



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	COUNCIL - 16 NOVEMBER 2022
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 13
Subject	DRAFT PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2023-24
Wards affected	N/A
Accountable member	Cllr Joe Harris – Leader of the Council Email: joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver – Chief Executive Email: rob.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Andrew Brown – Democratic Services Business Manager Email: andrew.brown@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	To set a programme of Council and committee meetings for 2023-24.
Annexes	Annex A – Programme of meetings for January 2023 to May 2023 with changes Annex B – Draft programme of meetings for June 2023 to May 2024
Recommendation(s)	That Council resolves to: a) Approve the programme of meetings for May 2023 and the inclusion of a Licensing Sub-Committee meeting on 26 April 2023 as set out in part 2 of the report and shown in Annex A; b) Note that the Leader of the Council has agreed to move the Cabinet meeting originally scheduled for 6 March 2023 to 13 March 2023 and to cancel the Cabinet meeting that was scheduled for 3 April 2023; c) Approve the programme of meetings for June 2023 to May 2024 (Annex B); d) Delegate authority to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer), in consultation with Group Leaders, to make changes to the programme of meetings in the event that there is any future decision of Council to change the committee structure or committee remits that impacts the programme of meetings; e) Delegate authority to the Democratic Services Business Manager to set



	meeting dates for the Performance and Appointments Committee and the Licensing Sub-Committee (Licensing Act 2003 Matters); f) Agree that, subject to any alternative proposals Council considers and agrees, meeting start times will be rolled forwards from 2022/23; g) Delegate Authority to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer) to set dates for member training and briefing sessions and any working groups established by the Council.
Corporate priorities	Delivering our services to the highest standards
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Licensing Team Leader Planning Services Business Manager Local Management Team

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Constitution requires that the Chief Executive will produce a schedule of meetings for each municipal year, based on operational requirements.
- 1.2 This report proposes meetings dates for May 2023, which have not previously been set by Council, and a recommended programme of Council and Committee meetings for June 2023 to May 2024. Meeting dates for Cabinet are a matter for the Leader of the Council and are included in the programme for completeness.
- 1.3 Setting meeting dates in advance allows for good governance, open and efficient decision making and helps members and officers to plan their workloads and availability.

2. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR MAY 2023

- 2.1 Council on 19 January 2022 agreed a programme of meetings for the (current) 2022-23 municipal year up to the end of April 2023 and noted that the May 2023 meeting dates would be submitted for consideration at the November 2022 meeting of Council.
- 2.2 The Council is due to hold all out elections on 4 May 2023 and the pre-election period for those elections is expected to start on 17 March 2023. Saturday 6 May 2023 will be the



Coronation of King Charles and it is possible that either Friday 5 May or Monday 8 May will become a public holiday

- 2.3 It is proposed that the Annual meeting of Council is scheduled for 24 May 2022. This date is within the required date-range following the local elections and will provide sufficient time for the formation of political groups and for those groups to hold meetings prior to Annual Council. No committee meetings are scheduled for May 2022.
- 2.4 Members elected on 4 May 2023 will commence their term of office on Monday 8 May 2023, or if that date is a public holiday, Tuesday 9 May 2023. It is proposed that member induction sessions are earmarked for Tuesday 9 May 2023 and Wednesday 10 May 2023. The intention is to hold two induction sessions; one daytime and one evening session. The timing of any public holiday would not affect the timing of the induction sessions.
- 2.5 To avoid having a very long gap between Licensing Sub-Committee meetings and to provide for continuity of decision making it is proposed that a sub-committee meeting on Wednesday 26 April 2023 is added to the programme of meetings.
- 2.6 To avoid executive meetings being held during the pre-election period the Leader of the Council has agreed to cancel the Cabinet meeting originally scheduled for 3 April 2023. The Cabinet meeting originally scheduled for 6 March 2023 has been moved back one week to 13 March 2023, the last Monday prior to the expected start of the pre-election period.

3. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR JUNE 2023 TO MAY 2024

- 3.1 The draft programme of meetings for 2023-24 has been formulated on a similar basis to recent years and is based on the current committee structure. Council is recommended to approve the programme of meetings as set out in Annex B. Should Council decide to make changes to its committee structure in future, a revised programme may need to be prepared and circulated. It is recommended that authority is delegated to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer), in consultation with Group Leaders, to make changes to the programme as required following any such decision.
- 3.2 The principle used in timetabling meetings is that business needs to take place in a timely manner but that the broader needs of members will be taken into account. Gloucestershire school holiday dates (shown as grey in Annex B) have been avoided where this does not adversely affect the overall meetings programme however the following meeting dates do fall within Gloucestershire school holidays:
 - Licensing Sub-Committee meetings on 26 July and 23 August 2023
 - Planning and Licensing Committee on 9 August 2023
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 31 October 2023



- Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 2 April 2024

- 3.3 District councillors may also serve as county councillors and / or parish councillors. Meetings of Gloucestershire County Council have been set up to the end of the 2023 calendar year, with most meetings of that authority starting at 10.00am. Clashes with County Council meetings are few but where they do occur any members affected would be able to arrange a substitute for one meeting or the other.
- 3.4 Given that many of the officers who deliver the work of the Council and attend meetings are employed by Publica Group and work across at least two other local authorities, care has been taken to avoid Council and committee meetings at Cotswold District Council clashing with major meetings of Forest of Dean District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council. The avoidance of clashes means that some committees (e.g. Audit Committee) do not always meet on the same day of the week. The programme of meetings across the three councils is very busy meaning there is limited scope to move or add meetings without creating potential clashes for officers. It is likely that the Budget Council meeting will be held on the same date as West Oxfordshire District Council's Budget Council meeting; 21 February 2024. This has been difficult to avoid due to the school holidays the previous week. However, the two meetings are likely to start four hours apart and this shouldn't cause difficulties for many officers.
- 3.5 The Performance and Appointments Committee is responsible for matters relating to the Council's statutory officers and meets on an ad hoc basis when there is business to consider. This report doesn't propose setting meeting dates for this committee and instead seeks a delegation to the Democratic Services Business Manager (who is not one of the Council's statutory officers) to set meeting dates for this committee as required. This delegation also includes meetings of the Licensing Sub-Committee (Licensing Act 2003 Matters), which also meets on an ad hoc basis.

4. CABINET AND SCRUTINY CYCLE

- 4.1 One change to the cycle of meetings from previous years is that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is scheduled to meet on the Tuesday prior to (most) Cabinet meetings. This is intended to allow for pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet reports and will provide the opportunity for Scrutiny to submit recommendations to Cabinet on those decisions.
- 4.2 Cabinet will meet on the first Monday of each Month where this fits with the cycle of decision making and the overall programme. The exceptions are as follows:
- June 2023 – the first and second Mondays of the month is too close to the annual Council meeting to allow for Cabinet member input into reports before they are published in the Cabinet agenda, so the third Monday (19th) is proposed.



- July 2023 – to allow a reasonable gap between the June and July meetings the third Monday (17th) is proposed.
- January 2024 – the first Monday is New Years' Day so the second Monday (8th) is proposed.
- April 2024 – the first Monday is Easter and the second Monday is during the school holiday period so the third Monday (15th) is proposed.
- May 2024 – the first Monday is a public holiday so the second Monday (13th) is proposed.

5. MEETING START TIMES

5.1 No changes are proposed in this report to the start times of meetings but Members may wish to propose alternative start times. Current start times are as follows:

- Council meetings are held at 6.00pm during the summer months (BST) and at 2.00pm during winter months (GMT), with the exception being the February Budget Council meeting which is held at 6.00pm.
- Planning and Licensing Committee and Licensing Sub-Committee alternate the start time of meetings so that they commence at 10.00am one month and 2.00pm the next.
- Overview and Scrutiny and Audit Committee meetings start at 4.00pm.
- Cabinet starts at 6.00pm but that is a matter for the Leader rather than Council.

5.2 In proposing any alternative start times Members are asked to be mindful of the impact on members and officers who attend meetings and should first consult with the Democratic Services Business Manager to ensure that meetings held at different times could be suitably resourced and supported by officers.

6. TRAINING AND BRIEFING DATES

6.1 It is intended that a member training scheme will be produced and approved prior to the May 2023 local elections which will articulate a member induction and training programme. The content of the scheme will be informed by a survey which will be circulated to all members seeking views on the priorities for training and members' availability to attend training sessions. It will also be based around the Local Government Association Member Development Charter. It is also intended that a programme of regular member briefings will be produced following input from members. This report seeks a delegation to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer) to set training and briefing dates following that exercise, with oversight by the Chief Executive.

7. MEMBER WORKING GROUPS

7.1 The Council may establish informal working groups to perform particular tasks. Recent examples include the Constitution Working Group and the Cost of Living Working Group.



This report seeks a delegation to the Director of Governance and Development (Monitoring Officer) to set meeting dates for working groups.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The number of meetings within the recommended meetings programme is similar to in previous years. Members are entitled to claim mileage expenses for attending meetings and such costs can be met from existing budgets. It is anticipated that the majority of training will be delivered internally and will not therefore have a financial impact. An earmarked 'member training' reserve with a current balance of £5,905 is available to fund members' attendance at external courses. There are no further direct financial implications.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The responsibility for setting meeting dates for Council and Committee meetings rests with Council under the Local Government Act 1972 (Schedule 12). In a year of ordinary elections the Annual Council meeting must be held on the eighth day after the retirement of councillors, or such other day within twenty-one days of the date of retirement. In non-election years the Annual Council meeting may be held on any date in March, April or May.

10. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 There are no significant risks in relation to this report.

11. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 11.1 The recommendations are not expected to differentially impact any groups with protected characteristics. Meetings are held in an accessible venue and are webcast live.

12. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 Members are required to attend meetings in person so there will be emissions associated with journeys to and from meetings. Many members choose to have paper copies of agenda packs but alternatively members may prefer to access papers using the Modern.gov app.

13. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 13.1 Should Council wish to consider alternative proposals it could request that a further report is presented to a future meeting.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 14.1 None.