

CIVIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE26 March 2003
(6.00pm- 7.05pm)

PRESENT: Councillors C Rosenstiel (Chair), Bradnack, Durrant, Liddle, Pinnington, Smith, Taylor and Ward.

FOR ADOPTION BY THE COUNCIL**03/CIV/13 THE COUNCIL'S CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

The Council is required to have this Code. Cambridge adopted its first Code last year and it is now time for its annual review. The origin and purpose of the Code are explained in its introduction. The national guidance is in italics at the start of each section. The column "Cambridge City Council commits itself to" is also taken from the guidance as to what Codes should contain.

The Committee noted that the Standards Committee had no comments on the Code. In response to a suggestion from Councillor Bradnack, the Director of Central Services agreed to incorporate an action plan column in the Code at the time of the next review to illustrate not just 'How the Council will do this' but also by when and by whom. The Committee also requested that the reference (page 12) of a requirement to be trained before dealing with planning matters at area committee be deleted, as that had not been agreed at the Area Committees member/officer working group. The Committee agreed that reference should be made on page 12 to there being a formal process in the Constitution for altering the date of a committee meeting.

Council is recommended

To agree the Council's Code of Corporate Governance, attached as appendix 1 to this adoption minute, (the amendments referred to above are incorporated into this version).

03/CIV/14 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**Member/Officer Protocol (appendix 2 of this adoption minute)**

Members noted that the Standards Committee had requested a review of the Protocol. The suggested changes by the Standards Committee are underlined and in italics/struckthrough, other amendments (not underlined) are from the officers.

The Committee noted that the revised version (if approved) should have better internal dissemination, as not all members and relevant officers were aware of its existence.

Strategic IT responsibilities

Following the decision at Council on 13 February to allocate executive responsibility for strategic IT issues to the Deputy Leader, it is recommended that the Deputy Leader has control (subject to overall responsibility of Full Council) of the Technology Investment Fund (TIF) from 1 April 2003. Under the current arrangement, the TIF falls under the Leader and this now needs to be matched up with creating a specific Executive responsibility for strategic IT.

Freedom of the City *(see also information minute 03/CIV/22)*

Councillor Durrant (in consultation with the current Mayor and former Mayors Cowell and Knowles) had requested that the Committee discuss the issue of Freedom of the City. During discussion it was agreed that reference to both the Freedom of the City and Honorary Councillors was needed in the Constitution, and the Head of Legal & Democratic Services proposed the following wording which the Committee agreed:

Amend the Constitution as follows:

1. Add to Part 2, para 4.2.9, page 9: . (The grant of Freedom of the City or honorary membership of the Council needs to be approved at a special Council meeting by a two-thirds majority of those voting.)
2. Delete wording in Part 3, para 5.2, page 53 of the Constitution referring to honorary membership of the Council and replace with:

"Power to consider nominations for honorary membership of the Council and for the Freedom of the City, and to make recommendations to the Council. (The grant of Freedom of the City or honorary membership of the Council needs to be approved at a special Council meeting by a two-thirds majority of those voting.)"

3. Incorporate, as an appendix to the Council Procedure Rules, the guidance on honorary membership of the Council contained in the Council's former Standing Orders at page 142.

In response to a request from Councillor Durrant, the Head of Legal & Democratic Services also undertook to report back to a future meeting on the position of Office of High Steward.

Council is recommended [by 8 votes to 0 on (i) & (iii); and by 5 votes to 3 on (ii)]

- (i) To agree the revised Member/Officer Protocol attached as appendix 2 of this adoption minute
- (ii) Amend the Constitution (page 40) to include control of the Technology Investment Fund with the Strategic IT executive functions of the Deputy Leader.
- (iii) Amend the Constitution to include reference to Freedom of the City/Honorary Councillors as listed in 1-3 above.

03/CIV/15 **DECENTRALISED DECISION MAKING: A STRUCTURE FOR AREA COMMITTEES**

Members of Council – please refer to appendix 3, which is the report considered by both Civic Affairs Committee and Strategy Scrutiny Committee (24 March)

The Committee noted the recommendations in the report which had been agreed by the Leader following Strategy Scrutiny Committee on 24 March. Councillor Bradnack proposed the following amendment (which had also been put at Strategy Scrutiny Committee):

“Delete recommendations 2.1 to 2.3 and replace with:

2.1 That one area committee is set up on a pilot basis covering the North area of the City shown on maps 1,2 and 4 of Appendix 2

2.2 That the area committee meet initially on an eight week cycle and develop a style and format of working to meet the needs of the local communities and the experience be used to help formulate recommendations for implementation of a full programme of area committees citywide.

2.3 That the functions delegated to the area committee (see para 6.3) exclude planning applications, that officer representation at committee meetings include housing staff as and where appropriate, and cost savings associated with the planning officer and committee manager functions be invested in community development support as outlined in the Labour Group budget amendment to Council in February 2003.

2.4 That half the available budget for environmental improvements be ring fenced for the area covered by the committee in 2003/04 with a view to distributing future budgets on a per capita basis weighted by relative disadvantage.

With consequential amendments to remaining recommendations.”

The Chair did not agree that the amendment be considered at the meeting as it covered policy and expenditure proposals which were not within the remit of the Committee and therefore recommended that it be noted for further consideration at Council on 10 April.

Council is recommended (by 5 votes to 3)

To agree that amendments can be made to the Constitution to enable area committees to be implemented in accordance with the Leader's recommendations below:

(i) That 4 area committees are implemented covering the geographical areas shown on Map 2 (see Appendix 2 of the report)

(ii) That the area committees meet on an 8 week cycle and that they consist of an open forum stage lasting up to 30 minutes followed by a formal stage.

(iii) That the functions listed under paragraph 6.3 of the report are delegated to area committees.

(iv) That the Elected Members of each area committee meet soon after Annual Council in May to agree other issues, such as timing and location of meetings, giving due consideration to the views of the Member Working Group and public consultation as set out under Section 7 of the report.