

Item

Municipal Year 2021/22 (Indicative)



To:

Civic Affairs Committee 25/11/2020

Report by:

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Wards affected:

None directly affected

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The report seeks comments and approval of the Council's meeting calendar for the Municipal Year 2021/22 (indicative).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To comment on the meetings calendar 2021/22 and, if required, to delegate final approval to the Chief Executive in consultation with Group Leaders.
- 2.2 To agree to change the date of Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee from 12 April to 29 March 2021 as explained in the report.
- 2.3 To agree to cancel the April 2021 Council meeting for the reasons outlined in the report.

3. Background

- 3.1 This committee sets the forward programme of dates for the Council and committee meetings, with Group Leaders having seen the draft calendar for any prior comment. The four Area Committees agree dates at respective meetings in February-April each year.

- 3.2 The calendar avoids as far as possible main school holidays and political party conferences. Liaison with partner authorities is done so the calendar seeks to avoid date clashes wherever possible. Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committees have been scheduled in accordance with usual practice however given the Council is in the process of preparing a joint draft Local Plan with South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) meetings may need to be rescheduled to align with the Local Plan process.

Council meeting 22 April 2021

- 3.3 There are scheduled elections for the 42 seats on the city council on 6 May 2021. The last time there were 'all-out' elections for the city council was 2004. The elections had been scheduled for May 2020 but were re-scheduled under the Coronavirus Act 2020. Not only will there be 'all-out' city council elections in Cambridge on 6 May 2021, there will be elections for County Councillors, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Combined Authority Mayor. The Notice of Election (the start of the election timetable) will be Monday 29 March 2021.
- 3.4 Members have cancelled April Council meetings before in 2017, 2019 and had agreed to cancel April 2020 prior to the coronavirus lockdown, which meant all meetings were cancelled prior to making virtual meetings the norm. Forward planning by senior managers means there will be no decisions for Council from either the Executive or regulatory committees in April 2021. It is worth noting that the county council has no scheduled meetings in April 2021. In addition to there being no known business for decision, cancelling Council allows all councillors to focus on the elections.

Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee-March 2021

- 3.5 Another impact of the city council elections moving to 2021 is that the current date for Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 12 April 2021 looks an anomaly. It is recommended this is moved to Monday 29 March, the day the Notice of Election is scheduled and which is the first day of the school Easter holiday (with the Easter weekend at the end of the week).

4. OPTIONS

The Committee can suggest alternatives to the calendar proposed.

5. Implications

(a) Financial Implications - none

(b) Staffing Implications-none

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

The calendar spreads the meetings across days of the week (Monday-Thursday) and hours of the day. There are more meetings in the late afternoon/evening to suit current councillor preferences. The 2021/22 calendar avoids, where possible, meetings in school holidays following the committee's earlier decision (19/17/CIV).

(d) Environmental Implications - none

(e) Procurement Implications - none

(f) Community Safety Implications - none

5. Consultation and communication considerations

Group Leaders, the Monitoring Officer and s151 Officer have been consulted on the proposed calendar.

6. Background papers

GCP, Combined Authority and SCDC and County Council draft meetings calendars and published meeting dates.