

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2015-16

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Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval of the draft Calendar of Meetings for 2015-16.

RECOMMENDATION

Council is asked to approve the draft Calendar of Meetings for 2015–16 as set out at Appendix A to this report.

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

1. This report is not scheduled to be considered by Overview and Scrutiny because full consultation is undertaken on the draft Calendar of Meetings during the course of its preparation, including with the chairmen of all the overview and scrutiny and other committees, followed by consideration and approval by Council.

Background

2. The draft Calendar sets out the proposed meeting schedule for the municipal year 2015-16, together with dates of meetings which occur immediately before and after that period.
3. Preparing a Calendar of Meetings for the municipal year ahead enables effective planning of Council business and preparation of the Executive's Forward Plan. In addition the Constitution specifies that citizens have the right to attend meetings of the Council, the Executive and its committees and the availability of a Calendar enables citizens to be aware in advance of meeting dates.

4. Set out at Appendix A is a draft Calendar of Meetings for the period 7 May 2015-25 May 2016 which extends just beyond either side of the municipal year. Members are advised that, in recognition of Central Bedfordshire Council's status as a maturing Authority, the draft Calendar reflects the outcome of a continuing review of the scheduling of meetings. As such it introduces a two month cycle for the Council, Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committees to replace the eight week cycle for the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committees which was introduced in September 2014.
5. The draft Calendar has been circulated for comment to the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, Group Leaders, Executive Members and Deputies and the chairmen of all committees. In addition the Chief Executive and all Chief Officers have also been consulted. Whenever possible any suggested amendments have been incorporated into the draft.
6. It should be noted that the draft Calendar only lists those meetings which can or need to be programmed (for constitutional, financial or other reasons). Meetings of other Council bodies, such as the Licensing Sub-Committee and Appointments Sub-Committee, will be arranged as and when necessary.

Council Priorities

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

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

8. The submission of the draft Calendar of Meetings for approval annually by Council complies with the requirements of the Council's Constitution.

Financial Implications

9. Administration of the proposed meetings can be met within existing budgets.

Equalities Implications

10. Central Bedfordshire Council has a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity. The availability of a Calendar enables citizens to be aware in advance of meeting dates and to make arrangements to participate in the democratic process.

Conclusion and next Steps

11. Approving the draft Calendar will assist the Council and its Members to undertake their duties and enable citizens to attend and participate in the democratic process. The introduction of a two month cycle for some bodies reflects the aim of continually improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council's meeting schedule.
12. Following approval of the draft Calendar the dates will be published on the Council's website and paper copies of the Calendar will be made widely available.

Appendices

The following Appendix is attached:

Appendix A – Draft Calendar of Meetings 2015–2016

Background Papers

None