

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C/100/2007-08.
Date of meeting: 4 February 2008.



Portfolio: Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services.

Subject: Calendar of Council Meetings 2008-09.

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Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992-564470).

Recommendation:

- (1) That the current review of the meeting cycle of the Area Plans Sub-Committees by Overview and Scrutiny be noted; and**
- (2) That, as attached and subject to the outcome of the review noted above, the draft Calendar of Meetings for the period May 2008 to May 2009 be recommended to the Council for adoption.**

Report:

1. The forward programme of meetings of the Council is considered by the Cabinet each year for subsequent approval by the Council. The calendar has developed over time to meet the changing needs of the authority and, wherever possible, meetings of a particular committee have been standardised on a particular night of the week.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

2. As per last year, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will meet at the start of the municipal year to plan their programme in conjunction with the Cabinet. They will then meet each cycle on the Thursday before Cabinet, i.e. after the Cabinet agenda is published. This is to allow both normal scrutiny business and 'oversight' of the Cabinet agenda to improve pre-decision scrutiny.

Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Panels:

3. No scheduled meetings have been programmed for the Task and Finish Panels. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has responsibility for these Panels and will decide at the beginning of the municipal year those Panels which will be required when setting the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for the forthcoming year. These Panels tend to meet as and when they are needed in order to complete their own self-set timetabled reviews.

Council:

4. As in previous years, Council meetings have generally been programmed for Tuesdays. The two exceptions to this are the meetings scheduled for May and June, as the Annual Meeting takes place two weeks after the election in May and the Council is required to agree the statutory Statement of Accounts by 30th June each year. A provisional Council meeting has been scheduled for 30 September 2008, in the event that the revised Statutory Statement of Accounts require agreement. Two Council budget-setting meetings are provisionally set for February 2009 to be used if needed.

Licensing Committee:

5. Regular monthly meetings of the Licensing Sub-Committee are planned to meet the on-going requirements of the Council including the new powers under the Gambling Act. Licensing Sub-Committee meetings are scheduled to start at 10.00am, whilst the bi-annual meetings of the full Licensing Committee will commence at 2.00pm.

Planning Sub-Committees:

6. The Area Planning Sub-Committees have been scheduled to meet on a four weekly cycle. There is a review currently being undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny as to whether these Sub-Committees should meet on a three-weekly cycle, and the outcome of this should be reported to the Council at its meeting scheduled for 19th February 2008.

Member Remuneration Panel:

7. There are currently no meetings scheduled for the Member Remuneration Panel as this Committee only meets as and when necessary.

Statement in Support of Recommended Action:

8. The Council should set its forward calendar as early as possible to allow the necessary booking of facilities. Any alteration to the broad look of the programme would require further consultations with the local councils. Meetings have also been scheduled to avoid the conferences of the main political groupings on the Council.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

9. Individual frequencies of meetings could be varied. In practice additional meetings are added as and when issues dictate. These also include call-ins, the procedure for which allows for extraordinary meetings to be convened.

Consultation Undertaken:

10. Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Service Directors, Service Assistant Directors, and Overview and Scrutiny Lead Officers.

Resource implications:

Budget provision: Provision for external meetings £1,260; provision for Committee Allowance in respect of officer attendance at evening meetings.

Personnel: Officer attendance at evening meetings.

Land: Nil.

Community Plan/BVPP reference: BVPP 2003-04 page 24 ‘... carry out reviews of the Constitution to ensure effectiveness and accountability of the decision-making process...’

Relevant statutory powers: LGA 2000 (section 22), LGA 72 (section 101 – 102).

Background papers: None.

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: Officer attendance at evening meetings. A balance should be struck between the effective running of the authority and the rights and home/work balance of individuals (members and officers).

Key Decision reference (if required): Not a key decision.