



What is a call-in?

If a member of the council has concerns about a 'key decision' made by the Cabinet collectively or by an officer he/she may call in that decision for a scrutiny committee to consider. This is subject to the 'urgency' provisions (see below). Once a decision **not** subject to urgency provisions is called-in, it **cannot** be implemented until a scrutiny sub-committee or Council reconsiders the decision.

The power of call-in does not apply to day to day management and operational decisions made by officers under delegated powers or 'in principle' decisions and may only be exercised in relation to non-key decisions as part of a review of service plans.

What is a key decision?

A key decision is one which involves expenditure or savings of £500,000 or more and/or that has a significant impact on two or more wards.

All forthcoming key decisions must be published on the monthly Forward Plan before being taken. The latest copy of the Forward Plan is available on the council's website or by clicking on this link. All key decisions must be listed on the Forward Plan before being taken although ideally four months in advance.

Timetable for call-ins

Cabinet decisions are published within three clear days of the meeting being held (via publication of the minutes [here](#)).

Officer delegated decisions are published within two clear days of the decision being

made (via publication of an officer delegated decision report [here](#))

Decisions must be called-in within five clear days of publication. Decisions will be implemented following the expiry of that five-day period if the decision has not been called-in.

Within five clear days of a decision being called-in, a scrutiny committee will be called to examine the decision. The decision maker will be notified of the call-in and the date for the meeting. A report will be prepared by Democratic Services outlining the reason for the call-in. The meeting to consider the call-in will be held within 10 working days of the meeting date being agreed and notified.

The scrutiny sub-committee will consider the decision and either:

- Decide that no further action is necessary - in which case the decision will be implemented.
- Refer it back to the decision maker for reconsideration, setting out in writing the nature of its concerns - in which case the decision maker will have ten clear days from the date of the meeting to either amend, withdraw or implement the original decision
- Refer the matter to Council (see below) only if it is felt the decision is contrary to the council's budget and/or policy framework.

How to call-in a key decision

Councillors wishing to call-in a decision must submit the relevant pro forma. This requests that councillors set out:

- Which decision or decisions are being called in (this will be the formal decision made usually starting 'resolved that...')
- The reasons for the call-in and
- What the councillor wants the scrutiny committee to do with the decision

Council

If a call-in is referred to Council it can decide to take no further action, in which case the decision can be implemented immediately.

If Council objects to the decision it can adopt one of the following courses of action:

- If it considers that the original decision is outside of policy framework and/or inconsistent with budget it can nullify the decision.
- If it considers that the decision accords with the policy framework and is consistent with budget, Council will refer any decision to which it objects back to the decision-making person or body, together with its views on the decision. That decision-making body or person shall choose whether to either amend/withdraw or implement the original decision within ten working days of request.

Non-adherence to timetable

If following an objection to the decision, the scrutiny sub-committee does not meet in the period set out above, or does meet but does not refer the matter back to the decision making person or body, the decision shall take effect on the date of the scrutiny sub-committee meeting, or the expiry of that further 10 working day period, whichever is the earlier.

If the council does not meet, or if it does but does not refer the decision back to the decision-making body or person, the decision will become effective on the date

of the council meeting or expiry of the period in which the council meeting should have been held, whichever is the earlier.

Call-in and urgency

The call-in procedure shall not apply where the decision being taken is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would substantially prejudice the council's or the public's interests.

The record of the decision and notice by which it is made public shall state whether in the opinion of the decision-making person or body, the decision is an urgent one, and therefore not subject to call-in. The Monitoring Officer or, in his/her absence the Chief Executive, if necessary in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Resources and/or the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny committee, must agree both that the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency. Decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of the Council, together with the reasons for urgency.

Additional documents

In addition to this guidance document you may find the following helpful:

- [Call-in form](#)
- [Call-in flow chart](#)

Any queries? Contact the scrutiny team:

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