

Agenda item: FC 223/20

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 14th December 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update Council on the Budget and Priorities Consultation.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That Council notes the report.**
- 2. That the consultation continues until 5th January, with publicity (including targeted social media adverts).**
- 3. That a final report detailing all feedback comes to Council in January for consideration when ratifying the budget and precept for 2021/22.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

This report was written on 7th December 2020 and figures and statements were correct as of 2pm on that day. It is worth noting that at this point, the Gazette was in the process of being delivered and therefore the final publicity push had not commenced.

The intention is that this will be advertised regularly between now and January 5th and, where appropriate, targeted adverts will be used on social media to encourage people to contribute.

The full detail of responses is attached below, with the headlines being:

- We have had responses from each estate, except Leadenhall and Beanhill (we haven't had any from the industrial estates either, but this is usual).
- People value all the services that WCC provides.
- The Community Fridge is especially valued, (this may be due to the consultation being advertised here at an earlier date) but all have people who have used and would like to prioritise this in coming years (events, dog bins (!?) and grant aid are least valued)
- Precept increase is split between no increase and high increase, with more people suggesting a high increase
- Respondents are mostly female and over 35.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The feedback from the consultation will contribute to the final decision on the budget for next year (and the impact this then has on following years).

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None noted.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

FULL FEEDBACK AS AT 2PM ON 7TH DECEMBER 2020

Q1 – Which estate do you live / work on?

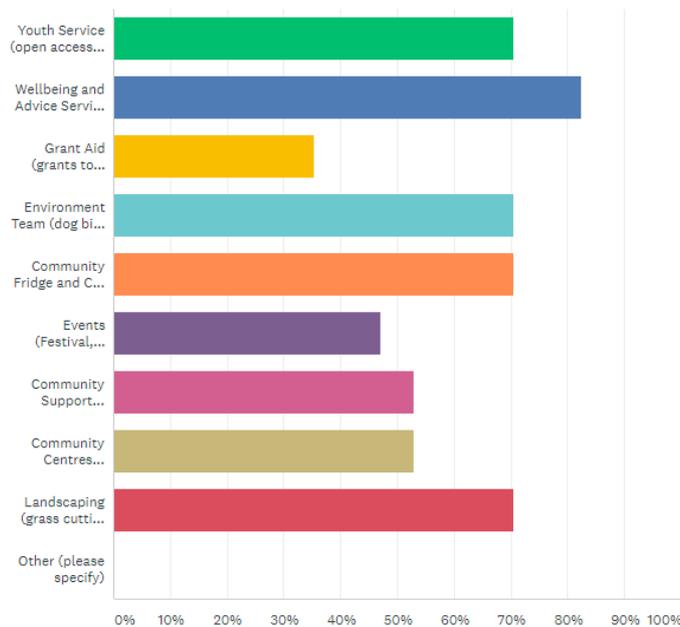
- PB – 1
- LH – 0
- ES - 3
- NF - 5
- CH - 6
- BH - 0
- TB - 2
- Ind – 0

Total – 17

Q2

Of our current services, which do you think are important? Tick all that apply

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0

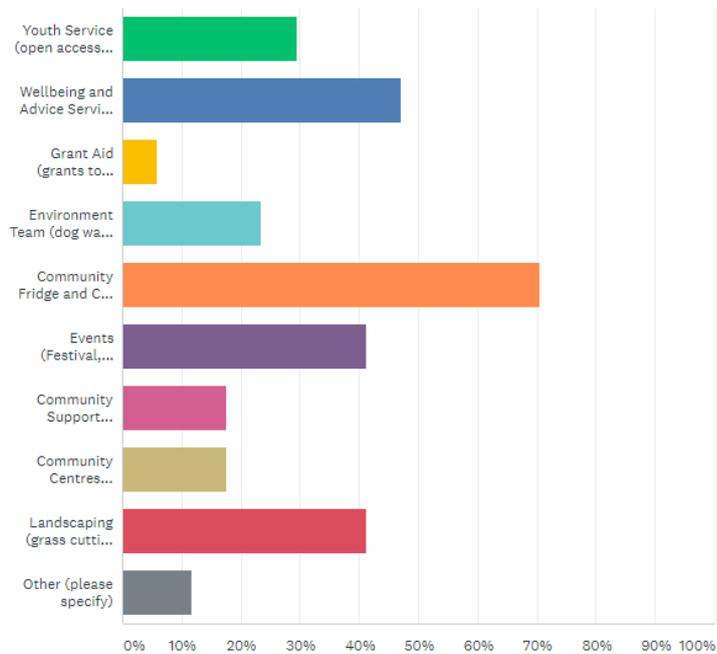


As you can see, people think that ALL services are important, but advice leads, landscaping, fridge, youth and environment all there or thereabouts too.

Q3

And of those services, which have you used or benefited from over the past year? Tick all that apply

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0

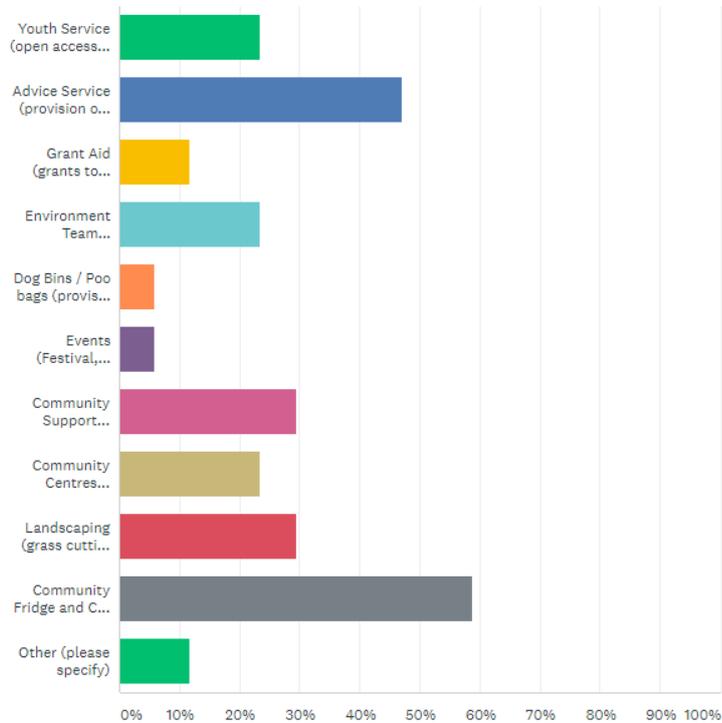


This suggests that the Community Fridge is most used, but this may be due to the consultation being advertised there earlier than elsewhere. Other comments included 'not used yet' and 'none'.

Q4

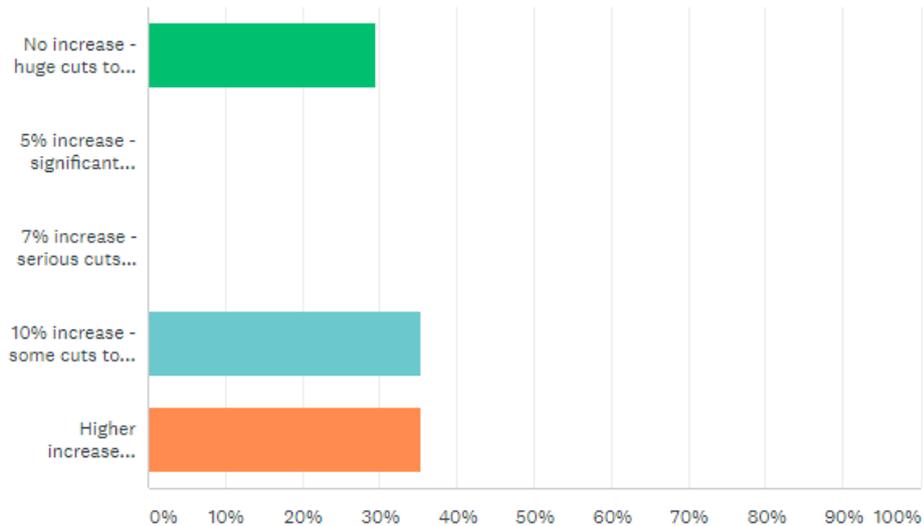
As explained above, we may need to reduce our services due to reduced funding. If this did happen, what should we prioritise? Which are most important to you? (tick no more than three).

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0



Again, Community Fridge is prioritised, but see note above. Other comments included 'support for residents in need' and 'none'.

Q5 – This question asked about precept increases and put specific figures on. The responses were:



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ No increase - huge cuts to services	29.41% 5
▼ 5% increase - significant service cuts	0.00% 0
▼ 7% increase - serious cuts to services	0.00% 0
▼ 10% increase - some cuts to services	35.29% 6
▼ Higher increase (around 20%) to cover the costs lost	35.29% 6
Total Respondents: 17	

There is a clear split here between no increase and a higher increase – 70% of respondents suggested a 10% or more increase, with the remainder saying no increase.

Q6 Are there other things that you would like to see Woughton Community Council provide? Please let us know your ideas, views or feelings below.
Comments included:

- Landscaping in Eaglestone needs improvement as it looks awful currently. Eaglestone Park needs to be maintained. Park behind Hawkmoor Close in Eaglestone is in bad shape. We pay full council tax but the service we get against the money we pay is not fair. Please request landscape manager to manage Eaglestone Park properly. Weeds and grass are not cut along the pavement. Streets are not cleaned as it is expected to be.
- parking
- Any community family support ideas. Getting communities to work together and help each other. Pride in the community. Lantern parades and workshops etc
- Anything to do with families and supporting family activities. Bringing families together.
- A provision which means that residents can come to WPC for advice on any matter of concern and they would be signposted along the best path to resolve the issue.

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Other comments made around the survey included:

- Eaglestone needs landscaping improvement and proper cleaning.
- Community spirit really important. Gives people pride in where they live and be kinder to each other and help out more.
- Here we go again, the whole country is on its knees, people are dying, others are losing their jobs or really struggling to barely keep their heads above water, then along come you bunch of thieves and take more food from our families mouths and make our lives even more difficult than they are all ready. YOU SHOULD ALL BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELVES.

Demographics

The age range was fairly well spread, with similar numbers across the 35 – 65+ range. Only one younger person so far and female respondents outnumbered males by 13 / 3 (one 'rather not answer').

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WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 14th December 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To propose a budget for 2021/22, with three-year projected budget included and to propose precept level for 2021/22 for further consultation with residents.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That Council notes the report, proposed budget sheet and three-year projections.**
- 2. That a further report is provided to Council in January 2021, providing details of the consultation and any updates about projected income.**
- 3. That Council prepares to ratify the final budget in January 2021, based upon feedback and updated projections.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Since the publishing of the last budgetary report (16th November 2020) some of the 'unknowns' we had mentioned have been clarified. Therefore, I have built a comparative 3-year budget with a 0%, 5% and 7% precept increase. Prior to affecting a recommendation these comparatives are based on the following presumptions.

- £169,782.00 LCTRS grant for 2021/22 – CONFIRMED.
- Reduced Council tax base rate, £540,011 down from £574,899 for 2021/22– CONFIRMED.
- £50,000 support from MKC for the following two years 2022/23 and 2023/24 in our bid to continue to fight for fair funding – NOT CONFIRMED.

Most pressing is to look at the effect of our precept for all options, over the next three-year period, as this is prudent when budget planning and setting any precept benchmarks.

0% rise (no increase)

No increase in our precept for next year would reduce our precept by almost £35,000 (£540,011 down from £574,899) due to our reduced council tax base. Figuratively speaking, with efficiency savings that we have agreed to make from our original budget, no precept rise for 2021/22 would give us a £37,635.81 surplus.

To look at the effects this would have on the following year a 0% rise for the following 3 years would give us (£100,000) deficit in 2022/23 and (£108,000) deficit in 2023/24.

For clarity, no increase rise for next year and then a 5% increase for the following 2 years:

(£73,452.74) deficit in 2022/23
(£52,718.14) deficit in 2023/24

Total losses of (£126,170)

Based on receiving £50,000 support grant from local authority for 2022/23 onwards – therefore losses could be circa £226,000.

No increase rise for next year and then a 7% increase for the following 2 years:

(£62,652.52) deficit in 2022/23
(£29,821.67) deficit in 2023/24

Total losses of (£92,474)

Based on receiving £50,000 support grant from local authority for 2022/23 onwards – therefore losses could be circa £192,000.

5% rise (across 3 years)

A 5% rise would leave us marginally under our current precept level (£8000) lesser to £567,011. This would likely give us a higher surplus for 2021/22 of £65,636. However, the following 2 years would leave us (£45,102) deficit in 2022/23 and a further (£22,905) deficit in 2023/24.

Total losses of (£68,007)

Based on receiving £50,000 support grant from local authority for 2022/23 onwards – therefore losses could be circa £168,000.

7% rise (across 3 years)

A 7% rise would slightly increase our precept level from £574,899 to £577,811 for 2021/22. This would likely leave us with a further increased surplus for 2021/22 of £75,463. We would likely see a deficit of (£22,205) in 2022/23, and then a small surplus of £13,456 in 2023/24.

Total losses of (£22,205)

Based on receiving £50,000 support grant from local authority for 2022/23 onwards – therefore losses could be circa 122,000.

2020/21 and COVID Effect – our losses

You will note we account either a loss, or losses in every scenario given, hence why it is important to note the effects any precept decision will have on the following 3 years. It is important to know that we have had a very difficult year due to the

constraints and stress that COVID19 had on our budget and mainly our ability to build our income.

We are aware that in September we were looking at circa £30,000 deficit for the end of this year 2020/21. This is more likely to be in the range of £50-60,000 with further losses incurred due to lockdown 2.0.

We have recognised what seems to be realistic in terms of maximum income available for us to be able to bring in, and this sits at £70,000 for hall hire across all 3 years and £40,000 of additional income steadily across three years.

Summary

We know we will need to use our reserves to cover our losses for this year. So it's ever more important to ensure a robust enough budget to assist us with maintaining service and delivery levels.

A 0% rise would leave us with circa £37,000 surplus to recover from £92,000 worth of losses + £60,000 from this year (circa £150,000) this is untenable and would see us using a dangerous amount of our reserves which would provide unsubstantial contingency fees if needed (even with a 5 or 7% rise the following two years the projection is equally unfeasible)

A 5% rise would leave us with circa £65,000 surplus to recover from £68,000 worth of losses + £60,000 from this year (circa £128,000) still leaving a significant £63,000 hole in our finances.

If we take a £60,000 loss and objectively assess the scenarios above it seems prudent to recommend a 7% increase. Although on paper, a £75,000 surplus may seem unnecessary, this really only makes up for the £60,000 loss from this year 2020/21 and the coinciding 22,000 loss in 2022/23 (with support from the £13,000 surplus the following year in 2023/24.

It is crucial to have explained well, the impact Covid has had and will have over the next three years and that we will still be finding ourselves trying to recover from the losses incurred over the next three years.

Again, this budget is based on the information we have at our disposal at the time of writing and includes some presumptions whereby we are still unclear on any future decisions.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None Perceived.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None Perceived.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Budget planning – December 2020.

AUTHOR

Samone Winsborough
RFO

Agenda item: FC 225/20

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 14th December 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To provide an update on the Annual Service Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the Council notes the report.**
- 2. That the Council Manager continues to work with officers to achieve the plan, with variations based on this paper.**
- 3. That further updates are provided, with an 'end of year report' in March.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Following the previous paper submitted to council in September, this paper updates the progress made with regard to the 2020/21 Service Plan. Updates since September are in red.

The service plan has 21 items on it. Some are unaffected, some will need adjusting and some will not be met this year. Briefly, this breaks down as:

1 – Woughton on the Road. The trailer is up and running and the wrapping should happen, if somewhat later than anticipated. City Fibre have agreed to support the wrapping of the trailer and designs are being finalised currently. The trailer has provided an excellent resource over the summer and this can be extended to include a variety of other provision (pop up Community Fridge, pop up café, etc.) **Due to delays in finalising the design of the wrap and the need to engage external design, this remains similar. Interest and visits from other councils have happened, suggesting external usage and hire may be viable in future years.**

2 – Community Allotments. Transfer is progressing. Planning being considered. Big Lottery have halted ALL non-CV-19 funding for six months, so progress will be slowed by this. However, alternatives will be investigated, and work can start once land transfer is agreed and planning permission given. **Following the closure of our previous solicitors, new legal advisors have been appointed to progress this.**

3 – Community Engagement – limited to online currently and the big events where feedback was going to be encouraged are not taking place. Some positives over the summer, but not as much as had been hoped. Continued work on this over the coming months. **Social media has been the focus over recent months and is likely to continue until Spring. Planning for 2021 events has started.**

4 – Play Park Assessment. This will take place as planned.

5 – Community Led Housing. Paper provided to this meeting – recommendation that this is ‘on hold’.

6 – Increase the equipment library. Due to MKC refusing permission for additional storage, the ‘hold’ on the community growing space and the need to reduce spending, we will replace broken but not increase the number of items this year. Some additional items in place (pressure washer, carpet cleaner) and webpage / online form being created. **Page for updated website is prepared and will be ‘launched’ when website refresh is completed.**

7 – Woughton Business Forum. Paper went to Operations Committee in September and verbal update from this will be provided. **Terms of reference have been agreed and initial ‘steering group’ has been created. Initial meeting to take place in early 2021.**

8 – Resident Skills Development. No face-to-face training at the current time, but potential for some ‘online’ options. To be discussed in RA Forum. **Some online food hygiene has taken place, to upskill fridge volunteers. Otherwise, as before.**

9 – Long Term Planning. Will continue as planned but will also include an element of ‘recovery’ planning, post pandemic. First draft in place and being worked on with senior officers. **Covid recovery element built into Service Plan for 2021/22 and 5 year plan submissions have started, leading to overall plan first draft in early 2021.**

10 – Waste, recycling and the environment. Difficult currently and impact on summer plans likely. Building understanding, volunteer teams and similar restricted by situation, but work is continuing, nevertheless. Significant work to do to promote Woughton cleanliness.

11 – Training and Development (Internal) – halted by current restrictions but plans for later in the year / 2021 ongoing. Paper went to Operations in September – verbal update to be provided.

12 – Community Development – continuing, but in a different way. Some good work started (e.g. Beanhill Comm Garden, online Res Association Forum) but restrictions limit significantly.

13 – Events. Trailer and Play Rangers have happened. Pop up café has been successful. Limits to what is possible, but consideration for different types of event continuing. **Planning for next year underway. Activity packs created and disseminated during later part of 2020.**

14 – Partnerships, collaborations and clustering. Work ongoing and hopefully will see some impact this financial year.

15- Accreditation – will take place as planned.

16 – Improvements to website / communications. Will take place as planned.

17 – Youth Council. Unlikely in 2020, but potential for early 2021 for new council year / new school year (either May or September). *Saving made through placing ‘on hold’ but may be needed in early 2021.*

18 – CCTV. Decision to make on spend, given impact of CV19 on budgets. Unable to meet with TVP / MKC to discuss potential, so likely to need to wait until early 2021 for full evaluation

19 – MK Storehouse. Decision made and reduced funding awarded.

20 – Policy and Procedure – will continue as planned.

21 – IT systems and processes. Will continue, but with some items less likely to happen due to costs (e.g. new database). Potential for work to be undertaken to integrate new finance system with data management and existing systems.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Significant savings made due to inability to proceed with some elements.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

No variation noted. Some officers have had variations to usual working patterns and focus, due to situation, but nothing specific within this proposal / paper.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Service Plan 2020/21.

AUTHOR:

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: FC 226/20

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 14th December 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the Council on Service Planning for 2021/22.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That Council notes the report and additions to the Service Plan (see v2).**
- 2. That Council considers any further additions / alterations to the Service Plan.**
- 3. That discussions continue to mould the plan, prior to final agreement in early 2021.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

This paper discusses version 2 of the Service Plan, with the following additions, following discussion at previous meetings:

Item 14 – Estate renewal and regeneration – focuses on ensuring a strong local voice in any decision regarding renewal, alongside specific focus on key areas (e.g. trees, rats / vermin) for the Planning, Licencing and Development Committee

Item 15 – Geeks In Sheds – a proposal to explore the potential for a new initiative that takes the ‘men in Sheds’ model, but focuses on technology, ICT and similar, building skills, confidence and similar

Item 16 – Apprenticeships – to look at policy development to enable greater use of apprentices and work placements, including for young people under 18, to support development of skills within the community. Links to Item CV4 which looks at Education, Training and Employment in a broader sense.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Unclear at this point, but the early stages should not lead to any significant expenditure. Depending on the impact of those initial explorations, there may be some implications at a later stage.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

These additional elements will have a bearing on staff time and capacity. This will need to be monitored and managed appropriately.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

2021.22 Service Plan v2.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: FC 227/20

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 14th December 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To bring a request for a dog bin to Full Council, following a request from a member of the public.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That Council notes the report.**
- 2. That the request is placed within the overall provision of dog waste bins across the parish.**
- 3. That the Environment Team looks at the suitability and viability of dog bins and, if appropriate and costed correctly, installs a bin in the requested place.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Following a request via email for Council to consider placement of a dog waste bin near the Gurdwara, this paper is to provide this.

The email suggests that there is no dog waste bin on the 'keyworker' estate (the newer bit of Leadenhall, around the Gurdwara) and a picture was attached of a grassed area which did include some dog waste.

This issue was discussed with the Landscape and Environment Manager, the Environment Officers and there was a view that if people don't bag their waste, a dog bin may not make any difference. However, there isn't a dog waste bin within that area, the closest being Ludgate or within the Two Halls Park (see map below – bins marked with red circles).



There is currently an assessment of all dog waste bins taking place, with a view to replacement where appropriate and placement more generally. It is recommended that this request forms part of that wider assessment and is considered within the wider plan.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The cost of a new dog bin is around £300. The cost of emptying a dog bin is around £3.60 per week, per bin. This means the annual cost of another bin would be around £200.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None noted.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None noted.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 14th December 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To consider a request by a resident that the minutes on the website should be coterminous with the meeting that it is covering.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

A resident has said that the meeting minutes of the Full Council and it's committees are confusing to follow, as they are not covering the meeting where the agenda and supporting papers are placed on the website.

It has been custom and practise in the Parish and Town Council sector to only upload the minutes that a committee meeting and Full Council are considering for approval as stated on any particular agenda.

Full Council if it is so minded to change the present pattern of uploading the minutes onto the website, then the Committee & Member Services Officer requests that this is implemented when the 2021/2022 calendar of meetings have been approved.

In the meantime due to the present layout there may be a long delay in uploading the committee minutes, until the appropriate Full Council and Committee has taken place.

There may also be an opportunity to consider an alternative layout of the Full Council and Committee meetings once the test website goes live, and so could incorporate any changes to uploading the sequence of Full Council and Committee meetings if it is the wish of Members to do so. (see Operation Committee meeting minutes held on Monday 9th November 2020, Agenda item OC 87/20 refers).

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. To note the report.**
- 2. To agree either to continue the present system of uploading the minutes onto the website, or to ensure each set of minutes is uploaded onto the website which is coterminous with the meeting that the minutes are referring too.**
- 3. That if Full Council is of a mind to change the present system when uploading minutes of the Full Council and the Committee meetings, then this is implemented at the start of the 2021/2022 meeting cycle.**

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Brian Barton
Committee & Member Services Officer