

Bolsover District Council

Annual Council

24th May 2017

Operation of Urgency Rules and Financial Limit for Key Decisions

Report of the Leader of the Council

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- The purpose of this report is to:
 - (a) Advise of Key Decisions taken under statutory Special Urgency Rules in the past 12 months.
 - (b) Advise of decisions taken under Urgency Rules within the Council's Scrutiny Rules (this is where call in provisions are waived as the decision is urgent and cannot be reasonably deferred).
 - (c) Set the Key Decisions threshold for the forthcoming year in line with the constitutional requirement at Annual Council Meetings.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 A Key Decision is an Executive (i.e. Cabinet or officer) decision which is likely to:
- Result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
 - Be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards within the District.

In determining the meaning of "significant" the Council must have regard to any guidance for the time being issued by the Secretary of State. The Council is considering the level for significant income or expenditure for the forthcoming year to be £75,000 for revenue and £150,000 for capital, as set out in the previous report to this. The current level is £50,000 for either revenue or capital.

- 1.2 The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 require that all Key Decisions must be published at least 28 days prior to being made. Where this is not possible the decision may still be made so long as there is compliance with General Exception provisions. This involves informing the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee (or, in their absence the Chair of Council or Vice Chair of Council) and publishing

a notice five days prior to making the decision outlining the reasons why compliance with the requirements is not possible.

- 1.3 Where it is impractical to comply with the General Exception rules, a Key Decision may only be taken in cases of Special Urgency. This is where the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee (or, in their absence the Chair of Council or Vice Chair of Council) agrees that the decision is urgent and cannot be reasonably deferred. Again, the Council must publish a notice setting out the reasons why the decision is urgent and cannot be reasonably deferred.
- 1.4 The Leader is required to submit, at least on an annual basis, a report setting out those decisions where Special Urgency rules have been used. The report must cover the period since the last report was issued and contain details of the decisions that were made. Since the last such report to Council, there has been one decision taken using Special Urgency rules.
- 1.5 All Key Decisions are subject to the Council's call-in provisions which are set out in the Scrutiny Rules. Call-in provisions may be waived only where a decision is urgent. A decision is urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public interests. The Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee (or, in their absence the Chair of Council or Vice Chair of Council) must agree both that the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency. Decisions taken as a matter of urgency are required to be reported to Council, together with the reasons for urgency. In the past 12 months there have been no decisions taken using Urgency provisions.
- 1.6 Finally, to review the threshold for Key Decisions on a regular basis. (See definition of a Key Decision in paragraph 1.1).
 - 1.6.1 The current threshold for a Key Decision is £50,000. Whilst this has been considered as an appropriate level up to the present time, during the review of the constitution, it was acknowledged that it had remained at this level for a number of years and following comparison with best practice and similar sized authorities, the Council agreed that the level for significant income or expenditure for the forthcoming year to be £75,000 for revenue and £150,000 for capital.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 To fulfil a statutory duty to report Key Decisions taken under Special Urgency rules and separate constitutional duties to report decisions where call-in has been waived and to review the financial threshold for Key Decisions.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 None.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 None.

5 Implications

5.1 No legal, HR or finance implications arising from this report.

6 Recommendations

6.1 That Council:

- (a) Notes there have been no decisions taken over the past 12 months under Special Urgency rules,
- (b) Notes there have been no decisions taken over the past 12 months under Urgency provisions in the Council's Scrutiny Rules,
- (c) Agrees that the financial threshold for Key Decisions be £75,000 for revenue income and expenditure and £150,000 for capital income and expenditure.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is an executive decision which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	None
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	None

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
	N/A
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
None.	
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Appendix A: Key Decisions taken under Special Urgency

Decision	Date Taken	Decision Maker	Reasons for Urgency
<p><u>Award of Contract</u></p> <p>To award a contract to undertake works to construct a 2km blue grade mountain bike trail, 300m of surfaced greenway and associated works at Glapwell Countryside Site (£97,007) to TGN Construction (Yorkshire) Ltd.</p>	<p>16 December 2016</p>	<p>Assistant Director - Leisure</p>	<p>To allow works to be carried out during the early months of 2017, particularly tree works before the end of March (outside of the nesting season).</p>