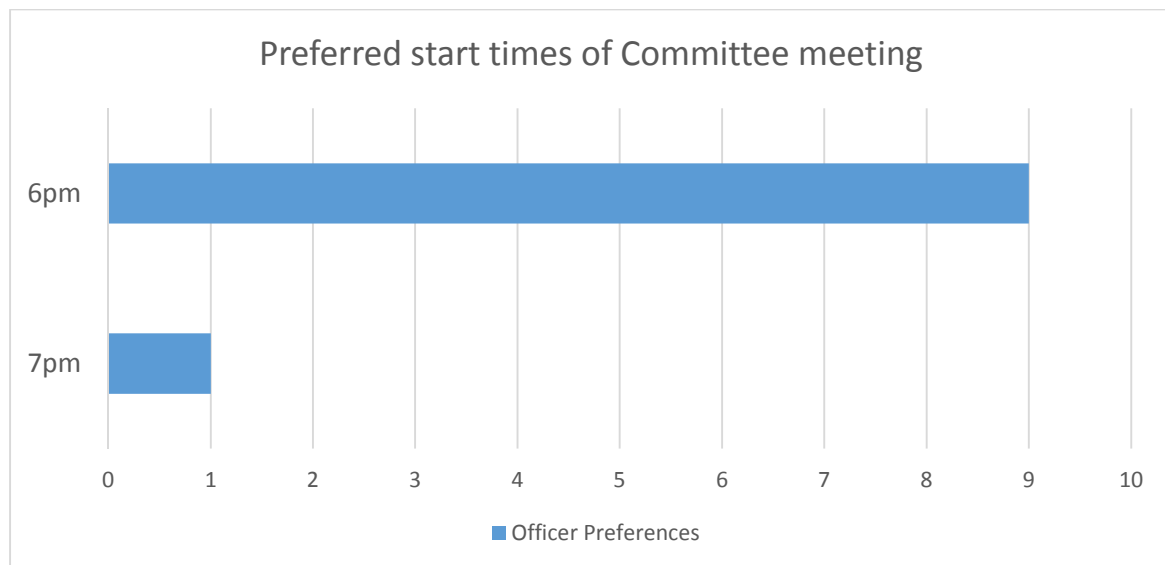


Summary of Officer Responses

A survey was circulated to all officers and external partners who had attended one or more of the Governance and Audit Committee's that started at 7pm.

Below is a summary of the responses received from officers and external partners. A total of eleven responses were received.

What would be your preferred start time for a Committee meeting?



Summary of comments received in favour of a 6pm start –

- A 6pm start allows sufficient time for a meeting to be concluded, even if the agenda/debate is lengthy. There could be a risk that later start times may lead to items being deferred and to extra meetings being scheduled.
- A 7pm start time is likely to lead to later finish times. This will increase the length of the working day for officers who attend and support Committee meetings. Certain meetings, such as the Local Plan Committee and Council, regularly last three hours or more, which means a 10pm finish time. Given that officers (and members) are likely to have worked a full day beforehand, tiredness and concentration can be an issue at these late hours.
- Greater likelihood of availability of external partners to attend meetings is better for a 6pm start.
- Increases the likelihood of Officers retaining a part of the evening for themselves and allows for additional commitments.
- A better work/life balance.
- Less likely to experience difficulty travelling home on public transport.
- The 6pm start is current practice widely known by Officers, Councillors and members of the public.
- Significant public attendance has been seen at a number of Committee meetings that started at 6pm. There is no particular time that would suit all members of the public.

Appendix B

- Some officers walk home from the Town Hall post meetings. Later finishes will increase the number of times officers walk home in darkness and through the town centre at night.
- More efficient use of time.
- Due to work commitments, although meetings were starting later, officers were not starting their working day later. This resulted in officers already having worked more than a full day by 6pm and then having to wait an extra hour for the meeting to start. This is an issue from the personal aspect for the officers themselves, this also causes an issue with the build-up of additional flex hours and results in an additional hour of 'leave' for the officers concerned, or potentially disadvantages the officer, if they are unable to use up their excess hours

Summary of comments received in favour of a 7pm start –

- Likely that traffic is improved due to the later start time.
- Acknowledgement that it may be easier for members to get to meetings with a later start time.