

What is a Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)?

The Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) is a development from the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The CCfA provides Councillors with a mechanism to formerly request a relevant Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel to consider an issue in their ward, if all other options to resolve it have failed.

The CCfA provisions were introduced on 1st April 2009.

The principles of the CCfA are that:

- All decision making should be transparent and that Policy Development and Scrutiny should have a role to play in this process;
- The CCfA is there to identify and recognise the need to resolve issues through discussion;
- Scrutiny has a role to play in helping the Council to improve services;
- It provides an opportunity to promote the role of Ward Councillors as champions and leaders of their communities.

How does the CCfA process work at B&NES?

Individual local authorities are able to develop a CCfA process that is relevant to them. We have developed our process by using best practice examples provided by other Local Authorities, adapted to ensure that the process is streamlined within the current systems and structures at B&NES.

The CCfA legislation recognises that Councillors will often be responsible for taking up issues of concern in their local communities and trying to resolve these issues on their behalf. When traditional avenues for resolution have not been successful, Councillors may consider using raising a CCfA.

If a Councillor is made aware of an issue within their ward, and decides to try to resolve it, they could explore various avenues. Options may include talking to the Cabinet Member, fellow ward Councillors or Council departments.

If the Councillor feels this issue has still not been resolved, they may consider completing the Councillor Call for Action request form which is available from the Policy Development and Scrutiny team (see contact details at the end of this leaflet.)

Once the form has been completed, further help and advice will be offered if there are any additional ways to resolve the issue. It may then be added as an agenda item for the next panel meeting. This will give the panel the opportunity to hear all the information relating to this issue and try to develop a consensus and recommendations about how the issue can be resolved.

Please also note that the following categories are excluded items under the Excluded Matters (England) Order 2008:

- Individual complaints
- Planning, licensing, Council Tax/Housing Benefits or School appeal process
- An issue currently under dispute in a court of law
- Any matter which is vexatious, discriminatory or not reasonable to be included at a meeting of the Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel or any of its sub-committees.

Relevant advice will be taken on these from the Council's Monitoring Officer.

How does a CCfA differ from a call-in?

CCfA	Call-in
Aim: Consensus building	Aim: Checks and balance system
Single, ward based issues	Potential to be multi ward issues
Individual Councillor request	10 Councillors need to sign request
Responding to long term community issue	Responding to Cabinet decision
No set time constraints, unless specified	Time constraints, meeting has to be held within 10 working days of verified request
Any Councillor can make CCfA request	Only non-Cabinet Councillors can sign request
Panel can make recommendations	Panel can either uphold and refer back to Cabinet member or reject request

What are the timescales for a CCfA?

There are no formally required timescales for responses to CCfA requests but we will aim to:

Acknowledge a Councillor's request for a CCfA within 1 working day (if e-mailed) or 2-3 working days for postal requests. At the Public Panel meeting, if the panel make recommendations to Cabinet, Council or Partners these will usually require a response within 2 months or 28 days if the CCfA is a Community Safety issue. Any other timescales (e.g. task and finish group work or a progress update) will be decided by the Panel at the meeting.

It is hoped that CCfA meetings will be able to bring together all the parties involved in the issue (the public, ward Councillors, Cabinet members, Officers and possibly local partners). This will allow the Panel to hear all of the evidence

and develop a consensus about the way forward, and form recommendations for a resolution.

If you require further information or guidance on the Councillor Call For Action please contact the Policy Development & Scrutiny Team (scrutiny@bathnes.gov.uk or 01225 396410)