


Non-Executive Report of the:  <b>Council</b>  Wednesday, 25 May 2022	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	<b>Classification:</b> Open (Unrestricted)
<b>COMMITTEE CALENDAR 2022-23</b>	

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

### Executive Summary

This report proposes a calendar of Council, committee and other meetings for the forthcoming municipal year 2022/23.

The Calendar of Meetings was agreed at the Council meeting held on 16 March 2022. However, as is traditional, the report is also presented at the Annual Council.

The following changes should be noted from the version presented at Council in March:

- Council moved to 13 July from 20 July.
- The addition of a brief General Purposes Committee meeting directly following this meeting of Council to establish an Appointment Sub-Committee.
- The addition of a brief Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 7 June to appoint the Scrutiny Leads and Sub-Committees.
- Meeting of the Inner North-East London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee moved from 8 September to 19 October.

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 2022/23 as set out in Appendix A.
2. To delegate to the Monitoring Officer 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 any 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.

## **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 Monitoring Officer 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 1 to the report. In general it follows the same pattern of meetings set in previous years in terms of frequency of meetings with the Annual Meeting in May 2022 and all meetings following on from that.
- 3.2 Cabinet and other Executive meetings will continue to take place on Wednesdays. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) will therefore meet on the Monday of the same week as Cabinet. This supports the role of OSC in providing Pre-Scrutiny of Executive decisions by giving OSC Members time to review the Cabinet papers before their own meeting takes place.
- 3.3 Mirroring the arrangements in recent years, an additional Cabinet meeting is scheduled for the beginning of January 2023 to consider the draft budget proposals before submission to the special budget OSC meeting later that month.
- 3.4 As in previous years, efforts have been made to avoid holding meetings during school holidays, with particular reference to August. However, it may be necessary for some meetings to be held especially in relation to regulatory matters. Wherever possible we have also sought to minimise the impact of meetings on Members where these clash with certain religious holidays and party conferences. During Ramadan, officers will work with Committee Chairs to identify a suitable start time for the meeting taking into account the breaking of the fast. It may be necessary in some cases to organise adjournments during meetings to accommodate this.
- 3.5 The men's football world cup dates have been noted, however as it is taking place at a busy time in the calendar (November/December 2022) only limited re-arrangement of meetings has been possible.
- 3.6 With the local elections having taken place in May 2022, after the original report was agreed but before the calendar comes into effect, it may be that the new administration will wish to review the committee arrangements and calendar of meetings. This report is being re-presented at the Annual Meeting in May to allow for such changes should they be desired.  
  
Physical, virtual and hybrid meetings and Covid restrictions.
- 3.7 At the moment legislation requires that all formal Council meetings take place at a physical location and to be counted as in attendance and to vote Members must also be in that location. The Council is allowing other participants to participate virtually as that is seen as helping increase accessibility to our meetings. Almost all meetings are also now webcast.
- 3.8 No change to the legislation is expected and so the above arrangements will continue.

- 3.9 At present Covid restrictions have eased sufficiently to allow the Council Chamber to host all but the biggest meetings/events without impact. Officers will continue to liaise with the Chairs of meetings regarding meeting arrangements and action will be taken should restrictions increase again.
- 3.10 Should new Covid restrictions be introduced in the future the Council will also explore whether other meetings should also be held with reduced attendance or at alternative venues. It should be noted that there are costs associated with holding meetings outside of the Town Hall including venue hire and webcasting arrangements.

#### Member Induction Programme

- 3.11 The committee calendar has been developed in conjunction with the Member Induction Programme to try and minimise any clashes between committee meetings and induction seminars.

#### New Town Hall

- 3.12 At some point during the municipal year, Council and Committee meetings will start operating from the new Town Hall. Dates for the transition will be announced nearer the time. For the purposes of this calendar the location of meetings should be considered to be the 'Town Hall' whether that be Mulberry Place or Whitechapel.

### **4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The calendar has taken into account religious observances and in particular the impact of Ramadan.

### **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 There are no other statutory implications of the specific proposed committee calendar, although a failure to agree a committee calendar at all would impact on the Council's ability to meet all the above implications.

## **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 2022/23 as set out in Appendix A, and the delegation to the Monitoring Officer 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.

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 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.

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## **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

### **Linked Report**

- None.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Calendar of Committee meeting dates 2022-23.

### **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