

AVON LOCAL COUNCILS ASSOCIATION

NORTH SOMERSET AREA GROUP

MINUTES of the meeting of the North Somerset Area Group of ALCA

held on Tuesday, 17 April 2018 at 10:00am
Strawberry Line Café, Yatton Railway Station, BS49 4AJ

Present: Geoff Coombs (Chairman) Barrow Gurney PC
Dick Whittington Butcombe PC
Jeremy Blatchford Nailsea TC
Joanna van Tonder (Secretary) Barrow Gurney & Brockley PCs

1. Apologies for absence – none received

2. ALCA (County) / NALC issues:

- a) "Break the Mould" Frome TC Conference – 12 April 2018** – DW gave a brief overview of the day and reported the main theme had been to encourage others to think outside the box when it came to community problem solving.

The booklets made available on the day were free to be distributed and shared. JvT to scan and circulate.

JvT

- b) ALCA (County) meeting – 13 February 2018 & 14 June 2018** – Members expressed regret that the conference reports presented at the meeting on 13 February were not more substantial.

It was agreed to ask that devolution and the draft Housing Bill be included on the agenda for the meeting on 14 June.

JvT

- c) ALCA DPO Service meeting – 24 May 2018** – JvT confirmed there had been a wealth of information from ALCA and NALC to Town & Parish Councils covering GDPR. The requirement for all T&PCs to appoint a Data Protection Officer was considered and it was agreed NALC should be encouraged to engage with government in finding a solution.

It was considered prudent that ALCA was beginning to consider the provision of a DPO service.

Secretary's Note: *Since the date of this meeting, government has passed an amendment exempting T&PCs from the requirement to appoint DPOs.*

The meeting on 24 May, originally scheduled to discuss DPO service provision, will go ahead as planned but will replace the ALCA County meeting scheduled for 14 June 2018.

- d) Larger Councils Forum** – JB reported that, at the last meeting, it had become apparent there were large variations between the towns and even bigger differences between districts. He felt, however, the forum could offer a useful networking platform. While BaNES showed innovation in its approaches, South Gloucestershire seemed generally uncooperative and progress was likely to be slow.

- e) Smaller Councils Committee** – Nothing to report.

- f) Access to NSAG website page** – It was agreed the committee would ask for permission to edit the North Somerset Area Group page on the ALCA website.

JvT

3. Town and Parish Forums

- a) **Spring GENERAL T&P Forum: 14 March 2018** – It was noted that, despite some criticism that the Budget presentation was simply an exercise in propaganda, most felt it had been a good session. It was agreed the devolution discussion that had followed the budget was extremely useful although it seemed NSC were more keen to devolve assets than services.

It was deemed sensible to hold off on further devolution discussions with NSC until June at the earliest in light of staff changes and new appointments anticipated at NSC. In the meantime, a follow-up "holding" message would be sent out to T&PCs.

GC

GC

GC to follow up on list of assets from NSC and circulate to members.

- b) **PLANNING Forum – 10 May 2018** – JB suggested contacting Mary Blatchford, Chair of the Audit Committee, regarding the trouble some attendees have in hearing the audio output in the Council Chamber.

JvT to check the date with Jason Beale and circulate a reminder to PCs.

JvT

- c) **Autumn GENERAL T&P Forum** – JvT to liaise with Rhiannon Jones (NSC) with a view to firming up a date for this forum.

JvT

JB offered to circulate notes from a Health & Wellbeing Conference he had attended and recommended members looked at what was being achieved in Gloucestershire.

Members considered if Health & Wellbeing was a top priority issue or whether the topic of Devolution would be more appropriate. It was agreed to continue with H&W for now with an option to reconsider closer to the time.

- d) **Clerks' support network** – JvT confirmed the first Clerks' Coffee morning had been a success with a turnout of approximately 1/3 of the District's Parish Clerks. The next event is scheduled for 24 May 2018.

4. Other NSC issues:

- a) **Devolution of services** – see 3(a), above.
b) **Other** – no other NSC issues.

5. Other Town and Parish issues:

- a) **Broadband** – It was noted that no information was being made available to T&PCs from either Connecting Devon & Somerset, WERN or NSC.

- b) **Reaching out to non-member Town & Parish Councils** – JvT said she would think about what support could be offered to the new Clerks expected to join two of the non-member Councils around Weston-super-Mare following recent staffing changes.

JvT

GC said he would speak to Don Davies, District Councillor for Pill & Easton-in-Gordano about encouraging the PC to rejoin.

GC

- c) **Other** – no other Town & Parish issues.

6. ALCA North Somerset AGM

– It was agreed to schedule the AGM for a Thursday evening in mid June (14th, 21st or 28th) with a provision of tea and cakes.

JvT to investigate the three venues considered: Tythe Barn (Nailsea), 65 High Street (Nailsea) and Cleeve Village Hall.

JvT

Members discussed possible topics and speakers with suggestions of Health & Wellbeing and Broadband.

GC

7. Any other business

– no other business was discussed.

8. Dates for future meetings

– mid-July (Strawberry Line Café, Yatton)