

NOTES OF AN INFORMAL MEETING OF THE CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS OF SCRUTINY ON 3/4/02

Issue

Whether Members who call in Executive decisions should be requested or required to state their reasons

View

Members who call in Executive decisions should be asked to state their reasons but this should be optional and should not be made a requirement of the Council's constitution.

Issue

Whether called in decisions of the Executive should be considered at the next scheduled meeting of the appropriate scrutiny committee or at a special meeting of the committee specifically convened for that purpose.

View

That called in decisions should be considered by the appropriate scrutiny committee within four weeks of the expiry of the call in period. This should be a special meeting of the committee specifically convened for that purpose unless the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee agree to its inclusion in the agenda of a scheduled meeting within the same period. The Members who have called in the decision should be consulted about the date for the special meeting with a view to selecting a date which is convenient to either or preferably both if this can be achieved.

The constitution requires that the matter be dealt with at the meeting to which it is first referred unless the Executive agrees otherwise. The suggestion that this might be changed to the Executive Leader was not favoured.

Issue

Whether the remit of Lifelong Learning and Social Inclusion Scrutiny Committee is too large and the role and effectiveness of the Housing Panel.

View

The standing committees should be retained for at least another municipal year. There should be a thorough review of the remits and responsibilities of the standing committees with a view to clarifying any grey areas and to balancing the workloads. More use should be made of panels both informal (e.g. like the arrangements already used to deal with best value reviews) to consider matters entirely within the remit of a committee and formal (e.g. the Leisure Panel) to consider matters which come within the remits of more than one committee in order to avoid duplication.

The Membership of formal panels set up to deal with cross-cutting topics should be drawn from more than one committee. Members (other than Executive Members) should be invited to volunteer to sit on such panels.

The Housing Panel should be asked to complete its task and then be dissolved.

A new Housing Panel should be set up as a scrutiny panel (i.e. it should not include any Executive Members) and the membership should not be restricted to Members of LL&SI.

Note

The views set out above will be reported to and considered by the Scrutiny Board at a meeting on 15th May 2002.