

<b>Committee(s):</b> Establishment Committee – For decision	<b>Date(s):</b> 10 July 2019
<b>Subject:</b> Frequency of meetings and workload	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Town Clerk	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> John Cater	

### Summary

At the 30<sup>th</sup> April meeting of the Establishment Committee, Members expressed concern at the large number of items on the agenda (44 in total), they also noted that the Committee had not met since 26<sup>th</sup> February. In response the Chair asked the Town Clerk to review the frequency of Establishment Committee meetings and to see if introducing a monthly cycle was warranted.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Approve option 2 - the retention of the current frequency of meetings i.e. the Committee to meet every six weeks, with the introduction of any further ad-hoc meetings at the discretion of the Chair.

### Main Report

#### Background

1. At the 30<sup>th</sup> April meeting of the Establishment Committee, Members expressed concern at the large number of items on the agenda (**44 in total**), they also noted that the Committee had not met since 26<sup>th</sup> February and were concerned that officers were not providing them with enough meetings so as to ensure the workload was more judiciously spread out and decision making was as efficient and effective as it could be.
2. In response, the Chair asked the Town Clerk to review the frequency of Establishment Committee meetings and previous workloads (i.e. the number of items at each meeting), with a view to seeing if introducing a monthly cycle was warranted.

#### Current Position

3. Upon review of all Establishment Committee meetings over the previous two years, it became apparent that the workload (44 items) for the April 2019 meeting was an outlier. The average number of items considered or received at each of the 16 meetings since July 2017 is **25** (please see appendix 1 below)

4. It should be noted that the Establishment Committee meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> April produced the longest break between meetings over the last two years. Previously over this period, the Committee met approximately every six weeks.

## Options

Members have two options:

1. Introduce a four-weekly cycle from September 2019 onwards
2. Retain the six-weekly cycle, with the introduction of any further ad-hoc meetings at the discretion of the Chair.

## Proposal

5. To retain the six-weekly cycle; the workload at the April 2019 meeting was clearly sub-optimal, however it was an outlier, with the cycle up to that period providing Members and officers with a meeting schedule that was reasonable, efficient, and effective.

## Conclusion

6. Members were concerned with the number of items on the agenda at the 30<sup>th</sup> April Establishment Committee meeting. The Chair asked the Town Clerk to review the workload and cycle of meetings over recent years, with a view to seeing whether the Committee should introduce a four-weekly meeting cycle. Upon review the 30<sup>th</sup> April meeting was an outlier in terms of both:
  - Scheduling - the meeting took place a full 8 weeks after the last meeting in February, when the previous “gap” had been on average 6 weeks
  - Workload – the agenda contained 44 items, significantly higher than the average of 25 items per meeting over the period July 2017 – April 2019.

## Appendices

- Appendix 1 – list of Committee meetings since July 2017 with workload

Meeting date	No. of items*
26 <sup>th</sup> July 2017	26
25 <sup>th</sup> September 2017	4
17 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	28
5 <sup>th</sup> December 2017	26
15 <sup>th</sup> January 2018	21
26 <sup>th</sup> February 2018	34
9 <sup>th</sup> April 2018	13
25 <sup>th</sup> April 2018	30
22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2018	21

9 <sup>th</sup> July 2018	29
20 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	29
29 <sup>th</sup> October 2018	26
3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2018	30
16 <sup>th</sup> January 2019	21
26 <sup>th</sup> February 2019	24
30 <sup>th</sup> April 2019	44

Mean average of **25 items per meeting**

\*includes all standing items

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