



Report of the Chief Democratic Services Officer

North East (Inner) Area Committee

Date: 26th March 2007

Subject: Dates, Times and Venues of Area Committee Meetings 2007/08

Electoral Wards Affected:

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council
Function

Delegated Executive
Function available
for Call In

Delegated Executive
Function not available for
Call In Details set out in the
report

Executive Summary

The purpose of the report is to request Members to give consideration to agreeing the dates, times and venues of their meetings for the 2007/08 municipal year which commences in May 2007.

1.0 Background Information

1.1 The Area Committee Procedure Rules stipulate that there shall be at least six ordinary meetings of each Area Committee in each municipal year (May to April).

1.2 The Procedure Rules also state that each Committee will agree its schedule of meetings for the year at its first meeting in the municipal year. If this was strictly adhered to, unfortunately it would mean that none of the dates and times would be agreed early enough to appear in the Council's official diary.

2.0 Options

2.1 The options are:

- To approve the list of dates and times provisionally agreed with the North East Area Manager based on the existing pattern;
- To consider other alternative dates;
- To continue to meet at 4.00 pm, or to consider alternative times;

- To continue to alternate suitable venues between the three wards of Chapel Allerton, Moortown and Roundhay

3.0 Meeting Dates

- 3.1 The following provisional dates have been agreed in consultation with the North East Area Manager. They follow roughly the same pattern as last year, i.e. Mondays in June, September, October, December, February and March:-

25th June 2007, 10th September 2007, 15th October 2007, 3rd December 2007
4th February 2008 and 17th March 2008.

- 3.2 A similar pattern of meetings is being suggested in respect of the other 9 Area Committees, so that for co-ordinated purposes, all Committees are meeting in the same basic cycle and months. Whilst Members have discretion as to which actual dates they wish to meet, they are requested to take into consideration that any proposed substantial change to the cycle, e.g. changing months rather than dates within the suggested months, will cause disruption and lead to co-ordination problems between the Area Committees.

4.0 Meeting Days and Times

- 4.1 Currently the Committee meets on Mondays at 4.00 pm and the above suggested dates reflect this pattern.
- 4.2 Meeting on set days and times has the advantage of certainty and regularity, which assists people to plan their schedules. The downside might be that it could serve to exclude certain people, for instance, who have other regular commitments on that particular day or who might prefer either a morning meeting or a meeting later in the evening after normal work hours.
- 4.3 For these reasons, some Area Committees have chosen to vary their meeting days and times, alternating between different weekdays and holding daytime and evening meetings alternatively. Others, however, have chosen a regular pattern similar to this Committee's existing arrangements – it really is a matter for Members to decide.

5.0 Meeting Venues

- 5.1 Currently the Committee alternates venues between the three wards which has proved to be a successful arrangement.
- 5.2 If the Committee were minded to request the officers to explore possible alternative venues, then the considerations Members and officers would have to take into account are matters such as cost, accessibility – particularly for people with disabilities – and the facilities available at the venue, e.g. IT facilities for presentations etc.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 Members are requested to consider the options and to decide their meeting dates, times and venues for 2007/08 in order that they may be included in the Council's official diary for 2007/08.