

Cumbria Association of Local Councils

Annual General Meeting 2019

Minutes of the 45th Annual General Meeting of the Cumbria Association of Local Councils held on Saturday the 9th November 2019 at 10.30 am at the Market Hall Church Street Wigton

Present:

Moira Knoery (Holme St Cuthbert PC)	Linda Housby (Holme St Cuthbert PC)
Margaret Knowles (Beetham PC)	Janet Searle (Wetheral PC)
Paul Titley (Keswick TC)	Roger Hart (Allonby PC)
Patricia Macdonald (Orton (Carlisle) PC)	David Wilson (Brigham PC)
Sue Castle-Clarke (Ousby PC)	Pauline Hinde (Bowness on Solway PC)
Paul Carr (Embleton PC)	Elaine Lynch (Wigton TC)
Marian Caruthers (Bowness on Solway PC)	Margaret Davies (Wasdale PM)
Christine West (Lazonby PC)	Trevor Allison (Cummersdale PC)
Keith Launchbury (Westnewton PC)	Steve Harwood (Keswick TC)
Janet Mansfield (Allhallows PC)	Anne Byers (Dalston PC)
Sean Reed (St Cuthbert Without PC)	Freda Chapman (Borrowdale PC)
Roger Atfield (Levens PC)	Pennie Ridyard (Burneside PC)
Mike Higginbotham (Wetheral PC)	Bryan Craig (Dalston PC)
Jonathan Davies (Penrith TC)	Peter Winter (Preston Patrick PC)
Christine Hallatsch (Windermere TC)	Leith Hallatsch (Windermere TC)
David Graham (Crosby Ravensworth PC)	Jane Tea (Kirkoswald PC)
Malcolm Grainger (Boltons PC)	Peter Thornton (Cumbria CC)
David Peters Natland PC)	Holly Ho (Alston Moor PC)
Julia Wrigley (Wasdale PM)	Meg Hancock (Newby PM)
Jo Lappin (CLEP)	Hilary Harrington (Allerdale Mayor)
Phil Hancock (Morland PC)	

In attendance Samantha Bagshaw (Chief Officer), Sonia Hutchinson (Parish Development Officer), Karen Wood (Office Administrator) and Chris Shaw (Liaison Officer Allerdale and Copeland, Jean Airey (Senior Training Officer)

Madam Mayor Hilary Harrington Allerdale Borough Council welcomed parish representatives and the guest speakers to Wigton. She said that it was good to see a large number of parish councillors in the hall. She hoped that all the information provided by the guest speakers would be helpful.

The chairman asked the meeting to stand in silence in remembrance of Bob Mather the late President of the Association who had died during the year

Part 1

Prior to the business part of the meeting heard from two guest speakers.

Peter Thornton Deputy Leader of Cumbria County Council

Mr. Thornton spoke about the future of local government. He said that the parish council was the bedrock of local government. Others had said that parish councillors were of a higher quality than district councillors and certainly they were local people with talent and commitment. He said that all councils of whatever tier had to balance their budgets but with less central government aid this was more difficult and he gave the example of Northamptonshire county council where problems had occurred.

Dealing with the issue of Social Care for which at present the county council had financial responsibility he said that the council tax yield for 70 properties in Cumbria covered the cost of one patient with dementia in Cumbria and in total the cost to the council for social care was £170 million.

Turning to the Highways budget Peter Thornton said that the total length of roads to be gritted in Cumbria was 490 miles the equivalent of Penrith to Barcelona but it was with highways that the public could be of greatest assistance by early reporting of problems. He spoke of the advance in technology that allowed for quality information to be passed quickly to the council.

In Cumbria he said a major problem was rural transport. He said that 5 years ago subsidies at a cost of £250k were stopped but most routes continued to operate but whether that would continue was a moot point and the answer may be moving to services on demand.

He touched on the question of road pricing and electric cars and how local government could be involved in charging arrangements.

Peter moved on to answer many questions some to do with connectivity in rural areas, with the clearing of gullies and with the argument of whether

care for the elderly and disabled should fall on the principal authorities or the NHS.

Finally Peter returned to his earlier point that the role of the parish council was vital given that they had local knowledge and often were able to shout the loudest.

Jo Lappin Chief executive Cumbria Enterprise partnership (LEP)

Jo said her presentation was titled Working together for Cumbria for a reason. It was a politics free zone and where opportunities to work together were clear.

She said that there were 38 LEP nationally and Cumbria were the 8th largest geographically and the 3rd smallest by population. The private sector had 20 members and the public sector 6 LEP were responsible for strategy, investment, co-ordination and advocacy and had many challenges.

Cumbria had the slowest growth of population in the country and the third largest older population by ratio. Cumbria had third highest salaries of the 38 but serious problems of deprivation and poverty in some areas. Jo said that Cumbria should not be seen as an isolated part of the country and the LEP aim was to persuade companies to start up or relocate to Cumbria and people need to know that the area was not inaccessible. She said that Cumbria had much to offer with global nuclear expertise and strong and resilient communities with large visitor and outdoor industries.

Jo said that the LEP were an active member of the Northern Powerhouse 11 strong group of LEPs and were central to discussions on energy needs. She said that they had a significant offer on rural matters and were being heard by others

Turning to the Borderlands Growth Deal she accepted that this needed wider publicity but it was a cross border opportunity to leverage many millions from central government and the Cumbria LEP had to take every opportunity to be at the heart of the project

Jo touched on the Towns deal opportunity with 5 towns in Cumbria actively involved and generally where towns and parish could be involved

Jo answered a number of questions about keeping the working population in the county, about the infrastructure and the distance from the West Coast to the M6. She agreed that every effort needed to be made not simply to promote the Lake District but the county as a whole.

The chairman thanked both speakers for their contribution and joining a lively debate.

Part 2

Election of Officers

i) The meeting elected David Graham as President of the Association and he chaired the meeting from this point onwards.

Mr. Graham said it was a real challenge to follow Bob Mather and an honour to take the role

Vice president Mr. S Simpson
Hon. Treasurer Ms J Hardy

2. Apologies

Seascale Parish Council	Stan Simpson, Vice President
William Little. (Great Orton PC)	Nigel Wadsworth (Docker PM)
Arthur Capstick (Staveley with Ings PC)	
Keith Hitchen (Waberthwaite PC)	Alan Bowness (Boltons PC)
John Saunders	

3. Minutes of the annual general meeting held on the 10th November 2019

They were agreed as a correct record and signed by the President.

4. Matters arising.

There were none.

5 Presentation of the Annual Report

The chairman of the executive committee Rick Petecki presented the report.

The chairman referred to the annual report as printed. He said that the overall budget cuts experienced by the principal authorities may be coming to an end and that impacted on the grants made by the district councils and the county council to CALC. He said that in some districts Calc were now working with different political leaders following the May 2019 elections but the aim was to continue a strong partnership and influence decisions taken. That meant being consulted at an earlier stage rather than consultation at the end. He said the county association were taken seriously by NALC and had a representative on the policy committee. He said he was pleased that the fee change has not had a negative effect. He said that CALC aimed to be active in other bodies in the county but that placed a serious strain on the small staff. However Calc had to be relevant and communities benefitted by being represented by CALC. The Annual Report was adopted.

6 Presentation of the Statement of Accounts

In the absence of the Honorary Treasurer the Chief Officer presented the statement of Income and Expenditure for 2018/2019. She said that whilst the income and expenditure statement showed a deficit compared with last year income from membership and the principal authorities was stable. Training costs had increased but since the last elections with many new councillors it was expected that would change. She said we were working in a challenging environment but with a good relationship with the principal authorities and a continued high level of membership the officers who were in the office from 9 to 5 every weekday would maintain the ability to help all councils. The statement of accounts was approved.

7. Appointment of Auditors

The reappointment of Saint and Co as the Association's auditors was approved

8 Appointment of Executive Committee

The chairman said that it would be noted that Cllr Margaret Throp (Upper Derwent PC) was not standing for re-election. He said that she had suffered a severe stroke. He said he had conveyed the best wishes of the association to her family.

i) The president reported the nominations made by the district associations

Allerdale	Cllr Rick Petecki Cllr Roger Hart	(Embleton and District PC) (Allonby PC)
Barrow	Cllr Mike Cummings	(Askham and Irleth PC)
Carlisle	Cllr Bryan Craig Cllr Mike Higginbotham	(Dalston PC) (Wetheral PC)
Copeland	Cllr Andrew Pratt Cllr Oliver Dorgan	(Drigg and Carleton PC) (Cleator Moor TC)
Eden	Cllr Sue Castle –Clarke Cllr Jane Tear	(Ousby PC) (Kirkoswald PC)
South Lakeland	Cllr David Peters Cllr Leith Hallatsch	(Natland PC) (Windermere TC)

ii) Election of members to serve for a period of three years

The president announced that the following had been elected at the meeting

Cllr Jonathan Davies (Penrith TC)

The president said at the constitution did not allow co-option to the county executive of members to serve for three years and a further election for the 4 vacancies would be held at the next annual meeting.

9. To determine annual increase of the CALC portion of the subscription income for 2020/2021

The AGM considered a report by the chief officer explaining the background to the county executive's recommendations

Each recommendation was put to the meeting and approved

- i) That the CALC subscription income shall be increased by 3% for 2020/2021
- ii) That the Calc subscription for parish meetings that raise a precept shall be £34 in 2020/2021, plus 7.2 p per elector for the NALC portion of the membership fee
- iii) That parish meetings which do not raise a precept, shall not be charged any Calc or Nalc subscription in 2020/2021.

10 To discuss any other business raised by councils

No issues were raised

11 Concluding remarks Mayor Hilary Harrington in closing the meeting said that challenging and stimulating questions had been raised with the guest speakers and the meeting showed just how hard CALC worked to keep the local councils out of trouble. She said she for one had certainly enjoyed the meeting and wished everyone a safe journey home.

The meeting closed at 12.40 pm