

<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Policy and Resources Committee	11 March 2021
<b>Subject:</b> Easter, summer and Christmas holiday recess periods	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>1 and 2</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>£NA</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>NA</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>NA</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Town Clerk & Chief Executive	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Chris Rumbles	

### Summary

At Policy and Resources Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021 Members raised their concerns regarding a December meeting of Hospitality Working Party having been convened so close to the Christmas holiday period. Members requested a paper be prepared allowing them to consider the introduction of a formal recess period in the lead up to Christmas, in addition to the ones adhered to for Easter and Summer.

More recently, at the last meeting, reference has been made to whether thought could also be given to avoiding meetings taking place during the school half-term periods as this was also a difficult time for those Members with childcare responsibilities. It was noted that currently the pressure on the corporate calendar was such that this was unlikely to be possible with the current number of Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Parties. However, should the number of meetings reduce as a result of the governance, the issue could be revisited to allow for a more family-friendly approach.

### Recommendation

Members are being asked to:

- Approve the introduction of formal Christmas recess period in addition to those covering the Easter and Summer holidays during which time no formal committee meetings are held as set out in paragraphs 11-13.

### Main Report

#### Background

1. At Policy and Resources Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021, Members raised their concerns regarding the convening of a Hospitality Working Party meeting in December 2020 being too close to the Christmas holiday period.

2. Members proposed a paper be prepared to allow them to consider the option of a formal recess being introduced over the Christmas holiday period during which time no committee meetings are to be held.
3. More recently a Member questioned whether thought could also be given to avoiding the scheduling of formal meetings during the three school half-term periods as they were also a difficult time for those Members with childcare responsibilities. It was noted that the current pressure on the corporate calendar of meetings was such that this was unlikely to be possible with the current number of Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Parties. It should also be noted that this would be further complicated by the fact that all schools and academies set their own term dates so they would vary from school to school. However, should the demands on the calendar of meetings be reduced the issue could be revisited to allow for a more family-friendly approach to scheduling.

### **Current Position**

4. By convention the City Corporation has traditionally not held meetings over the summer from the last week in July until the first week in September.
5. It is customary also to avoid committee meetings over the Easter period.
6. Whilst it has been normal practice for officers to avoid diarising meetings the week before Christmas unless requested to do so, the convention is not as firm as that adopted for the other two seasons.

### **Proposals**

7. This report proposes formalising arrangements to cover an agreed period of recess over the Christmas holiday as well as those already adhered to for the Easter and Summer periods.
8. Members are asked to consider and agree an appropriate period before Christmas and into the new year during which time no committee of working party meetings will be held.
9. Members are also asked to consider the same formal arrangement being applied to the summer and Easter periods to provide clarity for Members and officers moving forward.
10. Set out below are proposals to cover a formal period of recess over the Easter, Summer and Christmas holiday periods during which time no committee meetings will be convened.

### **Easter**

11. No committee meetings to be held during the week immediately preceding and immediately following Easter weekend

### **Summer**

12. No committee meetings to be held during the last week of July until the first full working week in September.

## **Christmas**

13. No committee meetings to be held during the week immediately leading up to the Christmas holiday period until the first full working week in January.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

14. This report has no immediate financial, legal or other implications.

## **Equality Impact Assessment and Public Sector Equality Duty**

15. Under the Equality Act 2010, all public bodies have a duty to ensure that when exercising their functions due regard is given to the need to:-

- *eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the 2010 Act;*
- *advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and*
- *foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;*

16. In advancing equality of opportunity public bodies also need to have due regard to the need:-

- *remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;*
- *take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people; and*
- *encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.*

An assessment of the people with protected characteristics was recently undertaken (i.e. age, disability, gender transition, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sex orientation). The impact of formally agreeing recess is likely to be positive impact on transparency.

## **Conclusion**

17. This report seeks a steer from Members on how they would like to proceed with committee arrangements over the Easter, Summer and Christmas holiday periods of recess.

## **Chris Rumbles**

Committee and Member Services Officer, Town Clerk's Department

E: [chris.rumbles@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:chris.rumbles@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

T: 020 7332 1405