

To the Chair and Members of the COUNCIL

DIARY OF MEETINGS – 2015/16

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to approve a schedule of meetings for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

RECOMMENDATION

2. The Council is asked to:-
 - (1) approve the proposed Diary of Meetings for the 2015/16 Municipal Year, attached at Appendix A; and
 - (2) note the schedule of Cabinet meetings determined by the Mayor of Doncaster.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

3. Approving an advanced calendar of meetings for the 2015/16 Municipal Year and publishing the Forward Plan of key decisions provides an opportunity for citizens of the Borough to engage in the democratic process; where provided for in the Council's Constitution, questions can be asked at Council meetings and its Committees.

BACKGROUND

4. At its meeting on 3rd March, 2015, the Council considered a report outlining a proposed Diary of Meetings for 2015/16, upon which comments were sought and these are now reflected in the schedule attached at Appendix A.

Issues to note

5. As last year, the frequency of Council meetings has been retained at six with evening meetings starting at 6.00pm being held in the months of July and September.
6. In order to comply with the statutory timescale for agreeing the Council Budget and setting the Council Tax, this issue will be determined at the Council meeting in March 2016.
7. Meetings have been kept to a minimum during peak holiday periods in late July/August and over the Christmas period.

8. As there will be no scheduled Borough Council Elections in 2016, there is an opportunity to bring forward the date of the Annual meeting of Council next year. By moving this meeting to the first Friday in May, it provides an opportunity for Committees of Council, particularly Overview and Scrutiny, to progress work programmes earlier in advance of the summer recess.
9. A schedule of Cabinet Meetings approved by the Mayor of Doncaster, has been incorporated in the Diary of Meetings.
10. The dates for Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee meetings have been diarised to ensure that they synchronise with the budget setting process and coincide with the publication of the quarterly Performance and Improvement reports, in order to be considered in a timely manner.
11. Dates for Member Training sessions and monthly Member Seminars, have been programmed during the Municipal Year.

The E-Diary

12. The Committee ICT system provides for one click access to the Diary of Meetings from the Intranet home page and can be accessed via the Council's website www.doncaster.gov.uk. This helps raise awareness of public meetings and may encourage members of the public to attend and contribute where provided for in the Council's Constitution. When additional meetings, Members Training events and Seminars are organised, the diary is updated to maintain an accurate list of known Member commitments from a DMBC perspective. Members are encouraged to regularly check the Council's electronic diary to ensure that their own records are up to date and are aware of any changes to scheduled meetings that may have occurred.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

13. Members are requested to either approve or amend the proposed Diary of Meetings for 2015/16.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY PRIORITIES

14. This report has no direct impact on the Council's Key Priorities.

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

15. There are no identified risks associated with this report. The Diary has been drafted based on the provisional diary agreed by Council on 3rd March, 2015.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

16. There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

17. The 2015/16 approved budget includes provision for the production of the Municipal Year Book and Council Diary.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

18. There are no human resources implications associated with this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

19. There are no technology implications associated with this report.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

20. There are no specific equality implications arising from this report.

CONSULTATION

21. The Mayor of Doncaster and other Political Group Leaders have been consulted on the provisional Diary of Meetings for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Council on 3rd March, 2015 (Proposed Diary of Meetings 2015/16)

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