

CIVIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

26 March 2003
(6.00 - 7.05pm)

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

FOR INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

03/CIV/16 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2003 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

03/CIV/17 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were none.

03/CIV/18 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

03/CIV/19 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No members of the public wished to address the Committee.

03/CIV/20 **INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2003/04**

Resolved-

To agree the Internal Audit plan for 2003/2004 as outlined in Appendix 1.

03/CIV/21 **REVIEW OF SCRUTINY FUNCTION**

The Committee noted the following comments which were tabled from the Director of Finance re. the use of the Council's External Auditor to ensure an independent element within a review of the Constitution:

'External Audit is governed by the Code of Audit Practice for Local Authorities and the NHS in England and Wales, which states that they should not carry out work for the Council which does not relate directly to the discharge of their functions as auditors if it would impair their independence or might give rise to a reasonable perception that their independence could be impaired.

Depending on the detailed remit for their involvement, this would not appear to prevent their participation in the proposed review. However, such work would be outside of the normal work covered by the Audit Service Plan, and as such no budget for the costs

that would be incurred is currently available. If their involvement is to be commissioned, an estimate of their time and hence cost, would be required such that appropriate funding could be approved.'

The Committee noted that a response from the Leader to the request made at January's meeting was awaited and therefore deferred consideration of the matter to its next meeting. *(The Leader had responded informally, but as the response was not available for members it would need to be reported to the next meeting).*

03/CIV/22 **FREEDOM OF THE CITY**

See also minute 03/CIV/14

The Committee discussed how nominations for the Freedom of the City could in future be elicited and although using the local media had been suggested, the Committee did not come to a common position and would require further consideration. It noted that the Head of Legal & Democratic Services would report back on the position of Office of High Steward. The Committee requested that the officers investigate whether there were alternatives to the previous practice of presenting a casket to those receiving the Freedom.

Having discussed the constitutional changes required to be made at Council on 10 April, Councillor Durrant proposed (and the Chair seconded) that Peter Cowell DL, be awarded the Freedom of the City for his distinguished service to the city. The Committee noted that this would be formally put to Civic Affairs at its next meeting on 6 May.

03/CIV/23 **POLLING DISTRICT REVIEW**

The Committee was advised by the Director of Central services that the Polling District Review did not have to be reported to Council on 17 July as stated in the agenda.

The Committee noted that as well as the informal meeting on 12 June and formal meeting on 26 June as stated, a further meeting to approve the Council's Statement of Accounts may be required in early July.

Resolved -

To agree that the Committee meet informally to discuss the Polling District Review on 12 June and that the scheduled meetings following are 26 June and (provisionally) 9 July (all to commence at 6pm).

03/CIV/24 **COMMITTEE DATES FOR OCTOBER 2003/MAY 2004**

Resolved -

That the dates for 2003/04 as attached to the agenda be agreed.

The meeting ended at 7.05pm.

Chair