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Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Democraidd



To: Cllr Robin Guest (Chairman)

CS/NG

Councillors: Chris Bithell, Derek Butler,
Clive Carver, David Cox, Glenys Diskin,
Ian Dunbar, David Evans, Veronica Gay,
George Hardcastle, Joe Johnson, Rita Johnson,
Dave Mackie, Tim Newhouse, Neville Phillips,
Ian Roberts, Tony Sharps, Paul Shotton,
Nigel Steele-Mortimer, Owen Thomas and
Arnold Woolley

2 January 2014

Maureen Potter 01352 702322
maureen.potter@flintshire.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE** will be held in the **DELYN COMMITTEE ROOM** on **WEDNESDAY, 8TH JANUARY, 2014** at **3.30 PM** to consider the following items.

Please note that the meeting will commence at 3.30pm or on the rising of the Constitution Committee, whichever is the latest.

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

A G E N D A

- 1 **APOLOGIES**
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

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The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English
Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawau gohebiaeth yn y Cymraeg neu'r Saesneg

3 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 4)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting.

4 **ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TRAINING** (Pages 5 - 10)

Report of Democracy and Governance Manager

5 **MEMBER PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS** (Pages 11 - 18)

Report of Democracy and Governance Manager

6 **FEEDBACK ON MEMBER DEVELOPMENT EVENTS** (Pages 19 - 28)

Report of Democracy and Governance Manager

Agenda Item 3

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

17 JULY 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA on Wednesday, 17 July 2013

PRESENT: Councillor Robin Guest (Chairman)

Councillors Derek Butler, David Cox, Veronica Gay, Patrick Heesom, Tim Newhouse, Neville Phillips, Nigel Steele-Mortimer, Owen Thomas and Arnold Woolley

APOLOGIES: Councillors Chris Bithell, Clive Carver, Ian Dunbar, George Hardcastle, Joe Johnson and Paul Shotton.

IN ATTENDANCE: Democracy and Governance Manager, Member Engagement Manager, and Committee Officer

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

There were no declarations of interest.

2. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

The Chairman sought nominations for a Vice-Chairman for the Committee.

Councillor W.O. Thomas proposed that Councillor N.R. Steele-Mortimer be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee. Councillor T. Newhouse seconded the proposal and when put to the vote Councillor Steele-Mortimer was appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor N.R. Steele-Mortimer be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

3. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 24 April 2013, were submitted.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be received, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. ANNUAL REPORTS BY MEMBERS

The Democracy and Governance Manager introduced a report to agree the Council's arrangements for annual reports by Members. He explained that at its meeting on 24 October 2012 the Committee had considered consultation on the draft guidance and advised that the final version of the guidance had been issued in May 2013 and was appended to the report.

The Democracy and Governance Manager advised that the Council was legally required to make the arrangements detailed in Section 5 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011. Once the arrangements had been made it was for individual Members to choose whether or not they made an annual report to be published in accordance with the arrangements.

The Democracy and Governance Manager referred to the new arrangements under the Measure. He advised that it was for individual Councils to determine the conditions that should be imposed on such annual reports by Members and the arrangements it wished to make for them. In response to the draft guidance the Committee had made the point that the final guidance should make it clear that if an individual Member's annual report did not comply with the guidance the Authority should not publish it. Although the final guidance had not incorporated this point the Authority could impose a condition to this effect and also that it complied with the standard template recommended in paragraph 1.6 of the guidance to ensure a uniform format for such reports.

The Democracy and Governance Manager also recommended that a condition be imposed to ensure the contents of the annual report were not defamatory as determined by the Monitoring Officer.

Concerning the arrangements for publishing the annual reports and publicising their availability, he advised that it would be sufficient to publish the annual reports and their availability on the Authority's website

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the following conditions be imposed as part of the arrangements under Section 5 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011:
 - (i). That annual reports by Members must comply with the statutory guidance including the standard template referred to in paragraph 1.6 of that guidance.
 - (ii) That the contents of the annual report are not defamatory in the opinion of the Council's Monitoring Officer.
- (b) That there are sufficient arrangements for publishing the annual reports and publicising their availability if they are published on the appropriate part of the Council's website and their availability publicised on it.

5. MEMBERS TRAINING – CORPORATE PARENTING TRAINING

The Member Engagement Manager introduced a report to consider the recommendations of the Joint Social & Health Care and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 11 June 2013, in relation to corporate parenting training. He advised that during the meeting it had been suggested that corporate parenting training should be made compulsory for all Members and that this was supported by Members of both Committees. The joint Committee had recommended that County Council be asked to consider making corporate parenting training compulsory for all Members and that the training be provided during a future meeting of the County Council.

The Member Engagement Manager advised that the Authority did not have the power to make Member training compulsory. Group Leaders could however be asked to encourage their members to attend. He referred to the suggestions that a Corporate Training session be held either before, during, or after County Council meetings, and explained the reasons why those options would not be conducive to providing meaningful training sessions.

Councillor P.G. Heesom suggested that other methods of enhancing awareness of topics should be explored and cited the use of literature as an example.

Councillor V. Gay referred to the role of school Governing Bodies and asked if training or guidance could be provided to raise awareness of their responsibilities for Looked After Children in school.

During discussion it was proposed and seconded that relevant Cabinet Members and Scrutiny Chairs together with the appropriate officers be requested to facilitate a seminar on the subject of Corporate Parenting and that Group Leaders be asked to request that Members attend such a seminar when arranged.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the appropriate Members and officers be requested to facilitate a seminar on the subject of Corporate Parenting; and
- (b) That Group Leaders be asked to request that Members attend such a seminar when arranged

6. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press or members of the public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 3.35 pm and ended at 4.00 pm)

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Chairman

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 8 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE MANAGER**

SUBJECT: **ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TRAINING**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 For the Committee to consider issues arising from the Overview & Scrutiny training provided by Julia Wright on the 31 October and 1 November 2013.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 As part of the Member development programme for 2013/14 the external trainer, Julia Wright, facilitated training on Overview & Scrutiny. Three options were given for Members to attend on either the afternoon or evening of the 31 October or the morning of the 1 November 2013. Unfortunately only 15 Members attended one of these three sessions. The Member feedback from these sessions was as usual with sessions facilitated by Julia very positive. The details of that feedback appear as part of the report dealing with all Member development events held since the last meeting of the committee later on the agenda.

2.02 Whilst part of the training was to improve listening, questioning and chairmanship skills it also involved obtaining from Members present their views on the current Overview & Scrutiny arrangements and possible areas for improvement. Whilst many positives of the existing arrangements were commented on the purpose of this report is to consider the more significant areas for improvement that were identified.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The first suggestion that the committee is asked to consider is having periodic informal meetings of the Chairs of Overview & Scrutiny Committees. This would provide a mechanism for committee Chairs to informally discuss issues of common interest, to learn from each others experiences and to coordinate forward work programmes of each committee. Historically in the early days of Overview & Scrutiny in Flintshire there was a coordinating body made up of Chairs and Vice Chairs of each of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees. This

later evolved into a formal Co-ordinating Committee and more recently that committee's role has been taken on by the Constitution Committee. The formalities associated with formal committee meetings may however inhibit the mutual sharing of experiences. The only informal meetings that Overview & Scrutiny Chairs (and Vice Chairs) are invited to at present is to meet with members of the Audit Committee two or three times a year to discuss matters of interest common with the committee.

- 3.02 The second significant issue arising from the training was to seek to improve questioning of those who attend before Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Julia Wright advocated more use of the questioning plan which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. It was felt that this was particularly important where outside bodies were attending before the committee so that they knew beforehand the issues that would be raised and would be able to answer questions on those areas. It was also believed that it would enable the committee to work better as a team and for areas of questioning to be given to individual committee members to pursue.
- 3.03 The third issue the committee is asked to consider is the size of Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the use of substitutes. Having 15 elected Members on each committee (and 5 co-opted Members on Lifelong Learning) is slightly above the average size on Overview and Scrutiny Committees in Wales (14). Between 2001 and 2008 the size of Overview & Scrutiny Committees was 11/12/13 Members which worked well.
- 3.04 Overview and Scrutiny Committees have no restrictions on the use of substitutes and at the sessions it was felt this can lead to a lack of continuity and duplication with substitute members raising issues that have been covered in previous meetings. The use of substitutes is restricted for both the Audit Committee and Planning Committee by provisions in the Constitution. In Audit Committee the committee has to agree that there is a good reason for the substitution at the commencement of the meeting and also that any proposed substitute shall have attended the relevant Audit Committee training. With the Planning Committee, in addition to the substitute member having had relevant training, the substitute has to be one of a maximum of three named by each political group. The committee may wish to consider whether any similar restrictions should be introduced on the use of substitutes at Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- 3.05 The next significant issue arising from the training course is related to the number of formal committees and whether more use should be made of less formal member groups. The average number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees in Wales is 4.2 whereas currently in Flintshire we have 6. The committee may wish to consider whether work could more effectively be undertaken by small informal groups of members reporting back to fewer formal Overview and Scrutiny

Committees. One advantage of smaller groups is that the membership can be variable according to the number of members interested in the topic being examined. The less formal setting can also lead to less concern as to how comments may be reported. The work of groups is under the control of the formal committee with its work being reported back to the appropriate committee.

3.06 The last significant area identified during the training course was the need for more focus on the topics that should be examined by Overview and Scrutiny. It was recognised that one of the advantages of Overview and Scrutiny is that it is member led and it is for members to choose their topics rather than officers or any external bodies. Whilst some of our Overview & Scrutiny Committees have an annual forward work programme workshop this needs to be kept up-to-date. The forward work programme is normally the last item on each agenda and this is perhaps the most important item on the agenda. Once a topic has been identified for examination it then involves a lot of member and officer time in pursuing it. It is important that any topic selected merits the resources that will then be devoted to it. It is also important that no major topics are overlooked in preparing forward work programmes and that there is capacity to consider any current major issue that arises.

3.07 Members who attended the training may have other issues that they would wish to be raised when considering this report. The committee's views are sought on not only the specific issues raised in this report, but any others arising from the Overview and Scrutiny training.

4.00 RECOMMENDATION

4.01 For the committee to consider issues arising from the Overview and Scrutiny training.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None as a result of this report.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – Questioning Plan

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

Contact Officer: Peter Evans
Telephone: 01352 702304
Email: peter.j.evans@flintshire.gov.uk

Questioning Plan

<p>Issue 1</p>	<p>Main questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ 3. _____ _____ 	<p>Supplementaries</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Issue 2</p>	<p>Main questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ 3. _____ _____ 	<p>Supplementaries</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Issue 3</p>	<p>Main questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ 3. _____ _____ 	<p>Supplementaries</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 8 JANUARY 2014**

REPORT BY: **DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE MANAGER**

SUBJECT: **MEMBER PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To inform the committee of the arrangements in place for undertaking annual personal development review meetings for Members.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 In accordance with the requirements of the Welsh Local Government Association Charter for Member support and development the Council has had in place for several years various Member role descriptions and arrangements for Members in receipt of special responsibility allowances to have annual personal development review meetings.

2.02 The statutory guidance on the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires all Members (with the possible exception of the Leader) to have the opportunity of annual reviews of their training and development needs. The Democratic Services Committee considered this at its meeting on the 24 July 2012 and resolved that the existing arrangements for Members receiving special responsibility allowances having annual review meetings should be extended to cover all Members.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 It has been previously agreed that the most appropriate time for Members to have their personal development review meetings is during February or March so that any training needs identified can then feed into the preparation of the Member development programme for the following Council year.

3.02 Attached as Appendix 1 to this report is a copy of the guidance for Members on personal development meetings. Attached as Appendix 2 is the personal development plan for an elected Member. Briefing sessions have previously been given on the importance of Members being able to have such an annual meeting and to answer any queries Members may have. If the committee so wish I will arrange further briefing meetings or alternatively all Members know that they can contact me if they have any queries about the process.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the committee notes the arrangements in place enabling all Members to have an annual personal development review meeting if they so wish.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 There has been consultation with Group Leaders in the past.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 There has been consultation with Group Leaders in the past.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 - Guidance on personal development meetings
Appendix 2 – Personal development plan

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

Contact Officer: Peter Evans
Telephone: 01352 702304
Email: peter.j.evans@flintshire.gov.uk

Guidance on Personal Development Meeting for Members

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the personal development meeting is to provide you with an opportunity to review your role generally, consider any specific tasks for the year ahead, consider the areas where you feel confident and identify areas that you might find challenging and may need support and development. You will have an opportunity to identify any learning and development needs which should then be fed back to Member Services for consideration in preparing the annual Member development programme commencing in May.

Preparation

Make contact with your Group Leader or their Deputy to agree the appropriate person to meet with and to arrange a mutually convenient time and place where you can have a confidential and undisturbed conversation lasting about an hour.

Before the meeting consider the personal development plan you completed last year and start to think about preparing this year's plan, consider the role description you have, consider your strengths/weaknesses, specific tasks and challenges and any development needs you have.

Undertaking a Review

The discussion you have with your Group Leader or other appropriate person should be confidential to yourselves. The attached pro forma personal development plan is to provide a structure to the discussion. During the discussion you should complete the plan but the discussion is more important than the paperwork.

Your Group Leader or other experienced Member will help you consider your role/contributions/strengths/weaknesses and training needs. They should act as an objective sounding board. At the start of the meeting they may wish to see the personal development plan you completed last year.

Please note that it is for you to undertake any actions resulting from the meeting and to keep your completed personal development plan but to pass a copy of page 3 to Member Services by the end of March.

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A PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR ELECTED MEMBERS

Name:

Length of service and previous roles as an elected Member:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Current role(s) and responsibilities:
(e.g. Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny Member, Chair, Ward Member, Member of a statutory committee such as Planning, Licensing etc.)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

My strengths are:
(Including your existing personal as well as role skills, knowledge and attributes)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Areas that I would like to develop are:	Preferred method of development (e.g. visits to other authorities, peer networking, practical workshops, e-learning etc.)
Skills (e.g. decision making, meeting management, self presentation, mentoring, consultation etc.)	
Knowledge (e.g. the Code of Conduct, equalities, the planning process, local policy etc.)	

Action Plan for this year for Councillor:

Area for development	How?	Priority	How will I know if this development has been successful?
One of the areas from those identified above that you'd like to address this year	Your preferred method of development for this area eg. seminar	Rate in order of importance	What sort of things would you be expecting to be able to do or do differently as a result of this activity?

When completed please give a copy of this page to Member Services

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**
DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 8 JANUARY 2014**
REPORT BY: **DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE MANAGER**
SUBJECT: **FEEDBACK ON MEMBER DEVELOPMENT EVENTS**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To provide the committee with feedback on Member development events since these were last reported to committee.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 At all Member development events the Members present are asked to complete an evaluation form giving their feedback on it. It is the practice to provide an analysis of this feedback to meetings of this committee on a regular basis.

2.02 Since feedback was last reported to the committee there have been the following Member development events:-

- 24 September - Planning/Flood Risk Strategy
- 10 October - Writing Community Newsletters and Websites
- 15 October - Planning/Flood Risk Strategy
- 25 October - Public Law Outline and Corporate Parenting
- 31 October - Effective Overview & Scrutiny (2 sessions)
- 1 November - Effective Overview & Scrutiny
- 15 November - The Role of the Planning Inspectorate

The graphs showing the feedback received for each of the above are attached as Appendices to this report.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 It is considered important to receive Member feedback on development events to monitor the quality of them and to identify any issues that can be improved for future Member development events.

3.02 One issue that the committee may wish to consider is the poor attendance at some of the development events.

3.03 In addition to the analysis in the appendices, which is very positive, Members may wish to make observations on their experience of any events they attended or make suggestions for improvements for future Member development events.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That Members consider the feedback in the appendices so as to inform arrangements for future Member development events.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None as a result of this report.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None as a result of this report.

12.00 APPENDICES

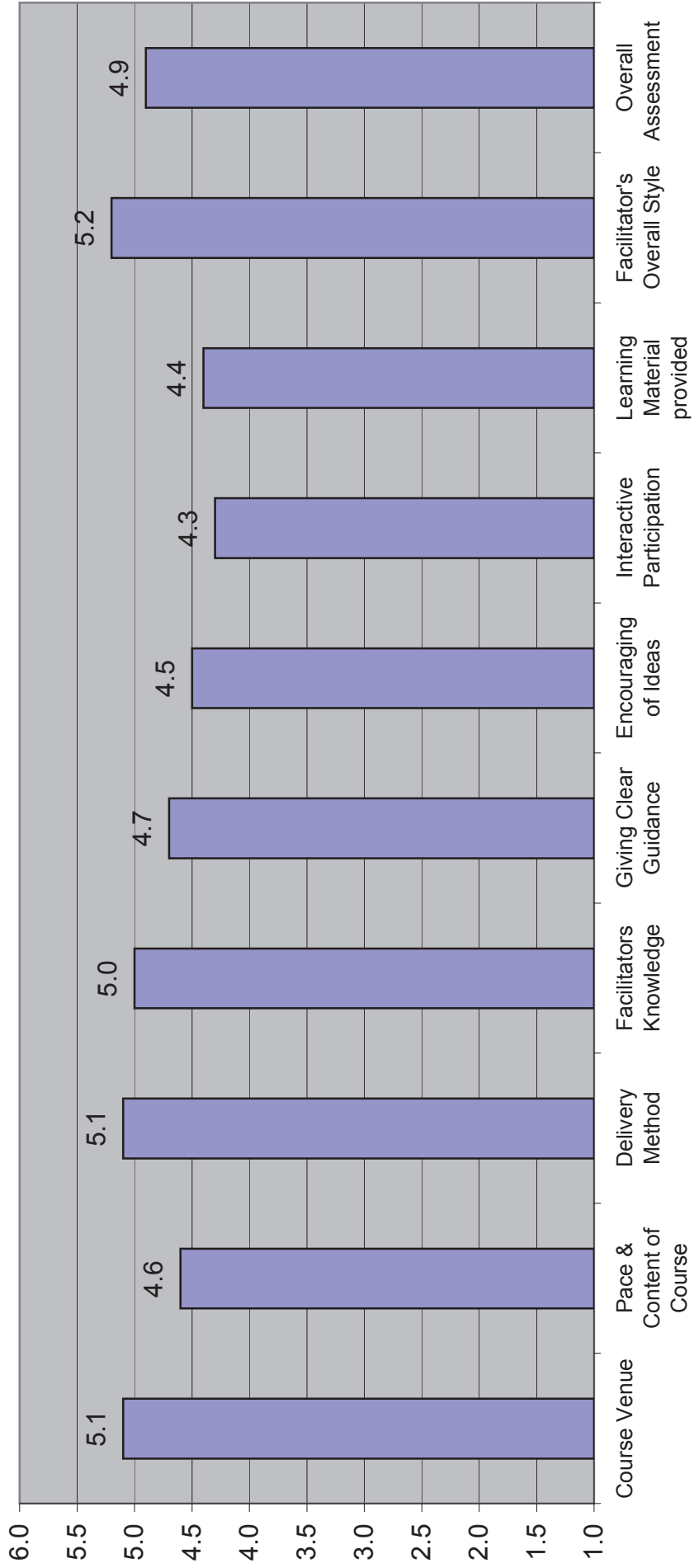
12.01 Appendix 1 - Graphs showing feedback

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

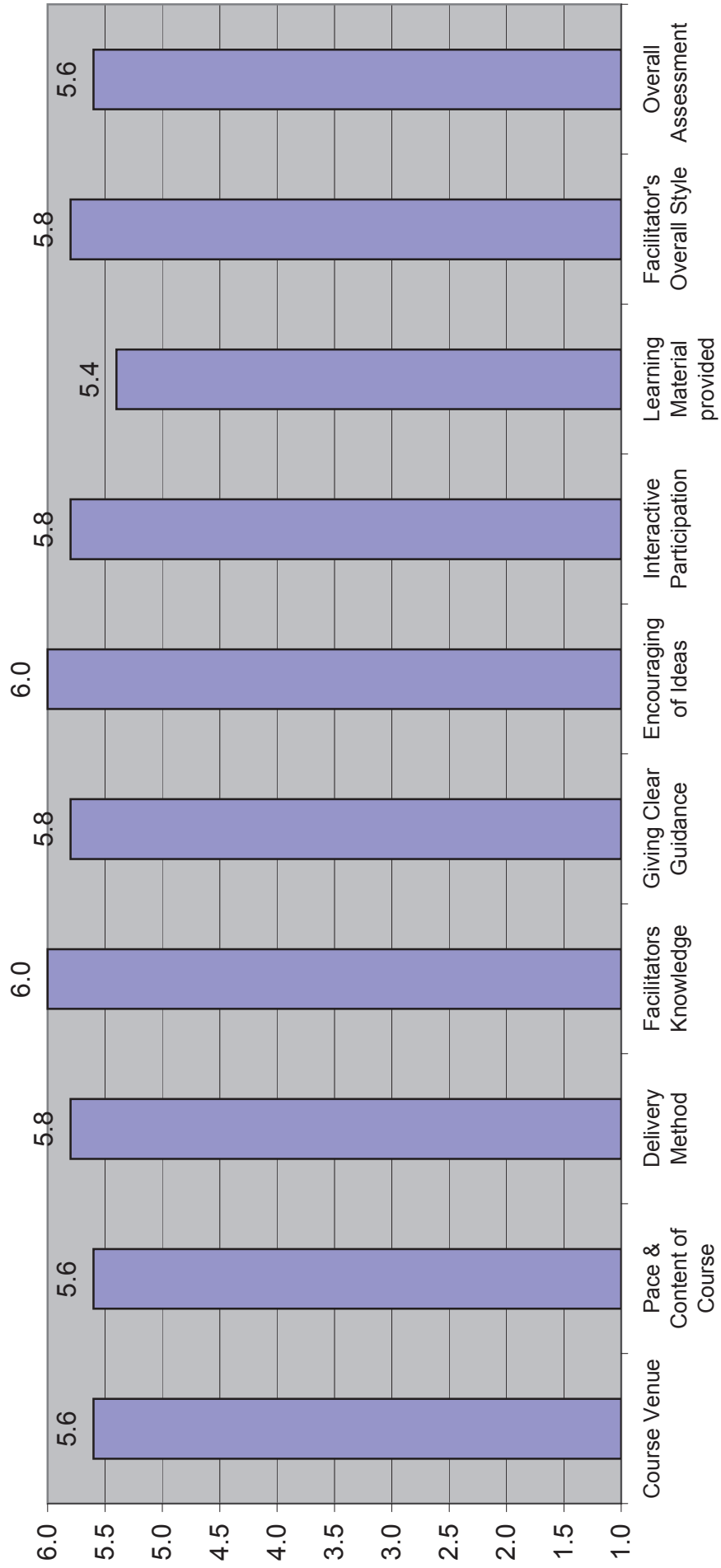
Contact Officer: Peter Evans
Telephone: 01352 702304
Email: peter.j.evans

**Member Training - Planning/Flood Risk Strategy
 24th September 2013, 10.00 am - 1.00 pm - Delyn Room
 Lead Officer: Andy Farrow - 10 Attendees**



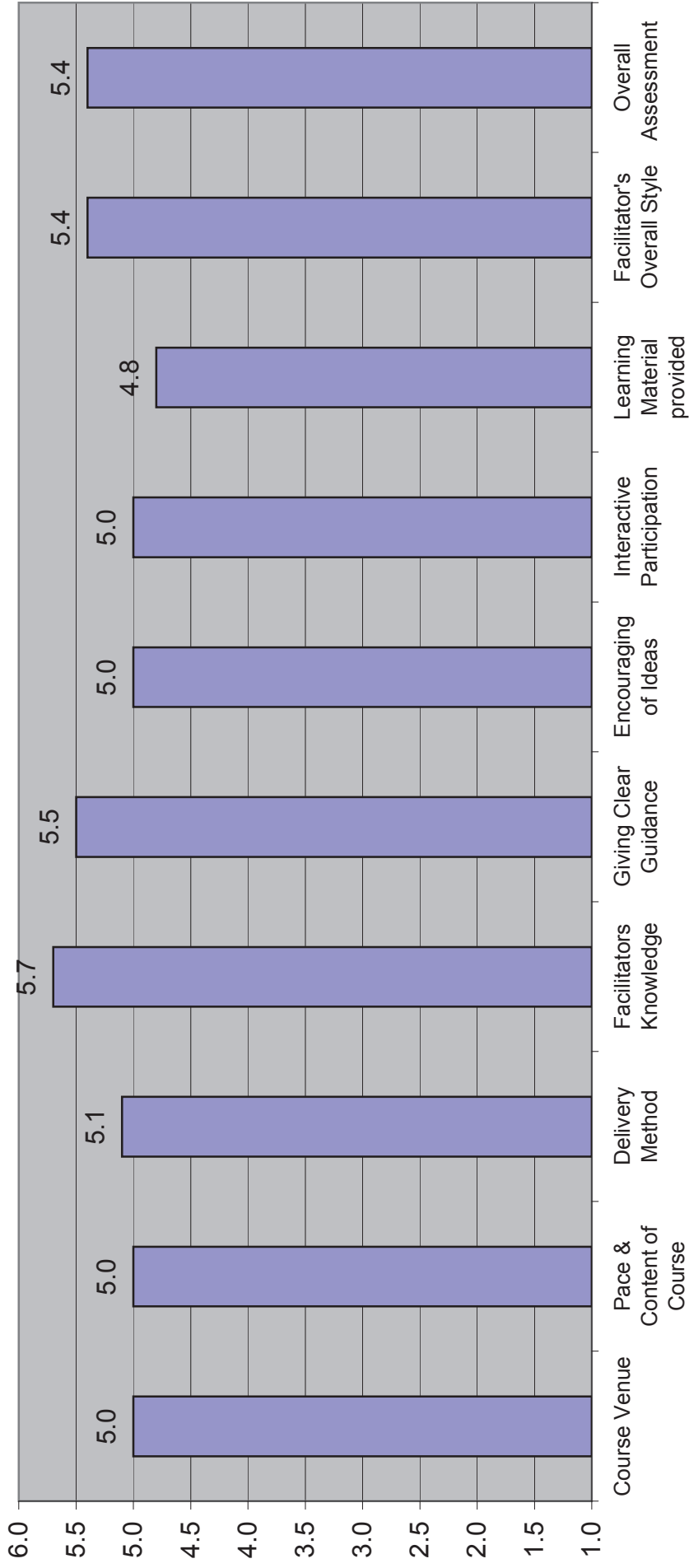
1 Poor - 6 Excellent

**Member Training - Writing for Community Newsletters & Websites
 10th October 2013, 6.30 pm - 9.30 pm - Clwyd Room
 Lead Officer: Barbara Milne - 7 Attendees**



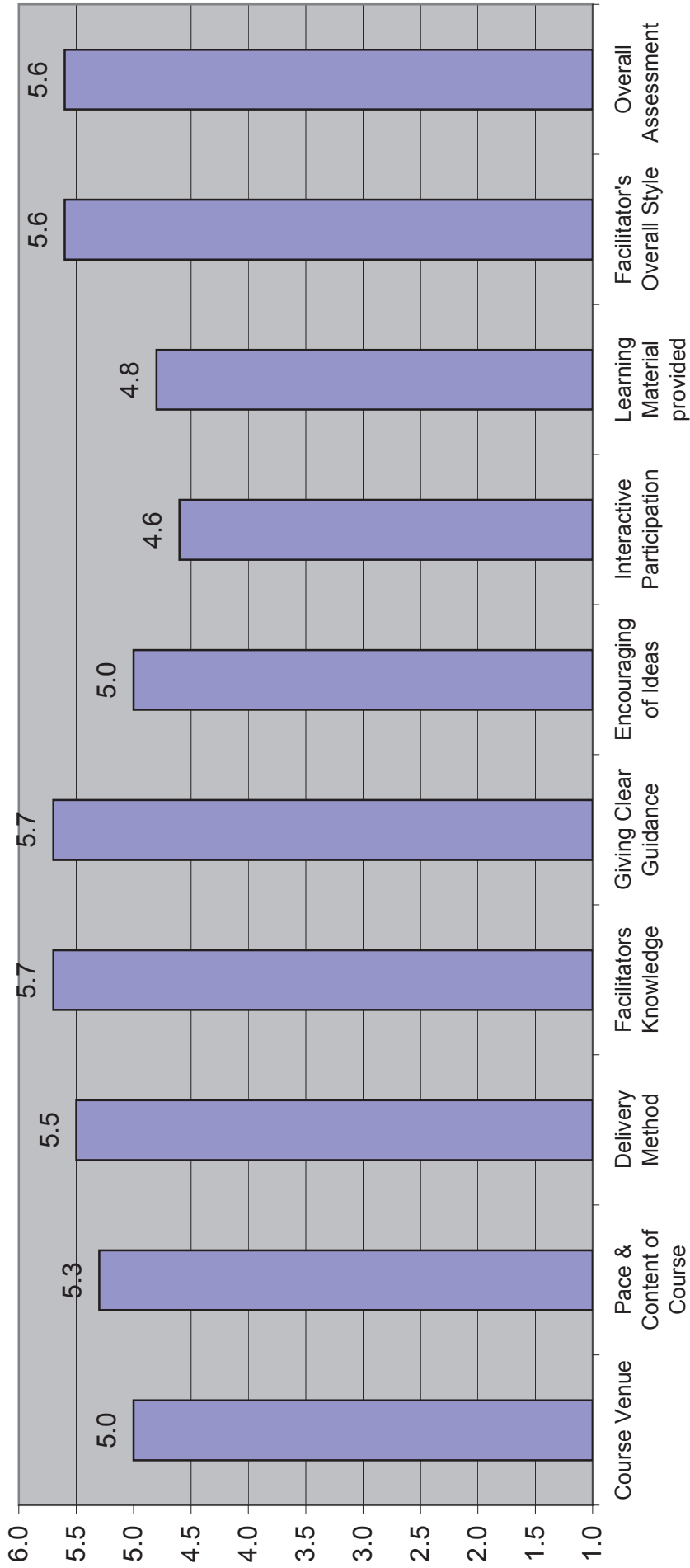
1 Poor - 6 Excellent

**Member Training - Planning/Flood Risk Strategy
 15th October 2013, 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm - Delyn Room
 Lead Officer: Andy Farrow - 14 Attendees**



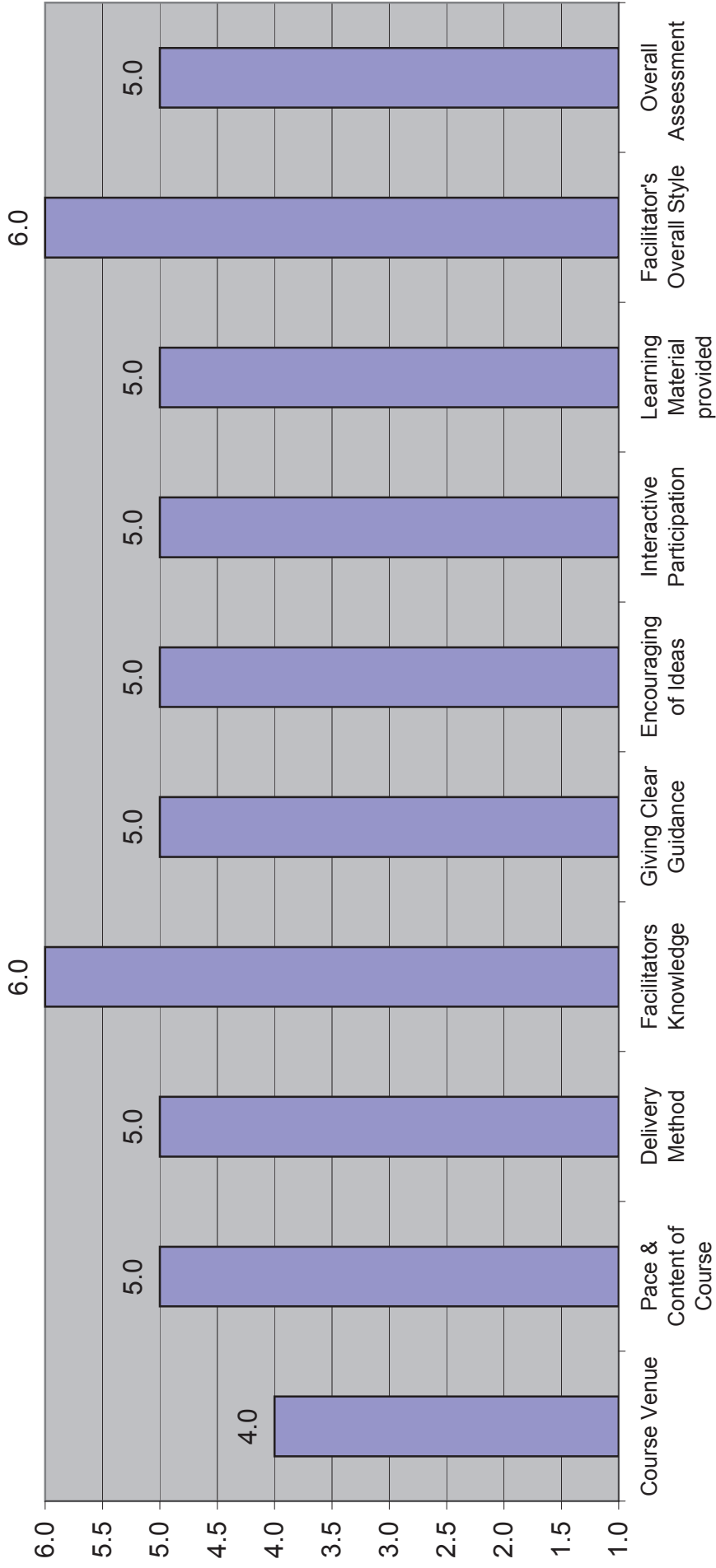
1 Poor - 6 Excellent

**Member Training - The Role of the Planning Inspectorate
 15th November 2013, 10.00 am - 1.00 pm - Alyn & Deeside Room
 Lead Officer: Richard Popleton - 25 Attendees**



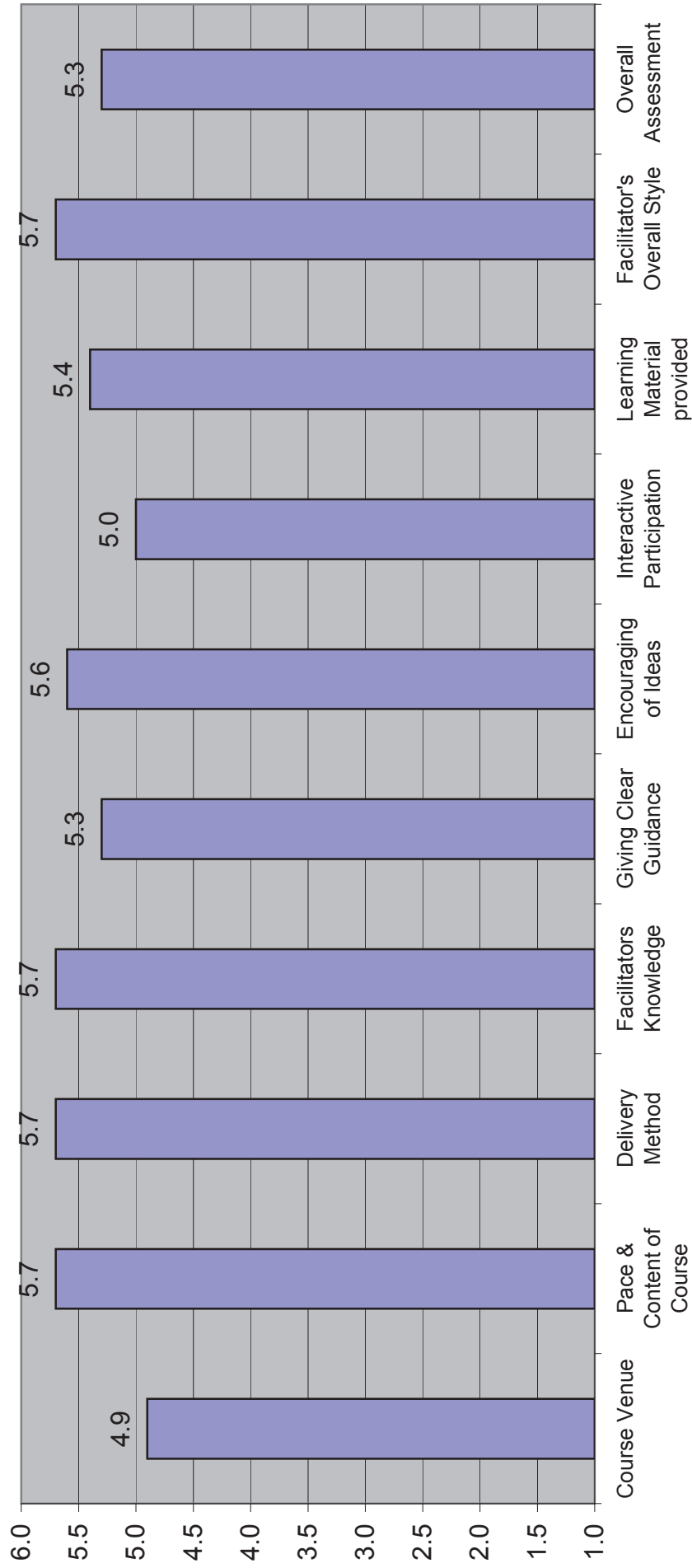
1 Poor - 6 Excellent

**Member Training - Public Law Outline & Corporate Parenting Seminar
 25th October 2013, 10.00 am - 12.20 pm - Alyn & Deeside Room
 Lead Officer: Carol Salmon - 18 Member Attendees**



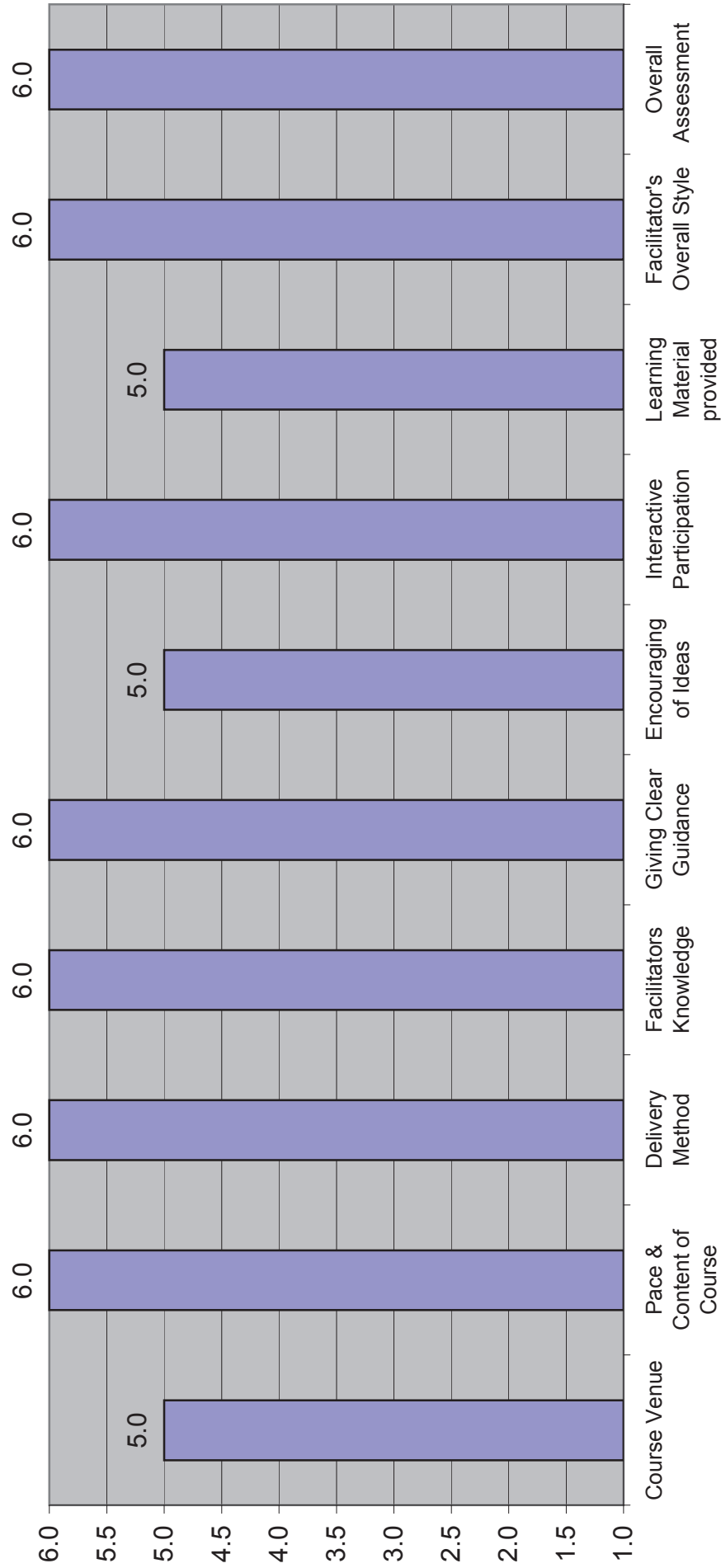
1 Poor - 6 Excellent

Member Training - Effective Overview & Scrutiny
31st October 2013, 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm - Clwyd Room
Lead Officer: Julia Wright - 9 Attendees



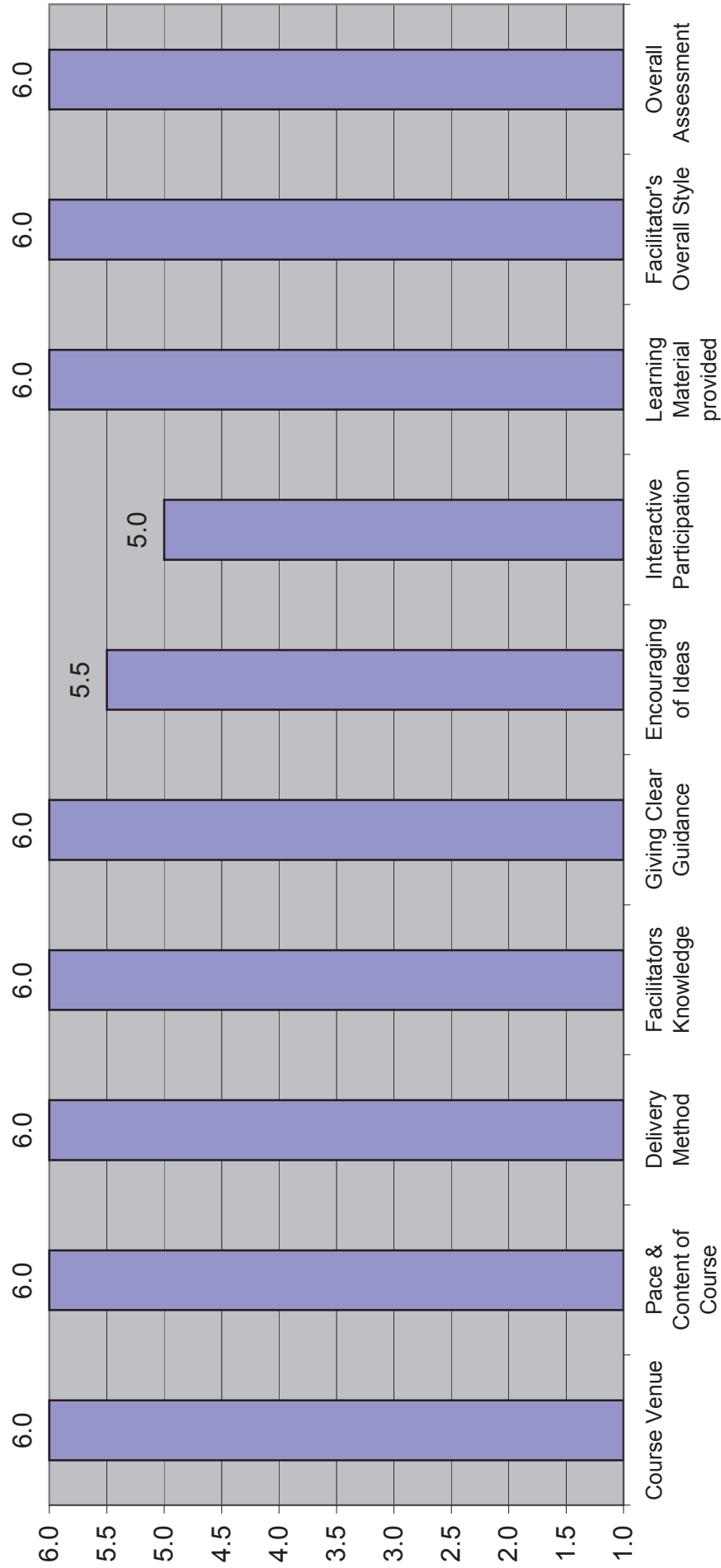
1 Poor - 6 Excellent

Member Training - Effective Overview & Scrutiny
31st October 2013, 6.00 pm - 9.00 pm - Clwyd Room
Lead Officer: Julia Wright - 3 Attendees



1 Poor - 6 Excellent

Member Training - Effective Overview & Scrutiny
1st November 2013, 9.30am - 12.30 pm - Clwyd Room
Lead Officer: Julia Wright - 3 Attendees



1 Poor - 6 Excellent