



South Cambridgeshire District Council

Civic Affairs Committee
Annual Report 2021/22

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 2021/22

Three meetings were held during 2020/21:

10 June 2021, 9 September 2021, and 7 December 2021. A meeting scheduled for 2 March 2022 was cancelled due to a lack of business.

The membership was:

- Chairman: Councillor Anna Bradnam
- Vice-Chairman: Councillor Dr. Claire Daunton

Councillors:

- Henry Batchelor
- Martin Cahn
- Nigel Cathcart
- Mark Howell
- Bridget Smith
- Aidan Van de Weyer
- Heather Williams

MATTERS CONSIDERED BY THE CIVIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE DURING 2021/22

Community Governance Review of the Parishes of Babraham and Sawston (June's Meeting)

At its meeting on 25 March 2021 the Committee had agreed to out to the second stage of consultation on the boundary proposed by Sawston Parish Council. At its meeting on 10 June 2021 the Committee recommended that Council agree the new parish boundary in line with the proposal made by Sawston Parish Council. The Consultation had shown that this option had the overwhelming support of the wider public. Council agreed this recommendation at its meeting on 22 July 2021.

Adoption of the Model Code of Conduct

At its meeting on 9 September 2021 the Committee received an update from the Anti-Bullying Task and Finish Group, which unanimously supported the new Local Government Association Code of Conduct and its attempts to tackle harassment. By affirmation, the Committee recommended the Model Code of Conduct to Council, which agreed it on 23 September 2021.

Update on Code of Conduct complaints (June's, September's and December's meetings)

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