

# Full Council

## 18 July 2024

### Timing of Meetings

#### For Decision

**Cabinet Member and Portfolio:**  
Cllr N Ireland, 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:

Full Council is requested to approve a minor change to the time that Cabinet meetings are held throughout the year and to allow the Chairs of the People & Health Overview Committee, People & Health Scrutiny Committee, Place & Resources Overview Committee, Place & Resources Scrutiny Committee and Audit & Governance Committee the ability to change the meeting times of their committees.

#### Recommendation:

- (a) That, as a change to the current Calendar of Meetings all future Cabinet meetings be held at 6.30 pm;
- (b) That each of the Chairs of the 2 Overview Committees, the 2 Scrutiny Committees and the Audit and Governance Committee, in consultation with committee members, be given discretion to change the time of day at which their committee is to meet.

## **Reason for Recommendation:**

To provide a consistent meeting time for all meetings of Cabinet throughout the year and for the Chairs of the Overview, Scrutiny and Audit and Governance committees each to be able to decide, in consultation with members of their committees, the most appropriate times for meetings to be held.

### **1. Timing of Meetings**

1.1 In 2023 a cross party Member Task and Finish Group met to review the time that committee meetings were held at Dorset Council, with the aim of giving members the opportunity review the start time of meetings ahead of the May 2024 local elections and to inform the setting of the 2024/25 Calendar of Meetings. The recommendations of the Task and Finish Group were initially considered by the Audit and Governance Committee on 13 November 2023 ([Review of Timing of Committee Meetings .pdf](#) [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](http://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)) and in December 2024 Full Council resolved to:-

- retain all Full Council meetings at 6.30pm;
- move all Audit & Governance Committee meetings from 10.00am to 6.30pm
- to hold Cabinet meetings at 6.30pm during the summer months and to hold Cabinet meetings at 2.00pm during the winter months

1.2 The new Leader of Council, Cllr Nick Ireland, who Chairs the Cabinet meetings has asked that, for the benefit of consistency, all future meetings of Cabinet are held at 6.30pm. This is a relatively minor change to the Calendar of Meetings that was set in December 2024 as only 4 meetings of Cabinet will need to switch to the new time of 6.30pm.

1.3 In addition, it is proposed that the Chairs of the 2 Overview Committees, the 2 Scrutiny Committees and Audit and Governance Committee be given the flexibility to trial different meeting times for their committees to assess which time of day would better suit members of their respective committees.

1.4 To avoid confusion going forwards and maintain an element of consistency it is suggested that Chairs adopt one of the following standardised meeting times as follows:

Morning meetings – to commence at 10.00am

Afternoon meetings – to commence at 2.00pm  
Evening meetings – to commence at 6.30pm.

**2. Financial Implications**

No direct financial implications.

**3. Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**

N/a

**4. Well-being and Health Implications**

The opportunity to hold committee meetings at a more convenient time for members may improve work/life balance for members.

**5. Other Implications**

None

**6. Risk Assessment**

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

Current Risk: LOW  
Residual Risk: LOW

**7. Equalities Impact Assessment**

An equalities impact assessment has not been undertaken for this report as the recommendations do not, at the current time, represent a significant change to the approved Calendar of Meetings.

**8. Appendices**

Timing of Meetings Report and Minutes of the Audit & Governance Committee 13 November 2023

[Agenda for Audit and Governance Committee on Monday, 13th November, 2023, 11.00 am - Dorset Council](#)

Timing of Meetings Resolution of Full Council December 2023

[Covering Report from Audit and Governance Committee Timings.pdf \(dorsetcouncil.gov.uk\)](#)

Minutes of Full Council – 14 December 2024

[Agenda for Dorset Council on Thursday, 14th December, 2023, 6.30 pm - Dorset Council](#)

9. **Background Papers**

See appendices above.

10. **Report Sign Off**

This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)