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## REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

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### REVIEW OF KEY DOCUMENTS

#### Reason for this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Democratic Services Committee of the key documents which will be used in the development of the Elected Member Induction Programme following the Local Government Elections in 2022.
2. The Committee is requested to recommend these documents to Council for approval and adoption.

#### Background

##### Role of the Democratic Services Committee

3. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, Part 1, Chapter 2, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/4/part/1/chapter/2> requires local authorities to appoint a Democratic Services Committee to oversee the Democratic Services functions of the Council, ensure that the work is adequately resourced and report to the full Council accordingly. The Democratic Services functions include Members' Services, Committee Services and Scrutiny Services, but not Cabinet Support Services.

#### Issues

##### Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy.

4. In March 2019, Council approved the Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy as recommended by the Democratic Services Committee. In January 2020 the Committee considered a proposal for the categorisation and prioritisation of learning activities and to approve the implementation of an appropriate pilot process until the full review of the Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy was undertaken.
5. No further changes have been identified for the Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy. The revised Strategy V2.0 has been attached at **Appendix A** for consideration and agreement of the Committee.
6. The Committee is requested to recommend the revised strategy to Council for approval.

## Elected Member Role Descriptions

7. On 14 January 2019 the Democratic Services Committee considered the following role descriptions and agreed that they be submitted in due course to Council for approval:
  - Elected Member.
  - Democratic Services Committee Member.
  - Democratic Services Chair.
  - Scrutiny Committee Member.
  - Scrutiny Committee Chair.
8. Development of the remaining role descriptions were not sufficiently progressed for consideration by the Committee or for approval. The role descriptions have not been updated to reflect the changes necessary to reflect the Local Government & Election (Wales) Act.
9. To ensure that any potential candidates or returning Elected Members are provided with a consistent understanding of the roles they will be undertaking when they are elected as a councillor or to which they may be appointed by Council, it is recommended that the WLGA role descriptions updated for 2021 be adopted by Council. A copy of the WLGA Role Descriptions for 2021 is attached at **Appendix B**. This document has been updated to reflect the introduction of the Governance & Audit Committee and includes a new role description for a Political Group Leader.
10. These generic role descriptions can then be updated during the 2022-27 administration to better reflect the roles of Elected Members in Cardiff. The previously updated role descriptions will be used as reference for the tailored Cardiff role descriptions that will be developed during the next administration.

## Member Mentoring Scheme

11. Elected Members in Cardiff are provided with a range of essential support and development activities, but these cannot always cater for some of their individual and immediate needs. Mentoring is an approach to development which can meet these needs with the support of experienced Elected Members.
12. In 2012, the Chair of the Democratic Services Committee wrote to all Elected Members to seek support from experienced Members from all political parties to act as mentors, and to seek interest from mentees. The Democratic Services Committee supported a cross party Mentoring Scheme, and this was to be reflected in the matching process. Elected Members were to be asked to state whether they would wish to be a mentor or a mentee and if they had a preferred partner.
13. No further information is documented or held by the Democratic Services Team regarding any mentoring arrangements that were undertaken although Mentoring was included in the Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy for development during this administration.
14. It is understood that the Elected Members currently undertake informal mentoring arrangements where newly elected or other members discuss issues with each other, member to member or have informal discussions with appropriate officers who provide

suitable advice. It is anticipated that with a suitably trained number of Member Mentors this may then become a more formalised arrangement.

15. The role of the trained Member Mentors will provide opportunities to help the newly Elected Members to “grow” quickly into their role and will assist in developing their skills, knowledge, understanding and behaviour. The newly Elected Members could be for those:
  - a. Members elected for the first time as a Councillor in 2022.
  - b. Members re-elected as a Councillor in 2022 with a break in their service.
  - c. Members elected as a Councillor between the 2022 and 2027 elections.
  - d. Members elected following the 2027 Elections if the mentor retains their seat on the Council.
16. The Head of Democratic Services will also train as Member Mentor to enable those Independent Members who may not have easy access to another Elected Member Mentor to be mentored. This is not an ideal situation but is considered as a fall-back position if necessary.
17. Training can be provided by the WLGA in early in 2022 to ensure that there are sufficient mentors available immediately after the election when the mentors are able to provide the greatest benefit. The training will follow the WLGA Guidance for Member Mentors as attached at **Appendix C**.
18. Following the training, each political group will be able to offer their new members a mentor to support them if they so wish. It has been previously identified that initial meetings between mentors and mentees were held weekly but as time progressed the meetings became less frequent until it was mutually determined that after approximately one year no further meetings were required. However, mentors and mentees may continue their relationship and provide a familiar source of advice and guidance even after the formal mentoring has ceased.
19. Therefore it is proposed that the WLGA guidance for Member Mentoring be adopted as the basis to provide member mentors following the Local Government Elections in 2022.

### **Financial Implications**

20. Any expenditure for the providing of Member Development activities will be met from the Member Development Budget.

### **Legal Implications**

21. Under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, Part 1, the Democratic Services Committee is responsible for overseeing the democratic services functions of the Council, ensuring this work is adequately resourced; and reporting to full Council accordingly.
22. The Democratic Services functions (which must be discharged by the Head of Democratic Services) are defined as follows:

- (a) to provide support and advice: to the authority in relation to its meetings; to committees of the authority and the members of those committees; to any joint committee which a local authority is responsible for organising and the members of that committee; in relation to the functions of the authority's scrutiny committees, to members of the authority, members of the executive and officers; to each member of the authority in carrying out the role of member of the authority (but excluding a member's role as an Executive member);
- (b) to promote the role of the authority's Scrutiny Committees;
- (c) to make reports and recommendations to Council in respect of the number and grades of staff required to discharge democratic services functions and the appointment, organisation and proper management of those staff; and
- (d) any other functions prescribed by the Welsh Ministers.

23. In determining how to exercise its functions, the Committee must have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers: <https://gov.wales/local-government-measure-2011-guidance> (chapter 3)

The information set out in the body of this report and its appendices provides the framework for the development of the Member Induction Programme 2022, intended to ensure Members receive the support and advice required to effectively discharge their roles.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

24. The Committee is requested to consider the detail in the report and to:
- a. Recommend the approval and adoption by Council of the revised Elected Member Learning and Development Strategy V2.0 (Appendix A).
  - b. Recommend the approval and adoption by Council of the WLGA Role Descriptions (Appendix B) for use in the 2022 induction programme (to be updated in due course to better reflect the roles undertaken by Councillors in Cardiff in the new administration period).
  - c. Adopt the WLGA guidance for Member Mentoring (Appendix C) as the basis to provide member mentors following the Local Government Elections in 2022.

**GARY JONES**  
**HEAD of DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**  
**13 July 2021**

Appendix A - Elected Member Learning & Development Strategy 2019-22 (Revised) V2.0  
Appendix B - WLGA Framework Member Role Descriptions and Person Specifications  
Appendix C – WLGA Guidance for Member Mentors

Background Papers: None