

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Council</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>28 January 2021</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Programme of Meetings, May 2021-November 2023</b>		
<b>Report Of:</b>	<b>Policy and Governance Manager</b>		
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Budget/Policy Framework:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Tanya Davies, Policy and Governance Manager</b>		
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<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>1. Draft Programme of Meetings, May 2021-April 2023</b>		
	<b>2. Proposed amendments to the Programme of Meetings, March-April 2021</b>		

## FOR GENERAL RELEASE

### 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To approve a two-year programme of ordinary meetings of Council and other meetings for the period of May 2021 to April 2023 and consider amendments to the current year's programme to reflect the postponement of the 2020 elections to 2021.

### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- (1) Subject to any further changes, the two-year programme of ordinary meetings of Council and other meetings for the period of May 2021 to April 2023 be approved.
- (2) Subject to the May 2021 elections going ahead as scheduled, the proposed changes to the current year's programme of meetings be approved.
- (3) In the event that the May 2021 elections are postponed, authority be delegated to the Managing Director, in consultation with Group Leaders, to revise the programme of meetings to reflect the new date and associated Member induction requirements.

### 3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 The Council is required to agree a programme of meetings on an annual basis and the draft programme is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The Council approves a two-year programme each year in order to provide the Council and Councillors with adequate notice of meetings. As such, this programme

contains 12 months of dates that have previously been approved and 12 months of new dates.

- 3.4 It is important to retain the flexibility to amend the first year of a two year-programme, because dates for events and meetings of other organisations that impact on the Council's own programme are often not available until 12 months in advance. As such, a small number of changes are proposed to the period of May 2021-April 2023. The changes are highlighted in Appendix 1 using deletions and underlined insertions.
- 3.5 It should be noted that the school term dates for 2021-22 have not yet been published; therefore, meeting dates for 2021-22 may be subject to change once the term dates are known.
- 3.6 Changes are also proposed to the current year's programme of meetings to reflect the postponement of the 2020 elections due to the Covid19 pandemic. These elections are currently due to take place in May 2021, with four election types taking place in Gloucester (Police and Crime Commissioner, County Council, City Council and Quedgeley Town Council). The government has recently restated its intention for the elections to go ahead despite the pandemic, therefore preparations continue on that basis; however, the council must be prepared in the event that the elections are postponed again and it's possible that any postponement could be at relatively short notice.
- 3.7 Should the elections go ahead in May 2021, in line with standard practice in election years, it is proposed that a small number of meetings be cancelled as they fall in what will now be the pre-election period, known as purdah, and it is also proposed that the final Council meeting of the municipal year be brought forward from 25 March to 18 March to allow the Returning Officer and his staff sufficient time to manage the nomination process following publication of the City Council Notice of Election. Group Leaders have been consulted on these proposals in advance.
- 3.8 In the event that the elections are postponed again, the changes to the programme highlighted in 3.7 will not be implemented and instead it will be necessary to revise the programme for 2021-22 to reflect the new election date. As this would be a technical revision to the programme to make space for the election, purdah, Councillor appointments and any essential induction requirements, probably at short notice, it is proposed that authority be delegated to the Managing Director to make the necessary changes following consultation with Group Leaders rather than come back to full Council for approval.
- 3.9 Included in the consultation with Group Leaders highlighted in 3.8 would be a discussion about the Annual Council meeting and appointments made at that meeting. Specifically, subject to legislation, a decision would need to be made on whether to postpone the Annual Council meeting scheduled on 24 May 2021 until after any new election date, meaning that all appointments would be extended until any revised date. The views of the current Mayor and Sheriff would need to be taken into account because if they were not willing to continue in the roles, the scheduled Annual Council meeting would need to go ahead in order to elect a new Mayor and Sheriff.

#### **4.0 Social Value Considerations**

4.1 There are no social value considerations.

## **5.0 Environmental Implications**

5.1 There are no environmental implications.

## **6.0 Alternative Options Considered**

6.1 All available options for the scheduling of meetings were considered when compiling the programme.

6.2 The current year's programme of meetings could remain unchanged; however, this would result in meetings taking place during purdah and insufficient time for the Returning Officer and his staff to manage the nomination process for the forthcoming elections.

6.3 Observations and comments were invited from Group Leaders and senior officers.

## **7.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

7.1 To agree the programme of ordinary meetings of Council and other meetings for the period of May 2020 to April 2022.

7.2 To enable changes to be made to the programme of meetings to reflect the first and any subsequent postponements of the scheduled elections.

## **8.0 Future Work and Conclusions**

8.1 By approving a two-year programme of ordinary meetings several months in advance of the start of the timetable, Members and other interested parties can plan ahead and the business of the Council can be transacted more efficiently and effectively.

8.2 Following approval, the programme of meetings will be communicated to partner organisations and the dates added to the Council's website. Invitations to all meetings will be sent to Members after Annual Council to take account of any changes to committee membership.

8.3 The dates of meetings that fall in the purdah period will remain in the calendar and diaries for the time being in case of further postponement of the elections. Members will continue to be updated as and when more information about the May 2021 elections becomes available and any necessary changes to the 2021-22 programme will be communicated following appropriate consultation.

## **9.0 Financial Implications**

9.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

## **10.0 Legal Implications**

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

(One Legal have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

## **11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications**

11.1 There are no risks arising from this report.

## **12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:**

12.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

12.2 There are no safeguarding implications.

## **13.0 Community Safety**

13.1 There are no community safety implications.

## **14.0 Staffing & Trade Union**

14.1 There are no staffing or trade union implications.

**Background Documents:** None