

<b><u>BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL</u></b>	
<b>Report To</b>	<b>The Chair and Members the Democratic Services Committee</b>
<b>Report Subject</b>	<b>Annual Reports for Members – Proposed Arrangements</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Bernadette Elias, Head of Policy &amp; Performance (designated Head of Democratic Services)</b>
<b>Report Date</b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup> February, 2018</b>
<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Corporate Services &amp; Strategy</b>
<b>Executive Portfolio</b>	<b>Corporate Services</b>
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>29<sup>th</sup> March, 2018</b>
<b>Date signed off by Monitoring Officer</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Date signed off by Section 151 Officer</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Date signed off by Chair</b>	<b>14<sup>th</sup> March 2018</b>
<b>Key words</b>	<b>Members Annual Reports</b>

## **Report Information Summary**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to present the proposed arrangements to support the production of the Annual Reports of Members for comment prior to recommendation to Council.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Scope of the Report</b>
2.1	The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires Local Authorities to make arrangements to enable its Members to produce annual reports on activities undertaken in the previous Council year. This means that it must advise its Members how and by when to do this.
2.2	The purpose of completing Annual Reports is to help improve local people's understanding of what their Local Councillor does and the important role they undertake.
2.3	The adoption of a standard format and guidance enables the Authority to support its Members in the development of these Annual Reports.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Contribution to the National Well-Being Goals – Detail attached as Appendix 1</b>
3.1	Providing appropriate support and guidance for Members in the development and publication of Annual Reports will ensure they can provide details of their effective and valuable contribution made within their roles to the communities.
<b>4.</b>	<b>Recommendation(s) / Endorsement by other groups, e.g. CLT/Committees/Other groups</b>
4.1	The Council adopted the current format for Annual Reports at its meeting on 10 <sup>th</sup> October, 2013 and this received further endorsement by Council on 7 <sup>th</sup> May, 2014.
4.2	It is, therefore, an opportune time to reconsider these arrangements in order to ensure that both new and returning Members are satisfied with the level of support on offer.
<b>5.</b>	<b>Recommendation/s for Consideration</b>
5.1	It is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee considers the options set out in paragraph 6 of the main report and recommend the preferred option to Council for approval.

Why this topic is a priority for the Council?						
Single Integrated Plan (SIP)	Council's Well-being Objectives	Performance Management Improvement Framework (PMIF)	Operating Model	Transforming Blaenau Gwent (TBG Programme)	Relevant legislation	Other (please state)
	X		X	X	Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011	Member Development Strategy

Reporting Pathway							
Directorate Management Team (DMT)	Corporate Management Team (CLT)	Audit	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny	Executive	Council	Other (please state)
	20.03.2018		29 <sup>th</sup> March, 2018			24.5.18	

## **Main Report**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Background and Context</b>
1.1	Section 5 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure requires local authorities to ensure that all their elected members are able to prepare an annual report on their council activities during the previous year. This includes enabling any Member of the Council's Executive to be able to report their executive activities also. The Council has responsibility for publishing the reports.
1.2	The Councillor's Annual Report is a mechanism for improving communication between Councillors and the local electorate and it helps to improve local people's knowledge and understanding of what their local councillor does, and the important role they undertake should they wish to take advantage of it.
1.3	The Council has achieved Level 1 of the WLGA's Charter for Development and Support, as part of this award there is also a requirement that the Authority makes arrangements for all Members to be able to publish their annual reports and that they are provided with relevant support and guidance.
1.4	The Council adopted the current format for Annual Reports at its meeting on 10 <sup>th</sup> October, 2013. This format for Annual Reports was considered by the Members Services Network Group which comprises representatives of the 22 authorities in Wales including representatives from the Welsh Local Government Association and a largely common approach was adopted across Wales.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Performance Evidence and Information</b>
2.1	The number of Annual Reports completed by Members nationally is monitored by Welsh Government on an annual basis.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Risk Implications</b>
3.1	There is a risk of non-compliance with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 if appropriate arrangements to facilitate the Annual Reports for Members are not in place.

<b>4.</b>	<b>Financial Implications</b>
4.1	There is a financial implication associated with the cost of translation (in line with the Council's Welsh Language Scheme) of approximately £1,200 (based on 42 reports being received).
<b>5.</b>	<b>Staffing/Workforce Development Implications</b>
5.1	Staff from within the Democratic Services Team will continue to support the development and publication of Annual Reports for Members.
<b>6.</b>	<b>Options for Consideration</b>
6.1	<p>Option 1 – To consider the proposed arrangements for the production of Annual Reports for Members and recommends to Council that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Annual Report format (Appendix 2) and process be agreed and implemented; and</li> <li>• The proposed timelines for the 2017/2018 Annual Reports be approved, namely:-           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A short Member Information Session will be held on <b>Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2018</b> to provide information, guidance and advice to Members in relation to completion of these templates.</li> <li>- Annual Report templates to be issued to Members by <b>Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2018.</b></li> <li>- Completed templates to be <i>electronically (where possible)</i> returned by <b>Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2018.</b></li> <li>- Annual Reports to be published on the Council's website by the end of August 2018.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6.2	Option 2 – To not agree the proposed arrangements for the production of Annual Reports for Members.
6.3	It is obligatory for senior salary holders to complete an Annual Report.
<b>7.</b>	<b>Impact Assessment Against Proposals / Options</b>
7.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Thinking for the long term</b></li> </ul> <p>Following the implementation of the arrangements and information session, Members should feel better able and have</p>

	<p>increased confidence to communicate information on their roles to the constituents. It will also help to ensure that a consistent approach is adopted by all Members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Taking a preventative approach</b>          The arrangements and information session will also help to implement legislative requirements and remove any adverse reputational damage to the Authority that could be caused by the non-compliance with the requirements of The Measure. Members should also fully understand where they can go to for further information and/or support.</li> <li>• <b>Taking an integrated approach/Collaboration/Involvement</b>          Officers have consulted on the guidance with the Welsh Local Government Association and other local authorities. Internally, the work has been taken forward with Democratic Services.</li> </ul>
7.2	<p><b>Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)</b>          There is no anticipated negative impact on the protected characteristics.</p>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
8.1	<p>The introduction of Annual Reports for Members aims to help improve local people’s understanding of what their Local Councillor does and the role they undertake. This approach resonates with elements proposed within the Welsh Government white paper on reforming Local Government and it is, therefore, likely to remain a pertinent issue for Local Authorities and Members.</p>

Assess how well your project / activity will result in multiple benefits for our communities and contribute to the national well-being goals.		
Description of the Well-being goals	How will your project / activity deliver benefits to our communities under the national well-being goals?	Is there anyway to maximise the benefits or minimise any negative impacts to our communities (and the contribution to the national well-being goals)?
<p><b>A prosperous Wales</b>            An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.</p>		
<p><b>A resilient Wales</b>            A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).</p>		
<p><b>A healthier Wales</b>            A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.</p>		

Description of the Well-being goals	How will your project / activity deliver benefits to our communities under the national well-being goals?	Is there anyway to maximise the benefits or minimise any negative impacts to our communities (and the contribution to the national well-being goals)?
<p><b>A more equal Wales</b> A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic background and circumstances).</p>		
<p><b>A Wales of cohesive communities</b> Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.</p>		
<p><b>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language</b> A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.</p>		
<p><b>A globally responsible Wales</b> A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.</p>	<p>Providing appropriate support and guidance for Members in the development and publication of Annual Reports will ensure they can provide details of their effective and valuable contribution made within their roles to the communities.</p>	