

Agenda Item 7

COUNCIL	DATE 22 May 2024
TITLE Calendar of Meetings 2024/25	WARDS All
CHIEF OFFICER Chief Executive	CABINET/LEAD MEMBER Leader of the Council
DECISION CLASSIFICATION Non exempt report	IS THE FINAL DECISION ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THIS REPORT TO BE MADE AT THIS MEETING? Yes

1. **Recommendations:**

- A. That Council approves the Calendar of Meetings at Appendix A.
- B. That Council approves the amended dates of Council meetings for 2024-25 listed within Appendix A.

2. **Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 2.1 To propose a calendar of meetings for Council bodies for 2024-25 and for the meetings of Council during 2024-2025, noting that these were previously agreed for 2023-2026 in February 2023.

3. **Links to the Merton Priorities (Borough of Sport/Civic Pride/Sustainable Futures)**

- 3.1 This report relates to the Council's Strategic priorities as it ensures that meetings of Council bodies can be scheduled, administered and take place to make decisions across the Council's strategic priorities.

4. **Introduction and Background**

- 4.1 The details of meeting dates are set out at Appendix A including the revised Council dates.

4.2 It is noted that the dates approved by Council on 1 February 2023 in respect of Full Council meetings for 2023-2026 have required subsequent amendments for the 2024-25 meetings and therefore the dates are now re-submitted for approval by Council.

4.3 Under the Council Procedure Rules (Part 4A of the Constitution), the Chief Executive may vary the time and place of or cancel such meetings in exceptional circumstances to ensure the smooth operation of the Council. This may only be done with the agreement of the Chair of the relevant meeting and after consultation with the Leaders of other political groups represented on the Council.

4.4 A General Election must be held by 24 January 2025 and therefore it is also noted that the meeting dates detailed in Appendix A may need to be adjusted to

allow for the pre-election period and polling day itself. As the date of the election is currently unknown, it is not possible to provide for this within the calendar at this time. Once the date is known, the Chief Executive and Group Leaders will agree any changes to the calendar if required as per 4.3 above.

4.5 Additional meetings will be scheduled in during the year when and where required including, but not limited to additional meetings of any body, meetings of the Appointments Committee and Licensing Sub-Committee meetings.

4.6 The Council can make whatever arrangements it sees fit in respect of the calendar within the legal restraints set out in section 11 below. The Council should also have regard to audit and accounting requirements in respect of submission of the Annual Governance Statement by the end of June in each year and the approval of the Final Accounts by the end of September in each year.

5. **Available Options & Preferred Option**

5.1 Option 1: approve the calendar as per Appendix A.

5.2 Option 2: approve but amend the calendar by proposing different dates and times of meetings.

5.3 Option 3: reject the proposed calendar entirely and allow Chairs to determine dates on an ad-hoc basis. This is not recommended for reasons of transparency and administrative efficiency.

6. **Preferred Option**

6.1 That Council approve the calendar of meetings attached at Appendix A so that meetings can be scheduled and take place.

7. **Reasons for Recommendations**

7.1 To ensure the smooth running of meetings of Council bodies.

8. **Consultation Results**

8.1 The Leader has been consulted in respect of the executive meeting schedule. Group Officers, Officers and Group Leaders have been consulted and their comments have been taken into account where possible.

9. **Next Steps & Timetable: Communication and Implementation of the Decision**

9.1 The calendar covers the period from immediately after the 2024 Annual meeting up to and including the Annual Meeting 2025.

10. **Report Appendices**

10.1 The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Calendar of Meetings 2024/25

11. **Background Papers**

None

12. **Cross-Cutting Issues and Implications and Sign-Off**

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Legal including Human Rights Act	<p>This report forms part of the required business of the Annual Meeting of the Council, as stated in the Council Procedure Rules in the Council's Constitution.</p> <p>In borough election years the Council must hold its Annual Meeting will take place within 21 days of the retirement of the outgoing councillors. In other years the Annual Meeting must be held in March, April or May.</p>	John Scarborough, Monitoring Officer, 1 May 2024
Finance and other resources	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any administrative costs arising from ad hoc in-year changes to the council's calendar of meetings will be met within existing budgets.	Gina James Service Financial Adviser 7/5/2024
Equalities	The decisions recommended through this report have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act 2010. There is no apparent equality impact on end users.	Amy Dumitrescu Head of Democracy Services 10/4/24
Climate change	Whilst all meetings will have some environmental impact in terms of energy used within the buildings and transport to and from the meeting, meetings are predominantly paperless to reduce environmental impact, with all meeting documents available electronically and paper copies only	Amy Dumitrescu Head of Democracy Services 10/4/24

	<p>provided where required for accessibility reasons.</p> <p>The Council encourages sustainable travel – the vast majority of meetings will be held at the Civic Centre which is close to public transport links.</p>	
Executive Director	Clearance/Approval of Report	<p>Polly Cziok</p> <p>Executive Director Innovation and Change</p> <p>14 May 2024</p>
Cabinet Member/s	Clearance/Approval of Report	<p>Councillor Ross Garrod</p> <p>Leader of the Council</p> <p>15 May 2024</p>
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