

## CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

## DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

4<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2014

**REPORT BY:** Democratic Services Committee Chair and Head of Democratic Services

**SUBJECT:** Members' Annual reports, security of information and appointments to outside organisations guidance

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**REPORT FOR:** Decision

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### 1. Introduction

1.1 The report is on behalf of the Member Development Working Group [MDWG].

### 2. Members' Annual Reports

2.1 Part 1 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 contains provisions intended to strengthen local democracy. Section 5 requires local authorities to ensure that all elected members are able to make an annual report on their council activities for the previous year. Any reports produced by members must be published by that council.

2.2 The first Annual Reports were written for the period 2012-2013. Reports were written by 31 Members and these were published on their individual page on the Council's website. For those Member who did not write a report a note was placed on their page stating the following:- "Councillors, if they wish, can write Annual Reports. This Councillor has not written a report for the period 2012 – 2013."

2.3 The MDWG at its meeting in June 2014 discussed whether details of Committee membership, attendance and details of training should be published for all Members, even where individual reports, on constituency activities, are not written.

2.4 The Working Group considered that this basic information should be readily available to the public to ensure equal access to such information. It was also felt that on seeing this information more Councillors could be encouraged to complete a report.

### 3. Security of information

3.1 At the Member Development Working Group [MDWG] in February, 2014 concerns were raised about the open access to the Members' Lounge and the potential for information in the Members' pigeon holes being lost. The loss of confidential information could potentially result in a costly security breach for the Authority. The Group asked that:

- i. Consideration should be given to putting secure doors on the Members' Lounge.

- ii. The Confidential Waste Bin in the Members' Lounge should be moved to the Members' Support Unit.
  - iii. The Members' pigeon holes should be moved to the Members' Support Unit.
- 3.2 On making enquiries it was noted that all of these actions could be done but there were budgetary implications. The secure door access would be in the region of £2k per door. If a secure door system was to be introduced it would need to be agreed which doors were secured, just the door from Reception or all the doors into the Members' Lounge.
- 3.3 The MDWG in June noted the potential costs of installing secure doors. However, after further consideration it felt that if the confidential waste bin and the Members' pigeon holes were moved to the Members' Support Unit there was no need to have the expense of secure doors. The estimated cost for the relocation of the pigeon holes is £200. At a time of budget constraints it was considered this was the most cost effective option.

#### **4. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES GUIDANCE**

- 4.1 The MDWG has developed the attached guidance "Appointments to outside bodies: specific information relating to Powys County Council" [Appendix A]. This guidance is supported by information produced by the Welsh Local Government Association [WLGA].
- 4.2 The guidance, with the WLGA information, will be distributed to Members and will form part of the New Members Induction Pack.
- 4.3 The Working Group is currently reviewing the range of organisations to which Members are appointed and information will be sought from Members regarding their appointments.

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
<b>That the Democratic Services Committee agrees that details of Committee membership, attendance and details of training should be published for all Members, even where individual reports, on constituency activities, are not written.</b>	<b>To ensure that the public can access basic information about the work of their local councillors.</b>
<b>That the Democratic Services Committee approves the relocation of the Members' pigeon holes and the confidential waste bin from the Members' Lounge to the Members' Support Unit.</b>	<b>To increase the security of confidential information. To reduce the risk of confidential security breaches. To increase security with limited expense.</b>
<b>That the Democratic Services Committee approves the guidance "Appointments to outside bodies: specific information relating to Powys County Council."</b>	<b>To support members' in their roles on outside bodies</b>

<b>Person(s) To Action Decision:</b>	<b>Wyn Richards, Head of Democratic Services</b>		
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Actioned:</b>	<b>June, 2014</b>		
<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>			
<b>Within Policy:</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Within Budget:</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Contact Officer Name:</b>	<b>Tel:</b>	<b>Fax:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
Wyn Richards Head of Democratic Services	01597 826375	01597 826220	wyn.richards@powys.gov.uk

### **Appointments to Outside Bodies: specific information relating to Powys County Council**

#### **1. Introduction**

In addition to your involvement in the Council, you may also be formally appointed by the Council as it's representative on a variety of organisations [see 2 below]. Such organisations include statutory authorities, charities, partnerships, community organisations and Local Education Authority [LEA] school governors. Service on such outside bodies is an established part of a Member's role. You will be able to use your knowledge and skills as a Councillor to assist the organisation.

In addition to the above you may be invited to become a member of a local organisation in your ward because you are the local Councillor [see 5 below].

This document provides information specific to Powys County Council and is supported by further information produced by the Welsh Local Government Association [WLGA]:

- Leaflet for Members Appointments to Outside Bodies: The Councillor's Role
- Members' Toolkit - Appointments to Outside Bodies: The Councillors' Roles - General Guidance & Potential Pitfalls and Conflicts

The above documents are available on the Members Portal [*Page information to be added*].

#### **2. Appointment**

The Council, Executive and Shire Committees have the role of agreeing appointments of Members to a range of organisations. These formal appointments are made at the Council's Annual General Meetings [AGMs], at the first Shire AGMs after an election or at other meetings as required. You should discuss the reason for your appointment with the relevant officer in the Council and with the outside body. Information about such appointments is included in the Council's Constitution Part 9.

Some appointments to organisations will require you to become a trustee or director. In such cases you will have a specific role in this organisation and you should ensure that you understand your role. Further information for trustees and directors is given in

When you have been appointed you will need to ensure details of your appointment are included on the Register of Interests of individual Councillors kept by the Council's Monitoring Officer. Throughout your term of office as a Councillor you should ensure that this record is kept up to date.

The organisation to which you are appointed may undertake a DBS [Disclosure and Barring Service] check after your formal appointment.

#### **3. Reporting back**

The Council has agreed that where Members are formally appointed to represent the Council they should report on the work of the organisation to the Council, Executive or Shire Committees as appropriate. The Member feedback form [Appendix 1] can be used by Members to report back to Shire Committees. [Note: there is no requirement for LEA school governors to report back to Council].

When making either written or verbal reports you should also ensure that these do not breach the organisation's or the Members' Code of Conduct or confidentiality rules.

As part of the reporting back process the Council can review representation if for example you are not considered to be undertaking your role appropriately or if it considers that representation is no longer required.

#### **4. Allowances, insurances and indemnities**

The Council has authorised attendance at meetings of outside bodies, where a formal appointment has been made, as an approved duty for members. Where you undertake such duties you can claim travelling and/or subsistence allowances. However, some organisations may pay allowances in accordance with their own rules. If this is the case, you must not claim any from the Council.

Some organisations will have insurances/indemnities which will cover the actions of its membership. If these are not available the Council's indemnity will cover you when you are acting on behalf of the Council.

#### **5. Membership of organisations in your ward as a result of being a councillor**

There will be many organisations in your ward in which previous Councillors have had an interest and in some cases participated in their committees. In such circumstances, it is for you as a new Councillor to decide whether and how you relate to such organisations. If you participate in any committees you will do so as the ward councillor and not as a representative of the Council, as no formal appointment has been made by the Council. You should not purport to act as the Council's representative on an outside body unless a formal appointment by the Council has been made.

Councillors participating in organisations in this way however, must still comply with the Code of Conduct of that organisation, if it has one or comply with the Members' Code of Conduct. There is no requirement to report back to Council on the activity of such organisations.

## POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL

## REPORT TO THE SHIRE

Name of Member	
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Name of Outside Body	
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Date[s] and time[s] of meeting[s]	
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Venue of meeting[s]	
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**Nature of Representation (please tick all that apply)**

PCC representative or substitute	
Director/Trustee or other role	

**Main agenda items considered at the meeting[s]:**

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**At the meeting[s], were there any implications for the Council in terms of:**

Services provided by the Council	YES / NO
Funding/grants	YES / NO
County Council policies (please state policy areas)	YES / NO
Other	YES / NO

**If Yes please give details**

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**Dates of future meetings:**

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Please return this form to Shire Committee Clerk, Democratic Services as soon as possible after the meeting.

**Please note:**

**The information provided in this form will be made available to other Members in the Members Information Bulletin.**