

## Full Council

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<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>Committees 6-month Review and Schedule of Meetings 2025-26</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>19 November 2024</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Lizzie Fuller, Committees Services &amp; Processes Officer</b>

### Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update on the new committee structure and an opportunity for feedback.
2. To propose a schedule of meetings for 2025-26 with justification for the council to approve.

### Action Required

1. To provide feedback on the new committees at the 6-month review mark.
2. To approve the Schedule of Meetings for 2025-26.

### Background

3. In August (3-month review), the Council approved several minor changes to the Scheme of Delegations and Standing Orders to reflect and improve current working practices. At the now 6-month review mark, no further changes to these documents are proposed at present, although some cross-checking of the updated Scheme of Delegations with other council documents will be undertaken in the coming months.
4. All committees have now met at least once (E&A and CS have met twice and Planning 7 times) since the Annual Meeting. Feedback is continually welcome and encouraged on the new committees.
5. Officers consider that the main focus of work now is to review the frequency of the new committees, see next section.

### Schedule of Meetings

6. As part of the new committee structure, a new committee cycle / frequency for 2024/25 was approved by the Council on 30 April 2024:
  - a. Full Council – roughly every other month
  - b. Planning – every 4 weeks
  - c. Corporate Governance – 4 times a year / every 3 months
  - d. Community Services – 3 times a year / every 4 months
  - e. Environment & Assets – 3 times a year / every 4 months
  - f. Personnel – 4 times a year / every 3 months
7. The frequency is considered to still be the right approach; however, the exact scheduling needs to be revisited for the following reasons:

- a. Delaying the June committee cycle to July had a negative impact on the September cycle as the meetings were then too close together. The CG September meeting had to be cancelled due to insufficient agenda items, and the budget figures were reported to Full Council instead. Other committee meetings were also too far apart. In future, June meetings should be avoided as other committee/democratic tasks take a considerable amount of time in May leaving insufficient time to prepare for June meetings.
- b. Scheduling meetings in September did not work as planned due to Officer workloads being heavily impacted by appraisals / budget setting / town events, and this should be avoided in future.

However, positively, a 4-weekly (rather than 3-weekly) meeting cycle for the Planning Committee has worked well without impacting on the Town Council's ability to respond to applications or request call-ins.

8. Officers have gathered feedback from the Management Team and relevant Officers to ensure the scheduling of meetings best reflects the needs and operational requirements of the organisation.
9. A proposed Schedule of Meetings for 2025-26 is attached (Appendix A). Page 2 of this document includes notes to provide context and justification for the scheduling.
10. There is little scope to amend the Schedule whilst maintaining the required meeting frequency and incorporating Officer recommendations, however if any Councillors have any suggestions please advise the Committee Services & Processes Officer in advance so a potential alternative schedule can be prepared.

### **Resource Appraisal**

11. The resource implications involve officer time to progress relevant actions including training and administration.

### **Risk Assessment**

12. The efficiency and reputation of the Council could be affected if all councillors and officers are not aware of the changes and responsibilities of a new committee structure. Individuals are encouraged through this report and the attached documents to read and comment on the recommendations to mitigate this risk.
13. The documents are a legal requirement for the governance of a Town Council.

### **Legal Powers:**

- Local Government Act 1972, Sections 101-106
- Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, Part II, Section 8

### **Recommendation:**

- i) To approve the Schedule of Meetings for 2025-26.***