



Democratic Services

Team Plan 2015/16

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Service Plan: Resources
Date signed off: 28/05/2015
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Team Overview – Democratic Services

The Democratic Services team undertakes a number of key roles for the Council. The team provides The Democratic Services Division comprises three distinct service elements:

- Democratic and Scrutiny Services
- Registration Service
- Freedom of Information / Record Management / Land Charges.

The Team's broad functions are:

- **Provision of a range of services relating to the Council's decision-making processes**
- **Provision of advice, guidance and support to develop the Council's Scrutiny and Committee Services functions and to ensure that decision-making is transparent and accessible**
- **Provision of advice in respect of the Council's Constitution, Codes of Conduct and Register of Interests to elected Members, all Directorates and to Town and Community Councils**
- **Provision of a wide range of Scrutiny support, including undertaking Task and Finish Reviews, co-ordination of Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes, preparation of the Annual Reports to Council, development of guidance notes and protocols and implementation of Scrutiny Action Plans**
- **Reviewing / delivering / facilitating the Council's Member Development Strategy and Member Development Programme, including training in respect of the Council's Scrutiny function and other areas relating to the Council's governance arrangements**
- **Responsibility for servicing independent bodies such as School Admissions Panels and the Vale of Glamorgan Local Access Forum**

- **Registrations of Births, Deaths, Still-births, Marriage, Civil Partnerships, Conversions and Citizenships**
- **Issuing of copy certificates for all of the above type registrations.**
- **Taking the legal notice of Marriages or Civil Partnerships**
- **Recording and maintaining records of all religious marriages**
- **Provision of Tell Us Once service**

- **Nationality Checking Service**
 - **Carrying out of Celebratory Services, e.g. Renewal of Vows, Naming Ceremonies**

 - **Dealing with Access to Information requests**
 - **Provision of corporate Records Management service**
 - **Provision of Land Charges service**
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Our Contribution to Service Plan priorities 2014/15

Our contribution to the Service Plan priorities last year (including Corporate Plan priorities):

- During 2014, we successfully introduced live webcasting of the Planning Committee. The new webcasting service enables members of the public to see how the Committee makes decisions and watch the debates in which their views are represented. (CL6)
- We also introduced a new protocol that enables members of the public to register their interest to speak at the Planning Committees. This new protocol was agreed by Council in December 2014 and was implemented for Planning Committees from 1st February 2015.
- We agreed a new Charter with Town and Community Councils which has helped to further develop and improve working relationships between the Council and Town and Community Councils (CL7)
- The Registration Service continues to receive high customer satisfaction levels. A satisfaction level of 100% was achieved. Returned survey forms, which included the question "How satisfied were you with the overall level of service provided by the Register Office?" resulted in 96.02% of respondents indicating "Very Satisfied" and 3.08% indicating "Satisfied".
- Work has continued on the drawing up (for consideration by Full Council in 2015) of a revised Council Constitution.

Our Team Plan 2015/16

Service Outcome 1:		Residents are confident in accessing our services and are engaged with their local community.						
Objective 2:		To deliver seamless services to our customers, by working in partnership and engaging our residents in decision-making and service improvement.						
Ref.	During 2015-16 we plan to:	Success Criteria/ Outcomes we'll achieve from this action are:	High, Medium or Low priority	Officer responsible for achieving this action	Start date	Finish date	How will the work be resourced?	Progress
RS/A098	Implement the Scrutiny Action Plan arising from the WAO Scrutiny Improvement Study.	We strengthen our Scrutiny function to reflect good practice and increase public engagement in the Scrutiny process.	High	Jeff Wyatt	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	0.25 FTE over the year.	For future monitoring of Plan.
	Arrange, and deliver, a workshop for Scrutiny Committee Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen and Cabinet Members.	Draft Action Plan further refined to reflect outcomes of workshop prior to formal consideration / approval.	High	Jeff Rees / Karen Bowen / Gareth Davies	01/04/2015	31/07/2015	Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A98 – 0.25 FTE over the year.	
	Clarify role and purpose of Cabinet Members contributing to scrutiny.	Consistent practices and protocols in place which clarify and “formalise” roles, responsibilities and relationships.	High	Jeff Rees	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A98 – 0.25 FTE over the year.	
	Clarify Officers’	Consistent practices	High	Jeff Rees	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	Total resource (for	

	contribution to scrutiny.	and protocols in place which clarify and “formalise” roles, responsibilities and relationships.					all actions related to RS/A98 – 0.25 FTE over the year.	
	Expand Member Development and training opportunities	Member Development Programme reflects, as far as practical, outcome of any Member Personal Development Interviews undertaken and of a Training Needs Analysis.	Medium	Jeff Wyatt / Jeff Rees	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A98 – 0.25 FTE over the year.	
	Be more outcome-focussed and ensure that the method of scrutiny is best suited to the topic area and the outcome desired.	Arrangements and criteria for pre-Cabinet scrutiny are clear and documented and Scrutiny Committee agendas are relevant and “fit for purpose”.	Medium	Jeff Rees / Karen Bowen / Chris Hope / Gareth Davies	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A98 – 0.25 FTE over the year.	
	Align scrutiny programmes with the council’s performance management, self-evaluation and improvement arrangements.	Scrutiny ensures that its work programmes are aligned with the Council’s arrangements	Medium	Jeff Wyatt/ Jeff Rees / Karen Bowen/ Chris Hope / Gareth Davies	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A98 – 0.25 FTE over the year.	
	Review alignment of Scrutiny Committees’ work programmes with the work of audit, inspection and regulatory bodies.	Scrutiny draws effectively on the work of audit, inspection and regulation and its activities are complementary with	High	Jeff Rees / Karen Bowen/ Chris Hope/ Gareth Davies	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A98 – 0.25 FTE over the year.	

		the work of external review bodies.						
	Review performance reporting in the context of it complementing the work of external review bodies.	Performance reporting is relevant focused and timely	Medium	Jeff Rees	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A98 – 0.25 FTE over the year.	
	Review existing decision-tracking mechanism regarding performance in order to quantify and evidence success.	Effective decision-tracking is in place.	Medium	Jeff Rees/ Karen Bowen/ Chris Hope/ Gareth Davies	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A98 – 0.25 FTE over the year.	
	Undertake annual self-evaluation of scrutiny.	Protocols and procedures remain updated, take account of the “Outcomes and Characteristics of Effective Local Government Overview and Scrutiny and reflect findings of self-evaluation exercise.	Medium	Jeff Rees / Karen Bowen / Chris Hope / Gareth Davies	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A98 – 0.25 FTE over the year.	
	Raise awareness of the Council’s adoption of the 10 Principles for Public Engagement.	Raised Member / Officer awareness of Principles.	Medium	Gareth Davies	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A98 – 0.25 FTE over the year.	
RS/A089	Submit to Council for consideration a draft revised Council Constitution.	Council’s Constitution reflects the new Welsh Model version and	High	Jeff Wyatt	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	0.25FTE over the year.	

		provides for new requirements arising out of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and associated legislation. Council's decision making processes enable increased public participation.						
	Submit final draft revised Constitution to Model Constitution Working Party.	Draft Constitution to be submitted Council is informed by Working part's consideration / input over a series of meetings.	High	Jeff Wyatt	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	0.25FTE over the year.	
RS/A038 (CP/CL6)	Develop and introduce protocols to increase public engagement and participation in the Council's meetings.	Increased opportunities for public speaking and involvement at Scrutiny and Planning Committee meetings and improved content on the website.	High	Jeff Wyatt	01/04/2015	30/06/2015	0.25 FTE over 3 months.	For future monitoring of Plan.
	Draw up for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Resources) / Cabinet / Council as appropriate a draft protocol for Public Speaking at Scrutiny	Consistent procedures developed and documented.	High	Jeff Wyatt / Jeff Rees / Karen Bowen / Chris Hope / Gareth Davies	01/04/2015	30/09/2015	Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A038 (CP/CL6) – 0.25 FTE over 3 months.	

	Committees.							
	Introduce formal provision for public speaking at the Council's Scrutiny Committees.	Increased public engagement and participation in the Scrutiny process.	High	Jeff Rees / Karen Bowen / Chris Hope / Gareth Davies	01/04/2015	30/09/2015	Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A038 (CP/CL6) - 0.25 FTE over 3 months.	
RS/A099 (CP/CL4)	Implement joint Scrutiny arrangements for the regionalisation of Regulatory Services.	Effective joint Scrutiny of Regulatory Services is in place.	High	Jeff Wyatt	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	0.25 FTE over the year.	For future monitoring of Plan.
	Facilitate meetings with Scrutiny Officers of constituent Authorities to develop framework for joint scrutiny arrangements.	Arrangements for joint scrutiny are developed and agreed by constituent Authorities.	High	Jeff Rees	01/04/2015	31/12/2015	0.25 FTE over the year (see above for RS/A099(CP/CL4))	

Service Outcome 2		The Vale community benefits from the Council's sound and transparent decision-making through effective management of resources.						
Objective 3		To optimise our resources, exercise robust financial management and provide effective relevant services and facilities.						
Ref.	During 2015-16 we plan to:	Success Criteria/ Outcomes we'll achieve from this action are:	High, Medium or Low priority	Officer responsible for achieving this action	Start date	Finish date	How will the work be resourced?	Progress
RS/A105	Undertake a training needs analysis to inform the production of a Member Development Programme.	A Member Development Programme is developed that is tailored to Members' identified needs.	Medium	Jeff Wyatt	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	0.1 FTE over the year.	For future monitoring of Plan.
	Develop and circulate to Members a Training Needs Analysis Form.	Specific development needs are identified by individual Members.	Medium	Jeff Wyatt / Jeff Rees	01/04/2015	31/07/2015	Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A105 - 0.1 FTE over 3 months.	
	Draw up for consideration by the Democratic Services Committee a draft Member Development Programme.	A Member Development Programme is developed that is tailored to Members' identified needs.	Medium	Jeff Wyatt / Jeff Rees	01/04/2015		Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A105 - 0.1 FTE over 3 months.	
	Facilitate delivery of an ongoing Member Development Programme.	A Member Development Programme is developed that is tailored to Members' identified needs.	Medium	Jeff Wyatt / Jeff Rees	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	Total resource (for all actions related to RS/A105 - 0.1 FTE over 3 months.	

RS/A110 (IO1)	Begin work on the corporate projects work stream to consider a corporate response to demand management, effectiveness of spend, working with Town and Community Councils and income generation.	We identify and deliver cash savings to support delivery of the reshaping services agenda and facilitate new ways of working.	High	Huw Isaac	01/04/2015	31/03/2016	Project team will support delivery of individual projects made up of 12 officers Directorates will contributing officer time/support sponsored by the Chief Officer of each Directorate.	For future Monitoring of Plan.
	Project manage scoping of Town and Community Councils work stream to progress opportunities as well as build capacity to support new ways of working	We identify and deliver cash savings to support delivery of the reshaping services agenda and facilitate new ways of working.	High	Karen Bowen / Louise Mills	01/04/2015	31/03/16	Karen Bowen is Project Manager	
New Action	Review service delivery points for Registration Service.	Serviced delivery maintained to standards required by New Governance, whilst contributing to identified required savings for the Division.	High	Jeff Wyatt / Tania Carter	01/04/2015	30/09/2015	Within existing resources.	For future monitoring of Plan.

	Explore scope for additional income generation (to include reviewing existing non-statutory charges and current arrangements in respect of Register Office ceremony room provision.	Serviced delivery maintained to standards required by New Governance, whilst contributing to identified required savings for the Division.	High	Tania Carter	01/04/2015	30/09/2015	Within existing resources.	For future monitoring of Plan.
New Action	Review existing office accommodation, storage provision, anticipated future requirements and investigate scope for scanning of documentation.	In accordance with Space Project (Phase 2) office accommodation and storage requirements reviewed and rationalised.	High	Jeff Wyatt / Jeff Rees / Tania Carter / Tim Cousins	01/04/2015	30/09/2015	Within existing resources.	For future monitoring of Plan.