

AVON LOCAL COUNCILS' ASSOCIATION

North Somerset Group Annual General Meeting

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 25th June 2015 at 1930hrs at
Backwell Parish Hall, Station Road, backwell, BS48 3QW

Present: N E Walter	Previous Chair	Cllr M Bowerman	Backwell
Cllr R Taylor	Backwell	Cllr L Shayler	Banwell
Paul Harding	Banwell	Cllr G.Coombs	Barrow Gurney
Joann Van Tonder	Barrow Gurney	Cllr D Whittington	Butcombe
Cllr Mrs J Ashman	Cleeve	Cllr G. Hill	Clevedon
Cllr J West	Clevedon	Paula Heath	Clevedon
Cllr J Ashman	Cleeve	Cllr M Sewell	Kingston Seymour
Cllr J Grant	Locking	Cllr C Cave	Long Ashton
Cllr M Moorcroft	Long Ashton	J Tungs	Long Ashton
Mrs E Cave	Long Ashton		
Cllr R Lees	Nailsea	Cllr J Blatchford	Nailsea
Mrs L Perk	Winscombe & Sandford	Cllr M Williamson	Winscombe and Sandford
Cllr D Glynn	Wrington	Cllr Georgie Bigg	Wrington
Cllr R Prys-Owen	Yatton	Cllr M Petersen	Yatton
Mrs Mrs D White	County Secretary ALCA	CEO Mike Jackson	North Somerset Council

- 1. Introduction.** The previous North Somerset ALCA Chairman Noel Walters welcomed all to the ALCA Annual General Meeting. Noel introduced and thanked the Chairman of Backwell PC for the use of the Hall and also the members for their attendance.
- 2. Welcome:** Cllr Bob Taylor welcomed everyone to the Parish and provided a background to the Parish Hall and other amenities owned and supported by the Council. Forty organisations use the hall and within the Parish there are 3 churches, four schools and 1,900 houses. The Parish completed their Neighbourhood Plan this year which will provide them with a vision and legal powers to determine future growth and development.
- 3. Election of Chairman.**
It was proposed and seconded that Cllr Geoff Coombs (Barrow Gurney) be elected to fill the post of Chairman, for the ensuing year. Cllr Coombs thanked Noel for the many years of commitment and support to North Somerset ALCA and Cllr Rhiannon Prys-Owen (Yatton) presented him with a gift of appreciation from the membership.
- 4. Election of Vice Chairman.**
It was proposed and seconded that Cllr Mike Petersen (Yatton) be elected to fill the post of Vice-Chairman, for the ensuing year.
- 5. Election of Secretary.**
It was proposed and seconded that Cllr Rhiannon Prys-Owen continues as Secretary for the ensuing year.
- 6. Guest Speaker:**
Cllr Coombs welcomed Mike Jackson the Chief Executive Officer of North Somerset Council (NSC) who spoke on the benefits of working in partnership with Town and Parish Councils.
 - a) MJ** described his previous experience at Norfolk County Council where he was the Council's director of environment, transport and development and as such has an understanding and experience of transport, planning and infrastructure development. He recognised the importance of how the Localism Act has devolved more power to District, Town and Parish Councils enabling

them to shape their local areas. He recognised that the significant loss of funding had resulted in local communities taking responsibility for some services without any increased capacity to ensure that effective delivery is maintained. This has put a lot of pressure on partnerships. NSC has cut its budget by 37% over the last 4 years and will be less than half what it is currently worth by 2020.

- b) Some of the specific projects that NSC has worked closely with local Councils on include: a programme of asset transfer e.g. youth clubs; public toilets; tennis clubs. Community Right to Bid there have been 10 successful applications and NSC continues to support potential applications. There is significant collaboration in developing Neighbourhood Plans that are consistent with the Local Plan. There is growing evidence of the weight given to policies within Neighbourhood Plans. NSC still awaiting the response on the Core Strategy and there will be a consultation on the Joint Spatial Plan 2015/16. The plan area will be the combined administrative areas of the four West of England authorities and the plan period for the JSP will reflect new housing and employment growth requirements 2016-2036.
- c) The priorities for NSC: Currently procuring a new Waste contract commencing 2017. There will be a Parish Incentive Scheme to reduce waste and recycle more. Councils will be invited to apply for a grant of up to £1,000. There will also be a review of the Highways contract and there are current discussions with BANES Council to jointly procure this contract and combine the services. There is also a Community Access review of services and how to best manage these including Leisure Centres, Children's Centres and Libraries and NSC are about to start this process.
- d) Each Town and Parish Council has a Parish Liaison Officer who can be a point of contact to support local Councils and be a focus for issues raised by the local council that relate to North Somerset Council. The Town and Parish Digest is a bi-monthly e-bulletin circulated by NCS Officer Rhiannon Jones. There are also 4 meetings held throughout the year of which two are Planning Forums and two are held to address specific issues or themes identified by the local councils. Geoff Coombs welcomed the closer relationship and it was timely with a great need for Town and Parish Councils to work more closely together with NSC.

7) Question and Answer Session :

- a) Parishes don't get the opportunity to consult on Licencing applications and they affect local communities. Ashton Court is a prime example of how activities can impact on the local community. South Glos and other Authorities do consult with local communities and it seems unfair that NSC does not.
Action: MJ to investigate why NSC does not consult with local councils.
- b) With almost 50% reduction in NSC budget what is going to be left of services and how will local councils cope with the impact? The statutory responsibilities of the District Council are becoming increasingly more expensive and consuming much more of the budget. NSC has to consider collaborating with other agencies to manage community facilities. There needs to be better publicity as it is difficult to see the reductions.
Action: RPO to contact Rhiannon Jones to see if Malcom Coe (Head of Finance and Properties) can attend the Parish Forum meeting in October.
- c) Could the problem of repairing pot-holes be delegated budget to local councils? There are examples of how this can work e.g. Parish Gangs in Norfolk. It could be considered in the new Highways contract.
- d) When planning decisions are made, how much influence does the feelings of residents have in the decision making process as it feels as if it doesn't make any difference? Yatton parish could potentially have a 30% increase in its population without increasing infrastructure. Is this fair? Is NSC too afraid of the cost of an appeal? Planning Officers do take account and they have to make decisions that are contested in the Courts. Councils are victims of the previous Governments legislation and interpretation of the National Policy Framework. Currently NSC is awaiting the instructions from the Secretary of State on the Core Strategy.
- e) The previous Committees would visit potential sites and this is no longer the case. Why can't local councils be involved in visiting the sites and commenting on the proposals for development? The inspections are usually for members only but there some examples of some local Councillors do visit sites.
- f) When the highways are reviewed Authorities are encouraged to review the A roads why not B roads? The West of England Transport Forum coordinates the regional transport strategy and funding streams as transport and highways across the authorities are linked and mutually dependent on each other. The Joint Spatial Plan includes the Transport Plan which was launched

on 30th June. It would be helpful for Town and Parish councils to have an input in these strategic plans before they go into print.

- g) How are Town and Parish councils represented on the NSC strategic groups and Local Enterprise Partnerships? Some are through Clinical Commissioning Group. People and Communities and LEP Civic Society Group. Parish Councils need to be more pro-active in identifying key strategic groups and feeding back information to local councillors.
- h) There are opportunities to capitalise on the low cost of borrowing to improve infrastructure e.g. Portishead Rail line; Ashton Vale link road. Generating more income streams locally through economic development and stronger financial incentive of Council and Business rates.
- i) We must continue improving communication and build on the four meetings each year. There is an important role for ALCA in coordinating the communication networks between NSC and town and the parish councils.

Geoff Coombs thanked Mike for his contribution to the Annual General Meeting and assured him that ALCA would strive to increase the future collaboration with North Somerset Council.

8. Apologies.

Apologies were received from Cllr Richard Nightingale (Weston), Loxton, Walton in Gordano and Blagdon Parish Councils.

9. Minutes of Previous AGM – 12th June 2014.

The minutes of the last year's AGM having been circulated with the calling notice, after one amendment to the attendees list, were agreed as being a true record of that meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman.

10. Appointment of four Representatives to ALCA Executive Committee.

It was proposed and seconded that Cllrs Geoff Coombs (Barrow Gurney) Mike Petersen (Yatton) Rhiannon Prys-Owen (Yatton) and Rod Lees (Nailsea) would represent the Group on the ALCA Executive Committee.

11. Representative Appointments.

The following representatives were agreed by the meeting:

- a. **North Somerset People & Communities Partnership** – Cllr Jeremy Blatchford; (Nailsea)
- b. **Bristol International Airport Transport Forum** - Cllr D Glynn (Wrington).
- c. **CPRE** - Cllr Georgie Bigg (Wrington).

12. Feedback from representatives.

- **CPRE** was working at local and national levels and with all the changes in Planning Legislation it is important to liaise with local councils and community groups. CPRE has already responded to the JSP and through various initiatives working on our behalf e.g. Brown Field First, Wasted Space to Lung Space. **Action: GB to circulate web links to RPO**
- **Bristol Airport – Airport Transport Forum** A summary report was submitted to the AGM summarising the main activities matters relating to the Airport. **Action. DG to email report to RPO for circulation to ALCA Members.**
- Dick Wittington reported on behalf of the West of England Rural Network a community consultation with rural parishes on Priority Broadband. There were concerns around the poor role out of Broadband across North Somerset; an up-date on Super-fast Cable and expansion of the internet; Connecting Devon and Somerset helping communities, including parish councils to maximise on technology.

13. Future priorities.

It was agreed to continue improving the communication with NSC and to collaborate on planning the 4 joint meetings. It was felt unnecessary to increase the number of meetings and we would review the process at the next AGM. There being no further business the Chairman thanked the attendees and closed the meeting at 9.30pm.

Signed :
Date : 23rd June 2015

DRAFT