
REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES – ACTIVITIES & SERVICE SUPPORT

Reason for this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Democratic Services Committee on the performance of the Council's Democratic Services since the last meeting 13 November 2023.

Background

Role of the Democratic Services Committee

2. 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

Member Development Activities

3. The following Member development activities are being planned:

- a. Member Development - School Admissions and Appeals

This session will update Members prior to the opening of the School Admission Appeals window on 1st March and provide "An opportunity to refresh and update Elected Member's on School admissions and appeals processes and procedures to help support any constituent enquiries. A short presentation will be followed by a Q&A. This session will provide an understanding of how admissions are processed in accordance with the Admission Policy and Admission Code"

The session will be held on MS Teams on Thursday 22 February 2024 starting at 17:00 and lasting approximately one hour.

This session is categorised as follows:

Requirement	Newly Elected Members	Experienced Members	Committee Members	Executive Members / Chairpersons/ Group Spokesperson
Auditors, Inspectors & Regulators, Corporate Policy	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended

b. Member Development - Special Procedures (Cosmetic Procedures)

This session will explain the intention to introduce a licensing scheme for people that carry out many cosmetic procedures e.g. tattooists, acupuncturists, body modification etc. The new regime will result in some applications/individuals being considered by the Public Protection Committee to determine whether they should be licensed. This is a change from the current situation whereby these procedures are mostly covered by a registration scheme rather than a licence, so there is no mechanism to consider whether somebody is safe or suitable. Although this is primarily for members of the Public Protection Committee it is likely to be useful for all members.

The session will be held on MS Teams but we are still waiting for confirmation of dates which are likely to be in February.

This session is categorised as follows:

Requirement	Newly Elected Members	Experienced Members	Committee Members	Executive Members / Chairpersons/ Group Spokesperson
Committee Specific	Beneficial	Useful	Recommended	Useful

c. WLGA Essentials: Risk Management for Councillors

The WLGA's Improvement Programme is offering Governance and Audit Committee members the opportunity to attend a training session on Risk Management in local government. The aim of these sessions is to provide an overview of risk management, its importance to corporate governance and the successful delivery of corporate objectives. It will also highlight some of the critical success factors of an organizational risk management approach. In consideration of the time available, and the nature of the audience, the session content will be kept mainly at a higher level. Each session will draw on the UK Government Orange Book and a number of best practice guides plus some practical examples to bring the subject to life.

Although this is primarily for members of the Public Protection Committee it is likely to be useful for all members.

This session is categorised as follows:

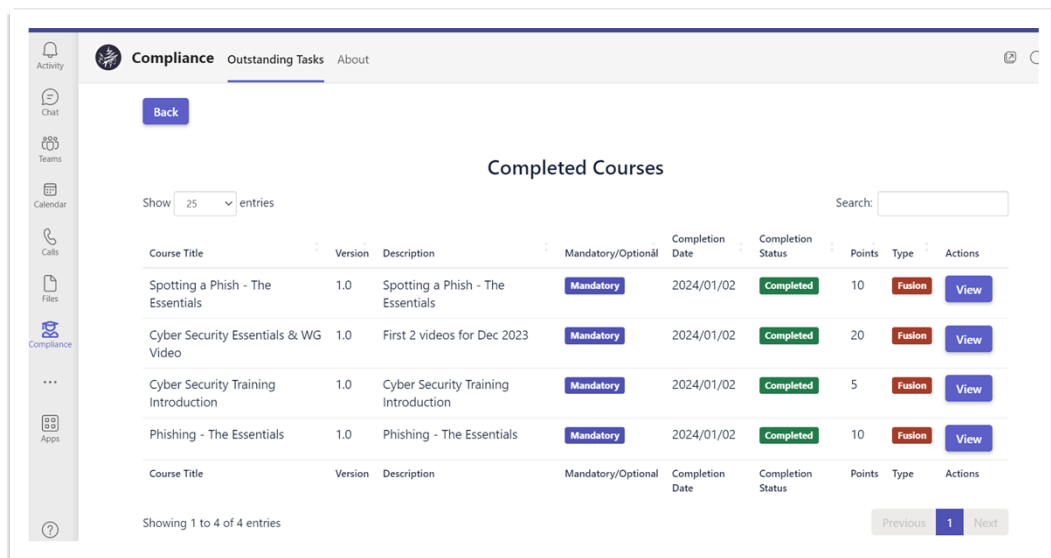
Requirement	Newly Elected Members	Experienced Members	Committee Members	Executive Members / Chairpersons/ Group Spokesperson
Committee Specific	Beneficial	Useful	Recommended	Useful

4. The following Member Development session have been provided:

Date	Topic	Attendance	Percentage attendance
10 Jan 24	Member Development - Hate Crime	12	15.19%
01 Feb 24	Member Development – Major Project Finance and Delivery	TBC	TBC

5. Cyber Security Training – MS Teams Compliance

At the end of 2023, all Cardiff Council ICT users were provided with Cybersecurity training using MS Teams micro videos. These short sessions were mandatory for employees but were optional for Elected, Independent and Co-opted Members. Members can access the compliance tab on MS Teams to confirm if they have completed any or all of these modules. The collation of this compliance data is being undertaken and is hoped to be reported to the next meeting of the committee.



6. Member Induction – Mandatory Training

The following Mandatory modules from the Member Induction Programme have been completed by all Elected Members:

- What Councillors need to know including the Member’s Code of Conduct
- Information Governance and Data Protection
- Safeguarding

- Corporate Parenting
- Supporting Equality in Cardiff's Diverse Communities

7. Member Enquiry System (MES) Refresher training

The Member Services Team have been providing individual refresher training to Members in the use of the MES. An email was sent to all Members to determine if a collective session would be beneficial for Members. Responses were positive about the individual refresher Training that had been provided and the general consensus was to continue with individual refresher training.

Financial Implications

8. Any costs from Democratic Services activities and services support are to be monitored and contained within the respective funding sources and budgets.

Legal Implications

9. 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.
10. 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.
11. In determining how to exercise its functions, the Committee must have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers: Statutory and non-statutory guidance on democracy within principal councils: governance and scrutiny [HTML] | GOV.WALES, (specifically, the updated Democratic Services Committees Statutory Guidance within Part 4 of the consolidated guidance on democracy within principal councils.)
12. The information set out in the body of this report enables the Democratic Services Committee to oversee the work of democratic services, ensure the work is adequately resourced and report to full Council, as appropriate.

13. Other relevant legal provisions are referred to in the body of the report.

RECOMMENDATION

14. The Democratic Services Committee is requested to note the information set out in the report.

GARY JONES
HEAD of DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
30 January 2024

Background Papers: None