



Minutes of the Board Meeting of Surrey ALC Ltd.  
Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 10.30am  
Meeting held on Zoom

## Attendance

Cllr Christine Howard DL, Chair  
Cllr Graham Alleway, Director  
Cllr Mike George, Director  
Cllr Stuart McLachlan, Director  
Sally Harman, Chief County Officer, Surrey ALC Ltd.  
Mark Mulberry, Mulberry & Co, Accountant and Company Secretary  
Anna Beams, Mulberry & Co, Clerk to the Board

### 1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed all Directors and officers to the meeting. Congratulations were extended to the Chair on her recent appointment as a Deputy Lieutenant for Surrey.

### 2. Apologies & declarations of interest

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Katia Malcaus Cooper. There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. Approval of previous minutes

The minutes were approved as a true record of the previous meeting.

*10.35 Cllr Mike George joined the meeting.*

### 4. Chairs Report

The Chair referred to her report circulated with the agenda (*appendix A*) and highlighted item 3 where she proposed to hold a Climate Change networking event for Surrey ALC in conjunction with the Lord Lieutenants Climate Change Group.

Following discussions, it was **AGREED** that the Chair and CCO would form a proposal including costings to bring to the next Board meeting.

<b>ACTION:</b> Chair and CCO to meet and form a Climate Change Networking Event proposal including costings to report to the Board.
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The Chair added that a request has been received from the Surrey Hills Society to promote an event they are holding in April.

It was **AGREED** that, providing they send the CCO the details, the office will be happy to circulate on behalf of Surrey Hills.

## 5. CCO Report

The CCO referred to her report circulated with the agenda (*appendix B*).

- She reminded Directors that they are all booked to attend NALC Levelling Up training at the end of the month.
- The CCO explained that, due to a lack of response from Wellers Law Group over the Christmas period, she has been trialing the NALC legal advice service which has been working well. Responses have been received within 5 working days and can be received within 24 hours if marked as urgent.
- Cllr Alleway raised the issue of the rising risk of the County Council selling off land and the subsequent impact to rural parishes and the need for the County to communicate their schedule. The CCO confirmed that she contacted the County Council and Boroughs in September urging that any communications with parish and town councils are disseminated as early as possible. The Chair suggested that this matter is raised at the Levelling Up training at the end of the month. The CCO added that other County Associations within the network have gone through the devolution process, and she can take concerns to the County Officers for advice if necessary. She suggested that Directors reflect on the matter post the Levelling Up training and bring their thoughts to the next Board meeting for discussion.

The Chair proposed that a Devolution Working Group is formed.

It was **AGREED** to take the discussion on devolution to the next Board meeting.

### **ACTIONS:**

- Directors to bring thoughts regarding devolution to the next Board meeting.
- Agenda item for next meeting – To Form Devolution Working Group.

- The CCO reported that at the recent Clerks Forum, attendance had increased from 18 to 43 and the Councillors Forum from 15 to 50. Learning taken from the Forums is to increase the duration from 1 to 1.5 hours and potentially invite less speakers to allow more Q&A time.
- The Chair and CCO recently met with Canon Peter Bruinvels and Sarah Goodman to discuss the Surrey County Council Armed Forces Covenant. The Board was invited to appoint a representative to sit on the Task Group Board.

It was **AGREED** that the Board would appoint a representative with the appointment reviewed annually.

It was **AGREED** that the Chair is appointed as SALC representative on the Surrey County Council Armed Forces Covenant Task Group Board for the current year.

**ACTION:** CCO to inform Sarah Goodman of the Chair's appointment.

- The CCO reported that the updated Road Safety Strategy Consultation has been emailed out to members by Anna and posted on the website.
- The CCO summarised precept changes in Surrey
  - Average Band D: £55.76 (national average: £81.74)
  - Increase Band D: 5.97% (national increase: 5.87%)

- Total precept in Surrey: £9.3million

## 6. Finance report

Mark Mulberry referred to his report circulated with the agenda (*Appendix C*)

Mark added that an increase in estimate of costs has been factored into account dependent on decisions made by the Board. He suggested that the Board may wish to make decisions regarding future expenditure and proposed that subscription fees may need to increase by a maximum of 5% in 2025-26.

It was AGREED that Mark would re-calculate the figures for future expenditure following decisions made by the Board and report back.

**ACTION:** Mark Mulberry to re-calculate figures for future expenditure based on decisions made by the Board for inclusion in the financial report at the next Board meeting.

## 7. Training Report

Anna Beams referred to her summary circulated with the agenda (*Appendix D*).

She explained that the training programme differs each year depending on requirements and that there is a 4-year cycle of training whereby councillor attendance can decline throughout the duration of the 4-year term. She suggested that including specific and relevant training such as the upcoming Biodiversity Workshop should improve the impact on the decline in attendance.

Anna added that she has focused on encouraging councils or clusters of councils to book in-house, bespoke training and has recently renewed the training programme to include updated planning and finance training. Attendance in quarter 4 is looking positive following an email push of the new training sessions.

The CCO added that training is being promoted at forums and by email, newsletters and a membership leaflet which is currently being drafted.

## 8. President and Vice President Roles

The Chair referred to the draft role profiles circulated with the agenda (*Appendix E*).

Following discussions, it was **AGREED** that:

- Following the retirement of Michael More-Molyneux in two years' time, the new Lord Lieutenant will be invited to continue as President of SALC for the tenure of their Lieutenancy with a review by the SALC Board every three years.
- Previous CEOs may be appointed as Vice Presidents of SALC.
- The term of office for Vice President is a maximum of nine years with a review by the SALC Board every three years.

It was **AGREED** to make the following amendments to the role profiles:

- President Roles and Responsibilities - Be available for consultation with the Board and CCO on matters of strategy, governance, finance and management, if the **SALC Board** requests meeting.
- Vice President Roles and Responsibilities - Be available for consultation with the Board and CCO on matters of strategy, governance, finance and management, if the **SALC Board** requests meeting.

- To add to President and Vice President Roles and Responsibilities – **This position has no voting rights and no involvement in the day to day running of the organisation.**

**ACTIONS:**

- Anna Beams to make above amendments to the role profiles of President and Vice President.

**9. CiLCA SLA & Insurance and Zoom Costs**

The Board **APPROVED** that the CiLCA SLA for 2024-25 is signed and returned by the CCO.

The Board **APPROVED** a payment of £71.19 for professional industry insurance to Sue Hobbs, CiLCA trainer.

The Board **APPROVED** a payment of 16.7% of Zoom costs to Sue Hobbs, CiLCA trainer.

**ACTIONS:**

- CCO to sign and return CiLCA SALC when received.  
- Anna Beams to make above payments on receipt of invoices.

**10. SALC Contract Renewals 2024**

*11:54 Due to the commercially sensitive nature of this item, Anna Beams and Mark Mulberry left the meeting.*

The CCO had circulated a proposal from Mulberry and Co ahead of the meeting which incorporated all the amends proposed from the October board meeting. The Board agreed for the CCO to sign the proposed Mulberry and Co contract for Provision of Governance and Financial Services along with their training services from the 1st of April 2024 to the 1st of April 2025 circulated by the CCO with 1 amend which was to amend to reflect 13.5hrs for Staff Costings.

**ACTION:** CCO to notify Mulberry and Co and approve contract.

The CCO had circulated 2024/25 three legal partner tender proposals for consideration ahead of the meeting. The Board agreed for the CCO to sign the proposed contract with Surrey Hills for 10hrs of advice on retainer from the 1st April to the 31st of March 2025 and for them to become SALC's official legal partner for the coming financial year. NALC legal services to be used for any non-urgent straight forward queries.

**ACTION:** CCO to inform the parties involved and approve contract.

The CCO had circulated a proposal from Mulberry and Co and Breakthrough Communications to continue as SALC's training partners into 2024/25. The Board agreed to continue their training partnership agreements with both Mulberry and Co and Breakthrough Communications from the 1st April 2024 to the 31st March 2025.

**ACTION:** CCO to notify parties involved and approve agreements.

The Board agreed to not pursue an HR partnership relationship and instead to provide general advice. SALC would refer members for more complex advice to Worknest, NALCs partner organisation.

The Board agreed for the CCO to investigate member preferential rates for a possible Planning Consultant partner but to not look into a retainer situation.

The Board agreed to delegate the approval of the SALC insurance contract to the Chair and CCO subject to it fulfilling requirements and within budget.

12:20 Anna Beams re-joined the meeting.

## 11. SALC Website

The CCO confirmed that she has been advised that SALC will be able to obtain a .gov.uk domain as a Limited Company.

Following discussions, it was **AGREED** that the CCO takes the next steps to acquire a .gov.uk domain.

It was **AGREED** that Aubergine are the preferred website supplier for a proposed new website, and the costs were agreed in principal.

### **ACTION:**

- CCO to take next steps in acquiring .gov.uk domain.
- CCO to progress proposal put forward by Aubergine.

## 12. NALC Motion Consideration

The CCO explained that the Board's request to add training of new councillors to take place within the first year of office to the Model Standing orders had been submitted to NALC. NALC had responded stating that there would be a consultation on the Model Standing Orders later this year and this addition could be put forward by the CALC at that point. The CCO noted that the Board may want to consider putting forward a request to change the name of Clerk to a more up to date title.

It was **AGREED** to follow up at the next Board meeting.

## 13. The Future of the Local Council Support Sector

The CCO referred to a report circulated with the agenda prepared by Danny Moody, CEO of Northants CALC. The report drew attention to the duplication and lack of cohesive working by NALC, SLCC and the CALCs and proposed holding a summit in Spring 2024 to address the issue.

It was **AGREED** to support the proposed Summit in Spring 2024 with feedback that there is currently a gap whereby there are 82 members of SALC and 50 members of the SLCC in Surrey and as such any duplication of services such as training wasn't across the board.

**ACTION:** CCO to feedback the above to Danny Moody.

## 14. Board Meeting Dates 2024

The Board **AGREED** with all proposed dates.

## 15. SALC AGM/Conference 2024

It was **PROPOSED** that the ticket cost to member councils is increased to £25 per person.

It was **PROPOSED** that the cost to a commercial stall holder is £100 per stall plus the ticket cost of £25 per person.

A discussion was held regarding ticket costs for non-members and a breakdown of non-member costs was requested by the Board.

It was **AGREED** to defer the above items and decision on ticket and stall pricing to the next Board meeting.

The proposed total expenditure was **AGREED** as per the breakdown circulated with the agenda.

Proposed speakers were **AGREED** as per the list circulated with the agenda, with the exception of Planning Surrey County Council speakers would need to be pinned down in March.

**ACTIONS:**

- Anna Beams to draft a breakdown of non-member costs
- Discussions for next Board meeting – ticket cost for members and non-members, stall holder fees, Surrey County Council speakers

**16. Communications Plan 2024**

The CCO reported that the December newsletter saw an increase in open rates and that subscriber numbers have risen.

**17. Working Plan**

The CCO will update the Working Plan based on decisions made at this meeting.

**ACTION:** CCO to update Working Plan to reflect decisions made at this meeting.

**18. Matters arising from previous minutes**

All actions have been completed.

**19. Any other business for future meetings**

The following items were **AGREED**:

- To record future Board meetings.
- Managing Risk – Cllr Alleway to put forward a formal way of managing risk at the March Board meeting
- To invite proposed new Board members to the next Board meeting.

The CCO advised the Board that she will be on annual leave from 9<sup>th</sup> March for one week.

**20. Date & venue of next Board meeting**

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024 @ 10:30am - Briars Centre, Lightwater, GU18 5YX

**21. Confidential business**

*12:47 CCO and Anna Beams left the meeting.*

The Chair and Chief Officer discussed the implications of the recent NALC Pay review. As Sally only started with us in July 2023, she recognised that a back dated pay review would be a challenge for our current budget and has offered to accept the NALC recommended 4% pay rise from the new financial year. In principle the Board agreed that we should follow NALC guidelines for staff employed by Surrey ALC.

Many thanks for all your input to a very successful January SALC Board meeting.

12:50 Meeting closed.

Signed (Chairman) *Chris Howard*  
Chris Howard (Apr 9, 2024 17:09 GMT+1)

Dated 09/04/2024

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# SALC Board Minutes 24 Jan 2024 - DRAFT

Final Audit Report

2024-04-09

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