

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

22 JULY 2019

Present: Councillor Jones-Pritchard (Chairperson)
Councillors Bowden, Goodway, Lay, McKerlich, Naughton,
Keith Parry, Sandrey and Wong.

1 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Burke-Davies, Goddard and Kelloway.

2 : APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR & COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

It was noted that the Council, at its annual meeting on 23 May 2019 appointed Councillor Mike Jones-Pritchard as Chairperson of this Committee and the following Members to this Committee:

Councillors Bowden, Burke-Davies, Goddard, Goodway, Jones–Pritchard, Kelloway, Lay, McKerlich, Naughton, Keith Parry, Sandrey and Wong.

3 : TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Council, at its annual meeting on 23 May 2019, agreed the following Terms of Reference:

- To carry out the local authority's function of designating the Head of Democratic Services.
- To keep under review the adequacy of provision of staff, accommodation and other resources made available to discharge the democratic services functions of the Authority.
- To make reports, at least annually, to the full Council in relation to these matters.

4 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations for interest for this meeting.

5 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

6 : LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT - OFFICE 365

The Chair welcomed Phil Bear, ICT Service Manager and David Butler, ICT Project Manager from Digital Services who were in attendance.

The Chair referred to the Head of Democratic Services report on Learning and Development Item 7, paragraph 10 pages, 27 and 28 and the roll out of Office 365 cloud-based software to the whole of the authority planned to be completed by April 2020.

The Head of Democratic Services detailed the work undertaken so far with an Office 365 pilot group of Elected Members and in particular to the technical issues encountered with Elected Members who have other roles with regional and national government. These matters required further investigation it was therefore not possible for these Members to participate in the initial pilot. The pilot would run in July and August to enable lessons learned to be resolved prior to the main roll out to Elected Members from September to December 2019.

Feedback was provided from Members involved in the initial briefings and were particularly affected by the dual role issue. Members reported on their experiences in managing their Office 365 account in multiple roles, using Office 365 on personal devices and in particular the ability to use the log on anywhere facility. The Council's offer seemed only to be based on the Council's own infrastructure and managed devices, and this did not mirror the security arrangements for regional and national government, and appeared to inhibit the way Elected Members work.

The ICT Service Manager referred to Council Acceptable Usage Policy, the authentication processes for users, security data for Elected Members as Data Controllers and processor and the importance of maintaining Council data security in accordance with national requirements. Elected Members using their own personal devices without Blackberry Works to process data was not in accord with the Council's policies.

The Head of Democratic Services confirmed that the pilot would be used to find workable solutions for Elected Members. He was keen that Members of this Committee also joined the pilot and confirmed that bespoke training would be arranged in small groups for Elected Members during the transition period. In addition, Members would be required to complete the E. Learning Cyber Security modules.

A Member referred to the role of an Elected Member as prescribed by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales and wellbeing concerns in relation to the accessibility of Members who through advances in technology are accessible 24/7 and 365 days of the year with continuous pressures to respond to queries immediately because of the requirements of instant messaging. The Chair recognised that the personal well-being and support to Elected Members was an important role of this committee and that sessions and information to support members would be provided in the early autumn.

The ICT Service Manager explained the cost benefits to the Council of the migration to Office 365 platform that was already in progress and the future implications for the Council.

RESOLVED – That

1. Councillors Bowden, Lay, McKerlich and Sandrey be included in the pilot project being taken forward in July and August;
2. The arrangements for Member sessions for the roll out of the project from September to December were noted;

3. All Elected Members be required to complete the Cyber Security Essential learning sessions in tandem with the roll out.

7 : ELECTED MEMBER ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

The Head of Democratic Services submitted the second tranche of Member Role Descriptions for consideration:

- Audit Committee Member
- Audit Committee Chair
- Standards and Ethics Member
- Standards & Ethics Chair

The role descriptions had been prepared in consultation with the Chairs and Members of the Audit and Standard and Ethics Committees and were recommended for adoption by the Committee and then Council.

A list of the other role descriptions to be completed were detailed in Appendix E to the report and the Head of Democratic Services requested an extension to the timeline for completion of the schedule from May 2020 to July 2020.

The Chair highlighted some amendments to the Audit and Standard and Ethics Committees role descriptions as propose, in particular removal of gender specific references and avoidance of duplication of details already in the Elected Member Role Description approved by Committee on 14 January 2019 (Min No 20).

A number of matters were raised including: -

- A separate role description for Independent Members appointed to Committees be produced;
- The requirement of a legal opinion on how individual Committee Member role descriptions are accountable to Full Council.
- The prescriptiveness of role descriptions and how Members will be held accountable, and to whom, as the role of a Councillor was not a job, but a commitment to serve the citizens of the City in a public office.
- Newly Elected Members role descriptions would be useful tool to set out what is expected of a member on a particular committee.

RESOLVED – That

1. the role descriptions for

- Audit Committee Member
- Audit Committee Chair
- Standards and Ethics Member
- Standards & Ethics Chair

be revised to include the amendments detailed by the Chair at the meeting.

2. The Head of Democratic Services seek legal advice on accountabilities described in the Committee Member Role Descriptions, in particular the accountability to Full Council;

3. Subject to recommendation 1 and 2 the Role Descriptions be submitted to Council for approval and adoption in accordance with the schedule.
4. A separate Role Description be prepared for Independent Members of Committees.
5. The schedule of other Role Descriptions under preparation was noted.
6. The change of the timescale of reporting all Role Descriptions to Full Council from May 2020 to July 2020 was noted.

8 : LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The report provided information on the Member Learning and Development programme and potential options for inclusion in the programme from September to December 2019.

The Council on 28 March 2019 approved the Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy and the Committee's Annual report from which a number of matters were identified for consideration by the Committee including Personal Safety and Security of Elected Members; Members Well-being and work life balance; Mentoring; personal development; and support in the use of Modern.Gov.

The Head of Democratic Services drew attention to the sessions held in the last 6 months and the level of attendance at each event. He reported that the sessions on the Elected Member Role as Corporate Parent had been deferred to coincide with the relaunch of Children's Services policies.

It had been agreed that Members sessions on Personal Safety and Security would be delivered in Party Group meetings and this had been offered to all Groups. All Members had also been invited to have a Personal Safety Risk Assessment with the Council's Security Manager. The outcomes of this assessment are feed back to the Member and Head of Democratic Services for any actions.

The Head of Democratic Services detailed the two options for the delivery of Charing Skills sessions for newly elected and potential future Committee Chair and deputies. In addition, he referred to the Welsh Government E-Learning module for Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence, which will be made available through the Council's e-learning portal, along with the Cyber Security E-Learning modules.

Following discussions with the Cardiff Academy Elected Members would be able to participate in the Welsh Language sessions provided for staff in the autumn.

The Committee was also advised that the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, Councillor Thorne had been approached by the Home Office to run events with all Elected Members on the Governments Prevent Strategy as well as workshops on identifying persons vulnerable to radicalisation.

Members commented on the report and the learning opportunities and discussed

- the Personal security and the assessment process. The Committee was keen to have feedback on how many Members felt that they were at risk and whether there was a pattern of issues emerging.
- Members who had received a security risk assessment commended the process as it provoke thought and understanding of potential risks and how to mitigate for them.
- It was noted that eleven Members had undertaken the assessment and four Members had been issued with the safety device connected with the response centre.
- Members discussed training needs assessments and how these would be undertaken and whether this was for political groups to complete with their Members or whether there was a formal process and how Independent Elected Members could receive an assessment. The Head of Democratic Services explained that the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 allows for each Member to have an annual review by a *suitably qualified person or persons* of their training and development needs. It was recognised that for all 75 Members to have an annual review, it would require a significant resource with capacity and the qualification to undertake these task. It was suggested that this matter be referred to Whips.
- Members also discussed arrangements for Mentoring and political party arrangements and whether there are gaps that need to be addressed. This was particularly important with new Councillors being elected mid-term. It was suggested that this matter be discussed with Group Whips.
- Members also manage their own personal development and accessing courses or resources outside of the Council often paid for by the individual.
- The timing and attendance at sessions was discussed particularly Essential sessions and what recourse there will be for Members who do not attend. It was agreed that Members required at least 4 to 6 weeks lead in time and that a range of times be offered for sessions. It was reported that sessions over the 'lunch' period and after 5.00pm were better attended than morning or mid-afternoon sessions.
- A Member queried why Leadership sessions were restricted to the limited offer available in Wales and whether the LGA or other bodies such as Warwick and Birmingham Universities ran relevant developmental courses.

The Head of Democratic Services sought approval from the Committee to undertake the all Member Annual Survey before December 2019. In order to analyse trends the majority of the survey questions would remain the same with some updating of the learning and development questions to relate to the current learning and development offer as the 2017 survey concentrated on feedback on the Member Induction.

RESOLVED – That

1. the programme of Member Learning and Development be prepared for September to December based on the following priorities:

(a) Chairing Skills

The WLGA be approached to provide a specific Chairing Skills Session for newly elected and potential chairs which can be supplemented by mentoring support and shadowing from current or experienced

Members who have proven Chairing skills.

- (b) Welsh Language
Cardiff Academy sessions be circulated to all Members as soon as the programme is available for September. For those Members unable to sign up to these sessions any alternative session such as Adult Learning be considered on a case by case basis.
 - (c) PREVENT Strategy
Further details of the PREVENT sessions be agreed in consultation with the Cabinet Member and lead officer for inclusion in the programme.
 - (d) Corporate Parenting
An Essential session on Members role and responsibilities as a Corporate Parent be schedule in conjunction with the policy relaunch.
 - (e) Follow up Essential Sessions be programmed for
 - Children's Rights in Practice Part 1 & Part 2
 - Corporate Safeguarding
 - (f) Cardiff Academy Essential E-Learning modules be made available to Elected Members to include
 - the Welsh Government E-Learning module for Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence;
 - Cyber Security Modules 1 to 3.
2. The Group Whips be requested to consider a consistent process for Elected Members annual learning and development assessments;
3. The provisioning of Mentoring for Elected Member be further discussed at Group Whips.

9 : DEMOCRATIC SERVICES - ACTIVITIES & SERVICE SUPPORT MATTERS

The Service report including information on performance since the last meeting 14 January 2019 was presented for information and feedback.

The report included data on the use by Members of the Members Enquiry System, and the number and methods of reporting. Clarification was given on the increase in volume of enquiries logged by officers. These figures included officers in Directorates as well as the Members Services support officers.

Members asked if cases could only be closed by the Member once they are satisfied with the response. Members were advised that cases can be re-opened or linked so that there is a case history and audit trail of response.

Members noted the additional Webcasting contracted hours and the proposed allocation that would include Cabinet meetings and 2 out of 5 most appropriate Audit Committee meetings. Members expressed concerns about webcasting of Audit Committee meetings as meetings regularly included exempt items.

The Committee was reminded that the deadline for Elected Member Annual reports was 31 July 2019. Four individual and two ward based reports had been received to date.

The Chair referred to the remit of this Committee to review the adequacy of resources available to discharge the democratic functions of the Council and in particular to support requirements for the roll out of Office 365. The Head of Democratic Services had also advise the Chair of additional demands on the service in the next quarter which involved moving over to the Sharepoint platform; updates and development of Modern.Gov and support to Education Appeals process. It was proposed that the Head of Democratic Services prepare a report for review by the Committee on the provision of resources.

RESOLVED – That

1. The activities and service report be noted and feedback from the Committee on the Members Enquiry system be included as part of an ongoing review of the system;
2. The Head of Democratic Services present a report to an additional meeting of the Committee to enable it the review the adequacy of resources as part of the 2020/21 budget process.

10 : FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee received and noted the proposed Work programme for 2019 – 2020, which would be updated to incorporate an additional meeting as requested by the Committee to review resources.

11 : URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

12 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED – That following discussions about work programming that

1. An additional meeting of the Committee be scheduled in the autumn to review resources for democratic services;
2. The scheduled meeting in January 2020 be altered to 13 January 2020 at 5.00pm to avoid a clash with the Group Whips and to allow for timely consideration of the Committee's Annual Report for submission to the January Council meeting.

The meeting terminated at 7.10 pm