

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Civic Affairs Committee held on  
Tuesday, 5 March 2019 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Dr. Douglas de Lacey – Chairman  
Councillor Dr. Claire Daunton – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Henry Batchelor Dr. Martin Cahn  
Nigel Cathcart Mark Howell

Officers: Patrick Adams Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Gemma Barron Head of Sustainable Communities and Wellbeing  
Andrew Francis Electoral Services Manager  
Siobhan Mellon Development Officer  
Rory McKenna Deputy Head of Legal Practice

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bridget Smith, Peter Topping and Aidan Van de Weyer.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors Bridget Smith, Peter Topping and Aidan Van de Weyer sent their Apologies for Absence.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

### **4. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION**

The Chairman of the Constitution Review Task and Finish Group, Councillor Claire Daunton, presented this interim report on how the review was progressing. Councillor Daunton thanked the Democratic Services Team Leader and the Deputy Head of Legal Practice for the work they had carried out in supporting the Group.

The Group had decided to recommend that the size of the Constitution should be reduced. Information that did not need to be included would be removed and put separately into what was currently being called an "Ethical Handbook". It was noted that due to the volume of work, the Group now planned for its recommendations to go to the Committee and then to Council in the autumn instead of to Annual Council in May.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

### **5. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - STAPLEFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

The Development Officer presented this report, which invited the Committee to decide whether to agree to the request of Stapleford Parish Council to increase its size from 9 to 11 parish councillors and if so, when this change should be implemented. It was understood that both local members, Councillors Nick Sample and Peter Fane, had no

objections to the change.

It was noted that the Committee had deferred making a decision at its last meeting, as it sought clear justification for the change. The Committee had requested that in future, parish councils be invited to send a representative to these meetings. The Chairman invited two Stapleford parish councillors, David Pepperell and Howard Kettell to speak. They made the following points:

- The boundary between the village of Stapleford with 2,000 residents and Great Shelford with 5,000 residents was unclear, giving the appearance of one settlement.
- Great Shelford Parish Council had 15 parish councillors.
- Recent nearby developments affected Stapleford due to resulting demands on both infrastructure and for more housing.
- There had been an increase in consultations with Stapleford Parish Council, which necessitated sending representatives to meetings outside the parish.
- There was considerable demand from developers to build on both brownfield sites and the green belt.
- Stapleford Parish Council were being consulted on the proposed east-west railway.
- Usually the Parish Council met monthly, but the amount of extra business had resulted in seven extra meetings in the last year.
- Stapleford Parish Council had sufficient funds in the budget to pay for elections in May 2019, to allow an increase to be implemented this year.

The Chairman thanked the two parish councillors for their attendance and the information provided.

Members of the Committee made the following points:

- It was unclear if Stapleford Parish Council would be able to fill 11 vacancies.
- There were justifiable reasons for the increase, which should be supported.

The Electoral Services Manager explained to the Committee that an election could be arranged for Stapleford Parish Council for 2 May 2019, which would allow the increase to be implemented then.

The Civic Affairs Committee unanimously

#### **AGREED**

- A)** To the request from Stapleford Parish Council to increase the number of parish councillors from 9 to 11.
- B)** To implement this change on Thursday 2 May 2019 (to be funded by the parish council).

#### **6. UPDATE ON CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer presented this update on the complaints cases regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct. It was noted that of the three complaints, one did not merit formal investigation and the other two would hopefully be concluded by the time of the next meeting.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

**7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Committee noted that the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 4 June at 10am in the Swansley Room.

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**The Meeting ended at 10.25 a.m.**

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