

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Democratic Services Committee.

1st July 2016

Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Member Development Programme 16/17 and the Annual Development Review (ADR) and Annual Report Process.

Purpose of the Report

1. To consult the Democratic Services Committee on the proposed content of the Member Development Programme for 16/17.
2. To update Members of the Democratic Services Committee on the Annual Development Review and Annual Report Process and to invite discussion on how best to proceed with these processes for the 15/16 Civic Year.
3. To update Members on the All Wales E-Learning Online Portal that is now available to all Members and to invite discussion on how best to advertise its availability.

Member Development Programme

4. In previous meetings of the Democratic Services Committee, Members have noted the work that had been undertaken in relation to Member Development in line with the Strengthening and Modernising Democratic Arrangements proposals. Members have requested that the draft Member Development Programme be brought back to the Committee for their information. The draft programme is attached at Appendix 1.
5. Member Attendance at Seminars and Training Sessions throughout the 15/16 Civic Year has ranged between 20% -50%. The Democratic Services Committee is invited to consider ways to encourage attendance at Member Seminars.

Annual Development Review and Annual Report Arrangements

6. In previous meetings of the Democratic Services Committee, Members have agreed to promote the participation of Annual Development Reviews and Annual Reports for Members in line with the Scheme, as revised by the Democratic Services Committee in 2013. Take up by Members of both the ADR and Annual Report opportunities is presently limited. The 14/15 Annual Development Review process resulted in six Members completing reviews. The 14/15 Annual Report process resulted in 5 Members completing annual reports.
7. The Committee is therefore invited to identify ways in which Member participation might be increased. The Schemes are attached at Appendix 2.

E-learning Developments

8. To complement the Member Development Programme for 16/17 E-Learning has been explored. E-Learning is the name given to training courses that are accessed electronically and any other electronic resources that may form part of that course (such as videos, web links, reference guides). The courses are typically delivered from a website which you login to. Because the website is accessed via the Internet it can be accessed at any time.

9. E-Learning is not intended to replace the existing training that is offered but to enhance the opportunities available via different means. There may be times when Members may need to quickly refresh their memories about a topic or only have a couple of queries which do not require attendance at a full training session. Neath Port Talbot CBC will be accessing their e-learning through the All Wales Academy.
10. The All Wales Academy (AWA) is an e learning site, available in English and Welsh to all 22 local authorities with 24/7 access to local government staff, school governors and councillors and it is free for individuals to use.
11. The AWA is a project bringing together the 22 local authorities in Wales, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), Wales Trade Union Congress (Wales TUC) and associated trade unions led by Skills for Justice.

Financial Impact

12. The Member Development Programme is accommodated within existing budgets.

Equality Impact Assessment

13. Improvement reports elsewhere on today's agenda will have improved access to information imparted at seminars especially for Members who have sight or hearing impairment. Additionally, the creation of the Member portal and the dissemination of seminar materials will assist the Council in meeting its equality responsibilities, especially those Members who might not be able to attend seminars due to work or caring responsibilities. Feedback is now routinely captured at the end of seminars. To date there have been no equality issues raised as part of the feedback process.

Workforce Impacts

14. Work has been re-allocated in the Democratic Services Unit to allow for the additional work required.

Legal Impacts

15. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 provides the legal framework for the work covered in this report.

Risk Management

16. There are no significant risk management issues associated with this report.

Consultation

17. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

18. Members consider and comment upon the proposed Member Development Programme for 2016-17 as contained in these papers.
19. That Members of the Democratic Services Committee consider ways in which Member participation in the Annual Development Review and Annual Report processes might be increased.
20. That Members of the Democratic Services Committee view a demonstration of the E-Learning Online Portal and suggest how best to promote the service to Members.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

21. To endorse the Member Development Programme for 16/17 and agree a way forward for the ADR and Annual Report processes in line with the schemes.

Implementation of Decision

This decision is for implementation after the three day call in period.

List of Background Papers

22. Democratic Process- Strengthening and Modernising Arrangements in Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council. Council. July 2014.

Council Report-WAO Corporate Assessment of Neath Port Talbot Council, January 2015.

Appendices

Appendix 1- Draft Member Development Programme.

Appendix 2- ADR/Annual Report Process

Appendix 3 -WLGA Councillor Development and Support Services from the WLGA 2015-16

Appendix 4- E-Learning Flyer

Officer Contact

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Appendix 1

SCHEDULE OF SEMINAR DATES 2016/17

Date	Time	Subject	Who	Confirmed
2nd June	10am	PREVENT	Karen Jones	YES
7th June	9am	Performance Management Training Session 1 (Repeat)	Steve Barry	YES
24th June	2pm	Performance Management Training Session 2 (Repeat) (RE-ARRANGED FROM JUNE 16th)	Steve Barry	YES
29th June	3pm	Budget	Hywel Jenkins	
8th July	9am	Performance Management Training Session 3 (Repeat)	Steve Barry	YES
27th July	3pm	Not Yet Allocated		
14th September	3pm	Fabian Way SPG	Nicola Pearce	YES

22nd September	10am	Budget	Hywel Jenkins	
29th September	10am	Not Yet Allocated		YES
19th October	3pm	Not Yet Allocated		
3rd November	10am	Enterprise Zone	Gareth Nutt	YES
16th November	3pm	Not Yet Allocated		
8th December	10am	Not Yet Allocated		
21st December	3pm	Not Yet Allocated		
18th January	3pm	VVP	Simon Brennan	YES
24th January	10am	Budget		
2nd February	10am	Electrification	Dave Griffiths	YES
8th March	3pm	Not Yet Allocated		
23rd March	10am	Not Yet Allocated		

Skills and Training to be considered:

TRAINING

WAO	Performance Management	June/July 16	Steve Barry WAO	Workshop
Chairing Skills				
Questioning Skills				

CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS

- Skills
- Protocol
- Constitution- Roles and Responsibilities of the Chair

COMMITTEE SPECIFIC

- Questioning Skills
- Committee Procedure i.e. motions, amendments, agendas.
- Topic Specific

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES FEEDBACK FROM WORKSHOP

- Members Induction 2017
- Members IT

- Member Development

ANNUAL ROLLING PROGRAMME

- Committee Procedures
- Members Interests
- Code of Conduct
- Outside Bodies
- Meeting Protocol
- Corporate Parenting
- NPT HOMES
- Budget/FFP 29/9/16
 24/1/17

Appendix 2

ADR and Annual Report Schemes

Elected Member Annual Reports

Definition

An annual report will enable elected Members to highlight to the electorate the work that they have undertaken or been involved in during a specific civic year.

Background

The Local Government Measure 2011 introduced a number of new statutory requirements to strengthen democracy in Wales. One of the requirements is concerned with making arrangements for every elected Member to provide an annual report at the end of each municipal year.

The details of the statutory requirements are found in section five of the Measure:

- i) A local authority must make arrangements for each person who is a member of the local authority to make an annual report about that person's activities as a member of the authority during the year to which the report relates; each person who is a member of the authority's executive to make a report about the person's activities as a member of the executive during the year to which the report relates; and the authority to publish all annual reports produced by its Members and by Members of its executive.
- ii) The arrangements may include conditions as to the content of the report that must be satisfied by the person making it.
- iii) A local authority must publicise its arrangements.
- iv) In exercising its functions under this section a local authority must have regard for any guidance issued by ministers.

3. Approach

In order to support Members in producing their reports at the end of a municipal year, it has been agreed that the content of such reports

follow a simple standard form. This will allow for the right balance between providing information that will be relevant and interesting for the electorate, whilst avoiding the risk that the annual reports become political in nature. The annual reports will be published in PDF format on the Councillors' pages of the Council's corporate website.

It has been agreed that any Annual Report by an elected Member should be concise and limited to two A4 sides. To assist elected Members in preparing an annual report five suggested headings have been agreed to assist in focussing the report:

Role and Responsibilities;

Community Activity;

Initiatives and Special Activities;

Learning and Development; and

Other Activities and Interests.

Some examples of information that can be included under each heading are outlined below.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Democratic Services Unit will provide accurate information on the attendance of members at full Council and all other Council committees.

Individual Councillors will be expected to provide information on any external bodies that they sit on, including levels of attendance which must be recorded personally. Examples of external bodies/committees could include:

School Governing Bodies;

Local Town/Community Councils;

Local Authority Consortium Committees; and

Special Interest Groups

This list is indicative and not exhaustive.

Community Activity

This is an opportunity for Councillors to highlight the work they have undertaken on behalf of their local constituents. It should not include details of specific cases. It could include details of regular surgeries they have held and any relevant outcomes. The Democratic Services Unit will not provide any information within this section.

Initiatives and Special Activities

This is where Councillors have the opportunity to describe any major initiatives or special projects that they have been associated with on behalf of Neath Port Talbot Council.

Learning and Development

Councillors can highlight in this section what Personal Development activities they have undertaken over the previous civic year. Examples can include events such as Council seminars or official training courses. In the future this information will mirror what a Councillor has included within section two of their Personal Development Review.

Other Activities/Interests

This is a general heading for Councillors to provide any information on themselves that they believe will be of interest to their constituents. It can be the opportunity to show the 'personal' aspect of your role as a Councillor.

The Head of Democratic Services, the Senior Committee Services Officer and the Senior Scrutiny and Member Development Officer will be available to read the reports to offer advice on whether any of the content is inappropriate. We anticipate that many Members will wish to produce the content themselves without the need for administrative support, however, should any Members need assistance then please make contact with the Electoral and Democratic Services Manager who will be pleased to help. Should there be demand, training can also be arranged.

The Democratic Services Committee will evaluate this scheme in Autumn 2013 to ensure that the process is fit for purpose.

Guidelines

As with any publication that is in essence linked to the Council there are a number of areas that must be considered when writing annual reports. The next section ensures that elected Members are made aware of potential issues that can or cannot be included within Annual Reports.

In 1986 Parliament imposed controls on Local Authority publicity prohibiting what was described as “political publicity” which appeared to be designed to affect public support for a political party. Also the law made provision for a statutory code of recommended practice to which Local Authorities must have regard in undertaking any publicity. The current Code of Practice for Local Authorities in Wales was issued by the National Assembly for Wales in October 2001.

Officers do not wish to be seen as censors of Members’ publications but we have to ensure that anything that is published using public money complies with the Code.

In considering the subject areas of the annual reports, the following matters will be important:-

the reports should be relevant to the functions of the authority;

it should not duplicate unnecessarily publicity produced by central government, another local authority or another public authority

Comment should be objective, balanced, informative, and accurate and issues must be presented clearly and as fairly as possible.

The reports may include information about individual Councillors only where this is relevant to their position and responsibilities within the Council and all content should be objective and explanatory. It is important that annual reports are not liable to misrepresentation as being party political

Annual Development Reviews.

Guidance for Reviewers

Before conducting your review (s) you may find it useful to consider the following:

1. Purpose of the Review

The purpose of your meeting will be to provide your reviewee with an opportunity to review their role generally, identify any specific tasks for the year ahead, consider the areas where they feel confident and identify areas where they will be more challenged and may need support and development. Their learning and development needs together with the usefulness or otherwise of previous development will then be fed back to the Head of Democratic Services to create development programmes.

2. Preparation

You may want to familiarise yourself with the role description of the person whose review you are conducting and consider some of the questions that you will ask to help the review meeting explore their role and needs. Your reviewee will contact you to plan a time and place convenient to you both where you can have a confidential undisturbed conversation. The meeting should take no longer than an hour and a half.

3. Undertaking the Review

Please remember that the conversation you have with your reviewee needs to be kept confidential.

Your role is to help the reviewee consider his/her role/contribution, strengths/weaknesses and training needs. You should act as an objective sounding board in this exploration.

Your role is not to give your own feedback on the performance of your colleague.

Use the template as the basis for your discussions.

It is the responsibility of the reviewee to undertake any actions resulting from the conversation, keep any documentation and discuss any emerging development needs with the Head of Democratic Services.

Any additional support required from the Council may also be identified and fed into the organisation as appropriate.

Guidance for Reviewees

Before undertaking your review you may find it useful to consider the following guidance.

1. Purpose of the Review

The purpose of your meeting will be to provide you with an opportunity to review your role generally, consider any specific tasks for the year ahead, consider the areas where you feel confident and identify areas that you might find challenging and may need support and development. You will have an opportunity to identify learning and development needs which you will then be able to feed back to the Head of Democratic Services to organise development programmes.

2. Preparation

Before your meeting you will need to complete the template. This will help you to think about your role, specific tasks for this year and any support that you might need. You'll also find it useful to review your role description and person specification.

Make contact with your reviewer and plan a time and place convenient to you both where you can have a confidential undisturbed conversation. The meeting should take no longer than an hour and a half.

3. Undertaking the Review

Please remember that the conversation you have with your reviewer needs to be kept confidential to yourselves.

Use the template as a basis for your discussions.

Your reviewer will help you consider your role/contribution, strengths/weaknesses and training needs. They will act as an objective sounding board in this conversation.

Their role is not to give their own feedback on your performance.

Please note that it is your responsibility to undertake any actions resulting from the conversation, keep any documentation and discuss

any emerging development needs with the Head of Democratic Services.

Any additional support required from the Council may also be identified and fed into the organisation as appropriate.

TEMPLATE FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS

Please complete this pro forma and bring it to the meeting, this form is confidential to you and the person who is conducting your review except for the final sheet which will be used by member support officers for your personal development plan and to prioritise activities for the Authority's training programme.

1. What are my current roles and responsibilities? (e.g. the council executive/cabinet portfolio, overview and scrutiny member, chair, member of a statutory committee such as planning, licensing etc. In the community, ward member/community leader)
2. What Learning and Development have I undertaken this year?
3. What additional learning and development would be useful, use the table below.

Areas that I would like to develop are:	Preferred method of development (e.g. visits to other authorities, peer networking, practical workshops, e learning etc.)
Skills (e.g. meeting management, questioning techniques, media interviews,	
Knowledge (e.g. the code of conduct, equalities, the planning process, local policy etc.)	

My learning and development needs for this year (please discuss this section of your pro forma with your member support officer, it will be used to create development plans and training programmes)

Area for Development	How	Priority
<p>example</p> <p>How to Chair scrutiny meetings effectively</p>	<p>I'd like to observe meetings in other authorities</p> <p>A workshop on chairing skills would be handy</p> <p>I'd like to receive some written guidance for scrutiny chairs</p>	1
<p>example</p> <p>Understanding of the planning system to answer constituents enquiries</p>	<p>A workshop on all the planning basics would be useful</p> <p>A meeting with planning officers on specific issues raised by people in my community about planning permission</p>	3
<p>example</p> <p>Local Government Finance, how do I contribute to the budget setting process?</p>	<p>I'd like to have discussions with finance officers and some mentoring from Cabinet member for Finance and Resources as this is an area I'd like to move into.</p>	2
<p>example</p> <p>Training in the use of social media</p>	<p>A meeting with someone who can explain how to use Twitter safely to publicise what I do and encourage the public to contact me.</p>	4

My evaluation of the training I have already received

Training undertaken	What difference has this made to the way I work as a member
example Council induction programme on the work of the council and who's who.	Has given me a good refresher of how the council operates which has enabled me to explain this to people attending my surgeries and know who the appropriate officers are to speak to. It also highlighted areas where I need further training.
example media skills training	Helped me represent the council more effectively at a radio interview last week
example attended the Leadership Academy	Helped me understand my own leadership style and how it differs from other I am now working more effectively with other Cabinet members I also had help on a personal leadership challenge.

