

Key Decision Required:	NO	In the Forward Plan:	NO
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CABINET

8 NOVEMBER 2013

REFERENCE REPORT FROM THE SERVICE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OF 7 OCTOBER 2013

A.1 INFORMAL CALL-IN PROCESS

BACKGROUND

At the meeting held on 7 October 2013, the Chairman of the Service Development and Delivery Committee (Councillor M Page) spoke of his wish to see the Committee move forward by developing and delivering strategies and how future agendas could be better-managed to enable more-focussed discussions to take place.

The Chairman said that he was very keen to look at how call-ins were managed, and shared with the Committee, the process used by Essex County Council in dealing with call-ins, including mediation as an early means of resolution.

The Chairman set out what he would wish to see come forward to Cabinet and for the effect of this to be included in the Council's Constitution. Essentially, it was suggested by the Chairman that, if adopted, when a call-in was received under the Council's current rules:

1. An informal mediation meeting take place within five working days of the call-in and that the meeting be chaired by the Chairman, or Vice-Chairman of the appropriate overview and scrutiny committee;
2. The meeting comprise the Chairman (and/or Vice-Chairman of the appropriate overview and scrutiny committee), the decision-maker (portfolio holder), the three members who had called the decision in and appropriate officers (including a member of staff from Democratic Services to ensure that the proceedings of the meeting are recorded);
3. In the event that mediation did not resolve the issue, a meeting of the appropriate overview and scrutiny committee be called to consider the call-in, within 15 working days from the date after the mediation meeting to allow time for a convenient date to be arranged and all paperwork prepared (including the formal minutes of the mediation meeting held); and
4. In the event that mediation did resolve the issue and the call-in was subsequently withdrawn, Members would be informed as to what had occurred at the mediation meeting.

The Leader of the Council, who had been invited to attend the Committee, said that if a formal recommendation was put before the Cabinet from the Committee, then the necessary changes to the Council's Constitution could occur.

Members of the Committee were generally in support of the proposal to hold mediation meetings in an attempt to try and do away with the need for formal committee meetings.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS / COMMENTS TO CABINET

Cabinet is now asked to consider the recommendations and comments of the Committee and determine its response if any:

The Committee **COMMENTS** to **CABINET** that officers are asked to prepare a draft, informal call-in process, in line with what had been discussed, and that this is presented to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee on 11 November 2013, in order that it can make an informed recommendation to Cabinet.

PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S COMMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

Comments will be provided directly at the meeting.