

Cherwell District Council

Council

18 October 2021

Calendar of Meetings 2022/2023

Report of Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

This report is public

Purpose of report

Council is asked to consider and agree the proposed calendar of the meetings for the municipal year 2022/2023 (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 senior leadership team and senior managers to programme key dates into their work plans.
- 2.2 The proposed Cherwell District Council 2022/2023 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 2022 post-election and 2023 pre-election periods.
- 3.2 Meeting dates for Committees reflect the dates in previous years as far as possible.

- 3.3 Meeting dates are set to ensure linked committees follow in a timely manner for items to be considered by more than one committee.
- 3.4 In light of the shared working arrangements with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) and to assist “twin hatter” councillors (Members who are both an OCC and a CDC councillor), the calendar of meetings has also been prepared giving consideration to the calendar of meetings for OCC.

Full Council

- 3.5 Council meetings are held on Mondays with the exception of the 2022/2023 Annual Council meeting which will be held on Wednesday 18 May 2022. 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.
- 3.6 At the conclusion of the Annual Meeting, the first meetings of formal committees will be held to appoint their Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the municipal year.

Executive

- 3.7 Meetings of Executive being held on the first Monday of each month with the following exceptions: August and May when no meetings are scheduled and January, as the first Monday in January is a Bank Holiday.
- 3.8 The Shareholder Committee is a sub-committee comprising three Executive members. Shareholder Committee meetings will be scheduled roughly quarterly according to the needs of the companies and the Shareholder Representative and following consultation with Shareholder Committee members.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Budget Planning Committee

- 3.9 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.
- 3.10 The first meeting of 2022/2023 municipal year of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been scheduled for a Wednesday rather than a Tuesday to avoid a clash with the already scheduled Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel. This meeting is also at 6.30pm and CDC’s three representatives on the Panel are drawn from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.11 If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees to establish any scrutiny review working groups, these groups will set their own meeting dates.

Planning Committee

- 3.12 Meetings of the Planning Committee are scheduled every 4 weeks as far as practicable taking into account Bank Holidays and elections.

- 3.13 It is mandatory for Planning Committee members and substitutes to have received training prior to sitting on the committee. This date will be included as part of the 2022 Member Induction and Training programme and Members notified accordingly. Additional training/briefings for Planning Committee members will continue to be scheduled prior to scheduled meetings as this has been received favourably by Committee members.

Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee

- 3.14 The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee meeting six times. It is mandatory for Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee members to have received training prior to sitting on the committee. This date will be included as part of the 2022 Member Induction and Training programme and Members notified accordingly. 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.

Licensing Committee and Licensing Sub-Committee

- 3.15 Meetings of the Licensing Committee and the Licensing Sub-Committee will be arranged as required.
- 3.16 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.

Personnel Committee and Appeals Panel

- 3.17 The Personnel Committee is responsible for staffing matters in accordance with its Terms of Reference. Meetings will be arranged if required, following consultation with the Personnel Committee Chairman (or Vice-Chairman in their absence), HR and relevant Director(s).
- 3.18 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).

Standards Committee

- 3.19 The Standards Committee is responsible for matters relating to Member conduct and the ethical framework.
- 3.20 Meetings of the Committee are arranged if required, following consultation with the Standards Committee Chairman (or Vice-Chairman in their absence) and the Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer.

All Member Seminar

- 3.21 Dates for monthly "All Member Seminars" have been included on the proposed calendar of meetings. The seminars are scheduled monthly and the day of the week varies in acknowledgement of other commitments Members have.

- 3.22 The first scheduled date, Monday 16 May 2022, will be a Member Welcome Event following the local elections. Details of the topic for other monthly seminars will be notified to Members closer to the date.
- 3.23 In addition to the scheduled seminar dates, an induction programme of training and briefing sessions will be circulated separately to Members by the Democratic and Elections Team. This will include committee specific training for Planning Committee, Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committee members prior to their first meetings of the municipal year.
- 3.24 Additional seminars, training and briefing sessions will be arranged as necessary to cover matters as requested by Members or officers.
- 3.25 These seminars are not open to the public. It is anticipated that sessions will be virtual in continuation of the well-received and well-attended virtual sessions this municipal year. Virtual seminars also help the Council meet its climate change objectives by eliminating the need for travel, which in turn supports Members in reducing the time taken to travel.

Cherwell Parish Liaison Meetings

- 3.26 The bi-annual Parish Liaison Meetings are scheduled and organised by the Communities Team. The 2022/2023 meetings will be held on Wednesday 8 June and Wednesday 9 November 2022. The dates are included on this report for information. Further details will be provided to Parish Councils and Members in advance of each meeting.

Joint Meetings with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)

- 3.27 There are currently two formal committees with OCC: Joint Shared Services and Personnel Committee, and Joint Appeals Committee. Meetings of these committees will be arranged as business requires.
- 3.28 In addition to the above formal committees, there is one informal working group with OCC: the Partnership Working Group (PWG). The quarterly meeting dates are agreed with the Chair and Vice-Chair of PWG and notified to PWG members and subs.

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 diary 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 calendars from the websites.
- 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 2022 Annual Meeting, updated meeting requests will be sent as required to reflect any changes to committee membership.
- 3.31 For Member Training and Briefing sessions, the meeting requests will include details 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 Director of Law and Governance, 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

- 3.34 In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government included s.78 in the Coronavirus Act 2020 which enabled the Secretary of State the power to make The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, which enabled virtual formal committee meetings to be held.
- 3.35 These Regulations ended on 7 May 2021. Committee members are required to attend formal meetings in person to be able to participate and vote. Formal meetings are being held as hybrid meetings which enables non-committee members, officers and members of the public wishing to address a meeting. All meetings continue to be webcast.
- 3.36 The majority of informal meetings and Member briefings have continued to be held virtually.
- 3.37 It is anticipated that the current meeting arrangements will continue in 2022/2023, however if there are any legislative changes, Members will be advised.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 It is believed that the proposed calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2022/2023 as set out at Appendix 1 will provide a suitable decision making framework for Cherwell District Council.

5.0 Consultation

Senior 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,
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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:

Richard Hawtin, Team Leader – Non-contentious Business, 01295 221695
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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:

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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 Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Finance and Governance

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix 1 – Proposed Calendar of meetings 2022/2023

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

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