



Signed off by	Head of Legal and Governance
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To	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Executive Council
Date	Thursday, 25 January 2024 Thursday, 1 February 2024 Thursday, 20 February 2024
Executive Member	Leader of the Council

Key Decision Required	N
Wards Affected	

Subject	Calendar of Meetings 2023/24
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Recommendations
<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the draft Calendar of Meetings for the 2024/25 Municipal Year (Annex 1) and make any observations to the Executive.</p> <p>The Executive is asked to consider, and recommend to Council, the draft Calendar of Meetings for the 2024/25 Municipal Year (Annex 1).</p> <p>Council is asked to approve the Calendar of Meetings for the 2024/25 Municipal Year (Annex 1).</p>
Reasons for Recommendations
To establish a timetable to ensure the efficient and effective conduct of Council business for the forthcoming Municipal Year.
Executive Summary

The Calendar of Meetings for 2024/25 draws on the pattern of meetings from previous municipal years. It is designed to ensure all business is achieved as efficiently as possible. The draft Calendar of Meetings for 2024/25 has been subject to a full consultation process having been considered by Group Leaders' and Leader's meetings both held on 15 January 2024.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider the Calendar of Meetings at its meeting on 25 January 2024.

It will be reported to the meeting of the Executive on 1 February 2024. The proposed Calendar of Meetings will be subject to approval by Council at its meeting on 20 February 2024.

The Calendar of Meetings requires approval by Council.

Background

1. The Constitution stipulates that Council approves the Schedule of Meetings (Procedure Rule 2/Para 2.4.2).
2. A draft Calendar of Meeting is published as an Appendix to this report (Annex 1).

Key Information

3. The public meetings as detailed in the Calendar of Meetings (Audit Committee, Council, Employment Committee, Executive, Licensing and Regulatory Committee, Partner, Shareholder and Trustee Executive Sub-Committee, Planning Committee and Standards Committee) all start at 7.30pm as set out in the Constitution (Procedure Rule 4, Paragraph 4.8.4).
4. The Budget Council meeting for 2025 (February) and preceding Executive meeting will again take place as late in the meeting cycle as possible. This is to allow more time after the end of the mandatory eight-week budget consultation period to enable sufficient consideration of the results before inclusion in the report that will initially go to the Executive and progress onto Council. It has been verified that this delay will not negatively affect the production and distribution of Council Tax letters.
5. The Council meeting in Spring 2024 has again been moved to avoid being consecutive with the Good Friday Bank Holiday. This is usual practice with the Council meeting being moved depending on how the Easter Holiday falls.
6. The Partner, Shareholder and Trustee Executive Sub-Committee meets formally before Executive meetings. Informal meetings of the Sub-Committee will meet every other month (between the formal meetings) and additional meetings will be held, should a need arise.
7. Planning Committees are held on Wednesday evenings and in different weeks to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee meetings (given the large overlap in Members involved in these meetings).

8. Following a previous discussion at Group Leaders', the draft Calendar of Meetings reflects that no Planning meetings take place between the local elections and the Annual Council meeting. This avoids needing to appoint Substitute Members for any Planning meeting in May, if some Members of the Committee have not been re-elected, and new Committee Members are yet to be confirmed at the Annual Council for the new Municipal Year. Therefore, two Planning Committees will take place in April in 2024 and 2025.
9. There are eight Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings throughout the year (including the Police and Crime Annual Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny) plus the Budget Scrutiny Panel on 27 November 2024.
10. There are four Audit Committee meetings during the 2024/25 municipal year. The meetings will take place on Wednesday evenings. This is to allow for a phasing that better accommodates the Chair's briefing meeting. These meetings are scheduled to be in the same week as Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings to fit in with reporting to Executive meetings and to avoid meeting in the same week as the Planning Committee.
11. As in previous years, meetings of the Licensing & Regulatory Committee and its Sub-Committees have not been scheduled except for the initial meeting to appoint the Chair, Vice Chair and Chairs of the Sub-Committee. The first meeting of the Licensing & Regulatory Committee on 28 May 2024 will be combined with a training session.
12. The Standards Committee meets three times a year. The first Standards Committee for the Municipal Year 2023/24 is expected to be brief taking place on 4 June 2024.
13. The Employment Committee meets quarterly.
14. As was achieved last year, effort has been made to avoid school holidays where possible. However, this is difficult to achieve in totality especially if numerous meetings being held in the same week is to be avoided. It is hoped that the correct balance has been achieved.
15. It is being suggested that the Executive meeting in October 2024 is confirmed rather than remaining provisions. However, this meeting will only proceed if there is sufficient business to warrant it being held.
16. The proposed Calendar includes indicative dates for meetings at the start of the 2025/26 Municipal Year to assist with planning for future business. These dates will be confirmed as part of the Calendar of Meetings for 2025/26, subject to any revisions.
17. Amendments to the Calendar may be made at any time in the course of the year, in consultation with the relevant Chair, and any such changes will be publicly notified as and when these occur. However, given the difficulties of rescheduling meetings, and the notice of meetings provided by this calendar, it is hoped that any such changes would be a rarity and that all Members will take note of these dates at the point the calendar is approved by Council.

Legal Implications

18. There are no legal implications

Financial Implications

19. There are no financial implications.

Equalities Implications

20. Consideration has been given to avoiding meeting dates in Surrey school holidays, where possible.

Communication Implications

21. Automatic notification of meetings to Members using the ModGov system has been ceased after this caused multiple notifications and confusion. All scheduled meetings will be sent via Outlook Calendars to officers and Members and be listed in the Centralised diary.
22. Scheduled meetings will be available to view on the Council's website. Any changes will be publicly notified as and when they occur.
23. A public notice of meetings is provided on the noticeboard outside the Town Hall as is legally required.
24. The request by Group Leaders that notification be provided to candidates of mandatory training dates for Planning and Licensing will be addressed. How this is best fulfilled will be carefully considered.

Consultation

25. All members of the Management Team have reviewed the draft schedule. As a result, the sequence of meetings was specifically scrutinised to see if this could be further optimised. It was established that the current phasing of meetings is required to allow officers sufficient time to produce reports and to allow these to progress correctly through the meeting cycle.
26. The Corporate Governance Group (officer group) was consulted at its meetings on 13 December 2023.
27. The Group Leaders' and Leader's meetings were consulted at their meetings both held on 15 January 2024.
28. Any comments by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 25 January 2024 will be reported to the Executive on 1 February 2024.
29. The final Calendar of Meetings 2023/24 is subject to the approval of Council at its meeting on 20 February 2024.

Annex 1

1. Annex 1 – Draft Calendar of Meetings 2023/24 dates.