

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration

Council: 23 June 2021

Subject: Council and Committee Timetable – October 2021 to June 2022

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The Council is asked to approve a committee timetable for the period October 2021 to June 2022.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Council:-

- (a) approves the timetable attached as the appendix to the report;
- (b) notes that the Planning Committee will meet bi-monthly, with special meetings being called if required;
- (c) notes that work is underway to introduce hybrid meetings in the autumn;
- (d) agrees that all meetings of Council and Committee meetings be held remotely or in the Civic Space, Church Street, Dumbarton (hybrid) until such times as social distancing requirements are removed. Thereafter, the usual rotation of meetings between Clydebank and Dumbarton will resume.

3. Background

- 3.1** The Council, at its meeting on 25 June 2020, agreed an annual committee timetable covering the period from September 2020 to September 2021.
- 3.2** A new timetable now requires to be approved in order to allow Elected Members and officers to plan Council and constituency business for the year ahead. This timetable will agree meeting dates up until June 2022.
- 3.3** Meetings are currently being held remotely to adhere to the Scottish Government's guidelines on home working and social distancing. However, at its budget meeting in March 2021 the Council agreed to fund the introduction of hybrid Council and committee meetings that will allow a restricted number of Elected Members to meet in person in the Civic Space, Church Street, Dumbarton with the remaining Elected Members joining remotely. It is anticipated that this format will be introduced in the

autumn.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** The proposed timetable is based on the current governance arrangements that have been in place for the last year. The current programme of meetings has worked satisfactorily and ensured that Council business is dealt with timeously.
- 4.2** It is important that a new timetable of meetings is considered now to allow officers to plan business, arrange pre-agenda meetings and for diary invites to be issued to Elected Members and officers well in advance of meeting dates.

Planning Committee

- 4.3** The Planning Committee previously met on a monthly basis, with the exception of July. However, it has been noted that a number of the monthly meetings have had only one or two items of business submitted for consideration. This is not good use of Members' or officers' time and following discussion with the Planning, Building Services & Environmental Health Manager it is recommended that the Committee meets on a bi-monthly basis with special meetings being called if required.

Appeals Committee

- 4.4** Meetings of the Appeals Committee have been scheduled to meet one Thursday per month with the exception of July and December. In the event that there are no appeals to be heard the scheduled monthly meeting will be cancelled in consultation with the Chair and similarly additional dates may be set if there are a number of appeals to be considered at any one time.

Licensing Board

- 4.5** The Licensing Board agrees its own timetable of meetings therefore the dates shown in the appendix are suggested dates only.

Other issues

- 4.6** It should also be noted that the timetable of meetings of the West Dunbartonshire Health & Social Care Partnership Board and its Audit & Performance Committee; the Joint Consultative Forum; and Community Planning West Dunbartonshire Management Board are determined by each of these bodies and therefore the dates shown in the proposed timetable are suggestions only.

4.7 In accordance with Standing Orders, the date of the Statutory Meeting of Council i.e. the first meeting of the new formed Council following the local government elections in May 2022, will be set by the Chief Executive and therefore the date shown on the attached timetable is provisional.

4.8 It is anticipated that the remainder of the committee timetable for 2022/23 will be presented to the Council meeting scheduled to be held on 22 June 2022.

5 People Implications

5.1 There are no employee issues arising from the recommendations of this report as the Council currently operates a similar timetable. However, if the number of meetings were to increase there would be an increase in the workload of the officers directly involved. Any increase in the number of meetings would also put pressure on the limited resources in Committee Services.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 A programme of meetings based on the frequency similar to last year's timetable will have no financial implications. However, any increase would have an impact on the staffing resources currently available. The continuation of daytime meetings also removes the need for overtime costs for some of the officers who have to attend these meetings.

7 Risk Analysis

7.1 If the Council fails to approve a timetable of meetings at this time then all matters requiring Council/committee decision will need to be submitted to special meetings of Council. Given that a Council meeting would not be a suitable forum to consider regulatory matters such as planning and licensing, it is recommended that Council approves the proposed dates as detailed in the appendix attached, or agrees alternatives.

8 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 An initial equalities impact screening was carried out on venues for committee meetings. The outcome of that screening was that there would be little or no impact on equalities groups in West Dunbartonshire.

8.2 The introduction of live audio streaming provides that meetings are now accessible to some groups that may not have previously been able to attend.

9 Consultation

9.1 Officers from legal and finance have been consulted on the content of this report.

10 Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** This report does not have a direct impact on the Council's strategic priorities. However, it is essential that the Council's decision making structures are effective therefore enabling the Council to make the necessary decisions and monitor the work of Council departments which will implement the strategic priorities across a range of services.

Peter Hessel
Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration
Date: 8 June 2021

Person to Contact:	Christine McCaffary, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Email - christine.mccaffary@west-dunbarton.gov.uk
Appendix:	Timetable of Meetings of West Dunbartonshire Council and its committees – October 2021 to June 2022
Background Papers:	None
Wards Affected:	All