



Avon Local Councils' Association

Minutes of the Regional Committee Meeting Thursday 18th February 2021 by Zoom

Present: Chairman – Kathy Thomas, Rhiannon Prys Owen, Cheryl Kirby, Dawn Drury, Gail Boyle, Geoff Coombs, Liz Shayler, Mike Drew, Noel Walter, Dick Whittington, Gareth Williams, Josie Pownall. Jayne Stansfield.

Officer – Deborah White

Apologies – Jeremy Blatchford

1. The minutes of the meeting on 2^{6th} November 2020 were recorded as a correct record
2. **ALCA Finance report.** The January finance report had been circulated indicating a predicted £11,000 deficit that will be covered by reserves

- a. A vote of thanks for the hard work of the Chief Officer, particularly around the Clerks Network, was proposed and supported.
The recommended national annual percentage increase was approved, back dated to April 2021 - **AGREED**
An uplift of one Spinal Column point in May 2021 - **AGREED**
- b. The Chief Officers Assistant position has been advertised on the Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Somerset and Avon CALC websites, in the B&NES Council bulletin and on Indeed.com. Several interested parties have phoned for an informal chat and applications are being already received. Deadline 1st March 2021
- c. Website renewal. Three providers have been invited to quote, only one quote has so far been received **ACTION** CO to circulate

3. Training report

- a. Uptake of courses has been strong, generating addition admin which will eventually slow. Feedback has been good. The annual cost of the advice contract has already been recovered.
- b. Breakthrough Communications will be providing on demand training sessions. The cost is upfront and therefore risk is to the CALC to fill enough places to cover the cost, but there is a cap on the number of total places. Charing Virtual Meetings starts on 22/2/21, with a third waiting list already filled.
- c. SWCLCA Nimble E-learning project. The 7 SW CALCs are working on a joint project supported (hopefully by SWCLCA funding to provide E-learning courses through Nimble. An “Introduction to your Council” session for councillors, as an introduction to the Being a Good Councillor session is proposed as free to all ALCA members, along with a free “Introduction to the role of the Clerk”

Chief Officer – Deborah White

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ACTION – rebrand and package the new ALCA training courses and the Being a Good Councillor course **AGREED**

4. **NALC free membership offer** for 1 year to new members.
It was agreed to offer all non-member councils full membership at just the ALCA element rate only for a year. **AGREED**
5. That ALCA should join the Northamptonshire **CALC Green Energy Club** scheme was **AGREED**
6. **North Somerset Area Group**
The Exec. Group meet weekly and work to improve the relationship between Local Councils and the Principle Authority is going well, including involvement in the North Somerset Together project.
Encouragement is being given to Ward Members to get involved at a Local Council level.
Beware new developments with the regulations around CIC and CIO that allow them to operate outside their Articles.

BANES Area Group

Area meeting have taken place and representatives elected to all the external bodies.

Administration of the Area Group is difficult as there is still no Administrator – steps are being taken to draw up a job description and advertise
There have been some recent issues with dual hatted councillors

7. Lobby Day

- Mike Drew and CO met with Wera Hobhouse MP for Bath, with limited success.
- A meeting with Jacob Rees Mogg MP to inform him of the issues facing the sector was declined as he already talks to Parish Councils.
- Mike Drew along with NALC colleagues met with Luke Hall, MP Tim Farron MP and also engaged with All Party Committees and Peers Groups.
- Discussions with Liam Fox MP and John Penrose MP have been positive towards the need for virtual meetings, there was also discussion on the need for first tier of government support (not through Principle Authority) and Health and Wellbeing work being undertaken by local Councils during the pandemic

8. Any Other Business None

9. Next meeting - suggested first week of June 2021

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