

Subject: Review of Meetings Timetable
Date of Meeting: 10 March 2009
Report of: Director of Strategy & Governance
Contact Officer: Name: **Mark Wall** Tel: **29-1006**
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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 To look at the proposed schedule of meetings for the municipal year 2010/11 based on the current meetings timetable and taking into account the local elections in May 2011.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the proposed timetable of meetings for 2010/11 be approved.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

Existing Arrangements

- 3.1 The timetable of meetings for 2009/2010 was based on the new executive arrangements for the council and took account of the need for changes in the frequency of meetings that had become apparent as part of the review of meetings in the first year of the new arrangements. This saw a reduction in the overall number of scheduled meetings and this will be monitored as part of the 12-month review of the constitution.
- 3.2 The proposed timetable for 2010/11 maintains a similar cycle of meetings and takes into account the local elections to be held in May 2011. In summary, the proposals are:-

Executive Meetings:

Cabinet meeting: 4 weekly
Environment CMM: 6 weekly
Housing CMM: 6 weekly

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Adult Social Care & Health, Children & Young People, Finance, Central Services, Culture, Recreation & Tourism, Enterprise, Employment & Major Projects CMM's: Quarterly

Full Council and Regulatory Committees:

5 Ordinary Council meetings, plus the Annual Council and Budget Council

Governance: 8 weekly

Planning: 3 weekly

Audit and Standards: Quarterly

Licensing: 3 meetings a year

Personnel Appeals: Monthly

Overview & Scrutiny:

Overview & Scrutiny Commission: 6 weekly

Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee: 6 weekly

Adult Social Care & Housing, Children & Young People, Culture, Tourism & Enterprise, Environment & Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committees: 8 weekly.

Partnerships:

Children's Trust Board: 6 meetings

Joint Commissioning Board: Quarterly

- 3.3 The proposed timetable for 2010/11 provides for a total of 153 meetings (see Appendix 1).

Governing Principles for the Meetings Timetable

- 3.4 The following guidelines have been applied in reviewing the meetings timetable:
- As far as possible clashes of meetings have been avoided. However, inevitably, given the constraints of avoiding school/public/religious holidays and the number of meetings to be accommodated on specific days of the week, there are occasions where there are overlaps of meetings. This has been exacerbated in March/April 2011 because of the elections in May 2011 and seeking to enable Members to be free from council business in the run up to the elections.
 - What appear at the moment to be "free" days will be filled by Licensing Panel hearings and the various chairman's and political group meetings.

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- As far as possible meetings have not been scheduled on Fridays.
 - As far as possible school holidays, religious holidays and party conference weeks have been avoided, although it has not been possible to keep those weeks completely clear.
 - Meeting start times generally are scheduled for 4pm or later to encourage public attendance. However, Cabinet Members and Committees can determine whether to continue with the programmed start time or if an alternative time would be more appropriate for their particular meeting.
- 3.5 There must be a sufficient number of meetings to enable the council business to be transacted. The schedule of Council and Cabinet meetings is designed to ensure that:-
- Committee and Scrutiny reports can be received without undue delay;
 - consideration of the various plans and strategies to be adopted by Full Council can be accommodated;
 - there is scope to accommodate city-wide debates if necessary; and public interest and participation through questions and deputations continues to be facilitated.
- 3.23 The Overview & Scrutiny Commission is programmed to meet once a cycle in line with the Overview and Scrutiny rules.
- 3.24 Whilst every effort will be made to keep meetings on the dates listed there may be a need to alter them and additional meetings may be required for dedicated debates on key issues or particular plans and strategies.
- 3.25 As usual, a number of further meetings, which are not part of the formal meetings cycle, have been programmed to meet on a regular basis e.g. the Community Safety Forum. In addition dates have yet to be finalised for the Cabinet Sustainability Committee, the Inclusive City Partnership and the Sustainability Partnership.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Leading Members, Directors and appropriate officers have been consulted on the proposed timetable and appropriate committee and council dates set to meet statutory requirements.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from the report.

Finance officer consulted: Anne Silley

12 February 2009

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Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The proposed timetables of meetings does not prevent the calling of Special Meetings or the use of Urgency Sub-Committee meetings should circumstances arise, however it does enable a more fluent scheduling of meetings to be maintained throughout the municipal year.
- 5.3 The proposed timetable allows for continued compliance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in Part 8.1 of the Constitution

Lawyer consulted: Abraham Ghebre-Ghiorghis 12 February 2009

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The majority of meetings are scheduled for 4pm or later to encourage public attendance and interest. Holiday periods are also avoided as far as is feasible.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 There are no sustainability implications arising from the report.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are no crime & disorder implications arising from this report.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The scheduling of meetings aims to accommodate the decision-making processes for the year, but there is always the possibility of additional meetings having to be called.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.7 The scheduling of meetings accommodates the Council priority for open and effective city leadership

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Proposed Timetable for 2010/11

Background Documents

Timetable of Meetings for 2009/10