

COUNCIL, 15 DECEMBER 2020, AGENDA ITEM 8 – EXEMPTIONS TO THE CALL-IN PROCESS

Question by Residents' Group

Would the Leader of the Council explain why so many Executive Decisions on this report have a reason for no "Call in" as Special Urgency due to Gold Command? Furthermore, would the Leader of the Council explain what this means and why they were needed given that the Executive Decisions in question were for non-Covid related decisions?

Answer:

The Key Executive Decisions listed in the report before Members were made exempt from call-in with the agreement of the Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny Board. The need for urgency was a direct or indirect consequence of the COVID pandemic, with action taken by the Chief Executive utilising the statutory powers conferred to him under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Gold Command), or through the scheme of delegation by Cabinet, Individual Cabinet Member or Officer.

The Council's previous Monitoring Officer put in place measures to monitor all requests for exemption from call-in and urgency prior to consideration by the Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny Board. Our current Monitoring Officer has maintained that practice.

For reasons of openness and transparency, the Chief Executive made a commitment at the outbreak of the pandemic to keep Members updated of decisions made during this period when exercising his powers. He has honoured that commitment both through the publication of decisions listed in the report before Members but also through regular updates at All Member Briefings. I'm sure all Members are grateful for the hard work and commitment demonstrated by the Chief Executive and his staff during these difficult times.