

Corporate Policy and Resources Committee



15 April 2024

Title	Calendar of Meetings 2024-25
Purpose of the report	To make a recommendation to Council
Report Author	Matthew Williams, Committee Manager
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	Not Applicable
Corporate Priority	Community Addressing housing needs Resilience Environment Services
Recommendations	Committee is asked to: Recommend that Council approve the Calendar of Meetings for 2024-2025 as set out in either Appendix 1 or Appendix 2.
Reason for Recommendation	The Calendar of Meetings provides a framework for the democratic and decision-making procedures that will underpin the delivery of the Council's key corporate priorities.

1. Summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current calendar of meetings expires in August 2024. Political group leaders have also suggested changes to the structure of Committees. If approved, the calendar of meetings requires amending to reflect the new structure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are required to have an up-to-date calendar of meetings, allowing future planning for Councillors, Officers, and members of the public.

This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two possible variations of the Calendar of meeting are being put forward for consideration, one for if the Council approves the amendments to the Committee structure, and one if it does not. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendation to Council

- 1.1 This report proposes a schedule of Council and Committee meetings (Appendix 1 and Appendix 2) to enable the consideration of Council business during the period from June 2024 to Aug 2025.
- 1.2 The schedule set out in Appendix 1 assumes no changes to the current Committee system save for the addition of additional meetings in November/December 2024 to cover budget issues and an additional Corporate Policy and Resources Committee in May 2025.
- 1.3 The schedule set out in Appendix 2 assumes:
- Neighbourhood Service and Enforcement Committee is removed (with responsibility transferred to Environment and Sustainability Committee and Community Wellbeing and Housing Committee)
 - Administrative Committee is removed (with responsibility transferred to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee)
 - Economic Development Committee is removed (with responsibility transferred to a new proposed Committee)
 - Addition of new Business, Infrastructure and Growth (BIG) Committee
 - Audit Committee increase from three meetings per year to four.
- 1.4 Appendix 1 would see 59 scheduled meetings per year, compared to 53 this year – an increase of 11.3%. The increase is due to the inclusion of additional meetings for committees in late November/early December to cover budget issues, and Audit Committee increasing to 4 meetings per year.
- 1.5 Appendix 2 would see 50 scheduled meetings per year, a decrease of 5.7%.

2. Key issues

- 2.1 Meetings of the Council have been scheduled with the following general principles in mind, to enable effective decision-making whilst making the best use of resources available:
- Avoidance of Surrey school holidays wherever possible. It is not possible to additionally accommodate the differing holiday periods of private schools.
 - Maintaining the current scheduling of full Council meetings i.e. meetings in July, October, December, February and April and the Annual (Mayor making) meeting in May.
 - The Committee meetings have been programmed to ensure that matters which need to be referred on to the Corporate Policy and Resources

Committee and/or Council can proceed in a timely way, thereby enabling the Council to implement its priorities and strategies, as well as fulfil its constitutional and legal obligations.

- iv) The Regulatory and Administrative Committees feed directly into Council (i.e. Planning, Licensing, Audit, Standards and, for Appendix 1, Administrative)
 - v) Each Committee meets wherever possible on the same day of the week.
 - vi) Licensing Committee primarily meets as a daytime Sub-Committee and those meetings are arranged as and when required. Rather than schedule a monthly Licensing Committee which is likely to be cancelled, this Committee can be scheduled as and when we are notified of business.
- 2.2 The Committee Chairs have the power to call additional or extraordinary meetings, when required, to accommodate urgent or unscheduled matters of business. If the general election falls on the day of a meeting, the Committee Chair and Vice-Chair also have the power to adjust the date of the meeting to avoid conflict with this date.
- 2.3 The Chief Finance Officer has been consulted on the suitability of dates to enable financial reports to be ready for consideration at the relevant service committees on a timely basis.

3. Options analysis and proposal

- 3.1 The calendar of meetings provides a framework for the democratic and decision-making processes that will underpin the delivery of the Council's key priorities.
- 3.2 Option 1: Recommend both Calendars to Council for consideration, pending the outcome of proposed changes to Committees.
- 3.3 Option 2: Amend the Calendar of meetings as set out in either Appendix 1 or 2.
- 3.4 Option 3: Do not approve the Calendar of meetings. This is not recommended as would mean there would be no schedule of meetings.

4. Financial management comments

- 4.1 The cost of administering the proposed meetings will be met from within existing budgets.

5. Risk management comments

- 5.1 The report reinforces a structured approach in terms of a framework and publicised timetable for the democratic and decision-making procedures that will underpin the delivery of the Council's key corporate priorities. This ensures that reporting and decisions are made in a timely fashion to support service delivery/key project milestones/professional standards/requirements.
- 5.2 There could be associated risk implications where an increased level of meetings are being proposed in terms of Officer/Member time, and the impact on resourcing and service capacity pressures etc. This again is dependant on the governance model and options pursued.

6. Procurement comments

6.1 There are no Procurement considerations to take into account.

7. Legal comments

7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

8. Other considerations

8.1 Additional Committee meetings to those proposed will have resource implications.

9. Equality and Diversity

9.1 Consideration has been given to avoiding, where possible, scheduling meetings on the same day as major religious festivals.

10. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications

10.1 There are no implications arising from this report.

11. Timetable for implementation

11.1 Once agreed by Council, the Calendar of Meetings will be published on the Council's website and implemented from June 2024.

12. Contact

12.1 Matthew Williams, m.williams@spelthorne.gov.uk

Background papers: There are none.

Appendices:

Appendix A - Calendar of Meetings schedule with existing committee structure

Appendix B – Calendar of Meetings schedule with proposed committee structure