

**CIVIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**16 July 2002  
(4.30pm-5.35pm)

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

**FOR ADOPTION BY THE COUNCIL****02/CIV/1 AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION**

The Committee received a report from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, the Director of Central Services and the Chief Executive recommending some changes to the Council's constitution adopted at the annual meeting in May 2002. The proposed changes were mainly alterations to responsibilities of executive councillors and corrections of minor drafting errors. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services suggested some additional changes to responsibilities which were not set out in the report. These would put into effect changes to responsibilities which were agreed by the Environment and Housing and Health Committees in November 2001 but which were not put before Council at that time.

**Council is recommended**

To approve the following changes to its Constitution:

**1. Page 38**

Transfer sixth bullet point in para 2.3.4.1 on page 38 to para 2.5.1 on page 40 (Responsibilities of the Executive Councillor for Commercial and Human Resources).

*This would transfer responsibility for Council Tax, National Non-Domestic Rates and Housing Benefit from the Leader to the Executive Councillor for Commercial and Human Resources.*

**2. Page 39**

(1) In para 2.4.3.2 on page 39, for "Supervision of the borrowing and lending of money and management of the Council's debt" substitute "Supervision of the borrowing of money and management of the Council's cash flow". (2) In the same paragraph, for "Other detailed financial management matters, including the writing off of debts" substitute "Other detailed financial management matters, except for the writing off of debts". (3) Add "the writing off of debts except where the responsibility of the Executive Councillor for Housing and Health" to para 2.5.1 on page 40 (Responsibilities of the Executive Councillor for Commercial and Human Resources).

*This would move responsibility for writing off debts from the Leader to the Executive Councillor for Commercial and Human Resources, apart from rent debts, which are the responsibility of the Executive Councillor for Commercial and Human Resources.*

3. **Page 40**

Delete the indented text following the final bullet point in para 2.4.2.

*This removes a duplication of text.*

4. **Pages 43 and 44**

Amend the responsibilities of executive councillors in accordance with the following table:

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Under New Constitution</b>	<b>Reassign to</b>
Monitoring and control of air pollution	Environment portfolio (page 43 of the Constitution) and Housing & Health portfolio (page 44)	Environment Portfolio
Monitoring and control of noise pollution	Environment portfolio (page 43) and Housing & Health portfolio (page 44)	Environment
Water pollution	Housing & Health (page 44)	Environment
Control of dogs and other animals and all matters concerned with animal welfare and control.	Housing & Health (page 44)	Environment
Control of pests and nuisances	Housing & Health (page 44)	Environment
Drainage & sewerage	Housing & Health (page 44)	Environment

*This removes a duplication in respect of air and water pollution and implements the changes approved by Environment and Housing and Health Committees in November 2001.*

5. **Page 45**

In Para 2.7.1.2 Add “by tenants and former tenants” to follow: “The management of the Housing Revenue Account including debts owed to it”

*This brings the description of the responsibilities of the Executive Councillor for*

*Housing and Health into line with the provisions for writing off debts at page 77 of the Constitution.*

**6. Page 73**

In para 9.3.1.(a), delete from “the appropriate” in line 1 to “£500 and” in line 4.

*This would remove the requirement for officers to consult members before approving grants to outside bodies which do not exceed £1,000. There would still be a need to report grant approvals to the next Scrutiny meeting.*

**7. Page 75**

In paragraph 7, delete “Chair of City Board” and substitute “the Leader”.

**8. Page 77**

Substitute “Commercial and Human Resources” for references to “Administration, Staffing and Assets”.

**9. Page 98**

In the first box on that page, substitute reference to “Executive Councillor for Strategy/Leader” by reference to “Executive Councillor for Commercial and Human Resources”.

*This brings the provisions for delegation to officers into line with the change of responsibility for the collection of tax and rates and administration of Council Tax and Housing Benefit recommended above.*

**10. Page 98**

Delete the reference in the second box to a power delegated by the Executive Councillor for Strategy/Leader and Executive Councillor for Housing and Health to “authorise the giving of consent by the Council as mortgagee in respect of minor routine matters not affecting the Council’s security under the mortgage”.

*This is a duplication of a delegation from the Executive Councillor for Commercial and Human Resources, within whose remit this falls (see page 86).*

<b>FOR INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL</b>
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**02/CIV/2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were none.

**02/CIV/3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made.

02/CIV/4     **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were none.

02/CIV/5     **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

The Committee was advised that although the current Regulations stated that the Accounts must be approved by members within six months of the end of the financial year, consideration is being given by Government to bring this date forward to 30 June. The Director of Finance and the Committee placed on record their appreciation to the officers in producing the Accounts within a much shorter timescale and in preparation for the possible change in future years.

The Head of Accounting Services stated that the Accounts were yet to be audited by the Council's External Auditor, which was due to be undertaken in August. The Committee was advised that the Accounts would only be re-submitted to members if the External Auditor required material changes to be made.

In response to a question on the Euro, the Committee was advised that the Council's financial management systems were being upgraded to enable Euro compliance.

**Resolved –**

That the Statement of Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2002 be approved.

That approval is given for the draft Statement of Accounts (subject to audit) to be made available on the Council website, pending completion of the review by External Audit and formal publication.

02/CIV/6     **PROVISION OF FOOD AT COUNCIL MEETINGS**

**Resolved -**

That the decision to provide food should be left to the Chair of the meeting and the decision should be based on whether, by being at the meeting in question, a mealtime (lunch or dinner) would be missed. Members also agreed that for health and safety reasons, no meeting should go beyond four hours without a formal extended break.

02/CIV/7     **DATES OF MEETINGS IN 2002/03**

The Committee agreed to meet on 13 November, 29 January 2003, 26 March all at 6pm.

The meeting ended at 5.35pm

**Chair**