



**Corporate Policy &  
Resources Committee**

**Thursday, 15 December  
2022**

**Subject: Amendments to approved Committee Timetable arising from the earlier commencement of the pre-election period in West Lindsey**

Report by:

Chief Executive

Contact Officer:

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Purpose / Summary:

To approve amendments to the agreed Committee Timetable as a result of the earlier commencement of the pre-election period in West Lindsey.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

**That Committee approves the following changes to the 2022/23 approved timetable, due to the Pre-Election period now starting on the 13 March 2023 namely: -**

- (a) that the meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee currently scheduled for 21 March 2023 be moved to Tuesday 7 March 2023; and**
- (b) that the meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee currently scheduled for 23 March 2023 be moved to Wednesday 8 March 2023.**

## IMPLICATIONS

### **Legal:**

The Local Government Act 1972 requires the Council to agree and publish a schedule of meeting dates.

The Head of Paid Service's delegation does not extend to amending already approved dates.

The pre-election period commences when the notice of election is published – this must be published 35 days before the election but can be published earlier by decision of the Returning Officer. West Lindsey will be calling their elections early on 13 March 2022, alongside some other Lincolnshire Authorities.

### **Financial : FIN/116/23**

This proposal does not change the total number of meetings and therefore there is no additional financial impact.

### **Staffing :**

The early calling of the election will assist in allowing additional time to process what is anticipated to be large volume of nominations at time of considerable change within the service.

### **Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :**

None arising from this report

### **Data Protection Implications :**

None arising from this report

### **Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:**

This proposal does not change the total number of meetings so has a no greater either positive or negative impact on the travel etc.

### **Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:**

None arising from this report

**Health Implications:**

None arising from this report

**Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report :**

Pre-Election Period guidance – LGA  
the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity

**Risk Assessment :**

**Call in and Urgency:**

**Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

*i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)*

**Yes**

**No**

**Key Decision:**

*A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications*

**Yes**

**No**

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is required under the Local Government Act 1972 to produce a schedule of its meetings. Corporate Policy and Resources are responsible for approving that timetable (schedule) annually, having approved the timetable for 22/23 at its meeting on 14 April 2022.

## 2. Reason for Changes

- 2.1 The need has arisen to amend two dates within that timetable, as a result of a decision, having been taken by a number of Lincolnshire Returning Officers to publish the Notice of Election in May 2023 earlier than the statutory 35 days required, the impact being, the pre-election period (historically and commonly referred to as purdah) commences earlier.

- 2.2 This decision has been taken given the changes arising from the Elections Bill and the introduction of voter ID, which will result in additional duties and tasks on the Electoral Registration and Elections Team and the fact that all 700 plus seats across the District are up for election. Calling the election early means the nomination period is extended by two weeks thereby allowing greater time for candidates to submit nominations and for the teams to process them, alongside the other changes being implemented into the Service at this time.

- 2.3 The pre-election period will therefore now commence on Monday 13 March 2023 in West Lindsey. During the pre-election period, extra sensitivities around communications and large decisions need to be considered. Two of the Council's key policy Committees' meetings, as a result of this early calling of election, are currently scheduled within that pre-election period namely: -

- Prosperous Communities Committee on 21 March 2023; and
- Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on 23 March 2023.

- 2.4 Whilst the Head of Paid Service has a number of delegations in relation to the Committee timetable, as set out at page Part IV- Page 32 of the Constitution, namely:

- "9. In the event of extreme inclement weather; or insufficient business to warrant calling a meeting or other unforeseen circumstance including periods of national mourning/national emergencies to **cancel or postpone** a meeting of the Council, a committee, sub-committee etc. or, where business dictates that **a meeting, not already set out in the timetable, be required** to be held, that meeting be called, in consultation with the relevant Chairman.

This delegation does not extend to changing already approved dates, in order that the delegation does not compete with the legal requirement to produce a schedule of meetings (ref 1.1 above).

## 3. Recommendation

- 3.1 To ensure any risks during the pre-election period are removed the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee are therefore asked to approve the following changes to the timetable:-
- (a) that the meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee currently scheduled for 21 March 2023 be moved to Tuesday 7 March 2023; and
  - (b) that the meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee currently scheduled for 23 March 2023 be moved to Wednesday 8 March 2023.