

## **Minutes of the Meeting of the County Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at the Edgar Hall, Somerton**

Present: Dave Mitton (Chairman), Jenny Lawrence, Jean Allgrove, Godfrey Townrow, Rue Losey, Loretta Whetlor

### *1. Apologies for Absence*

Apologies were received from Anne Reeder, David Aldridge and Peter Seib.

### *2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting*

The minutes of the January meeting were unanimously approved.

It was clarified that the new office license agreement had been signed for a period of three years.

The minutes of the Management Committee were also noted.

### *3. NALC Strategic Review*

Members considered the initial document received from NALC and made a number of observations, including:

- The document was not impressive and was poorly written, requiring a “plain English”, jargon free approach
- The term “community council” was confusing in this context
- There is a need to identify sector achievements and best practice in order to develop a sound vision to sell to others
- The vision needs to be applied to all sizes of council/council budgets
- NALC needs to focus on lobbying (recent successes noted), production of templates and toolkits and more “plain English” advice
- Whilst there may be scope to scale-back NALC’s legal service, there will still be a need for an advisory service as it is a key safety net for smaller councils
- The issue of smaller/larger councils needs addressing as the current NALC definitions feel too restricted. The needs of smaller councils can be very different – more practical, toolkit type of advice is needed
- NALC and SLCC should be encouraged to work together on areas of common concern to avoid duplication and conflicting advice
- The role of NALC and CALCs should be more clearly defined, ideally without the need for service level agreements

### *4. SALC AGM*

It was agreed to hold the AGM and an All Area Meeting on Saturday October 27<sup>th</sup> at the Edgar Hall Somerton. The CEO to invite Jonathan Owen (NALC CEO), David Fothergill (SCC Leader) and the MD of the Somerset Waste Partnership to attend as guest speakers.

5. *Status of the Association*

The CEO and Chairman reported on a meeting held with Rosie Parr of Lancaster Parr Solicitors. The articles of association are currently being revised in the light of these discussions. The final document will require approval of the AGM, with a view to the new structure coming into effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.

The chairman noted that he would now be willing to stay on for another term but that new county committee members would be required in October. It was agreed that the issue of succession planning be discussed further at the next committee meeting.

6. *Finance Report and Investment of Reserves*

Production of the 2017/18 accounts was still ongoing owing to the late uptake in training throughout March and the high number of outstanding invoices at year end.

The 2018/19 year had got off to a brisk start with several new members and a huge surge in training bookings. The CEO was confident that it promised to be a strong year for the final year in the quadrennium.

Members considered the recommendation from the Management Committee regarding placing a hold on investing in the CCLA Property Fund. As additional information had been received from the CCLA regarding the fund's portfolio, it was now felt that it would be acceptable to proceed with the investment.

7. *Data Protection Act 2018*

Members approved the Privacy Notice previously circulated by the CEO.

8. *Unitary Authority Discussions*

Members discussed the current debate regarding local authority structures. It was agreed to pursue discussion with the Somerset branch of SLCC as to how we can best represent the interests of our sector in any unitary debate and to also explore, regardless of local authority structures, the potential for the further devolution of services to local councils.

9. *Reports from Outside Bodies*

The Chairman reported on the July regional meeting, which had been attended by the new acting head of NALC's Legal Team, Jane Moore.

Loretta Whetlor reported that NALC's Lobby Day had been successful and that she had held a very productive meeting with Marcus Fysh MP.

It was also reported that the West Area Meeting held in June to discuss the Somerset West and Taunton Boundary Review had been very well attended.

10. *Service/Policy/Training Updates*

The CEO reported on a busy period for the association, with a strong emphasis in training for 2018/19. A number of new courses have already been held or are being planned throughout the year and these are likely to be well received based on the exceptionally high number of bookings to date.

The CEO is also discussing a possible future training programme with the Consortium of Somerset Drainage Boards.

11. *SID Briefing and Update*

The chairman reported on a successful and very well attended briefing session hosted by the association in March. As the SCC officer co-ordinating SIDs has now retired, the scheme has effectively ceased to operate. Anne Reeder has provided information indicating that the Avon and Somerset Police Trust may be interested in some form of co-ordinated scheme in the future. It was agreed that the chairman would liaise with the Police Trust.

12. *Items from Committee Members*

Godfrey Townrow reported that he had sent a full response to the recent consultation on standards to the Committee for Standards in Public Life. Jenny Lawrence reported that the SPFA AGM would be held on the 13<sup>th</sup> September at Woolavington Village Hall.

13. *Dates for Future Meetings*

Late September/Early October for County Committee