

To: Councillors Boyce, Hart, C Rosenstiel (Chair), R Smith,
Stebbing, Ward
Alternate: Taylor

Placed on public deposit on 21 March 2006



CIVIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday 29 March 2006

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Committee Room 1, The Guildhall

Contact: Cristina Marsh

Direct Dial: (01223) 457086

AGENDA

1 [MINUTES](#)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2006.

2 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

4 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME** – see below for detail of the scheme and other public information.

5 **EXTERNAL AUDIT:** A representative from the Council's External Auditors will be present to answer questions.

a) Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2004-2005

The External Auditor's 'Annual Letter' summarized the conclusions and significant issues arising from their audit and inspection of work in respect of the 2004-2005 financial year. This year the letter also incorporates their Direction of Travel report and the first Use of Resources assessment.

Appendix 1: Background to this Letter

Appendix 2: Audit and Inspection Reports Issued

Appendix 3: Audit and Inspection Fee

b) Audit and Inspection Plan 2006-2007

The Council's External Auditors are required to undertake audit and inspection work which complies with the statutory requirements that govern them, The Plan outlines the requirements and the work that is proposed to be undertaken in respect of the 2006-2007 financial year.

Appendix 1: Audit and Inspection Fee.

Appendix 2: Criteria to inform the Auditor's Conclusion on Proper Arrangements for Securing Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness in the use of resources.

Appendix 3: Planned Outputs

Appendix 4: The Audit Commission's Requirements in Respect of Independence and objectivity.

6 INTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC PLAN 2006/07 TO 2008/09. INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2006/07. (Contact officer: Bridget Bishop, Principle Auditor, tel. 01223 458182

Appendix A: Corporate Audit Plan

Appendix B: Departmental Audit Plans

7 DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS AT EAST AREA COMMITTEE (Councillor John Durrant, Chair of the East Area Committee)

The East Area Committee on 8 February, at the request of the Chair, considered how best to deal with the numbers of Planning Applications being determined at East Area Committees. Although the applications had reduced in number since early meetings of the Committee, some members had since declined to deal with planning applications and the number of open forum issues had increased.

Taking these issues into account, the Chair felt that, if the Area Committees were to provide a viable neighbourhood Forum, then sufficient time should be provided for consideration of the issues raised. They could only do this by reducing the formal content of the agenda, or splitting the content of the agenda to provide a reasonable content for meetings.

Members discussed the issue and took into account the advice from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services that while the Area Committee could consider the proposal from Cllr Durrant, it would not decide on changes, but could make recommendations to Civic Affairs Committee. It would be up to Civic Affairs to decide whether to recommend any changes to Council. Two or more Civic Affairs Committee members would be able to use the "referral up" procedure to put it before the Council. The meeting format is set out in the constitution and any changes would have to be agreed by Council, not by East Area Committee.

Agreed by 6 votes to 0 to ask Civic Affairs Committee to recommend amendments to the Constitution to allow Area Committees to hold separate meetings for the determination of Planning Applications.

8 CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL'S CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE (Contact Officer: Margaret Walker, Director of Central Services, tel. 01223 457301)

The Council is required to have this Code. Cambridge adopted its first Code in 2002 and it is now time for its annual review. As happened at last year's review,

the Committee is requested to consider the document en route to full Council on 20 April 2006.

The Standards Committee considered the Code on 15 March. The Committee had no comments on the Code. It discussed the reference in (f) Dimension 3 (page 82) to the 'requiring members to train for performing certain roles'. Officers are looking into this to define the standard of training if required.

9 CHANGES TO LEGISLATION ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION

From 1 March, Statutory Instruments came into effect which changed the legislation governing access to meetings and documents. The changes bring into line exempt information with legal requirements governing freedom of information.

As these came into effect on 1 March, we have used the new exemption categories for reporting the March Scrutiny Cycle. A report recommending the changes that need to be made to the Constitution will come to the next meeting.

10 THE NEXT MEETING OF CIVIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The next meeting for Civic Affairs Committee is scheduled for **Monday 15 May 2006 at 6.00pm in Committee Room 1.**

Information for the public

You are welcome to attend this meeting as an observer.

You can ask questions on an issue included on the agenda, or on an issue which is within this committee's powers. If you wish to ask a question related to an agenda item contact the committee officer (listed above under 'contact') **before the meeting starts.** If you wish to ask a question on a matter not included on this agenda, please contact the committee officer by 10.00am the working day before the meeting. Further details concerning the right to speak at committee can be obtained from the committee section.

In the event of the fire alarm sounding (which is a continuous ringing sound), you should pick up your possessions and leave the building by the route you came in. Once clear of the building, you should assemble on the pavement opposite the main entrance to the Guildhall and await further instructions. If your escape route or the assembly area is unsafe, you will be directed to safe areas by a member of Cambridge City Council staff.