

Committee: **Annual Council**
Date of Meeting: **27th May, 2021**
Report Subject: **Annual Cycle of Meetings 2021/2022**
Portfolio Holder: **Councillor N Daniels, Leader / Executive Member
Corporate Services**
Report Submitted by: **Gemma Wasley, Service Manager Performance and
Democratic**
Elizabeth Thomas, Scrutiny and Democratic Officer

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	06.05.21						27.05.21	

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 To present the Annual Cycle of Committee meetings for 2021/22 and a decision-making process which, if required, would take place during the proposed August recess.
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The report presents the Annual Cycle of Committee meetings for 2021/22 for Members' consideration. As part of the cycle a proposed recess is included which would cover the period 1st - 31st August 2021 inclusive, and the report details a process for decision-making to ensure that urgent matters can be dealt with during the proposed recess period should it be adopted.
 - 2.2 The agreement of the Annual Cycle of formal meetings forms part of the overall governance arrangements for the Council and supports the democratic process.
 - 2.3 The proposed cycle of meetings is attached at Appendix 1 for consideration.
 - 2.4 Reflecting previous cycles:
 - efforts have been made to align specific committees to specific days;
 - consideration has been given to the preferred times of meetings; and
 - where possible, meetings have not been included within the school holidays.
 - 2.5 The Council's new operating model and agile working policy will also support the new arrangements, for holding hybrid meetings, whereby members and officers will be able to attend meetings from either the meeting room or remotely. This is also in line with the statutory requirements as part of the Local Government and Elections Act, whereby remote access to meetings must be provided.
 - 2.6 Flexibility is to be expected in the implementation of the cycle, including the relevant Chair considering the business to be undertaken and responding accordingly.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 **Option One**

That Council:

- (i) Approve the proposed annual cycle of meetings attached at Appendix 1;
- (ii) Approve the following decision making process to deal with any urgent business during the August recess:
 - a. the Leader and Deputy Leader in conjunction with appropriate Executive Members and Officers deal with any urgent items from 1st - 31st August 2021 (i.e. a Special Meeting of the Executive would be convened at short notice recognising that the matter was urgent and the call-in procedure would apply). The Managing Director / Head of Paid Service in conjunction with the Leadership would determine if a matter was urgent; and
 - b. decisions should be limited to urgent matters and recorded on a decision schedule presented to the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council. No controversial or sensitive matters should be dealt with during this period.

Option Two

That Council:

- (i) Consider and make amendments to the proposed annual cycle of meetings attached at Appendix 1, prior to approval; and
- (ii) Approve the decision making process for urgent business in the August recess as set out in option one.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

The report supports the Corporate Plan's priority 'An ambitious and innovative council delivering the quality services we know matter to our communities'. It also supports the requirements under the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)***

There are no costs related to the establishment of the cycle of meetings.

5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

There is a risk to organisational reputation and the decision-making process should the cycle of meetings not be approved.

5.3 ***Legal***

Guidance is sought and provided by the Monitoring Officer when developing the Annual Cycle of meetings, as necessary.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

There are no staffing implications associated with the proposals in the report.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

Monitoring of each committee is undertaken by the Performance and Democratic Team and is used as an evidence base for making suggested amendments to future committee cycles.

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

The Cycle of Meetings, when published, will enable the members of public to be aware of the schedule of meetings, to become involved in the democratic process.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

The proposed Annual Cycle of Meetings has been developed in consultation with Elected Members and officers.

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

The Annual Cycle of Meetings supports the decision making process of the Council to deliver its business.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

The Cycle of Meetings has been drafted to reflect organisational business with an aim to reduce the need to arrange ad hoc special meetings, unless this is required for urgent business.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

The range of meetings in the cycle covers the spectrum of Council business various elements of which are done in collaboration both internally and externally.

6.7 ***Integration (across service areas)***

The range of meetings in the cycle covers the spectrum of Council business.

6.8 ***EqlA***

There are no negative impacts on the protected characteristics associated with this report.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The cycle of meetings is regularly monitored by the Performance and Democratic Team.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- *Appendix 1 – Annual Cycle of Meetings 2021/22*
- *Appendix 2 – Recess Decision Making Process*