



**West Sussex ALC Ltd.
Minutes of the Board Meeting of West Sussex ALC Ltd.
Held remotely by Zoom on
Thursday 26th September 2024 at 2:30pm**

Attendance

Cllr Douglas Denham St Pinnock, Chair, Mid Sussex District Association
Cllr Alison Cooper, Arun District Association
Cllr Michael Tu, Arun District Council
Cllr Andrew Shaxson, Chichester District Association
Cllr Amanda Tait, Chichester District Association
Cllr Charles Britton, Chichester District Association
Cllr Val Court, Horsham District Association
Cllr Graham Watkins, Horsham District Association
Cllr Martin Sheldon, Mid Sussex District Association
Trevor Leggo, CEO WSALC Ltd.
Julie Holden, Clerk's Representative, Society of Local Council Clerks (Sussex Branch)
Celia Price, Clerk's Representative, Society of Local Council Clerks (Sussex Branch)
Mark Mulberry, Company Secretary
Cllr Alun Alesbury, SDNPA representative
Anna Beams, Secretary to the Board

1. Welcome by Chair

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. He welcomed Celia Price who replaces Sarah Norman as SLCC clerk's representative alongside Julie Holden.

2. Apologies for absence

None received. Paul Mansfield, Adur representative was absent from the meeting.

3. Previous Minutes

The Chair questioned whether all DALC funds have been transferred into WSALC and was advised by Anna Beams that Mid Sussex and Arun have not yet due to banking issues.

The Minutes were **APPROVED** as a true record to be issued to the Chair for electronic signing.

4. SDNPA Report

Cllr Alun Alesbury reported that the Authority has a new Chief Executive, Sion McGeever. Tim Slaney and Mark Hughes revert to their earlier posts, Director of Planning and Deputy.

Preparation work on the new Local Plan is on an accelerated course but may be affected by material changes to national planning guidance.

Cllr Alesbury notified members of a parish meeting organised by the SDNPA taking place on 2nd October at 6.30pm. The agenda includes updates and a Q&A session.

The Chair observed that DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs) has not yet approved the appointments of two members elected earlier this year.

5. Financial Update

Mark Mulberry referred to his report circulated prior to the meeting.

As the report circulated covers the period to 30th June, Mark supplied updated figures to date as follows:

Current account funds - £17,008

Savings account funds - £171,618.75

Aged debtors - £5,600

Mark recommended that the Board agree a course of action regarding current aged debtors.

It was AGREED that the CEO will telephone each aged debtor individually.

Mark advised that he expects the association to be holding a surplus of £10 – 12k at the end of the financial year and is therefore not changing his recommendation of a 2% increase in subscription charges for 2025-26.

The Chair suggested that the proposed subscription increase is agreed at a later meeting and taken to the AGM.

6. CEO Update

The CEO updated the Board on the following matters:

Local Authority Finances – County and District councils are in a difficult financial position, with some services such as libraries and public conveniences vulnerable. The CEO suggested that parish and town councils may wish to factor funding such services in their budgets.

Warm Hubs – will be increasingly vital again due to the colder weather and removal of the winter fuel allowance. Parishes should be aware of the impact on their communities and be ready to assist.

Councillor safety – there has been a significant increase in threats to councillors. Inspector Oliver Fisher of Sussex Police has been tasked with offering guidance and advice to councillors. The Chair

added that if anyone is experiencing or is aware of harassment and bullying, they should contact the CEO who has contacts within the Police.

AGM & Conference – this year, WSALC and ESALC will hold individual AGMs at the AMEX Community Stadium followed by a joint conference at 11:00am on 4th November. Confirmed speakers for the day are Steve Tilbury, planning advisor, Transport for Southeast, Chief Constable Jo Shiner, Sussex Police. An expert in biodiversity will be invited. Further details will be circulated in the next fortnight.

The CEO paused his update for questions and comments.

Julie Holden explained that during a comms meeting with Mid Sussex District Council, MSDC had stated that councillors cannot redact personal information from Declaration of Interest forms unless they have made an individual approach to MSDC stating the reasons for the redaction. The appeals will then be considered on an individual basis. The Chair agreed to take the matter up with NALC.

NALC – are launching a new website on 7th October which will be more intuitive with an improved library of accessible documents. WSALC have registered on the website and individual councillors and clerks will need to register themselves. Details will be circulated when available.

NALC – are supporting the ‘Motion for the Ocean’, an initiative which addresses issues experienced by coastal communities such as traffic management.

8. Reports by District Associations

Adur: No report.

Arun: Cllr Micheal Tu, Chair of ADALC reported the following:

- Cllr Tu has held discussions with Cllr Amanda Worne of Yapton PC regarding co-chairing the ADALC.
- Arun District Council have a new Chief Executive, Dawn Hudd.
- Following the cancellation of the planned A27 by-pass, work needs to take place to find a way of alleviating the current traffic situation. Arundel in particular is suffering from ‘rat running’ and will be the Town Council’s focus.

Chichester: Cllr Andrew Shaxson, Chair of CDALC reported the following:

- A meeting of CDALC was held on 10th September which focussed on encouraging attendance and included a West Sussex Highways discussion around issues parishes are experiencing.
The Highways discussion highlighted a list of common challenges, mostly of a strategic nature. Cllr Shaxson and the CEO will follow up by arranging a meeting with West Sussex County Council to set out the issues highlighted at the meeting and ask for a commitment that a review of processes will take place and improvements occur. It was also suggested that a member of the Highways team is invited to attend a face-to-face CDALC meeting.
- Cllr Charles Britton added that it was encouraging that attendance from parishes within the South Downs was higher than usual. He also added that Cllr Joy Dennis of West Sussex County Council has recently visited the Heyshott area and instigated many improvements.

Horsham: Cllr Graham Watkins provided a verbal report as per appendix A.

Mid-Sussex – Cllr Douglas Denham St. Pinnock, Chair of MSALC reported the following:

- Along with the CEO, Cllr Denham St. Pinnock recently attended a meeting with the Chief Executive, Senior Officers, the Leader and Deputy Leader of Mid Sussex District Council. Issues highlighted by member councils were set out at the meeting and a written response is expected from the Chief Executive which will be circulated to Mid-Sussex member councils.
- Mid Sussex formerly comprised of one constituency, Mid Sussex, and is now divided into two – Mid Sussex and East Grinstead & Uckfield.
- The CEO added that, during the meeting with Mid Sussex District Council, concerns were raised by him that newly recruited officers are not briefed in town and parish councils and perhaps there is an opportunity to improve relationships by ensuring that they are fully briefed.

Cllr Graham Watkins advised that the Chief Executive of Horsham District Council, Jane Eaton, has made a commitment to visit all town and parish councils within the Horsham District in order to develop good relationships.

9. Clerks Update

Julie Holden reported on the following:

- the SLCC social event at Ridgeview Vineyard has been moved to 17th October. It is hoped that this will be the first of regular social events for clerks.
- Clerks were encouraged to send a response to the NPPF consultation, Julie thanked WSALC for commissioning a response paper.
- A WhatsApp group for clerks has been formed on a six-month trial basis with over forty joining to date. The aim is to provide a platform where clerks can advise and help each other.
- Issues have been identified with communications not reaching SLCC members. If any SLCC members are experiencing issues they should contact Julie or Celia.
- All clerks are welcome to attend SLCC meetings although they will be asked to join the SLCC if they attend regularly and are not members.
- Celia Price added that the last SLCC meeting include training and networking and encouraged all clerks to be involved and get in touch. She stressed the importance of clerks keeping up to date with information.

The CEO advised that details of the proposed Martyn's Law are beginning to emerge. The threshold for events needing a thorough risk assessment and additional security is now 200 attendees for both indoor and outdoor events. Councils should be aware of any updates.

11. Matters for discussion not on the agenda

No further matters.

12. Future Board meetings

To be confirmed.

16:00 Anna Beams, Mark Mulberry, Julie Holden, Celia Price and Alun Alesbury left the meeting for agenda item 11. Confidential Item: Chairs Business

Signed (Chair):

D D Pinnock

D D Pinnock (Oct 31, 2024 15:40 GMT)

Dated: 31/10/2024

APPENDIX A

HALC Report for WSALC

1. Prepared and circulated a planning survey dealing with the Regulation 19 submission of HDC that highlighted the general dissatisfaction of the Parishes with aspects of the Local plan in particular the NP – Reg 19 now submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and awaiting a date for the enquiry tah I will be attending.
2. Held a face-to-Face meeting with:
 - a. Jane Eaton CEO of HDC
 - b. Cllr Martin Boffey, Leader of HDC
 - c. Cllr John Milne – Chaiman of Planning North

To deal with concerns raised in the planning survey and agree an agenda for the up and coming HALC meeting on Monday 29th April at The Capitol, where they will all be present along with Catherine Howe Head of Strategic Planning dealing with NP & LP effects and Emma Parkes Head of Planning to discuss slow build our rates and the effects of section 106

Jane Eaton will deal with matters that effect communities, she after a suggestion with HALC will be paying visits to all Parishes

I have also had conversations with Emma Parks in preparation dealing with the slow build out rates of current developments which is causing disruption within villages that have ongoing major developments. I will circulate notes

Attended a virtual meeting on the 24th September about Parish & neighbourhood Councils Planning training 45 representatives from P & NH Councils with Barbera Childs, Emma Parks 7 Catherine Howe and Andy Bush the Arboricultural Officer – Interesting information about Habitat Banks that could be a revenue income stream for Councils. I will be preparing a briefing note.

We have an and coming HALC meeting on the 15th October where the will be an update from reps of HDC on Climate Action in Horsham and West Sussex.

Graham Watkins, Chair

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Final Audit Report

2024-10-31

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