

COUNCIL

22 May 2023

ANNUAL PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2023/24

Report of the Strategic Director of Law and Governance

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|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Strategic Aim: | A modern and effective Council | |
| Exempt Information | No | |
| Cabinet Member(s) Responsible: | Select, Position | |
| Contact Officer(s): | Angela Wakefield, Strategic Director of Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) | 01572 758220 awakefield@rutland.gov.uk |
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| Ward Councillors | N/A | |

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

1. Approves the Programme of Meetings for 2023/24 attached at Appendix A.
2. Notes that meeting dates for May and June 2024 are subject to revision by Annual Council in May 2024.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Council at its Annual Council Meeting is required to agree the date and time of ordinary meetings of Council (and its Committees) for the coming Municipal Year.
- 1.2 This report presents the programme of meetings for 2023/24. The programme also sets out meetings dates for May and June 2024 in order to allow Members and officers greater transparency on future meeting dates and assist in agenda-planning, these dates are subject to change by Annual Council in May 2024.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Each year the Council is required to agree a schedule of meetings for the forthcoming municipal year. Notice of these meetings is then published on the Council's website and displayed at the Council's offices.

2.2 The Schedule of meeting dates is underpinned by a series of principles which are applied to ensure adherence to the Constitution and other Financial and Legislative requirements, needs of the individual Committees concerned as well as, where possible, affording some consistency from year to year.

3 VIRTUAL MEETINGS

3.1 Members may be aware that under the terms of the Local Government Act 1972 formal meetings of the Council and its Committees are required to meet in-person in order to lawfully transact business. Virtual meetings were briefly lawful during the COVID-19 Pandemic however the regulations allowing this ceased to apply on 7 May 2021.

3.2 However, it has remained custom and practice at the Council for some meetings to take place virtually when no formal decisions are required. For example, meetings of the Audit and Risk or Conduct Committee that are only receiving update reports for noting have taken place remotely in recent years. These meetings have been livestreamed via Zoom in order to allow public access and participation.

3.3 The Programme has been drafted on the basis that.

3.3.1 Bodies regularly required to make decisions will always meet in-person, these are:

- Full Council
- The Cabinet
- Planning and Licensing Committee
- Conduct Committee

3.3.2 The Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee is only required to make a formal decision when considering a call-in request, however it is recommended that this Committee meet in-person due to the nature of the meeting. Other Scrutiny work, such as Task and Finish Groups or evidence sessions would operate flexibly based on the nature of the topic and work required.

3.3.3 Committees of the Council only occasionally required to make a formal decision are marked as discretionary and is expected for these to meet either in-person or remotely, with the Chair of the Committee to agree the location of individual meetings with the relevant officers as part of the agenda-setting process. These are:

- Audit and Risk Committee
- Constitution Commission
- Employment and Appeals Committee
- Health and Wellbeing Board

3.3.4 The Council's Democratic Services and other teams also administer several consultative bodies that do not make formal decisions, some of these also do not meet in public or have many attendees from outside the County. Under the programme these bodies are also marked as discretionary and are expected to meet

virtually but could meet in-person if requested by those bodies or agreed at agenda-setting, these are:

- Children and Young People's Partnership
- Corporate Parenting Board
- Parish Clerk Liaison Group
- Parish Council Forum
- Rutland Countryside Access Forum
- Schools Forum
- Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

4 BODIES WHERE NO MEETINGS ARE SCHEDULED IN THE PROGRAMME

4.1 Some bodies of the Council have only met sporadically in recent years, with meetings often needing to be cancelled or rearranged as the proposed dates have not aligned with the business coming forward.

4.2 It is proposed that meetings of these bodies not be set at Annual Council and instead arranged as and when there are items of business for consideration, with dates to be agreed with the Chair of the Committee and a relevant officer on behalf of the Chief Executive. These dates will be arranged so that Members receive as much notice as practicable.

4.3 The bodies this is intended to apply to (and the relevant officer to agree meetings with the Chair) are:

- The Conduct Committee (Strategic Director of Law and Governance / Head of Legal and Democratic Services)
- The Employment and Appeals Committee (Strategic Director of Resources / Head of Human Resources)
- The Constitution Commission (Strategic Director of Law and Governance / Democratic Services Manager)

5 CONSULTATION

5.1 The Council's Corporate Leadership Team were consulted in the drafting of the Programme to ensure that the proposed meeting dates would accommodate the expected items of business over the coming municipal year.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

6.1 It is a legislative requirement under the Local Government Act 1972 to agree and publish a notice of ordinary meetings of the Council and its Committees. Similar provisions apply to meetings of the Cabinet under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000

6.2 Council may choose to add additional dates to the Programme of Meetings prior to

approval, however the dates proposed are the recommended number officers consider appropriate for the business likely to come forward.

- 6.3 The Chief Executive and Chairs of individual Committees also have the power to vary the dates and times of meetings or call additional meetings should this become required during the municipal year. This also extends to varying the location of a meeting to be held remotely.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the report as arrangements for meetings and Member/Officer attendance are met within existing budgets.
- 7.2 However, Members should be aware that all meetings of the Council and Committees have a cost in officer time and Council resources in preparation and attendance at meetings, and these costs are higher for in-person meetings.

8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 As required by Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972, a notice is published on the notice board at the Council Offices informing the public of the meetings of the Council and its Committees. As soon as reasonably practicable following Council, a notice will be published on the noticeboard at the Council Offices.
- 8.2 The Council also publishes all meeting dates on the Council's website: <https://rutlandcounty.moderngov.co.uk/mgCalendarMonthView.aspx?GL=1&bcr=1>
- 8.3 If changes are made to the public notice by the Proper Officer during the year, the notice will be updated and information fully publicised on the Council's website.

9 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) has not been completed because no personal data has been processed in the compilation of this report.

10 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has not been completed because there are no service, policy or organisational changes being proposed in this report.

11 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no community safety implications arising from the report.

12 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no health or wellbeing implications arising from the report.

13 ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 Environmental implications
- 13.2 There are positive environmental implications associated with continuing to hold meetings virtually where legally permitted and practically possible.

14 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 Council is recommended to approve the draft Programme of Meetings 2023/24 at Appendix A so that a schedule of the ordinary meetings of the Council and its Committees can be published in line with legislative requirements.

15 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 15.1 There are no additional background papers to the report.

16 APPENDICES

- 16.1 Appendix A – Programme of Meetings 2023/24

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.