



South Cambridgeshire District Council

**Civic Affairs Committee  
Annual Report 2020/21**



## **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 2020/21**

Five meetings were held during 2020/21:

2 June 2020, 1 July 2020, 3 November 2020, 1 December 2020 and 25 March 2021.

The membership, with substitutes, was:

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

Councillors:

- Henry Batchelor

- Martin Cahn
- Nigel Cathcart
- Geoff Harvey (substituted at December's meeting)
- Mark Howell
- Bridget Smith
- Aidan Van de Weyer
- Heather Williams
- Richard Williams (substituted at December's meeting)

## **MATTERS CONSIDERED BY THE CIVIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE DURING 2020/21**

### **Community Governance Review of the Parishes of Longstanton and Oakington & Westwick due to Northstowe (June and November Meetings)**

The Committee on 2 June agreed to extend the period of consultation. The Committee on 3 November recommended to Council to create a new parish of Northstowe, with elections to Northstowe Town Council to take place in May 2021. Council agreed the Committee's recommendations at its meeting on 26 November 2021.

### **Thriplow Community Governance Review (June meeting)**

The Committee recommended to Council that Thriplow Parish Council be renamed Thriplow and Heathfield Parish Council and the representation be changed to 5 for councillors for the Thriplow village ward and 4 for Heathfield ward. Council agreed these recommendations at its meeting on 14 July 2020.

### **Greater Cambridge Joint Development Control Committee (July meeting)**

The Committee recommended to Council the establishment of the Greater Cambridge Joint Development Committee. This was agreed by Council at its meeting on 14 July 2020.

### **Community Governance Review of Foxton Parish Council (November and March meetings)**

At its meeting on 3 November the Committee agreed to go out to consultation on the request from Foxton Parish Council to increase the size of the Parish Council from 9 to 10. The Committee agreed the request at its meeting on 25 March, with the implementation date to be agreed with the Parish Council.

### **Setting up of an Anti-Bulling Task and Finish Group (November meeting)**

The Council meeting of 24 September 2020 referred a motion on anti-bullying to the Committee. As a result, the Committee set up an Anti-Bulling Task and Finish Group which held its first meeting on 18 January 2021.

### **Sawston and Babraham Community Governance Review (December and March meetings)**

At its meeting on 1 December 2020 the Committee agreed to go out to the first stage of consultation on changing the boundary between Babraham and Sawston due to a new development. At its meeting on 25 March the Committee agreed to go out to the second stage of consultation on the boundary proposed by Sawston Parish Council.

### **Code of Conduct Update Reports (June, July, November, December and March meetings)**

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