

Council



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Title of Report:	Amendments to Constitution: date of Annual Council 2015 and approval of schedule of meetings for 2015/16	
Report No:	COU/SE/15/003 [to be completed by Democratic Services]	
Decisions plan reference:		
Report to and date/s:	Council	24 February 2015
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Purpose of report:	To seek an amendment to the Constitution to enable approval of the date for the Annual Council meeting in 2015 and the programme of meetings for 2015/16.	
Recommendation:	Council: It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that: (1) the Constitution be amended at Part 4, Council Procedure Rule 1.1.1 and 1.1.2 (k) as detailed in Appendix 1 to this report; and (2) the date for the next Annual meeting of the Council be confirmed as Tuesday 19 May 2015; (3) the programme of meetings for 2015/16 as detailed in Appendix 2 to this report be approved.	

Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i>	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<i>The key decision made as a result of this report will be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until seven working days have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i>			
Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All members were consulted by email. 		
Alternative option(s):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Annual meeting of the Council could be held on the date specified by the Constitution, but this would clash with Suffolk County Council's Annual Meeting. Members had previously agreed that this should be avoided. As in previous years, approval of the meeting dates for the forthcoming civic year could be sought at the Annual Meeting in May. However, this is a barrier to forward planning and transparency particularly with regard to those meetings that take place soon after the Annual Meeting. 		
Implications:			
<i>Are there any financial implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
<i>Are there any staffing implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
<i>Are there any ICT implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
<i>Are there any legal and/or policy implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to give legal effect to the proposed changes to the constitution they will need to be formally adopted by resolution of council. 	
<i>Are there any equality implications? If yes, please give details</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having more notice of forthcoming meetings may enable members of the public to participate more easily in the democratic process. 	
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
Changes are not approved	Medium	Report clearly explains the reasons for the proposed changes and the benefits for members and the public.	Low

Ward(s) affected:	All Wards
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>	
Documents attached:	<i>(Please list any appendices.)</i> Appendix 1 – Amendments to the Constitution Part 4 – Council Procedure Rules Appendix 2 – Programme of meetings for 2015/16

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Background

1.1.1 A review of the constitution is currently taking place and it is intended that the new constitution will be approved by Council at a Joint Meeting (with Forest Heath District Council) to be held on **25 March 2015**.

1.1.2 This paper sets out two amendments to the current constitution (which would be incorporated into the new version), that Council will be asked to approve at its meeting on **24 February 2015**. This will enable confirmation of the date for the Annual Meeting of the Council, and approval of the programme for ordinary meetings of the council.

1.2 Amendments to the Constitution

1.2.1 Due to a clash with the Annual Meeting of Suffolk County Council, members have previously decided that it is undesirable to schedule the Annual Meeting of this Council for the second Thursday following the four yearly elections, as required by Council Procedure Rule 1.1.1. In order for the Annual Meeting to be held on an alternative date, Council will need to approve a change to the constitution. The proposed change, detailed in **Appendix 1** to this report, will allow for some flexibility for setting the date of the Annual Meeting in future. The proposed new wording is taken from Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972.

1.2.2 The programme of ordinary meetings cannot be published on the website until it has been approved by Council. At present, Council Procedure Rule 1.1.2 (k) requires that approval be given at the Annual Meeting, which means the dates will not be available to the public until late May. The proposed change, detailed in **Appendix 1** to this report, will allow for the programme of meetings to be approved at an earlier council meeting.

1.2.3 To ensure openness and transparency, and allow the public, members and officers to plan for the year ahead, it is proposed that these amendments to the constitution be approved at the February meeting.

1.3 Date for the Annual meeting of the Council 2015

1.3.1 For the reasons set out above in paragraph 1.2.1, it is proposed that the Annual Meeting be held on **Tuesday 19 May 2015**. This confirms the date that members were informally advised to diarise at the Council meeting held on 30 June 2014.

1.4 Programme of council meetings for 2015/16

1.4.1 The council is invited to approve the programme of council meetings for 2015/16 attached as **Appendix 2**.