

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, 1 September 2016

PRESENT: Councillor T. Davies (Chair)

Councillors:

W.T. Evans, H.I. Jones (In place of H.B. Shepardson) and D. Price

Also present:

Councillor L.M. Stephens, Executive Board Member for Human Resources, Efficiencies and Collaboration;

The following Officers were in attendance:

L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law;
G. Morgan, Democratic Services Manager;
M. Edwards, Corporate Learning & Development Advisor;
M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer.

Democratic Services Committee Room, County Hall, Carmarthen - 10.00 am - 10.45 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. D. James and H.B. Shepardson.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. MINUTES - 17TH MARCH 2016

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee held on the 17th March 2016 be signed as a correct record.

4. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT & INDUCTION 2016/17

The Committee considered a report which sought support to promote the uptake of Member Development 1-1 meetings to gain a clear picture of any development which needed to be addressed over the next 6-8 months. The Committee's views were also invited on the key questions which needed to be asked of members as part of a Councillor Induction Survey in order to inform the delivery of a comprehensive, informative and effective induction programme for 2017.

There was a general consensus that a further reminder should be sent to the Leaders of each Political Group emphasising the need to hold one to one meetings with their members in order to ascertain their training needs. The Head of Administration and Law commented that she and the Chief Executive regularly met with the Group Leaders and that she would raise the matter at the next meeting. It was agreed that reminders be sent to the Group Leaders by the Member Development Champion, Councillor W.T. Evans, and the Executive Board Member – Human Resources, Efficiencies and Collaboration.

With regard to the Councillor Induction Survey members welcomed the idea of mentoring for new members and it was considered each new member could be

mentored by both an officer and an experienced member. It was also suggested that the Induction programme should also provide members with an overview of planning matters with an emphasis on the importance of impartiality. Training in the conducting of interviews was also put forward as a suggested topic.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED

4.1 to endorse the above course of action relating to ascertaining the training needs of members;

4.2 the Head of Democratic Services be notified of any issues relating to training needs and Members induction.

5. REVIEWING THE COUNCIL'S ON-LINE INFORMATION UNDER COUNCIL & DEMOCRACY

The Committee was apprised of the information currently available on the Council and Democracy section of the corporate website, which now included a link to the revised Code of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members. In addition, over the next few months, information on 'How to be a Councillor' would be added in readiness for the local government elections in May 2017.

The Chair expressed disappointment over the low number of Members who had uploaded Annual Reports for 2015 and it was agreed that it would be useful to have details of the number of people who had viewed the reports.

In response to queries the Committee was informed that the new Forward Work Programme for the Executive Board would be uploaded onto the website shortly and that the issues of promoting public questions and facilitating on-line petitions were being addressed.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

CHAIR

DATE