

CIVIC AFFAIRS AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

19 May 2026
5.30 - 6.20 pm

Present: Councillors McPherson (Chair), Gawthrop Wood (Vice-Chair), Bennett, Bick, Dalzell, Sheil and Davey

Councillor Bennett was present via Teams.

Also present: Councillor Thornburrow

Officers:

Chief Executive: Robert Pollock

Chief Operating Officer: Jane Wilson

Chief Financial Officer: Jody Etherington

Head of Legal Practice and Monitoring Officer: Tom Lewis

Democratic Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer): Dan Kalley

Democratic Services Officer: Sarah Michael

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

26/17/Civ Apologies

No apologies were received.

As Councillor Richardson was no longer a Committee Member, Councillor Davey attended as an alternate.

26/18/Civ Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

26/19/Civ Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 23 February 2026 and 9 March 2026 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

26/20/Civ Public Questions

There were no public questions.

26/21/Civ Constitutional Updates - Revised Member - Officer Protocol

The Committee received a report from the Monitoring Officer.

Cllr Bennett proposed an amendment to the section relating to supplementary estimates to ensure provision to allow for reporting of decisions to Full Council.

Resolved (unanimously) to recommend to the Annual General Meeting the following changes to the Constitution following the last meeting on 9 March 2026:

- i. The updated member/officer protocol
- ii. The limited power for Cabinet to make supplementary estimates – additional revenue and capital expenditure up to a threshold, with provision to allow for reporting of decisions to Full Council.
- iii. To note that the Committee already agreed to recommend minor revisions to the terms of reference for the Equalities Panel to be renamed the Inclusion and Equity Panel.

26/22/Civ Committee Appointments for Annual Council

The Democratic Services Manager updated Members that following the election on 7 May 2026, the amended committee allocation proportionality had been distributed to Members.

Group Leaders confirmed that they had not yet been able to nominate Chairs, Vice Chairs and Committee Members.

The Committee was therefore unable to make recommendations to Council.

26/23/Civ Honorary Councillors

The Democratic Services Manager presented a report on nominations for Honorary Councillors.

Councillor Bick asked for confirmation that those nominated all met the criteria of 10 years' service, or 8 years if they had been Mayor. The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that was the case.

Resolved (unanimously) to:

- i. Recommend to Council that the following be made Honorary Councillors:
 - o Richard Robertson
 - o Baiju Thittala
 - o Anna Smith

26/24/Civ Auditor's Annual Report

The Chief Finance Officer presented the Auditor's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2025 and explained that the auditors would attend the Civic Affairs and Audit Committee meeting in June 2026 to take questions and present a plan for 2025/26.

In response to Members' questions, the Chief Finance Officer said that the Finance team was fully resourced, and that the working relationship with the new audit partner was positive, with the partner committed to achieving buildback as soon as possible.

Resolved (unanimously) to:

- i. Note the EY Auditor's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The meeting ended at 6.20 pm

CHAIR