



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	COUNCIL – 15 DECEMBER 2021
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 09
Subject	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL DRAFT SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2022-23
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Joe Harris – Leader of the Council Email: <a href="mailto:joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk">joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver – Chief Executive Email: <a href="mailto:Robert.Weaver@cotswold.gov.uk">Robert.Weaver@cotswold.gov.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To receive the draft Schedule of Meetings for the civic year 2022-23.
Annexes	Annex A – Draft Schedule of meetings 2022-23
Recommendation(s)	<i>That the Council approves the schedule of meetings for 2022-23.</i>
Corporate priorities	Delivering our services to the highest standards
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Senior Management Team



## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The draft schedule of meetings is presented to Council and is formulated on a similar basis to the 2021-22 schedule.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

- 2.1 At Full Council on 18 November 2020, the timings of meetings for the 2021-22 municipal year was approved.
- 2.2 For 2022-23, Council meetings will remain either at 2pm or 6pm (in principle summer meetings (during BST) will be held at 6pm and winter meetings (during GMT) at 2pm with the exception being the February Budget/Council Tax meeting which will be held at 6pm);
- 2.3. For 2022-23, the Planning and Licensing Committee will continue to alternate the start time of its meetings so that they commence at 10:00 one month and 14:00 the next.
- 2.4. For 2022-23, Overview and Scrutiny and Audit Committee meetings shall continue to start at 4pm.
- 2.5. It is considered that the meetings for 2022-23 should remain at the times above due to the 2021-22 meeting schedule operating well.
- 2.6 The Council remains committed to enable the transparency which is sought by Members.
- 2.7 Meetings will continue to be held in the Council Chamber at Trinity Road, Cirencester unless Government guidance in light of the Covid-19 pandemic changes and a return to remote meetings is mandated.
- 2.8 Technology, namely Google Meet and Webex, has been utilised to facilitate meetings which are not legally required to take place physically. This has assisted in reducing travel to a central location.
- 2.9 The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (Part 3 - Modification of meetings and public access requirements) allowed virtual meetings to take place during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2.10 In the event that the Government enacts similar legislation in the future, the Council will explore remote/hybrid meetings if the associated legislation permits this approach.
- 2.11 The Council may wish to consider how technology can be utilised in order to facilitate non-decision making meetings, i.e. that Council discusses the possibility of these



meetings being held remotely/using a hybrid approach. Such meetings could include (but are not limited to) task and finish groups, working groups, Scrutiny Committee meetings and licensing panels for example

- 2.12** Current legislation requires only the decision makers to be present in person in the same place at the same time. There is no equivalent statutory requirement for Officers to attend in person. Additionally, meetings of the Licensing Committee for applications under the Licensing Act 2003 can still be held virtually.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1** At the present time, with the majority of meetings now being held physically, Councillors are entitled to claim mileage expenses for attending meetings. This could increase expenditure on mileage claims.

### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1** There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

### **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1** There are no key risks expected to arise from this item. However, the Council has a general duty of care to its Members and Officers, which should be borne in mind.

### **6. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 6.1** Not required as a whole. However, individual proposals may require an analysis to be carried out.

### **7. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1** Virtual meetings during the early part of the 2021-22 municipal year resulted in fewer car journeys and therefore lower emissions from combustion engines. With meetings having now returned to pre-pandemic arrangements, the impact of this may increase emissions.

### **10. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 10.1** The Council could continue with the existing arrangements or put forward an alternative.

### **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1** None

(END)