

The background of the slide features a large, light blue watermark of the University of Aberdeen crest. The crest is a shield divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant shows a castle tower, the top-right shows a stag's head with a cross on its antlers, the bottom-left shows a three-masted sailing ship on waves, and the bottom-right shows an eagle with its wings spread. Above the shield is a crown with four floral motifs. Below the shield is a banner with the motto 'A NE FOR A'.

Agenda Item 11

Decision Making Arrangements

Falkirk Council

Title: Decision Making Arrangements
Meeting: Council
Date: 30 September 2020
Submitted By: Director of Corporate and Housing Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report presents proposals for decision making in light of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and new ways of working. It also presents a programme of meetings for 2021 for consideration by Council.

2. Recommendations

2.1. Council is invited to:-

- (1) agree to revert to the full committee structure;**
- (2) agree the revised timetable of meetings for the remainder of 2020 with immediate effect;**
- (3) agree the meeting dates for 2021;**
- (4) agree to retain remote meetings at present and to introduce blended meetings as the preferred method of conducting committee meetings at Phase 4 of the Route Map for Moving out of Lockdown,**
- (5) agree that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Group Leaders, is given authority to reinstate the Emergency Executive and suspend such elements of the decision making structure that the public health situation requires in his opinion.**

3. Background

- 3.1. Council agreed at its meeting of 30 June 2020 to reintroduce its normal programme of meetings with the exceptions of the Executive and Education, Children & Young People Executive with all meetings being held remotely. Meeting dates for the Emergency Executive were agreed for the period to 17 September.

4. Considerations

Meeting Dates 2020

- 4.1. Council previously agreed to reintroduce its programme of meetings for 2020 with slight amendments to incorporate the operation of the Emergency Executive. Council is now asked to reintroduce the Executives as contained in the draft programme of meetings for the remainder of 2020 which is provided as Appendix One to the report.

Meeting Dates 2021

- 4.2. A draft programme of meetings for 2021, is provided at Appendix Two to the report, and is based on three weekly meetings of the Executive with one in three meetings being the Education, Children & Young People Executive along with bi-monthly alternating meetings of the Scrutiny Committees.
- 4.3. In addition to the programme of meetings agreed by Council a number of bodies set their own meeting dates. These include the Licensing Board, Community Planning Strategic Board, Integration Joint Board, Falkirk Community Trust Board and Central Scotland Valuation Joint Board.
- 4.4. Further to the formal programme of meetings it is again proposed to reserve Thursday afternoons for meetings of the policy development panels and scrutiny panels as was done for 2020. This gives consistency in the meeting arrangements of both types of body and enables officers and members to plan their commitments more effectively.

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- 4.5. In order to provide resilience to the Council's decision making structure in the event of a second wave of the Covid-19 virus Council is asked to agree that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Group Leaders, is given authority to reinstate the Emergency Executive and suspend other elements of the decision making structure should the public health situation require it in his opinion. This provision will ensure that the Council is able to protect its communities while maintaining an effective decision making process that involves elected members.
- 4.6. At such a time as the Scottish Government announces that the country is moving into Phase 4 of the route map out of lockdown it will be reasonable to introduce 'blended' meetings. Blended meetings would involve, initially, a small number of members being physically present in a meeting room with the remaining members and most officer attending remotely. When the public health situation allows for this approach to be implemented it is recommended that this is adopted as the default method of conducting committee meetings. It will continue to be important to maintain physical distancing. In order to achieve this blended meetings will allow for only a small number of people to attend physically and public attendance will still be prohibited.

5. Consultation

- 5.1. No consultation has been carried out on the proposals contained within the report.

6. Implications

Financial

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Resources

- 6.2 There are no resource implications arising from the report recommendations.

Legal

- 6.3 There are no legal implications arising from the report recommendations.

Risk

- 6.4 There are no risk implications arising from the report recommendations.

Equalities

- 6.5 An equality and poverty impact assessment was not required.

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

- 6.6 A sustainability assessment has not been completed as part of compiling the report.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 This report invites Council to make a number of decisions relating to its timetable of meetings and decision making arrangements in light of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Director of Corporate and Housing Services

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Date: 10 September 2020

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Timetable of Meetings for the remainder of 2020

Appendix 2 – Draft timetable of Meetings for 2021

List of Background Papers:

No papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

FALKIRK COUNCIL – PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS – 2020

OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2020

8 October – Scrutiny Committee (External)	17 November – Executive
13 October – Executive	18 November – Planning
21 October – Planning	30 November – Planning On-Site
27 October – Education, Children & Young People Executive	2 December – Falkirk Council
2 November – Planning On-Site	8 December – Education, Children & Young People Executive
4 November – Civic Licensing	9 December – Civic Licensing
9 November – Audit	10 December – Pensions
12 November – Scrutiny	

Note – In line with the current guidance meetings of the Planning On-Site Committee are not able to take place at this time.

FALKIRK COUNCIL - PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS – 2021

JANUARY TO JUNE 2021

12 January – Executive	9 March – Executive	11 May – Executive
13 January - Civic Licensing	10 March – Civic Licensing	12 May – Civic Licensing
14 January – Scrutiny (External)	11 March – Scrutiny (External)	19 May – Planning
20 January – Council	17 March - Planning	20 May – Scrutiny External
21 January – Planning	18 March – Pensions	31 May – Planning On-Site
26 January – Education, Children and Young People Executive	23 March – Education, Children and Young People Executive	1 June – Education, Children and Young People Executive
28 January – Scrutiny	29 March – Planning On-Site	3 June – Scrutiny
1 February – Planning On-Site	1 April – Scrutiny	9 June – Civic Licensing
3 February – Civic Licensing	7 April – Civic Licensing	15 June – Executive
16 February – Executive	12 April – Audit	16 June – Planning
17 February – Planning	13 April – Executive	17 June – Pensions
24 February – Falkirk Council (budget)	21 April – Planning	21 June – Audit Council
1 March – Planning On-Site	4 May – Planning On-Site	23 June – Falkirk
3 March – Falkirk Council	5 May – Falkirk Council	

FALKIRK COUNCIL – PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS – 2021

AUGUST TO DECEMBER 2021

16 August – Planning On-Site	4 October – Planning On-Site
19 August – Scrutiny – External	5 October – Executive
23 August – Audit	7 October – Scrutiny Committee – External
24 August – Executive	19 October – Executive
25 August – Planning	20 October – Planning
1 September – Civic Licensing	1 November – Planning On-Site
6 September – Planning On-Site	3 November – Civic Licensing
7 September – Scrutiny	8 November – Audit
14 September – Education, Children and Young People Executive	9 November – Education, Children and Young People Executive
20 September – Audit	11 November – Scrutiny
21 September - Planning	17 November – Planning
23 September – Pensions	29 November – Planning On-Site
28 September – Civic Licensing	30 November – Executive
29 September – Falkirk Council	1 December – Civic Licensing
	2 December – Pensions
	8 December – Falkirk Council