
Subject: DRAFT CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2025-26

Meeting and Date: Council – 29 January 2024

Report of: Head of Corporate Services and Democracy

Classification: Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: The Constitution requires that the Calendar of Meetings be set at the Annual Meeting of the Council.

Recommendation:

- (a) That the Draft Calendar of Meetings for 2025-26 be approved in principle subject to final ratification at the Annual Meeting of Council on Wednesday 21 May 2025.
- (b) That Council approve the change to the previously approved date of the Planning Committee meeting from 15 May 2025 to 8 May 2025.

1. Summary

1.1 In order to provide Members, Officers, other local authorities and the general public with as much notice as possible, a provisional Calendar of Council Meetings is presented to the Council in January of each year prior to its final ratification at the Annual Meeting of the Council in May.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 In keeping with a Council resolution efforts have been made to avoid scheduling meetings during school holidays wherever practicably possible. However, it has not always been possible to avoid the school holidays completely, not least because not all schools follow the Kent County Council (KCC) term dates that this report uses as its basis. The following meetings are proposed during KCC school holidays: Planning Committee (21 August 2025) and Cabinet (13 April 2026).

2.2 The Autumn Party Conference dates are:

- 28 September – 1 October 2025 (Labour Party)
- 5 – 8 October 2025 (Conservative Party)

The meeting of Cabinet (6 October) and Joint Health, Safety and Welfare Consultative Forum (8 October) clash with the Conservative Party Conference. However, there should be minimal impact resulting from this overlap.

2.3 The Council sets its draft Calendar of Meetings independently and usually in advance of those of the town and parish councils. It is not realistically possible to completely avoid clashes with meeting dates of town/parish councils during the course of the year without moving to a daytime meeting schedule. However, the mayoral town councils have been contacted and we have been advised they will schedule their Annual Meeting/Mayor Making dates (as these meetings are most likely to have the greatest impact on dual-hatted Members) once Dover District Council's dates are approved in principle.

2.4 A copy of the draft dates for 2025-26 will be provided to all town and parish councils for information once approved in principle by the full Council. A copy will also be available on the Council's website.

2.5 It has also been necessary to propose moving the Planning Committee meeting in May 2025 (that was previously approved by Council) from 15 May 2025 to 8 May

2025 to fit better into the 2025/26 meeting programme. Council is asked to approve this amendment.

- 2.6 It should also be emphasised that the calendar set out in Appendix 1 only applies to committees with scheduled meetings. It does not apply to any committees that are called on an ad-hoc basis as business warrants, such as the General Purposes Committee, or the meetings of any sub-committees or project advisory groups.

3. **Identification of Options**

- 3.1 There are three options available to the Council:

3.2 Option A – To approve in principle the Calendar of Meetings for 2025-26 as set out in Appendix 1, including the change of date for the Planning Committee in May 2025.

3.3 Option B – To approve in principle the Calendar of Meetings for 2025-26 as set out in Appendix 1 with amendments.

3.4 Option C – To not approve in principle the Calendar of Meetings for 2025-26.

4. **Evaluation of Options**

4.1 The recommended option is Option A as this supports the existing decision route cycle and avoids wherever possible school holidays and party-political conferences.

4.2 Option B is not the recommended option as it may require adjustments to the existing decision route cycle. If any Member wishes to propose an amendment to the proposed meeting dates (Option B) they are requested to discuss these with the Head of Corporate and Democratic Services prior to the date of the Council meeting at which this report will be considered in order that the feasibility of any proposals can be established.

4.3 Option C is not recommended as it will adversely impact on advance planning for committee meetings. If this option is chosen, Members are asked to identify issues with the proposed Calendar of Council Meetings to enable officers to produce an amended draft Calendar to be brought back to Council in March 2025.

5. **Resource Implications**

There are no resource implications arising from this report as set out. However, if significant changes were to be made to the Calendar of Council Meetings, then this may need to be re-evaluated.

6. **Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

- 6.1 There are no climate change implications directly arising from the report.

7. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Draft Calendar of Meetings 2025-26

Appendix 2 – List of KCC School Holidays

Appendix 3 - Public Holidays 2025-26 and Party-Political Conference Dates 2025-26

8. **Background Papers**

None

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