

Cherwell District Council

Council

17 October 2022

Calendar of Meetings 2023/2024

Report of Assistant Director Law, Governance and Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer (Interim)

This report is public

Purpose of report

Council is asked to consider and agree the proposed calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2023/2024 (Appendix 1).

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve the calendar of meetings for Cherwell District Council for the municipal year 2022/2023 (Appendix 1).

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 It is necessary for Council to agree a calendar of meetings to enable the business of the council to be programmed appropriately in conjunction with its statutory requirements and the Executive's and Committee's work programmes and to enable the corporate leadership team and senior managers to programme key dates into their work plans.
- 2.2 The proposed Cherwell District Council 2023/2024 calendar of meetings is attached at Appendix 1.

3.0 Report Details

Cherwell District Council (CDC) Meeting Calendar

- 3.1 The Cherwell District Council calendar of meetings has been prepared on the basis of the considerations set out in the paragraphs below and takes into account Bank Holidays, the summer period when meetings are traditionally avoided as far as practicable and the 2023 post-election and 2024 pre-election periods.

- 3.2 The calendar has been developed over time to meet the changing needs of the authority. Meeting dates are set to ensure that there are appropriate reporting lines to allow relevant committees to be informed, scrutinise and make valuable contributions to the decisions of Executive and Council.

Full Council

- 3.3 Council meetings are held on Mondays with the exception of the 2023/2024 Annual Council meeting which will be held on Wednesday 17 May 2023 (this was agreed by Council at its xx October 2021 meeting when the 2022/23 meeting calendar was agreed). This allows for the inclusion of proportionality calculations following the local elections taking place on Thursday 5 May 2022 and allows sufficient time for political groups to meet and nominate their committee members before the Annual Council meeting.
- 3.4 The 2024/25 Annual Council is included on the meeting schedule at Appendix 1. Maintaining the pattern and for the reasons set out at paragraph 3.3, it is proposed this be held on Wednesday 15 May 2024.
- 3.5 At the conclusion of the Annual Meeting, the first meetings of formal committees are held to appoint their Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming municipal year.

Executive and Shareholder Committee

- 3.6 Meetings of Executive are scheduled on the first Monday of each month with the following exceptions: August and May when no Executive meetings are scheduled and January and April, as the first Monday in January and April are Bank Holidays.
- 3.7 The Shareholder Committee is a sub-committee comprising three Executive members who will be appointed by Executive at their first meeting of the 2023/24 municipal year. Shareholder Committee meetings are scheduled quarterly.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Budget Planning Committee

- 3.8 Meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Budget Planning Committee are scheduled to tie in with key activities undertaken by each Committee. The scheduling ensures that meetings enable feedback between the Executive and the respective Committee.
- 3.9 If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee establishes any scrutiny review working groups, these groups will set their own meeting dates.

Planning Committee

- 3.10 Meetings of the Planning Committee are scheduled every 4 weeks as far as practicable taking into account Bank Holidays and the election period.
- 3.11 It is mandatory for Planning Committee members and substitutes to have received training prior to sitting on the committee. This date is included as part of the 2023 Member Induction on the morning of the date of the first Planning Committee of the municipal year as Committee members will have been appointed at the Annual Council meeting the previous day.

Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee

- 3.12 The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee is a key component of Cherwell District Council's corporate governance framework. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment, the integrity of the financial reporting and governance processes. The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee has six scheduled meetings.
- 3.13 It is mandatory for Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee members to have received training prior to sitting on the committee. This date is included as part of the 2023 Member Induction programme. Additional training/briefings for Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee members will continue to be scheduled prior to or at the conclusion of scheduled meetings as this has been received favourably by Committee members.

Personnel Committee and Appeals Panel

- 3.14 The Personnel Committee is responsible for staffing matters in accordance with its Terms of Reference. In recent years meeting were arranged if required, following consultation with the Personnel Committee Chairman (or Vice-Chairman in their absence), HR and relevant Director(s). The 2023/24 meeting calendar includes scheduled quarterly Personnel Committee meetings to enable the Committee to receive regular staffing updates and support officers scheduling items that require decision by the Committee,
- 3.15 The Appeals Panel would only meet to determine appeals in accordance with its Terms of Reference. Meetings will be arranged if required, following consultation with the Appeals Panel Chairman (or Vice-Chairman in their absence), HR and relevant Director(s).

Licensing Committee and Licensing Sub-Committee

- 3.16 The Licensing Committee is responsible for licensing matters in accordance with its Terms of Reference. Previous meeting calendars have not included scheduled Licensing Committee meetings. The 2023/24 meeting calendar includes two scheduled meetings to enable the Committee to receive regular updates and conduct any necessary business in a timely manner..
- 3.17 The Licensing Sub-Committee is required to meet if decisions on applications under the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 cannot be decided under delegated powers as valid objections/representations have been received and not withdrawn. The Licensing Sub-Committee has to meet within set timescales and meeting dates will be agreed with Sub-Committee members and Licensing Officers to ensure the statutory requirements are fulfilled.
- 3.18 The Licensing Subcommittee will be made up of any three Members drawn from the membership of the Licensing Committee who have received appropriate training. This training will be scheduled as part of the Member Induction programme.

Standards Committee

- 3.19 The Standards Committee is responsible for matters relating to Member conduct and the ethical framework in accordance with its Terms of Reference. In recent

years meeting were arranged if required, following consultation between the Standards Committee Chairman (or Vice-Chairman in their absence) and Monitoring Officer. The 2023/24 meeting calendar includes two scheduled Standards Committee meetings to enable the Committee to receive regular updates and conduct any necessary business in a timely manner.

Member Induction 2023 and All Member Seminars

- 3.20 Following Cherwell local elections an induction programme is scheduled between May and July to support newly elected Members and provide all information and support they need to fulfil their role. The sessions included on the meeting calendar are not an exhaustive list rather key sessions to ensure mandatory committee specific training is scheduled prior to the first meeting of the particular committee. Additional sessions and service specific bitesize briefings will also be scheduled. Member Induction sessions are also open to re-elected and standing councillors.
- 3.21 Following the induction programme dates for monthly “All Member Seminars” have been included on the proposed calendar of meetings. The briefings are scheduled monthly from September the day of the week varies in acknowledgement of other commitments Members have. Additional briefing and training sessions will be arranged throughout the year as necessary to cover matters as requested by Members or officers.
- 3.22 Member induction, briefing and training sessions are not open to the public. It is anticipated that sessions will be largely virtual in continuation of the well-received and well-attended virtual sessions over the past two municipal years. Virtual seminars also help the Council meet its climate change objectives by eliminating the need for travel, which in turn supports facilitates attendance for Members in reducing the time taken to travel.

Cherwell Parish Liaison Meetings

- 3.23 The bi-annual Parish Liaison Meetings are scheduled and organised by the Communities Team. The 2023/2024 meetings will be held on Wednesday 14 June 7pm – 9pm and Wednesday 8 November 6pm – 9pm. The dates are included on this report for information. Further details will be provided to Parish Councils and Members in advance of each meeting.

Publicising Meeting Dates and Addition of Meeting Dates to Calendars

- 3.29 Once agreed, all committee meeting dates listed at Appendix 1 will be added to the Council’s website. This online calendar is the most effective way to view accurate and up to date public meeting dates. Members (and anyone who wishes) can download meeting dates into their own calendar from the website.
- 3.30 The Democratic and Elections Team will send meeting requests to committee members to ensure Members have meeting dates in their calendars. After the May 2023 Annual Council Meeting, updated meeting requests will be sent as required to reflect any changes to committee membership.
- 3.31 For Member Induction, Seminar and Briefing sessions, the meeting requests will include details as to how to join the sessions virtually.

Amendments to the Calendar of Meetings

- 3.32 Members are reminded that the Council's Constitution sets out that no alterations to the dates and times of meetings shall take place unless Council, the Committee or Sub-Committee agrees an ad-hoc change or the Chairman of the relevant Committee or Sub-Committee, after consultation with the Assistant Director Law, Governance and Democratic Services, concurs with either a cancellation, or an alternative date or time.
- 3.33 If there are any changes to meeting dates Members will be notified via email, updated meeting requests sent and the website updated accordingly.

Format of Meetings

- 3.35 Committee members are required to attend formal meetings in person to be able to participate and vote. Formal meetings are held as hybrid meetings which enables non-committee members, officers and members of the public wishing to address a meeting to attend virtually. All meetings are webcast.
- 3.36 The majority of informal meetings and Member briefings are held virtually. This helps facilitate attendance for Members and supports the councils climate agenda by reducing travel where possible.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 It is believed that the proposed calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2023/2024 as set out at Appendix 1 will provide a suitable decision making framework for Cherwell District Council.

5.0 Consultation

Corporate Leadership Team

Support and recommend the adoption of the proposed calendar of meetings.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To amend dates in the proposed calendar. This is not recommended as any changes to the proposed calendar may have a knock on effect to the meeting cycle or performance targets / statutory deadlines which may in turn require the whole calendar to be redrafted. The Constitution allows for in-year meeting dates to be added and changes to meeting dates and the process for this is set out at paragraphs 3.32 and 3.33.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial or resource implications arising directly from this report.

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance, 01295 221845,

Michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 Meetings which the Council is required by legislation to hold have been included on the meeting calendar. There are no other legal issues arising from this report.

Comments checked by:

Shahin Ismail, Interim Assistant Director Law, Governance & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer. Shahin.ismail@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Risk Implications

- 7.3 The Council needs to have in place a programme of meetings to ensure effective and efficient decision making.

Comments checked by:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Interim Assistant Director – Customer Focus, 01295 221556

Celia.Prado-Teeling@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Equalities Implications

- 7.4 There are no direct equalities implications associated with this report.

Comments checked by:

Celia Prado-Teeling, Interim Assistant Director – Customer Focus, 01295 221556

Celia.Prado-Teeling@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

All - Agreement of a calendar of meetings has significant implications for the Council's business planning and the programming of work.

Lead Councillor

Councillor Richard Mould, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix 1 – Proposed Calendar of meetings 2023/2024

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager,
01295 221589, natasha.clark@cherwell-dc.gov.uk