

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 13 December 2011

Portfolio Holder: Councillor John Wyatt

Recommending:

That, as attached at Appendix 1, the draft Calendar of Council Meetings for 2012/13 be adopted.

(NOTE: The attention of members is drawn to paragraph 8 of the report. Officers were asked to give further consideration to the dates of three meetings in September 2012. The attached Appendix includes changes to overcome the issues identified by the Cabinet. The Council meeting has been moved to 25 September, thus maintaining the tradition of holding such meetings on a Tuesday. The meeting of the Standards Committee has been moved back one week to 2 October 2012 to avoid a clash with the Constitution and Members' services Scrutiny Panel).

1. Within the current Democratic Services Business Plan, item 16 of the Action Plan is to review the Calendar of Council Meetings, and in particular the frequency of individual Committees. As a result, Democratic Services submit the draft Calendar of Council meetings each year to the Management Board for consideration prior to its approval by Members.

2. The draft Calendar at Appendix 1 is based upon the current year's calendar, with approximately the same number of meetings. It has been slightly amended in some places but wherever possible:

- (a) all Cabinet and Cabinet Committees have been scheduled for a Monday;
- (b) all Overview and Scrutiny Panels have been scheduled for a Tuesday;
- (c) all Planning Sub-Committee meetings have been scheduled for a Wednesday; and
- (d) all miscellaneous Committee meetings have been scheduled for a Thursday.

3. Licensing Sub-Committees have remained on a Tuesday morning with the two full meetings of the Licensing Committee on a Wednesday afternoon.

4. There are occasional instances where a Scrutiny Panel is not on a Tuesday evening, but this is to enable the Scrutiny Panel to retain their quarterly meeting schedule. Both the Finance & Performance Management Cabinet Committee and Scrutiny Panel have an additional meeting to allow for their participation in the budget preparation process, including a 'joint' meeting in January to consider the draft budget for the following year.

5. Friday evenings have continued to be kept free of meetings, and any encroachment into August has been kept to a bare minimum due to holidays. Planning Sub-Committees

have always continued to meet throughout August, along with the Licensing Sub-Committee and Housing Appeals and Review Panel.

6. The calendar for 2011/12 changed the frequency of the Area Planning Sub-Committees from a three weekly cycle to a four weekly cycle. It is felt within Democratic Services that this change has worked well, with minimal impact upon the relevant Key Performance Indicators, and this arrangement has been retained for 2012/13.

7. It should be noted that the current Calendar is very congested and the organisation of any additional meetings should be given very careful consideration.

8. We noted that in September 2012, the Council meeting had been scheduled for a Thursday and that meetings of the Constitution and Members' Services Scrutiny Panel and the Standards Committee had been planned for the same evening. We asked officers to give further consideration to the dates of these meetings before the matter is considered by Council and to include a note in the report to Council of changes to overcome these issues.

9. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.