

URGENT ACTIONS – GUIDANCE NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. These notes are intended to provide practical guidance to Members and officers on the use of the Urgent Action procedures in Executive Procedure Rules (Executive decisions) and Standing Order 19 (other Committee or panel decisions).

WHEN URGENT ACTION SHOULD BE USED

2. The urgent action provisions should only be used in circumstances where either:
 - (a) Delay in taking action will leave a serious effect on service delivery; or
 - (b) Delay in taking action will have significant cost implications for the Council
3. The Officer proposing the urgent action will need to demonstrate clearly the grounds for urgency in each case, to explain what the implications will be of delaying action until the next meeting of the Executive/Committee. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services will be required to certify the adequacy of the reasons for urgency in each case.

REFERENCING

4. All urgent actions need referencing before processing. Democratic Services will issue referenced forms on request. This will be done electronically and the referenced form will be emailed to the relevant officer.

STAGE A. PROCEDURE

5. Stage A requires completion of details of the action proposed, the officer filing the action, full reasons for urgency and the explicit implications of not taking action before the next scheduled meeting of the Executive/Committee. Completion of Stage A requires certification by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services as the Council's Monitoring Officer (or the Legal Services Manager as Deputy Monitoring Officer) that the reasons for urgency are adequate. All parts of Stage A must be completed in all cases before Stage B is started.

STAGE B. PROCEDURE

6. Stage B requires the relevant portfolio holder, Overview and Scrutiny Chair, the Head of Finance and Business Development (as the Council's Section 151 Officer) and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (as the Council's Monitoring Officer) to comment on and either agree or disagree with the proposed action. Other officers should also be consulted in relevant cases, e.g. the Human Resources Manager in cases where they are significant Human Resources implications. Consultation on decisions proposed under urgent action procedures are as important as on other decisions (see Guidance on Consultation and Deadlines) although timescales for urgent decisions will if necessary be shorter.

STAGE C AND IMPLEMENTATION

7. The originating officer should complete Stage C as certification that all stages of the procedure have been completed. Implementation of the action agreed should take place only after completion of Stage C

POST IMPLEMENTATION

8. Immediately following completion of Stage C a copy of the completed form should be forwarded to Democratic Services who will report all urgent actions to the next available meeting of the Executive. The report to the Executive should also include information from the originating officer on the results of the urgent action.
9. Democratic Services will also, immediately following completion, send a copy of the completed form to all the signatories on the form.