

Meeting of:	<b>Democratic Services Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Monday, 12 July 2021</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Corporate Performance and Resources
Report Title:	Draft Candidate & Elected Member Handbook (2022 Edition).
Purpose of Report:	To seek Member approval of the draft Candidate & Elected Member Handbook (2022 Edition) content ahead of publication as part of the 2022 Local Government Election Nomination Process and the Council's ongoing Member Development Programme.
Report Owner:	Head of Democratic Services
Responsible Officer:	Jeff Rees, Head of Democratic Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services.
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision.
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <p>A Candidate &amp; Elected Member Handbook is an important information resource as it enables all Election Candidates whom eventually become Elected Members to quickly become familiar with how the Council works, support available to them, the rules and procedures under which the Council operates and the complexities of the Elected Member role.</p> <p>The next Local Government Election is scheduled for 5th May 2022 with the deadline for Candidate Nominations expected to be on or around Thursday 7th April 2022. This will be confirmed by the Electoral Commission later this year.</p>	

## **Recommendations**

1. T H A T the draft Candidate & Elected Member Handbook (2022 Edition), attached as Appendix A to the report, be endorsed.
2. T H A T subject to any proposed amendments from the Committee being made beforehand, the draft Candidate & Elected Member Handbook (2022 Edition) be referred to Cabinet for approval.
3. T H A T the Candidate & Elected Member Handbook (2022 Edition) be made available to all Local Government Election 2022 Candidates by the Head of Democratic Services, following the deadline for Candidate Nominations, as set by the Electoral Commission.
4. T H A T an electronic copy of the Candidate & Elected Member Handbook (2022 Edition) be uploaded to the Council's Website, Member Committee Hub, Member Desktop 'How-To' Folder and MemberNet Homepage following the 2022 Local Government Election.
5. T H A T the Head of Democratic Services be authorised, in consultation with the Chairman of the Democratic Services Committee, to make amendments to the Handbook content relating to typographical amendments or to reflect changes relating to keeping policy and/or the Council's Constitution up to date.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

1. To facilitate the approval and subsequent publication of a 2022 Edition Candidate & Elected Member Handbook as part of the 2022 Local Government Election Nomination Process and the Council's ongoing Member Development Programme.
2. As per reason 1 above.
3. To manage Election Candidate expectations of the Elected Member role and ensure that Elected Members have important information available to them prior to their first day in office.
4. The Candidate & Elected Member Handbook (2022 Edition) is readily available to all Elected Members whenever required during their term in office.
6. To ensure that the Handbook content continues to develop over the period prior to publication and remains accurate.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The functions of the Head of Democratic Services are set out in the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011 and relate particularly (but not exclusively) to the provision of advice and support to Elected Members.

- 1.2** A Candidate & Elected Member Handbook is an important information resource as it enables all Election Candidates whom eventually become Elected Members to quickly become familiar with how the Council works, support available to them, the rules and procedures under which the Council operates and the complexities of the Elected Member role.
- 1.3** The Candidate & Elected Member Handbook (2022 Edition) has been collated by Democratic Services Officers who provide front line support to all Elected Members and have in-depth knowledge of day-to-day member support needs.
- 1.4** Progress to date, for collating the Handbook, has been monitored under the Audit Wales (formerly Wales Audit Office) Action Plan in response to the 2018 Audit Wales "Overview and Scrutiny Fit for the Future?" review as monitored by the Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen Group.
- 1.5** A supporting Project Brief (Appendix B) and Project Timeline (Appendix C) have been produced by the Democratic Services Team.
- 1.6** On 11th March, 2020, the Scrutiny Committee Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen Group was presented with a draft table of contents for the Handbook. The Group subsequently decided that the draft table of contents be shared with all Elected Members for their input. The draft list was subsequently emailed to all Elected Members following the meeting with no further comments being received.
- 1.7** The Candidate & Elected Member Handbook will also be published against the background of the Council's Corporate Plan 2020 - 2025 to ensure that Members are qualified to contribute to the Council's vision of 'Working together for a brighter future,' via the five ways of working and four well-being objectives:
  - To work with and our communities;
  - To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth;
  - To support people at home and in their community; and
  - To respect, enhance and enjoy our environment.

## **2. Key Issues for Consideration**

- 2.1** The next Local Government Election is scheduled for 5th May, 2022 with the deadline for Candidate Nominations expected to be on or around Thursday, 7th April, 2022. This will be confirmed by the Electoral Commission later this year.
- 2.2** In preparation for the last local election held in 2017, the Head of Democratic Services wrote to all Candidates to inform them of the Council's Member Development Programme should they be elected. It is proposed that the Handbook be shared as part of this process in 2022.
- 2.3** For the 2017 Local Government Election there were 159 Candidates nominated. To minimise printing costs, it is proposed that the Handbook be published on the Council's Public Website and Candidates directed to the appropriate webpage as part of the letter sent from the Head of Democratic Services. Candidates will also be offered an electronic copy via email on request.

- 2.4** The Handbook has been written taking in to account information available via the following sources:
- Vale of Glamorgan Constitution;
  - Vale of Glamorgan Public Website;
  - Vale of Glamorgan StaffNet (MemberNet);
  - Vale of Glamorgan Cabinet and Scrutiny Roles & Responsibilities Protocol
  - Vale of Glamorgan 2017 Member Development Training Materials
  - Vale of Glamorgan Member Schedule of Remuneration
  - Vale of Glamorgan ICT Code of Conduct
  - Vale of Glamorgan GDPR Privacy Notice
  - Vale of Glamorgan Care First Service
  - Vale of Glamorgan Member Surveys
  - Vale of Glamorgan Member Personal Development Reviews (PDRs)
  - Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer Knowledge / Discussions with Members
  - IRPW: February 2021 Annual Report
  - WLGA Council: Diversity in Democracy 2021 Report
  - WLGA Social Media A Guide for Councillors
  - Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and associated guidance
  - Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and associated guidance; and
  - WLGA Member Competency Framework 2021.
- 2.5** The Handbook sits under the Vale of Glamorgan Member Development Strategy and alongside the 2022 Member Induction & Development Programme as considered as separate items on the same agenda.

### **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

- 3.1** The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act sets out a duty for the Council to ensure the Sustainable Development Principle underpins all of the work undertaken by the Authority. Requiring us to demonstrate how decisions are formulated, taken and scrutinised via five ways of working, the Act underpins the Council's Corporate Plan. The approach to developing the Handbook is collaborative and involving and the contents of the Act will be used to inform the development of information within the Handbook over the coming years.

### **4. Resources and Legal Considerations**

#### **Financial**

- 4.1** Cost of producing hard copies for Elected Members on request will be met within the existing budget.

#### **Employment**

- 4.2** The main implication will be in terms of officer time.

## **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 4.3** Member support and development is a requirement of the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011.

## **5. Background Papers**

[Local Government \(Wales\) Measure 2011 and associated guidance documents.](#)

Appendix A - Candidate & Elected Member Handbook (2022 Edition):  
Contents List, Chapter Content and Glossary.

Appendix B - Candidate & Elected Member Handbook (2022 Edition):  
Project Brief.

Appendix C - Candidate & Elected Member Handbook (2022 Edition):  
Project Timeline.

# Candidate & Elected Member Handbook

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## Democratic & Scrutiny Services

Hello

Thank you for taking an interest in our Candidate & Elected Member Handbook.

Local Government Elected Members are entitled to Corporate Support in line with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Democratic & Scrutiny Services Division exists to provide such support.

Democratic & Scrutiny Services forms part of the Managing Director and Resources Directorate within the Council. The Division comprises distinct service elements:

- Democratic and Scrutiny Services
- Registration Service
- Freedom of Information / Record Management / Land Charges/Commons Registration Authority/Data Governance; and
- Cabinet and Mayoral functions.

It is responsible for developing and supporting effective decision-making processes, the Council's scrutiny function and committee arrangements as well as independently administering the school appeals service, providing advice and support for elected Members, that includes the Council's Constitution, Members' Code of Conduct and Member Development and supporting the cabinet and mayoral functions.

It is recognised that the majority of information shared with Elected Members is also relevant and of interest to Election Candidates, so the information contained within this handbook has been written with both Election Candidates and already Elected Members in mind.

We hope that the information contained herein provides you as the reader with a realistic idea of the Elected Member role and the support processes in place for Elected Members to meet their responsibilities.

This Handbook also helps to prepare Elected Members for the Council's Corporate Member Induction & Development Programme that will commence immediately after their election.

We would be very grateful if you could keep the following points in mind when reading the Handbook:

- An independent Consultant is currently undertaking a piece of work which may impact on the Officer Structure and will definitely result in the change in the Managing Director's job designation from Managing Director to Chief Executive which is a requirement of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (Section 54) which takes effect on 5 May 2022;
- A revised model Constitution is being worked on as part of an All-Wales Monitoring Officer initiative and it is proposed that the final draft will be available by October 2021 so that individual Councils have an opportunity to

consider and adapt to reflect local circumstances.

If you have any questions, at any time, please do not hesitate to get in touch:

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## Term of Office

The next Local Government Election is scheduled for May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Individuals who are elected at this time will ordinarily remain in office for a 5-year term until such time that another Local Government Election is held (in 2027) or they resign from their post.

At the start of their 5-year term as part of the Member Induction Event, each Elected Member (Councillor) will be asked to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and undertake to abide by the Members' Code of Conduct in the presence of the Managing Director of the Council; currently Mr Rob Thomas.

The declaration states that an individual will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties of their office according to the best of their judgement and ability as well as observe the Vale of Glamorgan Members Code of Conduct (see section 3).

An Elected Member is a public official and therefore the Council has a duty to publish contact information and any interests (see page \*\*\*) the Councillor may have. These details are available on the council's public website:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Council-Structure/councillors/Councillors.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/councillors/Councillors.aspx)

## The Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting (formally known as the Annual General Meeting – AGM) marks the start of each municipal year.

In a year when there is an ordinary election of Councillors, the Annual Meeting will take place within twenty-one days of the retirement of the outgoing Councillors. In any other year, the Annual Meeting will take place in March, April, or May.

The Annual Meeting will be the first meeting with the Full Council (all 54 Councillors) present.

If physically present in the Council Chamber, Councillors will have an allocated seat and microphone and will be grouped within their political party. They will be asked to declare themselves as present during the roll call at the start of the meeting by briefly standing when the Managing Director calls their name. If the Councillor attends the Full Council Meeting remotely, they will be asked to verbally state they are present and participate in line with the Council Procedure Rules for Virtual Meetings.

Councillors are also required to declare any personal interests (see page \*\*) and the nature of the same, whether the personal interest equates to a prejudicial interest and whether the Councillor has a dispensation to speak or speak and vote.

Agenda items for the meeting are centred around setting individual roles, committee memberships and future Full Council meeting dates so it is an important meeting to set out the municipal year ahead. An example of the agenda can be found here:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Council-Structure/minutes,\\_agendas\\_and\\_reports/agendas/annual\\_meeting/19-05-20.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/minutes,_agendas_and_reports/agendas/annual_meeting/19-05-20.aspx)

The outgoing Mayor will open and chair the meeting until handing over to the newly elected Mayor during proceedings.

There are certain processes and rules that members abide by during Full Council meetings and these are known as Standing Orders. These are set out in section four of the Council's Constitution:

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/June-2018/Section-4.pdf>

A 'Rules of Debate' training session will be offered to all Elected Members as part of the Member Induction & Development Programme (see page \*\*).

## Councillor Job Roles

The Council is comprised of fifty-four Councillors elected ordinarily every five years.

Each Councillor is democratically accountable to the residents of their electoral division (ward) as well as all of those who live in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The overriding duty of Councillors is to the whole community, but they have a special duty to their constituents, including those that did not vote for them.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 includes provisions which will contribute to diversity in local government democracy. These are:

- Entitlement to Job sharing for Cabinet Members and Committee Chairs.  
***[ADD NOTE HERE FOR ANY DECISIONS MADE AS PER ACT ACTION PLAN].***
- A duty on political group leaders to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members of their group.  
***[ADD NOTE HERE FOR ANY DECISIONS MADE AS PER ACT ACTION PLAN].***

As well as being a Local Ward Member, Elected Members may also have other roles as part of wider council functions:

### The Mayor

The Mayor must be an Elected Member of the Council. They are elected into office at the Annual Meeting of the Council in May and their year of office runs to May of the following year.

The Mayor or Mayoress wear their chains of office when they attend functions on behalf of the Council.

The procedural role of the Mayor is to preside over the principal meetings of the Council that are held at least five times a year. If he/she is not present at any meeting of the Council, then the Deputy Mayor has to preside. The duties of the Mayor at Council meetings are set out in the Local Government Act 1972 and include the requirement to use a second or casting vote when necessary.

The Mayor also has a ceremonial role where he/she acts as an ambassador for the Council.

## **The Leader**

The Leader is the political head of the Council and also the Leader of the majority political group(s).

The Leader remains in office until:

- he/she resigns from the office;
- he/she is suspended from being a Councillor under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 (although he/she may resume office at the end of the period of suspension);
- he/she is no longer a Councillor;
- the next local government election. The Council may remove the Leader from office at an earlier date, but only in the event of a vote of no confidence in the Leader or a change in political control of the Council.

The Leader's primary role is to steer the policies of the ruling Group through the Council.

The Leader appoints the Deputy Leader and the Executive (Cabinet) at the Annual Meeting. With them, the Leader agrees the Council's Forward Plan which sets out when decisions are to be made by Cabinet.

## **Chair or Vice-Chair of Committees, Groups and Panels**

The role of every Chairperson is to provide confident and effective management of meetings to facilitate inclusivity, participation, and clear decision-making.

The various Job Descriptions and Person Specifications can be found in Section 24 of the Council's Constitution:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/June-2018/Section-24.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/June-2018/Section-24.pdf)

## **Member Champions**

Member Champions exist to provide a voice for traditionally underrepresented groups, or issues which need to be kept at the forefront of Council business, although they may not be the responsibility of any individual or committee.

Member Champions are Councillors who, in addition to their other Council responsibilities, make sure that the issue or group that they are championing are considered when Council policy is being developed and decisions are made.

The current list of Member Champions can be found on the Council's website:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Annual%20Meeting/2021/Executive-Arrangements.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Annual%20Meeting/2021/Executive-Arrangements.pdf)

### **Outside Bodies & Organisations**

Councillors also represent the Council at meetings of outside bodies and organisations. Councillors are appointed as representative at the Annual Meeting of the Council and remain in post until the next Annual Meeting.

Partnership working is a key ethos for the Vale of Glamorgan Council as a whole and therefore Councillor Representatives play an important role.

The current Councillor Representative list can be found on the Council's website:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Annual%20Meeting/2021/Quasi-Judicial-Committees-Supplementary-Information.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Annual%20Meeting/2021/Quasi-Judicial-Committees-Supplementary-Information.pdf)

### **Political Group Leaders**

Political Group Leaders are nominated by and accountable to their political group. They provide political leadership for their group and act as a political figurehead and spokesperson for their group.

They provide leadership in the constructive challenge of the Council's policies by providing strong, clear leadership in the co-ordination of alternative policies, strategies, and service delivery.

## Councillor Role Description & Person Specification

### **Elected Member Role Description**

An Elected Member (Councillor) is accountable to:

- The Full Council.
- To the electorate of their ward; and
- To the electorate of the Vale of Glamorgan as a whole.

A Councillor's purpose is to represent and support communities:

- To represent ward interests.
- To be an advocate for the Council in the ward and communities they serve.
- To be a channel of communication to the community on Council strategies, policies, services, and procedures.
- To represent individual constituents and local organisations, undertaking casework on their behalf and serving all fairly and equally.
- To liaise with Executive (Cabinet) Members, other Council Members, Council Officers, and partner organisations to ensure that the needs of the local communities are identified, understood, and supported; and
- To promote tolerance and cohesion in local communities.

Councillors also make decisions and oversee the Council's performance:

- To participate in Full Council meetings, reaching and making informed and balanced decisions, and overseeing performance.
- To participate in informed and balanced decision-making on committees and panels to which they might be appointed.
- To adhere to the principles of democracy and collective responsibility in decision-making.
- To promote and ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of Council and other public services.

Councillors are representatives of the Council:

- On local outside bodies as an appointee of the Council.
- To represent the Council on local partnership bodies, promoting common interest and co-operation for mutual gain.
- To represent and be an advocate for the Council on national bodies and at national events.

It is essential that Councillors have regard to Internal Governance, Ethical Standards and Relationships:

- To promote and support good governance of the Council and its affairs.
- To provide community leadership and promote active citizenship.

- To promote and support open and transparent government.
- To support, and adhere to respectful, appropriate, and effective relationships with employees of the Council.
- To adhere to the Members' Code of Conduct, the Member/Officer Protocol, and the highest standards of behaviour in public office.

**A Councillor never stops learning and takes responsibility for their Personal and Role Development:**

- To participate in opportunities for Member Development provided for Members by the Authority.

A Councillor must be committed to the following values and principles of the Council which govern the conduct of Members of the Council:

- Selflessness.
- Honesty.
- Integrity and propriety.
- Duty to uphold the law.
- Stewardship.
- Objectivity in decision-making.
- Equality and respect.
- Openness.
- Accountability.
- Leadership.

**Elected Member Person Specification**

To fulfil their role as laid out above, an effective Councillor requires the following:

To represent and support communities:

- Good advocacy skills.
- Interpersonal skills.
- Integrity and the ability to set aside own views and act impartially.
- The ability to present relevant and well-reasoned arguments.
- Good communication skills.

When making decisions and overseeing Council performance:

- Knowledge and understanding of meetings law, rules, and conventions.
- An understanding of strategic, policy and service contexts for decisions.
- The ability to challenge ideas and contribute positively to policy development.

When representing the Council:

- Good public speaking skills.
- Good presentation skills.
- The ability to persuade others and act with integrity.

To maintain high levels of Internal Governance, Ethical Standards and Relationships:

- An understanding of the roles of Officers, Members, and different agencies.
- Respect for, and desire to work with, different groups and individuals.
- Have knowledge and understanding of the Code of Conduct and Member/ Officer Protocol.
- A knowledge and commitment to the values of the Council.

To manage their own Personal and Role Development:

- An ability to assess personal and role development needs.
- Desire and skills to participate in development.

The Vale of Glamorgan has a Diversity in Democracy Declaration that was adopted **[ADD DATE AS APPROPRIATE]**. The declaration sets out the Council's public commitment to improving diversity in democracy, demonstrating an open and welcoming culture to all whilst promoting the highest standards of behaviour and conduct. A copy of the declaration can be found here: **[ADD HYPERLINK ONCE CONFIRMED]**.

## Constitution

The Vale of Glamorgan Council Constitution provides an important means of enabling councillors, officers, citizens, and stakeholders to understand how the Council makes decisions and who is responsible for those decisions.

It describes the various bodies that make up the Council, their functions, membership, and procedural rules so it is quite a lengthy document.

The purpose of the Constitution is to:

- Enable the Council to provide clear leadership to the Community in partnership with citizens, businesses, and other organisations.
- Support the active involvement of citizens in the process of local authority decision-making.
- Help Councillors represent their constituents more effectively.
- Enable decisions to be taken efficiently and effectively.
- Create a powerful and effective means of holding decision-makers to public account.
- Ensure that no one will scrutinise a decision in which they are directly involved.
- Ensure that those responsible for decision-making are clearly identifiable to local people and that they explain the reasons for decisions; and
- Provide a means of improving the delivery of services to the community.

A hard copy of the Constitution is available for inspection at Council Offices and an electronic version is published on the Council's Website:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Council-Constitution.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Constitution.aspx)

Once an Elected Member has signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office, they will be provided with an electronic copy of the Constitution by the Democratic & Scrutiny Services Team on behalf of the Council's Monitoring Officer; currently Mrs Debbie Marles. The full Constitution will be available to Councillors via the offline 'How To Guides' folder on their Council desktop (see page \*\*).

The Monitoring Officer has tried to make the Constitution as clear and as easy as possible to understand. Inevitably, people will have different views about what certain passages mean but Democratic Services Officers are available to discuss and advise on the Constitution as necessary (see contact details on page \*\*\*).

***[ADD NOTE ONCE DEVELOPED - relating to the provision of a Constitution guide which Welsh M.O.s are working on the development of as part of wider work on the LG&E (Wales) Act].***

## Full Council

The Vale of Glamorgan Council has 54 Elected Members (Councillors), each representing an electoral division, or ward.

Therefore, Full Council is a formal meeting of all Councillors.

The Full Council is required by law to take certain important decisions, including setting the Council's budget and Council Tax and approving a number of key plans and strategies, which together form the Council's Policy Framework.

Other examples of Full Council business are:

- Adopting and changing the Council's Constitution.
- Appointing and removing the Leader in accordance with Standing Orders.
- Agreeing and / or amending the terms of reference for Committees, deciding on their composition, and making appointments to them.
- Changing the name of the area or conferring the title of freedom of the County Borough; and
- All matters which by law must be reserved to the Council e.g. appointing the various Committees Chairmen and Vice Chairmen.

It is the responsibility of the Mayor to preside over meetings of the Full Council so that its business can be carried out fairly and efficiently and with regard to the rights of Councillors and the interests of the Community.

The Mayor, as Chairman, ensures that the Council meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community and the place that Councillors, who are not on the Executive, are able to hold the Executive and Committee Chairmen to account.

During Full Council Meetings, Councillors are subject to certain rules of procedure and debate (see page \*\*).

As well as hearing questions raised by Councillors, Full Council also receives questions from, and provides answers to, the public in accordance with the Council's published procedure.

Anyone who is on the Vale of Glamorgan Electoral Register or is a Vale of Glamorgan Council taxpayer or non-domestic ratepayer may submit, in advance, a question at Full Council meetings in accordance with the Council's published procedure. Details of the procedure can be found on the Council's website: [https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Council-Structure/Public-Participation-at-Council-Meetings.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/Public-Participation-at-Council-Meetings.aspx)

Any Councillor may ask the Leader, the relevant Cabinet Member, or the Chairman of a Committee any question without notice directly arising from a Cabinet or Committee report on the Full Council Agenda.

If a Councillor wishes to ask a question in relation to any matter that Full Council has powers or duties which affects the Vale of Glamorgan then they must submit their question at least a week in advance of the Full Council meeting.

Section 4 of the Council's Constitution sets out the function and processes for a Full Council meeting:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/June-2018/Section-4.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/June-2018/Section-4.pdf)

### The Executive 'Cabinet'

The Executive is more commonly known as the Cabinet.

Cabinet consists of the Leader of the Council and at least two, but not more than nine, other Councillors appointed by the Leader.

The Leader decides the size and Membership of Cabinet and the role and responsibilities of each Cabinet Member including which Cabinet Member will act as Deputy Leader in the Leader's absence.

Cabinet is appointed to carry out all of the Council's functions that are not the responsibility of any other part of the council together with making decisions within the budget and policy framework set by the Council.

Cabinet Meetings currently take place on a fortnightly basis.

Cabinet work to a Forward Work Programme (see page \*\*) that sets out reports that each Cabinet Member expects to come to the various Cabinet Meetings across the municipal year.

Prior to a Cabinet meeting taking place, the agenda is sent to all 54 Councillors.

All Councillors and Members of the Public are able to observe Cabinet Meetings unless the matter under consideration is deemed confidential. For confidential matters, the Members of the Public will be required to leave the meeting.

Following a Cabinet meeting, the decisions are recorded in the form of minutes. As soon as the minutes from the meeting are approved, they are sent to all 54 Councillors.

Any Councillor then has the opportunity to "call-in" an item for further scrutiny (see page \*\*).

Cabinet is supported by a Cabinet Officer based within the Democratic Services Team.

## Overview & Scrutiny

The principle of the Cabinet style decision process adopted by the Vale of Glamorgan Council is that, by having a small number of Councillors responsible for decision-making, the decision-making process will be quicker, efficient and with increased accountability for those who make the decisions.

However, members of the public need to be assured that the small group of Cabinet Members are making decisions effectively and acting in the best interests of the local community they serve.

The Vale of Glamorgan Council has appointed 5 Scrutiny Committees to influence decisions that are taken by the Cabinet, to ensure that the views and needs of the community are considered:

- Corporate Performance & Resources.
- Environment & Regeneration.
- Healthy Living & Social Care.
- Homes & Safe Communities.
- Learning & Culture.

Holding the Cabinet to account can involve scrutinising Cabinet decisions at a number of different stages of the decision-making process: before decisions are made; before they are implemented and after they are implemented.

Holding the Cabinet to account shouldn't be about confrontation – it is more about non-Cabinet Members providing a "critical friend" challenge to the Cabinet and individual Cabinet Portfolio Holders. Scrutiny is not about challenging individuals or personalities but is about challenging decisions and securing improvement where possible.

Scrutiny Committees make 'recommendations' rather than 'resolutions' as they are not the senior decision-making body for the Council.

A protocol setting out the relationship between Cabinet and Scrutiny is available on the Council's Website:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Scrutiny%20information/Protocols/June-2017-Protocol-Scrutiny-and-Cabinet-Roles-and-Responsibilities.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Scrutiny%20information/Protocols/June-2017-Protocol-Scrutiny-and-Cabinet-Roles-and-Responsibilities.pdf)

Scrutiny Committee Meetings take place on a monthly basis (apart from August).

The law states that an agenda for every meeting must be published at least 3 clear working days prior to (and not including) the meeting date. The Vale of Glamorgan Council publishes an Agenda at least 5 clear days in advance of every meeting except for meetings where the public are able to register to speak when 6 clear days is provided.

After each meeting, both a Decision Notice and Meeting Minute must be published on the Council's website.

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Council-Structure/minutes\\_agendas\\_and\\_reports/minutes\\_agendas\\_and\\_reports.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/minutes_agendas_and_reports/minutes_agendas_and_reports.aspx)

A Decision Notice must be available to the public within 7 working days of the meeting (including the day of the meeting) and sets out the following information:

- The names of the members who attended the meeting, and any apologies for absence.
- Any declarations of interest (see page \*\*).
- Any decision taken at the meeting, including the outcomes of any votes, but excluding anything relating to a decision taken when the meeting was not open to the public as it discloses confidential information.

The Meeting Minute also includes the points listed above as well as discussion had at the meeting. Meeting Minutes are published as soon as possible following the meeting.

All Councillors except Members of the Cabinet may be Members of the Scrutiny Committees.

Cabinet Members may attend Scrutiny Meetings on a regular basis to answer questions on decisions taken, or proposed to be taken, which fall within their Cabinet Portfolio.

Reports may be submitted to a Scrutiny Committee by one of the following routes:

- (i) Report referred to a Scrutiny Committee by Cabinet for consideration;
- (ii) Report submitted directly to a Scrutiny Committee as part of its Forward Work Programme (see page \*\*);
- (iii) As a result of the 'Call-In' procedure (see page \*\*);
- (iv) As a result of a "Request for Consideration" item submitted by a Member (see page \*\*);
- (v) in the form of a reference from another Scrutiny Committee or other Committee.

As well as Scrutiny Committee Members and Cabinet Members, Senior Officers with responsibility for a service area for the subject of an agenda item under discussion will also attend Scrutiny Meetings to present an agenda item report and to answer questions or provide advice regarding operational aspects of a particular service. This will allow Members to question Officers on the likely impact of any decisions made by the Cabinet and for Members to gather a greater appreciation of reasons why a course of action was agreed upon. Members of a Scrutiny Committee can also

question Officers about issues affecting the performance of a specific service and to ask for more detail around the level of resources available within that service area.

The role of the Senior Officer will be to assist the Committee through the provision of professional advice and to ensure access to relevant information and personnel. However, where the agenda item relates to a “Call-In” of a Cabinet decision, the relevant Cabinet Member will respond to questions in the first instance.

As well as a formal Scrutiny Committee Meeting, a Scrutiny Committee may also choose to set-up a Task & Finish Working Group which allows members of the Scrutiny Committee to research and scrutinise a matter of community concern in more detail outside of the formal meeting setting. Once the members of the working group have concluded their work, they will present a report to the Scrutiny Committee who in turn may choose to make recommendations to Cabinet for consideration.

The Scrutiny Committees must report annually to Full Council on their work, with recommendations for their future Work Programmes and amended working methods if appropriate.

As well as the Scrutiny Annual Report, a Scrutiny Newsletter is published on a biannual basis and is sent to all stakeholders to inform them of Scrutiny Committee progress and upcoming points of interest being considered by the Committees. Previous Newsletter editions are available on the Council’s website: **[ADD LINK ONCE WEBPAGE ESTABLISHED]**.

The Council recognises that members of the public can make an important contribution and be a valuable source of information. The Council therefore encourages the active participation of the public within the scrutiny process in the Vale. A member of the public can be heard via the below methods:

- 1) register to speak at a Scrutiny Committee; or
- 2) send in written representations.

A Guide to Public Speaking at Scrutiny Committee(s) is available on the Council’s website:

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Our%20Council/Scrutiny/Guidance/16-05-16-Public-Scrutiny-Booklet.pdf>

**[ADD REFERENCE TO NEW PUBLIC ONLINE COMMENT AND REQUEST FOR CONSIDERATION FORMS AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN]**

Section 7 of the Council’s Constitution provides more detail on the Council’s Scrutiny Function:

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/June-2018/Section-7.pdf>

The usual decision-making process for the Council, in the main, is via Cabinet and/or Full Council Meetings and those other committees who deal with for example Planning or Licensing matters, but there are certain circumstances that will allow a decision to be taken without the matter being presented to the above bodies in advance or at all:

### **Delegated Powers**

The work of all Vale of Glamorgan Council staff and day to day running of the organisation is managed by the Council's Chief Officers.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is made up of the following individuals and meets on a regular basis:

- Rob Thomas, Managing Director.
- Debbie Marles, Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services.
- Miles Punter, Director of Environment and Housing.
- Lance Carver, Director of Social Services.
- Paula Ham, Director of Learning and Skills.
- Carys Lord, Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer.
- Tom Bowring, Head of Policy and Business Transformation.

Chief Officers are divided into Directors, Heads of Service as well as Operational Managers. As service managers they make recommendations to and are held accountable by Cabinet, Council and other relevant committees.

In order to provide a practical method of financial and operational management throughout the Council, Chief Officers have been given certain powers in the form of Officer Delegations.

These delegated powers are set out in Section 25 of the Council's Constitution and may from time to time be amended, added to or reduced in the interests of operational efficiency as determined by Cabinet:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/May-2020/20-05-26-Section-25.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/May-2020/20-05-26-Section-25.pdf)

### **Managing Director's Emergency Powers**

The Managing Director has delegated powers to act on any matter which, in his/her opinion, requires immediate action and does not justify holding a special meeting of the body which would usually consider the matter, or, there is not enough time to hold a meeting because of the urgent nature.

The Managing Director must consult with the appropriate Cabinet Member before using his/her emergency powers and if the matter involves the Council in additional

financial commitments, he/she must also consult with the Leader, the Section 151 Officer and appropriate Chief Officer(s).

Following a decision being made under the Managing Director's Emergency Powers, the decision must be reported to the next Cabinet or Full Council meeting as appropriate.

### **The Cabinet Urgent Decision Procedure**

If a decision needs to be made quickly, and/or is subject to deadlines, and there is either:

- no time for the matter to go before a Scrutiny Committee for consideration before being presented to Cabinet for a decision; or
- the matter needs to be referred to Full Council by Cabinet but there is no time for a Scrutiny meeting to be held to consider the matter in between the Cabinet meeting taking place and Full Council meeting being held;

then the Urgent Decision procedure may be used by Cabinet.

Because of the urgent nature of the item and that it is unable to be considered by the relevant Scrutiny Committee, the Chair (or the Vice-Chair) of the relevant Scrutiny Committee must agree that the decision is a matter of urgency and cannot be reasonably deferred before this procedure can be used.

For matters that contravene or amend the Council's budget and/or policy framework, a decision may only be treated as urgent if it is not practical to convene a meeting of the Full Council and the decision-taker will provide a full report to the next available Council meeting explaining the decision, the reasons for it and why the decision was treated as a matter of urgency.

All other instances of the Urgent Decision Procedure being used will be reported to Cabinet.

## Forward Work Programmes

Forward Work Programmes are a series of documents that list the subject matters of decisions that Full Council, Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees intend to take as well as when those matters will be discussed.

This scheduling in advance does not prevent urgent or unforeseen matters being considered.

Each of the aforementioned bodies are responsible for their own Work Programmes.

Annual Forward Work Programmes are prepared at the beginning of each Municipal Year and are supplemented by quarterly updated Work Programmes through the course of the year.

Cabinet work to an Annual Forward Work Programme so both Councillors and the General Public can see which Reports are expected to be presented to which Cabinet Meeting across the whole municipal year.

The Cabinet Forward Work Programme is a working document and is always subject to change based on changing priorities and meeting dates for Cabinet.

Therefore, the Cabinet Officer monitors the Annual Cabinet Forward Work Programme on a quarterly basis and produces a quarterly version of the Cabinet Forward Work Programme which is published on the Council's website alongside the Annual version.

Using the Cabinet Annual Forward Work Programme, each of the Council's Scrutiny Committees builds its own Annual Forward Work Programme that is also updated on a quarterly basis and published on the Council's website **[ADD HYPERLINK WHEN WEBPAGE ESTABLISHED]**.

As well as service area specific/ one-off reports that fall under the remit of an individual scrutiny committee, all Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes also include the following reports on a regular basis:

- Budget Monitoring.
- Performance Management; and
- Scrutiny Recommendation Tracking and Work Programme Updates.

## Corporate Calendar of Meetings

A Municipal Year runs from the 1<sup>st</sup> May to 30<sup>th</sup> April.

A Corporate Calendar of Meetings is published each year (usually January time) setting out the various committee meetings within the next municipal year starting in May.

There are three types of meeting:

1. Annual Meeting (please see page \*\*).
2. Ordinary Meetings – Meetings scheduled in advance of the municipal year as agreed by Cabinet and the relevant Committee Chair; and
3. Extraordinary Meetings – Meetings called on an ad hoc basis by the Committee Chair during the course of the municipal year.

Meetings are not usually held in the month of August or the two-week Easter academic holiday as these are considered recess periods.

The majority of meetings are held in the evening and the start time will be set out on the calendar.

Once the calendar has been agreed by Cabinet, it is emailed to all Elected Members and uploaded to the Council's Website:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Council-Structure/minutes,\\_agendas\\_and\\_reports/minutes,\\_agendas\\_and\\_reports.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/minutes,_agendas_and_reports/minutes,_agendas_and_reports.aspx)

The Corporate Calendar of Meetings is subject to any future changes in arrangements for meetings deemed appropriate by the Mayor of the Council or the relevant Committee Chair.

Not all Council bodies are reflected in the Corporate Calendar however, Democratic Services Officers will be able to advise on meeting dates as required (see contact details on page \*\*).

## Call-In

The Call-In process is the mechanism used by **any** Vale of Glamorgan Councillor to ask for the relevant Scrutiny Committee to review a decision made by Cabinet providing that the decision is not subject to:

- Implementation of the Urgent Decision Procedure (see page \*\*);
- If the decision is required to be ratified by Full Council, or
- If the matter has already been referred by Cabinet to a Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

When a decision is made by Cabinet, the decision (in the form of meeting minutes) will be published on the Council's website. This marks the start of the Call-In period when councillors have five working days, not including the publication date, to complete a Call-In Request Form.

If no Call-in requests are received by the end of the Call-In period then Cabinet's decision stands and Officers may act on the decision.

If a Call-In request is received during the Call-In period then it must first be accepted by the relevant Scrutiny Committee Chair as the relevant Scrutiny Committee will have the opportunity to discuss and evaluate the merits of the Cabinet decision. The relevant Scrutiny Committee must meet within twenty working days of receipt of the 'Call-In' request, not counting the month of August.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, the relevant Cabinet Member would be expected to attend a Scrutiny Committee meeting when a 'Call-In' is being considered. It is accepted however, that Officers are often better placed to present greater detailed information that led up to the decision and this is deemed to be acceptable, although it should always be the decision-maker that is held to account.

The public are not able to Call-in a Cabinet decision, only Vale of Glamorgan Councillors, therefore the Call-In Request Forms are only available on the MemberNet section of StaffNet which is the Council's intranet system.

### Requests for Consideration

Section 62 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires the Council to put arrangements in place to enable all persons who live or work in the Vale of Glamorgan area to bring to the attention of the relevant Scrutiny Committee their views on any matter under consideration by the Committee. A Scrutiny Committee must also take into account any views brought to its attention by a member of the public.

Therefore, **any** individual Vale of Glamorgan Councillor can ask for a specific issue or topic to be considered by the relevant Scrutiny Committee by completing a Request for Consideration Form that can be found on MemberNet.

Members of the Public are also able to engage with this process and can access the form via the following link (please also see page \*\* 'Overview & Scrutiny'): **[ADD LINK ONCE WEBPAGE ESTABLISHED]**.

All Requests for Consideration must be forwarded to the Democratic Services Team who will share the request with the appropriate Director(s) required to prepare a report for consideration by the relevant Scrutiny Committee(s). A copy of the request will also be forwarded to the relevant Scrutiny Chair for information.

There is no time limit on when a request must be considered but the relevant Officers and Committee Chair will do all they can to ensure the request is presented to Committee as soon as possible.

## Code of Conduct

Effective Local Government requires high standards of conduct to ensure that there is public confidence in the Council's work. Section 18 of the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Constitution sets out those standards, how to apply them and the potential consequences for Councillors if they do not adhere.

Each Councillor will be asked to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and undertake to abide by the Members' Code of Conduct shortly after the Election. This is a condition of becoming a Councillor.

All Councillors must agree to follow the Vale of Glamorgan Code of Conduct as set out in the Council's Constitution.

Failure to undertake or observe the Code of Conduct could result in a Councillor being temporarily suspended, issued with a formal censure or removed from office.

For low level allegations of breaches of the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Code of Conduct by Councillors, the Council has a Local Dispute Resolution Procedure. For more serious breaches, these are dealt with by the Public Service Ombudsman (see page \*\*).

Elected Members have a legal duty to act ethically and must have regard to the following principles:

Selflessness  
Honesty  
Integrity and Propriety  
Duty to uphold the law  
Stewardship  
Objectivity in Decision making  
Equality and respect  
Openness  
Accountability  
Leadership

The General Rules an Elected Member needs to follow under the Code are as follows:

- Promote equality
- Treat others with respect and consideration
- Do not bully or harass people
- Do not compromise the impartiality of officers
- Do not disclose confidential information
- Do not prevent access to information
- Do not bring your office or authority into disrepute
- Report breaches of the code to the Monitoring Officer
- Report conduct believed or likely to involve criminal behaviour
- Do not make vexatious complaints
- Cooperate with investigations
- Not use their position improperly
- Do not misuse the authority's resources

- Reach decisions objectively
- Consider advice given by officers and provide reasons if you don't take it
- Comply with the law and the authority's rules regarding expenses
- Do not accept any gifts or hospitality (see page \*\*) that would place you under an obligation or seem to do so.

The Council also has a 'Standard of Conduct Expected by Members Protocol' which establishes the behaviour which is acceptable and unacceptable between Councillors. It sits alongside the Code and fills the gap between behaviour which possibly in itself is not serious, but creates unpleasantness between Members, and behaviour that is approaching the threshold and serious enough for the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (see page \*\*) to hold an investigation.

### **Member & Officer Relations**

Both Councillors and Officers are servants of the public, and they are indispensable to one another. But their responsibilities are distinct. Councillors are responsible to the electorate and serve only so long as their term of office lasts. Officers are responsible to the Council. Their job is to give advice to Councillors and the Council, and to carry out the Council's work under the direction and control of the Council, its committees and sub-committees.

Section 21 of the Council's Constitution sets out the Member & Officer Protocol that provides a set of principles to guide Members and Officers of the Council in their dealings with one another:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/May-2021/Section-21.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/May-2021/Section-21.pdf)

### **Standards Committee**

The Council's Standards Committee has the following roles and functions:

- (a) promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Councillors
- (b) assisting Councillors to observe the Members' Code of Conduct
- (c) advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct
- (d) monitoring the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct
- (e) advising, training or arranging to train Councillors on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct
- (f) granting dispensations (see page \*\*) to Councillors from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct
- (g) dealing with any reports from a case tribunal or interim case tribunal, and any report from the Monitoring Officer on any matter referred to that officer by the Public Services Ombudsman
- (h) the exercise of (a) to (g) above in relation to the Community Councils wholly or mainly in its area and the members of those Community Councils; and
- (i) overview of complaints handling and Ombudsman investigations.

Section 8 of the Council's Constitution sets out the full remit of the Standards Committee:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/\\_Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/May-2021/Section-8.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/_Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/May-2021/Section-8.pdf)

## Declarations of Interest

The public must have confidence that Councillors are making decisions in their best interests and not their own. Therefore, if a Councillor has an interest, they must declare it.

An interest is any form of business or asset that could be perceived to influence a Councillor's decision.

Section 18 of the Council's Constitution sets out:

- the different types of interest,
- under what criteria an interest exists,
- the declaration process for Councillors,
- how interests must be registered prior to publication and
- to what extent a councillor may participate in council business if they have an interest.

After each Local Government Election, the successful Elected Members will be asked to complete a Register of Interests Form within 28 days of the Election taking place that is then published on the Council's public website and remains on the website for the duration of the Councillor's term in office:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Council-Structure/councillors/Register-of-Members-Interests.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/councillors/Register-of-Members-Interests.aspx)

If a Councillor's business or assets change during their time as a councillor then they must complete a Change of Interest Form, within 28 days of the change taking place, that is then published alongside their original Register of Interests Form on the Council's website.

If a Councillor needs advice on any matter that they think may constitute an interest, then they must contact the Council's Monitoring Officer.

Democratic Services Officers, on behalf of the Monitoring Officer, may also offer advice on Member Interests during Committee Meetings. Councillors must declare their interest at a meeting as soon as they are aware that a matter is to be discussed and must complete the Declaration of Interest Form provided by Democratic Services.

Some Councillors are also Twin hatted Members i.e. they have also been elected to serve on a Town or Community Council and therefore they must have due regard to declarations of interests being a Member of both a Principal and Town and Community Council.

Registration of Gifts & Hospitality

All Councillors must, within twenty-eight days of receiving any gift, hospitality, material benefit or advantage above £25 or totalling £100 over a year from a single source, provide written notification to the Council's Monitoring Officer.

A note will then be added to the Gift & Hospitality Register that is maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

## Complaints

Any person who wishes to lodge a complaint about a Vale of Glamorgan Service may do so via the Council's Corporate Compliments & Complaints Procedure as set out on the Council's website:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Complaints-and-Compliments.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Complaints-and-Compliments.aspx)

Councillors, when dealing with a constituent/ public complaint and if they are unable to resolve the matter themselves, should direct the individual to the above complaints procedure.

For complaints related to Vale of Glamorgan Councillors, the person may:

- Contact the Council's Monitoring Officer directly or
- Contact the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales.

[The Public Service Ombudsman for Wales](#) is independent of the Vale of Glamorgan Council and has legal powers to look into complaints about public services and independent care providers in Wales. They also investigate complaints that members of local government bodies have broken their authority's code of conduct.

If the Ombudsman believes a complaint to be justified, then they will refer the complaint on to the Council's Standard's Committee or to a tribunal convened by the [Adjudication Panel for Wales](#) depending on the severity of the complaint.

For low level allegations of breaches of the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Code of Conduct by Councillors, the Council has a Local Dispute Resolution Procedure overseen by the Council's Monitoring Officer. The key objectives of the Procedure are to:

- resolve allegations of breaches of the Code and Protocol locally and quickly,
- avoid unnecessary escalation of the situation which might impact on personal relationships within the Council and damage the Council's reputation,
- avoid unnecessary involvement of the Ombudsman so that his resources are devoted to the investigation of more serious or repeated complaints.

The Local Dispute Resolution Procedure can be found in Section 18 of the Council's Constitution:

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/May-2021/Section-18.pdf>

## Member Attendance

Every Councillor is entitled to attend any formal meeting of the Council whether that be its Committees, sub-committees, or Cabinet.

A Councillor is entitled to attend any Committee Meeting but is not entitled to take part in proceedings, if they are not a member of the Committee, without the Committee's permission.

A Councillor cannot vote on a matter being considered by the Committee if they are not a member of the Committee or have declared a prejudicial interest (see page \*\*).

If a Councillor has failed to attend any meeting of the Council for six consecutive months, then they will cease to be an Elected Member of the Council.

Each Councillor has a dedicated Member Page on the Council's Website that includes their meeting attendance record for the Committee's they were appointed to at the Annual Meeting of the Council or following a change of political group representation on a Committee made at the request of the relevant group leader.

The Democratic Services Officer present at each meeting will make a record of which Councillors are present, as well as any apologies for absence provided, and use that information to update the online member attendance records on a regular basis.

Meetings of the Council can be held face-to-face, remotely online or via a mixture of both (hybrid). **[UPDATE BASED ON COUNCIL'S REMOTE MEETING STANCE AT TIME OF PUBLICATION].**

If held face-to-face, the majority of meetings take place at the Civic Office building in Barry Town Centre. There are several different meeting rooms in the building but the largest is the Council Chamber. In the Chamber you will be required to use a microphone to ensure that all participants can hear you. There is also a hearing loop system available in the Council Chamber.

If held remotely, the meeting will take place on the Microsoft Teams Platform. All Councillors will be provided with the minimum of a Council laptop and mobile phone to support them with carrying out their duties via Microsoft Office and accessing Microsoft Teams (see page \*\*).

For a hybrid meeting, some participants will be face-to-face in the meeting room and some will be in a different location participating via an electronic device. **[ADD NOTE ON HOW MUCH CHOICE MEMBERS HAVE ON HOW THEY WISH TO PARTICIPATE ONCE HYBRID MEETING PROCESSES ESTABLISHED].**

The majority of Council Meetings are live streamed via YouTube meaning that anyone can watch the meeting live at the time that the meeting takes place by clicking the appropriate link on the Council's Minutes, Agendas & Reports Webpage. However, meetings are also recorded for watching on demand at a later date. The on-demand recordings are also available by clicking the appropriate link on the Council's website. **[ADD HYPERLINK WHEN M/A&R WEBPAGE REVIEW IS CONCLUDED]**.

From the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2022, for any meetings that are live streamed as required under the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021, it is a requirement of Councillors taking part to be seen on screen during the course of the meeting.

Some meetings may involve confidential or exempt information and therefore these meetings are not recorded or live streamed. Confidential information on an agenda is referred to as 'Part Two' (Part II) information.

Members of the public can attend in person and observe Council meetings whilst they are taking place. The above Part II restrictions also apply and when such items are being discussed the public will be asked to leave the meeting by the Chairman.

## Rules of Debate

Section 4 of the Council's Constitution sets out the various rules of procedure and debate that Councillors must adhere to during Council Meetings such as:

- How to propose a topic for discussion (a motion) and vote during the meeting itself and in advance of the meeting.
- The different types of speeches, when to make them and for how long.
- How to amend, alter or withdraw a motion prior to a vote.
- How to conduct themselves during the meeting and address the Chairman.
- The different types of vote and the process for these.

All Councillors will be provided training on Rules of Debate as part of the Member Induction & Development Programme (see page \*\*).

Member Induction & Development Programme

The Council is committed to an ongoing programme of Member Development to support Councillors to meet their responsibilities and undertake their role(s) within the Council.

Immediately following each Local Government Election, a Member Induction Event will take place, which will be followed by topic-specific development sessions on a range of relevant subject areas linked to the varying roles and responsibilities that Councillors will undertake.

**[ADD NOTE ON PRIOR NOTICE/BOOKING ON TO INDUCTION EVENT AT CANDIDATE STAGE ONCE CONFIRMED IN JR CANDIDATE LETTER]**

Some of the sessions will be open to all Councillors, some will be related to membership of specific Committees (e.g. Planning / Licensing), albeit non-Committee Members will also be most welcome to attend.

The Council has determined that certain sessions will be essential (mandatory) for new and returning Councillors, either for all Councillors or those Councillors appointed to specific Committees.

**For Committees such as Planning and Licensing, Councillors will have to have attended the training in order to take their seat on the Committee.**

The Member Induction & Development Programme occurs over four phases:

Phase 1	This is the first two weeks following the Local Government Election but prior to the first Annual Meeting of the Council [May]. The Member Induction Event takes place during this phase as well as other introductory sessions.
Phase 2	This is a further two months [June and July] prior to the August Recess and the period when the first committee meetings take place.
Phase 3	This is a further four months [September – December] up until the end of the calendar year and covers the first six months of the municipal year since the Local Government Election.
Phase 4	This is an ongoing period of development until the next Local Government Election based on topics requested by Councillors.

Two sessions will be offered for each seminar topic, one daytime and one evening, to support Councillor availability unless it's a session facilitated by an external presenter or not deemed necessary because of the low number of Councillors expected to attend.

**[ADD NOTE ON SESSION DELIVERY METHODS ONCE CONFIRMED AS PART OF 2022 PROGRAMME PLANNING]**

The resources provided at the seminars are uploaded to MemberNet following the sessions for Councillors to access at their own leisure.

**[ADD NOTE ON MEMBER EXPO EVENTS ONCE CONFIRMED AS PART OF 2022 PROGRAMME PLANNING]**

**[ADD NOTE ON ONGOING ICT TRAINING/SUPPORT AND/OR OD TEAM SUPPORT ONCE CONFIRMED AS PART OF 2022 PROGRAMME PLANNING]**

## Salaries

All Members of the Council receive a basic salary. This covers all Councillors' telephone, ICT and office costs and is reviewed annually by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

[The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales](#) is responsible for determining the level of payments to elected members of councils, national park authorities and fire and rescue authorities in Wales. The Panel produces an annual report that states:

*“The Panel has consistently expressed its view that maintaining the democratic values of local governance cannot be cost free. Members of local authorities (including co-opted and appointed members) are there to represent the interests of local people, undertake the governance of local communities, and secure appropriate value for money public services for local tax-payers through effective scrutiny for which they are accountable to their community. These are significant and important tasks for members of the relevant authorities within the Panel’s remit. Payments to members are made available to encourage a diversity of willing and able people to undertake local governance through their elected, appointed or co-opted roles.”*

*February 2021 Annual Report*

When the Panel’s Annual Report is issued, the Council must comply with the statutory requirements and apply all the relevant determinations. The proper officer of the Council must put in place mechanisms for all eligible councillors to receive payments as determined by the Panel.

Levels of payments to which Councillors are entitled cannot be varied by a vote of Full Council.

Councillors who have a senior role will also receive a senior salary, also known as a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA), that is inclusive of the basic salary. Senior Salaries are reviewed annually by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. No Councillor can receive more than one Senior Salary.

All payments of Councillor salaries and allowances (see page \*\*) are made monthly by direct bank credit and are subject to the appropriate Tax and National Insurance deductions. Councillors will be asked to provide bank details at the Member Induction Event.

Any Councillor may elect to forgo any part of their salary entitlement by putting their election in writing to the Head of Democratic Services who will make the necessary arrangements.

If a Councillor is suspended or partially suspended from any responsibility in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made

under that Part, the relevant part of any salary payable under the Council's Member Allowance Scheme in respect to that responsibility will be suspended and in the case of an over-payment, paid back to the Council.

The Council is required to agree, publish, and maintain an annual Schedule of Member Remuneration. The latest schedule can be found via the following link:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Council-Structure/Schedule-of-Member-Remuneration.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/Schedule-of-Member-Remuneration.aspx)

The Schedule of Member Remuneration sets out details of the specific payments that it intends to make to Councillors and Co-opted Members in accordance with the levels of remuneration and allowances determined by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. It provides details of the remuneration of Members through the payment of a Basic, Senior or Civic Salary and fees which are payable to Councillors and statutory Co-opted Members. The Schedule also provides details of the Care, Travel and Subsistence Allowances which apply.

Section 26 of the Council's Constitution sets out the details of the Council's Member Salary Scheme:

<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/May-2021/Section-26.pdf>

## Allowances

Councillors may claim Travel and/or Subsistence Allowances when they incur costs performing approved duties as a Member of the Council.

All claims made are published each year, for the previous municipal year, on the Council's website.

With regards to Travel, Councillors are requested to be mindful of choosing the most cost effective and environmentally friendly means of travel and encouraged to travel with other Councillors. For travel by car, motorcycle, or pedal cycle the (mileage claims) national rates for mileage are set by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales each year.

Subsistence allowances are payable when a Councillor performs duties outside the Vale of Glamorgan area and the rates are also set by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales each year. Councillors are advised to consult with the Democratic Services/Cabinet Office to take advantage of central booking arrangements when arranging overnight accommodation which has to be prior approved by the Managing Director and the Leader of the Council via the submission of the appropriate form.

All claims must be accompanied by relevant receipts for all actual expenditure incurred and submitted to the relevant Officer within ninety days. For Cabinet Members the relevant Officer is the Cabinet Officer, for all other Members the relevant Officer is any Member of the Democratic Services Team.

The exact rates are set out on the Travel and Subsistence Claim Form on the MemberNet Homepage as well as the latest Member Schedule of Remuneration on the Council's website.

If a Councillor is suspended or partially suspended from any responsibility in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under that Part, the relevant part of any allowance payable under the Council's Member Allowance Scheme in respect to that responsibility will be suspended and in the case of an over-payment, paid back to the Council.

Co-opted Members may also claim an allowance. A Co-Opted Member is someone who is appointed to a committee or sub-committee and has voting rights but is not an Elected Member. Their payments are capped to ten full days per year (i.e 20 half days) for each committee to which they are co-opted and are made monthly by direct bank credit. Any Co-Opted Member may elect to forgo any part of their entitlement to an allowance or fee and will not be entitled to claim if they are suspended or partially suspended from any responsibility.

Section 26 of the Council's Constitution sets out the details of the Council's Member Allowance Scheme:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/ Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/May-2021/Section-26.pdf](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Committee%20Reports/Committee%20Information/Constitution/May-2021/Section-26.pdf)

### Reimbursement of Costs of Care

If a Councillor has needed to arrange care for a dependent child or adult so that they may carry out their official and approved duties as a Councillor, they can be reimbursed for the cost of that care.

A cost of care payment applies to care provided by informal or formal carers for the following:

- (a) dependent children up to the age of 15; or
- (b) children over the age of 15 and adults providing that the Councillor can demonstrate that the dependent individual requires supervision.

Payments will not be made:

- to more than one Councillor or Co-Opted Member in relation to the care of the same child or dependant for the same episode of care; or
- to someone who is a part of a Member's household.

All claims for the Reimbursement of Costs of Care should be made in writing to the Head of Democratic Services, detailing times, dates and reasons for claim by completing both the 'Reimbursement of Cost of Care Claim Form' and 'Costs of Care Receipt Form' available on MemberNet. Receipts are required from the carer for both informal and formal care arrangements.

### Family Absence

Councillors are entitled to a period of family absence, during which, if they satisfy the prescribed conditions, they are entitled to be absent from Council meetings.

When taking family absence, Councillors are entitled to retain their Basic Salary irrespective of their attendance record immediately preceding the commencement of the family absence.

A Senior Salary holder will be able to continue to receive their Senior Salary for the duration of the absence. If the Council agrees that it is necessary to make a substitute appointment to cover the family absence of a Senior Salary holder, the Councillor substituting will be eligible to be paid a Senior Salary.

When the Council agrees a paid substitution for family absence, it will notify the Independent Remuneration Panel within 14 days of the date of the decision of the details, including the particular post and the duration of the substitution.

ID & Access Card

All Councillors will be issued with a photographic ID card and corporate lanyard during the Member Induction Event.

For new Councillors, the photograph on the card will be taken during the event itself. For returning Councillors, they may elect to use a previous photograph or have a new one taken.

It is important, for the safety of all, that all Councillors have their ID badge on display when entering and moving around Council buildings.

The card is an access control card for Council buildings as well as the various printers (see page \*\*) located around the buildings.

Councillors must not, under any circumstance, lend their ID Card to any other person.

Councillors must report their card lost, damaged or stolen, within 24 hours of discovery, so that a replacement may be issued by contacting Democratic Services.

**[ADD NOTE ON EQUALITY & DIVERSITY SURVEY TO IDENTIFY ANY BUILDING ACCESS (OR ANY OTHER) SUPPORT NEED(S)] – When Survey issued and what frequency?**

Car Parking

Car Parking is currently free and available at all three of the Council's largest office buildings for Councillors to attend meetings (if they choose to attend a meeting face-to-face):

<b>Civic Offices</b> Holton Road Barry CF63 4RU	<b>Dock Offices</b> Subway Road Barry CF634RT	<b>The Alps</b> Alps Quarry Road Wenvoe CF5 6AA
<u>Opening Times</u> Monday – Friday: **	<u>Opening Times</u> Monday – Friday: **	<u>Opening Times</u> Monday – Friday: **
Weekends: **	Weekends: **	Weekends: **

Only the Civic Office Building in Barry has 10 designated parking spaces for Councillors however, these are on a first-come-first-serve basis.

All Car Parks are also used by Council Staff, therefore, parking may take longer during working hours than evenings and weekends.

The Vale of Glamorgan Council is committed to reducing the environmental impact of its activities and as such it has produced a Travel Plan which aims to assist Councillors and Staff to choose sustainable travel modes for their journeys. The Travel Plan is available to Councillors on the Council's Intranet System; StaffNet. **[UPDATE THIS PARAGRAPH ON ANY DEVELOPMENTS AS A RESULT OF PROJECT ZERO].**

### Political Group Rooms

Each Political Group has a designated meeting room on the lower ground floor of the Civic Office building.

These rooms are accessed via the building's rear entrance using an ID Access Card (see page \*\*).

Councillors are free to use these rooms at all times when the Civic Office Building is open and are a useful space for working in-between appointments.

A supply of Tea, Coffee and Soft Drinks is also available near to the Group rooms for Councillor use.

Council Equipment

***[RECONSIDER THIS SECTION AFTER FURTHER 2022 MEMBER INDUCTION & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME PLANNING]***

The Council provides Councillors with appropriate Microsoft Office 365 operated equipment to assist in undertaking their various roles and responsibilities:

- Council Computer – This is a portable laptop with the ability to connect to the Vale of Glamorgan system from home as well as in Council buildings.
- Council Mobile Phone – For making calls, sending text messages, and receiving Emails on the go.
- Remote Meeting Headset – Earphones and microphone to support councillors to hear and be heard clearly during remote meetings.

**[ADD TO LIST AS APPROPRIATE]**

Equipment will be issued to Councillors as part of the Member Induction Event.

Other devices may be issued to Councillors, based on their individual support needs, as identified from their response to the Member Equality & Diversity Survey completed at their start of term. **[CHECK STANCE ON THIS STATEMENT NEARER TO PUBLICATION]**

**[ADD NOTE ON ANY STEPS TAKEN TO ASSESS COUNCILLOR INTERNET CONNECTION - TECH COMPATABILITY SURVEY?]**

Any devices issued remain the property of the Council and Councillors will be asked to return the equipment at the end of their term in office having accepted responsibility for the devices at the start of their term in office.

**[ADD NOTE ON USING PERSONAL DEVICES ONCE STANCE AGREED]**

**[ADD NOTE THAT TRAINING ON THE USE OF EQUIPMENT WILL BE PROVIDED ONCE STANCE AGREED]**

All Councillors will be required to undertake in writing that they will observe and comply with the procedures and protocols set by the Council governing the use of their equipment, the ICT Code of Conduct.

Both the Council's ICT and Digital strategies to enable opportunities for improvement through the innovative use of ICT, now and in the future, as well as setting out the Council's vision for how it will leverage new technologies to continue to provide high quality priority services are available on the Council's website. **[CONFIRM BEST LOCATION FOR HYPERLINK NEARER TO PUBLICATION]**

The Council's technical support service is called the ICT Service Desk and all Councillors will be provided with details for this service as part of the Member

Induction Event **[ADD CONTACT DETAILS HERE IF OK TO BE IN PUBLIC DOMAIN].**

Universal Printing

In 2018, the Council revised its print strategy to reduce printing waste and subsequent costs. This resulted in universal printers being placed in communal areas across the organisation and its office buildings. This move was also aligned to the Council's climate change challenge plan launched in 2021, 'Project Zero,' to adapt to and mitigate the impact of climate change.

The Council recognises that Councillors may be unable to work completely 'paper-free' however, does encourage individuals to work 'paper-less' where possible.

Therefore, all Councillors are automatically elected to receive meeting papers electronically, rather than in hard copy, but they may elect to have hard copies sent out to them in the post or delivered to their designated pigeon hole if required **[CHECK STANCE ON THIS STATEMENT NEARER TO PUBLICATION]**.

All Councillor laptops are set to the universal printers. This means that all documents sent to print will be held on the Councillor's print account for 48 hours until they reach any printer in the building to print the document.

## Correspondence

### General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The law on Data Protection changed on 25th May 2018. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a new, Europe-wide law that superseded the UK Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA 1998).

The GDPR sets out requirements for how organisations will need to handle personal data. It has enhanced the rights of people whose data is held (known as data subjects in the Data Protection Act) and give them more control over what happens to their data. It also allows for financial penalties to be imposed on any organisation that breaches those rights or does not comply with the 'accountability principle' – which basically means that data controllers and data processors i.e. The Council and its Councillors need to put technical and organisational measures in place to protect the data they hold from loss, unauthorised access etc and to ensure the rights of data subjects are protected.

All Councillors must be registered as a Data Controller with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) and pay a fee. The fee will be paid for by the Council and registration forms will be completed at the Member Induction Event. **[CHECK STANCE OF THIS STATEMENT AS 2022 MI&D PROGRAMME PLANNING DEVELOPS].**

Councillors will:

1. Make use of personal data provided by the council in the same way as an officer of the council might make use of data. Council officers and its suppliers will be subject to the controls of GDPR.
2. Use personal case work material in their own right when they collect or are given personal data through communications with their residents.
3. Access, collect and deploy personal data through their political campaigning and activation – with or without the use of political agents or political parties if they represent one.

Therefore, as Data Controllers, Councillors must comply with the new GDPR requirements as follows:

- Keep a record of their processing activities, this is to show their compliance with the legislation.
- Give a more detailed Privacy Notice when they collect personal data.
- Tell data subjects of their rights.
- Have appropriate security measures in place to protect personal data they hold.
- Regularly review and delete 'old' data they no longer need; and

- Report any breaches to the Council's Data Protection Officer, Mr Tim Cousins, within 72 hours.

Councillors should only use their official Vale of Glamorgan email address to respond to resident enquiries. Every Councillor will have a corporate email signature that includes a hyperlink to the Council's Privacy Notice:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Website-Privacy-Notice.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Website-Privacy-Notice.aspx)

### Postal Service

In accordance with the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (Section 43), the Council has a duty to publish official addresses for each Elected Member, electronic and postal. Members not wishing to make their home address public (provided they satisfy the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct) may utilise the Vale of Glamorgan Council's address.

### Welsh Language Standards

The Council is committed to the provision of an excellent service to Welsh speakers.

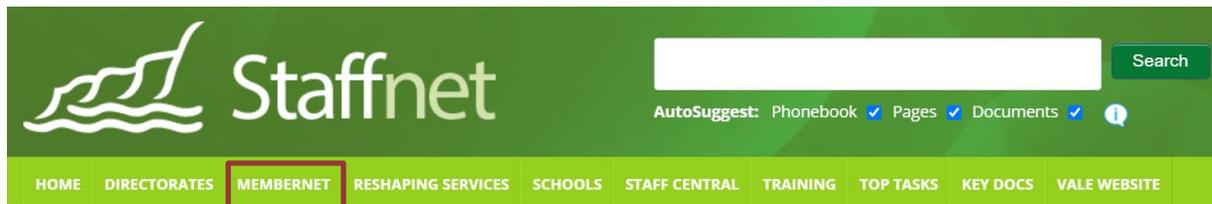
During 2015 it was issued with a legal Compliance Notice by the Welsh Commissioner specifying which Standards applied to the Council. In order to achieve the 174 standards within the notice the Council developed a comprehensive Action Plan which is published on its website:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/equalities/welsh-language-standards.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/equalities/welsh-language-standards.aspx)

## MemberNet

The Council has a its own intranet called StaffNet and it is the automatic search homepage on Councillor computers.

Therefore, it requires being connected to the Vale of Glamorgan system via an internet connection in order to use it. **[CLARIFY STATUS AT TIME OF PUBLICATION]**



From the StaffNet Homepage, Councillors can access documentation and Council Officer contact details that they will need to function as a Councillor.

A section of StaffNet is specifically tailored towards Councillors and is called MemberNet: <https://staffnet.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/MemberNet/MemberNet.aspx>

The MemberNet intranet page includes important information, documents, and guidelines for Councillors to refer to at their convenience and is updated on a regular basis. Therefore, Councillors are required to visit MemberNet on a regular basis.

### 'How To' Desktop Guides

Every Councillor will have a 'How To Guides' document folder on their computer desktop:



This folder contains guides, instructions and policy documents to support Councillors with tackling any technical issues they may have when the ICT Service Desk (see page \*\*) is closed.

Because the folder is located on the desktop, Councillors can access and use the folder when working offline.

## Committee Hub

The Committee Hub is an electronic storage folder for all published meeting agendas.

A short cut to the Hub is available on Councillor desktops and updated after every agenda publication:



Councillors can access agendas in several ways:

1. Via the hyperlink included within the notification email they receive each time an agenda is published.
2. By clicking on the relevant Committee name in the Committee Hub on their desktop.
3. By visiting the Council's Minutes, Agendas & Reports public webpage; or
4. Receiving a hard copy of the papers in the post (if requested in advance).

Some Committees are locked down to certain individuals because of the confidential nature of the paperwork and therefore only the members of that particular Committee have access to view the relevant Part II papers via the Hub. **[CHECK STATUS OF THIS STATEMENT PRIOR TO PUBLICATION]**

Any Councillor may request access to Part II information, if they do not already have access to it, by raising a formal request with Democratic Services. These requests must then be assessed on a 'need-to-know' basis due to the confidential nature of the information.

Members of the public are not entitled to see Part II information. Therefore, the Committee Hub is the only way for Councillors to view Part II information other than in hard copy.

Councillors can also download the agenda from the Committee Hub on to their Vale of Glamorgan laptop. This can be useful if they wish to annotate the document in advance of the meeting based on their own thoughts/comments to raise and/or work offline during the meeting itself.

Officer Directory

***[RECONSIDER THIS SECTION AFTER FURTHER 2022 MEMBER INDUCTION & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME PLANNING]***

An Officer Directory is available to Councillors via MemberNet and the How to Guides Folder on their desktop.

Councillors will also have the opportunity to meet key Officers as part of the Member Induction Event to formally introduce themselves, open lines of communication and establish good working relationships.

The Directory helps Councillors to contact the right 'on-the-ground' Officer for their query whether that be for themselves or as part of their ward casework.

Councillors may also use the Council's corporate methods of raising queries with Officers as available to Members of the public, such as:

the **Report It** Webpage on the Council's website which allows individuals to report a wide variety of matters:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/living/do\\_it\\_online/Report.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/living/do_it_online/Report.aspx)

the **Contact Us** Webpage on the Council's website which provides the contact information for the Council's Contact 1 Vale (C1V) Call Centre and directions to council offices to raise a matter in person at reception:

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Contact-Us.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Contact-Us.aspx)

## Councillors Guide to Personal Safety

### Personal Wellbeing

Councillors may use the Council's Employee Assistance Programme 'Care First' that offers Counselling, Information and Advice through three different services:

- 24/7 Online and Telephone Counselling Service.
- 'Zest,' an Application that teaches users coping mechanisms to handle situations life may throw their way.; and
- 'Lifestyle,' an online resource providing advice, information, webinars and articles on health, fitness, finance, childcare and consumer rights.

Councillors will also have access to the Council's E-Learning Portal called 'iDev' and the variety of wellbeing courses and seminars offered free of charge via the portal.

### Online Safety

Social media is changing the way society communicates, the way it receives news and, increasingly, the way it thinks about itself and others.

Social media is transforming politics too; it makes politicians and public institutions more accessible, allows individuals to have their voices heard and helps share ideas or promote campaigns, potentially to millions, in an instant. It is a powerful tool that can do much good but, in the wrong hands, can cause harm too. The growth of online abuse or trolling is a concern, as is the mounting evidence that organisations or even foreign agencies can exploit social media or use 'fake news' to influence public opinion or even affect democratic contests.

Social media has therefore become a vital tool for councils and councillors to inform and engage with the communities they serve. Many councillors already use social media and many more are thinking about using it. Therefore, the Council offers a 'Personal Safety & Self-Care' Member Development Session that includes online safety.

The [Welsh Local Government Association \(WLGA\)](https://www.wlga.wales/SharedFiles/Download.aspx?pageid=62&fileid=344&mid=665) also offers guidance to councillors who are new to social media and some tips for those already using it. Social media is rapidly evolving, so the guidance offers a general overview, some key pointers and principles and references to step-by-step resources online: <https://www.wlga.wales/SharedFiles/Download.aspx?pageid=62&fileid=344&mid=665>

Glossary of Terms

Agenda	A list of matters either in electronic or hard copy form to be discussed at a meeting.
Annotate	To add a short explanation or opinion to a text or drawing.
Chair / Vice-Chair	The gender-neutral role description for the person in charge of the meeting. <b>[CHECK STANCE ON GENDER NEUTRAL TERMS PRIOR TO PUBLICATION]</b>
Constituents	A person who can vote in a particular area of the country.
Constitution	The set of political principles by which a state or organisation is governed, especially in relation to the rights of the people it governs.
Democratic	Democratic is the adjective of Democracy: the belief in freedom and equality between people, or a system of government based on this belief, in which power is either held by elected representatives or directly by the people themselves.
Desktop	A view on a computer screen that contains icons (= small symbols or pictures) representing files, programs, and other features of the computer.
Electoral Division/Ward	One of the areas into which a Council area (Vale of Glamorgan) is divided, having its own elected political representative(s) for each ward for the purposes of an election.
Electorate	All the people who are allowed to vote.
Forward Work Programme	A schedule document that sets out the matters the Committee will consider in the future and when.
Governance	The way that organisations or countries are managed at the highest level, and the systems for doing this.
Intranet	A system of connected computers that works like the internet and allows people within an organisation to communicate with each other and share information.
Local Government	The control and organisation of towns and small areas, and the services they provide, by people who are elected by those living in the area.
MemberNet	The Councillor specific resource section of the Council's Intranet.
Motion	A formal suggestion made, discussed, and voted on at a meeting.
Municipal Year	The municipal year is a period used by local government in the United Kingdom. The municipal year usually begins in May and ends at the end of April each year.
Offline	(Of a computer) not connected to or directly controlled by a central system, or not connected to the internet.
Part II	"Part Two" information is confidential or exempt information not available to members of the public.
Proper Officer	An Officer designated to carry out a specific function provided for within the Council's Constitution. Unless stated otherwise, the "Proper Officer" is the Chief Executive <b>[CHECK TITLE] [LIST CURRENT OFFICERS HERE?]</b> .
Scrutiny	The careful and detailed examination of something in order to get information about it.

Standing Orders	Rules that say how an organisation should organise its formal meetings (Council/ committee).
Summons	The Agenda papers are sent to the Councillor by way of an invitation requesting that they attend the meeting.
The Executive "Cabinet"	The Cabinet, made up of the Leader of the Council and up to 9 other Councillors from the controlling political group(s), uses its Executive Powers to make most of the Council's decisions on services, functions and corporate management, including plans and strategies.

# Project Brief

## Aim:

To produce a Corporate Candidate & Elected Member's Handbook that is relevant, up-to-date, easy to read and useful to Election Candidates, Newly Elected Members and Returning Members that collates the already existing electronic and paper resources available in time for the Local Government Elections in May 2022.

## Reasoning:

Members require corporate support in line with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

It is recognised that the majority of information shared with Elected Members is also relevant and of interest to Election Candidates.

Information that is easily available and understandable is beneficial to both Returning and Newly Elected Members, on a day-to-day basis, to support them to fulfil their role.

Accurate and comprehensive information provides the reader with a realistic idea of the Elected Member role and the support processes in place for Elected Members to meet their responsibilities.

## Link to the Wales Audit Office Review Action Plan:

**Proposal for Improvement 1: Skills and Development** - The Council should further consider the skills and training that Scrutiny Members may need to better prepare them for current and future challenges and develop and deliver an appropriate training programme.

**Action Point 3** - Informed by the Member Development Review process, undertake a Training Needs Analysis for Members to inform the Council's Organisational Development requirements to support Members in the aspects of the Member Competency Framework and to include specific scrutiny elements relating to:

- Questioning skills;
- Chairing skills;
- Scrutiny of budgets;
- Business case scrutiny (to include options appraisal, financial analysis, commercial arrangements for instance);
- **Tools and mechanisms available to Members to fulfil their roles** (i.e. the call-in process and requests for consideration etc.);
- Public Engagement in scrutiny and decision making.

## Resources

Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021

Vale of Glamorgan Constitution

Vale of Glamorgan Public Website

Vale of Glamorgan StaffNet (MemberNet)

Vale of Glamorgan Cabinet and Scrutiny Roles & Responsibilities Protocol

Vale of Glamorgan 2017 Member Development Training Material

Vale of Glamorgan Member Schedule of Remuneration

Vale of Glamorgan ICT Code of Conduct

Vale of Glamorgan GDPR Privacy Notice

Vale of Glamorgan Care First Services

IRPW: February 2021 Annual Report

WLGA Council: Diversity in Democracy 2021 Report

WLGA Social Media A Guide for Councillors

Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer Knowledge / Discussions with Members

## Assessment Questions:

1. Is this the right section of the Handbook to mention this? Would the information sit better somewhere else?
2. Is that too much information for the reader? Does the reader need to know that at this point in time? K.I.S.S
3. Is the language used plain and understandable? (Glossary).

## Project Timeline

*\*Subject to change following consideration by the Monitoring Officer, Democratic Services Committee and Cabinet.\**

- **By 28<sup>th</sup> June '21:**
  - 1) Finish writing content, consult with DSSOs and tweak draft content as appropriate.
  - 2) Present Draft content to Monitoring Officer, possible presentation to Senior Leadership Team.
  - 3) Produce as Appendix for Democratic Services Committee report (agenda send-out Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July).
- **12<sup>th</sup> July '21** – Present draft (word document) version of Handbook to the Democratic Services Committee for Elected Member input/endorsement.
- **July/August '21** - Tweak draft content as per Member Comments and further Officer consultation. Send finalised English content for Welsh Translation. Send both English and Welsh content for Graphics.
- **August/Sept '21** – Present graphic version to Cabinet for approval.
- **Dec '21** – Consult with the Electoral Registration Department on how the Handbook may be included within Election Candidate Packs taking in to account key candidate nomination dates as set by the Electoral Commission. Consideration given to reduce printing costs!
- **Mar '22:**
  - Handbook provided (ideally electronically) to potential Candidates attending the 'Becoming a Councillor' Open Day Events.
  - Handbook is emailed to all confirmed Election Candidates and provided as hard copy on request. Small supply print exercise undertaken – probably external supplier to ensure quality.
- **May '22** – Election and subsequent Member Induction & Development Programme for Councillors begins:
  1. Handbook emailed to all Elected Members as part of Member Induction Event;
  2. Handbook uploaded to MemberNet;
  3. Handbook uploaded to Offline 'How To' Folder available on Member Desktops;
  4. Handbook uploaded to public website.