

## **EXTRACT FROM GOVERNANCE AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE MINUTES 30 SEPTEMBER 2009**

### **CABINET DECISION-MAKING ARRANGEMENTS**

The Committee considered a proposed change to the existing Cabinet Decision-Making arrangements.

Despite Council having agreed that individual Cabinet Members should have their own decision-making powers, the collective Cabinet was still being expected to deal with many decisions which could be dealt with on an individual basis. Despite a series of training sessions, Officers were still reluctant to refer decisions to individual portfolio holders rather than collective Cabinet. Cabinet Members were themselves reticent in using their powers and often deferred to full Cabinet.

A further reduction in the volume of Cabinet business could be achieved by removing paragraph (d) of the existing restrictions on individual Cabinet Member decision-making. This related to decisions which “are significant in terms of their effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards”. Many decisions were “significant in terms of their effect on communities” but could readily be taken by the relevant portfolio holder. By removing this provision, Council would bring clarity and certainty to its executive decision-making arrangements. There were no implications for the Council’s call-in provisions which would continue to apply to all executive decisions whether taken collectively or individually.

Cabinet Members would also be given some assurance in the use of their individual decision-making powers by:

- (a) the opportunity to discuss a proposal first at an informal Cabinet meeting; and
- (b) the scheduling of regular weekly Cabinet Member decision days on Tuesdays.

### **RESOLVED**

**That Council be recommended that**

- (1) an amendment be made to the decision-making powers of individual Cabinet Members by the removal of paragraph (d) from the existing restrictions on individual Cabinet Member decision-making, the revised restrictions being as follows:**

**“Cabinet Members may make all executive decisions in respect of their portfolio areas except:**

- (a) Decisions already taken by Cabinet or an officer acting under delegated powers.**
- (b) Decisions involving a departure from the Council's Budget and Policy Framework or any Cabinet or regulatory committee policy.**
- (c) Decisions involving expenditure or savings of £1 million or more.**
- (d) Decisions which the Leader wishes to be taken by full Cabinet.**

**PROVIDED THAT all such decisions shall be taken in public and that regard shall be had to the advice of the Borough Solicitor by the decision-maker in interpreting these provisions."**

- (2) the Constitution be amended accordingly.**