



COUNCIL, 15 JANUARY 2025

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SUBJECT: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY RULES – EXCEPTION TO THE CALL-IN (REQUISITION) PROCEDURE

SUMMARY

Under paragraph 18e of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Leader of the Council is required to submit reports to Council on decisions taken by himself, Cabinet or individual Cabinet members, or key decisions made by a member of staff in the circumstances set out in Rule 18 (exemption to the call-in (requisition) procedure) within the previous 3 months.

This report details Key Decisions that have been taken in the circumstances set out in Rule 18 (exemption to the call-in (requisition) procedure) for the six month period covering **1st June 2024 to 31st December 2024**.

- 1) Swimming Pool Support Fund - Acceptance of Grants
(Decision made on 13 August 2024)
- 2) Household Support Fund
(Decision made on 1 November 2024)
- 3) Central Park Leisure Centre Solar Award of Contract
(Decision made on 13 December 2024)

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the report be noted.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Rule 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules provides that:

(b) The call-in procedure shall not apply where a decision being taken by Cabinet or an individual Cabinet member, or a key decision made by a member of staff is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public interests. The record of the decision and notice by which it is made 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.

(c) The decision making person or body can only take an urgent decision under (a) above and avoid the call-in procedures after obtaining agreement from the Chairman of the Board that the decision be treated as urgent.

Swimming Pool Support Fund - Acceptance of Grants

2. On behalf of Cabinet, the Strategic Director of People, sought agreement from the Chairman of the Board to exempt from call-in a key decision concerning an application for £700,000 grant funding from Sport England.
 - 2.1 The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Board, Councillor Laurance Garrard, gave his agreement to the exemption from call-in for the following reason:
 - 2.2 Officers were advised on 8th August 2024 of the need to sign grant adherence agreements with Sports and Leisure Management Ltd. (SLM) by 15th August, otherwise the Council risked losing £700,000 of funding. In order not to prejudice the Council's interests, call-in was waived to allow the decision to be made in time to sign all agreements

Household Support Fund

3. On behalf of Cabinet, the Strategic Director of People, sought agreement from the Chairman of the Board to exempt from call-in a key decision concerning the acceptance and distribution of the Household Support Fund from the Department for Work and Pensions.

Council, 15 January 2025

- 3.1 The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Board, Councillor Laurance Garrard, gave his agreement to the exemption from call-in for the following reason:
- 3.2 The Department for Work & Pensions published guidance for Local Authorities on the 27th September, with the requirement to submit spending plans by the 1st November. The Council was awarded just over £1.6 million, in part to support residents who are no longer eligible for the winter fuel allowance. Since accepting the funding was in the Council's best interests, call-in was waived so that the delivery plan could be submitted on time and meet the 1st November deadline

Central Park Leisure Centre Solar Award of Contract

4. On behalf of Cabinet, the Strategic Director of People, sought agreement from the Chairman of the Board to exempt from call-in a key decision concerning the award of a contract for the car port and solar panel scheme at Central Leisure Centre
- 4.1 The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Board, Councillor Laurance Garrard, gave his agreement to the exemption from call-in for the following reason:
- 4.2 The Council successfully secured £700k grant funding towards a total project cost of £823k. It was a condition of the grant that the money had to be spent by the end of March 2025, otherwise it would be lost. There was an urgent need for the contract to be awarded to allow orders to be placed for the fabrication of the car ports and for PV panels. Any delay would have meant the project could not have started on 6 January 2025 and work would therefore not have been completed before end of March. Since it was in the Council's interest for the contract to be awarded expeditiously, call in was waived so that £700k grant funding would not be withdrawn.

Financial Implications and Risks:

While there were financial implications around the decisions described in this report, there are none directly associated with this report.

Legal Implications and Risks:

There are no immediate legal implications directly associated with this report.

Human Resource Implications and Risks:

There are none directly associated with this report.

Council, 15 January 2025

Equalities and Social Inclusion Implications and Risks:

There are none directly associated with this report.

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Background paper List

None