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Gareth Owens LL.B Barrister/Bargyfreithiwr
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Democraidd



To: Cllr Robin Guest (Chairman)

CS/NG

Councillors: Chris Bithell, Clive Carver, David Cox,
Glenys Diskin, Ian Dunbar, David Evans,
Veronica Gay, Ron Hampson, 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

20 March 2014

Maureen Potter 01352 702322
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Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE** will be held in the **DELYN COMMITTEE ROOM** on **WEDNESDAY, 26TH MARCH, 2014** at **2.00 PM** to consider the following items.

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

A G E N D A

- 1 **APOLOGIES**
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**
- 3 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 4)
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting.

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

- 4 **TRIAL OF REMOTE ATTENDANCE AND WEBCASTING** (Pages 5 - 8)
To inform the committee of the arrangements for remote attendance and webcasting to be trialled at the meeting and at the Constitution Committee meeting that follows.

- 5 **POSSIBLE REDUCTION IN SIZE OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEES** (Pages 9 - 12)
To consider recommending a reduction in the size of both the Democratic Services and Constitution Committees.

- 6 **FEEDBACK ON MEMBER DEVELOPMENT EVENTS** (Pages 13 - 22)
To provide the Committee with feedback on Member development events since these were last reported to Committee.

Agenda Item 3

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE **8 JANUARY 2014**

Minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee of Flintshire County Council held in County Hall, Mold on Wednesday, 8 January 2014

PRESENT: Councillor Robin Guest (Chairman)

Councillors: Chris Bithell, David Cox, Ian Dunbar, David Evans, Veronica Gay, George Hardcastle, Dave Mackie, Tim Newhouse, Neville Phillips, Paul Shotton, Nigel Steele-Mortimer, and Arnold Woolley

APOLOGIES: Councillors Derek Butler, Glenys Diskin, Joe Johnson, Ian Roberts, and Owen Thomas

SUBSTITUTION: Councillor Jim Falshaw for Clive Carver

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Aaron Shotton

IN ATTENDANCE:

Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Democracy and Governance Manager, Member Engagement Manager, and Committee Officer

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

9. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 July 2013, were submitted.

Annual reports by Members

The Democracy and Governance Manager advised that he had written to all Members concerning publicising the availability of annual reports on the Council's website and had asked Members to notify him of such reports by the end of January 2014.

Corporate Parenting Training

Councillor Chris Bithell expressed disappointment at the low attendance for the Corporate Parenting seminar.

RESOLVED:

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

10. ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TRAINING

The Democracy and Governance Manager introduced a report to consider issues arising from the Overview and Scrutiny training provided by Julia Wright on the 31 October and 1 November 2013.

The Democracy and Governance Manager gave an overview of the key considerations which were detailed in the report. The Committee was asked to consider and comment on each of the issues in turn.

- On the suggestion that the Committee considered having periodic informal meetings of the Chairs of Overview & Scrutiny Committees, the Democracy and Governance Manager advised that the Constitution Committee had agreed to the creation of an Overview & Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Steering Group at the meeting of the Committee preceding this meeting.
- In relation to the need to seek to improve questioning of those who attend before Overview and Scrutiny Committees it was agreed that use should be made of the questioning plan which was appended to the report. It was acknowledged that this was particularly helpful where outside bodies were attending before the committee and that it would also assist with committee team work and areas of questioning for individual Members to pursue.
- Concerning the size of Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the use of substitutes, it was agreed that there was no need to change the current arrangements.
- Regarding the suggestion of whether more use should be made of less formal member groups, Members commented on the work currently undertaken by Task and Finish Groups and decided that no action was required.
- Members expressed a number of views in relation to the need for more focus on the topics that should be examined by Overview and Scrutiny, and it was agreed that the issue be given further consideration by the individual Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

RESOLVED:

That the issues arising from the Overview and Scrutiny training be noted.

11. MEMBER PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS

The Democracy and Governance Manager introduced a report on the arrangements in place for undertaking annual personal development review meetings for Members. He advised that the most appropriate time for Members to have their personal development review meetings was during February or March so that any training needs identified could be fed into the preparation of the Member development programme for the following Council year.

RESOLVED:

That the arrangements in place to enable all Members to have an annual personal development review meeting be noted.

12. FEEDBACK ON MEMBER DEVELOPMENT EVENTS

The Democracy and Governance Manager introduced a report to provide feedback on Member development events since last reported to the Committee. The report referred to the poor attendance at some events.

Councillor Chris Bithell commented on the poor attendance at the Corporate Parenting seminar and emphasised the importance of training in this area. He expressed the view that Corporate Parenting training should be made compulsory for Members. The Chairman commented on the need for further clarification around the role and responsibilities of Members as Corporate Parents concerning children's welfare and agreed to pursue this with appropriate members and officers.

Councillor Veronica Gay spoke in support of the importance of the various training provided and the information and knowledge gained.

Councillor Neville Phillips referred to the number of development events which had been held recently and asked if training sessions could be more evenly distributed across a twelve month period. The Democracy and Governance Manager acknowledged the point and explained that when an external provider was engaged to provide training, to keep costs to a minimum, the provider may be appointed for a day or two and Members would be expected to attend only one of a number of events offered at the time.

During discussion it was agreed that Group Leaders be asked to encourage their members to attend Member development events.

RESOLVED:

That Group Leaders be asked to encourage their Members to attend Member Development events.

13. PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

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

14. DURATION OF MEETING

The meeting commenced at 3.00 pm and finished at 4.15 pm.

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Chairman

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 26 MARCH 2014**

REPORT BY: **DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE MANAGER**

SUBJECT: **TRIAL OF REMOTE ATTENDANCE AND
WEBCASTING**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To inform the committee of the arrangements for remote attendance and webcasting to be trialled at the meeting and at the Constitution Committee meeting that follows.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 Section 4 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 allows Councils to make arrangements for Members to attend meetings remotely provided that that Member is able to be seen and heard by Members in actual attendance and that the Member in remote attendance is able to hear and see those in actual attendance.

2.02 Last year the Welsh Government consulted on draft guidance relating to remote attendance and that guidance was considered at the Constitution Committee meeting on the 17 July 2013. The final guidance has yet to be published by the Welsh Government. There are no legal provisions relating to webcasting of meetings but the Welsh Government see it as a way of making Council meetings more accessible.

2.03 Flintshire and other Councils in Wales have received grant funding from the Welsh Government to enable it to investigate the use of remote attendance and webcasting of meetings. The conditions attached to that grant were that by the 31 March 2014 there should be a written report on the meetings at which there had been remote attendance and present on the Council's website broadcast of meetings. A failure to meet these conditions would lead to the grant being repayable.

2.04 Following a procurement exercise the Council has entered into a contract with Public-i for remote attendance and webcasting at meetings of the Democratic Services and Constitution Committee meetings on the 26 March 2014.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.01 The grant awarded to the Council is a one off grant and it has been made clear that there is no commitment to ongoing funding to meet ongoing costs associated with remote attendance and webcasting. In its response to consultation on the draft guidance concerning remote attendance the Council raised concerns about the staffing implications and other ongoing costs of complying with that draft guidance. This may lead to changes being made in the final guidance when it is issued.
- 3.02 For the purposes of this trial the remote attendance will be from the video conference room so that if there are problems the meeting can be adjourned for the Member to actually attend the meeting. Councillor Newhouse has agreed to attend remotely from the video conference room.
- 3.03 The webcasting of the meeting is dependant upon Members using the microphones to speak and sitting in the places allocated to them for these two meetings.
- 3.04 Following the meeting Members are asked to complete a feedback questionnaire to assist in the evaluation of the trial and the preparation of a report on it. The evaluation results will be reported to the next meeting of the committee.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.01 That Members note the arrangements made for a trial of remote attendance and webcasting at the meetings of the Democratic Services and Constitution Committee.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.01 The trial will enable the Council to satisfy the conditions of the Welsh Government grant of £40K.

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 With the chair and vice chair of the committee.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 With the chair and vice chair of the committee.

12.00 APPENDICES

None

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

None

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 26 MARCH 2014**

REPORT BY: **DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE MANAGER**

SUBJECT: **POSSIBLE REDUCTION IN SIZE OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEES**

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To consider recommending a reduction in the size of both the Democratic Services and Constitution Committees.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 A councillor has asked for consideration to be given to reducing the size of both the Democratic Services and Constitution Committees from 21 to 15 Members. The Chair has agreed to this being considered.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 Attached as Appendix 1 is a record of attendances at meetings of the Democratic Services and Constitution Committees over the last 12 months. This shows that the average number of Members attending a meeting of the Democratic Services Committee is 12. The Committee may therefore consider that as a result of this the size of the Committee can be reduced.

3.02 The Chair of both Committees makes the point that there is little that can be done to vary the content of matters coming before each Committee and that if some Members are not sufficiently interested to attend, this should be taken note of. The size of the committee is not a measure of its importance.

3.03 Both the Democratic Services Committee and Constitution Committee have the same membership and chair so as to facilitate both Committees meeting on the same day and one immediately following the other. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires that Democratic Services Committees limit the matters such committees can consider and therefore prevents it being combined with the Constitution Committee.

3.04 The committee needs to consider whether reducing its size would improve its effectiveness and what is the most appropriate size for the committee.

3.05 If this Committee wishes to reduce its size, then this would need to be agreed by the Constitution Committee which would also need to consider reducing its own size to correspond.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 For the Committee to consider whether it wishes to reduce its current size.

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 With the Chair of the Democratic Services and Constitution Committees.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – Attendance Records

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

None

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APPENDIX 1

**Attendance at Constitution Committee and
Democratic Services Committee Meetings**

Date of Meeting	Constitution Committee	Democratic Services Committee
17 July 2013	11	10
16 October 2013	9 (including 1 substitute)	Cancelled
8 January 2014	15 (including 1 substitute)	14 (including 1 substitute)
Average	12	12

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FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

DATE: **WEDNESDAY, 26 MARCH 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:

- 14 January – Noise from Development & Planning Bill for Wales
- 23 January – Digital Inclusion
- 27 January – Treasury Management
- 31 January – Planning Bill for Wales
- 11 February – Community Safety
- 21 February – The Role of the Planning Inspectorate
- 21 February – The Assessment of Noise from Development
- 27 February – Digital Training

2.02 The graphs showing feedback received for each of the above are attached as Appendix 1 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 In addition to the analysis in Appendix 1, 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

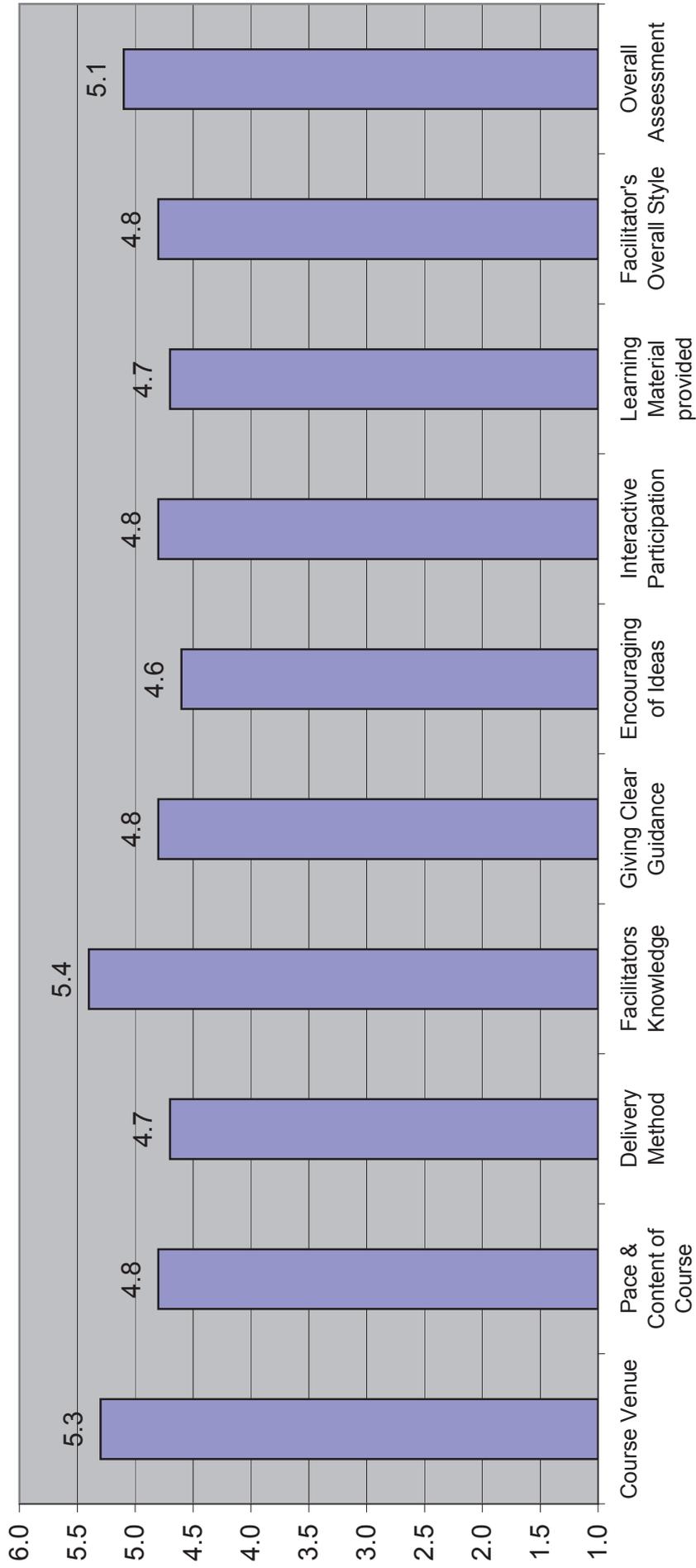
Appendix 1 - graphs showing feedback received for each training session.

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

No background documents.

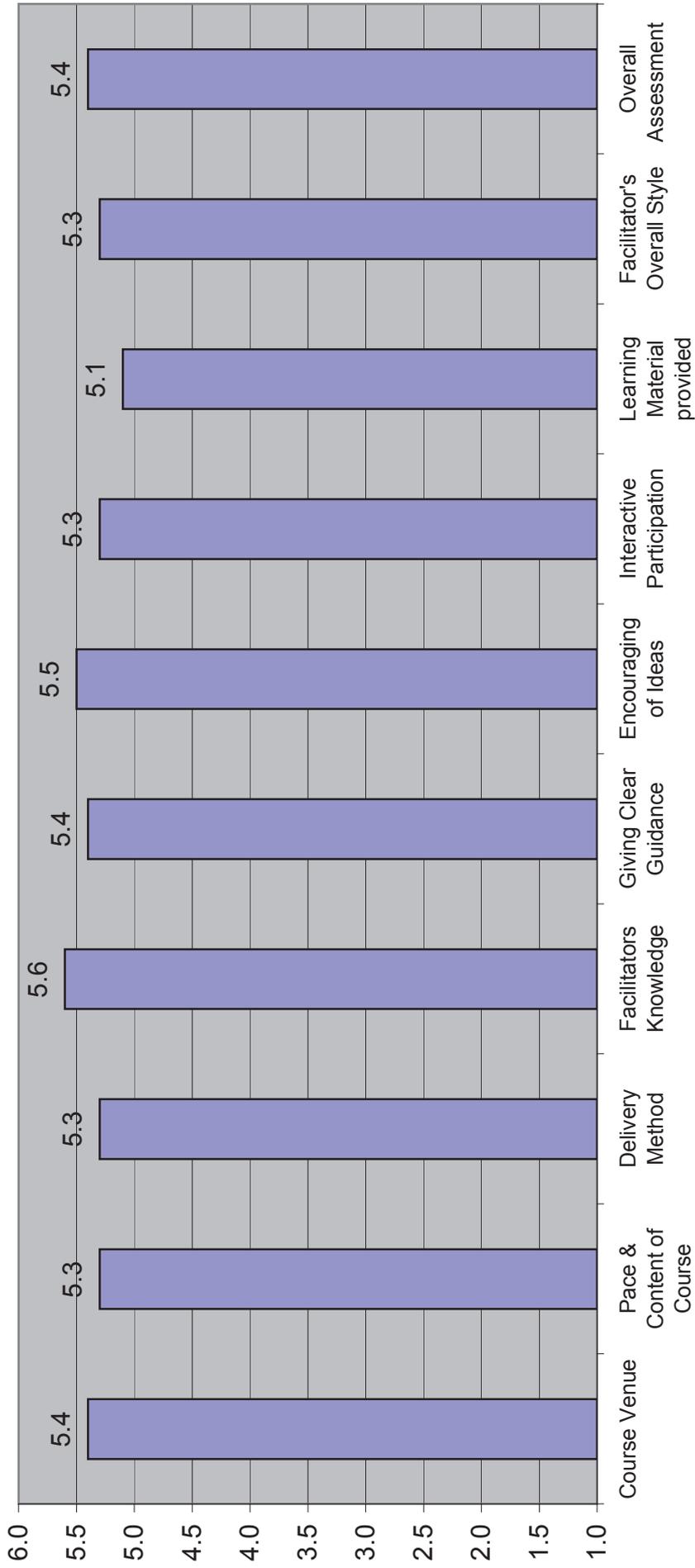
Contact Officer: Peter Evans
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**Member Training - Assessment of Noise from development & consultation on the
 Planning Bill for Wales
 14th January 2014, 10.00 am - 1.00 pm - Delyn Room
 Lead Officer: Andy Farrow & David Jones - 14 Member's Attended**



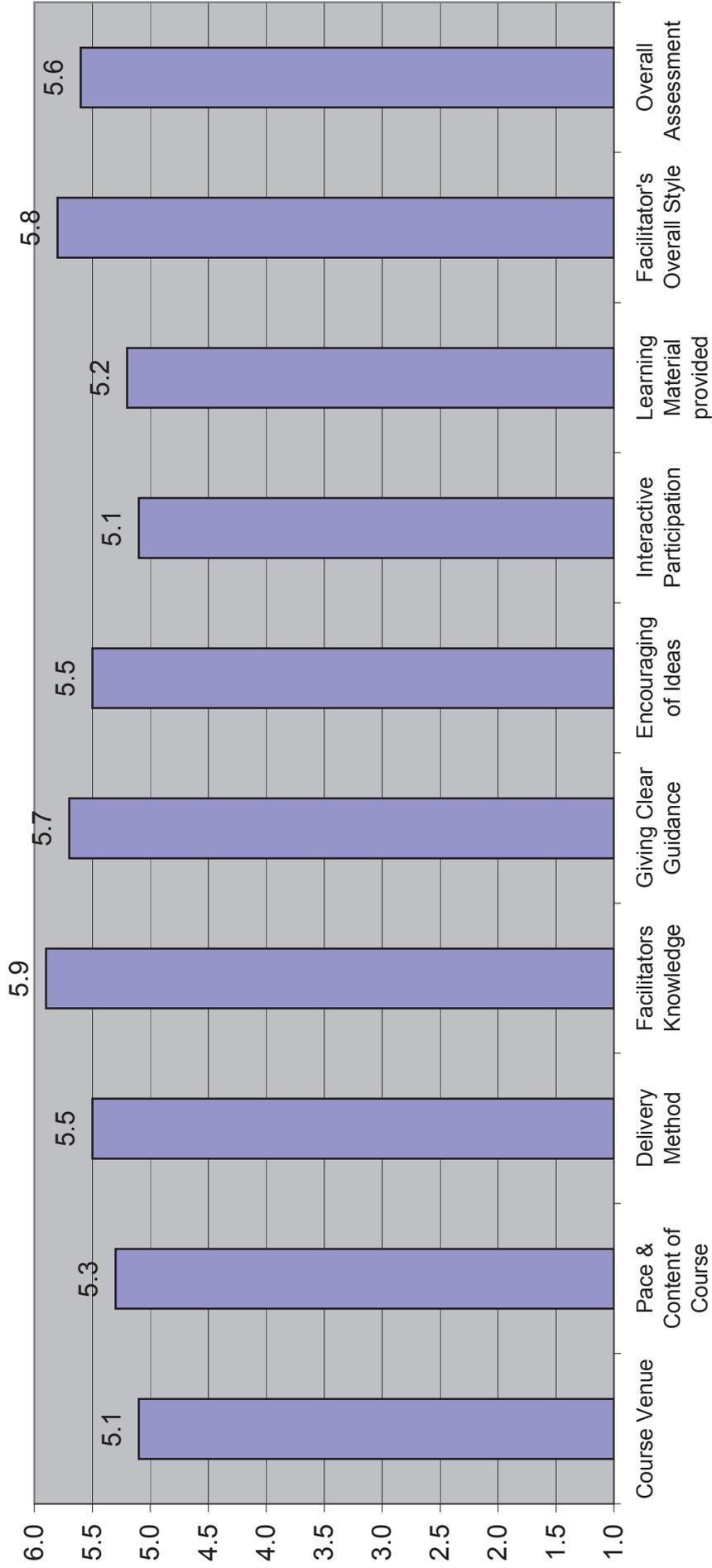
1 Poor - 6 Excellent

**Member Training - Digital Inclusion
 23rd January 2014, 1.00 pm - 4.00 pm - Video Conference Room
 Lead Officer: Kevin Roberts - 10 Attendees**



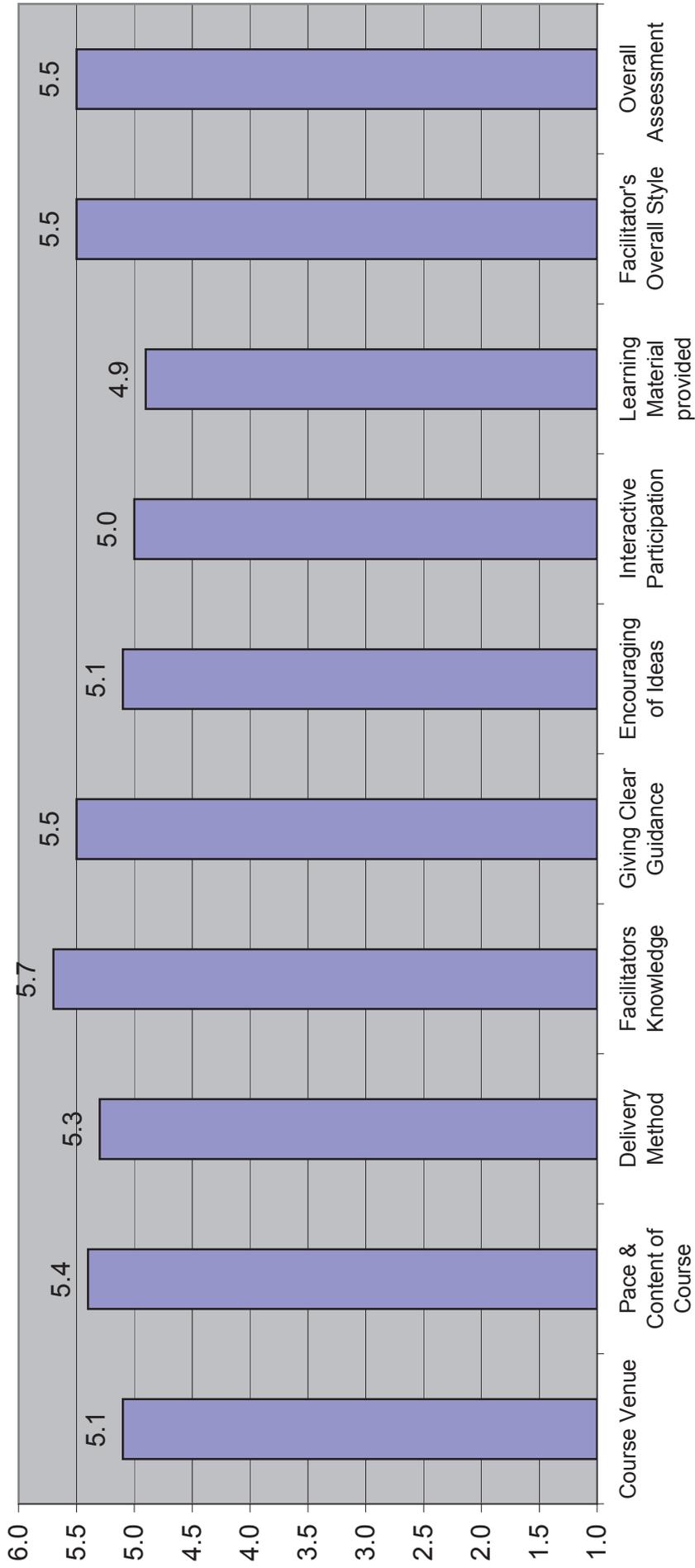
1 Poor - 6 Excellent

**Member Training - Treasury Management
 27th January 2014, 10.00 am - 1.00 pm - Alyn & Deeside Room
 Lead Officer: N. Keeling (Arlingclose Ltd)- 21 Member's Attended**



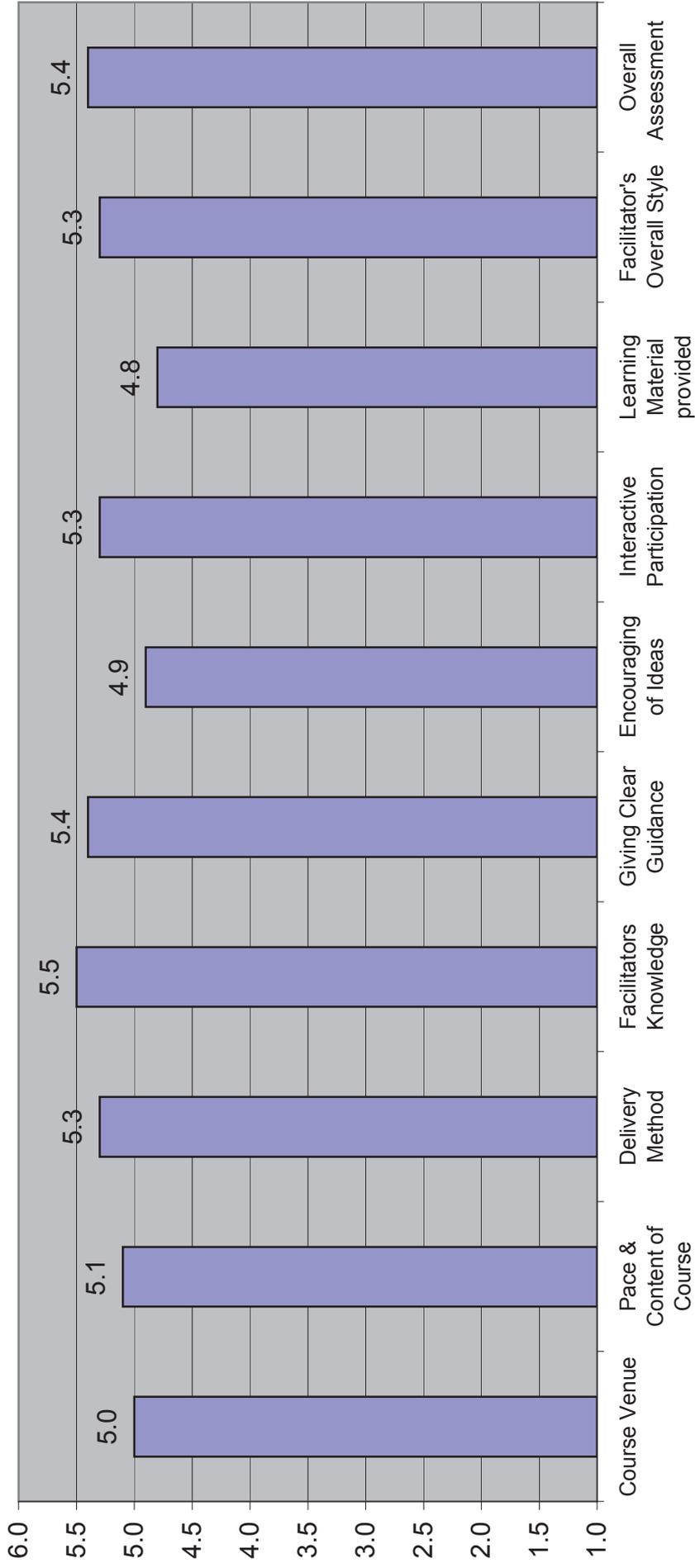
1 Poor - 6 Excellent

**Member Training - Planning Bill for Wales
 31st January 2014, 10.00 am - 1.00 pm - Alyn & Deeside Room
 Lead Officer: Andy Farrow - 16 Member's Attended**



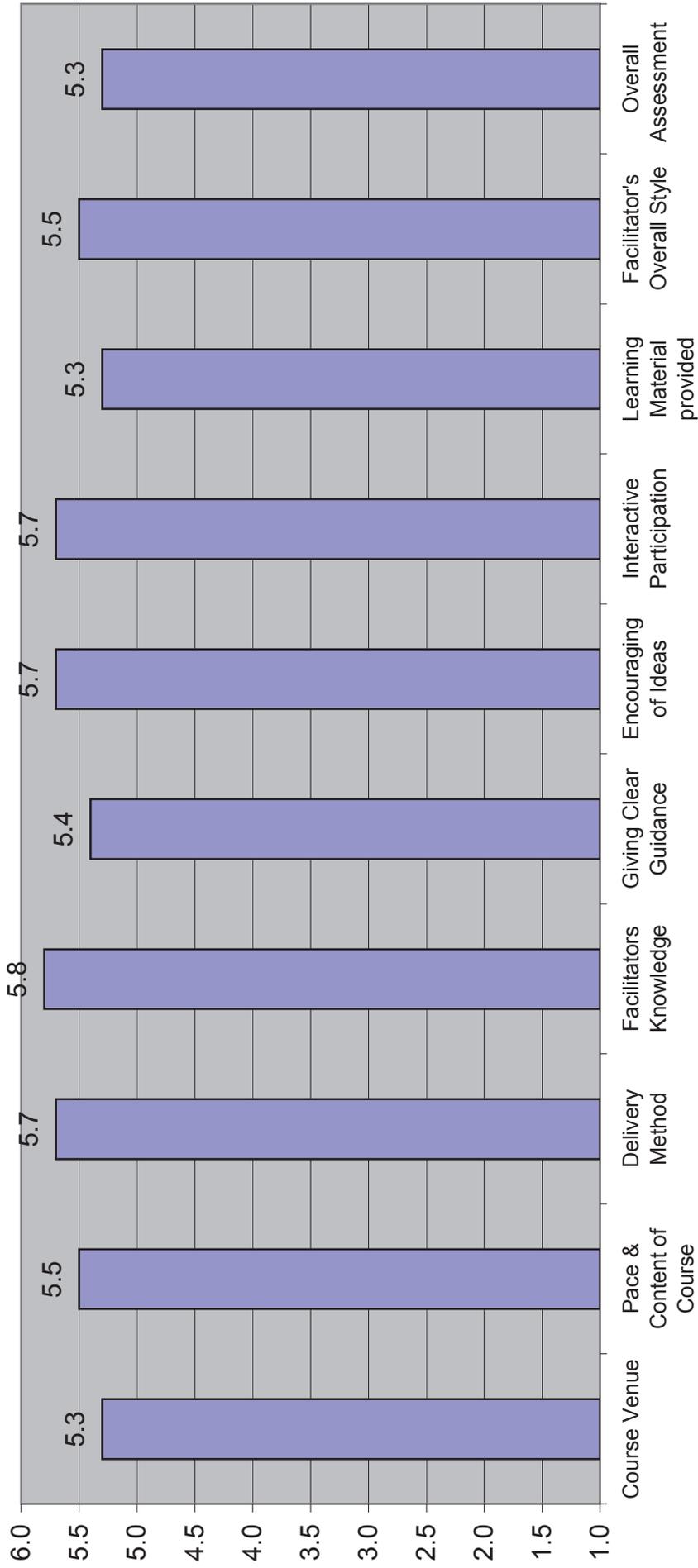
1 Poor - 6 Excellent

**Member Training - Community Safety & Reassurance in Flintshire Training
 11th February 2014, 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm - Alyn & Deeside Room
 Lead Officer: Sian Jones - 9 Member's Attended**



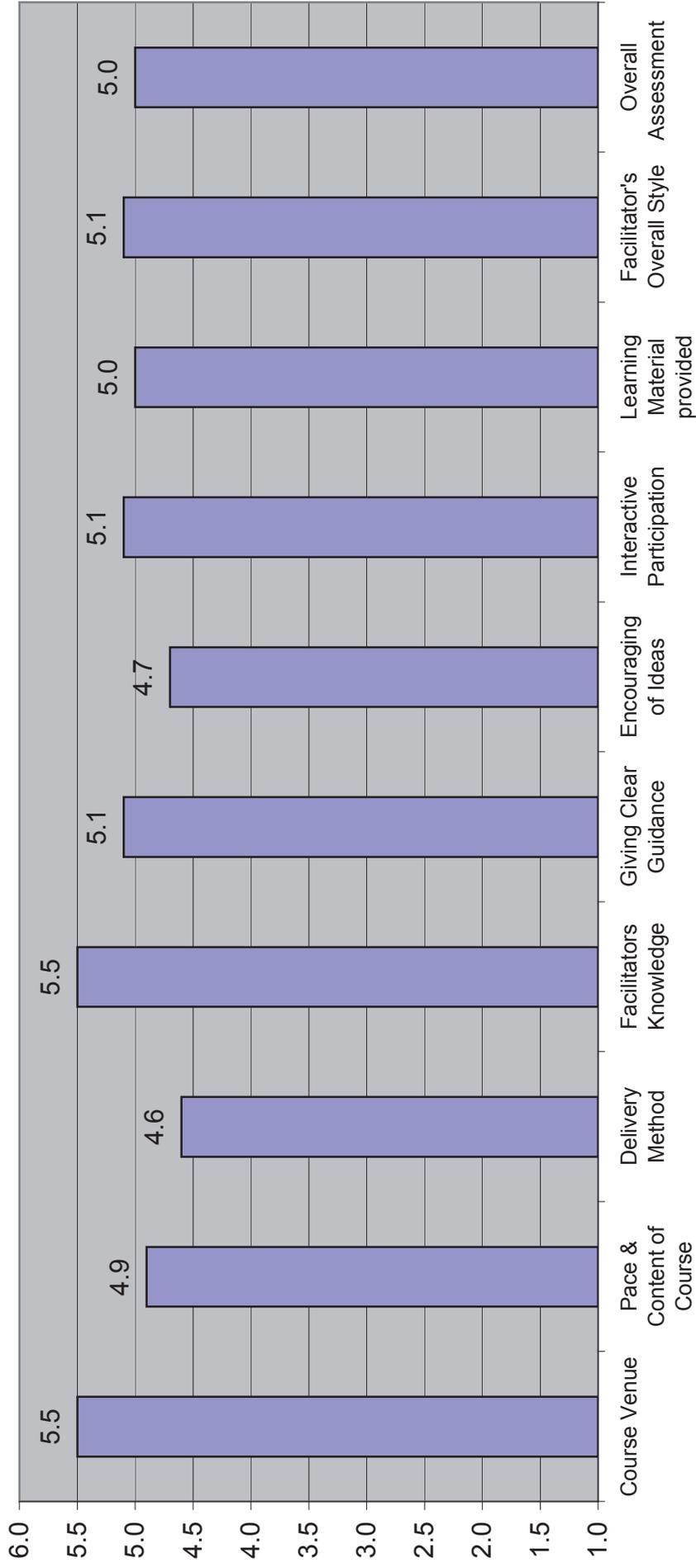
1 Poor - 6 Excellent

**Member Training - The Role of the Planning Inspectorate
 21st February 2014, 3.30pm - 5.00 pm - Clwyd Room
 Lead Officer: Andrew Farrow - 12 Attendees**



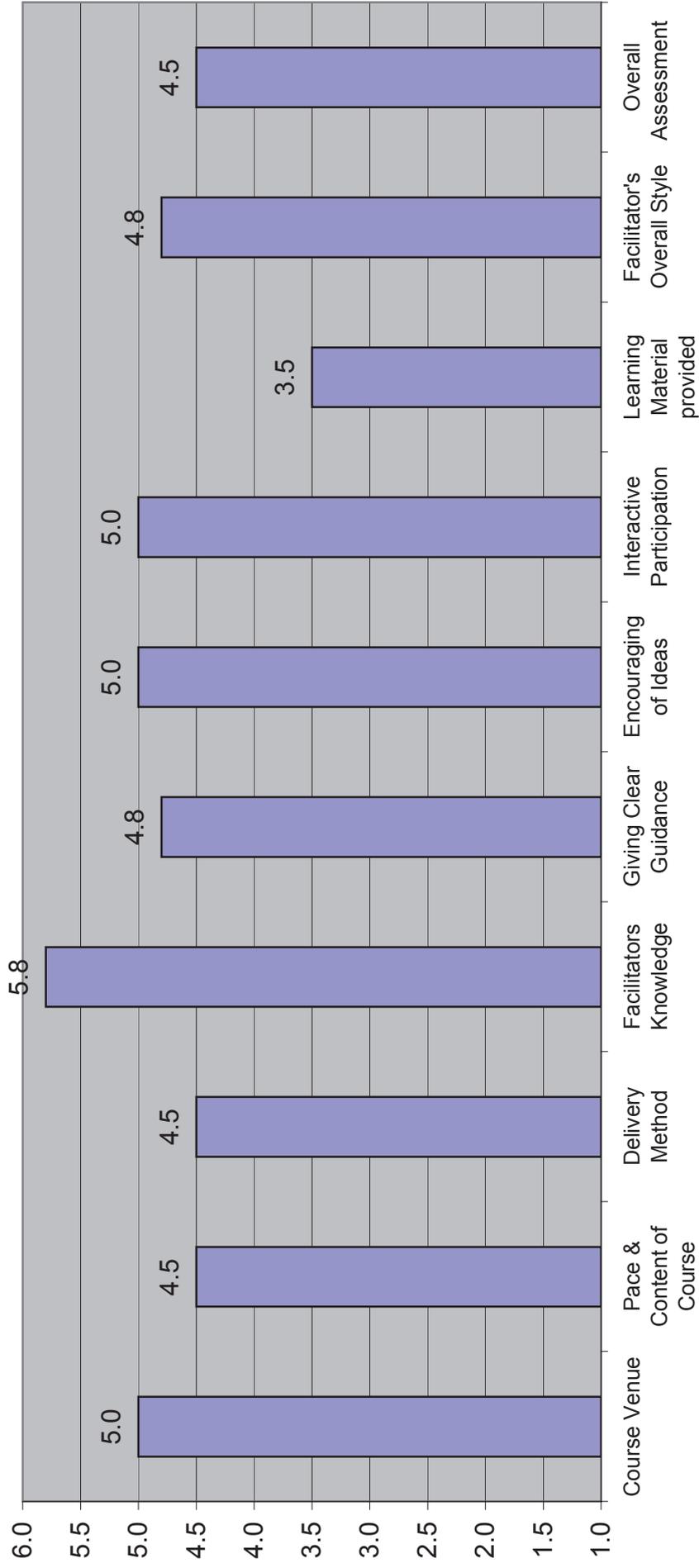
1 Poor - 6 Excellent

**Member Training - Assessment of Noise from Development
 21st February 2014, 2.00 pm - 3.15 pm - Clwyd Room
 Lead Officer: David Jones - 16 Attendees**



1 Poor - 6 Excellent

**Member Training - Digital Inclusion
 27th February 2014, 9.30am - 12.30 pm - Video Conference Room
 Lead Officer: Kevin Roberts - 4 Attendees**



1 Poor - 6 Excellent