

CONSTITUTION AND ETHICS COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 5
30 SEPTEMBER 2019	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Fiona McMillan, Director of Law and Governance	
Contact Officer(s):	Pippa Turvey, Democratic and Constitutional Services Manager	Tel. 452460

ADDITIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
FROM: <i>Director of Law and Governance</i>	Deadline date: <i>N/A</i>
<p>It is recommended that Constitution and Ethics Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider the range of options contained within the report in relation to an additional Council meeting. 2. Agree to include one or none of the options within the draft Council Meeting Schedule for submission to Full Council. 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 This report is submitted to the Constitution and Ethics Committee following consultation with Group Leaders and the Corporate Management Team, as requested by the Committee at its meeting on 8 July 2019.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to the Committee on the responses received from Group Leaders and the Corporate Management Team, and for the Committee to consider which option it feels most appropriate to take forward in light of these responses.

2.2 This report is for the Constitution and Ethics Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 2.7.2.1. *'Authority to oversee the operation of the Council's Constitution and authority to make recommendations to Full Council as to amendments and improvements to the Council's Constitution (including the codes and protocols) subject to the receipt and consideration of a report prepared by the Monitoring Officer, with the exception of those matters under the remit of the Executive.'*

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
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4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 The Constitution and Ethics Committee considered at its meeting on 8 July 2019 the frequency of Full Council meetings. It was felt that it would be beneficial to consider the opinions of the Corporate Management Team and Group Leader's when reviewing the number of Council meetings scheduled per year, as these individuals would have a better working knowledge of the requirements and implications of an additional meeting.

This letter was sent, on behalf of the Chairman, on the 16 July 2019, to the Chief Executive, the Director of Law and Governance, the Executive Director for Place and Economy, the Director of Public Health, the Executive Director for People and Communities, the Acting Corporate Director of Resources, the Director of Business Improvement and Development, the Director for Customer and Digital Services, Councillor Holdich, Councillor Shaz Nawaz, Councillor Sandford, Councillor Lane, and Councillor Howell. Responses were requested by 13 September 2019.

The options set out included an additional budget Council meetings, with the focus only on the budget, and an additional May meeting with the focus on questions and motions only, either held immediately after Annual Council or within two weeks.

The responses received from senior officers favoured an additional May meeting if one was considered necessary, focusing on questions and motions, in the two weeks following the Annual Council meeting. This was considered preferable to adding these into the Annual Council Meeting.

The Green and Conservative Group Leaders were similarly in favour of an additional meeting in the weeks following Annual Council. The Green Group Leader made further comment in relation to the order of business, suggesting that motions on notice be moved higher in the agenda in order for them to be discussed earlier in the evening.

The Liberal Democrat Group Leader made the following suggestions:

1. *“Change the Annual Council meeting into a normal Full Council meeting with motions and questions and possibly other items of executive business being included on the agenda. Annual Council has the ceremonial mayor making at the beginning but the whole meeting rarely takes up the full four hours allocated.*
2. *Make the meeting which sets the final phase of the budget and the Council Tax a budget only meeting*
3. *Move the January Full Council meeting to early February to minimise the gap between this meeting and the next opportunity to submit motions/questions at the reconfigured annual council meeting in May.*
4. *Consider putting one additional Full Council meeting into the schedule. This could be in early September so as to minimise the gap between the July and October Council meetings. Or you could leave the January full council where it is currently and put in an additional council meeting towards the end of March, before the start of the purdah period.”*

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 As set out in the previous committee decision, all members of the Peterborough City Council Corporate Management Team and all Group Leaders were written to their opinions sought. This included their preference on the options set out, or any further option.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 6.1 It is anticipated that the committee’s decision will allow for all of the Council’s business to be dealt with, with sufficient time for consideration.

7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 The reason for the recommendation is to ensure that Members feel that they have a sufficient and appropriate number of Full Council meetings throughout the year to consider Council business, while taking account of the comments of the Corporate Management Team, Group Leaders, and resources available.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 **To not consider any route for an additional Full Council meeting** - This was disregarded, as this would not action the Constitution and Ethics Committee's wish to review the opinions of the Corporate Management Team and Group Leaders on the options for an additional meeting.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 9.1 In considering the relative advantages and disadvantages of the options set out in the report, it should be noted that each meeting of Full Council costs approximately £3,500.

Legal Implications

- 9.2 There are no legal implications arising from this recommendation.

Equalities Implications

- 9.3 There are no equalities implications arising from this recommendation.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 10.1 [Record of Outcomes from the Constitution and Ethics Committee Meeting - 8 July 2019](#)

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 None.

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