



Surrey ALC Ltd.

Minutes of the Board Meeting of Surrey ALC Ltd. held on Thursday 18th July 2019 at 10:00am at Cranleigh Parish Office

Attendance

Cllr Harry Fitzgerald, Chairman
Cllr Steve Cosser, Vice Chairman
Cllr Dr Paul Cragg, Director
Cllr Graham Alleway, Director
Cllr Peter Perdue, Director
Cllr Stuart McLachlan, Director
Cllr Mike Goodman, Director
Liz Cutter, Vice President
Chris Howard, Vice President
Dr Richard Olliver, Vice President
Betty Ames, Vice President
Lauren Blatherwick, SLCC representative
Trevor Leggo, CEO SSALC Ltd.
Anne Bott, Deputy CEO SSALC Ltd.
Roger Taylor, Director & Wellers Hedleys Solicitors LLP
Paul Richards, Clerk to the Board, SSALC Ltd.

1. Apologies for absence

None

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th May 2019 were approved and signed.

3. Finance

- The CEO presented a finance update; and
- The CEO reported on the 2018/19 annual accounts, circulated previously, which were reviewed by the Board. Members approved the accounts which were signed by the Chair and Vice Chair.

4. CEO report

- **Health and Wellbeing (H&WB).**
 - The CEO advised that the meeting scheduled with Tim Oliver, Chair of SCC, was cancelled. A rescheduled date in August will be advised.;
 - RO advised that the questionnaire to local councils will be ready for distribution next month. He will present this at the AGM and conference in October. He has drawn up an action plan and will meet with County Council, District/Borough portfolio holders and his CCG contacts to discuss. He will meet other stakeholders where appropriate;
 - BA reported that at a recent H&WB meeting, local councils were seen as having an important role to play. BA will continue to work as community liaison whilst RO leads for Surrey ALC on all H&WB matters;

- The Chair attended a meeting with Tandridge DC and Age UK. He extended an invitation to local councils to meet their local Age UK branch; and
- The CEO advised that the Chair of WSALC had invited the Chair and RO to attend an event hosted by WSALC and Age UK on 30th July 2019.
- **Staff update** – the CEO advised Members that there are no outstanding issues.
- **Other matters**
 - The CEO reported a difference of opinion with CPRE who have sent a threatening letter regarding local council membership. Advice from SALC solicitors is that local councils should not belong to CPRE, as a corporate body, as CPRE are a campaigning group. However individual Councillors may opt to join. They would, however, need to register an interest in the usual way. The DCEO has requested that the SALC solicitor provides definitive advice given that NALC appears to be offering a differing response; there needs to be consistency. The CEO to due to meet the NALC CEO and will raise this issue. SMCL suggested that the same advice should be given for all campaign groups e.g. GACC;
 - Operation Bridge – the CEO referred to a confidential email sent to Board Members. This is a matter for the Board and is for information only. LB advised that guidance on this matter from the NACO had been circulated to SLCC members. The CEO has contacted the Lord Lieutenant offices at WSCC and SCC for advice and advised that all local authorities should take advice from the relevant Lord Lieutenant offices;
 - The CEO reported that the recent Chair’s networking event was well attended with very good feedback from attendees; and
 - Head of Highways is leaving SCC, Members asked that the CEO send a letter to wish him well.

Action:

1. The CEO to send a letter of thanks to the outgoing SCC Head of Highways

5. Events and Training

- **Three Counties Training Programme** – the CEO updated Members on the new programme;
- **New councillor training 2019** – the CEO advised that 550 new Councillors had attended the recent training course. Bespoke training, by invitation, has also been delivered successfully.
- **AGM and Conference**–
 - The DCEO advised that the AGM would be held at the Dorking Halls on Tuesday 15th October 2019. The Lord Lieutenant is to be invited;
 - The Conference theme will have an environmental focus which will link to work the Chair of ESALC, and NALC are involved with. Surrey CC will take the afternoon agenda (as last year) with MG planning arrangements with the Surrey CEO and Leader;
 - MG will use the Conference as an opportunity to get the message across how local councils can get involved – what can they do, what can they do for their communities;
 - Surrey CC to update on transformation projects, libraries, use of precept for carers; and
 - The DCEO will work the MG and CEO to draw up the Agenda.

6. DCEO report - The DCEO provided an update and advised that: -

- Many Surrey parishes attended new Councillor events. In addition, bespoke training has been delivered. The successful sessions have, in part, been due to starting earlier thanks to Anna Beams.
- 550 councillors have been trained to date. MG asked that news of this successful training campaign be put on SALC newsletter.
- Following recent Surrey ALC staff changes, the reduced SALC employee support has led to additional requests coming to the DCEO from Clerks and councillors. She suggested that the reduced employee support may need to be revisited and that the SALC bulletin should have frequent FAQs seeded into it to reduce calls. The CEO advised on the recent coverage and support for new councillor training with associate staff. He now relies on versatile the SALC office staff and associates;
- Separate meetings to clarify strategy and key objectives for next 4 years are to be scheduled. Topics to include the increase in work volumes, new councillors, loss of experience, clustering, Director coverage, and examples of best practice and direction to local councils in Surrey. The Chair confirmed the need to get

closer to local councils perhaps via a regional approach. GA stressed the need for succession planning, and MG reminded Members of previous Surrey ALC events to invite local councils;

- LB advised Members on the SLCC support for Clerks that included phone lines, forum etc.;

11:05 – MG leaves meeting

- RT advised that SLCC has appointed a team of former local authority lawyers. However, they have no relevant local council experience. Queries are now being related to Surrey ALC solicitors due to misleading advice received from SLCC. RT will work with the DCEO to improve existing services to local councils e.g. webinars;
- SMcL advised that the Surrey Info website facility has been removed by Surry CC. This web-building site is a vital tool for many local councils in Surrey. There has been no consultation or advance warning of the withdrawal of service. MG asked for details and will review the information; and
- AB suggested that the strategy and key objectives meeting be held before the AGM as details could then be presented to conference. It was agreed to schedule the meeting for Monday 7th October 2019 in Wonersh Sports Hall commencing at 10am with lunch. Mark Mulberry should be invited so that any financial implications can be assessed.

7. Working with Surrey County Council

The CEO advised that meeting scheduled with Tim Oliver, Chair of SCC, was cancelled. A rescheduled date in August will be advised. The agenda included the use of the Parish Online digital mapping system, H&WB, Surrey Hills and briefing SCC Councillors, maybe at Cabinet level, to raise awareness of local councils in Surrey.

8. NALC Update

- The Chair advised that, following the recent elections, more younger people and those from the various gender/race groups are needed. In addition, the complex application is difficult to complete and needs to be overhauled;
- The CEO advised that Katy Bourne, the Sussex PCC, will be a keynote speaker at the forthcoming NALC AGM and conference. A representative from smaller councils will also be invited. PP was nominated as the Surrey ALC small council representative and accepted the invitation to attend; and
- Members asked how Councillors are getting information and updates. The CEO advised that only around 50% of Councillors know that the SALC website/newsletter exists.

9. SERCAF

The CEO reported that SERCAF meeting on the IOW meeting was successful.

10. Update from Directors

- GA reported that, as a Surrey Heath Borough Councillor, their Performance and Scrutiny annual plan for the Borough had little or no profile for local councils. He has formed a new local council working group that will, hopefully, raise the profile for delivery outside of the town centre. The DCEO will put this news in the SALC bulletin and raise this at the AGM; and
- SC reported on progress with the Godalming Neighbourhood Plan referendum (budget was £30,000). CH suggested that the Godalming Neighbourhood Plan is used as a case study at the AGM.

11. Urgent matters

- **Surrey Hills matters** – LC provided an update: -
 - New AONB five-year strategy and highways plan to be launched at their AGM on 15 October 2019;
 - Need access to senior Surrey CC Highways Officer for funding. CIL money should be released to fund three staff including a Highways Officer;
 - Members discussed the GU8superfast.co.uk video that highlighted the 'rat run' traffic issue around Hambledon and the problem of Surrey CC Highways advice on planning matters. This will also be raised at the AONB Board on 4 September 2019;
 - There will be a Surrey Hills Affordable Housing summit with English Housing Association on 24 September with issues reported to Planning and Highways workshop on 5th November 2019; and

- CH advised that techniques such as narrowing entrances are relatively easy to implement to help both local councils and Surrey CC save money. SC advised LC to talk to Cllr Colin Kemp at Surrey CC regarding infrastructure improvements.
- The Chair advised that Bolney Parish Council (in West Sussex) fix their own potholes for WSCC via 100 volunteers led by the Chair. This was seen a good example of local service delivery, but Members were concerned with the liability and resource/staff issues. RT described examples of County Councils working with local councils that cover issues associated with liability, indemnity and training. Members agreed to raise this at the AGM; and

12:09 – *Stuart McLachlan leaves the meeting*

- LB reported on the decision by Waverley Borough Council to end compensatory grants. The financial burden now rests with on rural local councils. The CEO advised that the current trend across Boroughs and Districts is to remove them e.g. none in ESCC and WSCC. The DCEO reminded Members that effective business planning should allow local councils to set their precept/budget and use these resources for grants.

12. Next meetings

The next meeting would commence at 10am on Tuesday 24th September 2019 at Cranleigh.

The AGM would be held at the Dorking Halls on Tuesday 15th October 2019 commencing 10am. Members discussed the need for meeting to be held in December 2019 to review the outcomes of the AGM.

Meeting closed 12:15

Signed (Chairman) _____

Dated _____