10, what made you score this?)

- Please give us your feedback on the new scrutiny model and how it is working for your committee?

- How useful do you find the Scrutiny Pre-Briefings (timing in relation to meetings and usefulness)

- Have you raised any questions in advance of the meetings?
(If not, why not? Is this process helpful?)

- How would you rate the arrangements for the following:
Forward Work Programmes
Support at meetings
Follow up information in relation to any information not available at a meeting?
(forward work programmes, agenda planning, pre briefings, support at meetings, follow up)

- How would you rate scrutiny's involvement in the budget setting process in the last year?
 - (If not 10 out of 10 why not? If 10 out of 10 what made you score this?)

Executive/ Regulatory:

Questions for Cabinet Members and non-scrutiny members:

6. How do you rate the support you receive in your Cabinet Member role?

7. How do you find the new process following the removal of Cabinet Boards and the responsibilities that come with Cabinet? (i.e Answering questions and Leading Reports)

8. If you have chaired a meeting are you happy with the support you receive? (i.e Pre-briefing, briefing notes, Meeting Support)

9. How do you usually prepare for a meeting? (Opening documents before meetings etc)

Member Seminars/Training

Questions for all Members:

1. Would you like to identify any topic areas you would like training on for the next Civic Year?

2. Would you like to identify any topic areas you would like to see in the Member Seminar programme for the next Civic Year?

3. How would you rate any training/Member Seminars that you have attended over the last 12 months? Please provide specific examples.

IT Matters

Questions for all Members:

1. Do you feel you have ample support with using the Modern Gov system at home and during meetings? Do you need any advice on the Modern Gov app?

2. Do you feel you have ample support from the IT section in using your equipment?

General

- How often do you use the members room and what do you use it for?

1. Do you feel you receive adequate support from Democratic Services?

2. Do you have a preference for timings of meetings?

3. Any final comments or observations?
