

Timetabling Information

Council

Monthly meetings have been scheduled to follow the Annual Meeting on the 7 May 2013. No meeting has been scheduled for January on the basis that (a) preparations for meetings in early January are affected by the Christmas and new year holidays, and (b) Cabinet in January needs to meet to make recommendations to Council on the following year's budget,

There are 2 Council meetings scheduled for February, particularly to agree the Council's budget and then to set the level of council tax.

Two dates in June and October have been reserved for Council to meet if there is sufficient business to transact.

Cabinet

Dates for Cabinet meetings have been moved towards the end of a month where possible. The reason for this is that Cabinet considers an important budget monitoring report at each meeting, which covers the previous month. Collection of the budget information, report preparation, and publication can result in these reports being 'late'. Holding the Cabinet meetings at the end of a month will allow these reports to be circulated on time. As a consequence, some Cabinet meetings do fall during school holidays.

There will be two meetings in September as a result of the August recess.

Mid-month meetings will be held in:

- December - a meeting the following week would fall on Christmas Eve;
- January - Cabinet needs to meet early enough to make recommendations on the budget to Council at the beginning of February, with Council's agenda being published at the beginning of the last week in January
- February – Affected by the position of Council meetings at the beginning of the month (to agree the budget) and at the end of the month (to set Council Tax levels).

Scrutiny Committees

The 3 scrutiny committees have 5 co-opted voting members whenever they discuss education matters. For this reason none of their meetings have been scheduled during school holidays.

The previous timetable included a meeting for the Performance Scrutiny Committee on the 23 May 2013. It is proposed to move that meeting to the 16 May and hold a Communities Scrutiny meeting on the 23 May instead. The reason for this change is to allow each of the scrutiny committees to meet twice before the recess and for the

Partnerships Scrutiny Committee to meet in July to avoid having to call a special meeting to deal with known business on its forward work programme.

A June meeting of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee is scheduled for 2 p.m. on Monday 10 June to meet with the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

Part of the Performance Scrutiny Committee's role is to scrutinise the Council's performance using the information gathered through the quarterly performance reports. Some of the committee's meetings are based on when those quarterly reports will be available to ensure the committee has access to the latest performance information.

Planning Committee

Planning officers have identified the proposed schedule for Planning Committee meetings which is thought to ensure that the committee meetings and associated post-committee work (issuing decision certificated, etc.) are complementary.

Corporate Governance Committee

The Corporate Governance Committee is also the Council's Audit Committee and the proposed schedule takes into account when the committee will be required to consider treasury management performance and the statement of accounts.

Standards Committee

The number of scheduled meetings has been reduced from 8 to 5 (May 2013 – April 2014) to reflect the workload experienced over recent years. However, if the workload indicates that other meetings are required, these will be arranged accordingly.

Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Committee

Meetings of the CHSW Committee have been scheduled for approximately 1 month after the end of the previous quarter to allow the committee to review quarterly health and safety reports.

Local Joint Consultative Committee (LJCC)

4 quarterly meetings have been scheduled on Wednesday afternoons.

Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

The membership of this statutory committee includes representatives from Denbighshire County Council, religious denominations and teacher associations. This year, the draft schedule proposes to hold their 3 termly meetings on different days of the week (a Monday, Wednesday and Friday) to lessen the impact on teacher representatives caused by taking time out of school on the same week-day for each meeting.

Democratic Services Committee

This committee must meet at least once every calendar year and is able to review the level of support for democratic services, committees, etc. Two Friday meetings have been scheduled at the beginning of the municipal year (24 May) and on the 7 February. Extra meetings can be added if necessary.

Council Briefing

Afternoon sessions of this informal gathering of Council have been proposed for June, September, November, January and April to accommodate issues of interest to members.

Three budget workshops have also been included in the Council Briefing schedule to support members' involvement in developing the draft budget for the following year.

Cabinet Briefing

This is an informal but important meeting for Cabinet members and meetings are proposed for the first Monday of a month. This is expected to complement the cycle of Cabinet meetings which will usually be at the end of the month. Please note that meetings have not been scheduled for May (the first available Monday would be mid-month, and 1 day before Cabinet) and September (there are Cabinet meetings at the beginning and the end of the month).

Results of a Survey on the Timing and Location of Meetings

Question 1 – Would you prefer morning, afternoon or evening meetings?

Responses:

Morning = 26 Afternoon = 7 Evening = 6

Question 2 – Would you apply your preferences to all committees, only committees you are a member of, or only certain committees?

Responses:

All committees = 13
Only committees (the respondent) is a member of = 13
Only certain committees = 5

(The comments received were: satisfied with current arrangements = 2; should be flexible on timings = 2; too many meetings are held in Ruthin = 1; some evening meetings should be held = 1; committees which the public regularly attend e.g. Planning should be in the evening = 1; like to see a balanced mix of morning, afternoon and evening meetings for Planning, Licensing and some scrutiny meetings = 1; would not like to dictate to members of other committees on their timings = 1)

Question 3 – Would you prefer to see the timing of meetings rotate?

Responses:

Yes, for all committees = 7
Yes, for some committees = 4
No = 19

(Comments: satisfied with the current arrangements = 2; Meetings should rotate (except for Council & Planning which should be in Ruthin at 10 a.m.) = 1; Hold meetings at various times according to the wishes of members = 1; Full Council & Planning should remain the same but others could rotate = 1; Afternoon meetings could be easier to support / attend = 1; One committee could meet in the evening to allow members who prefer evening meetings to attend = 1; Rotating times (of specific) committees could cause difficulties for working members because of the irregular pattern when booking time off to attend = 1)

Question 4 – Are there particular times that would cause you difficulties?

Responses:

Yes = 20 No = 9

(Comments: the responses to this question clearly require clarification. Evening meetings were the most commonly cited difficulty mentioned by 15 respondents.

Having too many meetings in a week was cited by 4 respondents as being a problem).

Question 5 – Do you have a preferred location(s) for meeting venues?

Responses:

Yes = 21 No = 9

(Comments: Ruthin = 11; Ruthin or Denbigh = 4; Rhyl = 2; Depends on locations of officers or committee members = 2; Rhyl or Prestatyn = 1; Rhyl, Prestatyn or Denbigh = 1; Rhyl, Prestatyn or Ruthin = 1; Rotate throughout the county = 1)