

**SWYDDFA CABINET
CABINET OFFICE**

Our Ref: DDA/AT/GN

Dyddiad/Date: 20/09/2016



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Dear Councillor Clark,

**CABINET RESPONSE: DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE TASK GROUP
ON MEMBER SUPPORT SERVICES**

Thank you and the Democratic Services Committee for undertaking this important Task Group on Member Support Services.

The findings and recommendations are constructive and can be used alongside the finds of the Member Survey 2016 and further work by the Cabinet on benchmarking and review of support to Members.

Set out below is the response to the recommendations from the Task Group and the progress on implementation:

- (1) The Director Governance and Legal Services submit a growth bid for 2016/17 to fund a permanent Member Support Assistant post and no reduction in services to Members be made to the Committee & Member Services budget.

Response: - A growth bid was received and considered as part of the budget setting process for 2016/17 and ratified by Full Council at its Budget meeting on 25 February 2016. The growth bid regularised the temporary position in relation to the Member Support Assistant role.

- (2) The Constitution Committee undertake a review of the number and frequency of meetings; the effectiveness and purpose of Council meetings; and the remits of the committees to see if there is scope to combine roles or revise terms of reference to avoid duplication.

Response: The Constitution Committee at its last meeting agreed to undertake benchmarking of Council meeting procedures and agenda management. The recommendation from the Task Group will form part of the consideration of the Council meeting review which will be taken forward with the new Director of Governance and Legal Services after she takes up her post in September 2016.

- (3) The Elected Members Handbook May 2012 be reviewed and updated to make clearer the services available to Members and delete provisions that have already been removed such as the dictation service. That this provision be subject to the permanent support arrangement as identified in Recommendation (1) above.



Response: The Organisational Development Governance and Performance Programme has Members Support and Induction 2017 as the lead project and as part of the preparation for the new Member Induction a refresh of the Members Handbook will be completed in conjunction with key stakeholders including the Democratic Services Committee.

- (4) The Democratic Services Committee receive a report from the Director Governance and Legal Services on the Welsh Government consultation on the draft second Local Government Wales Bill and provide their comments to input into the consultation process in particular to highlight concerns on the restrictive nature of the requirements and the need for direct consultation with Members by Welsh Government on the future proposals.

Response: - the response from the Democratic Services Committee was submitted as part of the consultation process, and the views expressed mirrored closely the Council's own response.

- (5) The Committee and Members Services Manager in preparation for the next Municipal Year considers how the provision of the helpful information formerly in the Members Yearbook can be made available in an economical format to Members if the consensus of Members is that this would be a valuable tool that they wish to re-introduce.

Response - as part of outcomes from the Members Survey 2014 and in identifying efficiency savings for 2015/16 the budget for the Member Yearbook was removed. Key information that use to be available in the Yearbook is available electronically.

- (6) The Director Governance and Legal Services submit a bid for 2016/17 to reinstate an appropriate budget for the provision of hot drinks facilities at a minimal cost in the County and City Hall Members rooms, and that the Committee & Members Services Manager negotiate a base cost for this provision with Cardiff Catering.

Response - a review of provision and discussions have been had with Cardiff Catering to allow for a provision in the Members Business offices to be maintained in particular for Members working out of hours where there is no other facility available.

- (7) Cardiff Catering is requested to ask the vending service provider to provide more healthy and less sugary food in its facilities.

Response - current Cardiff Catering vending services do provide a variety of healthy and Fairtrade products. The provision of further products will be reviewed as part of the contract review.

- (8) The list of suggestions made by Members for improved support is taken on board as part of the provision of the permanent support arrangement as identified in Recommendation (1) above. These include other areas that could be managed and developed to support Members in the future which would require a level of staff resources: -

Response – work is ongoing as part of the review of the Members webpages and the Members On-line Library Service (MOLIS) to ensure as much information as possible is available on line.

Members will be aware that the Committee Management System introduced in 2015 continues to be developed and progress has been made on ensuring that scrutiny Chair's letters and Cabinet responses are linked directly to the relevant meeting. This has been implemented for 2016/17 Municipal Year as business as usual.

Kind regards,



Councillor Dan De'Ath
Cabinet Member Skills, Safety and Engagement

