

Key Decision Required:	NO	In the Forward Plan:	YES
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CABINET

26 JUNE 2020

REPORT OF CORPORATE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO HOLDER

A.2 PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS: AUGUST 2020 TO APRIL 2021

(Report prepared by Ian Ford and Lisa Hastings)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To enable Cabinet to give consideration to the programme of meetings for the period August 2020 to April 2021.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Members will be aware that the Cabinet, is required by the Constitution, to submit for formal approval to the Annual Meeting of the Council a programme of meetings for the forthcoming Municipal Year. However, due to the outbreak of Covid-19 and the ensuing global public health emergency, meetings of the Council (including the Annual Meeting), its Committees and the Cabinet were unable to take place during March, April and early May 2020. Legislation was passed that permitted Councils not to hold an Annual Meeting in 2020.

In addition, Parliament enacted The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (the “Regulations”) which enable local authorities to hold meetings remotely such as video conferencing and to ‘live stream’ those meetings to enable the public to watch, and/or listen to, the proceedings.

Paragraph 4 of the Regulations permitted the Council to determine how such meetings were held and enabled flexibility on the time and date and frequency without the requirement of additional notice. With the approval of the relevant Chairmen, one Cabinet meeting, two Planning Committee meetings, one Planning Policy & Local Plan Committee meeting and one Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting have been arranged and successfully held under the new Regulations.

It is therefore considered timely that a full programme of meetings for the remainder of what would have been the 2020/21 municipal year be submitted for Cabinet’s endorsement in order that it can then be submitted for approval to Full Council. The programme also includes provisional dates for part of 2021/22.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) that the programme of meetings for the Council and its Committees, as set out in the Appendix to this report, be agreed, in principle, and be submitted to Full Council for formal approval; and**

(b) that the proposed dates for All Member Briefings for Members be noted.

PART 2 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

A draft programme of meetings for the period August 2020 to April 2021 has been prepared and is set out as an Appendix to this report. The dates of meetings from September 2020 onwards are the same dates as were included within the published agenda for the March 2020 Cabinet meeting though Members will be aware, of course, that that meeting had to be cancelled due to the country going into 'lockdown' for the Covid-19 emergency.

The meetings of the Full Council, the Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee, the Licensing and Registration Committee and the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee will normally commence at 7.30 p.m.

Meetings of the Planning Committee and the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee will normally commence at 6.00 p.m. Meetings of the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee will be arranged as and when required.

Meetings of the Standards Committee will normally commence at 10.00 a.m.

Meetings of the Audit Committee will normally commence at 10.30 a.m.

It is expected that all meetings will continue to be held remotely in accordance with the Regulations for the foreseeable future. The Regulations allow the format, location, timing and frequency of meetings to be amended, without further notice, if required. Due to the on-going response to the COVID-19 pandemic it is important that the manner in which meetings are under is kept under constant review and will be determined following consideration to the Regulations, Government Guidance and Health and Safety Risk Assessments.

If it does prove possible to hold 'physical' meetings either in whole or in part then meetings of the Full Council will usually be held in the Princes Theatre, at the Town Hall, Clacton-on-Sea. Meetings of the above-mentioned Committees will usually be held in the Council Chamber at the Council Offices, Thorpe Road, Weeley (though please refer to the section on the Council Offices, Weeley included below), with the exception of the Audit Committee which will normally meet in the Connaught Room, at the Town Hall, Clacton-on-Sea.

Members will be aware that Cabinet meetings are fixed by the Leader of the Council in accordance with Article 7.08 Cabinet Procedure Rules sub-section 1.1 of the Council's Constitution and therefore the scheduling et cetera may change. If able to be held in a physical location then the public meetings of the Cabinet listed will normally commence at 10.30 a.m. in the Essex Hall, at the Town Hall, Station Road, Clacton-on-Sea.

The programme does not show meetings of the Sub-Committees, which are arranged either at meetings of the relevant Sub-Committee or from time to time when required. Dates for All Member Briefings have been included in order to assist Members in keeping their diaries up-to-date.

Closure of the Council Offices at Thorpe Road, Weeley

Cabinet will be aware that, as part of the “Transforming Tendring” project, the Council Offices at Weeley will be closed and the site disposed of, with the departments currently based at Weeley being moved to Clacton-on-Sea. This will obviously mean that the current Council Chamber at Weeley would then no longer be available for Committee etc. meetings.

In preparation for this disposal a phased programme of office accommodation works is underway at the Town Hall, Clacton-on-Sea. Included within these works is the provision of a new Council Chamber within the Town Hall in Clacton. Once that is operationally available a phased transition of Committee etc. meetings from Weeley to Clacton will take place.

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

None.

APPENDICES

Programme of Meetings for the period August 2020 to April 2021