

## ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet **Date:** 1 December 2016  
**Subject:** Calendar of Council Meetings 2017/18  
**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor R Bassett (Governance & Development Management)

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### **Recommending:**

**(1) That, as attached at Appendix 1, the draft Calendar of Council Meetings for 2017/18 be adopted.**

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1. The calendar has developed over time to meet the changing needs of the authority and, where possible, meetings of a Committee have been standardised on a particular night of the week for consistency. The draft Calendar at Appendix 1 is based upon the current year's calendar, with approximately the same number of meetings.

2. However, there have been some minor amendments proposed for the Calendar this year, which are:

(i) maintaining a two week gap between Cabinet and Council meetings to ensure that any reports from Cabinet to the Council are not published on a supplementary agenda;

(ii) a new committee has been added, meeting twice a year, for the Overview & Scrutiny Chairmen, Vice Chairmen & Officers to discuss any issues arising from the Council's Scrutiny meetings; and

(iii) the Standards Committee has been removed following the Council's decision last year for it to meet only 'as and when' required.

3. 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. However, the Regulatory Committees have always continued to meet throughout August in the past and this practice has been continued.

### The Executive

4. Some Cabinet meetings have been rescheduled for a Tuesday evening. This change will allow a minimum of two weeks between Cabinet and Council meetings, ensuring that any reports from the Cabinet to the Council will appear on the main agenda for Members to consider rather than a supplementary agenda.

### Overview & Scrutiny

5. A new committee has been added, meeting twice a year, for the Overview &

Scrutiny Chairmen, Vice Chairmen & Officers. Similar to the corresponding committee for the Development Management Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and Officers, the purpose of this would be to discuss any issues arising from the Council's Scrutiny meetings and future training needs for Members.

### Planning

6. The week of the Annual Council meeting has again been kept free of Planning meetings and this will enable further training to take place. However, Planning meetings have been arranged for the other weeks in May between the Election and the Annual Council meeting, as there would be a detrimental impact upon the Planning Performance Indicators if there was a six or seven week gap between meetings of the Sub-Committees.

### Religious Festivals

7. No Area Planning Sub-Committee meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday 20 September 2017, as this would clash with the Jewish festival of Rosh Hashanah. This has necessitated a five week gap between Sub-Committees from August to September, but the usual four week gap has been reinstated for the meeting cycles for the remainder of the municipal year (with the exception of Christmas week). The scheduled dates for Yom Kippur of 29/30 September 2017 and for Pesach of 30/31 March 2018 have also been kept clear of all meetings.

### Licensing

8. A legal technicality has arisen whereby a meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee cannot consider both Alcohol Licences and Taxi Licences. However, it is intended to run two meetings consecutively on the same day with the same membership, and therefore does not impact upon the calendar.

### Miscellaneous Committees

9. Both the Youth Council and the Local Highways Panel have not been included in this schedule as it is felt that they are meetings that sit outside the Council. The Youth Council have their own programme, and although the Local Highways Panel involves both the County and District Councils they are not organised by the District Council.

10. Two meetings of the Appointments Panel have been scheduled for the two Thursdays following the Local Elections on 11 and 18 May 2017, prior to the Annual Council on 25 May. Two corresponding meetings have also been scheduled for May 2018.

11. A new initiative for 2016/17 was the scheduling of one date per month predominantly for Member Briefings in relation to the development of a new Local Plan. This is to minimise the impact upon the Calendar when Member Briefings are required, and the Planning Policy team can schedule these dates into their Project Plan. This arrangement has been retained for 2017/18 as these dates could also be used for other meetings or further Member Training sessions if they are not required by the Planning Policy team.

12. The Local Councils Liaison Committee has traditionally met three times a year. However, the Committee reviewed its schedule of meetings recently and

decided to meet only twice a year in the future. The listed dates in Appendix 1 reflect this.

13. One final change has been the removal of the Standards Committee from the calendar. Last year, when the Council decided not to amalgamate the Standards Committee with the Audit & Governance Committee, and that the Standards Committee should only meet as and when required. Therefore, Officers felt that no purpose would be served by scheduling regular meetings for the Standards Committee.

#### Conclusion

14. The Council is requested to consider the draft Calendar of Council meetings for 2016/17, as attached at Appendix 1, and whether any further changes are required. However, it should be noted that the current Calendar is extremely congested and the organisation of any additional meetings should be given very careful consideration.

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