



West Sussex ALC Ltd.

Minutes of the Virtual Board Meeting of West Sussex ALC Ltd. held on Friday 21st January 2022 at 2:00pm by Zoom

Attendance

Cllr Douglas Denham St Pinnock, Chairman, Mid Sussex District Association

Cllr Martin Beaton, Vice-Chair, Arun District Association

Cllr Alison Cooper, Arun District Association

Cllr Tim Russell, Chichester District Association

Cllr Charles Britton, Chichester District Association

Cllr Malcolm Eastwood, Horsham District Association

Cllr Donald Mahon, Horsham District Association

Cllr Jon Millbanks, Mid Sussex District Association

Mark Mulberry, Company Secretary

Trevor Leggo, CEO WSALC Ltd.

Sarah Norman, Clerk's Representative, Society of Local Council Clerks (Sussex Branch)

Anna Beams, Mulberry and Co (clerk)

Becky Shaw, CEO, West Sussex County Council

Lee Harris, Executive Director of Place Service, West Sussex County Council

Emily King, Director of Communities, West Sussex County Council

1. West Sussex County Council, general update

The Chairman introduced and welcomed Becky Shaw, CEO, Lee Harris, Executive Director of Place Service and Emily King, Director of Communities of West Sussex County Council.

Becky Shaw then gave the Board an overview since her appointment in January 2020. She advised the board that the team have covered a significant amount of ground including:

- Responding to pandemic alongside partners including keeping services running, setting up new services including community hubs and supporting those shielding with food, care and medicines.
- Significant improvement programmes for Children's Social and Fire and Rescue services. The County Council await the results from the Government about whether the Children's Trust removal can be made permanent having been paused a year ago. The positive Ofsted results are worth noting. The County Council are awaiting the inspection report on Fire and Rescue Services which will be publicised in June. The next Cabinet will consider new Adults Strategy.
- Place directorate has been key in the above and has also provided comprehensive response to initial arrival and ongoing support for Afghan Evacuees, delivered Net Zero

initiatives, Highways, waste and property services (especially significant during the pandemic and delivery of projects such as Woodlands Mead and Centenary House)

- The County Council have improved internal organisation through a new integrated business planning process that holds policy, performance and finance together and monitors their progress openly. This outcome of process for next year will be reported to Cabinet on 1st February and full Council on 18th February: headlines – no new cuts to services, 3% council tax increase and significant investment into special school places, net zero and highways. With a warning about the single year settlement reflecting significant uncertainty in national policy for adults, children’s and levelling up and also future funding settlements so future years expected to involve significant new reductions in spending.

2. Apologies for absence

Received and accepted from Julie Holden.

3. To approve the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 5th October 2021

The Minutes were duly approved.

4. SLA with Mulberry & Co.

Mark Mulberry confirmed that the Mulberry & Co Service Level Agreement for 2022-23 would be offered to WSALC on the same terms as the current year.

The CEO added that the service arrangement works extremely well, is thorough and responsive and that he recommends the appointment of Mulberry & Co for a further year at the terms offered.

The Board unanimously **AGREED** to appoint Mulberry & Co as service providers for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

5. Financial update

Mark Mulberry referred to the Q3 Management Account Report (*appendix A*) and highlighted the following:

- The Association has received the final balance of c.£7,000 following the closure of SSALC.
- Income to date is c.£116,000.
- Costs to date c.£77,000 of which c.£25,000 are NALC affiliation fees.
- The Association is currently holding a surplus of c.£38,000 with c.£75,000 in reserves.
- The Association is currently running to budget with a forecasted net surplus of c.£22,000 and net reserves c.£66,000 at year end.

Cllr Eastwood queried whether the long term debtors had been actively pursued. The CEO responded that the two outstanding payments were from members who had not approached WSALC for any support during the past year and therefore the opportunity had not arisen to pursue payment.

It was **AGREED** that Anna Beams would pass the invoices to the CEO who would speak to the councils in question.

6. Services update

Anna Beams reported the following:

- The training programme has been updated to reflect feedback received. Some of the shorter Councillor Training modules have been combined and are now slightly longer and more cost effective to members. Face to face training may also be introduced this year which will run alongside remote training.
- During Quarter 3, 129 WSALC members attended training of which 54 attended Councillors, 25 Clerks, 4 Finance and 46 Planning.
- A Mulberry & Co Legal & Finance Day is being planned for the summer which WSALC members will be able to book on at a discounted members rate.

Anna added that, should WSALC wish to hold a face to face conference this year, discussions and arrangements should begin as soon as possible.

Cllr Beaton suggested that the above attendance figures could be circulated to member councils in order to encourage further attendance. The CEO and Anna Beams will discuss suitable methods of disseminating the information.

Concern was raised regarding communications being passed to Councillors as well as a lack of interest in training by established councillors and that the emphasis needs to be on finding ways of encouraging existing, long standing Councillors to attend.

7. WSCC

Cllr Beaton commented that it was extremely useful for Becky Shaw and her colleagues to have attended the Board meeting today and that regular attendance would be beneficial. He added that it was vital to establish a clear method of exchanging information between member councils and the County Council.

It was **AGREED** that WSCC would be invited to attend a Board meeting twice a year.

The Chairman suggested that the District Associations are best suited to looking after the interests of the local councils and therefore communications should be fed through them.

Cllr Eastwood returned to the matter of whether WSALC should hold a face to face conference this year. It was agreed that the Chairman and CEO would discuss the matter and report back to the Board.

8. Operating in a pandemic or similar emergency

The Chairman reported that he had drafted a paper regarding delegated powers for parish councils. The draft paper had been sent to Ian Davison for comment and that he had responded with many changes. As a result, no further progress has been made.

9. Rampion 2 Windfarm

The CEO advised that Dr Colin Ross of Protect Coastal Sussex had recently delivered a presentation regarding the proposed extension of the Rampion Windfarm (Rampion 2) to the recent WSALC Chairs Forum. He explained that the group are not in favour of the development of the Windfarm.

Cllr Beaton suggested that the role of WSALC should be to communicate the facts to member councils in order for them to respond individually. He recommended that WSALC should take a neutral position.

It was **AGREED** that WSALC would take a neutral position regarding the Rampion 2 Windfarm and disseminate any information received to member councils.

10. Health & Wellbeing Survey

The CEO referred to a draft survey that had previously been circulated to Board Members for comment. He reported that he had received a positive response and that any suggested changes have been incorporated.

The CEO is hopeful that the updated survey will attract a good number of responses. Sarah Norman, SLCC representative, agreed to highlight it at the next SLCC meeting and encourage clerks to complete the survey on behalf of their councils. Responses will be shared with West Sussex County Council once they have been collated.

It was **AGREED** that the health & wellbeing survey may now be circulated to member councils.

The Chairman queried when an updated version of the Neighbourhood Plan survey will be circulated as agreed at a previous Board meeting. The CEO advised that he has received a copy of the previous survey and will review it pending re-circulation.

3. Reports by District Associations

a) **Adur:** No update was received as there was no representative present at the meeting.

b) **Arun:** The CEO reported that a meeting took place on Wednesday 19th January 2022 which focussed on the re-generation of ADALC. He added that Cllr Michael Tu, Arundel Town Council, was elected as Chairman and Anna Beams has been appointed as Secretary. Two ADALC members will be working with the newly elected Chairman, namely Cllrs Martin Beaton and Nikki Hamilton-Street, in order to establish a 'Management Committee'. The Management Committee will meet between ADALC meetings to develop initiatives suggested by member councils. The first committee meeting will take place in early February.

The main issues discussed at the ADALC meeting were the A27 consultation process and planning and housing matters. Concerns were raised at the meeting regarding housing numbers and it was concluded that ADALC should organise a unified approach and will collate the local parishes position.

- c) **Chichester:** Cllr Russell reported that a meeting is scheduled for Thursday 10th February 2022. He re-emphasised the importance of information being passed to councillors by their clerks as it was apparent that some council Members had not received notice of the meeting.

Cllr Britton added that Chichester has the opposite problem to Arun regarding land availability as a high proportion of land in the south of the district is rural and within the South Downs National Park.

- d) **Horsham:** Cllr Eastwood reported that the Horsham Association held its first face to face meeting in two years on 30th November 2021. The meeting was held jointly with Horsham District Council and was well attended by HDC officers as well as local councils, with representation from every parish council in the district. The meeting focussed on Wilder Horsham, Climate Change and planning with presentations on each topic delivered by HDC.

Horsham District Council has a new Leader and will shortly have a new CEO, focus is therefore on developing and building positive relationships between HALC and the new personnel.

The new HALC Board now has control of the bank accounts, member councils have been invoiced and a new Constitution has been drafted and circulated for approval at the next meeting on 16th March.

- e) **Mid Sussex:** Cllr Millbanks reported that MSALC held a meeting on 18th November 2021. A further meeting is scheduled for 24th February 2022 when the main focus will be housing, the second runway at Gatwick and the proposal by CenterParcs to develop within the district. It is hoped that regular meetings will follow and Cllr Millbanks added that the bank accounts will be changed to an alternative provider.

The CEO advised the Board that he has been investigating 'Carbon Footprint Calculators' as he is aware that the Kent Association have commissioned a calculator for member councils use. The Kent version is chargeable although the CEO advised that he is aware of some free versions already in use. He requested Board members to contact him if they are aware of any versions currently being used by member councils.

13. Dates of future meetings

Board meeting: Friday 29th April 2022 at 2:30 PM

Dates for further meetings to be confirmed.

15.50 Meeting closed

Signed (Chairman) _____ Approved 29th April 2022 _____

Dated _____

WSALC Limited – Management Accounts Reporting for the quarter to 31st December 2021.

Income

Subscription income is £79,493 of which £1,092.53 remains unpaid as at the management accounts date. The original budget was for £84,618; however, eight member councils decided not to renew their subscription. We remain hopeful that they will be persuaded to re-join in time to come

We are not anticipating any additional income to be booked for the remainder of the year, therefore our forecast is to end the year with £116,193 of income.

Expenditure

The costs incurred to date are £77,378 against a total year end budget of £108,093, we are currently forecasting a year-end expenditure total of £93,816. The reduction in costs being due to no planned expenditure on training or special projects, combined with a reduction in NALC costs due to a reduced membership.

All costs are listed within this pack.

Bank & Cash Balances

At the 30th September 2021 there was £76,059 in the current account and £22 in the deposit account. It is anticipated the current account will reduce to circa £60k by the year end.

A copy of the bank statement is provided with this pack.

Year End Forecast

It is anticipated that there will be a surplus of £22,377 at the year-end date. This will be subject to change as the year progresses and depending also on board decisions re future spending.

Time Spent

WSALC have contracted for Mulberry & Co to provide 15 hours per week (on average) service cover. This equates to 195 hours per quarter

In the three-month period to 31st December 2021 we report a total of 211 hours and 23 minutes was spent as follows:

Accounts	3 hours
Bookkeeping	5 hours 20 mins
Payroll	1 hour
General*	
AG - Advice and guidelines	4 hours 20 minutes
CA - Chargeable administration	113 hours 05 minutes
MT - Board & Other meetings	7 hours 25 minutes
PC - Phone Call	11hours 23 mins
TG – Training	2 hours 50 mins
Annual Leave	63 hours

Appendix A

*Key:

AG – Time spent researching and giving specific advice to member councils queries

CA – Includes email administration, clerks, chairs & other forum attendance and preparation, website maintenance, any other tasks as requested by Trevor Leggo

PC – WSALC specific phone calls received and made

MT – Board meeting preparation, agenda, minutes and attendance

TG – General research, for example reading NALC updates etc.

