



FULL COUNCIL

Wednesday, 27 January 2021

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2021/22

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. To seek approval for the Calendar of Meetings for the 2021 /22 municipal year.
2. The Calendar of Meetings provides the framework for the democratic and decision-making processes that will underpin the delivery of the key priorities identified within the Council's East Suffolk Strategic Plan.

Is the report Open or Exempt?	Open
Wards Affected:	None directly affected in relation to this report.
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Steve Gallant Leader of the Council
Supporting Officer:	Hilary Slater Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal and Democratic Services Telephone Number – (01394) 444336 hilary.slater@east Suffolk.gov.uk

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Calendar of Meetings for 2021/22 has been compiled to enable the effective consideration of Council business and covers the period from May 2021 to May 2022. A copy of the proposed Calendar of Meetings for 2021/22 is attached as Appendix A.
- 1.2 Previously, the start time of meetings has been standardised in order to give consistency and to accommodate the anticipated volume of business.
- 1.3 The Chairman of the Council / Chairmen of Committees have the power to call additional or 'Extraordinary' meetings when required, to accommodate urgent or unscheduled items of business or to change a meeting date to reflect unexpected circumstances (eg bad weather etc).
- 1.4 The Calendar, once approved, will be publicised and will be available to view on the Council's website: www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk
- 1.5 The meeting papers for Full Council, Cabinet and the Committees are also available to view on the website.
- 1.6 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, 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) came into force in April 2020. As a result, the Council's formal meetings are currently taking place remotely, via Zoom, and the meetings are able to be viewed live or as a recording on the Council's YouTube channel. A link to the YouTube feed is included on the agendas for the individual meetings.
- 1.7 At the time of preparing the Calendar of Meetings for 2021/22, there are many unknowns regarding the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, meeting rooms have been booked for these proposed meetings at the Council's offices at East Suffolk House and Riverside, should meetings be able to take place physically.
- 1.8 However, it is possible that legislation may change over time, which may allow for remote meetings to continue in the longer term or for 'hybrid' meetings to take place. Depending upon the legislation and following discussions with the Leader of the Council and the Chairman, decisions will be taken regarding how the meetings will take place. Full information regarding the meeting venue or the format eg remotely or in a 'hybrid' form, will be provided on each agenda.
- 1.9 The public will still be able to view Council meetings (including Committees and Sub-Committees) either in person, if meetings are taking place physically, or online via YouTube, if the meetings are being held remotely or in a 'hybrid' form, when 'open' items of business are being considered.

2 HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO THE EAST SUFFOLK STRATEGIC PLAN?

- 2.1 The East Suffolk Strategic Plan expects the Council to maintain the highest standards and governance arrangements and to deliver against all of the themes within the plan. Having an approved Calendar of Meetings is essential to meet both the Strategic Plan and

legislative requirements, and to ensure there is a framework for the democratic and decision-making processes of the Council.

3 FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are statutory and constitutional requirements to hold Council meetings to formulate decisions and to approve policies / strategies. The publication of Agendas and reports for meetings are undertaken in accordance with statutory requirements.
- 3.2 Meetings have been scheduled to enable effective decision-making whilst making the best use of resources. The meetings have also been programmed to ensure that decision-making is undertaken in a timely way to help with the implementation of Council strategies, plans, priorities and in fulfilling statutory and constitutional obligations.
- 3.3 The public can view Council meetings (including Committees and Sub-Committees) online, via YouTube, when 'open' items of business are being considered. The Agenda and accompanying 'open' reports for meetings are made available to view on the Council's website. Publication of the Calendar of Meetings allows the public to know in advance when Council and Committee meetings are being held.
- 3.4 The cost of administering all of the proposed meetings can be met from within existing budgets.

4 OTHER KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Although meetings are currently being held remotely, when they are able to take place physically, they will be convened in venues that meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, in terms of public accessibility, in order to ensure access to Council meetings for all. Both East Suffolk House and Riverside meeting the Equality Act 2010 requirements for public accessibility.
- 4.2 In addition, copies of the Agenda, reports or supporting documentation can be made available in large print, Braille or in a different language, on request.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation is not necessary. However, due care has been taken not to hold meetings at the same time as other nearby local authorities such as Suffolk County Council.

6 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 None. The Calendar of Meetings provides the framework for the Council's democratic and decision-making processes and is a statutory requirement. It also enables all Members of the Council to plan and insert proposed meeting dates in their diaries in advance and allows the public and press to view future meeting dates.

7 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 To enable the effective scheduling of Council business for 2021/22.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Calendar of Meetings for 2021/22 be approved.

APPENDICES	
Appendix A	Draft Calendar of Meetings for 2021/22

BACKGROUND PAPERS – NONE
