

# Chichester District Council

Corporate Governance and Audit Committee

2 July 2020

## Amendment to Corporate Governance and Audit Committee Timings

### 1. Contacts

#### Report Author

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### 2. Recommendation

**That members consider and approve the proposed afternoon start times, of 2.00pm, for future Corporate Governance and Audit Committee meetings.**

### 3. Background

- 3.1 As it is committed to best practice, this Council wishes to better facilitate the participation of every Member until it has fully reviewed meeting times; therefore, in keeping with the spirit of Part 5(d) of Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, The Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee propose that the Calendar of Meetings May 2020 to May 2021 be amended so that the meetings of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee match those of Full Council.

The above clause stipulates that the number of committee seats allocated to each political group should be in the same proportion to their number of Members. Whilst maintaining the current time would not necessarily prevent any Group from taking up its allocation, as this time is less favoured by employers, it could mean that only one of the members of a minor party would not be able to serve on Committees, which is clearly not what this clause intends.

It should also be borne in mind that since May: -

- a) No members of the public have attended the present morning meetings, but have Full Council, so this could prove to be positive;
- b) Even if some Members have regular afternoon commitments, their attendance at Full Council demonstrates Tuesday afternoons are possible;
- c) Officers have managed Chair's briefings on Tuesday afternoons and participated in Task & Finish Groups, so this is a time they can manage;
- d) Other regular meetings have been rearranged, particularly DPIP's which although not a Committee, meets more often than Corporate Governance and Audit, and has a larger membership;
- e) By voting on the Calendar in September, Council demonstrated it is not bound by literature sent out to prospective Councillors during the local election campaign.

There is also a potential pecuniary advantage because our committee rooms are a popular let, so the more we can limit our usage to Tuesdays, the more potential whole day availability is created.

The Court sits in the committee rooms each Friday. Thursday afternoons will still not be available for the hire of the committee rooms due to the time involved to reconfigure the facilities required.

#### **4. Proposal**

The Committee is requested to approve the committee calendar of meetings for May 2020 to May 2021 as follows:

<b>Current Dates 2020/21</b>	<b>Proposed New Dates/Timings 2020/21</b>
Thursday 23 July 2020 9.30am	No change
Thursday 22 October 2020 9.30am	Monday 10 October 2020 at 2.00pm
Thursday 14 January 2021 9.30am	Monday 18 January 2021 at 2.00pm
Thursday 25 March 2021 9.30am	Monday 22 March 2021 at 2.00pm

#### **5. Outcomes to be Achieved**

The outcome is to achieve a meeting time which is more acceptable to the membership of the Committee and those who have work commitments.

#### **6. Alternatives Considered**

6.1 The alternative is to keep the current committee timings of a 9.30am start.

#### **7. Resource and Legal Implications**

7.1 Officers when looking at alternative dates have considered the impact on the timetable for the consideration of the Council's statutory accounts and strategic risks and are satisfied that the deadlines can be met when re-scheduling the meetings and that the Council's external auditors, Ernst & Young LLP, are available to attend relevant meetings.

#### **8. Consultation**

8.1 The Corporate Governance and Audit Committee members have been consulted on the proposals by way of this report.

#### **9. Community Impact and Corporate Risks**

9.1 A change that affects when the public can access committees and engage with members must have a community impact.

10.1 There are no significant corporate risks identified from the matters covered by this report.

#### **11 Other Implications**

<b>Are there any implications for the following?</b>		
	Yes	No
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>		X
<b>Climate Change and Biodiversity</b>		X
<b>Human Rights and Equality Impact</b>		X
<b>Safeguarding and Early Help</b>		X
<b>General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)</b>		X
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>		X
<b>Other</b> (please specify)		X

## **12 Appendices**

12.1 None

## **13 Background Papers**

13.1 None