



# WEST SUSSEX ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS LIMITED

## Minutes from the Board Meeting of West Sussex Association of Local Councils Limited Held at Council Chamber, Billingshurst Community & Conference Centre, Roman Way, Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 9QW on 10.00am on Thursday 17th October 2019

<b>Directors Present</b>	Cllr Terry Oliver	Horsham District Association and Chair
	Cllr Lilian Richardson	Arun District Association
	Cllr Tony Nicklen	Adur District Association
	Cllr David Ribbens	Chichester District Association
	Cllr Phil Baxter	Horsham District Association
	Cllr Rodney Jackson	Mis Sussex District Association

<b>Presidents and Vice Presidents Present</b>	Michael Chater OBE	President
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<b>Also in attendance</b>	Trevor Leggo	CEO SSALC
	Mandy Jameson	Sussex PCC's Senior Communications Manager
	Ch. Supt Westerman	Div Commander, West Sussex Division, Sussex Police
	Dan Sanders	Training and Practice Development Lead Officer Countering Extremism, Community Safety & Wellbeing, WSCC
	Anna Beams	Office, Training & Events Manager SSALC
	Paul Richards	Clerk to the Boards SSALC

### 1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Beal, Cllr Steer, Julie Holden, Alun Aylesbury and Helen Rice.

### 2. **To approve the minutes of meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

Cllr Jackson advised that he had sent apologies for the last meeting. After this amendment, the minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman.

### 3. **Matters Arising (not on this Agenda) and update on actions from the last meeting**

None

### 4. **WSCC update on Health and Wellbeing (H&WB)**

- The CEO advised that the project continues to work with the engaged and willing 30 or so local councils who have responded to the latest surveys and updates. He reported that engagement with WSCC is paramount to the continued success of the project however the Leader of the Council (Louise Goldsmith) and senior officer (Rachel North) have both departed. He will ask to meet the new WSCC Leader as soon as possible to re-establish the relationship. The Chair reminded Members that the key objective for the project in West Sussex was for the District Associations to disseminate the necessary information and updates to their members and encouraged the Board to take this message back to their associations;
- SERCAF plan to meet in March 2020 for a H&WB symposium. The Chair reminded Members of SERCAF (including Kent, East & West Sussex and Essex) had met earlier in year to share best practice;

- NALC has followed WSALC's lead and have issued H&WB guidance. The Chair encouraged the WSALC Board to remain at the forefront of this important project and thanked the SALC team for their support;
- Cllr Ribbens reported that the Chichester DALC had received a recent presentation from WSSC and hope to invite the relevant Cabinet Member to their next meeting;
- The Chair advised that his local council, Broadbridge Heath, had commissioned Healthwatch to undertake a survey in conjunction with Horsham District Council;
- Cllr Jackson updated Members with the work of the Hurstpierpoint community hub that opened recently;
- Cllr Richardson suggested that when SERCAF meet for their symposium, working examples are presented that explain the end-to-end process involved. The CEO suggested that the Milland example might be appropriate;
- The CEO agreed to send the results from the recent surveys to the DALCs

<p><b>Action:</b> The CEO to send to the DALCs the results of the recent H&amp;WB survey.</p>
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## 5. Police matters

Mandy Jameson provide an update from the PCC's office that included: -

- The PCC led programme of Feedback and Consultation events continue to be successful across Sussex. To date, 30 events have been held with over 300 residents attending. Latterly, the Police District Commanders have been invited and have provided valuable feedback on local operational matters;
- The wide range of focus groups have connected with various community groups. Larger groups have been held with specific focus e.g. rural crime. The PCC has attended such events and feedback has helped her inform and shape policy i.e. the introduction of rural PCSOs; and
- An update on the continued working with the PCC's office and SALC. The Chair thanked Mandy and asked that Board Members convey these positive messages to their DALCs.

Chief Superintendent Jerry Westerman gave an operational briefing that included recent crime trends, priorities, operational context and the transformational objectives for the Force. He also advised that: -

- The 101 non-emergency reporting service has seen an improvement. Average waiting times have reduced from 17 minutes in 2018 to just over 7 minutes in September 2019. More work needs to be done but the reduced waiting time is encouraging;
- The increased recruitment of Police Officers continues and a further 100 PCSOs had been announced recently. In addition, the recruitment of an additional 20,000 police officers across the UK (approx. 400 for Sussex) has commenced. 129 new officers will be recruited in this first tranche; and
- The Chair reminded the Chief Superintendent of a previous protocol with local councils where PCSOs would attend meetings on a regular basis. He agreed to review this but could not promise that a PCSO would attend each meeting.

## 6. Prevent and Countering Extremism

Dan Sanders, Training and Practice Development Lead Officer: Countering Extremism, Community Safety & Wellbeing at WSSC explained his role and the objectives of his team. In a detailed presentation, he explained that early intervention and safeguarding were key in preventing radicalisation and extremism. He advised that:

- The team is supported by a referral process;
- Extremism can take many forms including islamophobia, animal rights, homophobia and far right nationalists;
- Precursors, such as change in behaviour, could be an early sign of radicalisation and extremism;
- The team help monitor community tensions;
- Radicalisation and extremist groups make effective use of both the dark and regular internet;
- The public should contact the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) with any concerns.

The Chair thanked Dan for his very informative presentation and asked if would share this message with the various District Associations. Dan was keen to present to this wider audience to help spread the message.

## 7. NALC matters

The CEO reported that NALC has little engagement with HMG due to the ongoing Brexit deliberations. Therefore, action on such matters as the report from the Committee of Standards in Public Life has been

delayed. He also wondered if NALC information sent out by SALC to Clerks had been reaching Councillors. He reported that during the training of over 600 new Councillors, very few had reported seeing such information.

#### 8. **Reports by District Associations**

- (a) **Adur** – Cllr Nicklen advised that, apart from the proposed ADC local government review, little had taken place since the last meeting;
- (b) **Arun** – Cllr Richardson reported that the newly re-formed Association had convened its first meeting with Sue Furlong from WSCC providing updates to them. She advised that the CEO had secured future funding for the Association from ADC however ADC has now cancelled the planned joint meeting with local councils. The CEO agreed to refer this matter to the ADC CEO in order to reconvene this important meeting;
- (c) **Chichester** – Cllr Ribbens advised that the Association had been reformed and has invited the various subgroups to merge. However, recent meetings have not been well attended – it appears that local councils in the SDNPA area are not attending. Cllr Ribbens will take action to encourage them to attend future meetings. The Chair suggested that the Association move the meeting within the District area rather than hold all meetings in Chichester. This may encourage a wider attendance;
- (d) **Horsham**  
Cllr Baxter reported on the last meeting where four external presenters were invited to attend. The wide-ranging agenda attracted the highest attendance for Association meetings to date. Please see the HALC report attached at Appendix A; and
- (e) **Mid Sussex** – Cllr Jackson reported that meeting attendance from Association members had reduced recently. The new Association Chair aims to encourage more members to attend in the future.

#### 9. **Feedback from AGM and Conference**

The Chair apologised for his absence and thanked the Vice Chair and President for hosting what has been reported to be an excellent event. The CEO agreed that the event went well despite the non-appearance of the keynote speaker. The WSCC Leader failed to attend and had not sent apologies. Another WSCC speaker presented her update instead however, Conference instructed the CEO to send a strongly worded note to WSCC expressing their displeasure for the discourtesy shown. The CEO reported that, subsequently, the Leader's PA advised him that the Leader had resigned suddenly hence the non-attendance but had apologised that Conference had not been advised.

The President thanked the CEO and his staff for a very organised event and Members agreed that the location and facilities were excellent. Cllr Baxter asked if presentation notes could be made available in advance. Anna Beams advised that she had asked each presenter for advance copies, but none had been received.

The Chair referred to the AGM and asked why 20 abstentions had been received when voting to approve the accounts. Members were satisfied that the relevant explanation given at the AGM (which was minuted) proved acceptable to Members. Cllr Richardson suggested that the use of voting cards in the future would be of assistance. The CEO agreed and advised that the following AGMs at ESALC and Surrey ALC had utilised voting cards successfully.

#### 10. **South Downs National Park Authority** – no update

#### 11. **Update from the Society of Local Council Clerks** - no update

#### 12. **West Sussex Civilian & Military Partnership Board**

The CEO provided an update on the Engagement Events Group meeting that occurred on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2019. An events diary is being maintained in order to manage the booking of uniformed military personnel to attend community events. The President thanked the CEO for his work in this area which raises the profile of the Association.

The CEO also provided a confidential briefing on Operation Bridge. The Lord Lieutenant's office will advise on how and when this protocol should be used.

#### 13. **Staffing** - No issues to report.

**14. SALC Newsletter**

Anna Beams provided an update and advised that the newsletter is now sent to both Clerks and Chairmen. The issue remained that many Councillors do not appear to receive the important updates contained within the newsletter. Members were concerned that some Clerks, for whatever reason, were not distributing this information to the Councillors.

The Chair asked the Board to engage with their DALCs to enquire from their members how SALC might best communicate with them. He also reported that many Councillors did not appear to have been given their SALC website login details.

**Action:** The CEO to add this topic to the next agenda

**15. SERCAF**

No meeting has taken place since the last Board meeting. The Maritime sub-group plan to meet next in Hampshire on a date to be advised. The CEO advised that SERCAF had evolved into a more thematic body discussing common issues e.g. H&WB. The Board supported the role of SALC in this organisation.

**16. Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies - none.**

**17. St Catherine's Hospice**

The CEO reported that he had been approached by the fund raisers of St Catherine's Hospice to enquire if local councils would support them. Members advised of support for other hospices including St Barnabas House, Chestnut Tree House and others. The Chair reminded Members that local councils could use their grant process to make donations to such worthy causes. The CEO was asked to write to St Catherine's and advise them of the grant process.

**Action:** The CEO to add this topic to the next agenda

**18. A27 Arundel Bypass Scheme Update**

The CEO advised that the 'magenta' option was the preferred Bypass route for Arun District Council and Arundel Town Council as it had the least environmental impact.

**19. Chairman's update on relevant issues**

The Chair asked for any questions. Cllr Nicklen referred to Assets of Community Value and suggested that information about this topic might be useful for local councils. Cllr Nicklen was asked to provide a proposal to the CEO.

**20. Working Together Group WSCC Adult Social Services**

The CEO advised that WSCC had approached SALC with an invite to be represented on the newly formed Working Together Group. The Board agreed that the Chair be appointed as the WSALC representative to this stakeholder group.

**21. Any other urgent matters to be raised by Board Members – none.**

The meeting closed at 12:59pm.

**Next Meeting Dates in 2020 to be advised**

Signed (Chairman) \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX A – Report form the Horsham ALC

Horsham Association of Local Councils (HALC) had held its second meeting since the elections, on 12th September. A second HALC Representative for HDC Standards' Committee (Paul Bickford from Warnham) had been elected.

There had been an update from Sussex Police by a community PCSO emphasising that people should secure their property, especially when it is susceptible to theft or otherwise attractive to burglars; highlighting the Sussex Police Rural Crime Policy (details to be found on-line); confirming that "Neighbourhood Watch" was considered to be very effective; an "App" called "What3Words" was available for smartphones and could be used to notify various services of the location of matters of interest to them; and information about police activities could be followed on "Police Twitter".

Four slots had been allocated for Guest Speakers. Horsham District Council (Barbara Childs, Catherine Howe and Cllr. Claire Vickers) had given a presentation about Horsham's planning process, covering what is a Local Plan, the review stages, contents, housing numbers planned from 2019 – 2036 and the Duty to co-operate with other Local Authorities (in particular, Adur, Arun, Chichester, Crawley, Mid-Sussex, Worthing, Brighton and Hove and Reigate and Banstead). HDC would be "engaging" with Councils through a programme of meetings and seminars.

CPRE's Dr Roger Smith had made a short presentation, the main message from which was the hope that there would be a level of protection for the environment written into the Local Plan in such a way that it could not be circumvented. He had questioned HDC's application of the housing calculation formula and would be writing to HALC about.

Cllr. Ian Hare (Chairman, Pulborough Parish Council) had spoken about the Pulborough Footpath Initiative and the need to safeguard footpaths in general. Pulborough's Footpath Charter detailed the obligations of farmers and householders as landowners and the obligations of their users. Parishes were advised to use their websites to publicise their footpaths and bridleways.

Chris Stark (Area Highways Manager, WSCC) and a colleague had spoken about West Sussex Highways, Transport and Planning – in particular the service-level changes that had been forced upon the Council by funding shortages. Winter maintenance had been reviewed and gritting, previously 41% of roads, would be reduced to 31%.

To conclude, the HALC Chairman (Terry Oliver), Vice Chairman (Phil Baxter) and Secretary (Beverley Bell) had met HDC's Chief Executive – the outcome of which will be a presentation by HDC about its Corporate Plan, to be made to Parishes on Thursday 14th November (6.30 for 7.00 pm) at HDC's offices, Parkside, Horsham.

The next Meeting of HALC is scheduled for Thursday 14 November 2019.