



City of Westminster

General Purposes Committee

Date: 5 November 2014

Classification: For General Release

Title: Programme of Meetings 2015/2016

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 2015/16 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: 20 May 2015 (Annual), 8 July 2015, 11 November 2015, 20 January 2016, 2 March 2016, 27 April 2016, 18 May 2016 (Annual).
- 2.2 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 (if necessary)

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 community 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 2015/16 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 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 the Policy and Scrutiny Committees.
- 3.3 The proposed programme seeks to keep for the most part Thursday evenings free from formal Council meetings. This will then enable Members and the political parties to use Thursdays for Community meetings and other 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.

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 either March, April or May 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 again 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**

Email: nstauber@westminster.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None