

Final Report of the Call-In Scrutiny Panel

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OSC/64 (as amended by the incorporation of comments made at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission (OSC) on 19 November 2007)

General Purposes Committee –
3 December 2007

Report by the Chair of the Call-In Scrutiny Panel,
Councillor R G Burgess

Other Members of the Panel:

Councillors Dr. H S Bloom, A C W Crane, R J Hull, G K Seekings, J A Singh,
B A Smith and L A Walker.

Lead Officer: Pat Tinsley (Head of Democratic Services)

Contact Officer: Steve Lappage (Scrutiny Manager) (01293 438549)

Key points:

- 1) This report sets out the findings and recommendations of the Call-In Scrutiny Panel;
- 2) The main changes being proposed to the Council's Call-In arrangements are:
 - i) enabling minority groups with fewer than 4 Members to call-in an item without necessarily having to seek the support of another political group;
 - ii) establishment of a Call-In Scrutiny Panel, selected from a pool of non-Executive Members, to examine any matter called-in at the Executive or at a Committee of the Executive and to report directly to full Council.
- 3) The Panel also supports, in principle, the introduction of Call-In arrangements for the public but want to defer it pending the enactment of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill.

Section 1 – Introduction

- 1.1 The Commission, at its meeting on 9 July 2007, agreed to establish a scrutiny panel to undertake a review of the Council's Call-In arrangements following Members' concerns at the Council's Call In Procedures which they consider an inefficient and ineffective way of dealing with Council business, is not used to good effect and could be improved to provide better opportunities for Members, Officers and other stakeholders and experts to debate and reconsider the proposals.
- 1.2 The Panel was required to undertake a short review of the Council's Call-In procedures and of associated best practice to see if there is anything else the Council should do which would assist better decision making. Any changes approved can be introduced for new arrangements to be implemented in time for the new Council year.
- 1.3 The objectives of the review were:
 - i) To review CBC's Call-In procedures and identify areas for improvement. e.g. changes to who should be able to call-in a decision, when & how and whether any limitations should be introduced; the involvement of O&S;
 - ii) To look at other Call-In arrangements: e.g. West Sussex County Council;
 - iii) To improve decision-making;
 - iv) To ensure Call-In is used to good effect;
 - v) To provide better opportunities for Members, Officers and other stakeholders and experts to debate and reconsider the proposals.

RECOMMENDATION 1

The Commission is asked to consider this report and accept or amend any of the recommendations as appropriate.

Comments at OSC

Members of the OSC expressed a range of views on several of the recommendations.

A vote was requested which was taken on all of the recommendations together for their further consideration by the General Purposes Committee. The recommendations of the Panel were agreed on the casting vote of the Chair by four votes to three with one abstention.

RECOMMENDATION 2

The General Purposes Committee is requested to support the report and recommendations as endorsed or amended by the Commission.

Section 2 – Approach to the Review

- 2.1 The work of the panel included consideration of;
 - i) Crawley Borough Council's current call-in arrangements;
 - ii) West Sussex County Council's call-in arrangements;
 - iii) details of the incidence of call-in under the arrangements operated by Crawley Borough Council and West Sussex County Council and showing those cases where call-in resulted in an amendment to the decision;
 - iv) the Centre for Public Scrutiny's research report (March 2006) which investigated the call-in procedure across English local authorities.

- 2.2 Any recommendations arising from this review will need to be submitted, via the Commission, to the meeting of the General Purposes Committee to be held on 3 December 2007. Should the Committee then be minded to recommend any changes to the call-in process, the Head of Democratic Services would need to report back to the Committee with recommended amendments to the Constitution to reflect those changes (including call-in of decisions made by individual Executive members and of key decisions made by officers), which the Council would then be asked to formally agree.

Section 3 – Current Arrangements

- 3.1 The Council's Constitution makes provision for a process which enables Members to delay an Executive decision that has been made but not yet implemented (a so called 'call-in' procedure). The procedure relating to the call-in of a decision made by the Executive, or a committee of the Executive is summarised in **Appendix A** to this report. The process for calling-in decisions made by individual Executive Members or key decisions made by employees or key decisions made by employees with delegated authority from the Executive is set out in **Appendix B**.
- 3.2 The purpose of call-in is to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between effectively holding the Executive to account, being able to question decisions before they are implemented and allowing effective and efficient decision-making by the Executive.
- 3.3 DETR guidance issued at the time of the introduction of the new political management arrangements emphasises the need to allow effective and efficient decision making by the Executive and for call-in only to be used in exceptional circumstances. The guidance describes circumstances as being exceptional where there is evidence which suggests that a decision has not been taken in accordance with the principles of decision making set out in Article 13 of a Council's Constitution.
- 3.4 Article 13 of the Council's Constitution requires the Council to observe the following principles when making decisions:-
- i) Proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome)
 - ii) due consultation and the taking of professional advice from employees
 - iii) respect for human rights
 - iv) a presumption in favour of openness
 - v) clarity of aims and desired outcomes
 - vi) explanation of options considered and reasons for decisions
 - vii) due regard to the statutory framework, guidance and codes of conduct
 - viii) previously taken Council decisions.
- 3.5 Within Executive forms of Constitution there are several mechanisms that can be used to resolve conflict between the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Commission/Council. So long as there is compliance with section 21(3) of the Local Government Act 2000, Councils have a choice about the chosen mechanism. (Section 21(3) can be summarised as providing that the power of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review or scrutinise a decision, made but not implemented, includes the power to recommend that (a) the decision be reconsidered by the Executive; or (b) the Committee's function, as it relates to the decision, be exercised by the Council).

- 3.6 Also attached and summarised in **Appendix C** is an example of a call-in process included in the DETR guidance on Constitutions. However, the guidance points out that various call-in processes can be used.

Section 4 – Call-In Period

- 4.1 Whilst local authorities allow an average of 5 working days in which a decision may be called in before it is implemented, the Crawley arrangements provide for call-in to take place immediately after the decision is taken at the Executive. This has the advantage of providing clarity for councillors and members of the public present at the meeting and removes any uncertainty as to the status of the decision.

RECOMMENDATION 3

That this aspect of the call-in process should remain unchanged.

Section 5 – Who should be allowed to call-in a decision?

- 5.1 In reviewing who should be allowed to call-in a decision, the Panel did not favour an arrangement whereby only a single member of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission should be allowed to call-in a decision. Nor did the Panel wish to see the introduction of a process which required the support of at least two political parties to a call-in, as is the case in the arrangements operated by some authorities.
- 5.2 The Panel were reasonably satisfied with the current Crawley arrangements which provide for any Member of the Council present at the meeting of the Executive to be able to call-in a decision, if they believe that it has not been taken in accordance with the principles of decision making set out in Article 13 of the Constitution. The Member of the Council calling in the decision must then obtain, within five working days, the support of three other Members of the Council. (Failure to do so means that the original decision will be implemented on the sixth working day).
- 5.3 However, the Panel gave particular consideration to the unfavourable position of a minority party with fewer than four members under these arrangements. It was noted that a group with such a small membership would only be in a position to call-in an item with the support of another political group.

RECOMMENDATION 4

That, in the case of a political group with fewer than four members, the call-in requirements should be amended to enable a Member of that group to call-in a decision with the support of three other Members of the Council or with the support of every member of their own political group.

Comments at OSC

When invited to give his opinion by the Chair of OSC, the Leader of the Council expressed an alternative view that this proposal would place disproportionate power in the hands of small political groups of only two or three Members which could be used to delay decisions (whether of the Executive, a Committee of the Executive, decisions made by individual members of the Executive or key decisions made by officers under delegated powers).

However, the Vice-Chair of the OSC suggested that it was potentially illegal to restrict political groups and could be open to judicial review as it does not pass the test of fairness. In response, the Head of Democratic Services confirmed that the

current arrangements were not illegal. Nevertheless, the Head of Democratic Services was requested to seek further opinion of this matter which would be reported to the meeting of the General Purposes Committee on 3 December 2007.

Section 6 – Whether there should be more Overview and Scrutiny involvement

- 6.1 The Panel considered whether there should be more Overview and Scrutiny Commission involvement in the call-in process.
- 6.2 The Crawley arrangements currently provide that any matter that has been called-in at the Executive or a committee of the Executive will be reconsidered at the next meeting of full Council. If the Council does not object, then the original decision stands. If the Council does object, it cannot change the decision unless that decision was contrary to the policy framework or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the budget. Unless that is the case, the Council will refer the matter back, either to the next meeting of the Executive for reconsideration or to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission. The Commission was already encouraged to carry out any investigations at an earlier stage, if possible, by referrals from the Forward Plan.
- 6.3 However, the Panel favoured the practice commonly operated elsewhere which provided for matters which had been called-in to be considered, in the first instance, by a panel of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission. The Panel felt that this option offered the advantage of providing the scrutiny panel with the opportunity to consider those aspects of the decision that it wished to examine in detail, to consider any additional evidence and to invite to the meeting the appropriate Portfolio Holder and officers together with any other third parties. This should ensure the Panel was better informed and assist them in coming to a view.
- 6.4 All Scrutiny Panels initially report to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission. However, to assist the Council in its deliberations and to enable decisions to be expedited it is proposed that this Panel reports directly to Council. In common with other Scrutiny Panels, it is intended that the Chair of the Panel will be a Member of the Commission.
- 6.5 It is also considered that this approach could overcome some of difficulties that could arise in view of the tight timescales involved and might be more popular with Members who do not serve on the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and would not perhaps wish to lose the opportunity to participate in discussions on matters which have been called-in.
- 6.6 Problems surrounding the accommodation of this alternative call-in process in the committee timetable without incurring delays can be addressed at the time that the 2008/09 calendar is produced. Nevertheless, the officers take the view that a period of about a week should be retained between the Executive meeting and the Scrutiny Panel meeting to provide for the membership of the Panel to be established, to enable statutory requirements relating to notice of meetings to be observed and to give adequate time for appropriate witnesses to be identified and arrangements made for them to attend.

RECOMMENDATION 5a

That all non-Executive Members on the Council form a pool of members from which a politically balanced scrutiny panel can be called, as and when required, to examine any matter called-in at the Executive (or at a Committee of the Executive) and report to the next meeting of the Council.

RECOMMENDATION 5b

That each Panel comprise of seven Members selected from among the pool of non-Executive Members and be on the nomination of the political groups (leaders).

RECOMMENDATION 5c

That dates for such a panel should be provisionally reserved in the calendar following each Executive meeting but prior to Council at the end of the cycle.

RECOMMENDATION 5d

That all appropriate officers and Members need to be cognisant of the dates of these panel meetings and that their attendance, or otherwise that of a suitable deputy, may be necessary at short notice.

Comments at OSC

Some Members considered there were already more than enough meetings for Members to attend and it would be difficult to accommodate even more meetings. Furthermore, they considered that there would be sufficient opportunity to discuss further any items called-in at full Council and that Members could easily seek the provision of any additional information for discussion there.

However, other Members thought that a fuller and more informed debate could be more easily accommodated at a single issue scrutiny panel meeting than it could at a busy Council meeting and, therefore, would help to ensure better decision-making. It was also considered that such call-in arrangements worked very well at other authorities e.g. WSCC.

It was confirmed at the OSC that the proposed Call-In Scrutiny Panel would not be allowed to override a request for call-in.

Section 7 – Other Restrictions

- 7.1 The Panel considered whether it wished to recommend the imposition of any other restrictions on call-in in order to ensure that call-in is not abused or used to cause unreasonable delay (e.g. a restriction on the number of call-ins over a specified period of time, the number of call-ins that a Member can support over a certain period or a requirement that only decisions involving expenditure or reductions in service over a specified value may be called-in).

RECOMMENDATION 6

That no further restrictions be made to call-in.

Section 8 – Call-in by the public and Community Calls for Action

- 8.1. The Panel requested officers to look at arrangements operated by the five authorities identified in the Centre for Public Scrutiny report as those where the public were able to call-in decisions.
- 8.2. In the case of Colchester, the process for call in by the public which had been in operation since 2002 was removed from the Constitution at the beginning of the 2006/07 municipal year because it had never been used.
- 8.3. The Panel considered a summary of the following information received from each of the remaining four authorities, Basildon District Council, Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames Council, Milton Keynes Council and Thurrock Council:
- i) The process operated by their authority which provides for call-in by the public (including who exactly is able to call-in a decision);
 - ii) When the process was first introduced;
 - iii) The number of occasions when call-in by the public has occurred, the topics and the outcome (i.e. whether the decision was revised following the call-in);
 - iv) The approximate cost of call-in by the public (both in financial terms and the amount of time involved);
 - v) From their experience, any pros or cons of the process.
- 8.4. The 'pros and cons' identified by representatives of the four authorities operating arrangements for call-in by the public are summarised as follows:-

Pros

- Public call-in is seen as demonstrating an open and inclusive approach
- Engagement with the public. Normally public interest in these call-ins is significant and participation is high.
- Enhances the democratic process
- Scrutiny of the Executive
- Early concerns that public call-in would be used as a device to frustrate decision making have proved groundless.
- Having a dedicated panel to hear call-ins, has the advantage of giving members clarity of purpose, an agenda unencumbered by other business, and a framework for conducting hearings which allows for an even-handed approach before the Panel reaches its conclusions.

Cons

- One difficulty is that members of the public will not be as well informed about call-in as Members. It is, therefore, important to give the public guidance on the grounds on which a decision may be called in, perhaps by the introduction of criteria. They need to be aware that, if a decision relates only to a specific aspect of a policy, objections can only be considered to that aspect and not the whole policy. It should also be made clear to members of the public that scrutiny cannot reverse the decision but may ask for it to be reconsidered.
- Call-ins could be used for party political purposes. Care must be taken to ensure that meetings are open, rather than partisan, forums.
- Because of the contact with the public at meetings, members may act in a way which is likely to gain support from the audience
- A lack of understanding of the call-in process could lead to inappropriate call-ins or debate which does not focus on the call-in topic

- 8.5 Another point highlighted was that public call-ins (particularly from community groups, pressure groups, etc.) may generate a fair amount of media interest.
- 8.6 The Scrutiny Panel considered the issue of public call-in in the context of provisions contained in the Police and Justice Act 2006 and proposals contained in the Strong and Prosperous Communities White Paper which are contained in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill, which is currently before Parliament, for a community call for action mechanism.
- 8.7 Whilst the concept and procedure in the Bill is largely the same as the Home Office proposals, the Bill places more of an emphasis on the role of the Councillor, rather than on the rights of the public in triggering the mechanism, and in giving powers to councillors to resolve problems themselves than is the case in the Home Office proposals. The Bill goes further in proposing safeguards for filtering out frivolous or vexatious complaints and provides more scope for local flexibility procedurally (setting rules in the light of local circumstances).
- 8.8 There would, therefore, appear to be scope for confusion, with two different central government departments developing two slightly different mechanisms for the Community Call for Action and with crime and disorder matters being an exception to the process identified in the White Paper. More clarity with regard to these issues is expected.
- 8.9 It is understood that the Home Office mechanisms are expected to be rolled out sometime in 2008; the powers from the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill will come into effect in April 2008, subject to Parliamentary approval. Constitutional changes will be required to reflect the new mechanisms and the Scrutiny Panel, therefore, preferred to defer further consideration of this issue until such time as the mechanisms for community call for action have been finalised and the relationship between this procedure and any public call-in process might be clearer.
- 8.10 However, since the Panel's final meeting on 24 October 2007, it was announced that the Government has agreed to align the two versions of the Call for Action proposals with the Communities & Local Government version following the Third Reading of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill in the House of Lords. That will mean removing Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 to take out the "Community Call for Action" leaving the more simple "Councillor Call for Action" proposed in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill. In practice, this means that:
- i) Members of the public will not be able to raise Community Calls for Action (and thus ward Councillors will not be under a duty to respond to them on a call for action issue);
 - ii) There will be no right of appeal via the Council's Executive or Policy Committee;
 - iii) County Councillors can raise Calls for Action in relation to crime and disorder matters;
 - iv) Unitary and District Council scrutiny committees will maintain their new role in relation to Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (still pending recommendations from the Flanagan Review – expected in January 2008).

RECOMMENDATION 7

That the introduction of call-in arrangements for the public be supported in principle but that further consideration of this issue by the Call-In Scrutiny Panel be deferred pending confirmation of the Community Call for Action arrangements to be introduced once the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill is enacted.

Section 9 – Call-in of decisions made by individual members of the Executive or key decisions made by officers under delegated powers

- 9.1 A summary of the call-in arrangements operated in Crawley in respect of decisions made by individual members of the Executive or of key decisions made by officers under delegated powers is set out in **Appendix B** to this report
- 9.2 The Panel agreed that the arrangements relating to the call-in of decisions made by individual members of the Executive or key decisions made by officers under delegated powers should be changed to ensure consistency with the changes agreed at its previous meeting. Therefore, call-in arrangements for such decisions should be amended to enable a Member of a political group with fewer than four members to call-in a decision with the support of three other Members of the Council or with the support of every member of their own political group.
- 9.3 The panel also discussed whether provision should be made for Members of the public to call-in decisions made by individual members of the Executive or key decisions made by officers under delegated powers. The Panel supported this, in principle, but agreed any decision on it should be deferred, for consideration by a reconvened Call-In Scrutiny Panel pending the enactment of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill.

RECOMMENDATION 8

That the arrangements relating to the call-in of decisions made by individual members of the Executive or key decisions made by officers under delegated powers be amended to enable a Member of a political group with fewer than four members to call-in a decision with the support of three other Members of the Council or with the support of every member of their own political group.

RECOMMENDATION 9

That the introduction of public call-in arrangements in respect of decisions made by individual members of the Executive or of key decisions made by officers under delegated powers be supported in principle but that further consideration of this issue by the Call-In Scrutiny Panel be deferred pending confirmation of the Community Call for Action arrangements to be introduced once the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill is enacted.

Section 10 – Any Other Issues

- 10.1 In addition to reconvening in the light of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill, the Panel discussed reconvening to review the effectiveness of any revised call-in arrangements.

RECOMMENDATION 10

That the operations of any revised call-in arrangements be reviewed in approximately twelve months time.

Section 11 – Membership and Attendance

- 11.1 The Panel comprised of the following 8 Members: Councillors R G Burgess (Chair), Dr. H S Bloom, A C W Crane, R J Hull, G K Seekings, J A Singh, B A Smith and L A Walker.
- 11.2 The meetings of, and attendance at, the Panel were as follows:
- i) 20 September 2007 – Councillors R G Burgess (Chair), Dr. H S Bloom, A C W Crane, R J Hull, G K Seekings, J A Singh, B A Smith and L A Walker.
 - ii) 24 October 2007 – Councillors R G Burgess (Chair), A C W Crane, R J Hull, G K Seekings, B A Smith and L A Walker.
- 11.3 The Panel would like to thank all the witnesses, Members and Officers, who have contributed to this review.

Section 12 – Background papers

- 12.1
- i) The Council's Constitution
 - ii) The Constitutions of Arun District Council, London Borough of Bromley, Chichester District Council, Colchester Borough Council, Dacorum Borough Council, London Borough of Merton, London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, Rugby Borough Council, Rushmoor Borough Council, London Borough of Sutton, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and West Sussex County Council
 - iii) Minutes of the General Purposes Committee 20 March 2006
 - iv) Guidance issued by the DETR on new Council Constitutions
 - v) Reports DS/76 and DS/79 of the Head of Democratic Services on Review of Call-In Arrangements
 - vi) Minutes of meetings of Call-In Scrutiny Panel on 20 September and 24 October 2007
 - vii) Responses from Basildon, Colchester, Kingston, Thurrock and Milton Keynes Councils
 - viii) Strong and Prosperous Communities White Paper
 - ix) Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill
 - x) Police and Justice Act 2006

ENDS

Summary of Call-In Arrangements currently operated in Crawley for decisions made by the Executive or a Committee of the Executive

Immediately after a decision is taken at the Executive (or at a Committee of the Executive), any member of the Council present may indicate that they wish to call-in the decision because they do not believe it has been taken in accordance with the principles of decision making set out in Article 13 of the Constitution

If a decision is called-in, it is treated as suspended. The Member of the Council calling in the decision must then obtain within the five working days following the call-in, the support of three other Members of the Council. Failure to obtain the support of three other Members within this period will mean that the original decision will stand and, on the sixth working day, the decision will be implemented.

If the required number of signatures is produced within the period specified, then the decision will continue to be treated as suspended and the matter will be reconsidered at the next meeting of full Council.

If the full Council does not object, then the original decision stands. If the Council does object, it cannot change the decision unless that decision was contrary to the policy framework or contrary or not wholly in accordance with the budget. Unless that is the case, the Council will refer the matter back, either to the next meeting of the Executive for reconsideration or to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission. If the matter has already been the subject of scrutiny, it shall only be referred back to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission if there is new material to be considered. The Council may pass a resolution specifying the nature of its objection to the proposed decision.

Summary of Call-In Arrangements currently operated in Crawley for decisions made by individual Executive Members or of key decisions made by employees with delegated authority from the Executive

Notice of such decisions will be published in the Members' Information Bulletin and will be made available for public inspection at the Council's Offices.

Unless, within five working days of the publication date of the Members' Information Bulletin, any member of the Council objects to the proposed decision on the grounds that do not believe the decision, if implemented, would be in accordance with the principles of decision making set out in Article 13 of the Constitution, then the decision is implemented on the sixth working day.

If any Member of the Council objects, then the decision is called-in and it is treated as suspended. The Member of the Council calling in the decision must then obtain the support of three other Members of the Council within the five working days following the publication date of the Members' Information Bulletin. Failure to obtain the support of three other Members within this period will mean that the original decision will stand and, on the sixth working day, the decision will be implemented.

If the required support is given within the period specified, then the decision will continue to be treated as suspended and the matter will then be referred to the next Executive meeting. Once the Executive has made a decision, the call-in procedure for decisions taken by the Executive as a whole could still be applied to that decision.

Summary of an example of a call-in process included in the DETR guidance on Constitutions

Following the making of the decision (by the Executive, a committee of the Executive, an individual member of the Executive or a key decision made by an officer with delegated authority from the Executive), a notice would be published within two days, with a copy being sent to the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission within the same timescale;

The notice would specify that the decision would be implemented within, say, five working days unless the Overview and Scrutiny Commission objected to it and called it in.

If requested by the Chair or a specified number of members of the Commission, the decision would be called in and the decision making body or individual notified.

The Head of Democratic Services would then call a meeting of the Commission on a date to be agreed, wherever possible, with the Chair of the Commission, and in any case within a specified number of days of the decision to call-in (bearing in mind the statutory requirement to give five working days notice of the meeting).

If, having considered the decision, the Overview and Scrutiny Commission is still concerned about it, then it could refer the decision back to the decision making body or individual, setting out the nature of its concerns or refer the matter to full Council. If referred to the decision making body or individual, the decision making body or individual would then be required to reconsider within a further specified number of working days, amending the decision or not before adopting a final decision.

If the Overview and Scrutiny Commission does not meet within the specified period, or does meet but does not refer the matter back, the decision would take effect on the date of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission meeting or on the expiry of that further working day period, whichever is the earlier

If the matter is referred to full Council, and the Council does not object to the decision that has been made, then no further action is necessary and the decision would be effective in accordance with the provision below. However, if the Council does object it would refer the decision back to the decision making body or individual, together with the Council's views on the decision. The decision maker will choose whether to amend the decision or not before reaching a final decision and implementing it. Where the decision was taken by the Executive or a committee of the Executive, a meeting will be convened to reconsider within a specified number of working days of the Council's request. Where the decision was taken by an individual, the individual will reconsider within a specified number of working days of the Council request.

If the Council does not meet, or if it does but does not refer the decision back to the decision making body or individual, the decision would 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.

Exceptions suggested in the guidance:-

In order to ensure that call-in is not abused, nor causes unreasonable delay, certain limitations are to be placed on its use. These are (*the paragraphs below are examples*)

- (a) That an Overview and Scrutiny Commission may only call-in a specified number of decisions per (year) (six month period) (three month period)
- (b) That only decisions involving expenditure or reductions in service over a specified value may be called-in
- (c) That a specified number of members of an Overview and Scrutiny Commission (from at least two political parties) are needed for a decision to be called-in
- (d) That, once a member has signed a request for call-in, he/she may not do so again until a specified period has expired.