

Revised Calendar of Meetings 2020/21

Report of the Corporate Portfolio Holder

Recommended:

- 1. As a pilot and with effect from 19 May 2021, the frequency of Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny meetings be moved from a 4 week to a 5/6 weekly cycle, for the municipal year 2021/22.**
- 2. A review of the new arrangements be reported to Council in February 2022.**
- 3. That the draft Calendar of Meetings for 2021/22, as set out in the Annex to the report, be approved.**

SUMMARY:

- This report sets out proposals to extend the time between regular meetings of Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny in order to facilitate the business of the Council in a timelier manner and to better align with the Council's reporting deadlines.
- To approve the draft Calendar of Meetings for 2021/22.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Council considered and approved the Calendar of Meetings for 2021 at its meeting held on the 20 November 2019.
- 1.2 The Annex to this report puts forward for approval a revised Calendar of Meetings for 2021/22. The calendar follows the same general frequency of meetings for the majority of the Committees with the exception of Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny which are set out on a 5 and 6 weekly meeting frequency.
- 1.3 In order to better facilitate the Council's business, in particular to better align with the financial deadlines of the Council, it is proposed that Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny meetings are held on 6 weekly basis where previously these committees were scheduled to meet every 4 weeks.
- 1.4 Moving to a position where there is greater time between meetings allows for the business of the Council to be progressed in a more meaningful and effective way. The proposed new schedule allows Members and Officers to progress work and report back to future meetings in timely manner taking into account the legal requirements for agenda publication.

- 1.5 Greater time between meetings will allow the development of work to be progressed and allow Members and Officers to engage in more detailed development of ideas, consultation and to participate in training and development. More time between Overview and Scrutiny meetings for example, will allow greater opportunity for Members to engage in round table discussions and task and finish panels.

2 Background

- 2.1 Should there be business that requires consideration at Committee between scheduled meetings there remain a number of options in order to ensure business is progressed as need. The Chairman is able to call additional meetings of the Committee and Officers and Portfolio Holders are able to make decisions outside of committee on matters in accordance with the Constitution.
- 2.2 Key date changes are set out below:
- 2.3 Council meetings
- 2.4 The total number of Council meetings scheduled throughout the year remains unchanged, with 6 meetings plus Annual Council.
- 2.5 Annual Council 2021 has been put back a week from Wednesday 12 May 2021 to Wednesday 19 May 2021 to allow time for the agenda to be finalised taking into account any changes resulting from the elections due to be held on Thursday 6 May 2021.
- 2.6 Council originally scheduled to take place on 17 November 2021 has been brought forward a week to 10 November 2021 to better meet with the Council's financial requirements.
- 2.7 Council originally scheduled for Wednesday 23 February 2022 has been moved back to Friday 25 February 2022 to better align with the Council's financial requirements.
- 2.8 Annual Council 2022 originally scheduled for 11 May 2022 has been moved back a week to Wednesday 18 May 2022.
- 2.9 Cabinet
- 2.10 Cabinet meetings will take place beginning on Wednesday 26 May 2021 and are scheduled to be held every 5/6 weeks depending on the Council's reporting deadlines. The intention was to scheduled Cabinet every six week, however there are some instances where Cabinet is schedules to meet with a 5 week gap in order to better meet the Council's reporting deadlines.
- 2.11 There is a 4 week gap between Cabinet on 29 September 2021 and Cabinet on 27 October 2021 in order to meet with financial reporting deadlines.
- 2.12 Cabinet will no longer have a summer recess with the revised meeting frequency continuing through August.

- 2.13 Under the new proposals, a total of 10 Cabinet meetings are scheduled for 2021/22 where previously there were 11.
- 2.14 Overview and Scrutiny
- 2.15 Overview and Scrutiny meetings are held the week following Cabinet. This meeting pattern is proposed to continue with Overview and Scrutiny scheduled to meet every 5/6 weeks, the week immediately after Cabinet.
- 2.16 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will no longer have a summer recess with the revised meeting frequency continuing through August.
- 2.17 Under the new proposals, a total of 10 Overview and Scrutiny meetings are scheduled for 2021/22 where previously there were 11.
- 2.18 It is proposed that a review of the new meeting frequency of Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny be undertaken ahead of Annual Council 2022 to consider the new arrangements and whether they should continue.

3 Corporate Objectives and Priorities

- 3.1 The Councils Committees are required in order to progress the business of the Council in accordance with legislation. An efficient and effective calendar of meetings directly contributes to all of the Council's corporate objectives and priorities.

4 Options and Option Appraisal

Option 1 – to not amend the Council's Calendar of meetings for 2021/22.

- 4.1 Council approved the Calendar of Meetings 2021 at its meeting on 20 November 2019. Council could choose not to approve the changes to the calendar as set out in the report and continue to meet as set out in the calendar previously approved.

Option 2 –to amend the Council's Calendar of meetings for 2021/22.

- 4.2 This is the recommended option.
- 4.3 It is proposed that for a pilot period of one year that the meeting frequency of Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny move from 4 weekly to a 5/6 weekly cycle in order to allow more time between meetings to allow Members and officers to undertake work in a more effective manner and to better align with the Council's reporting requirements.

5 Risk Management

- 5.1 A Risk Management questionnaire has been completed and indicates this report does not require a risk assessment because the changes/issues covered by this report are not significant in terms of risk or have previously been considered.

6 Resource Implications

6.1 No additional resource implications have been identified.

7 Legal Implications

7.1 Full Council approved the Council's Calendar of meetings each year. It is for Council to decide the frequency of meetings for each of the Committees.

8 Equality Issues

8.1 None.

9 Other Issues

9.1 Community Safety – none.

9.2 Environmental Health Issues – none.

9.3 Sustainability and Addressing a Changing Climate – none.

9.4 Property Issues – none

9.5 Wards/Communities Affected – none

10 Conclusion

10.1 The revised Council Calendar of meetings 2021/22 provides a schedule which increases the length of time between regular ordinary meetings of Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny to allow Members and officers more time to progress business and report back to future meetings in a more effective way and to better aligns with the Council's reporting deadlines.

Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

Report to Council 20 November 2019.

Confidentiality

It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.

No of Annexes:

1

File Ref

N/A

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Report to

Council

Date

26 February 2021