

COUNCIL, 10 JUNE 2015

REPORT OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

REVISION TO THE CALL-IN PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATIONS BROUGHT BEFORE THE REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE

At its meeting on 11 March 2015 a report was presented which set out proposed changes to the call-in procedure for planning applications brought before the Regulatory Services Committee. At that meeting, Members deferred making a decision so that further thought could be given to the proposed revisions.

As a consequence, a further report was presented to the Committee on 30 April 2015. This revised report retained the proposal for the call-in of a planning application to be restricted to the Councillors for the ward in which the planning application site was located. It was recognised however that there might be exceptional circumstances whereby non-ward councillors felt it was necessary for an application to be brought for the consideration of the Regulatory Services Committee. In such exceptional circumstances, approval had to be sought in writing, setting out detailed reasons for the call-in which had to be related solely to matters of material planning concern, and obtained from the Head of Regulatory Services for the application to be brought before the committee.

Officers provided details of the call-in arrangements for all London boroughs (as shown in appendix A of the attached report to Governance Committee). The research showed that out of the remaining 31 London boroughs, 21 had some form of restriction on their call-in arrangements, with variations depending upon local preferences.

A consistent theme throughout the various local arrangements was the need for material planning considerations to be stated when the request for call-in was made. That provision currently existed within Havering's Committee procedure rules.

The Governance Committee accordingly recommends to Council that:

1. Committee Procedure Rule 13(e) of the Council's Constitution be revised the read the following:
 - (e) *Only a Councillor representing the ward in which the planning application is located, or in exceptional circumstances any member of the Council, may call-in an application before the Regulatory Services Committee. Any such request for call-in must be received by the Head of Regulatory Services in writing (to include email and facsimile) and*

must set out detailed reasons for the call in which must be related solely to matters of material planning concern. Any Member of the planning committee calling in a matter must take care to express themselves in a manner which would not amount to bias or pre-determination should they intend to take part in the meeting.

2. That Section 3.6.6(d) be revised to read the following:

“Members of the Ward in which a proposal is situated may request that an application be referred to the Regulatory Services Committee for determination. Such request must be made in writing to the Head of Regulatory Services personally. If no such request is received by the deadline of that period the Head of Regulatory Services may determine the application.

If any Member considers there are exceptional circumstances warranting the calling in of a planning application which is not situated within their Ward then they must seek and obtain approval from the Head of Regulatory Services.”

3. That the Council’s Monitoring Officer be authorised to make the necessary change to the Council’s Constitution, should the proposal be agreed by Council.