

17. Call-in

- (a) Where a decision is made by the Cabinet, an individual Member of the Cabinet, a Committee of the Cabinet, or an Officer the decision shall be published by the Proper Officer for Committees, including where possible by electronic means, and shall be available at the main offices of the Council as soon as reasonably practicable after being made. All Members will be sent copies of the written records of all such decisions by the Proper Officer for Committees within the same time scale.
- (b) That notice will bear the date on which it is published and will specify that the decision will come into force and may then be implemented, on the expiry of 3 clear working days after the publication of the decision (“the call-in period”), unless an Overview and Scrutiny Committee objects and calls it in for review.
- (c) During the period of 3 clear working days from the date of publication of a decision (“the call-in period”) any 3 Members of a scrutiny committee may call-in a decision relating to a function within the remit of the scrutiny committee by giving notice in writing (“the call-in notice”) on the form provided by Democratic Services, to the Proper Officer.
- (d) A “call-in notice” shall specify precisely which aspects of the decision is questioned or challenged, and in particular shall contain the grounds why it is considered that the scrutiny committee will be likely to refer the decision requested to be called in back to the decision making person or body.
- (e) The Proper Officer may rule that a call-in is not valid if:
 - (i) The call-in request has not been made within the 3 clear working days allowed for call-in;
 - (ii) It is not clear which decision is being called-in;
 - (iii) The decision is exempt from call-in on account of the urgency provisions as indicated at paragraph 18 below;
 - (iv) The call-in request provides too little information to enable scrutiny committee members or the decision maker to adequately prepare for the call-in meeting;
 - (v) The decision being called in, or broadly the same decision, has been called in during the last 6 months.
 - (vi) The call-in request is trivial or without substantial merit
- (f) The role of scrutiny committees in calling in a decision is:
 - (i) To test the merits of the decision;
 - (ii) To consider the process by which the decision has been formulated;
 - (iii) To make recommendations (to support the decision, change aspects of the decision, or to invite the decision making person or body to reconsider);
 - (iv) To suggest further steps before a decision is made (but not to try to carry out those steps in place of the decision making person or body);
 - (v) To come to a view in a relatively short time scale, so as not to compromise the speed and efficiency of the decision making process.

- (g) On receipt of a valid call-in notice containing the details specified above, the Proper Officer shall notify the decision taker of the call-in and hold a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on such date as he/she may determine, where possible after consultation with the Chairperson of the Committee, and in any case within 5 clear working days of the decision to call-in. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Proper Officer consider extending this time limit.
- (h) If, having considered the decision, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is still concerned about it, then it may refer it back to the decision making person or body for reconsideration, setting out in writing the nature of its concerns. If referred to the decision maker that decision maker shall then reconsider the decision within a further 7 clear working days, amending the decision or not, before adopting a final decision.
- (i) If following an objection to the decision, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee does not meet within the 5 working day period set out above (or agreed extended period), or does meet but does not refer the matter back to the decision making person or body, the decision may be determined on the date of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, or the expiry of that further 5 working day period (or agreed extended period), whichever is the earlier.
- (j) In order to ensure that call-in is neither abused, nor causes unreasonable delay, certain limitations are to be placed on its use. These are:
 - (i) an Overview and Scrutiny Committee may only call-in a total of three decisions per three month period;
 - (ii) three Members of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee are needed for a decision to be called in;
 - (iii) the Proper Officer may veto any request for call-in if it falls outside the remit of this scheme.

18. Call-in and Urgency

The call-in procedure set out in paragraph 17 above shall not apply where the decision being taken by the Cabinet, Cabinet committee, Cabinet Member or Officer is urgent AND not subject to call-in. A decision will be urgent AND not subject to call-in if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests. The record of the decision, and notice by which it is made public shall state why in the opinion of the Cabinet, Cabinet committee, Cabinet Member or Officer the decision is an urgent one not subject to call-in. The Chairperson of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny committee must agree that the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency and not subject to call-in; in the absence of the Chairperson of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the matter will be referred to the Chairperson of the Partnerships and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee, or in their absence to the Chairperson of the Corporate Resources and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee, or in the absence of both the Mayor's consent shall be required; in the absence of all three, the Deputy Mayor's consent shall be required. Decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of Council, together with the reasons for urgency.