

Decision Maker: GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Date: 9 February 2021

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2021/22

Contact Officer: Graham Walton, Democratic Services Manager
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Chief Officer: Mark Bowen, Director of Corporate Services

Ward: All

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report presents the draft programme of meetings for the next Council Year (2021/22) for Members' consideration. The proposed timetable, which has been the subject of extensive consultation, is based broadly on the current timetable, with only minor alterations. Should Members subsequently agree any changes to the current committee titles at the annual Council meeting these changes will be accommodated within the approved timetable.
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2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) **That, subject to any changes of meeting arrangements subsequently approved by Members, the programme of meetings for 2021/22 be approved.**
- (2) **That the Director of Corporate Services be authorised to adjust the programme in accordance with any changes made to committees by Members, and to make minor corrections to the programme as necessary.**

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: Not Applicable
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council:
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: No Cost:
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Democratic Services
 4. Total current budget for this head: £359k (2020/21)
 5. Source of funding: Revenue Budget
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 7 posts (6.67fte)
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not applicable
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None: Although the Council is required to hold an annual meeting and to appoint an Executive and a scrutiny committee the Council can set its own meeting dates.
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable: This report does not involve an executive decision
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Not Applicable
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Yes
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Any comments from individual Members will be reported at the meeting.

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The Council's programme of meetings is agreed each year by this Committee, and the proposed programme for 2021/22 is attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2 Since 2012, the overall number of programmed meetings has been reduced, allowing savings to be made in staff costs and other ancillary cost savings – heating, lighting, and preparation and distribution of reports. The proposed Programme for 2021/22 has been prepared closely resembling the programme for 2020/21.
- 3.3 As in previous years, every effort has been made to avoid more than one meeting being held on the same evening. The proposed programme has been prepared on the basis that the current Executive and Committee decision-making structures will continue in the same form next year. If Members do make any alterations to these then the programme can be adapted accordingly. Dates can still be changed or removed by individual Chairmen and Committees, and special meetings can still be arranged when necessary. In response to Member comments, the draft programme includes various daytime meetings where these dates are available.
- 3.4 The programme has to fit in with key timelines relating to financial management and reporting, including the setting of the Council Tax and annual budget, the reporting of statutory accounts and budget monitoring cycles. The programme also has to take account of public holidays, school holidays and election dates.
- 3.5 A meeting of the Executive, Resources and Contracts PDS Committee is always scheduled for the week before each Executive meeting to facilitate pre-decision scrutiny. Other PDS meetings are also now aligned more closely with the Executive across five cycles of meetings, enabling reports to be scrutinised, where necessary, at service PDS Committees before final consideration at the Executive. At the request of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, meetings of the Development Control Committee are also more evenly spaced, about eight weeks apart.
- 3.6 The draft programme has been circulated to all Members and to senior officers, and a number of detailed changes have been made in response to the comments received. Any further comments will be reported at the meeting.
- 3.7 The programme of meetings can apply to either meetings held in person or online meetings. The current temporary provisions that allow local authorities in England to hold online meetings expire on 7th May 2021, meaning that after this date committees can only meet in person. The Government is being lobbied to extend this facility, or make it permanent, but at present its position is that there is no space in the legislative programme to do this.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children/Policy/Finance/Personnel/Legal/Procurement
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Previous reports to this Committee on the Programme of meetings