

Democratic Services Committee Annual Report 2020-21



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

Contents

Foreword

Membership

Member Support & Resources

Hybrid / Webcasting

Members Portal

Member Training

Members Wellbeing

Diversity Working Group

Independent Remuneration Panel For Wales (IRPW)

Local Government & Elections Wales Act 2021

Looking Ahead

Appendix - Terms of Reference for the Democratic Services Committee



Cllr M Webber

Vice Chairperson of the Democratic Services Committee

This year has been another unprecedented year as the Committee embarked upon its virtual meetings settings, due to the covid 19 pandemic. The Committee have always been positive advocates for new ways of working as it has championed the provision of webcasting over the last 2 years and I'm pleased to see that Members of the Committee, like all Members of the Council embraced this new approach.

It has been a busy year for the Committee, even though it was a shorter than usual Municipal Year and I was pleased to be a part of the excellent work taken forward by the Committees Diversity Working Group. As Member Champion for diversity and inclusion, the work taken forward by my colleagues will not only benefit the Council in helping to promote the democracy agenda but will also create a diverse democracy that reflects Rhondda Cynon Taf. The working group have provided the Council with 16 recommendations to take forward in a short space of time ahead of the Local Government Elections and as a Committee we will continue to support the work and findings of the Group; it is however important to acknowledged that many of these matters are outside of the Council's control and require the support of political parties.

The move to virtual meetings has been a steep learning curve for all Members, a curve which however I am proud to say was supported by all. All members of this committee have recorded their thanks for the support afforded by the Council Business Unit and ICT during this period to enable all members to perform their role. This support will again play a key role as we embark on the next steps in digital democracy through the provision of hybrid meetings and webcasting. This is an exciting opportunity and one which the Committee eagerly awaits, due to the work undertaken by the Committee in supporting the provision of webcasting. The Committee have

received regular updates in respect of implementation of the new system and we look forward to taking forward our first meeting using the equipment in the Municipal Year. As a Committee we will also be mindful of the resource implications that such meetings may now bring and will consider any such implications in the next sufficiency of resources report that is brought forward to the Committee in the Municipal Year.

This year has been unprecedented not just because of the pandemic. It is also a notable one following the resignation by former County Borough Councillor M Diamond. As a Committee we would like to thank former Councillor Diamond for his professional stewardship of the Committee and we all wish him a very happy retirement. I would also like to thank all Committee Members for their hard work and focus to ensure that the Council continues to provide sufficient support to its Members and as we now look to the future and potential support we can provide to new candidates ahead of the Local Government Elections.

I would also like to congratulate our newly elected Chair Cllr Lewis Hooper and I look forward to working with him over the course of this new municipal year.

**County Borough Councillor M Webber.
Vice Chair.**

Members Of The Democratic Services Committee



Cllr L. M. Adams



Cllr J. Bonetto



Cllr J. Brencher



Cllr G. Caple



Cllr M. Diamond



Cllr J. Edwards



Cllr H. Fychan



Cllr G. Jones



Cllr K. Morgan



Cllr S. Powderhill



Cllr S. Rees



Cllr E. Stephens



Cllr L. Walker



Cllr M. Webber
(Vice Chair)

Member Support & Resources

In November 2020, and in accordance with the Measure and the Committee's agreed terms of reference the Committee considered its annual report in respect of Sufficiency of Resources. The Committee has a responsibility to keep under review the provision of staff, accommodation and other resources made available to the Head of Democratic Services, in order to ensure that it is adequate for the responsibilities of the post. The Head of Democratic Services in turn is responsible for making recommendations to the Committee to enable such determinations to be made.

Through his report the Head of Democratic Services was able to advise of the secure funding established in respect of the graduate positions:

- **Member's Researcher and Scrutiny Officer**
- **Democratic Services & Engagement Officer**

In addition funding for an additional position of a 'Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer' was also secured. The role has strengthened support and expertise available within the Unit taking forward the Council's joint scrutiny approach, outcome focused approaches to scrutiny and also to further support the Community Charter agreed at the Community Liaison Committee.

During the year due to the covid pandemic the Members Support Officer was seconded to the 'Track, Trace, Protect' team, to assist in supporting the Council's approach to the pandemic. This was a temporary 3-month secondment and the officer is now back in position continuing to support Members. Temporary cover arrangements through the Legal admin unit was sought to assist the Council Business Unit in the support provision needed during this period.

Looking forward, the Committee are already mindful of the resource implications that may be witnessed on the Council Business Unit with the administrating and support of webcasting arrangements and careful consideration will need to be provided for during the next report to Committee.

As a Committee we would like to thank the Head of Democratic Services and his team for the continued support provided to Members, as well as the ICT support that is provided and the countless other officers that assist Members with information sharing and gathering to assist us in undertaking our roles and supporting the people of RCT.

Hybrid / Webcasting

At the Democratic Services Committee on the 9th January 2020 Members agreed to take forward changes to the facilities within the Council Chamber through the procurement of equipment to facilitate webcasting and to further assist in the hybrid meetings requirement. Since that date the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act places a duty on principal councils to put in place arrangements for the broadcast of council meetings so that members of the public who are unable to attend are able to see and hear proceedings as they happen. Recordings of meetings should also be publicly available for a reasonable period after the meeting.

There are a number of benefits achieved through webcasting which include:

- A positive demonstration of accountability and transparency;
- Encouraging engagement and debate, by creating more opportunities for the public to access meetings;
- Accuracy of recording of meetings including recording of decisions, voting and attendance;
- The opportunity to raise the profile of the work of Councillors, and the discussions behind the decisions of Council and its committees.
- Assists in supporting our paper light approaches to meetings moving forward as some facilities in the Council chamber are currently inhibiting the role-out of a paper-light approach.

The Democratic Services Committee have received numerous updates in respect of the development and implementation of the webcasting equipment, which has been significantly delayed due to the covid pandemic.

With the agreement of the Committee and endorsed by Cabinet and Council, the introduction of live webcasting will be rolled out on an incremental basis to allow for experience to be gained with the live system operations. It is intended to adopt the same incremental approach as was utilised for the roll-out of virtual meetings during the summer of 2020, with this approach initially prioritising Cabinet, Democratic Services Committee, Planning and Development and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

The next phase would see the adoption, on an incremental basis by thematic scrutiny Committees following the schedule of the committee calendar, with a hybrid Council meetings being enabled at the end of this process. This technology will provide the opportunity to 'lock-in' the opportunity already created, through the virtually meetings arrangement via Zoom and the publication of meeting recordings on the Council website. It will be important to maintain flexibility in our approach to each specific committee, between full attendance, hybrid and virtual, to maintain and build upon the positive enhancements, which have been achieved over the last twelve months.

A full programme of training will be needed to be developed for members over the coming weeks to provide the opportunity for members to familiarise themselves with this technology. At the Council meeting in May, Members endorsed the recommendations of the Constitution Committee in respect of changes to the Council's Rules of Procedure which were adapted to permit the holding of hybrid meetings. In addition, due to the pandemic and current social distancing guidelines a covid safety measure guidance document has also been created to ensure the safety of both Members and Officers choosing to attend a hybrid meeting in the Council Chamber.

Hybrid / Webcasting

As well as the introduction of webcasting the Council Chamber has undergone significant amendments to ensure accessibility and to improve the democratic environment. The new webcasting equipment improves the audio within the Chamber, the addition of screens will make it easier for Members to engage in the process and the new furniture arrangements addresses DDA requirements. The pavement outside of the Council Chamber has also been lowered due to accessibility issues. These issues have been identified via the Diversity in Democracy Working Group. To further enhance the translation facilities provided during Committee meetings the chamber now consists of an integrated translation booth, which will benefit members of the Welsh language team to undertake this vital role and further enhance diversity in the democratic process. A video tutorial has been created and shared with Members to assist them an introduction to the Chamber

In December 2020, the Minister for Housing and Local Government, Julie James announced funding opportunities of £500,000 to support the digital transformation of democracy required to underpin many of the provisions contained within the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act, 2021. RCT Council submitted 3 bids to the fund and were successful with each of the bids to further strengthen the democratic process within RCT:

- Expansion of the Webcasting infrastructure (Bid 1)
- Strengthening of the Members Portal and voting Apps (Bid 2)
- Support framework to further assist Town and Community Councils with the implementation of the Local Government & Elections Wales Act.(Bid 3)

During the year, Members of the Democratic Services Committee supported the rationale that smaller Council meetings that are undertaken virtually should continue to be held through a virtual meeting setting. The reason for such a proposal was following consideration of:

- The likely duration of the meetings – Consideration of the agenda item content and also using Councillor and Officers time more sensibly by reducing the travel requirements;
- Promote diversity in Democracy by encouraging the flexibility of remote access to virtual meetings and thereby attracting more people who work and young parents
- Contribute to the carbon reduction agenda by reducing travelling and reducing travelling costs.

Members agreed for a number of meetings to continue on the virtual meetings basis, with the appropriate flexibility being provided for the Head of Democratic Services and the responsible Committee Chair to determine whether a meeting should be convened virtually, through a hybrid set-up or at a physical location. This should be determined by the nature of business being considered.

Democratic Services Committee have come along way with the introduction of webcasting arrangements within RCT, despite the delays witnessed by the Covid pandemic. The Council are in a positive position to commence its first round of demonstration meetings at the start of the Municipal Year with the intention of holding its first recorded meeting of the Cabinet in July. The Committee will closely monitor the roll out of the hybrid approach and review the arrangements as necessary to ensure the correct support is in place for Members and the public to access meetings through this new meeting environment. The Committee will also monitor the development work to be undertaken within Committee Room 1, to allow this meeting room to provide the functionality for hybrid meetings, as smaller committee room settings often lend itself better to some of the working of the smaller committees.

Like many Committees, the Democratic Services Committee have seen many positives with the virtual meetings approach and welcome the flexibility the hybrid meetings offer to Members and officers to suit their needs.

Members Portal

During the year Members were provided with a demonstration of the dedicated Members portal, which will allow Members greater flexibility and access to undertake their Elected Member role. The Portal currently allows Members to submit questions to Council, submit a 'Call In' form in respect of a Key Decision and the opportunity to complete Declaration of Interest forms relating to a meeting they have been present at. There is also the opportunity to access E-learning materials on the portal and key information documents, which again Members may find useful when undertaking their role.

The Portal, is a developing system and it is intended that the system will in time provide statistical information, compiled from the Council's customer reporting system ('The CRM'). Information on what issues are being reported, such as dog fouling or pot- holes, will be compiled on a ward by ward basis, alongside information on the resolution of these complaints. The new facility will also provide information on the latest business of the council being considered and matters such as planning applications which relate to that members electoral division. The current E-Learning modules available on the Portal are in their basic form and partnership working with the Council Business Unit and ICT is continuing in order to develop an e-learning module system which provides Members with full functionality and interaction in the e-learning module and demonstrate completed learning.

Due to Committees involvement in the development of the Portal, it is only right that Democratic Services Committee Members will test the system and provide feedback on its functionality. This feedback will ensure that the system is developed with the needs and requirements of the Members at its core, as it is the intention that the Portal becomes the 'go to place' for all Members when wanting to access information / report problems and get involved in the democratic process.

Member Training

The Democratic Services Committee is responsible for the training and development opportunities provided to Members by the Council Business Unit and receives reports in this respect as and when appropriate. A Report in respect of training was presented to Committee in March, which updated Members of the training completed following the Personal Development Reviews that were undertaken during the 2019 – 2020 Municipal Year and the training to be taken forward during the 2020-2021 Municipal Year.

Due to Covid pandemic, training and meetings of the Council were put on hold. During this time the Council Business Unit worked with Members and ICT to ensure Members were equipped with the correct devices to allow them to conduct their roles and support their constituents in very difficult and uncertain times. One to one training through a virtual basis was offered to all Members and Co-opted Members via the Council Business Unit. Such training allowed Members to conduct their committee responsibilities through a virtual basis. Members of the Council have spoken highly of the support provided to them during this period as the Council worked through the best options for Members and the undertaking of business to ensure the smooth running of the Council. It cannot go unnoticed the big change that such working necessitated for a lot of Members and the Committee would like to place on record its thanks to the attitudes and resilience of Members in undertaking this new approach to Committee meetings and engagement with constituents, for the safety of all.

As Members and Offices are now working comfortably on the virtual basis the Head of Organisational Development has resumed the PDR process and all Group Leaders and Independent Members were contacted during the year in respect of this process. Following the completion of the PDRs a meeting has been taken forward with the Head of Democratic Services to discuss how such training needs will be met. Due to the improved attendance at meetings, through the virtual meeting approach pre-council training has resumed with a training session in respect of the Council's Winter Maintenance plan taken forward in November and the Gypsy and Traveller Awareness training in January with Safeguarding training soon to be taken forward in June. Notably improved attendance figures were noted in comparison to the attendance within the Council Chamber. The Committee have also agreed a number of other training programmes to be taken forward for all Members including Mental Health & Wellbeing, Unconscious Bias, Pre-retirement information sharing and Emergency planning. These sessions will look to be held on standalone evenings within the Committee calendar to maximise attendance and where appropriate recordings of such training will be taken forward and made available on the Members Portal for future reference.

During January 2021 a questionnaire was undertaken with the Audit Committee Members and Co-opted Member to assist in informing a programme of development for the Committee. Officers are utilising the results of the survey to introduce a bespoke training programme for the Committee which will help equip Members in undertaking their roles on the Committee.

The Council have been recognised as providing a detailed and thorough Member Induction Programme, and with the Local Government Elections taking place in 2022, work will need to commence to ensure that the induction programme is still 'Fit for Purpose' to allow newly Elected Members to be supported from the very start.

Following the two by-elections in May, the Council Business Unit has already reviewed its induction information pack and has undertaken a range of training opportunities for the new Members, which will assist in the review of the Council's Member Induction Programme. Consideration will need to be given as to how Member inductions are taken forward following the Local Government Elections, in respect of new ways of working with virtual platforms (as recently witnessed in the Senedd with virtual Member Inductions) and the need to be mindful of any potential covid restrictions that may still be in place. Details of the induction programme will be presented to the Committee during the next Municipal Year.

Members Wellbeing

The welfare and mental health of Members is crucially important and Members need to be aware of the support that is available to them if they wish to utilise through the Council's Occupational Health service.

Although the remote attendance at Committee meetings brings a number of benefits for Members and greater flexibility with work / life balance, it has also produced a number of unintended consequences, such as Members feeling isolated. It was apparent that the informal, net working discussions by Members in advance of a physical meeting at the Council Chamber was lacking. To try and alleviate this situation the Council Business Unit, following support from the Democratic Services Committee facilitated a number of 'virtual coffee morning's' for Members. Such sessions provided Members with the opportunity to come together, chat and share experiences, which we hoped has boosted Members wellbeing during the covid restrictions. The sessions have been run on different days and times of the week to try and provide opportunities for all Members to attend. They have also provided opportunity for informal updates and a number of positive outcomes have come forward from such sessions, as well as hopefully supporting Members Wellbeing:

- Members discussed the higher rate of nuisance and cold calling through the lockdown period – A fact sheet assisting Members with how to deal with such calls was provided to Members.
- Social Media – Members discussed the increase use of social media through the pandemic and sought assistance in the best way to deal with social media enquiries – A number of infographics were created and shared with Members to help direct residence to some key Council services. In addition links were provided to some infographics for Members to utilise to support civility online / social media.
- Following on from this an Officer from the Council's communication team provided Members at a further coffee session with a presentation on good practice examples of social media accounts.
- Council Website Changes – At the last coffee session, Members were provided with an overview of some of the changes to the Council website and the Council Committee pages due to the need to utilise the Modern Gov system to link with the Council website to facilitate the webcasting recordings of the Council going forward. This was an opportunity that may not have naturally been made available to all Members, which was well received.
- Members Portal – Members in attendance at the last coffee session were also provided with a demonstration of the Members Portal, as this had only previously been provided to the Democratic Services Committee. This was again well received with a number of Members asking to be included in the pilot of the system along with the Democratic Services Committee Members.

It is intended that this provision of supported is continued to ensure the wellbeing of Members.

Diversity Working Group

Diversity within Local Government is all about creating an inclusive environment, accepting of every individual's differences, enabling all Councillors to achieve their full potential and as a result, allowing Council services to reach its fullest potential for the benefit of its residents. If you value each person's differences, regardless of political persuasion, gender, age, ethnic background, disability or sexual persuasion then you are allowing each person to contribute their unique experiences, which can have an extremely positive impact on the work of a Council as a whole and the people that we serve. The more representative our Councillors are the better understanding they have of the needs of the local community and therefore are better equipped at carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

During the Municipal Year the Committee formed a working group, following consideration of the Minister for Housing and Local Government Statement in respect of 'phase two of the diversity in democracy programme Action Plan' to look at the diversity agenda within democracy and to see what actions they could take forward to make RCT a more diverse democratic landscape. The work of the working group has been fast moving and already actions have been outlined within the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act that look to take forward the diversity agenda and the recent recommendations of the WLGA Council report.

The work of the group will be ongoing until the 2022 Local Government Elections as Members work to ensure that the Council achieves all it can to push the diversity agenda and develop a more diverse democratic profile. However, it is noted there are many things outside of its control and work will need to be taken forward with political parties to also help push the agenda forward.

It cannot be underestimated that trying to achieve a diverse culture is difficult and the working group have already in a short period of time identified potential barriers that may dissuade members of the public to stand for election. It is important to ensure that any perceived barriers are eradicated and instead celebrate and promote the rewarding experiences of becoming a Councillor. The working Group have noted the importance of demonstrating the flexibilities of the Council to allow for a work life balance, which will further be enhanced through the hybrid meetings. The Council need to promote the remuneration available to Elected Members and the training opportunities and support provided so that any future candidate is aware of the support open to them. Engagement with communities and groups to educate and promote the democratic process to make it engaging to residents, who may feel inspired to attend and one day become that Councillor, will also be pivotal to the work needing to be taken forward.

The Working Group recognised that Town and Community Councils provide a vital connection for communities into decision making and the need to work with our Community and Town Council colleagues to engage with potential candidates. It was therefore important as a group that Community Council representatives were included within its membership.

Diversity Working Group

As part of the Working Groups terms of reference it also included engagement with 16 – 17 year old's in local government democracy, ahead of the Senedd Elections. The working group considered campaigns by the YEPS service (developed by young people) and the Council's own awareness campaign to engage with first time voters. Due to the covid 19 pandemic much of the engagement wanting to be taken forward with schools was inhibited due to the lockdown and home learning requirements and the educational focus when schools did return. However, the group intend on taking these engagement opportunities forward when appropriate.

In May 2021 the Working Group produced its interim report which was endorsed by the Democratic Services Committee and later supported by full Council. This interim report with 16 recommendations allowed the group to compile the work achieved to date and the recommendations it felt were necessary to positively start the engagement and educating of the democratic process within Rhondda Cynon Taf. It is important that as a Council we act now to reach out to potential candidates. The Council also need to continue the momentum of engaging with the youth voters through the voting awareness raising campaigns that have been taken forward for the Senedd elections as our young people are the mouth piece for the future.

At the Council meeting in May, Members considered and supported the work of the diversity working group and also welcomed and work of the WLGA in respect of Diversity. At this meeting the Council endorsed the declaration of becoming a 'Diverse Council', one of the first Council's in Wales to sign and support such a declaration, which will further strengthen the work and role of the Democratic Services working group.

Independent Remuneration Panel For Wales (IRPW)

The annual meeting of the IRPW with the Chairs of Democratic Services Committee and the Heads of Democratic Services was held remotely on 27th October 2020 to discuss the Draft Annual Report for 2021/22 and proposed determinations in relation to Elected Members.

The Head of Democratic Services and the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee participated in discussions on the report including: the schedule of remuneration; reimbursement of the Cost of Care and personal safety of Elected Members. The IRPW urged Democratic Services Committees to take steps to encourage and facilitate greater use of the remuneration framework so that Members are not financially disadvantaged in undertaking their roles.

The Democratic Services Committee itself looked at the draft report of the IRP to ensure Members were afforded the opportunity to comment on the proposals set out in the draft annual report and to allow their representations to be taken into account by the IRPW under the requirements of the Local Government Measure 2011. Members were keen for the cost of care allowances to be highlighted to Members and to future prospective candidates that may stand for election in the 2022 Local Government Elections.

The final IRPW report for 2021/22 was published in February 2021 and a report will be submitted to Council in May 2021 setting out the key determinations for approval.

Local Government & Elections Wales Act 2021

The Local Government and Election (Wales) Act (The Act) received Royal Assent on the 20th January 2021 and was one of only two Bills in the Welsh Government's legislative programme to continue during the Covid -19 pandemic. The Bill was prioritised given the timescales required to introduce the planned reforms in respect of the 2022 Local Government elections.

It was therefore important during the year that the requirements of the Act and how the Council intended to respond to its requirements were discussed at the Democratic Services Committee. It was clear that this substantive piece of legislation would change the way the Council operate across a range of areas from electoral reform, public participation, governance and performance management, democratic processes and stronger working arrangements with Town and Community Councils.

THE ACT INCLUDES PROVISIONS FOR:

- **Reforming electoral arrangements for local government, including:**
 - Extending the voting franchise to 16- and 17-year olds and foreign citizens legally resident in Wales,
 - Changes to voter registration,
 - and enabling a principal council to choose between the 'first past the post' or the 'single transferable vote' voting systems;
- A general power of competence for principal councils and eligible community councils;
- Reforming public participation in local democracy;
- The leadership of principal councils, including to encourage greater diversity amongst executive members and establishing a statutory position of chief executive;
- Strengthening Scrutiny arrangements and arrangements for member conduct;
- The development of a framework and powers to facilitate more consistent and coherent regional working mechanisms;
- A new system for performance and governance based on self-assessment and peer review, including the consolidation of the Welsh Ministers' support and intervention powers;
- Powers to facilitate voluntary mergers of principal councils and restructuring a principal area;
- Local government finance including non-domestic rating and council tax;
- **Miscellaneous provisions relating to:**
 - Support provided for Community Councils
 - Executive arrangements
 - The status of the Head of Democratic Services
 - information sharing between regulators,
 - abolition of community polls,
 - fire and rescue authorities,
 - the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales, and
 - Public Service Boards.

The 'Coming into Force' provisions of the Act are complex, with some provisions coming into force within days of Royal Assent, others within two months and the majority via Ministerial statutory instruments. As a Committee we will receive regular monitoring updates on the provisions within the Act to ensure that as a Council we are proactively working to address the requirements ahead and to offer support to our colleagues in Town and Community Councils.

Looking Ahead

The Democratic Services Committee have a number of projects still to complete during the next Municipal Year, with the need to continue its momentum with the work of the diversity working group and to ensure that the recommendations agreed to date are implemented. In addition to this it will be important that these recommendations provide measurable outcomes, which the Committee will closely monitor.

The Committee welcome the phased roll out of the Webcasting arrangements across the Council Committee meeting calendar and will look to support both Members and Officers in this role out. It will be important that an incremental approach is taken forward and that we take forward arrangements that are most appropriate to each of the Committees. Consideration will need to be given to potential hybrid voting options and a trial of various voting options will need to be considered by the Committee. It will also be important that we ensure that the public are engaged in our hybrid meetings and the webcasting approach to promote the democracy agenda.

As a Committee we will trial the Members Portal and provide positive feedback to ensure the Portal does become a place that Members go to, to access and obtain information, engage in the democratic process and report problems on behalf of constituents. This 'one stop shop' will hopefully assist Members going forward.

In addition to the above it important that we continue to monitor Member's training, not only for this coming Municipal Year but that we as a Council are well equipped to support potential new candidates in the run up to the Elections and Elected Members following the Local Government Election. We need to make sure that we have done all that is possible to make any Member, newly elected or long standing, easier by providing them with the information and support necessary to equip them in undertaking the positive and rewarding role of a Councillor.

Appendix - Terms of Reference for the Democratic Services Committee

- Carry out the local authority's function of designating the Head of Democratic Services;
- Keep under review the provision of staff, accommodation and other resources made available to the Head of Democratic Services, in order to ensure that it is adequate for the responsibilities of the post;
- Make reports to the full Council in relation to these matters;
- The Democratic Services Committee may require Members and officers of the Council to attend before it to answer questions such Members and Officers having a duty to comply with but are not obliged to answer any questions which they would be entitled to refuse to answer in court proceedings in England and Wales. The Democratic Services Committee may invite other persons to attend meetings of the Committee;
- The Democratic Services Committee must meet at least once in every calendar year.
- The Chair of the Democratic Services Committee must secure that meetings are held in accordance with the requirements set out in these terms of reference;
- The Democratic Services Committee must consider any report or recommendation sent to its Members any report prepared by the Head of Democratic Services under Section 9(1)(h) of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 at a meeting held not more than three months after copies of the report are first sent to Members of the Committee;
- The Democratic Services Committee must as soon as practicable after it has prepared a report or made a recommendation under Section 11(1)(c) of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 arrange for a copy of it to be sent to each Member of the Council who is not a Member of the Committee;
- The Democratic Services Committee will have overall responsibility for deciding what should be regarded as reasonable training and development opportunities as part of its function of providing support to Members to carry out their functions. In addition to the list set out below, the Democratic Services Committee may add some policy areas for which training is considered essential, such as planning or licensing:
 - Induction
 - Role and functions of the Executive, the Council and its Officers
 - Overview and Scrutiny
 - Information Technology
 - Code of Conduct
 - The role of a Councillor as a local Member
 - Public Engagement
 - Equality and Diversity training
- The agreed training and development opportunities will be contained within a published development strategy; The WLGA's Charter for Member Support and Development ("the Charter") will be used for guidance purposes in maintaining the award of the "Advanced Charter";
- The Democratic Services Committee will propose the appropriate level of funding to be made available for the purchase of external training, should there be the case that the reasonable training and development needs of the Council cannot be met in-house.