



South Cambridgeshire District Council

Civic Affairs Committee
Annual Report 2022/23

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 2022/23

Three meeting were held during 2022/23:

15 June 2022, 8 December 2022 and 2 March 2023. A meeting scheduled for 13 September 2022 was cancelled out of respect following the passing of Queen Elizabeth II.

The membership was:

- Chairman: Councillor Anna Bradnam
- Vice-Chairman: Councillor Paul Bearpark

Councillors:

- Henry Batchelor
- Martin Cahn
- Mark Howell
- Bridget Smith
- Susan van de Ven
- Aidan Van de Weyer
- Heather Williams

Councillors Judith Rippeth and Dr Tumi Hawkins attended the meeting in June as substitutes.

MATTERS CONSIDERED BY THE CIVIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE DURING 2022/23

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

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

Assistant for Political Groups (March's Meeting)

At its meeting on 2 March 2023 the Committee recommended that Council amend the Constitution to allow the appointment of political assistants. Council agreed this recommendation at its meeting on 30 March 2023.