

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: **General Purposes and Licensing Committee**

Date: **16th February 2011**

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

Title: **PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2011/2012**

Contact Officer: Graham Walton, Democratic Services Manager
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Chief Officer: Mark Bowen, Director of Legal, Democratic and Customer Services

Ward: N/A

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report presents the draft timetable of meetings for the next Municipal Year for Members' consideration. At the last meeting of the General Purposes and Licensing Committee on 20th October 2010, Councillor Nicholas Bennett suggested that the Annual Council meeting should be moved by one week from the proposed date of 11th May 2011 to 18th May 2011; this report reflects that change. Since then, further consultation with Members has been carried out on the basis of a reduced programme, with meetings restricted to three days per week – two versions are attached for Members' consideration. In view of the major changes proposed to the programme it is recommended that Council be asked to take a final decision on this new approach.
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2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **That the Committee recommends to Council that an amended Programme of Meetings for 2011/2012 be agreed, as set out in either option 1 or option 2.**

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing policy. A Programme of meetings is approved each year by this Committee.
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council.
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: N/A
 2. Ongoing costs: N/A.
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Democratic Services
 4. Total current budget for this head: £1,753,921 (20010/11)
 5. Source of funding: Existing budgets
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): There are 10 posts in the Democratic Services team
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Preparation of the Programme of meetings, including extensive consultation, involves approximately 6 staff hours.
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: No statutory requirement or Government guidance.
 2. Call-in: Call-in is not applicable. The Programme does not involve an executive decision, and Council is recommended to take a final decision.
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): 100 plus. Copies are distributed to all Members of the Council and Chief Officers and are available to senior officers and partnership bodies on request.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 At its last meeting on 20th October 2010, the Committee considered a draft Programme of Meetings for 2011/2012. This Programme had been prepared closely resembling the Programme for the current year which was issued following approval by the Committee on 16th December 2009. Copies of the draft Programme had been circulated for consultation with the Party Group Leaders/Secretaries, all Portfolio Holders, Committee and Sub-Committee Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen and Chief Officers. As in previous years, every effort was made to avoid more than one meeting being held on the same evening but, having regard to other constraints some clashes were found to be unavoidable.
- 3.2 At the meeting on 20th October 2010, Councillor Nicholas Bennett proposed that the 2011 annual Council meeting should be moved back a week from 11th to 18th May. The Committee decided to defer a decision for this change to be made, along with the consequent alterations that would be needed, and to allow for further general consideration of the programme.
- 3.3 Since the Committee's meeting in October, officers have explored options on meeting arrangements to provide budget savings. These have been built into the options in this report. The main changes proposed are –
- Reducing the number of programmed meetings. This will allow savings to be made in staff costs, primarily in Democratic Services but also across the Council, and other ancillary cost savings – heating, lighting, and preparing and distributing reports. Special meetings can still be arranged when necessary. Nearly 30 meetings have been taken out of the proposed programmes.
 - Consolidating meetings around three evenings a week rather than four. This enables Civic Centre support and security to be better focussed, leading to further savings. Programmes have been prepared on the basis of Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights (option 1) and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights, with Council remaining on a Monday (option 2). Option 1 offers slightly more savings, but requires moving Plans Sub-Committees from their traditional Thursday evening slot.
 - A change in arrangements for Plans Sub-Committees, by reducing the number of Sub-Committees from four to three, while maintaining the current fortnightly frequency of meetings. This will provide savings in Members' Allowances. If Members prefer to keep four Sub-Committees, the programme can easily be altered as there are no changes to the actual dates of meetings.
 - Guillotining meetings at 9pm or 9.30pm, and moving additional meetings to the daytime, will produce further savings.
- 3.4 Option 3 gives a draft programme based on no changes to the current arrangements. The overall reductions proposed in the annual numbers of timetabled meetings under options 1 and 2 are as follows -

	Current (P/A) <i>(option 3)</i>	Proposed (P/A) <i>(options 1 & 2)</i>	Saving (P/A)
Council	5	5	-
CONCLUSION	4	2	2
Executive	11	7	4
I&E Sub	5	3	2
E&R PDS	14	8	6
A&C PDS	6	6	-
CYP PDS	9	6	3
ENV PDS	7	6	1
PPS PDS	7	5	2
R&R PDS	5	5	-
DC	9	6	3
GP&L	8	6	2
Audit	4	3	1
Pensions Invest	4	4	-
LJCC	4	2	2
Adoption	12	12	-
Plans	25	25	-
TOTAL	139	111	28

Non-Applicable Sections:	Policy, Financial, Legal and Personnel implications.
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Previous programmes of meetings and covering reports