

CABINET

17 MARCH 2025

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE FINANCE & GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO HOLDER

A.3 TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS: 2025/2026 MUNICIPAL YEAR

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To enable Cabinet to give consideration to the timetable of meetings for the 2025/2026 Municipal Year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report will enable Cabinet, as required by the Constitution, to submit for formal approval to the Annual Meeting of the Council a timetable of meetings for the 2025/2026 Municipal Year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (a) that the timetable 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 the Annual Meeting of the Council for formal approval; and
- (b) that the proposed dates for All Members' Briefings and Councillor Development Sessions be noted.

REASON(S) FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)

Having considered the timetable of meetings proposed by the Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder and in order to enable the timetable of meetings to be submitted to the Annual Meeting of the Council for approval and adoption, in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- (1) Not to approve the timetable of meetings;
- (2) To amend or substitute some or all of the proposed dates.

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

Agreeing the proposed changes will ensure that the Council demonstrates good governance and operates efficiently in pursuit of its priorities.

OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The Committee Services Manager, in preparing an initial timetable of meetings for the Portfolio Holder to consider, consulted with senior officer colleagues within the Council.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (including legislation & constitutional powers)

Is the recommendation a Key Decision (see the criteria stated here)	YES/NO	If Yes, indicate which by which criteria it is a Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/> Significant effect on two or more wards <input type="checkbox"/> Involves £100,000 expenditure/income <input type="checkbox"/> Is otherwise significant for the service budget
		And when was the proposed decision published in the Notice of forthcoming decisions for the Council (must be 28 days at the latest prior to the meeting date)	Not Applicable in this instance

X The Monitoring Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:

Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations 2000, as amended, sets out functions which must not be the responsibility of the Executive and therefore rests with Council or its committees. The power to agree a timetable of ordinary meetings of the Full Council and its Committees rests with the Full Council at its Annual Meeting. This is set down in the Council's Constitution in Council Procedure Rule 1 (Annual Meeting of the Council), specifically Rule 1.1(xii) (Timing and Business). This is confirmed in Council Procedure Rule 3 (Ordinary Meetings) and in Council Procedure Rule 35 (Meetings of Committees), specifically Rule 35.1 (Ordinary Meetings).

Schedule 3 (Responsibility for Executive Functions) in Part 3 (Scheme of Delegation) of the Council's Constitution and specifically section 4.2.1 (Overall Responsibilities of the Leader and the Portfolio Holders), sets out that the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance & Governance has the overall strategic responsibility for the Council's Democratic Services which, in turn, undertakes corporate administration in relation to timetabling and servicing meetings of the Council, Cabinet and Committees.

Article 7 (The Executive) of the Council's Constitution and, specifically, Article 7.08 (Cabinet Procedure Rules) – section 1.1 (Cabinet Meetings), states that the Cabinet will meet at times and at locations to be agreed by the Leader of the Council.

FINANCE AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Risk

Providing clarity through a clearly defined timetable of prevents confusion and enhances the Council's overall governance arrangements thereby helping to ensure that the Authority makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks.

X The Section 151 Officer confirms they have been made aware of the above and any additional comments from them are below:

No further comments to make in addition to those set out elsewhere within the report.

USE OF RESOURCES AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The following are submitted in respect of the indicated use of resources and value for money indicators:

A) Financial sustainability: how the body plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;	N/A
B) Governance: how the body ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks, including; and	N/A
C) Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the body uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.	N/A

MILESTONES AND DELIVERY

Preparation of a timetable of meetings for the forthcoming municipal year by the Committee Services Manager, including consultation with senior officer colleagues – late January to early February 2025.

Submission of draft timetable of meetings to the Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder for their review – February 2025.

Submission of Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder's recommendations to formal Cabinet meeting – 17 March 2025.

Submission of Cabinet's recommendations to the Annual Meeting of the Council for approval and adoption – 29 April 2025.

ASSOCIATED RISKS AND MITIGATION

Not approving and implementing an agreed timetable of meetings will negatively impact the Council's governance arrangements.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Under Article 3 (Citizens and the Council) in the Council's Constitution, the public have a right to attend meetings of the Council and its Committees and Sub-Committees except where confidential or exempt information is likely to be disclosed and attend meetings of the Cabinet when key decisions are being considered. The public also have a right to participate by submitting written questions to Full Council meetings and contribute to investigations by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The public can also participate at meetings of the Planning Policy & Local Plan Committee, the Planning Committee and the Tendring Colchester Garden Border Community Joint Committee in accordance with the relevant Public Speaking Schemes. At meetings of the Council, its Committees or Cabinet, members of the public must treat Councillors and Officers with respect and courtesy and must not wilfully harm the property of the Council, Councillors or Officers.

Article 2 (Members of the Council) states, inter alia, that Councillors attending meetings will represent their communities and bring their views into the Council's decision-making process, i.e. become an advocate for their communities; effectively represent the interests of their ward and of individual residents; be involved in decision-making for the people of the District as a whole; and contribute to the governance and effective management of the Council's business at meetings of the Council, Cabinet and other Committees and Sub-Committees, maintaining the highest standards of conduct and ethics.

Article 5 (Chairing the Council and Committees) states, inter alia, that Chairmen will preside over meetings so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of Councillors and the interests of the community; and ensure that the meeting is a forum for

debate of matters of concern to the local community.	
SOCIAL VALUE CONSIDERATIONS	
None	
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S AIM TO BE NET ZERO BY 2030	
The encouragement of Members to opt out of the default position of receiving printed copies of the summons of a meeting (with agendas and reports) and reverting to solely receiving summons via electronic notifications from May 2023 was consistent with the Council's policy of its operations becoming carbon neutral.	
OTHER RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS OR IMPLICATIONS	
Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.	
Crime and Disorder	None
Health Inequalities	None
Area or Ward affected	None directly.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND
<p>In accordance with the Constitution a draft timetable of meetings has been prepared and approved and is set out as an Appendix to this report.</p> <p>The meetings of the Full Council, the Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee and the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee will normally commence at 7.30 p.m.</p> <p>Meetings of the Licensing and Registration Committee will normally commence at 6.30 p.m.</p> <p>Meetings of the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee and the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Joint Committee will normally commence at 6.00 p.m.</p> <p>Meetings of the Planning Committee will normally commence at 5.00 p.m.</p> <p>Meetings of the Tendring Colchester Border Garden Community Joint Committee will be arranged as and when required.</p> <p>Meetings of the Standards Committee will normally commence at 10.00 a.m.</p> <p>Meetings of the Audit Committee will normally commence at 10.30 a.m.</p> <p>Cabinet meetings are fixed by the Leader of the Council in accordance with Article 7.08 Cabinet Procedures Rule sub-section 1.1 of the Council's Constitution and therefore the scheduling et cetera may change. The public meetings of the Cabinet listed will normally commence at 10.30 a.m.</p> <p>The timetable 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.</p>

Dates for All Members' Briefings and Councillor Development Sessions have been included in order to assist Members in keeping their diaries up-to-date. These will be held either in person or online via Microsoft Teams.

Wednesday evenings are avoided, wherever possible, for meetings of Committees et cetera as the Princes Theatre is used in term time for the Princes Theatre Youth Group and it is felt that to have a publicly accessible meeting on the same night will raise significant safeguarding issues. In addition, Monday evenings have been avoided, wherever possible, to avoid clashing with meetings of the Arts & Literature Society in the Princes Theatre for similar reasons.

Venues for Meetings of the Council, Cabinet and Committees Etc.

Meetings of the full Council will normally be held in the Princes Theatre in the Town Hall, Clacton-on-Sea.

Meetings of the Cabinet and Committees will normally be held in the Committee Room in the Town Hall.

PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

APPENDICES

Proposed Timetable of Council and Committee Meetings for the 2025/26 Municipal Year.

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