



South Cambridgeshire District Council

**Civic Affairs Committee
Annual Report 2018/19**

THE CIVIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The Civic Affairs Committee was established in September 2012 to carry out the responsibilities of the Constitution Review Working Party; the Electoral Arrangements Committee and the Standards Committee.

The responsibilities of the Civic Affairs Committee can be divided into three sections.

Reviewing the Constitution

- Brings forward proposed substantive changes to the Constitution for consideration by the Council.

Code of Conduct

- Promotes and maintains high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members.
- Assists the councillors and co-opted members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct.
- Advises the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct.
- Monitors the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct.
- Receives the investigation report of the Investigating Officer on any matter which had been referred by the Monitoring Officer for investigation.
- Maintains an overview of dispensations granted to councillors and co-opted members from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct.
- Receives reports from time to time from the Monitoring Officer concerning the operation of Members' Code of Conduct and in respect of his/her statutory functions under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- Monitors the contents of and requirements for all codes, protocols and other procedures relating to standards of conduct throughout the Council, including the Member-Officer Relations Protocol and the Officer Code of Conduct.
- Maintains an overview of the Council's 'whistle-blowing' policy.

Electoral and Governance Arrangements

- Reviews District or Parish electoral arrangements including boundaries and makes recommendations to Council.
- Gives parish meetings the powers of a parish council.
- Can increase or reduce the number of parish councillors on a parish council.
- Changes parish electoral arrangements where agreed, including parish wardings.
- Recommends district and ward boundary changes arising from a review.
- Recommends a Periodic Electoral Review.
- Recommends the establishment of a new parish council.

ATTENDANCE AT THE CIVIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE DURING 2018/19

Four meetings were held during 2018/19:

26 June 2018, 4 September 2018, 4 December 2018 and 5 March 2019.

The membership, with substitutes, was:

- Chairman: Councillor Douglas de Lacey
- Vice-Chairman: Councillor Claire Daunton

Councillors:

- Henry Batchelor

- Martin Cahn
- Nigel Cathcart
- Geoff Harvey (December's meeting)
- Mark Howell
- Steve Hunt (December's meeting)
- Bridget Smith
- Peter Topping
- Aidan Van de Weyer

MATTERS CONSIDERED BY THE CIVIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE DURING 2018/19

Amended public representations at Council meetings (June Meeting)

The Committee recommended to Council a 12 month pilot scheme to allow members of the public to make written representations at full Council meetings. This was agreed by Council on 19 July 2019.

Constitutional Review Task and Finish Group (June and March meetings)

The Committee agreed to set up a Constitutional Review Task and Finish Group, which met nine times this municipal year. The Group updated the Committee on its progress at its meeting in March. It is due to report its conclusions to the Committee in September 2019.

Community Governance Review of Milton Parish Council (June, September and December meetings)

The Committee agreed to the request from Milton Parish Council to reduce the size of the Parish Council from 15 to 12, with the change being implemented at the next scheduled election in May 2022, or earlier if funded by the Parish Council.

Community Governance Review of Barrington Parish Council (June and December meetings)

The Committee agreed to the request from Barrington Parish Council to increase the size of the Parish Council from nine to 13, with the change being implemented at the next scheduled election in May 2022, or earlier if funded by the Parish Council.

Additional powers to South Trumpington Parish Meeting (June meeting)

The Committee agreed the request from South Trumpington Parish Meeting to grant it additional powers regarding the spending of its precept.

Northstowe Community Governance Review (June meeting)

The Committee received a progress report on the proposed timetable for a Community Governance Review of Longstanton and Oakington & Westwick, in relation to the new development of Northstowe.

Community Governance Review of Stapleford Parish Council (June and March Meetings)

The Committee agreed the request from Stapleford Parish Council to increase the size of the Parish Council from 9 to 11, with this change being implemented on Thursday 2 May to be funded by the Parish Council.

Code of Conduct Update Reports (June, September, December and March meetings)

The Committee noted the progress being made on outstanding complaints regarding the Code of Conduct throughout the year.