

Arun District Association of Local Councils

Chair: Cllr Michael Tu, Arundel Town Council
Secretary: Anna Beams, Mulberry & Co, 9 Pound Lane, Godalming, GU7 1BX
Treasurer: Gillian Yeates, Bersted Parish Council
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Minutes of the Meeting of Arun District Association of Local Councils held on Tuesday 17th May 2022 commencing at 7pm via a Zoom video.

Present:

Nikki Hamilton-Smith	Angmering Parish Council
Michael Tu	Arundel Town Council
Steve Goodheart	Bognor Regis Town Council
Sarah Linfield	Clapham and Slindon Parish Councils
Steve Toney	East Preston Parish Council
Dave Smart	Felpham Parish Council
Stephen Abbott	Ferring Parish Council
Roger Wetherell	Kingston Parish Council
Jill Long	Littlehampton Town Council
June Hamilton	Pagham Parish Council
Alison Cooper	Rustington Parish Council
Stephen Haymes	Yapton Parish Council

Trevor Leggo (CEO, WSALC)
Anna Beams (Secretary)

1. Welcome and introduction

The Chairman welcomed those present. He explained that his objective as Chair of ADALC is to have a clear purpose within Arun and to engage and work closely with the District Council.

He added that, since his appointment in January, a Management Committee has been formed to work on the development of initiatives suggested by member councils and the reformation of ADALC. Current members of the Committee are Cllrs Michael Tu, Nikki Hamilton-Smith and Martin Beaton and he invited expressions of interest to join which would be dealt with under agenda item 5.

The Chairman suggested that at least one meeting of ADALC per year should be held in person.

2. Apologies for absence

Received and noted from Cllr Vawer (Walberton Parish Council) and Ford Parish Council. Chief Inspector Nick Bowman had also given apologies due to unforeseen circumstances, Trevor Leggo had invited an alternative guest from Sussex Police however, was unable to secure their attendance at short notice.

3. Sussex Police

As a representative from Sussex Police was unable to attend the meeting the invitation will be extended to the next meeting.

4. Financial Position

The Chairman reported that there had been no change to the bank balance which currently stands at £726.20. A WSALC grant is due to be paid bringing the balance to £1,226.20.

He advised that a subscription fee needs to be agreed and will need to be set at a level required to operate ADALC effectively. He suggested that an administrative support level of 2 hours per week would ensure the progression of objectives and the regeneration of ADALC.

The Chairman proposed a budget of c.£3,000 per year with 2022-23 being partly funded from the current balance and partly from subscriptions raised. He suggested a tiered option by precept broken down for year 1 as:

Precept over £500k – subscription rate of £150 per year

100-500k - £100

Under £100k - £70

Year 2 would increase as there would be no remaining balance in reserve.

He explained that the discussions are preliminary and welcomed the views of those present at the meeting.

Following a full and open discussion the Chairman agreed that the Management Committee would produce a proposal and briefing note to share with member councils.

5. Management Committee

Anna Beams stated that Cllr Stephen Abbott (Ferring PC) had previously expressed an interest in joining the Committee and was duly appointed and welcomed as a member by the Chair.

The Chairman reported that a meeting of the Committee and the Leader and CEO of ADC has been set for 23rd June and that he has had a lengthy discussion with the Leader in order to establish a relationship with him and the CEO. He added that a main objective of this meeting is to compile a list of key items to take to the meeting in June.

Following an open discussion, the following items were agreed:

- The reformation of the Arun Joint Action Group
- ADC engagement with parishes, how can ADC and the parishes communicate effectively?

- Shared Prosperity Fund, how will ADC administer the fund to include town and parish councils
- Resilience planning, can ADC assist parishes in the development of effective resilience plans
- How can parishes assist ADC with their objectives and areas of priority as adopted in their Council Vision
- Environment and recycling policy, should it be a national policy
- Youth Services and facilities
- Safer Arun Partnership, could ADC provide briefings to parishes regarding the function of the partnership
- Housing issues.

The Chairman advised that the list would be shared with ADC before the meeting on the 23rd June and that he had requested that any topics that ADC wished to discuss were also shared prior to the meeting.

6. ADALC Communications

The Chairman suggested that there is a need to share progress member councils to engage and communicate between meetings. He has carried out preliminary research along with Anna Beams and Trevor Leggo into methods of communicating and forums and has identified some potential options.

Anna Beams will carry out further research and draft a briefing note to be shared with member councils.

7. Recruitment of Town and Parish Councillors

Trevor Leggo explained the difficulties that have been experienced nationally in the recruitment of councillors. Approximately 10% of councils in the Sussex and Surrey region had contested elections in 2015 and 2019. Trevor welcomed suggestions and ideas to improve the current situation. He also asked whether any members present had vacancies within their councils that they are struggling to fill.

Two member councils shared that they have vacancies and are having difficulties attracting and recruiting councillors.

It was suggested that a national, modern method of attracting councillors could be beneficial as well as a local approach.

It was further suggested that ADALC could consider organising a form of roadshow across the district highlighting the purpose of parish and town councils and showcasing examples of achievements and that perhaps ADC could be approached as a joint initiative.

Trevor added that he had been involved in the creation of a new town council in East Sussex, Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council. As part of a campaign to recruit councillors, he had given briefings to potential members along with other key figures. The campaign resulted in a contested election and the appointment of the 3rd youngest councillor nationally at the time. He suggested that the campaign was a good example and could be used as a model.

Other suggestions included that NALC are approached to re-visit their national recruitment campaign, parishes highlight their work and achievements at events within their communities and meetings are streamed online to improve attendance thereby highlighting the work of the parishes.

8. Shared Prosperity Fund

Trevor Leggo explained that in April as part of the Levelling Up agenda, Government announced the Shared Prosperity Fund. A total of £2.6bn has been set aside for the next 3 years with £400m allocated at District Council level for 2022/23.

The fund will be administered at District Council level and Government expects those with fund management responsibilities to engage with local stakeholders. Parish and town councils are not named as stakeholders within Government guidance.

Trevor has been advised by the LGA that they are not issuing advice to the districts regarding engagement with town and parish councils and that it is a matter for the district councils.

Trevor suggested that ADC should be invited to attend a future ADALC meeting to explain how they intend to administrate the selection process and engage with local councils. The matter will be discussed at the meeting of ADC and the ADALC Management Committee on 23rd June.

9. WSCC Chargepoint Network

Trevor Leggo reminded members of the initiative being led by WSCC and asked whether any member councils have taken advantage.

Arundel Town Council are investigating sites.

East Preston Parish Council are considering the instillation of charging points. Cllr Steve Toney added that the council have queried whether the parking spaces can also be used by non-electric cars.

The Chairman advised that any further information or initiatives will be shared.

10. Housing issues

The Chairman confirmed that housing issues will be discussed with ADC on 23rd June.

A letter was written to Michael Gove MP by Aldingbourne Parish Council which has been circulated to members. Any response received will be shared.

Cllr Nikki Hamilton-Smith (Angmering PC) advised that the parish council have been successfully working with surrounding parishes and have employed the support of a planning consultant, which has led to recent refusals on some sites. She suggested that working closely with surrounding parishes as well as district councillors ensures that planning committees as well as residents have a greater understanding of issues and can make valid, informed objections.

Cllr Steve Goodheart (Bognor Regis TC) added that there have been many planning applications for houses of multiple occupancy which are difficult to object to.

11. Any other matters

- Please avoid May for future meetings as it is a particularly busy time for councils.
- Notes will be circulated following the meeting with ADC on 23d June.

12. Date of next meeting

To be advised

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm

Signed:

Dated:

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