

**RHONDDA CYNON TAFF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2016/2017**

**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**5<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2016**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

<b>Agenda Item No. 6</b>
<b>MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS</b>

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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To seek the views of Members of the Democratic Services Committee in respect of the monitoring of Members' attendance at meetings by the Standards Committee and the changes to be made in recording the attendances.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are requested to form a view as to whether the data as set out in paragraph 4 of this report should be recorded in respect of Members' attendance at meetings, and if so, a suggested date for implementation, in order that the findings of the Committee can be reported to full Council.

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 Members will recall that at the Council's Annual Meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2016, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services incorporated within his report titled '*Proposed Amendments to the Council's Constitution including its General Scheme of Delegation*' a section in respect of Members' Attendance at Meetings, which indicated that the Standards Committee were interested in including within its Work Programme the issue of Members' Attendance.

3.2 For ease of reference, I set out below the section of the report that was presented to the AGM:-

- 3.2.1 “At its meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015 the Standards Committee agreed that, as part of its Work Programme for the 2015 - 2016 Municipal Year, it would give consideration to the issue of Members’ Attendance at meetings.
- 3.2.2 At its meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015 the Committee considered a report of the Monitoring Officer setting out the types of Committee that elected Members are appointed to and attend. The Committee agreed to initially monitor in greater detail Members’ attendance at meetings of full Council, all Regulatory and Scrutiny Committees as well as the Audit Committee together with any associated training sessions held since May 2015.
- 3.2.3 At the Standards Committee meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2016 the Chairman informed the Committee that he was in the process of arranging dates to meet with individual leaders of the various Political Groups within the Council prior to the Annual General Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016 in order to outline the intention of the Standards Committee to monitor Members’ attendances at meetings in the future and recommend to the Council’s AGM changes as to the manner of recording Member attendances. Members noted that the Chairman alone would meet with the leaders and the Monitoring Officer would not be present at these meetings.
- 3.2.4 With regards to Members’ attendances at future training sessions, the Chairman suggested that Standards Committee Members sit in on some sessions to observe the training being provided. It was the wish of the Standards Committee to act in a pro active way in moving forward in this area of work.
- 3.2.5 In order to assist the Committees work on this topic in future the Standards Committee has recommended to Council that in addition to the current practice of recording Members’ attendance and non-attendance at meetings that the following data be captured for each meeting in the future: -
- Member’s Attendance/Non-attendance;
  - Recording whether apologies were given (or not) for non- attendance by a Member; and
  - Whether a Member remained for the duration of the meeting or left prior to its conclusion.
- 3.3 Following consideration of the report it was agreed:-
- (1) To note that the Chairman of the Standards Committee was arranging to meet with Leaders of the Council’s Political Groups prior to the Annual Meeting of Council on the 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2016 to outline the intention of the Standards Committee to monitor Members’ attendance at meetings in the future and recommend to the Council’s AGM changes to the manner of recording Members attendances;

- (2) That the following recommendations from the Standards Committee, that, in future, the following data be captured with regards to Members' attendance at each meeting be referred for consideration by the Democratic Services Committee:-
- Members' Attendance/Non-Attendance
  - Recording whether apologies were given (or not) for non-attendance by a Member; and
  - Whether a Member remained for the duration of the meeting or left prior to its conclusion.
- (3) That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services amend the Council's Constitution to reflect the required amendments/initiatives, following consideration by the Democratic Services Committee.

#### **4. VIEWS OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Members views are sought as to whether the following data should be recorded in respect of Members' attendance at meetings, and if so, a suggested date for implementation, in order that the findings of the Committee can be reported to full Council:-

- Members' Attendance/Non-Attendance
- Recording whether apologies were given (or not) for non-attendance by a Member; and
- Whether a Member remained for the duration of the meeting or left prior to its conclusion.

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