Report

Democratic Services Committee

Part 1

Date: 14 February 2019

Item: 7

Subject **Councillor Support – Development of Online Toolkit**

Purpose The purpose of this report is to outline potential developments and support that could be offered to Members via the Council's intranet page, through the creation of a 'Members Area' on the intranet. This report seeks to establish in principle for an online toolkit to be developed, and consider an outline of the proposed content.

Author Democracy and Communications Manager

Ward All Wards

Summary This report seeks to improve the support to Members through the development of an online toolkit for Members on the Council's intranet page.

Proposal The Committee is asked to consider and comment upon the proposal to set up an online toolkit, and outline of the proposed content.

Action by Democracy and Communications Manager and Scrutiny and Governance Manager

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Head of Finance
- Head of Law and Regulation
- Head of People and Business Change

Signed

Background

1.1 The Democratic Services Committee terms of reference outline the role of the Committee in reviewing the provision of support to Councillors to support them in carrying out their roles as Members. This report seeks to improve the support to Members through the development of an online toolkit for Members on the Council's intranet page.

1.2 Training material, forms and guides are all available to Members at present through hard copy only on request. Developing what is provided online will mean there is a central source of information that is quicker and easier to keep up to date. It also means that Councillors have access to a wider range to tools, guides and information that will support their development.

Current provision

There is currently basic information contained within the 'Democratic Process' section of the intranet which may be of use to Members. This includes:

- Contact information for the Democracy and Communications Team.
- Presentations from some Member Seminars and training sessions.
- Contact information of all Councillors.

Suggested Developments

- Development of the current section into a more comprehensive 'Members Area' on the intranet, with more detail on where / how to direct Member queries with Key contact information

	• Code of Conduct;
	• Declaration of interest guidance and links
IT Support	• Office user guides including Outlook, Word and Skype;
	• Contact details of digital champions for support;
	• Updates from the customer centre;
	• SRS support – information on how to log a call, and troubleshooting guides;
	• Out of office guide and template wording
Support to Councillors – Ward Work	• This could be developed with Councillors to cover frequently asked questions and other information to support Councillors in the ward work;
	• Ward meetings guide – support structure for ward meetings including who does what
Training / Seminars	• Schedule of All Member seminars – to be develop for 6 months.
	• Set dates up and create a schedule managed by the Scrutiny and Governance Team.
	• Presentations and briefing information seminars and access to past training material.
Online training tools	Links to online training providers and e learning modules that may be of interest to Members and support them in their roles. This could include

	those provided specifically to Councillors via the [All Wales Academy](#), including: • Social Media; • Data Protection; • The Effective Ward Councillor; • Ethics and Standards; • Chairing Meetings; • Introduction to Scrutiny.
Forms	• Form online to submit requests for All Member seminars. Training needs assessment – option to request additional sessions or additional topics; • Parking permits; • Declarations of interest update forms; • Hospitality and gifts declaration forms

Committee Specific Pages:

Planning Committee	• Planning guidance, • planning protocol, processes • Code of practice, • Training specific to Planning Committee Members such as Section 106, Induction for new planning members. House in Multiple Occupation.
Standards Committee	• Member code of conduct; • Member officer protocol; • Role of Standards Committee.
Audit Committee	• Terms Reference Committees, • Work programme; • Treasury management training.
Licensing Committee	• Code of practice for the three Licensing Committees (Licensing Committee, Licensing Sub Committee and Taxi Panel) • Committee specific training / briefing notes issued.
Scrutiny Committee	The online toolkit could also include a Scrutiny specific section to provide more specific support to Members in their Scrutiny role. This content could be developed with the Scrutiny Committees and the Scrutiny Chairs to ensure it covers support for all Members. This could include: • Links to Online training • CFPS Guides • Forms – Topic referral form

	• Process – How Members can request the Committees consider items, forward plans. • Welsh Assembly Guidance – for example [Scrutiny of the PSB Guidance](#)
Social Services Rota Visits	• Schedule of visits undertaken; • Template of the form; • Outline of the process; • Training material for undertaking visits.

Financial Summary

The development of an online toolkit would be met from existing resources within the Scrutiny and Governance Team.

Risks

There are no specific risks associated with developing these proposals. It is hoped that providing better and more accessible information to Members will help to support Members more effectively in carrying out their varied roles.

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

This relates to the Corporate Plan aim of Modernised Council, providing a better digital portal for Member information.

Proposal

The Committee is asked to consider and comment upon the proposal to set up an online toolkit, and outline of the proposed content.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer
To follow.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the report. In accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, the Council is required to provide elected members with sufficient support to enable them to effectively discharge their functions and carry out their duties as elected members. The proposed on-line toolkit will provide members with easier access to a wider range of relevant information and documents.

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

This report outlines proposals for the development of the Council's intranet pages, to provide better support for Members. This can be considered as part of a wider approach to better digitally equip Members.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The development of online support for Members will assist and support members in undertaking their roles and responsibilities under the act.

The training material to support Members will be more accessible and support Member development.

Background Papers
None.

Dated: 7 February 2019