

MEETING OF	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	10 September 2013
SUBJECT	Information for Members
PURPOSE	To submit the members' feedback on <i>Rhaeadr</i> and to discuss methods of communicating with elected members.
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The way in which elected members access information needs to be considered in order to be able to fulfil their roles successfully. To meet this need, *Rhaeadr* was established as an easy to use information portal for members to access regularly.
- 1.2 It is now timely to consider the use made of *Rhaeadr* as well as other methods of disseminating information to members whilst also considering other methods of collecting observations and responses from members on various topics.

2. PRESENTING INFORMATION THROUGH *RHAEADR*

- 2.1 In August 2013, the Council's Communication Officer contacted elected members directly over the phone in order to receive feedback from them on *Rhaeadr*.
- 2.2 The observations received about *Rhaeadr* represent a sample of 28% of all the Council's elected members.
- 2.3 From the whole sample, the main messages received about *Rhaeadr* are presented below:
 - 29% of members questioned felt that *Rhaeadr* was easy to use
 - 29% of members questioned used *Rhaeadr* regularly
 - 29% of members questioned felt that the information on *Rhaeadr* was concise and useful and were satisfied with the content
 - 14% of members questioned wanted more timely information about things going on in their local wards
 - 10% of members questioned were keen to receive training on how to use *Rhaeadr* on the iPad
 - 19% of members questioned stated that they did not use *Rhaeadr*
- 2.4 It is concluded from the information above that the elected members, on the whole, felt that *Rhaeadr* was useful in terms of presenting information to them.

3. RECEIVING OBSERVATIONS AND/OR RESPONSES THROUGH *RHAEADR*

- 3.1 However, evidence shows that *Rhaeadr* is not as successful to seek observations and/or responses from elected members on any particular topic. Recent experience has shown that responses to such requests are received very rarely.
- 3.2 This raised doubts regarding the suitability of *Rhaeadr* as a medium to seek observations and responses, despite being an acceptable medium to present information.
- 3.3 Therefore, consideration needs to be given to the best way of seeking observations and responses from elected members in future.

4. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ELECTED MEMBERS

- 4.1 A questionnaire has been drawn up for elected members involving several different matters including communication.
- 4.2 It is intended to use this questionnaire to receive information from members regarding any problems or difficulties they have in terms of communication.
- 4.3 Consideration needs to be given to the best way of ensuring responses from the members to this questionnaire, in order to ensure comprehensive feedback which will convey clear messages regarding the future communication needs of members.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee:-
 - a) gives guidance on any further developments for *Rhaeadr*
 - b) gives guidance regarding the next steps that should be taken in terms of looking at methods of receiving observations and/or responses from elected members
 - c) gives guidance regarding the best methods of receiving responses from elected members to the questionnaire that has been drawn up for them.