

CUMBRIA ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

DRAFT Minutes

Minutes of a meeting of CALC's Executive Committee held on **Saturday 21st October 2017** at 10.00 am at the Community Fire Station, Penrith.

PRESENT:

Ronnie Auld
Ann Byers
Leith Hallatsch
Keith Hitchen
Mike Higginbotham
David Huxley
Leslie Johnson
Brian Kennish
Bob Mather
Rick Petecki (Chairman)
David Peters
Margaret Throp

In attendance: Samantha Bagshaw, Chief Officer
 Cllr Mike Cumming

Presentation from **Cllr Keith Little**, Cabinet Member, Cumbria County Council for Highways and Transport and **Stephen Hall**, Acting Assistant Director, Highways, Transport and Fleet.

Stephen Hall talked about the on-going efforts being made by Cumbria County Council to improve their Highways Information Management System (HIMS). Stephen highlighted functions such as the ability to add yourself to any existing queries in order to receive email updates on the progress of work on reported faults. He explained that due to budgetary constraints, and the size of Cumbria (second largest county in England), roadworks must be prioritised and work can only be carried out if it meets the County Council's intervention criteria.

Stephen also talked about improvements that are currently being made to the HIMS which will be soon available – these include:

Access to full list of road closures and temporary diversions. This will explain why roads are closed and how long they will be closed for.

Another future improvement to the service, that the highways team is hoping to complete in the next 6 months, is the ability to create automated highways reports for every parish in Cumbria. This will allow clerks to be able to print off up to date highways information for their parish council meetings.

Action: June CALC Executive Committee meeting to receive an update on progress.

Cllr Little also cautioned that parish councils should not undertake any kind of work on the highways without consulting the local highways teams first. The example of a council putting stones to fill a deep pot hole was raised and the danger that any damage to vehicles caused by the stones would be the responsibility of whoever placed the material on the highways.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Little and Stephen Hall for their presentation.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. An Apology for absence was received from Cllr Jill Hay and accepted.

MINUTES

2. The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 24th June 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

3. Minute 13 stated

‘It was **Agreed** that Cumbria County Council’s Public Health and Communities Officer be invited to speak for 10 minutes at the CALC AGM in November.’ This has not happened due to concerns that it may make the meeting too long.

Agreed: To discuss the 2018 AGM format at the next Exec committee.

4. **Planning Arrangements in Principal Planning Authorities**

Minute 27 – the Chief Officer and Margaret Throp met to discuss the issues and agreed to pursue the matter with the principal planning officer at Cumbria County Council.

Matters Arising were noted by the Committee

CALC Budget Projections

5. The Committee discussed the Budget Projections. It was suggested that in future, a budget be set at the beginning of the year. It was generally agreed that seeing a three year projection was helpful to highlight any future challenges to CALC’s financial position.
6. The Committee noted the Budget Projection report.

CALC PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS TO 30th September 2017

7. The Committee considered the latest accounts up to the end of September 2017. The Chief Officer observed that the current balance would not remain so high as most of the income was in but that there was further expenditure to come.
8. CALC’s representation on outside bodies was discussed in connection with the costs attached to attending external meetings.

9. The level of CALC's reserves were also discussed. The President of CALC explained that for many organisations, the current level of reserves would be considered high. However, almost half of CALC's funding comes from outside organisations, any of whom can withdraw funding at short notice. If this was to happen, reasonable levels of reserves would allow the organisation to continue functioning whilst arrangements could be made to address the shortfall.
10. The Committee noted the statement of payments and receipts for the period ended 30th September 2017.
11. **Agreed:** that members who attend external meetings of outside bodies write a short paragraph about why their attendance is useful to CALC's membership for the January meeting.

CALC Members Survey

12. The Chief Officer reported the survey had been completed and findings would be used to improve the service offered by CALC to the members.
13. The Committee expressed concern about the apparent lack of value placed by respondents on the District Association meetings. David Peters stressed that members should go first to their district association to discuss matters of concern with fellow parish councillors - not directly to the CALC executive committee. There was a general discussion of the role and purpose of the district associations and how to define this more clearly whilst acknowledging that each district association can choose how to handle their own affairs for example whether or not they choose to have three-tier meetings. There was concern that the district associations should not decline in relevance.
14. Keith Hitchen suggested that the imminent consultation relating to Managing Nuclear Waste Safely (MRWS) on defining 'what is a community' would be something that every parish council should consider and that every district association should discuss.

The Committee noted the CALC Members Survey.

CALC Staffing Update

15. It was reported that the Parish Liaison Officer for Eden and Carlisle had resigned and as of the start of October, Sonia Hutchinson would fulfil the role on a temporary basis.
16. The decision to fill the post in-house on a temporary basis was taken by the Chief Officer with the Chairman to ensure that there would be an officer in place to arrange the Annual General Meetings for both Eden and Carlisle Associations. It was also felt to be prudent to not commit to a permanent position until funding commitments for 2018/19 are clearer.

Agreed

- that Sonia Hutchinson continues in the role of PLO for Eden and Carlisle until 31st March 2018
- that a letter of thanks to Veronica for her work for CALC should be sent.
- that a proposal to manage the workload on a permanent basis will be brought back to the January meeting.

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE FROM THE CUMBRIA LEADER'S BOARD

17. The Chairman briefed the Committee on the discussions at the meeting including developments at the West Cumbria Mining Project, nomination of the Vice Chair of the LEP and the deferral of a discussion on poverty and child poverty across the county.
18. The Chairman requested that Executive members brief him on issues that they would like to have raised at future board meetings and the Chief Officer would continue to circulate the draft agendas.
19. It was also agreed that it was of great importance that CALC is represented on the Leadership Board especially in view of ongoing discussions regarding devolution of services and unitary government. The Chairman encouraged members to read Lillian Burns' report on Devolution and Localism.

Action: Chief Officer to circulate copies to the members.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2017

20. The Committee considered a report from the Chief Officer concerning the 2017 AGM.

It was agreed to recommend to the AGM:

- (1) that the current President, Vice-President and Hon. Treasurer be re-elected ;
- (2) that Saint & Co be re-appointed as CALC's auditors ;
- (3) that membership fees be increased by 3.0% for 2018/19 ;
- (4) that the fee structure remains unchanged for 2018/19
- (5) that it resolves to create a new Barrow District Association and that the Chairman will take up a seat on the CALC Executive.
- (6) that there shall be provision for a second representative of Barrow District Association on the CALC Executive

It was further agreed that:

- the Chief Officer report back to the next meeting regarding requests from members regarding the fee structure, including for the smallest councils.
- the Chief Officer adds a brief report on the process relating to the examination of the fee structure to report back to the Annual General Meeting in November.

REPORTS FROM DISTRICT ASSOCIATIONS

21. The Committee received the reports from the district associations. The issue of decaying telephone boxes was discussed in the South Lakeland District Association meeting in September, Cllr Kennish said he would send information to the chief officer relating to future usage of these boxes. This information could then be sent on to the Parish Liaison Officer and disseminated to the South Lakeland parish councils.

UPDATES FROM CALC REPRESENTATIVES

22. The Committee received written and verbal reports from the Association's representatives.
- a. Rural Crime Stakeholder Working Group - report noted
 - b. LDNP Partnership Meeting: There was discussion about the recent success in achieving UNESCO World Heritage Site Status for the National Park, especially with regard to how to define 'Vibrant Communities' – more affordable housing was seen as a key to keeping communities vibrant. However, it was noted that not all the park has the same problems and that out of the 'honeypot' areas, Local Occupancy Clauses are a significant issues around encouraging people to move into the area.
 - c. Connecting Cumbria update - The representative reported that the Connecting Cumbria Partnership Board is now defunct. Brian Kennish reported that the recent Hub Co-ordinator's meeting was very positive about moving forward and they will be meeting in November hopefully with an expert from Open Reach. The latest update on coverage in Cumbria is that fibre is now across 93% of Cumbria – meaning properties who have the capability of upgrading to faster broadband (24Mbps) via fibre cables.
 - d. NuGen Report – Report Noted
 - e. Flood Resilience Board - this is just getting set up and there are still discussions around its role and powers. The last meeting was cancelled.
 - f. NALC North West Federation Meeting - the Chairman reported back from the last meeting where Cllr Lillian Burns from Cheshire discussed the difficulties of stopping unwanted developments in areas where there are no adopted Local Plans. They also discussed concerns over the time involved in getting responses from NALC's legal team and the work that is being carried out in trying to lobby for greater sanctions for parish councilors who breach the Code of Conduct.

NALC MATTERS BEFORE THE AGM

23. The agenda for the NALC AGM was noted. Rick Petecki reported that he would be putting himself forward for election on to the Policy Committee and the Smaller Councils Committee at the next National Council meeting.

MARYPORT TOWN COUNCIL

24. The committee considered the request from Maryport Town Council that CALC write a letter on behalf of Cumbrian local councils expressing concerns at the reduction of a police

presence on the ground in Maryport and highlighting the significant impact that government actions are having on Police services in the county.

25. It was noted that the Chairman had already raised concerns at the Rural Crime Stakeholder Group, on behalf of CALC members, about the reduction in staffing and the impact it is having on parishes. He also reported that the Cumbrian Constabulary are looking at the issues around local engagement and attempting to address the issue in local areas.

It was **agreed:**

that this matter should be discussed through the District Association meetings not the Executive Committee and that the request should be re-directed there for further consideration.

LDNPA PARISH FORUM POLICY REQUEST

26. The committee considered the proposal from the LDNPA Parish Forum that 'CALC proposes to NALC that they should adopt a policy to lobby government to ensure a tightening of planning regulations with regard to the appearance of commercial signage in conservation areas/ settlements within National Parks'

27. After some discussion it was felt that this proposal was not the best way to tackle the issue.

It was agreed that:

CALC would write to the Head of Planning at the Lake District National Park to raise the members' concerns over the issues around compliance with the law in terms of signage inside the national park.

CUMBERLAND BUILDING SOCIETY

28. The committee considered the CPCA Cumberland Building Society Deposit Account

It was agreed that:

- a. That any decision about who else is added on to the Mandate will be made after the Carlisle Parish Council Association AGM where a new Chairman and Vice Chairman will be elected.
- b. Claire Rankin is removed as a signatory on the account and replaced by Samantha Bagshaw
- c. That Cllr Craig Nicholson and Jocelyn Holland are removed as signatories on the account.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

29. The date of the next meeting is **Saturday 20th January 2018** at 10.00a.m.at Community Fire Station, Penrith

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

30. Two queries were raised:

- Do parish council who have a turnover of under £25k pa have to certify themselves exempt from external audit?
- Do all parish councils have to register with the Information Commissioner's Office to comply with the Data Protection Act 2000?

It was agreed:

1. that the Chief Officer would clarify the position on both queries and circulate the response to the Executive members.
2. Ronnie Auld also announced that Dalston Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan has been accepted by Carlisle City Council and there will be a referendum in the parish in February 2018.

Chairman