

AVON LOCAL COUNCILS ASSOCIATION

NORTH SOMERSET AREA GROUP

MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held on Thursday, 25 June 2020 at 4:00pm
remotely via the Zoom platform

Present:

Ian Morrell (65 High Street, Nailsea)	Pete Dutton (Hutton PC)
Deborah White (ALCA)	Paula Heath (Clevedon TC)
Eric Gates (Barrow Gurney PC)	Geoff Coombs (Flax Bourton PC) - CHAIRMAN
Andy Robbins (Barrow Gurney PC)	Dave Johnson (Long Ashton PC)
Nick Tyrrell (Barrow Gurney PC)	Janet Turp (Long Ashton PC)
Joanna van Tonder (Barrow Gurney PC)	Jeremy Blatchford (Nailsea TC)
Paul Harding (Banwell PC)	Don Davies (North Somerset Council)
Liz Shayler (Banwell PC)	Rhiannon Jones (North Somerset Council)
Alastair Barr (Blagdon PC)	John Banks (Tickenham PC)
Bruce Poole (Bleadon PC)	David Robinson (Wraxall & Failand PC)
Mike Fishwich (Brockley PC)	Jonathan Edwards (Yatton PC)
Dick Whittington (Butcombe PC)	"Zoejo"
Deb Lister (Cleeve PC)	

- 1. Introduction and Apologies: Cllr Geoff Coombs (Chair, ALCA North Somerset)**
Geoff welcomed everyone to this, the first virtual AGM of the North Somerset group. Apologies had been received from Cllr Georgie Bigg (Wrington PC).
- 2. Minutes of AGM – 13 June 2019**
The minutes of the previous AGM were approved as a true and accurate record.
- 3. ALCA County Report: Deborah White (Chief Officer, ALCA)**
Deborah began by saying that of the forty councils within North Somerset, 35 were members of ALCA with only Weston-super-Mare, Kewstoke, Hutton, Wick St Lawrence and St Georges not signing up. Yatton, Blagdon and Churchill PCs had all previously attained Quality Council status with Yatton PC qualifying for another four years. Cleeve, Long Ashton and Nailsea were expected to qualify shortly and it was hoped all councils would consider striving towards Foundation Level at the very least. Deborah explained that ALCA was having a hard time through the Covid-19 period as the association relied heavily on the delivery of their training programme for funding; online courses would be on offer in the near future. Together with changes in legislation, the pandemic had resulted in a huge increase in the volume of calls through to ALCA. Deborah reminded everyone that the Centre for Sustainable Energy was offering highly subsidised *Climate Emergency Planning* training on a first-come-first-served basis. On another note, councillors were reminded that only online meetings were permitted at this point.

4. **ALCA North Somerset Report: Cllr Geoff Coombs (Chair, ALCA North Somerset)**

Geoff presented his Chairman's report that outlined what the area group had been involved with over the preceding twelve months.

Additionally, Geoff reiterated ALCA N/S's goal to build on the relationship with the new NSC Executive Council as well as the new Management team in place. Over the past few months, the majority of ALCA's interactions with NSC had been through North Somerset Together, set up to co-ordinate Covid-19 support efforts.

With most becoming more comfortable with remote meetings such as the Clerks' forums and Town & Parish Council meetings, ALCA N/S was working to get the quarterly T&P Forums back up and running. Geoff thanked all North Somerset Councils for their fantastic efforts over the past months in ensuring their communities were, and continued to be, well supported.

Geoff also thanked the North Somerset group committee for their commitment.

5. **ALCA Subscriptions: Cllr Dick Whittington**

Dick explained that ALCA had been running at a deficit over the past years but that the shortfall had been covered by trading income generated. With Deborah very stretched and Treasurer Noel Walter working on a voluntary basis, it was becoming apparent that the organisation was understaffed and needed to begin succession planning. In order to put this right, the current £15k funding gap would double.

In light of this, Dick went on to suggest that, with reserves falling, subscriptions would likely need to increase by around 50% over the next three years and quoted comparative figures from other County Associations. However, ALCA was mindful that losing member councils would weaken the organisation and should be avoided.

Following a request for an indicative show of support for such an increase in subscriptions, the majority of those present indicated in the affirmative.

6. **Representative Reports:**

1. **Campaign to Protect Rural England (Cllr Georgie Biggs)**

No report had been received in time for the meeting but, while offering her apologies, Georgie Biggs confirmed she would forward a report on in due course for circulation.

2. **North Somerset People & Communities Board (Cllr Jeremy Blatchford)**

Jeremy presented his NSP&CB report advising that this board had split into two: the **Health & Wellbeing Board** and the **Community Safety Partnership**.

Three major issues were facing the Health Care sector, those being Mental Health, Obesity and Isolation. It was widely acknowledged that Town and Parish Councils were best placed to assess the needs of their communities.

3. **Bristol Airport Transport Forum (vacant)**

No report had been received as this vacant position remained unfilled.

7. **Election of ALCA North Somerset Officers:**

1. **Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary**

Chairman: Cllr Geoff Coombs was nominated and duly elected

Vice Chair: Cllr Dick Whittington was nominated and duly elected

Secretary: vacant – Joanna van Tonder agreed to continue in the role in the short term

1. **Four representatives to the ALCA Executive Committee**

It was proposed and agreed that Cllr Geoff Coombs (Flax Bourton PC), Cllr Jeremy Blatchford (Nailsea TC) and Cllr Dick Whittington (Butcombe PC) would represent North Somerset on the ALCA Executive Committee. Joanna van Tonder and Cllr Dave Johnson (Long Ashton PC) would share the fourth spot.

8. **Appointment of Representatives**

1. **Campaign to Protect Rural England**

Cllr Georgie Biggs would be asked if she was willing to continue to represent ALCA N/S with CPRE

2. **Health & Wellbeing Board / Community Safety Partnership**

Cllr Jeremy Blatchford

3. **Bristol Airport Transport Forum**

Remains vacant

9. **Date for 2021 AGM**

A Thursday in June 2021; to be confirmed.

GUEST SPEAKER

**Cllr Don Davies (Leader, North Somerset Council)
- Impact of Covid-19 on the operations and future plans of NSC**

Geoff Coombs welcomed Don Davies who began by expressing delight at the number of attendees given the new virtual platform.

Don thanked ALCA North Somerset for the invitation and went on to say how important the role of ALCA was. He thanked all Parish & Town Councils for the way in which they have risen to the challenge of the COVID-19 emergency. He went on to celebrate how communities have been working together under the umbrella of North Somerset Together.

Geoff Coombs thanked Don for his time and insights, and welcomed the opportunity for greater engagement between NSC, ALCA North Somerset and the Town and Parish Councils.

Before closing the meeting, Geoff thanked all for attending.

The meeting concluded at 5:35pm.