


Agenda Item No:	8	
Committee:	Overview and Scrutiny	
Date:	3 November 2025	
Report Title:	Reporting – Use of Waiver Provisions	

## 1 Purpose / Summary

To provide notice to members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of decisions taken without the need for notice to be given on the Forward Plan and/or for the call-in procedures to be applied.

## 2 Key Issues

To comply with the notice requirements set out in the Council's Constitution at paragraphs 16.3 of Procedure Rule 2 and paragraph and 20.4 of Procedure Rule 4.

## 3 Recommendations

For the Overview and Scrutiny Panel to note the waivers permitted by the Chairman since the date of the last meeting.

Wards Affected	All
Report Originator (s)	Maureen Davis, Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Amy Brown, Assistant Director for Legal and Governance <a href="mailto:amybrown@fenland.gov.uk">amybrown@fenland.gov.uk</a>
Contact Officer(s)	As above
Background Papers	Fenland District Council's Constitution: <a href="https://www.fenland.gov.uk/localgov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=315&amp;MId=2451&amp;info=1&amp;bcr=1">https://www.fenland.gov.uk/localgov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=315&amp;MId=2451&amp;info=1&amp;bcr=1</a>

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Access to Information Procedure Rules which constitute Rule 2 of the Council's Constitution specify at paragraph 13.1 that a key decision may not be taken unless notice of that decision has been published in the Forward Plan for a minimum period of 28 days. The Council's Forward Plan is accessible via the following link: <https://moderngov.fenland.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=136&RD=0&bcr=1>
- 1.2 Article 13 of the Council's Constitution defines a key decision as any decision which results in saving or expenditure in excess of £100,000 or, in respect of any land or property acquisition in excess of £250,000 and/or which is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area of the District comprising two or more wards.
- 1.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Procedures Rules which constitute Rule 5 of the Council's Constitution specify at paragraph 18 that when a decision is made by Cabinet, an individual member of the Cabinet, a committee of the Cabinet or a key decision is made by an officer with delegate authority from the Cabinet or under joint arrangements, that decision must be published within 3 working days of being made. There then follows a period of 5 working days following publication and prior to implementation, during which that decision can be called-in. Information about the procedure for call-in can also be found at Rule 5 of the Council's Constitution.
- 1.4 In exceptional circumstances, if it is not possible to meet the forward plan publication requirements, there are 2 procedures that can be followed to enable the decision to still be taken:
- 1.5 Procedure Rule 2, paragraph 16 of the Council's Constitution specifies that if a matter which is likely to be a key decision has not been included in the Forward Plan and the procedure at paragraph 15 cannot be complied with then, in cases of special urgency, the decision may still be taken if the Chairman of O&S or, in their absence, the Chairman of the Council agrees that the taking of the decision cannot be reasonably deferred.
- 1.6 Rule 4 of the Council's Constitution which comprises the Cabinet Procedure Rules specify at paragraph 20 that the call-in procedure shall not apply where the decision being taken 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's interests. The Chairman of O&S or, in their absence, the Chairman of the Council agrees that the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances to be treated as a matter of urgency.
- 1.7 Paragraph 16 of Procedure Rule 2 and Paragraph 20.4 of Procedure Rule 4 both specify that decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel together with the reasons for the urgency.
- 1.8 Decisions taken after the application of the urgency provisions are also routinely published in the Overview and Scrutiny Panel's annual report which is also submitted to Full Council for approval.

## **2 NOTIFICATION OF DECISIONS**

- 2.1 Since the date of the last meeting the Chairman of O&S has permitted the use of the waiver provisions on three occasions:
- 2.1.1 A waiver of the requirement to place an entry on the Forward Plan for the full period of 28 days was granted on 27th June 2025 together with a waiver of the associated call-in provisions. The Decision Notice relating to that decision can be found via the following link and related to a recommendation to urgently proceed with the proposed roof repair due to the level of deterioration and escalating health and safety concerns: [Decision - Award of a contract to Roof-Link in the sum of £190,256+VAT for the replacement of the existing roof on industrial units at Longhill Road, March - Fenland District Council.](#)
- 2.1.2 A waiver of the requirement to place an entry on the Forward Plan for the full period was granted on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2025. An entry was published on the Forward Plan on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2025 ([Issue details - Fenland Inspire! Project - Civil Parking Enforcement Update - KEY/04JUL25/01 - Fenland District Council](#)). However as the decision was taken by Cabinet on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025 ([Civil Parking Enforcement Update Rev3 Final.pdf](#)) the entry was not on the Forward Plan for the full period of 28 days. The need for a waiver arose due to the need for an urgent commitment in relation to the application of funds to the delivery of the project within required timescales.
- 2.1.1 A waiver of the requirement to place an entry on the Forward Plan for the full period was granted on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2025. An entry was published on the Forward Plan on 9 October 2025 (Issue details - [Garden Waste Direct Debts Sept 2025 - KEY/09OCT25/01](#)). The decision was taken by the Portfolio Holder Cllr Steve Tierney on 14 October 2025, and with approval from Cllr Davis the Forward Plan notification period and call in period was waived. The need for a waiver arose due to the need for the urgent purchase of software as a result of the current provider no longer being able to provide the direct debit process ahead of the services going on sale again in January 2026.

## **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 3.1 The Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny has to date provided a verbal update as to the use of the waivers provided for in the Constitution. In future, unless it is not possible to prepare a Report in time for Agenda dispatch in relation to the next available meeting of O&S, a Report will be prepared.

## **4 IMPLICATIONS**

### **4.1 Legal Implications**

- 4.1.1 The legal implications are as set out in the main body of this Report.

### **4.2 Financial Implications**

- 4.2.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this Report.