



WEST SUSSEX ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS LIMITED

Minutes from the Board Meeting of West Sussex Association of Local Councils Limited held via a Zoom video/audio conference on Monday 19th October 2020 at 11am

Directors Present	Terry Oliver	Horsham District Association and Chair
	Lilian Richardson	Arun District Association
	Tony Nicklen	Adur District Association
	Mike Beal	Chichester District Association
	Phil Baxter	Horsham District Association
	Rodney Jackson	Mid Sussex District Association
	Michael Warden	Arun District Association
	David Ribbens	Chichester District Council
	Roger Taylor	Weller Hedleys

Presidents and Vice Presidents Present None

Also in attendance Joanna Cadman Administrator

- 1. Apologies for absence:**
Apologies were received and accepted from Mark Mulberry, Mulberry and Co.
- 2. To approve the minutes of meeting held on 13th August 2020.**
The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting, Proposed by David Ribbens, Seconded by Michael Warden, all in favour.
- 3. Matters Arising (not on this Agenda).**
None.
- 4. To receive the Freedom of Information request from Richard Wickens, Clerk to Felpham Parish Council**
 - a) FOI request dated 25th September 2020:* received and noted.
 - b) Legal advice:* received and noted.
 - c) The Board to consider and decide their response to the FOI and instruct the Administrator accordingly.*
The Information Commissioner has advised Richard Wickens that the organisation is not a public body as defined by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and therefore does not have a duty to respond to Freedom of Information requests.

Roger Taylor was asked for his opinion. He agreed with the legal advice received from Hampshire Legal Services, that the questions raised in the FOI request should be responded to, and recommended that the Board's response should be formulated to be consistent with the views of the Board, but not to give any information which is not in the public domain at the moment.

Members noted that an explanation had never been given to member councils regarding the SSALC review of its activities, started in November 2019 and why it was not completed.

It was **agreed** that Phil Baxter and Mike Beal, in consultation with Roger Taylor, would prepare a response to the questions raised by Felpham Parish Council and circulate it to the Board. Once agreed, the text would be sent to all member councils.

It was also **agreed** that a holding letter will be sent by the Administrator to all member councils, advising that the questions from Felpham Parish Council have been put to the Board, and that a response will be sent to all councils by the end of this month.

Proposed by Michael Warden, Seconded by Tony Nicklen, all in favour.

5. **To receive and note the survey**

The survey of West Sussex ALC Limited's member councils' opinions of value for money from SSALC, which the Board intended to send to member councils, was received and noted.

The survey will be sent out by the administrator, with a covering email explaining that this is part of the Value for Money project, and that the responses will be included in the Directors report.

Members **agreed** that the survey should now be sent to all member councils, with a covering email as agreed.

6. **To receive an update on the outcomes of the SSALC Ltd Board meeting held on 15th October**

It appears unlikely that the current structure will continue in the same way as up to now. The present mould has been broken, but what the future brings will depend on a number of factors. If there is a requirement for the three organisations to work together, it will be in a different format.

Surrey ALC have arranged a working party to look at the situation if the present format does not continue.

A report is awaited on the overall costs of the closure of SSALC.

7. **To receive an update on the current VFM Project and to agree, if required, any matters relating to this project.**

Terry Oliver asked Board approval to approach NALC to formally ask them to conduct the ballot of members on the recommendations from the Value for Money project, that had already been announced to members, at an Extraordinary General Meeting.

Proposed by Michael Beal, Seconded by David Ribbens, all in favour.

Terry Oliver had spoken to Berkshire ALC regarding their administration arrangements, and proposed a meeting between them and the project team shortly.

8. **a) to consider the recent communications from clerks to the administrator and to instruct the administrator on a response.**

Members regretted the terminology used by some clerks in their communications with the administrator of the Board. It was agreed that a response would be formulated by Mike Beal, in consultation with Terry Oliver and Lilian Richardson, and sent to Roger Taylor for comment before circulation, to be completed before the end of the month.

Proposed by Mike Beal, Seconded by Tony Nicklen, with all in favour.

9. **To confirm that the Chair and Vice Chair have the authority to seek professional and legal advice on any subject related to this project**

Proposed by David Ribbens, Seconded by Lilian Richardson, all in favour excepting one abstention.

10. **Any Other Business**

No other matters were raised.

11. **AGM 2020**

The notice of the SSALC AGM had been received.

12. **Date of next meeting**

Agreed to be held following the AGM.

The meeting closed at 12.50pm.

Signed (Chairman) _____

Dated _____