

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

28 OCTOBER 2020

AGENDA ITEM B1

ADOPTION OF THE 2021 SCHEDULE OF ORDINARY MEETINGS

Purpose of Report

To adopt a schedule of ordinary Council and committee meetings for 2021.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receive the Adoption of the 2021 Schedule of Ordinary Meetings Report.*
2. *Adopt an eight-weekly meeting cycle for all Council and committee meetings.*
3. *Adopt the 2021 schedule of ordinary meetings for Council and committees.*
4. *Endorse the proposed community board meeting schedule for presentation to community boards for decision.*
5. *Delegate to the Chief Executive the ability to alter the schedule of ordinary meetings in consultation with the Mayor or committee chair as required.*
6. *Note that relevant terms of reference will be amended to reflect an eight-week cycle.*

1. Background

Each year Council must consider a proposed meeting schedule for its ordinary Council and committee meetings for the following calendar year.

South Wairarapa District Council have a very high number of formal meetings for officers to service and for elected members to attend. Officers are seeking a decision to adopt a schedule of formal meetings more in keeping with a council of our size and resourcing capability.

Council is asked to move from a six-weekly meeting schedule to an eight-weekly meeting schedule and to adopt a schedule of meetings for the 2021 calendar year.

2. Discussion

2.1 Meeting Provisions

The Local Government Act 2002, schedule 7, cl 19, requires Council to hold meetings.

19 General provisions for meetings

(1) A local authority must hold the meetings that are necessary for the good government of its region or district.

The Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, Part 7 specifies the process for calling meetings of the Local Authority.

The Local Government Act 2002 requires the Council to hold meetings necessary for the good government of its 'region or district'. The meetings must be called and conducted in accordance with the requirements set out in the Local Government Act 2002, and the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, as well as the Standing Orders of South Wairarapa District Council.

Council may adopt a schedule of meetings that cover any future period the Council considers appropriate. This schedule may be amended at any time.

Additional ordinary, extraordinary, or emergency meetings may be scheduled from time to time in consultation with the Chair and Chief Executive.

2.2 Proposed Meeting Cycle

Officers are recommending that Council adopt an eight-week meeting cycle to commence from February 2021.

For its population size, SWDC has a very high number of formal meetings due to the number of decision-making bodies and frequency of meetings. The following table compares meeting frequency of similar sized councils. The time period chosen, 1 July 2020 – 30 September 2020, was within this triennium and outside of the COVID-19 impacted time period. The period includes two typical six-weekly cycles, with the following exceptions:

- Includes two meetings of the Grant Subcommittee (an annual/bi-annual meeting) and a meeting of the CEO Review Committee.
- There were two meeting cancellations.
- There was one extraordinary Council meeting.
- The proposed meeting comparison does not include meetings of the Featherston Community Board, Martinborough Community Board and Finance, Audit and Risk Committee which are scheduled for the first week of October.

Comparison of Meetings held July – September 2020

	Carterton District Population 9,710	Ōtorohanga District Population 10,600	South Wairarapa District Population 11,100	Ruapehu District Population 12,750	Gore District Population 12,800	South Wairarapa District (Proposed)
Council	1	3	3	3	4	2
Committees (excluding joint)	6	2	9 ^a	3	3	8
Subcommittees	0	0	3	0	0	1
Community Boards	0	5	7	6	2	4
Total	7	10	22	12	9	15

^a two meeting cancellations in this period

The tables in Appendix 1 compare the Council committee structure of these same councils.

2.2.1. Expanding Business as Usual Capacity

Governance reporting takes a significant amount of time for officers. This includes drafting and review of the reports and meeting preparation, attendance and follow-up. The time commitment impacts officers' capacity to undertake "business as usual". Officers are currently reviewing the format of project reporting to improve readability and governance oversight and this is likely to improve efficiency to some degree. However, officers consider that lengthening the governance meeting cycle would allow officers more time to focus on operational matters and to undertake annual plan and long-term plan programmed work.

An eight-week cycle would have the added benefit of providing relief to elected members' schedules.

The proposed eight-week cycle is not expected to have any negative consequences for governance and decision-making. Extraordinary and emergency meetings can be utilised as and when needed for urgent decisions. There are also occasions where a report will need to be presented to Council instead of the relevant committee, as is the current practice.

The following table shows the decision papers presented to Council and committee meetings and whether those decisions could have been delayed by two weeks. Recommendations to Council and decisions from chairperson reports have been counted as decision papers.

Decision Papers Considered July – Sept 2020

	July		August		September	
	No. of Decision Papers	Decisions that could have been delayed by two weeks	No. of Decision Papers	Decisions that could have been delayed by two weeks	No. of Decision Papers	Decision Papers that could have been delayed by two weeks
Council	5	5	2 ^a	0	7	6
P&R Committee	2	2	2	2	cancelled	-
A&S Committee	cancelled	-	1	1	1	0
FAR Committee	n/a	-	1	0	n/a	-
MSC Committee	3 ^b	2	3 ^b	3	0	-

^aExtraordinary Meeting

^bPrimarily grant related decisions, the item that couldn't be delayed was a noting not a decision, however MSC support was being sought.

2.2.2. Flow of Reporting

SWDC's meeting timetable is set up so reports and recommendations can flow from a committee meeting to a Council meeting with limited delay, and for operational reports to flow through to community board meetings in a timely manner.

2.2.3. Community Boards Under Schedule 7 of the LGA

Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act applies to councils, local boards and community boards. Community boards, therefore, must hold meetings for the good of their respective communities and must adopt their own meeting schedule.

Consideration was given to community boards remaining on a six-week cycle, and ultimately the decision will be theirs to make. However, officers recommend that community boards also move to an eight-week cycle in order to retain the advantage of increased officer time and community board receipt of operational reports that are current and synchronized with the Council meeting schedule.

Council are asked to endorse an eight-weekly cycle for community boards to show leadership and direction, noting however this is only advisory and each board must make their own decision on the matter.

If community boards decide to retain a six-week cycle and Council elect to move to an eight-week cycle, then operational reports will be provided to community boards as and when they have been considered by Council committees, and as and when they are available, to retain the advantage of increased officer time for business as usual matters.

2.3 Terms of Reference

Terms of reference for Council committees are currently being reviewed. Should the recommendation to alter meeting frequency be adopted, this will be incorporated into the terms of reference as part of the review work being carried out.

2.4 Meeting Times

Proposed meeting times are:

	Proposed Meeting Time
Council	10:00am
A&S Committee	10:00am
P&R Committee	12:30pm
FAR Committee	10:00am
Māori Standing Committee	6:00pm

Councillor feedback is sought on the proposed meeting times. Where the above times are not available an alternative time will be scheduled.

Community boards will be asked to set their own meeting time. The Māori Standing Committee will be asked to confirm their preferred meeting time.

3. Options

Officers have prepared an eight-weekly cycle option (refer Appendix 2) for consideration.

The advantages and disadvantages of moving to an eight-weekly cycle and retaining the six-weekly cycle are summarised below.

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Eight-weekly Cycle	<p>Officers have more time to focus on business as usual and programmed activities.</p> <p>Encourages officers to forward plan any required decision making.</p> <p>Councillors have more time to focus on community advocacy and representation outside of meetings.</p> <p>Fewer meetings cancelled due to lack of decision-making business.</p>	<p>Councillors may not feel as up-to-date about key projects and business as usual operations.</p> <p>Potential public perception that Council is operating with less visibility and governance oversight.</p> <p>Extraordinary meetings may need to be held if urgent matters arise that can't be dealt with at a scheduled committee or Council meeting.</p> <p>Officers will need to forward plan engagement to ensure no delays to project timeframes.</p>
Six-weekly Cycle	<p>Councillors and community are familiar with this cycle.</p> <p>Councillors feel more up-to-date on key activities and business as usual operations.</p> <p>Potential public perception that Council is operating with more visibility and governance oversight.</p> <p>The potential for less need of extraordinary meetings.</p>	<p>Officers have less time to focus on business as usual and programmed activities.</p> <p>Councillors have less time to focus on community advocacy and representation outside of meetings.</p> <p>.</p>

4. Financial Considerations

There are no negative financial implications associated with the decision.

The primary advantage of the proposal put forward is to allow officers more time to focus on business as usual activities. The real cost is the opportunity cost (less time available) rather than financial savings.

The following table shows the estimated hourly savings of not holding a meeting per meeting cycle. An assumption has been made that the same number of decision reports would still need to be prepared regardless of the meeting cycle length, so that time is not included in the hourly total.

Estimated hours saved should an 8-weekly meeting schedule be adopted

	Approx. Average Hours Saved Per Cycle
Council	49
Committees (P&R, A&S, MSC)	94
Community Boards	77

5. Engagement and Communications

The Chief Executive and executive leadership team were consulted when developing the draft 2021 meeting schedule.

This report will be circulated to community boards and the Māori Standing Committee so they have adequate time to consider the proposal before their meetings. As the Māori Standing Committee is a committee of Council, adoption of the recommendations as they are presented include this committee.

All options allow the Chief Executive to properly notify the public of the times and dates of meetings in accordance with Part 7 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Once a 2021 schedule is adopted, it will be notified on Council's website.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Council Committee Structure Comparison

Appendix 2 – Draft 2021 Schedule of Ordinary Meetings

Contact Officer: Suzanne Clark, Committee Advisor

Reviewed By: Karen Yates, Policy and Governance Manager

Appendix 1 – Council Committee Structure Comparison

Council Committee Structure Comparison

Carterton District Council

	Frequency (as per TOR)
Council	Eight-weekly (in practice some variation to accommodate Plan adoptions)
Audit and Risk Committee	Quarterly
Infrastructure and Services Committee	8-weekly
Policy and Strategy Committee	8-weekly
Hearings Committee	As required
Rural Travel Committee	Annually
Water Race Committee	Quarterly
Community Grants	Annually

Ōtorohanga District Council

	Frequency
Council	Monthly
Risk and Assurance Committee	Quarterly (TOR)
CEO Review	1 meeting this year
Grants and Awards	As required (TOR)
Ōtorohanga Community Board	Monthly
Kāwhia Community Board	Monthly (less frequently in practice, some meetings cancelled outside the COVID period)

Ruapehu District Council

	Frequency
Council	3-weekly (appears to be some variation in practice)
Taumarunui / Ohura Ward Committee	8-weekly
RDC Management Committee	No TOR or minutes found
Audit and Risk Committee	quarterly
Hearings Committee	as required
National Park Community Board	6-weekly
Waimarino-Waiouru Community Board	monthly

Gore District Council

	Frequency
Council	Varies 4-6 weeks
Capital Works Committee	quarterly
Audit and Risk Committee	quarterly
Community Strategy Committee	quarterly
CEO Committee	No TOR or minutes found
Creative Communities Subcommittee	No TOR or minutes found
Rural halls and domains Subcommittee	No TOR or minutes found
Mataura Community Board	6-weekly

Appendix 2 – Draft 2021 Schedule of Ordinary Meetings

2021	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	2021
MON		1	1								1		MON
TUE		2	2			1					2		TUE
WED		3	3 WLS			2 Council			1 A&S/P&R		3	1 FAR	WED
THU		4	4 CEO	1		3	1		2		4	2 MCB	THU
FRI	1 New Years Day	5	5	2 Easter Friday		4	2		3	1	5	3	FRI
SAT	2 Public Holiday	6	6	3	1	5	3		4	2	6	4	SAT
SUN	3	7	7	4	2	6	4	1	5	3	7	5	SUN
MON	4	8 Waitangi Day	8	5 Easter Monday	3	7 Queens Bday	5	2	6	4	8	6	MON
TUE	5	9	9	6	4	8 MSC	6	3 MSC	7	5 FCB	9	7	TUE
WED	6	10 Council	10	7 Council	5	9 WLS/GCB	7 A&S/P&R	4 GCB	8	6 FAR	10	8	WED
THU	7	11	11	8	6	10	8	5	9	7 MCB	11	8	THU
FRI	8	12	12	9	7	11	9	6	10	8	12	10	FRI
SAT	9	13	13	10	8	12	10	7	11	9	13	11	SAT
SUN	10	14	14	11	9	13	11	8	12	10	14	12	SUN
MON	11	15	15	12	10	14	12	9	13	11	15	13	MON
TUE	12	16 MSC	16	13 MSC	11	15 FCB	13	10 FCB	14	12	16	14	TUE
WED	13	17 GCB	17 Council (LTP) A&S/P&R	14 GCB	12 A&S/P&R	16 FAR	14	11 FAR	15	13	17 Council	15 A&S/P&R	WED
THU	14	18	18	15 MCB	13	17 MCB	15 LGNZ Conference	12 MCB	16	14	18	16	THU
FRI	15	19	19	16	14	18	16 LGNZ Conference	13	17	15	19	17	FRI
SAT	16	20	20	17	15	19	17 LGNZ Conference	14	18	16	20	18	SAT
SUN	17	21	21	18	16	20	18	15	19	17	21	19	SUN
MON	18	22 Recovery	22	19 Recovery	17	21	19 Recovery	16	20	18 Recovery	22	20	MON
TUE	19	23 FCB	23	20 FCB	18	22	20	17	21	19	23 MSC	21	TUE
WED	20	24 FAR	24	21 FAR	19 LTP Hearing	23	21	18 WLS	22 Council	20	24 WLS/GCB	22	WED
THU	21	24 MCB	25	22	20 LTP Hearing	24	22	19	23	21	25	23	THU
FRI	22	26	26	23	21 LTP Hearing	25	23	20	24	22	26	24	FRI
SAT	23	27	27	24	22	26	24	21	25	23	27	25 Xmas Day	SAT
SUN	24	28	28	25	23	27	25	22	26	24	28	26 Boxing Day	SUN
MON	25 Wgtn Anniversary		29	26 ANZAC Day	24	28	26	23	27	25 Labour Day	29	27	MON
TUE	26		30	27	25	29	27	24	28 MSC	26	30 FCB	28	TUE
WED	27		31	28	26	30 Council/LTP	28 Council	25 CEO	29 GCB	27 Council (AR) A&S/P&R		29	WED
THU	28			29	27		29	26	30	28		30	THU
FRI	29			30	28		30	27		29		31	FRI
SAT	30				29		31	28		30			SAT
SUN	31				30			29		31			SUN
MON					31			30					MON
TUE								31					TUE

COUNCIL	District Council meeting	A&S	Assets and Services Committee
MCB	Martinborough Community Board	P&R	Planning and Regulatory Committee
FCB	Featherston Community Board	FAR	Finance Audit and Risk Committee
GCB	Greytown Community Board		School holidays
MSC	Māori Standing Committee	WLS	Wairarapa Library Service Joint Committee
CEO	CEO Review Committee	Recovery	Wairarapa COVID-19 Recovery Joint Committee
WRC	Water Race Subcommittee (TBC)	DistPlan	Wairarapa District Plan Joint Committee (TBC)
Grants	Grants Subcommittee (TBC)		