



Surrey ALC Ltd.

Minutes of the Virtual Board Meeting of Surrey ALC Ltd. held on Wednesday 28th April 2021 at 09:30am by Zoom

Attendance

Cllr Steve Cossar, Chairman
Cllr Dr Paul Cragg, Vice Chair
Cllr Stuart McLachlan, Director
Cllr Mike Goodman, Director
Roger Taylor, Legal Advisor
Mark Mulberry, Accountant
Dr Richard Olliver, Vice President
Liz Cutter, Vice President
Anne Bott, CEO Surrey ALC Ltd.
Anna Beams, Mulberry and Co (Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence

Chris Howard, Graham Alleway

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

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

3. Matter arising not on this agenda

The Chairman requested that the CEO and representatives from Mulberry and Co give the Board an update on the first month under the new arrangements.

The CEO reported that the arrangements are working well. It has been a particularly busy month for member councils due to the death of HRH Duke of Edinburgh and the uncertainty surrounding the continuation of remote meetings which has reflected in the volume of queries. Feedback from member councils has been very positive and weekly meetings have been arranged between the CEO and Anna Beams to ensure that all expectations are being met.

Anna Beams and Mark Mulberry reiterated the comments of the CEO.

Cllr McLachlan requested an update regarding Trevor Leggo and West and East Sussex. The CEO responded that Trevor was now employed by both West and East Sussex, that West Sussex have engaged Mulberry and Co as service providers and that East Sussex have employed an administration assistant. Mark Mulberry added that the both West and East Sussex would like to maintain a positive working relationship with the Surrey association.

The Chairman advised the Board that he would be attending a meeting with Surrey Hills regarding future partnership working and would report back to the Board the outcome of the meeting.

Liz Cutter advised that she had obtained the large Surrey parish map and it was available to use at future large events.

4. Financial Report

Mark Mulberry provided an update to the Board:

- There is £74,607 in the current account as of 28 April 2021.
- The total sum of debtors is £35,543 which is made up of approximately 35 outstanding subscription invoices, statements will be issued towards the end of May but mark is not expecting any defaulters.
- The VAT return is showing a refund of £565.

Once the March Management accounts are approved the Statutory Accounts can be issued and filed with Companies House.

Mark then referred to pages 2 and 3, the income and expenditure report for 2020-21:

- As at 31st March 2021 the income showed £82,000 of which £20,000 were NALC subscriptions.
- The cross charge to SSALC was £47,000 and it is estimated that £3,000 will be returned on closure of the company.
- SALC showed a surplus of £14,000 as at 31st March 2021 which when added to reserves gave a closing balance of £28,000 in closing reserves.
- Not anticipating a significant increase in income for 2022.
- Costs for 2021-22 are anticipated to be in the region of £74,000 in costs and the surplus £12,000 at 31st March 2022.

Mark suggested that the Board could consider how to make best use of the association's reserves and reminded the Board that he could produce all invoices and evidence of expenditure on request.

The Vice Chair queried what would happen should some or a significant number of members default on their SALC subscription payment. Mark Mulberry advised that due procedure would be followed but that it was unlikely as payments are at a level expected at this point in the year.

The Chairman raised the subject of the sum of £200 per year paid to SERCAF by the Surrey association as a subscription. He explained that each association within SERCAF paid the subscription other than East and West Sussex. The Chairman asked the Board to consider whether reimbursement should be sought.

It was **RESOLVED** to seek reimbursement of associations share of the surplus remaining in the SERCAF funds, a total of approximately £380.

5. Training Report

Anna Beams referred to the training report circulated prior to the Board meeting adding that bookings were at a level expected and that Mulberry and Co would continue to expand the programme. The question was raised regarding costs to members when face to face training is able to resume. Anne Beams responded that there is a need to take into account the cost of venues and length of training sessions and therefore the cost of a face to face training session would be more than a remote module. Venues are also restricted to reduced capacities at present which could have an impact.

6. CiLCA Support Programme

The CEO referred to her report circulated with the agenda and explained that enquiries had been made by clerks in Surrey regarding the CiLCA training and mentoring programme, that the expectation by councils is that new clerks will be prepared to undertake CiLCA and that a CiLCA qualified clerk is a great asset to member councils.

Anna Beams added that the West Sussex Association had resolved to support the training and mentoring programme and that the bulk of the administration is carried out by the CiLCA mentors with approximately one to two hours per month of West Sussex resources being used.

Clarification was sought regarding indemnity insurance and a Service Level Agreement (SLA). It was explained by the CEO and Anna Beams that insurance was taken out by the mentors in January for one year and the cost reimbursed by SSALC. An SLA was signed by both parties, SSALC and the CiLCA mentors, at the same time but that the SLA no longer applies since the cessation of SSALC. It was explained that it is the mentors themselves that are insured personally and that clarification would need to be sought as to who would be responsible for the cost of the insurance prior to the policy expiring.

The Chairman recommended that SALC enter into an agreement on the same terms as West Sussex. It was **RESOLVED** to enter into such an agreement.

The CEO raised the matter of signing authority. It was **RESOLVED** that signing authority be delegated to the CEO.

7. Recruitment Support

The CEO referred to her report circulated with the agenda adding that feedback she has received from staff previously involved in the process is that the recruitment process is resource intensive. She further advised the Board that the tendency in Surrey is for members to undertake their own recruitment process with some input from SALC in an advisory role.

The Chairman stated that he is concerned that there are a limited number of staff hours and that to undertake a complete process for a member council would use a proportionately high number of those hours. The option of charging for a recruitment service beyond simply advertising a vacancy on the website was raised.

It was **RESOLVED** to continue to advertise vacancies on the Surrey ALC website as part of the member councils' subscription and to charge for recruitment services beyond that with charges to be quoted on an individual basis.

It was **RESOLVED** that Anna Beams would draft wording for the website to be approved by the Board making it very clear that if member councils require a service more than advertising a position it is not within the realm of membership and therefore there will be an additional cost.

8. Developing future priorities for SALC

The Chairman proposed that, as a new Surrey focussed organisation, it is vital that a business plan is developed and that in the first instance a document should be drafted outlining the priorities of the association. He proposed that the first task should be consulting with members by way of a survey and drop in sessions, the plan would then be drafted based on the response.

It was **RESOLVED** that a survey would be drafted by the CEO, Anna Beams and the Chairman for approval of the Board

10.52 Mark Mulberry left the meeting

9. Relationships with external bodies

The Chairman proposed that it was important the association should develop good relationships with external bodies in Surrey although it would be necessary to keep the quantity and frequency of meetings to a

reasonable level due to staffing resources available. He added that it is particularly important to maintain good relationships with the County Council and clerk's organisations.

Liz Cutter suggested that there could be Board members appointed as representatives to external bodies.

It was agreed that relationships with external bodies are maintained and that it is of vital importance that the needs of member councils are the priority of the association.

10. Communication with members

Anna Beams updated the Board on the current methods of communication with members.

A fortnightly newsletter is circulated by email which includes an update from the CEO following the NALC County Officer Forum.

The SALC website has been updated to include a news feed on the home page and is updated when necessary but usually on a daily basis.

Any time critical updates for members are emailed as necessary and posted on the website.

The CEO added that clerks and chairman's forums have been a useful communication method in the past and recommended that the association continue to run them inviting a key speaker to ensure maximum attendance.

It was **RESOLVED** to schedule dates for future forums and invite the police to attend as key speakers.

11. New Board members

The Chairman reminded the Board that there are currently vacancies on the SALC Board and invited ideas to encourage new Members. He suggested that Board members could advise of any interested parties and encourage them to speak to the Chairman and CEO and invite them to observe future Board meetings. It was also suggested that a notice could be placed on the website. The Chairman stressed the importance of ensuring that potential new Directors of the Board have the necessary skills and interests to strengthen and enhance the current arrangement.

The CEO reminded the Board that meetings would shortly return to face to face and that it may be more difficult to attract new members if meetings are no longer taking place remotely.

Liz Cutter reminded the Board that a representative for clerks had attended Board meetings in the past however it was resolved by the Board that, as the Surrey branch of the Society of Local Council Clerks has now been revived and there is good communication with the CEO, it is not necessary to invite a representative to attend Board meetings.

It was **RESOLVED** that Anna Beams and the CEO would draft and place a notice on the SALC website directing interested parties to contact the Chairman or CEO for an informal discussion.

12. Frequency & venues for Board meetings

The Chairman proposed that, as processes have now been put in place for the running of the new organisation, the Board should return to meeting four times a year face to face. He proposed that meetings are held in various locations across the county in member council venues and that members of the host council are invited to attend.

It was suggested that hybrid meetings or a mixture of on-site and hybrid meetings are held to enable maximum attendance.

It was **RESOLVED** that four meetings on-site, hybrid or remote meetings are held per year.

13. Date of future meetings and AGM

It was resolved the next Board meeting will be held in July and that Anna Beams will circulate a Doodle poll to establish a date when the majority of the Board are available. It was further resolved that future dates would be discussed at the next Board meeting.

11.38 Meeting closed

Signed (Chairman) _____

Dated _____