

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S
REPORT TO**

Council
19 May 2021

Report Title: Calendar of Meetings 2021/22

Submitted by: Chief Executive

Portfolios: All

Ward(s) affected: N/A

Purpose of the Report

To note the calendar of meetings for 2021/22, and to remind members of the recommencement of the "6 Month Rule"

Recommendation

That Council notes:

- 1) the dates and times of the meetings as listed at appendix A**
- 2) that the operation of the "6 month rule", which will result in the disqualification of any member who does not attend a meeting in their capacity as Borough Councillor, recommences for all Councillors from and including the 19 May 2021 Annual Council Meeting**

Reasons

To comply with the Constitution and, in respect of the "6 month rule" previous resolutions of this Council.

1. Background

1.1 In respect of the Calendar of Meetings, Appendix 7 of the Council's Constitution states that:-

'The Council will decide when its meetings will take place. Details will be contained in a calendar of meetings which will be approved by the Council.'

1.2 The Calendar of Meetings for the period to and including 2021/22 was set by Council at its meeting on 16 May 2018. The remaining meetings for the 2021/22 municipal year are attached at appendix A for information.

1.3 In respect of the "6 Month Rule", members will recall that an Urgent Decision was taken by the Chief Executive on behalf of Council on 28 April 2020 in light of the national lock-down then in place because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The decision was taken in accordance with Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 to suspend the operation of that section which would otherwise have had the effect of resulting in the automatic disqualification of any Councillor who had not attended an official meeting in their capacity as a borough Councillor in any rolling 6 month period.

1.4 At its Annual Meeting on 23 September 2020, Council resolved to extend the suspension of the 6 Month rule until the next Annual Council Meeting. Accordingly, from the commencement of this Annual Council meeting the “6 Month Rule” is back in operation. For those members in attendance at this meeting, a fresh period of 6 months is commenced from the date of this meeting. For those members not at this meeting, the time period within which they must attend another meeting is to be calculated by taking a period of 6 months, less the time between 28 April 2020 and the date of the last meeting they attended before 28 April 2020. Members are invited to contact the Monitoring Officer to discuss in the event of any individual questions or concerns.

2. **Issues**

2.1 Set out above.

3. **Proposal**

3.1 That Council notes:

- 1) the dates and times of the meetings as listed at appendix A; and
- 2) that the operation of the “6 month rule”, which will result in the disqualification of any member who does not attend a meeting in their capacity as Borough Councillor, recommences for all Councillors from and including the 19 May 2021 Annual Council Meeting

4. **Reasons for Proposed Solution**

4.1 To comply with the Constitution and previous resolutions of Council

5. **Options Considered**

5.1 None

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 These are set out in the body of the report.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 The legal requirement to attend council meetings on a physical or face to face basis, combined with the operation of Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 may adversely impact on those who are unable to attend physical meetings on account of a protected characteristic. Not accommodating the impacts of that would be in breach of the council’s public sector equality duties. This risk can, however, be adequately mitigated by taking steps that will vary depending on the circumstances of each individual case. Any Member concerned about the interaction of the requirement to attend face to face meetings and the effect of Section 85(1) is invited to contact the Monitoring Officer to discuss.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 There are resource implications arising from the proposal.

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 The risks and proposed mitigation measures are set out above.

10. **UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)**

10.1 Not Applicable.

11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 This is not a Key Decision.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1 The Urgent Decision taken on behalf of Council on 28 April 2020 and the Council resolution (Item 15) of 23 September 2020.

13. **List of Appendices**

13.1 Not Applicable

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 The Urgent Decision and Council resolution referred to, available here:-

<https://moderngov.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=152>