



## **Chester-le-Street** District Council

**REPORT TO:** COUNCIL

**DATE OF MEETING:** 29 May 2008

**REPORT OF:** Head of Legal & Democratic Services

**SUBJECT:** Annual Programme of Ordinary Meetings of the Council

**ITEM NUMBER:**

### **1. Purpose and Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to agree the last annual programme of Ordinary Meetings of the Council.
- 1.2 The Council is therefore recommended to agree the timetable as set out in Appendix 1 hereto.

### **2. Consultation**

- 2.1 Views of all members are sought and some soundings have already been taken.

### **3. Transition Plan and People and Place Priority**

- 3.1 Work of the Council will continue until the new Authority takes over responsibility for district council functions as from 1 April 2009.

### **4. Implications**

#### **4.1 Financial and Value for Money Statement**

- 4.1.1 The programme of ordinary meetings of the Council is designed to ensure that all necessary work is transacted in a timely manner and with due regard of the need to avoid unnecessary meetings so saving time and money.

- 4.1.2 The holding of such meetings can be met from existing budgets.

#### **4.2 Local Government Reorganisation Implications**

Durham County Council takes over district council responsibilities on 1 April 2009 and Chester-le-Street District Council will cease to exist after 31 March 2009. A more flexible approach is required to assist with transition.

#### 4.3 Legal

4.3.1 The Council has an obligation to meet at least once at its Annual Meeting but can decide what ordinary meetings it wishes to hold in addition to that Annual Meeting. Section 99 of the Local Government Act 1972 and Part I to Schedule 12 of that Act refers. Part 4A of the Council's Constitution also refers.

#### 4.4 Personnel

4.3.1 The current arrangements are satisfactory.

#### 4.5 Other Services

4.5.1 Relevant officers from other Service Teams will continue to need to make themselves available.

#### 4.6 Diversity

4.6.1 The Council continues to fix its meetings in the evening at 6 pm as this represents an acceptable balance between all competing interests.

#### 4.7 Risk

4.7.1 The risk to the Council is that if it holds meetings too frequently such meetings would not be an efficient and effective use of resources and yet if the programme fails to allow for the holding of meetings for the timely transaction of business then there will be a need to either hold Special Meetings or for the use of the urgent business procedure.

#### 4.8 Crime and Disorder

4.8.1 None except Members will need to continue to make arrangements for their home security given that this programme is publicly available.

#### 4.9 Data Quality

4.9.1 Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation are accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete. The Council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

#### 4.10 Other Implications

4.10.1 None.

## **5. Background, Position Statement and Options Appraisal**

- 5.1 The Council can decide how often, where and at what time it wishes to meet throughout the year
- 5.2 If the Council fails to fix a time for its meeting then by law it is to be held at twelve noon.
- 5.3 The normal location of ordinary meetings of the Council is in the Council Chamber at the Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street but meetings can be held anywhere within the District or outside the area.
- 5.4 The frequency of meetings has in the past been linked to anticipated workloads.

## **6. Recommendations**

- 6.1 That the Council is recommended to agree the programme of ordinary meetings of the Council at the times, on the dates and at the location set out in Appendix 1 hereto.

## **7. Background Papers / Documents Referred to**

None.

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**Head of Legal and Democratic Services**

**15 May 2008**

**Version 1**

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