

FULL COUNCIL

Date: Monday, 5 December 2022

Title: Future Meetings of the Council

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk - Adam Clapton

Background

It has been six months since the Council resolved to hold in-person meetings following the Covid-19 Pandemic. Two exceptions were the first two cyclical meetings of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning (CB&P) Committee meetings and Working Parties. The resolution at the Annual Council Meeting on 11 May 2022 (minute no. 207) was,

Resolved:

- 1. That scheduled committees be held in person with the exception of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee where the environmental meeting and full planning be combined and held in person with other meetings being online; and*
- 2. That Working Party and Task & Finish Group meetings continue to be held online.*

Current Situation

Six months seems an opportune time to review the above resolution to ensure members are satisfied with the current arrangements.

The only business conducted at the Zoom planning meetings is consideration of statutory planning, licencing, and consultation applications. Delegation is provided to this Committee under its terms of reference,

'To consider, and submit appropriate representations on behalf of the Council, in respect of consultations relevant to the sphere of Planning and Development'

Representations/minutes are signed off at every third CB&P meeting which is held in person.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

There is no legislation which allows Council meetings to be held online. As representations from the virtual meetings are signed off at an in-person meeting at the end of each cycle this mitigates the issue. There is no legislation relating to the administration of Working Parties.

Financial implications

There are no financial implications.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Continuing meetings of the Climate, Biodiversity & Planning Committee in the current form.
2. Continuing Working Party meetings in the current form and,
 - a) If continuation is agreeable, there will be no further review. Changes will only be considered on request, due to circumstances or if a change in legislation occurs.