

Dorset Council

14 February 2023

Calendar of Meetings 2023-2024

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr S Flower, Leader of the Council

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director: J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

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Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

To consider the draft calendar of meetings for the 2023-2024 municipal year.

Recommendation:

1. That the calendar of meetings for the period May 2023 to May 2024 be approved.
2. That authority be delegated to the Director – Legal and Democratic Services to make any necessary changes, in consultation with relevant Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen, to ensure effective political management.

Reason for Recommendation:

To ensure effective political management, comply with Dorset Council procedure rules and to put into place appropriate arrangements for council committee meetings.

1. **Report**

- 1.1 The draft calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2023 to 2024 is presented to Full Council for formal adoption and is attached at appendix 1 to this report.
- 1.2 The calendar has been shared with the senior leadership team and group leaders as part of the consultation process. It was also circulated in draft form to all councillors in December 2022.
- 1.3 Throughout the year there may be some unforeseen diary clashes or changes required to the calendar to meet business need. Members are asked to give delegated authority to the Director for Legal and Democratic to make any necessary changes to the calendar of meetings, in consultation with the relevant committee Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen. This is to avoid the need to bring further reports to Full Council and to ensure effective political management.
- 1.4 Like the 2022-2023 programme, in preparing the calendar a short recess has been built into the month of August and the first week in January will also be avoided wherever possible.
- 1.5 Members are asked to approve the calendar of meetings for 2023-2024.

2. **Councillor Survey**

- 2.1 During October and November 2022, an electronic survey was sent to all councillors, asking for views and comments about the timings of Dorset Council committees. There were 54 responses received.
- 2.2 The results of the survey (as attached at appendix 2) indicated that the proposed calendar of meetings mostly meets the majority views from the survey.

3. **Financial Implications**

- 3.1 Dorset Council will apply its scheme of allowances for the travel requirements for members to attend meetings. There may also be incidental costs because of venue bookings which are chargeable. Where other venues have been used the cost of using these venues has been minimised as far as possible.

4. **Environmental Implications**

- 4.1 Careful management of the calendar of meetings prevents unnecessary meetings and helps to limit the number of avoidable journeys travelled by members of the council. Webcasting and the option to contribute remotely provides an alternative means for people to follow meetings and engage with the Council without the need to travel.

5. **Risk Assessment**

- 5.1 **HAVING CONSIDERED:** the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

6. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 6.1 This report does not contain a new strategy, policy or function and therefore does not require an impact equality assessment.

7. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Calendar of Meetings for 2022-2023

Appendix 2 – Results of the Councillor Survey

8. **Background Papers**

None