

**CALL-IN: REQUEST FOR THE FURTHER RELEASE OF FUNDING FOR
THE CUSTOMER FIRST PROGRAMME AND ASSOCIATED DELEGATED
AUTHORITY
(Report by the Director of Central Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is formally to notify Executive Councillors of the outcome of the call-in of the decision by the Cabinet to approve the release of funding for the Customer First programme and associated delegated authority.

2. CALL-IN

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources) called-in the decision by the Cabinet on 14th October 2004 and considered the matter at its meeting on 2nd November 2004.
- 2.2 In considering the matter, given that 89% of respondents surveyed during consultations on the budget would not be prepared to pay for improved call handling, extended opening hours and a single customer service facility, Members expressed concern at the cost of the Customer First project. However, having taken into account the work already completed towards the introduction of the call centre, the Panel decided that the decisions of the Cabinet should be implemented.
- 2.3 Despite the fact that assurances were given that no supplementary bids for resources would be approved, the Panel was of the view that the opportunities for cost savings should be examined. Members, therefore, requested the Cabinet to identify, as a consequence of the introduction of the call centre, a programme of efficiency savings and to inform the Overview and Scrutiny Panel accordingly.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The Cabinet is invited to note the decision of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel relating to the call-in and to consider the request to identify efficiency savings in due course.

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Background papers

Reports and Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 2nd November 2004.