

## REPORT

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>TIMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>FULL COUNCIL</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>21<sup>st</sup> July 2022</b>
<b>DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:</b>	<b>N/A</b>

### 1. PURPOSE:

To consider the recommendation from Democratic Services Committee, in line with the Local Government Wales Measure, to review the timing of Full Council meetings for the current term of Council.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That meetings of Full Council remain at 14:00 to allow newly elected councillors time to understand the role and impact of being a councillor fully. Democratic Services Committee may review the arrangements again and report back to Council following a minimum period of 12 months.

That individual committees are free to set the timing of their meetings that suit the committee and members of it.

### 3. REASONS:

Each local authority is required to review the times at which council meetings are held at least once in every term of the Council.

Guidance from the Welsh Government state that as a rule of thumb meetings will be held at times, intervals and locations that are convenient to the majority of members and that the Council should be willing to make changes to their pattern of working in order to retain new councillors with outside responsibility. Councils should also consider rotating meeting times due to the impossibility of pleasing all of their members all of the time.

### 4. KEY ISSUES / OPTIONS APPRAISAL:

The requirement to review the timing of council meetings was introduced as part of the Local Government Wales Measure in 2012 and requires Local Authorities to review and determine appropriate times for committees to meet.

Democratic Services Committee considered the item at its meeting on the 27 June 2022 and was presented with information and feedback from the review under the previous term of Council which consulted on holding meetings at 10:00, 14:00, 16:00 and 19:00. Further information from that meeting is available on the following link: [Agenda for Democratic Services Committee on Monday, 27th June, 2022, 2.00 pm \(monmouthshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/Agenda-for-Democratic-Services-Committee-on-Monday-27th-June-2022-2.00-pm)

The committee was happy to confirm that individual committees set the time of their meetings but would like the dates to remain as they are in the current diary as agreed for this year to assist with planning and organising councillor diaries. Committee chairs will be consulted during the preparation of the council diary for 2022/23 as part of its preparations.

The committee discussed the start time for full council meetings but felt that they were not yet experienced enough to make an informed decision on the timing of meetings, particularly with such a high turnover of councillors at the recent election. Overall members supported a morning or afternoon start time for full council meetings for a wide range of reasons but were also mindful of the need to be as inclusive as possible.

Given the legislative requirement for Council to determine the start time of Council meetings, the recommendation is being brought forward to retain the status quo at this stage but Democratic Services Committee will review the issue going forward and report back to Council with another recommendation when it feels informed enough to do so.

**5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

No resource implications

**6. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no sustainability implications of the timing of meetings. However working members may be adversely affected by a council meeting start time between the normal office working hours of 9 am to 5 pm.

**7. SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS**

Where members have governor responsibilities meetings which start at 5pm or later may interfere with their ability to attend meetings of their governing body.

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Local Government Wales Measure 2011 and supplementary Welsh Government statutory guidance.

**9. CONSULTEES:**

Democratic Services Committee  
Elected councillors in the previous term

**10. AUTHOR:**

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