

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 12 SEPTEMBER 2022

PART I – PART DELEGATED

5. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2024/25 AND AMENDMENTS TO 2023/24

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS (CED)

1 Summary

- 1.1 To consider the draft calendar of meetings for the Local Government Year 2024/25.
- 1.2 To consider amendments to the calendar of meetings for the Local Government Year 2023/24 on the scheduling of the two Service Committee meetings.

2 Details

- 2.1 Officers were asked by Members to extend the calendar of meetings so that dates are available up to two years in advance. Currently there are meetings scheduled until May 2024.
- 2.2 Council/Committee/Sub-committee meetings were held virtually from 5 April 2020 to until 6 May 2021 under the Covid 19 Regulations but the regulations ended on 6 May 2021. We now legally have to hold Council/Committee meetings where decisions are made as face to face meetings with all the Members making the decisions having to be present.
- 2.3 It has, though, been possible to hold non decision making meetings virtually (Forum meetings and sub-committee meetings). At the Annual Council meeting in May 2022 it was agreed that these meetings could be held as virtual, hybrid or face to face meetings which allows for greater flexibility. Also at this meeting it was agreed that Licensing sub-committee hearings could also be held as virtual, hybrid or face to face meetings as the Licensing Act does allow for this.
- 2.4 The Council are in the process of installing the required technology to livestream our public meetings and to be able to hold hybrid meetings and it is hoped this will be completed by the end of the year.
- 2.5 The 2024/25 draft calendar includes the following meetings:
 - 2.5.1 Full Council and Annual Council – in 2024/25 Full Council meetings have been scheduled for July, October, December and February. The Annual Council meeting in May 2024 is scheduled for 21 May and in May 2025 for 20 May.
 - 2.5.2 Policy and Resources Committee – seven meetings have been organised with all the meetings organised in advance of the two Service Committee meetings. This will ensure that all policy and budget decisions are agreed first allowing the Service Committees to then agree the detail and implementation. Details of the Policy and Resources and Audit Committee meetings will be sent to Watford BC to ensure they don't clash with their Finance/Audit meetings.
 - 2.5.3 Two Service Committees – Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development and Leisure, Environment and Community – it is proposed, following cancellations of meetings this year, that four meetings are held each year and that these are scheduled in the calendar in July, October, January and March. It is proposed that this scheduling is also included within the 2023/24 Calendar of meetings and that the meetings scheduled for August and November be cancelled and that the September

meeting for IHED be moved to October. A proposed amended calendar is attached at Appendix 2.

- 2.5.4 Planning Committee – 12 meetings of the Committee have been included in the calendar of meetings. All Councillors appointed to the Committee, newly appointed Councillors and named substitute Councillors are required to undertake mandatory training before the first meeting in the Local Government Year.
- 2.5.5 Licensing and Regulatory Services Committees – the meetings will continue to be held on the same evening and have the same Chair of each Committee and the same membership. All Councillors appointed to the Committees, newly appointed Councillors and any Member who acts as a substitute on the Regulatory Services Committee will be required to undertake mandatory training before the first meeting in the Local Government Year. No substitutes can be appointed to the Licensing Committee.
- 2.5.6 Local Area Forums and Environmental Forum – these meetings to be held either virtually, hybrid or face to face as they are non decision making bodies. It is for the Chair of the Forum to decide how the meeting should be held.
- 2.5.7 Audit Committee – the sign-off of the draft Statement of Accounts has reverted back to the end of July therefore the meetings schedule has been amended to hold two meetings in July the second meeting to sign off the draft statement of accounts, with further meetings at the end of September, November and one in March.
- 2.5.8 Council Tax Setting Committee – a meeting has been scheduled following the conclusion of the Full Council meeting (February 2025) but as with previous meetings the Council Tax has been set by Full Council without the need for the meeting. The setting of the Council Tax is though dependent on the HCC/Police Authority setting precepts by that date.
- 2.5.9 Local Strategic Partnership Board – the LSP Board meets co-jointly with the Community Safety Board. The LSP Board meeting dates have been included in the calendar as they are public meetings.
- 2.5.10 Pensioner Forum – currently three meetings have been included in the calendar. Over the last year the meetings have reverted back to face to face meetings and are being held at various venues around the District including the Council offices. In addition tours and walks are being organised at various venues by the Pensioner Champion in consultation with the Committee Team.
- 2.5.11 Licensing/Regulatory Services Sub-Committees – are organised only if an objection is received to an application for a new or variation of a premises licence or club licence, objection to a Temporary Event notice or a taxi licence. In addition a request can be received to ask the Council to review a licence.
- 2.5.12 Sub-committee meetings (Equalities, Local Plan and Constitution) are non decision making meetings. Meeting dates have not been included in the calendar as the dates are set up ad-hoc as and when there is a requirement for them to meet. When these meetings are organised they can be held virtually, face to face or as hybrid meetings and the Council endeavours to livestream these meetings.
- 2.5.13 Community Safety Co-ordinating meetings and Aquadrome Forum meetings are not public meetings therefore are not included on the calendar of meeting.
- 2.5.14 Mandatory Training – Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Services

At the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 18 July they received an annual report on Member Training. At that meeting Members requested that Officers look into providing the mandatory training for Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Services virtually via an online training module or if this was not possible to include the mandatory training dates in the calendar of meetings. Officers are now sourcing and preparing the information required for the online training modules which HR can then use to create the three modules. It is proposed that details be provided to the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer for consultation with the Leader and Group Leaders for agreement and if agreed this could replace the current mandatory training provided by outside consultants. Specialist External consultants in Code of Conduct/Governance were consulted on this method of delivering the mandatory training and could see no reason which would stop the training from being provided in this way.

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The Committee are asked to recommend to Council:

3.1.1 That the attached draft Calendar of Meetings for 2024/25 be agreed with Members able to comment on the dates before ratification by Council on 18 October.

3.1.2 That the proposed changes in the scheduling of the Service Committees as detailed in Paragraph 2.5.3 be agreed for ratification by Full Council on 18 October for years 2023/24 and 2024/25.

3.1.3 That the details for the mandatory training modules for Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Services be provided to the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer for consultation with the Leader and Group Leaders for agreement and if agreed this replace the current mandatory training provided by outside consultants.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy but not within budgets (see section 5.2 below). The relevant policy forms part of the change of Council's Governance to Committee arrangements agreed by Full Council on 24 April 2014. Minute CL81/13 and the Council Constitution refers.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 We have a budget of £750 for booking venues for Local Area Forum meetings.

5.2 There is currently an additional cost to livestream the Sub-Committee meetings of around £350 per meeting. Once the Council's livestreaming facilities are provided this cost will not be incurred by the Council.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 To accord with the requirements of the Council's Constitution (Council Procedure Rule 30 refers).

6.2 There is no legal requirement to livestream meetings as long as public access is provided.

7 Environmental Implications

7.1 Holding more virtual meetings not only increases attendance at the meetings and enables more people to take part in the democratic process but it contributes to achieving the objectives in our Climate Change Strategy by reducing travel to meetings and not having the costs associated with holding a physical meeting (staff resources, heating, lighting etc.).

8 Community Safety, Public Health

8.1 None specific.

9 Staffing Implications

9.1 The meetings are being managed by the Committee team.

10 Customer Services Centre, Communications & Website

10.1 All the meetings are included on the Council website.

10.2 Once the Calendar is agreed it will be communicated to all Councillors, Managers and the Customer Services Centre and published on the Council website.

11 Equal Opportunities Implications

11.1 Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?	Yes
Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required?	No – having more virtual meetings provides greater access to our meetings

12 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

12.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

12.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Committee service plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this plan.

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
Members not available to	The meeting would not be quorate	Provide sufficient notice of the	Treat	1

attend the meetings		meeting dates		
Members and members of the public not able to access the virtual meeting	The meeting would not be quorate and Members and the public would be unable to participate in the meeting	Provide the technology and support to enable Members to participate remotely in meetings and provide information and details to members of the public to be able to participate	Treat	2

12.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Very Likely ----- Likelihood ----- Remote	Low	High	Very High	Very High
	4	8	12	16
	Low	Medium	High	Very High
	3	6	9	12
	Low	Low	Medium	High
	2	4	6	8
	Low	Low	Low	Low
	1	2	3	4
	Impact			
	Low	----->		Unacceptable

Impact Score

4 (Catastrophic)

3 (Critical)

Likelihood Score

4 (Very Likely (≥80%))

3 (Likely (21-79%))

2 (Significant)

2 (Unlikely (6-20%))

1 (Marginal)

1 (Remote (≤5%))

12.4 In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

13 Recommendation

13.1 The Committee are asked to recommend to Council:

13.1.1 That the attached draft Calendar of Meetings for 2024/25 be agreed with Members able to comment on the dates before ratification by Council on 18 October.

13.1.2 That the proposed changes in the scheduling of the Service Committees as detailed in Paragraph 2.5.3 be agreed for ratification by Full Council on 18 October for years 2023/24 and 2024/25.

13.1.3 That the details for the mandatory training modules for Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Services be provided to the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer for consultation with the Leader and Group Leaders for agreement and if agreed this replace the current mandatory training provided by outside consultants.

Report prepared by: Sarah Haythorpe, Principal Committee Manager

Data Quality

Data sources: P&R Committee report September 2021

Data checked by: Ciara Feeney, Interim Monitoring Officer

Data rating: Tick

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	
3	High	*

Background Papers - none

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1 - Draft calendar of meetings 2024/25

Appendix 2 – Amended calendar of meetings 2023/24