

MEMBER BRIEFING NOTE: GOVERNMENT PLANNING REFORMS AND DCRB GATEWAY ARRANGEMENTS

What is changing?

- The national scheme of delegation for planning functions comes into force on 31 October 2026.
- Officer delegation becomes the default position for many planning applications.
- DCRB will continue to determine planning matters, but only where the national scheme and the Council's local arrangements allow referral.
- Local member requests, parish or town council requests, objection numbers, local controversy or publicity will not by themselves require an application to be reported to DCRB.

What is the gateway?

The gateway is the local process for deciding whether a Schedule 2 or Own-Interest application should be referred to DCRB. The Nominated Member and Nominated Officer must both agree that referral is necessary or appropriate. Where they do not agree, the application remains delegated to officers.

Who are the nominated roles?

- The Chair of DCRB is proposed to act as the Nominated Member.
- The Vice Chair, relevant Board Spokesperson or another trained Board member may act as substitute where the Chair is unavailable, has an interest, is the applicant or is otherwise unable properly to participate.
- The Chief Planning Officer, or another authorised officer, is proposed to act as the Nominated Officer.

What should members do?

- Ensure any views about referral are provided through the published arrangements and are based on material planning considerations and the statutory referral criteria.
- Avoid putting pressure on officers, the Nominated Member or the Nominated Officer about whether an application should be referred or how it should be determined.
- Avoid appearing to predetermine matters, including through social media, political group discussions or informal lobbying.
- Attend required training on the national scheme, revised Planning Scheme of Delegation, gateway process, own-interest applications and Planning Code.

Key dates

Date	Milestone
10 September 2026	Constitution and Ethics Committee considers the proposed constitutional amendments.
14 September 2026	DCRB receives this information report and member briefing note.

23 September 2026	Proposed constitutional amendments intended to be submitted to County Council for approval.
31 October 2026	Revised arrangements intended to operate from commencement of the national scheme.

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