



General Purposes Committee

Date:	7 November 2012
Classification:	For General Release
Title:	Programme of Meetings and Temporary Location of Council Meetings
Wards Affected:	N/A
Financial Summary:	There are no financial implications
Report of:	Head of Legal and Democratic Services

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The programme of meetings for 2013/14 has been drafted in accordance with the principles endorsed by the General Purposes Urgency Sub-Committee on 10 May 2012 which are set out in paragraph 3.1 of the report.
- 1.2 Following the decision of the Cabinet on 11 July 2012 to grant a 35 year lease to the London Business School it is necessary, with effect from Summer 2013, to vacate the Council House to allow the necessary refurbishment works to be undertaken. Accordingly, this report also includes a recommendation to Council for a temporary location of Council Meetings during this period.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Programme of Meetings set out in Appendix A be approved.
- 2.2 That the Council be recommended to agree that meetings of the Council be held for the 2013/14 Municipal Year as follows: 15 May 2013 (Annual); 10 July 2013; 13 November 2013; 22 January 2014; 5 March 2014 (Council Tax); 9 April 2014; 14 May 2014 (Annual).
- 2.3 That during the period of refurbishment works the Council be recommended to agree that meetings of the Council be held at Porchester Hall, Queensway, London, W2 5HS and that Standing Order 3 (1) be amended to reflect this.

3. Background Information

- 3.1 The General Purposes Urgency Sub-Committee (10.5.12) agreed that the 2013/14 Programme of Meetings be prepared having regard to the following basic principles:

Mondays: Cabinet/Policy and Scrutiny meetings

Tuesdays: Planning/Policy and Scrutiny meetings

Wednesdays: Council Meetings/Group Meetings/other Committee meetings

Thursdays: Licensing meetings daytime.

This strategy allows for easier planning and a more consistent approach. For the most part it is intended to leave Thursday evenings free for Area Forums and similar events.

- 3.2 The Council meetings need to be re-located for a temporary period of about 30 months following the decision to grant a lease to the London Business School and for a major refurbishment of Council House to take place. Officers have undertaken an extensive search for alternative premises and based on this officers are recommending that meetings be held at the Porchester Centre. Whilst it will be necessary to hire some additional equipment to facilitate meetings at Porchester Hall the overall cost is still less than that of the cheapest alternative option. This facility also allows meetings to be held on the same day (ie Wednesday) rather than different days which would have been the case with alternative venues.
- 3.3 In order to test the feasibility of holding meetings at Porchester Hall Officers have undertaken a test on site and this proved, whilst highlighting a few issues which needed attention, satisfactory. This test was attended by the Chief Whip, the Deputy Leader and the Cabinet Member and the Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing and Property Services. The Minority Group Chief Whip was unable to attend the meeting but has been consulted on the proposals and has no comments.
- 3.4 Attention is drawn to the date of the Annual Meeting in 2014. The City Council elections are due to be held in May 2014 but the European Parliamentary Elections are due to be held in June 2014. There is a possibility that these will be combined therefore requiring the City Council elections to be held on 5 June 2014. Whilst not submitted for approval at this stage a provisional booking has been made for the Annual meeting to be held on Wednesday 18 June 2014. A decision on whether to hold a combined election is not expected to be made by the Secretary of State until 2013. The last date on which a decision by the Secretary of State to hold a combined election can be made is 1 February 2014.

- 3.5 The Programme of Meetings reflects a programme of at least 6 meetings for each of the Policy and Scrutiny Committees. Members will recall that the new arrangements for the Policy and Scrutiny Committee envisaged these committees meeting up to 8 times per annum. The purpose of only programming 6 meetings is to allow the Policy and Scrutiny Committee the flexibility to hold additional special meetings at short notice depending on their work programme. In cases where the Chairman has requested the programming of 8 meetings these have been accommodated.
- 3.6 The proposed programme seeks to keep Thursday evenings free from formal Council meetings. This will then enable Members and the political parties to use Thursdays for Community meetings and party political meetings. They can also be used for any special meetings which cannot be arranged on other days.
- 3.7 The programme includes provision for the Discretionary Housing Panel and the Rating Advisory Panel to meet on a programme basis. The programmes have been developed having regard to the expected weight of business in each case.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Programme of Meetings in respect of Council meetings is a matter for the full Council to agree. The programme includes provision for Council meetings to be held when it is known full Council decisions will be required.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 It is anticipated that the cost of holding meetings at a temporary venue will cost an additional approximately £20,000 - £25,000 per annum. Provision for this additional expenditure has been included in the overall budget for the leasing of Council House, as no provision exists elsewhere for this.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The Programme of Meetings has been circulated to the Party Whips and adjustments made where requested. No outstanding issues remain as a result of this consultation.
- 6.2 The Chairmen of the Policy and Scrutiny Committees and other committees have also been consulted and no issues are outstanding.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the
Background Papers please contact Mick Steward: 7641 3134**

Email: msteward@westminster.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None

APPENDIX A

COUNCIL MEETINGS

23 January 2013, 6 March 2013 (Council Tax), 1 May 2013, 15 May 2013 (Annual), 10 July 2013, 13 November 2013, 22 January 2014, 5 March (Council Tax), 9 April 2014, 14 May 2014 (Annual)

CABINET MEETINGS

25 February 2013, 15 April 2013, 24 June 2013, 14 October 2013, 16 December 2013, 24 February 2014, 7 April 2014

WESTMINSTER SCRUTINY COMMISSION MEETINGS

21 March 2013, 17 July 2013, 20 November 2013, 12 March 2014

POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

ENVIRONMENT

17 January 2013, 14 March 2013, 25 April 2013, 1 July 2013, 23 September 2013, 5 November 2013, 20 January 2014, 3 March 2014, 1 April 2014

CHILDREN AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

13 March 2013, 17 June 2013, 16 September 2013, 11 November 2013, 13 January 2014, 12 February 2014, 31 March 2014

HOUSING, FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

9 January 2013, 13 February 2013, 25 March 2013, 18 April 2013, 4 June 2013, 16 July 2013, 10 September 2013, 22 October 2013, 3 December 2013, 14 January 2014, 4 March 2014, 8 April 2014

ADULT SERVICES AND HEALTH

7 February 2013, 17 April 2013, 26 June 2013, 25 September 2013, 12 November 2013, 21 January 2014, 25 February 2014, 25 March 2014

OTHER COMMITTEES

AUDIT & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

6 February 2013, 23 April 2013, 25 June 2013, 24 September 2013,
26 November 2013, 4 February 2014

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

27 February 2013, 3 July 2013, 6 November 2013, 26 February 2014

SUPERANNUATION COMMITTEE

20 February 2013, 23 May 2013, 17 September 2013, 19 November 2013,
18 March 2014

LICENSING SUB – COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Meetings are held every Thursday at 10.00am except Maundy Thursday, Christmas and
New Year

LICENSING COMMITTEE

20 March 2013, 10 July 2013, 20 November 2013, 12 March 2014

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

11 March 2013, 4 December 2013, 12 March 2014

RATING ADVISORY PANEL

23 January 2013, 6 March 2013, 10 April 2013, 15 May 2013, 5 June 2013,
3 July 2013, 31 July 2013, 4 September 2013, 2 October 2013, 30 October 2013,
4 December 2013, 22 January 2014, 19 February 2014, 19 March 2014,
23 April 2014, 21 May 2014

PLANNING AND CITY DEVELOPMENT

Meetings held on the first Tuesday of every month at 6.30pm.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS MEETINGS

Meetings generally held every Tuesday commencing at 6.30pm.
No meeting during Christmas and New Year periods

PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE (PLANNING BRIEFS AND LDF)

Meetings will be arranged as the need arises

DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS REVIEW PANEL

15 January 2013, 12 February 2013, 26 March 2013, 30 April 2013, 4 June 2013,
2 July 2013, 30 July 2013, 3 September 2013, 1 October 2013, 29 October 2013,
3 December 2013, 21 January 2014, 18 February 2014, 18 March 2014

Meetings dates change and additional dates are added.
Check for details at www.westminster.gov.uk