

CUMBRIA ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

DRAFT Minutes

Minutes of a meeting of CALC's Executive Committee held on Saturday 24th June 2017 at 10.00 am at the Community Fire Station, Penrith.

PRESENT:

Ann Byers
Jill Hay
Mike Higginbotham
David Huxley
Leslie Johnson
Rick Petecki (Chairman)
David Peters
Margaret Throp

In attendance: Samantha Bagshaw, Chief Officer
Sonia Hutchinson, Parish Development Officer, CALC
Jane Langston, Assistant Director, Technical Services, Eden District Council

It was agreed that Item 5 on the agenda be moved up to the start of the meeting. This item was presented by Jane Langston, Assistant Director of Technical Services at Eden District Council.

Update on CALC Projects with Eden District Council from Jane Langston

1. CALC has received funding during 2016/17 to support Eden District Council on two projects:
 - moving to digital consultation on planning
 - supporting Eden's work in devolving non-statutory services to parish/town councils

Digital Consultation

2. The only aspect of Eden's planning process that is not handled on-line is the consultation with parishes. Most parishes, if not all, send their responses in to EDC on-line and EDC's aim is to withdraw paper copies of planning documents and to rely on digital information only.
3. Sonia Hutchinson is the lead for CALC on the project. Sonia's role has been the liaison between the parishes and EDC, and Sonia has carried out the consultation with parishes on the process.

4. EDC recognise that this move presents difficulties for some parishes and is currently considering ways of mitigating these issues. Projectors and memory sticks have been offered.
5. As a result of the consultation, 16 parishes have indicated that they are happy to move to digital consultation methods immediately, the rest had concerns which Eden are trying to address and the aim is that they will move to the new system later in the year. Jane Langston noted that in the case of complex planning applications, paper copies will still be sent out.
6. Jane Langston also explained that the move to digital consultation was part of a wider IT transformation at EDC to improve efficiency. Widespread changes to their IT systems are underway currently, including an upgrade to the website, including the planning pages.
7. General discussion followed, including the point that some digital projectors allow memory sticks to be put straight into them therefore making it unnecessary to have a lap top with it.

Devolution

8. During 2016/17, Sonia has also met with individual parish and town councils who had previously expressed an interest in taking on non-statutory services from Eden District Council (EDC). She discussed the matter with them and reported back to EDC their views. Sonia has also attended formal meetings and has assisted by minuting those meetings.
9. Jane Langston explained that EDC anticipate a £1 million shortfall in their budget by 2022 and therefore are looking for alternative ways of delivering services moving forward. EDC are giving tapering support to parishes who take on services ie 100% of service costs to EDC in Year 1 down to 0% over 4 years. This approach is to allow parishes to build their capacity to manage the service over time. EDC are also working on upgrading assets to be transferred so they are passed on in good order.
10. Jane Langston expressed gratitude for the support from CALC. She reported that a report is going to the EDC Executive Committee next month to agree funds for the project to continue into 2017/18. The Chairman thanked the Assistant Director of Technical Services and she left the meeting.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

11. Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Jenny Alexander, Ronnie Auld, Peter Bales, Mike Cumming, Keith Hitchen, Brian Kennish and Bob Mather.

MINUTES

12. The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 1st April 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

13. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

CALC Learning and Development Update

14. Sonia Hutchinson, CALC's Parish Development Officer reported that it had been a good year for CALC's training programme. CALC has trained 323 delegates in total, up on the 311 in the previous year. In house training is popular and CALC will be promoting this alongside the other training courses for parishes who have not taken this approach. She highlighted two additional courses being put on by CALC this summer/autumn:
 - 2 x courses on Common Land – a one day course held in both the north and south of the county
 - A free session on parish investments and savings in the early autumn.
15. New training materials have been received from NALC so the current courses are being updated currently and an additional course provisionally entitled 'Next Steps' is being developed for councillors to give more information on, amongst other things, business planning.
16. There was discussion around CALC's offer of training around issues that the increased devolution of services throws up – business planning, issues. This was noted and will be reflected in the new course for councillors.

CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE FROM THE CUMBRIA LEADER'S BOARD

17. The Chairman reported back to the Committee on the Cumbria Leader's Board held on Friday 23rd June. He reported that an expansion of the membership of the Cumbria Leaders' Board (CLB) was discussed. New members could include a representative from the Yorkshire Dales National Park (Westmorland Dales) and the two Clinical Commissioning Groups that now cover north and south Cumbria.
18. The Chairman also reported that he had been elected Vice Chair of the Board for 2017/18.
19. The Board discussed a Cumbria-wide initiative - the **Healthy Weight Declaration**. This is in recognition of the serious childhood obesity issue in Cumbria, especially in the 6 – 9 age group. The initiative will have as key objective the promotion of walking to school, more cycling and healthy eating.
20. 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.
21. **Refugees** – Cumbria has taken in 7 families who have been displaced through the conflict in Syria and Libya. 14 adults and 7 children have been housed in Carlisle and Eden. A range of lessons have been learned through the process but it was reported that they have settled in well. The issue of taking on single children is a more difficult challenge, which will be discussed at the next board meeting.
22. The Chairman will circulate the agenda when he gets it next time and will seek issues to raise.

Highway Information Management System (HIMS) Update

23. The Chief Officer reported back on feedback initiated by a parish clerk, but corroborated by a number of clerks.
24. After discussion of the issues, it was noted that CALC would continue to drive forward fine tuning of the system from a parish point of view and then share progress with all parishes.

Planning Arrangements in Principal Planning Authorities

25. The matter of parish councils' access to planning committee/DCC site visits was discussed at the CALC Executive Committee on 14 January 2017 (minute 25), in light of a decision that Cumbria County Council would no longer be inviting a parish council representative to attend their planning site visits.
26. The Executive Committee noted the report from Chief Officer which set out what arrangements are in place across the county with regard to parish councils' access to site visits.
27. There was general agreement that the best protocol in use was that used by the Lake District National Park Authority, which does allow a parish council representative to attend site visits and does allow them to comment on factual matters only.

It was agreed:

- that the Chief Officer works with Cllr M Throp to formulate what CALC believes to be best practice.
- that this best practice protocol be circulated to all Executive Committee members for input
- that it be brought back to the next Committee meeting for adoption.

Change to the CALC Constitution:

28. Minute 26 of the Executive Committee on 1st April 2017 requested that the following change be agreed at the AGM in November:
 - removal of the word 'protect' from Paragraph 3 s (i) of CALC's Constitution

It was agreed:

- that the word be left in the constitution as it referred to protecting the rights of the parish councils, not protect in general terms.

Barrow District Association

29. The CALC Executive Committee **agreed:**
- a) To recommend to the AGM that it resolves to create a new Barrow District Association and that the Chairman will take up a seat on the CALC Executive.
 - b) that there shall be provision for a second representative of Barrow District Association and therefore no further changes to Sections 8 (e) or 9(ii) of the CALC Constitution are required.

CALC PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS TO 31 March 2017 and 31st May 2017

30. The Committee considered both the year end accounts and the latest accounts up to the end of May 2017.
31. The Chief Officer reported that she had discussed the accounts with the President of CALC and they had agreed to move to an income and expenditure model for future accounts. This approach gives a clearer picture of actual receipts and expenditure during any given financial year. They had also discussed preparing a budget in advance of future financial years and would prepare a half yearly budget for the October Executive to consider.
32. The Committee noted the statement of payments and receipts for the period ended 31 March 2017 and 31 May 2017

It was agreed that:

- CALC's accounts should be reported in an Income and Expenditure format in future
- CALC will prepare an annual budget and Medium Term Financial Plan for the Executive Committee

CALC INCREASES IN ANNUAL COSTS

33. The Committee discussed that reasonable and realistic overheads need to be charged on projects. The increases in costs to CALC and the figures presented were noted.

CALC STAFF SALARY REVIEW

34. The decision **not** to change CALC's salary rates after a review in light of the employees current job descriptions and work loads, was noted.

REPORTS FROM DISTRICT ASSOCIATIONS

35. The reports from the District Association were noted.

REPORTS FROM CALC REPRESENTATIVES

36. The Committee received a verbal update from the Lake District National Park Partnership Representative, Councillor Leslie Johnson. It was noted that there will be an announcement regarding whether the National Park Authority has been successful in achieving World Heritage Status in early July.

CALC PROGRAMME FOR LARGER COUNCILS

37. The Committee considered a proposal that CALC puts together a bespoke programme for town/larger councils that would be funded from reserves.

It was **agreed** that in light of the current CALC satisfaction survey, this decision should be deferred until such time as the feedback from this survey can be considered as it may have a bearing on the decision.

CHIEF OFFICER UPDATES

38. The Chief Officer updates were noted.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

39. The date of the next meeting is **Saturday 21st October** at 10.00a.m.at Community Fire Station, Penrith

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

40. None

Chairman