

**RHONDDA CYNON TAFF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015-2016**

**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**26<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2015**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**Agenda Item No. 5(b)**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (WALES)  
MEASURE 2011 –  
MEMBERS' ANNUAL REPORTS**

**Author: Ms.Karyl May, Head of Democratic Services**

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update Members on the progress being made in the publication of Members' Annual Reports for 2014/15.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Members be further encouraged to produce Annual Reports, especially those in receipt of a Senior Salary to ensure that the Authority maintains in the Advanced level of the `Wales Charter for Member Support and Development`.
- 2.2 That the link to Members' Annual Reports for 2014/15 be sent to the Minister for Public Services.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Committee held on the 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2014 the Head of Democratic Services reminded Members of the requirements contained in Section 5 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure, 2011 whereby County and County Borough Council (local authorities) must ensure that all their elected Members are able to make an annual report on their Council activities during the previous year. Concern was expressed at that meeting, that whilst the provision of support and advice is available to enable Members to carry out this function, the take up had been very low, so much so that not one annual report had been published on the Council's website, which had also been remarked upon by the Minister for

Public Services. It was appreciated that within the statutory guidance Local Government (Wales) Measure, 2011, it is not a requirement for a Member to produce an annual report but a duty for the Authority to ensure arrangements are in place to facilitate the publication of such reports. It is a requirement of the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development that those Members in receipt of a Senior Salary must publish an annual report and therefore this could have been detrimental in the Authority sustaining the Advanced Level of the Charter.

- 3.2 Following the meeting held on the 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2014, 36 Members' Annual Reports were published on the Council's website for 2013/14 and this contributed to the Authority maintaining the Advanced Level of the `Charter` for a further three years (Award maintained in January, 2015). However, as evidence needs to be provided for the three previous years to fulfil the criteria within the Charter during the review in 2018, it is imperative that Members Reports are published on an annual basis, especially for those in receipt of a Senior Salary.
- 3.3 On the 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2015, the Minister for Public Services wrote to all Leaders of local authorities in Wales requesting information on how many Elected Members had completed Annual Reports during 2014/15. Unfortunately, this Authority was in the same position as at last year, in that not one report had been received from any Member or published for the 2014/15 period; despite the fact that reminders had been sent Members advising of the arrangements that are in place to facilitate the publication of such Reports prior to the receipt of the letter from the Minister.
- 3.4 Further emails together with the template to be used and guidance notes have been sent to Members on two further occasions, the last reminder was sent on the 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2015, following further emails from the Minister's Office.
- 3.5 Members' Annual Reports for 2014/15 are now being published on the Council's website as and when received and at the meeting the Head of Democratic Services will provide a verbal update on the actual numbers that are published.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**Local Government (Wales) Measure, 2011 – Members' Annual Reports**

Freestanding Matter

