MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE NORTH AREA HELD
ON TUESDAY 18TH MARCH 2014 AT 7PM
AT WOOLAVINGTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Antony Carr, Chilton Polden PC, took the chair with 17 members and clerks representing the following Parish & Town Councils:

Ashcott, Catcott & Edington, Burtle, Chilton Polden, Brean, Nether Stowey, Shipham, Woolavington, Westonzoyland, Cossington, Spaxton, Brent Knoll, Cannington & Fiddington, Compton Bishop, Chapel Allerton

In attendance: Justin Robinson (County Executive Officer) and Sam Winter (County Information Officer).

1. Appointment of Area Chairman:
Cllr. Anthony Carr agreed to chair the meeting on the basis that it would be for this meeting only.

2. Apologies:
Apologies for absence were received from Axebridge TC, Berrow PC, Mark PC.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting:
The Minutes of the All Areas Meetings held in September 2013 were taken as read, with a correction to the date.

4. Notice of items to be taken in Open Forum:
Bus services through the Polden Hills - Ashcott PC.

5. Sector updates by Justin Robinson:
The CEO gave a presentation on the new NALC Model Financial Regulations, HMRC, Internal Control guidance and the Audit and Transparency consultations (attached as Appendix A).

The CEO advised that the new guidance contained in Appendix 11 (Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – A Practitioner’s Guide (2010)) borders on mandatory and will most likely be taken into account by auditors. As such Justin advised that members and all clerks should ensure they have read and are familiar with the content of Appendix 11.

SALC has now responded to the Local Audit and Accountability Act consultation on proposals to allow filming of town and parish councils. The CEO thanked member councils for their contributions. SALC received an approximate 50:50 split of member councils in favour/against the proposals and has included in the response that advanced notice should be given to councils of anyone intending to film proceedings.

Parishes are encouraged to respond to the consultation on the Draft Transparency Code, which closes on 9th May. If parishes respond direct to DCLG it would be appreciated if the response could be copied to SALC for information.
6. **Representatives' Reports:**
   **Quantock Hills AONB:** Reports of the group have previously been condensed to quarter of a page of salient points before circulation to SALC, but at this time of change it is felt this might be misleading. Unabridged reports of the group will in future be included with its minutes and published on the SALC website. Concern was expressed at an official proposal to cut County Council funding to the AONB by 95%. The group will provide an update once the final decision has been made.

7. **Open Forum:**
   Ashcott PC sought the opinion of other PCs as to concerns about the declining level of bus services through the Polden villages. The matter of county support being removed from bus services is to be discussed at a future cluster meeting.

8. **Next Meeting:**
   The next meeting to be held on a Thursday in June is TBC.