

Non-Executive Report of the: Council Wednesday, 30 September 2020	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Corporate Director, Governance and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Open (Unrestricted)
Committee Calendar 2020/21	

Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services,
Wards affected	(All Wards);

Executive Summary

This report proposes a calendar of Council, committee and other meetings for the forthcoming municipal year 2020/21.

The Calendar of Meetings was agreed at the Council meeting held on 11 March 2020. However, there have been a number of changes since that date and so the calendar is now presented for further agreement.

It is important to note that in the current pandemic situation, meeting dates and times may change throughout the year and so Members should check the website for the latest information.

The calendar of meetings is presented at Appendix A to this report.

Recommendations:

The Council is recommended to:

1. Approve the proposed calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2020/21 as set out in Appendix A including amended standard start times where appropriate.
2. To delegate to the Corporate Director, Governance the authority to agree meeting dates for any new Committees or Panels that are set up subsequent to this report being presented to Council, subject to appropriate consultation with Members.
3. To note that the Constitution provides for the Monitoring Officer to agree to cancel, amend a meeting or arrange new meetings where required, subject to the requirements of the Council Procedure Rules.
4. To note that the Council procedure rules agreed in relation to the operation of 'virtual' or 'remote' committee meetings (Section 26A of the

Constitution) allow for these meeting locations and arrangements, including start time, to be adjusted as required including after the agenda has been published.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Council is required to give public notice of its meetings in order to fulfil its legal obligations under the Access to Information Rules set out in the Constitution and to meet its obligations under the Local Government Act 1972.
- 1.2 The calendar will assist the Council to meet its legal requirements by setting out in a schedule, the meetings it intends to hold which all may easily refer to. It also aids transparent governance by enabling the work at meetings to be planned in advance. Hence the practice of presenting this report has evolved and is maintained.
- 1.3 Council is also asked to delegate to the Corporate Director for Governance the authority to agree meeting dates for any new Committees or Panels that are set up subsequent to this report being presented to Council, subject to appropriate consultation with Members to ensure that there supporting arrangements to allow the Council to continue to be able to deliver its meetings efficiently.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 None are presented although it would be within the powers of Council to vary the proposed Committee meeting dates, times and frequencies as well as to change the overarching Committee structure.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The draft calendar is presented at Appendix A to the report. In general, it follows the same pattern of meetings set in previous years in terms of frequency of meetings.
- 3.2 It is proposed that Cabinet and other Executive meetings will continue to take place on Wednesdays.
- 3.3 Mirroring the arrangements in previous years an additional Cabinet meeting is scheduled for the beginning of January 2021 to consider the draft budget proposals before submission to the special budget Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) meeting later that month.
- 3.4 OSC will operate reciprocal arrangements and the Committee will meet on a Monday before the date of the Cabinet meeting except where Bank Holidays fall on this day. On these dates, the OSC meeting will take place on the day before Cabinet. This arrangement will support the role of OSC in providing Pre-Scrutiny of Executive decisions by giving OSC Members longer to review the Cabinet papers before their own meeting takes place.

- 3.5 To accommodate Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Partners, the Health and Wellbeing Board will continue to meet on a Tuesday.
- 3.6 As in previous years efforts have been made to avoid holding meetings during school holidays. However, it is necessary for some meetings to be held especially in relation to regulatory matters.
- 3.7 Wherever possible we have also sought to minimise the impact of meetings on Members where these clash with certain religious holidays and other events. In most cases, committee meetings are listed at 5.30pm during Ramadan to allow the meetings to conclude before the breaking of the fast.
- 3.8 Where meetings are held virtually, discussions have taken place with Chairs and Members of those Committees which have resulted in altered start times for a number of meetings. These arrangements will continue to be reviewed as the year progresses and it may be necessary to make further amendments at various times.
- 3.9 The attached Committee Calendar presents the 'standard' start times for meetings but these may well vary at present due to the above discussions.
- 3.10 The Member Learning and Development dates have also been listed in the Calendar and where possible are listed when no Committee meetings are planned to encourage attendance. Each training session will be offered on two dates, one scheduled during the evening and the other during the afternoon. In keeping with the approach taken following the local elections in 2018, the development programme has been focussed to ensure that Members are able to receive appropriate support.
- 3.11 As Members will be aware, any subsequent requests to change dates of meetings of Committees following approval of the Committee Calendar by Council, or to set up Special Meetings of the Committees, are subject to consultation with the Chair(s) of the Committees, relevant members and the Chief Executive/Monitoring Officer.
- 3.12 The Council's Constitution also provides a general power for the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chief Executive, meeting Chair and other Members as appropriate, to cancel or vary the time of any meetings where necessary.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In collating this schedule of meetings, consideration has been given where possible to avoiding school holidays, known religious holidays and other dates which could inhibit attendance or participation by one or more section(s) of the borough's community. Certain meetings, such as the Health and Wellbeing Board will also take place at external venues where this is useful to encourage attendance and improve accessibility.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

5.2 None specific to this report.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 The Recommendations of the Report seek Council's approval of the proposed calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2020/21 as set out in Appendix A, and the delegation to the Corporate Director, Governance of authority to agree forthcoming dates for any new Committees or Panels that are set up subsequent to this report being presented to Council.

7.2 Additionally, Council is also requested to note the requirements in the Constitution that enable the Monitoring Officer to agree to cancel, amend a meeting or arrange new meetings where required, subject to the requirements of the Council Procedure Rules the variation of those rules in respect of the holding of 'virtual' or 'remote' committee meetings.

7.3 As advised at paragraph 1.1 of the Report the Council is required to give public notice of its meetings in accordance with the statutory requirements set out in the Access to Information Rules set out in the Constitution and the Local Government Act 1972.

7.4 Council will note the insertion of section 26A in the Constitution. This amendment enables the holding of remote Council meetings in accordance with the Local Authorities Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. These Regulations came into force on the 4 April 2020 for a specified period until the end of May 2021.

7.5 Council will further note paragraph 4.1 of the Report, which sets out the Council's consideration of the equalities impact of the Recommendations in satisfaction of its Public Equality Duty.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- Appendix A – Proposed Calendar of Meeting dates

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A