



General Purposes Committee

Date: 6 November 2013

Classification: For General Release

Title: Programme of Meetings 2014/2015

Wards Affected: N/A

Financial Summary: There are no financial implications

Report of: Head of Legal and Democratic Services

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The programme of meetings for 2014/15 has been drafted in accordance with the principles endorsed by the General Purposes Urgency Sub-Committee on 10 May 2012 which are set out in paragraph 3.1 of the report.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Council be recommended to approve the dates of full Council Meetings, as follows: 30 April, 2014 (instead of 9 April); 4 June (Annual) (instead of 14 May); 9 July 2014; 12 November 2014; 21 January 2015; 4 March 2015 (Council Tax); 29 April 2015); 20 May 2015 (Annual).
- 2.2 That the start time for the Annual Meeting on 4 June 2014 be 7.15pm.
- 2.3 That the Programme of other formal Meetings set out in Appendix A be approved.

3. Background Information

- 3.1 The General Purposes Urgency Sub-Committee (meeting held on 10 May 2012) agreed that the Programme of Meetings be prepared having regard to the following basic principles:

Mondays: Cabinet/Policy and Scrutiny meetings

Tuesdays: Planning/Policy and Scrutiny meetings

Wednesdays: Council Meetings/Group Meetings/other Committee meetings

Thursdays: Licensing meetings daytime.

This strategy allows for easier planning and a more consistent approach. For the most part it is intended to leave Thursday evenings free for Area Forums and similar events. These arrangements have worked well to date and accordingly, the principles set out above have been carried forward for the preparation of the 2014/15 Programme of Meetings.

- 3.2 The Programme of Meetings reflects a programme of at least 6 meetings for each of the Policy and Scrutiny Committees. Members will recall that last year the new arrangements for the Policy and Scrutiny Committees envisaged these committees meeting up to 8 times per annum if necessary. The purpose of only programming 6 meetings initially is to allow Policy and Scrutiny Committees the flexibility to hold additional special meetings at short notice depending on their work programme. The allocation of 6 meetings has proved to be sufficient for almost all of the Policy and Scrutiny Committees and, where the Chairman has requested the full 8 meetings at the outset of the programme, this has been accommodated.
- 3.3 The proposed programme seeks to keep Thursday evenings free from formal Council meetings. This will then enable Members and the political parties to use Thursdays for Community meetings and party political meetings. They can also be used for any special meetings which cannot be arranged on other days.
- 3.4 The programme includes provision for the Discretionary Housing Panel and the Rating Advisory Panel to meet on a programme basis. The programmes have been developed having regard to the expected weight of business in each case.
- 3.5 Following the announcement that the local elections in 2014 will be held on the same day as the European parliamentary elections it is necessary to change the date of the Annual Council meeting. The 4 June is proposed. Porchester Hall (the temporary location for Council meetings pending the return to Council House in 2016) has another booking during the daytime. Therefore it is proposed to commence the annual meeting at 7.15pm on 4 June 2014.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Programme of Meetings in respect of Council meetings is a matter for the full Council to agree. The programme includes provision for Council meetings to be held when it is known full Council decisions will be required - particularly the setting of Council tax prior to 11 March each year and the holding of an Annual Meeting in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 No financial implications.

6. Consultation

6.1 The Programme of Meetings has been circulated to the Party Whips and adjustments made where requested. No outstanding issues remain as a result of this consultation.

6.2 The Chairmen of the Policy and Scrutiny Committees and other committees have also been consulted and no issues are outstanding.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact Naomi Stauber: 7641 2341

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None

APPENDIX A