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**Meeting:** General Purposes Committee  
**Date:** 29 May 2014  
**Subject:** Revised Calendar of Meetings – Eight Week Cycle  
**Report of:** Chief Legal and Democratic Services Officer  
**Summary:** The report sets out proposed revisions to the Council’s adopted Calendar of Meetings for the Municipal Year 2014-15, to be introduced with effect from September 2014.

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**Advising Officer:** Mel Peaston, Committee Services Manager  
**Contact Officer:** Leslie Manning, Committee Services Officer  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** All  
**Function of:** Council

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

Having in place effective leadership and political management arrangements of the Authority is critical to the delivery of the Council’s vision and all its strategic priorities.

### **Financial:**

1. The proposed 8-week cycle of meetings will reduce the number of public meetings, and therefore the associated cost.

### **Legal:**

2. Not Applicable.

### **Risk Management:**

3. Not Applicable.

### **Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

4. Not Applicable.

### **Equalities/Human Rights:**

5. Not Applicable.

**Public Health:**

6. Not Applicable.

**Community Safety:**

7. Not Applicable.

**Sustainability:**

8. Not Applicable.

**Procurement:**

9. Not Applicable.

**The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:**

**that it approves the proposed revisions to the 2014-15 Calendar of Meetings as set out at Appendix A to this report.**

**Background**

10. Preparing a Calendar of Meetings for the municipal year ahead enables effective planning of Council business. In addition Part A4 the Constitution specifies that citizens have the right to attend meetings of the Council, the Executive and its committees and the Calendar enables citizens to be aware in advance of meeting dates.
11. At its meeting on 30 January, 2014 Council approved the draft Calendar of Meetings for the period 1 April 2014 – 30 June 2015. The period covered extended just beyond the proposed Annual Council meeting on 21 May 2015.
12. What is now proposed is the introduction of an eight week cycle for the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees with the objective of reducing the overall number of meetings without giving rise to a negative impact on effectiveness or efficiency. Discussions were held with senior officers and members of the Council as to the possible impact the proposal would have on the management of business for the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees following which it was decided to proceed further.
13. Since then the proposed change to an eight week cycle of meetings for the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committees has also been discussed with the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Panel. The Panel is supportive of the change.

## **Timing of introduction of an 8-week cycle of meetings**

14. To enable the appropriate planning of business and also diary management, it is proposed that the introduction of the eight week cycle for the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committees, if approved, should commence from September 2014. This will allow the introduction of the full range of changes arising from an eight week cycle from the beginning of the September/October cycle of meetings. A draft revised Calendar starting in September, and showing the proposed new meeting dates (marked in red) and those dates previously agreed by Council in January (marked in blue), is attached at Appendix A to this report.
15. The draft revised Calendar has previously been circulated to all elected Members and all Chief Officers for comment. Only one amendment was received; this referred to the proposed Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 18 November when both the Leader and Deputy Leader/Executive Member for Corporate Resources will be attending the annual conference of the County Councils Network (CCN). In view of these Members' commitments elsewhere it is suggested that, whilst the majority of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees are rescheduled from October to November in line with the new cycle, the date of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee should remain as 21 October.

## **Impact on other Committees**

16. There are also some proposed changes to the timing of some other committees, as detailed below.
17. The first is the rescheduling of the Audit Committee from the morning of 22 September to the afternoon of that day to enable the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held in the morning.
18. The second is the rescheduling of the General Purposes Committee from 4 December to 20 November and has come about because the Chairman is now unable to attend a meeting on the December date.
19. Third, it is also proposed to move the General Purposes Committee from 12 March 2015 to 5 March 2015 in order that a meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee can be held on 12 March in its established sequence with the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

## **Municipal Year 2015-16**

20. The Committee is advised that the proposed eight week cycle is a transition measure applicable only to 2014-15 and, as such, there are no proposed meeting dates scheduled beyond the end of May 2015. Instead, and in recognition that Central Bedfordshire is a maturing council, it is intended that the draft Calendar for the 2015-16 municipal year will be drawn up based on the application of a regular, two calendar month cycle for Council, Executive and the overview and scrutiny Committees. It is also intended that the meetings for each body will be held, as far as is possible, on the same, specific day of each cycle e.g. Council on the second to last

Thursday of the second month and Executive on the first Tuesday of the second month. The draft Calendar for 2015-16 will be submitted to Members at a later date for consideration in the usual manner.

### **Next Steps**

21. Further to the Committee's endorsement of these proposals, a recommendation will be made to Council for its determination on 12 June. Arrangements will then be put in hand to ensure that members of the Council, officers and all other interested parties are aware of the revised dates, and can plan accordingly.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A – Draft Revised Calendar of Meetings 2014-15

### **Background Papers** (open to public inspection):

None