

# **Cherwell District Council**

## **Council**

**16 October 2023**

## **Calendar of Meetings 2024/2025**

### **Report of Assistant Director Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer**

This report is public

#### **Purpose of report**

Council is asked to consider and agree the proposed calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2024/2025 (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 2024/2025 (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 2024/2025 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 2024 post-election and 2025 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 Annual Council meeting. It was agreed at the 17 October 2022 Council meeting that the Annual Council for the 2024/25 municipal year be held on Wednesday 15 May 2024. The calendar at Appendix 1 amends this date to Wednesday 22 May 2024. This will allow for additional time for the inclusion of proportionality calculations following the local elections taking place on Thursday 2 May 2024 and allows sufficient time for political groups to meet and nominate their committee members before the Annual Council meeting.
- 3.4 The 2025/26 Annual Council is included on the meeting schedule at Appendix 1. Whilst district council elections are not scheduled in 2025, it is proposed that a later be retained and this be held on Wednesday 21 May 2025.
- 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 June and September which are scheduled for the second Monday of the month.
- 3.7 The Shareholder Committee is a sub-committee comprising five Executive members who will be appointed by Executive at their first meeting of the 2024/25 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 Scrutiny review working groups established by the Overview and Scrutiny 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 councillors appointed to Planning Committee or as a named substitute to attend training each year prior to attending a committee meeting. The training date is included as part of the 2024 Member Induction programme.

### **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 all members appointed to the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee each year to attend training prior to attending a committee meeting. The training will be held on the same date, immediately prior, to the first scheduled meeting to facilitate attendance. 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. Meetings are scheduled quarterly 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. Two meetings are scheduled as placeholders and will take place if there is business for the Committee.
- 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. Two meetings are scheduled as placeholders and will take place if there is business for the Committee.

### **Member Induction 2024 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 support newly elected councillors in their role.
- 3.21 Mandatory Planning Committee and Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee training, which must be attended by all councillors appointed to each committee, is included as part of the Member Induction programme. Specific training for other committee members is also. Each session is scheduled prior to the first meeting of the particular committee and is open to all Members.
- 3.22 Additional sessions and service specific briefings will also be scheduled. Member Induction sessions are also open to re-elected and standing councillors.
- 3.23 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 2024 to March 2025. 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.
- 3.24 Member induction, briefing and training sessions are not open to the public. It is anticipated that sessions will be largely hybrid or virtual, content dependant, in continuation of the well-received and well-attended hybrid and virtual sessions. Hybrid and 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**

- 3.25 The bi-annual Parish Liaison Meetings are scheduled and organised by the Communities Team. The 2024/2025 meetings will be held on Wednesday 12 June and Wednesday 13 November 2024. The dates are included in 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 2024 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 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**

- 3.35 Committee members (and appointed substitutes) 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 or hybrid. 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 2024/2025 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 of Finance, 01295 221845,  
[Michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto: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:

Shiraz Sheikh, Monitoring Officer, [shiraz.sheikh@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:shiraz.sheikh@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, Performance and Insight Team Leader, 01295 221556  
[Celia.Prado-Teeling@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto: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, Performance and Insight Team Leader, 01295 221556  
[Celia.Prado-Teeling@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:Celia.Prado-Teeling@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

### Sustainability Implications

7.5 There are no direct sustainability implications associated with this report.

Comments checked by:

Jo Miskin, Climate Action Manager, [jo.miskin@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:jo.miskin@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 Sandy Dallimore, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services

## **Document Information**

### **Appendix number and title**

- Appendix 1 – Proposed Calendar of meetings 2024/2025

### **Background papers**

None

### **Report Author and contact details**

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