
Subject: **AMENDMENT TO THE CALENDAR OF ORDINARY MEETINGS 2019-20**

Meeting and Date: **COUNCIL – 29 JANUARY 2020**

Report of: **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER**

Classification: **UNRESTRICTED**

Purpose of the report: This report proposes alternative dates for the annual budget setting meeting of the full Council following a request from the Leader of the Council that the dates be reviewed.

Recommendation: That Council approve the ratification of the amended Programme of Ordinary Meetings for 2019-20.

1. **Summary**

1.1 At the Annual Meeting of the Council on 17 May 2019 a Programme of Ordinary Meetings was adopted for the municipal year 2019-20. At the request of the Leader of the Council a review of the dates of the annual budget setting meeting of the Council has been undertaken with a view to amending the currently adopted date.

2. **Introduction and Background**

2.1 The Programme of Ordinary Meetings for 2019-20 is based on a cycle that commences with a meeting of the Cabinet and ends with a meeting of the Council. In between those two points all other committee business takes place. However, as part of the Calendar of Meetings, there are two meetings whose dates are determined by legislation - the Annual Meeting and the Budget setting meeting.

2.2 While there is a significant amount of legislation relating to local authority financial planning and budget setting, the key piece of legislation in respect of the date of the budget setting meeting is the Local Government Act 1992. The Act requires that the budget setting meeting (which sets the Council's Budget and the Council Tax) must be held before 11 March immediately prior to the start of the financial year on 1 April.

Proposed Amendments

2.3 The budget setting meeting is currently scheduled for Wednesday 4 March 2020. This is the culmination of a budget setting cycle as follows:

- Cabinet – 3 February 2020 (to consider the draft budget)
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 10 February 2020 (to scrutinise the budget)
- Cabinet – 2 March 2020 (to consider the recommendations of scrutiny)
- Council – 4 March 2020 (to consider the recommendations of Cabinet and set a budget)

2.4 It is proposed that this be amended as follows to accommodate a move of the date for the budget setting meeting to Wednesday 26 February 2020:

- Cabinet – 3 February 2020 (no change)
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 10 February 2020 (no change)
- Cabinet – 24 February 2020 (change)
- Council – 26 February 2020 (change)

2.5 The amended budget cycle still provides two weeks for the Cabinet to consider any recommendations arising from the scheduled Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 10 February 2020.

2.6 The amendments also avoid the KCC Half Term dates 17-21 February 2020.

2.7 In addition to this, if the Cabinet meeting on Monday 2 March 2020 is moved to Monday 24 February 2020, it is proposed that the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee scheduled for Monday 9 March 2020 be moved forward to Monday 2 March 2020.

3. Identification of Options

3.1 There are three options available to the Council:

3.2 Option A – To make no changes to the adopted Calendar of Ordinary Meetings for 2019-20 agreed by Council on 17 May 2019.

3.3 Option B - To approve an amended Calendar of Ordinary Meetings for 2019-20 as set out in paragraph 2.4 of the report (see also Appendix 1).

3.4 Option C – To approve an amended Calendar of Ordinary Meetings for 2019-20 different from that set out in paragraph 2.4 of the report.

4. Evaluation of Options

4.1 Option A: This reconfirms the existing Calendar of Ordinary Meetings for 2019-20.

4.2 Option B: This provides for an amendment with the least disruption to the overall Calendar of Meetings and is consistent with statutory budget setting deadlines.

4.3 Option C: Any other amendment must be consistent with statutory deadlines and provide for sufficient time for officers to implement any changes that may arise from the meeting of Cabinet on 3 February 2020 and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 10 February 2020.

4.4 In the event that any Member wishes to propose amendments under Option C, it is requested that they contact the Democratic Services Manager prior to the date of the meeting at which this report is considered in order that the feasibility of any amendment to the meeting dates can be established.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 There are no resource implications arising from this report as set out as the report maintains the existing overall number of meetings in the Calendar of Ordinary Meetings.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Comment from the Section 151 Officer:

6.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council:

6.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer:

6.4 Other Officers (as appropriate): None

6.5 Others: As part of the process of preparing this report, consultation was undertaken with the Opposition Group Leader. He was not minded to support the proposed amendment.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Proposed Amended Calendar of Ordinary Meetings 2019-20

8. Background Papers

None

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