

SYNOPSIS

Report Originator	Head of Service sponsor	Date Originated
Sarah Haythorpe	Stephen Rix	2 August 2023
Lead Member Name:	Area of Responsibility:	
Sarah Nelmes	Leader of the Council	
CMT Date:	8 August 2023	
JLT Date:	-	
SYNOPSIS PURPOSE		
Reason	JLT/CMT Feedback for Officer and further instructions	Decision required from CMT
<p>To consider the draft calendar of meetings for 2025/26 for comments ahead of presentation of the full report to P&R Committee on 11 September</p> <p>To consider amendments to the calendar of meetings for the current year 2023/24 and 2024/25</p>	To consider the synopsis ahead of the drafting the final report	To make comments ahead of the drafting of the final report
IF APPLICABLE, PROPOSED ROUTE FOR FURTHER APPROVAL		
		Date
Committee		P&R Committee – 11 September 2023
Council (if required)		17 October 2023

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2025/26

(ADL&D)

1. Description

- 1.1 The calendar of meetings for 2025/2026 is being considered by CMT for any comments on the organisation of the dates for the meetings for 2025/26.
- 1.2 Comments have been received from Members on the current year calendar of meetings with regard to the Budget Setting Council meeting on 20 February 2024 and changing the date to the following week as officers understand the date now falls within half term. In addition, Members have asked if the July Planning Committee meeting date could be moved to a week later (17 July) instead of 11 July. CMT are asked for their views on changing these dates and whether they should be put forward as part of the final report to P&R Committee in September.

2. Summary of Main Points

- 2.1 Following requests by Members the calendar of meetings is now organised two years in advance to enable members to schedule the meetings in their diary two years in advance.
- 2.2 The current calendar of meetings is attached for information. It is proposed that the meetings would follow a similar format or 2025/26 but to advise if the changes requested in Point 1.2 should be included when drafting the calendar of meetings for 2025/26.
- 2.3 Decision making meetings (Council/Committees) are required by law to be held in person with all the Members making the decisions having to be present.
- 2.4 It has, though, been possible to hold non-decision-making meetings virtually (Forum meetings and sub-committee meetings). It was agreed at Annual Council in May 2023 that virtual/remote sub-committee meetings would be livestreamed and is included in the Council's livestreaming protocol agreed by P&R Committee in June 2023. Since May 2023 all public meetings held at the Council offices are livestreamed.
- 2.5 Licensing sub-committee hearings could be held as virtual, hybrid or face to face meetings as the Licensing Act allows for this.
- 2.6 The 2025/26 calendar proposes to include the following meetings:
- Full Council and Annual Council – in 2025/26 Full Council meetings to be scheduled for July, October, December and February. Annual Council meeting in May 2026 to be scheduled for 19 May 2026 (the 2025 meeting is already scheduled for 20 May).
 - Policy and Resources Committee – to schedule seven meetings with 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 detail and implementation. Details of the Policy and Resources and Audit Committee meetings to be sent to Watford BC to ensure they don't clash with their Finance/Audit meetings.
 - Two Service Committees – General Public Services and Economic Development and Climate Change, Leisure and Community Committees – to schedule four meetings to be held in July, October, January and March.
 - Planning Committee – 12 meetings to be scheduled (one each month). 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.
 - Licensing and Regulatory Services Committees – propose that the meetings 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 or onto a sub-committee hearing under the Licensing Act 2003.
 - Local Area Forums and Environmental Forum – these meetings to be held virtually, as they are non-decision-making bodies.

- Audit Committee – the sign-off of the draft Statement of Accounts has reverted back to the end of May therefore looking to change the scheduling of the meetings to end of May, end of July, end of September, beginning of December and end of March.
- Council Tax Setting Committee – to schedule a meeting after the Full Council meeting (February 2026) but 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 dependent on the HCC/Police Authority setting precepts by that date.
- Local Strategic Partnership Board – the LSP Board meets co-jointly with the Community Safety Board. The LSP Board meeting dates will be included in the calendar of meetings following consultation with the Chair of the Boards and the Head of Community Partnerships. The LSP Board meetings are public meetings and consideration is being given as to whether these meetings are to be livestreamed.
- Seniors' Forum – currently looking at scheduling three meetings in the calendar although the Champion is holding around 6 meetings a year. The meetings are held as face-to-face meetings predominantly at a local school in the District. In addition, tours and walks are organised at various venues by the Champion in consultation with the Committee Team.
- Licensing/Regulatory Services Sub-Committees – are organised 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.
- Sub-committee meetings (Equalities, Local Plan and Constitution) are non-decision-making meetings. Meeting dates will not be included in the calendar as the dates are set up on an ad-hoc basis.
- Community Safety Co-ordinating meetings and Aquadrome Forum meetings are not public meetings therefore will not be included on the calendar of meeting.

2.7 Members have requested that Officers look to provide the mandatory training dates for Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Services as part of the calendar of meetings. This year dates were provided to Members in February and March. At this time, it is not possible to schedule these dates without knowing how the training is to be delivered. For 2023 Specialist External consultants provided the planning and code of conduct training and the licensing and regulatory services training was provided by Counsel.

3. Recommendations

3.1 CMT to provide feedback and comments before the final report is drafted for CMT to consider at their meeting on 22 August.

Synopsis prepared by: Sarah Haythorpe,

Appendices to the synopsis: Current calendar of meetings

Background Papers: P&R Committee report September 2022