

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-087-2008/09
Date of meeting: 2 February 2009



Portfolio: Leader of the Council.
Subject: Calendar of Council Meetings – 2009/10.
Responsible Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).
Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendation:

That, as attached at Appendix 1, the draft Calendar of Council Meetings for the period May 2009 to May 2010 be recommended to the Council for adoption.

Executive Summary:

The Cabinet considers the forward programme of meetings of the Council each year prior to final 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.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

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 for Action:

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.

Report:

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

1. The Overview & 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. The European and County Council elections have been scheduled for Thursday 4 June 2009, therefore the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting in June 2009 has been brought forward to Tuesday 2 June 2009.

Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Panels

2. 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 that 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

3. As in previous years, Council meetings have generally been programmed for Tuesdays. The exception to this is the meeting scheduled for 21 May 2009, as the Annual Meeting takes place during the third week in May. The Annual meeting in 2010 had been scheduled for 25 May to ensure that all Council meetings will be held on a Tuesday after May 2009. The Council meeting for 29 September 2009 has been scheduled in the event that the revised Statutory Statement of Accounts requires agreement. A second budget-setting Council meeting has been provisionally set for 18 February 2010, to be used if required.

Licensing

4. Regular monthly meetings of the Licensing Sub-Committee are planned to meet the on-going requirements of the Council under the Licensing and Gambling Acts. 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. The meeting originally planned for 4 June 2009 has been brought forward by a week to allow for the European and County Council elections being held on that day.

Planning Sub-Committees

5. Following a review last year by Overview & Scrutiny, the Area Planning Sub-Committees have been scheduled to continue to meet on a three-weekly cycle.

Member Remuneration Panel

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

North Weald Airfield Strategy Cabinet Committee

7. In both 2007 and 2008, a meeting of this Cabinet Committee had been convened on the last Monday in July. Consequently, this date has now been formally added to the programme, to be used if required.

Resource Implications:

Provision for external meetings £1,910;
Provision for Committee Allowance and Webcasting in respect of officer attendance at evening meetings.

Legal and Governance Implications:

Local Government Act 2000, section 22; and
Local Government Act 1972, sections 101 & 102.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

Not applicable.

Consultation Undertaken:

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

Background Papers:

None.

Impact Assessments:

No risk management analysis undertaken.

No impact upon the Council's statutory duty to promote equality throughout the District.