

Gloucester City Council

Committee	: Council
Date	: 19 January 2012
Subject	: Programme of Meetings, May 2012-November 2013
Decision Type	: Council
Ward	: All
Report By	: Corporate Director of Resources
No. of Appendices	: 1. Draft Programme of Meetings May 2012-November 2013
Reference No.	: TD2012/01

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To approve an 18-month programme of ordinary meetings of Council and calendar of other meetings for the period of May 2012 to November 2013 and consider recommendations made by the Constitutional & Electoral Working Group (CEWG) regarding changes to the respective start times for Annual Council and Budget Council.

2.0 Recommendations

Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- 2.1 The 18-month programme of ordinary meetings of Council and calendar of other meetings for the period of May 2012 to November 2013 be approved.
- 2.2 Future programmes of meetings be prepared annually to cover the proceeding 18-month period.
- 2.2 The proposed changes to the respective start times for Annual Council and Budget Council be approved.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Prior to March 2010 the Council's Constitution prevented the programme of ordinary meetings from being agreed in advance of the Annual Council meeting. An amendment to the Constitution was agreed by the Council on 25 March 2010 allowing the programme to be agreed at an ordinary meeting of the Council. The effect of the amendment was that the programme could be prepared further in advance giving Members, officers and the public increased notice of ordinary meeting dates.

4.0 Progress

- 4.1 In line with the Council's decision in 2010, the programme of meetings is now submitted to Council at the beginning of the calendar year. The programme of meetings is attached as Appendix 1 to this report showing dates, start times and

noting those meetings that are not open to the public. Where appropriate, the frequency of meetings is prescribed by the Constitution.

- 4.2 Democratic Services have received requests from Members for a longer timetable so that commitments can be planned more effectively around Council meetings. In response to these requests an 18-month timetable has been prepared and it is proposed that this practice continues on an annual basis, with the first six months of each timetable having been set the previous year.
- 4.3 In order to provide Members with more detailed information about meeting dates and to prevent clashes with meetings of the Council's partner organisations, meeting dates of significant Outside Bodies have been included in the programme and, where possible, meetings have been scheduled with those dates in mind. Members are asked to note that meetings of Outside Bodies are not generally held in public and that attendance is restricted to representatives appointed at Annual Council. Dates of bank holidays, school holidays and party conferences have also been included in the programme.
- 4.4 The programme includes scheduled meetings for the Standards Committee; however, these dates are subject to a decision by the Council on the future of the Standards Committee following the enactment of the Localism Act 2011, which resulted in the abolition of the existing Standards regime, including the requirement to maintain a Standards Committee. A report to Council from the Monitoring Officer is expected in March 2012 following consideration of proposals by the Standards Committee, Audit Committee and CEWG.
- 4.5 Dates for meetings of Overview & Scrutiny Task & Finish Groups have been included, but are yet to be assigned and are therefore subject to change or cancellation.
- 4.6 The schedule of dates for the CEWG has been changed to reflect the need for the Group's increased input during the months prior to the last Council meeting of each municipal year to enable any revisions to the Constitution to be adopted in time for the start of the next municipal year.
- 4.7 At their meeting on 16 November 2011 the CEWG were invited to suggest constitutional items for review and identified the following matters:
- The time of commencement of the Budget meeting be changed from 14.30 hrs to 18.00 hrs with effect from February 2013.
 - The time of commencement of the Annual Council Meeting to be changed from 11.30 hrs to 15.00 hrs followed by an adjournment for afternoon tea and recommencement at 17.00 hrs for the remainder of business, such changes to take effect from May 2013.

The changes were proposed to assist in the efficient and effective transaction of the Council's business and also to reflect the Council's understanding of the competing demands on Members' time. The programme reflects the both the existing times and proposed new times for these meetings and Council is asked to approve the proposed changes.

4.8 Comments on the draft programme have been invited from Group Leaders and senior officers and feedback has, where possible, been incorporated.

5.0 Future Work

5.1 As detailed above, it is proposed that an 18-month programme of meetings is prepared each year.

5.2 Dates of Outside Body meetings are generally only available for the year ahead; however, this does not preclude the Council from approving an 18-month timetable of its own meetings. The Council’s programme of meetings will be communicated to partner organisations.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 By approving the programme of ordinary meetings several months in advance of the start of the timetable, and by moving to an 18-month programme, Members and other interested parties can plan ahead and the business of the Council can be transacted more efficiently and effectively.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 No direct financial implications as a result of this report.

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 By approving the programme of ordinary meetings the Council is fulfilling a constitutional requirement.

9.0 Risk Management Implications

9.1 There are no key risks as a result of this report.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

Is a PIA required?	Yes	No	Explanation: access to meetings is a consideration, however, as the programme of meetings follows practices undertaken in previous years there is no need for a PIA. The programme of meetings does not refer to meeting venues; however, steps will be taken to ensure that venues for meetings open to the public will meet access requirements.
		√	
Has an initial PIA screening been completed?	Yes	No	Explanation:
		√	
Has a full PIA been completed?	Yes	No	Explanation:
		√	

Is the PIA available?	Yes	No	Explanation:
		√	
Has the PIA identified any negative impacts on any protected characteristic or community cohesion?	Yes*	No	*Please ensure PIA is available
		√	

11.0 Other Corporate Implications (this may include Community Safety, Environmental, Staffing, Trade Union)

1. Community Safety

There are no community safety implications resulting from this report

2. Environmental

There are no environmental implications resulting from this report.

3. Staffing

There are no staffing implications resulting from this report.

4. Trade Union

There are no issues relating to trade unions arising from this report.

Background Papers : None

Published Papers : Council's Constitution

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