

Avon Local Councils' Association
Regional Committee Meeting **Tuesday 13th February 2018**

Minutes

1. Present

Joanna Van Tonder
Cllr. Geoff Coombs,
Noel Walter,
Cllr. Rosemary Naish,
Cllr John Malone
Cllr Jeremy Blatchford
Cllr Kathy Thomas
Cllr Dick Whittington
Cllr Mike Drew
Cllr Clive Fricker

Apologies

Cllr Rhiannon Prys-Owen
Cllr Judith Chubb-Whittle
Cllr Dawn Drury
Cllr BoB Symons

The Minutes of the last meeting were approved as a correct record

Proposed - Geoff Coombs

Seconded – Clive Fricker

AGREED

2. ALCA Finance Report

Hon. Treasurer **Noel Walter**

Predicted income up to March - £17,550, which includes some of next year's subs paid in advance

Expenditure IRO £6,500

A £5,000 deficit is forecast, which is better than previous prediction. Achieved by training income and a grant for TCG

ALCA either needs more members or to increase membership fees so that the income covers expenditure

Will propose 2.5% increase next year, as last year

A discussion focussed on:

- the remainder on reserves - £56,000 (Approx. 11 years operating deficit)
- Even if all councils in the West of England area were members there would still be a deficit. It needs the parishing of Bristol and Bath
- If training provision failed e.g. sickness of the Chief Officer there will be serious problems

Acceptance of the Financial report

Proposed Mike Drew
Seconded Rosemary Naish
AGREED

3. Organisational Issues

a. Feedback from SWCLA

Jonathan Owen – NALC CEO updated the group on

- Referendum rules (3-year promise at the moment). business rates
- Business Rate - new businesses – hope that LA will retain more, NALC is campaigning for PC's to benefit. If NALC succeeds ALCA need to look at how this applied.
- NP guide and Employers guide – all on NALC website
- GDPR. The NALC commissioned toolkit will be available shortly

Discussions focussed on:

- Celebrating what LC's do well
- Devolution updates in the other counties in the SW region
- Second homes – need for LC benefit because have to provide services for tourists
- Discussion on NALC committee structure (larger smaller)
- Full list of parishes and precepts available from the Office of National Statistics

b. Larger Councils forum.

Initial meeting scheduled for 26th March in Bradley Stoke. Good reaction from Clerks, but with no follow through from interested councillors. Question over whether Clerks have cascaded the information?

The question was raised about extending the invitation to non-members. The suggestion was that they could be non-voting guests.

ACTION CO to send personal invitations to Chairmen and Councillors.

c. Resources group update

The first meeting was to focus on a remit for the group, but they haven't met yet due to scheduling problems. The Line Manager to date has been BoB Symons, who has been unable to commit, but the group didn't feel that a meeting without BoB would be productive.

ACTION If BoB Symons cannot commit to a 28th March meeting then a replacement representative from the Regional Committee can be found

d. ALCA role in regional consultations

Comments from around the group

- There is nothing wrong with ALCA taking a "Sample View" from the membership and offering it
- Discussions can be had at the UA Area Group meetings and noted as a view

- There is a need for an independent agency feeding information down to LC's

ALCA should:

- be commenting on the broad-brush issues but not on the detail
- be challenging whether the impact on the sector has been considered. Asking agencies with a broader remit to communicate more effectively with LC's and they are going to do to mitigate the impact on LC's
- comment on the principles and methods of consultation – not the detail.
- not get involved in detail, because broader plan impact on individual members differently
- encourage ALCA members to comment.
- ask members if they have been consulted properly

4 NALC Business

a. Recent NALC updates and reports
National assembly last week

- Management board – surplus on budget generally. Larger Council conference was not such a big earner as it was later in the year (xmas, soon after national conference)
- LCR is no longer a big earner and so there was a debate on continuing – will at the moment.
- There was some discussion on committees focussing on council size.
- There was a motion from West Sussex County Association re the Freedom of Information Act - should it apply to very small councils. Resolution rejected.
- GDPR – NALC are fine tuning the commissioned toolkit

5 Area reports

- a. South Gloucestershire – no meetings. Should it be T&PCF the working on the Parish Charter? Poor council involvement but SG cabinet has signed off
- b. Bristol – no report
- c. B&NES – Kelston Parish Meeting membership - no precept (VH paying?)
Charter – B&NES cabinet in May.
Last meeting – dual hatter (cabinet hat) interfered too much. Has cut out 3rd PL meeting which is a concern. RN is attending Connecting Communities Chairman forum – influence there
- d. North Somerset – committee meeting agenda included the Larger Councils Forum and GDPR. Parish Liaison Forum 14th March will focus on NS budget and discussion on devolution of services. Director of Development attending to lead discussion on devolution of capital assets and services.
New initiative - Clerks network.
Internal Audit concept promotion

6 Updates / consultations

- a. Libraries – delegation and devolution. Involvement of volunteers. Transference of assets – briefing note issued.
- b. GDPR – still unclear. Message to LC's good housekeeping and planning to comply.
- c. External Audit arrangements. No change for most councils – important that smaller councils are clear on exemption process and don't just do nothing

7 Any Other Business

- NALC conference – 30-31st October 2018 Milton Keynes. Additional ALCA representative to be decided at future meeting
- Social Media training – 2 ½ course own computer workshop (Instagram etc.) £150. **ACTION** CO to include in training programme
- Lobby day. **ACTION** CO to Write to all MP's. RC members to organise own local meetings / phoning MP's for meeting.
RN and MD to represent ALCA in London. March 20th 2018. Issues to include GDPR, Ref principles, parishing urban areas, distribution of CIL.
- Western Power Distribution open day.30 PC's – excellent consultation. Best customer service
- HR service to members – future agenda item

8 Date and location of the next meeting - 17th May 2018 19:15 B&NES venue TBC