

**QUESTION FROM COUNCIL: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMITTEES AND FULL COUNCIL**

**To:** Constitution and Ethics Committee

**Date:** 28th April 2015

**From:** LGSS Director Law, Property and Governance

**Electoral division(s):** All

**Purpose:** To consider the question posed by Councillor Downes to Full Council on 24th March 2015.

**Recommendation:** The Committee is asked to:

- a) consider the question of the relationship between Committees and Full Council; and
- b) decide whether to recommend to Council, either in the short or the long term, that any change should be made to the Council's Constitution.

<b><i>Officer contact:</i></b>		<b><i>Member contact</i></b>	
Name:	Quentin Baker	Name:	Cllr S Kindersley
Post:	Director of Law, Property & Governance and Monitoring Officer	Portfolio:	Chairman, Constitution and Ethics Committee
Email:	<a href="mailto:quentin.baker@cambridgeshire.gov.uk">quentin.baker@cambridgeshire.gov.uk</a>	Email:	<a href="mailto:skindersley@hotmail.com">skindersley@hotmail.com</a>
Tel:	01223 727961	Tel:	01767 651982

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Full Council on 24th March 2015 considered three motions submitted in advance by members under the provisions of the Council Procedure Rules.
- 1.2 Amendments were proposed to two of the motions that the motion be referred to a named Service Committee. Both these amendments were agreed by a majority, and the questions raised in the motions were referred to Committee without being further discussed at Council.

## **2. COUNCILLOR DOWNES'S QUESTION**

- 2.1 Later in the same meeting, Councillor Downes asked the following question of the Chairman of the Constitution and Ethics Committee:

I hope that the next meeting of your Committee will consider this morning... I think that we have been very bogged down in procedural matters.... I would like to ask the Chairman if he will give the Constitution and Ethics Committee a chance to review the procedures because one important fundamental issue has arisen and that is the relationship between Committees and full Council. That is an important fundamental issue which has arisen because if we are only going to have important matters discussed by a specific Committee and only an annual report from these Committees then I think there's a danger of a mismatch between our general knowledge and our specific knowledge. We are all required to be generalists from the point of view of the public, we have our specific interests, we have our specific expertise, but when it comes to the public we are required to know more widely what is going on and I feel that this morning has illustrated some of the tensions that might arise. So I am asking in a constructive way that we consider this morning and think whether we can improve our procedures to allow proper participation and proper relationship between Committees and full Council.

- 2.2 Article 8 of the Constitution, Committees, states in its introduction:

The Council shall establish a number of committees in order to undertake its functions in a more efficient way. These are divided into four categories, Service Committees; Regulatory Committees; Joint Committees and Other Committees. In some cases the law requires the Council to establish a committee and stipulates the way it shall operate. However, in most cases Full Council may decide on the size, terms of reference and membership of its committees.

- 2.3 The subject of the relationship between Committees and Full Council was not raised in the course of the recent review of the Committee system, but the Constitution remains subject to ongoing review.

Source Documents	Location
Minutes of Council, 24th March 2015	<a href="http://tinyurl.com/ccc-cc-240315">http://tinyurl.com/ccc-cc-240315</a>