

Chichester District Association of Local Councils

Chair: Cllr Alistair Spencer (West Itchenor PC)
Clerk: Anna Beams, Mulberry & Co, 9 Pound Lane, Godalming, GU7 1BX
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Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Chichester District Association of Local Councils held on Monday 6th June 2022 at 7pm via Zoom.

Present:

Cllr Rosalind Hart	Bepiton PC
Cllr Timothy Firmston	Birdham PC
Cllr Clare Apel	Chichester City PC
Cllr Anna Gaymer	Donnington PC
Cllr Dougie MacDonald	Earnley PC
Cllr Charles Britton	East Lavington PC
Cllr Pamela Kensington	East Wittering & Bracklesham PC
Cllr Helen Marshall	Fishbourne PC
Cllr Andrew Shaxson	Harting PC (Vice Chair)
Cllr Joan Foster	Hunston PC
Cllr Tim Russell	North Mundham PC
Cllr Nicholas Taylor	Plaistow & Ifold PC
Cllr Amanda Tait	Southbourne PC
Cllr Richard Hitchcock	Westbourne PC
Cllr Roy Briscoe	Westbourne PC
Cllr Christopher Mead-Briggs	West Itchenor PC
Cllr Alastair Spencer	West Itchenor PC (Chair)
Cllr Nicolette Pike	West Wittering PC
Cllr Jean Barrett	West Wittering PC
Cllr Sophie Winship	Wisborough Green PC
Trevor Leggo	WSALC, CEO
Anna Beams	Secretary

1. Welcome, attendance and apologies

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Robert Taylor (Southbourne PC), Henry Potter (Boxgrove PC) and Robert Carey (Earnley PC) and representatives from Cocking PC.

2. Election of Officers of CDALC

- **Chairman:** Andrew Shaxson proposed Alastair Spencer as Chairman, seconded by Jean Foster, **AGREED** by the majority
- **Vice Chairman:** Alastair Spencer proposed Andrew Shaxson as Vice Chair, seconded by Tim Russell, **AGREED** by the majority

- **Treasurer:** it was **AGREED** that, as the current treasurer was not at the meeting, the item should be deferred to the next meeting.

3. Election of representatives to outside bodies

- **Directors to the Board of WSALC:** Andrew Shaxson proposed Tim Russell and Charles Britton, seconded by Alastair Spencer, **AGREED** by the majority.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th April 2022

It was **AGREED** that the minutes should be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

5. Finance Report:

- The Chairman presented the Annual Accounts (APPENDIX A) which were **APPROVED** by the majority.
- It was suggested that a budget would need to be produced before a subscription could be set. The Chairman advised that he will produce a budget before the next meeting and it was **AGREED** to defer the item.

Trevor Leggo explained that the CDALC has an important role in representing town and parish councils at district level and that there are administrative costs which need to be covered by a subscription.

6. WSALC Report

Trevor Leggo reported on the following:

- a) Operation London Bridge: guidance has been produced in consultation with the Lieutenancy Office. No action should be taken by town and parish councils until formal notification has been received from Paul Legrave, Lieutenancy Officer at WSCC.
Trevor will deliver a briefing at the next WSALC Chairs and Clerks forums in July.
- b) Sign Language: councils are now required to provide a signer for hard of hearing councillors and officers under the Equality Act. Trevor is unsure whether the legislation applies to members of the public attending meetings.
It was suggested that Hearing Loop systems could be an option. Trevor advised that many councils have a system in place.
- c) Thorney Island Community Bus: Trevor advised that he had been present at the arrival of the Community Bus which will provide free transport for isolated families. The venture is a collaboration between Southbourne, Westbourne and Chidham & Hambrook Parish Councils and the Ministry of Defence. Sufficient funding has been provided by the parish councils, the Armed Forces Covenant and a local residents association to support the project for 2 years.
- d) Sussex Police Forums: the latest round of meetings has now been completed and a report is being prepared by the Chief Constable and PCC.
- e) NALC: NALC are continuing to press for a restoration of sanctions and are awaiting an update from Government. No progress has been made in respect of hybrid meetings.
- f) Susan Pyper Lord Lieutenant has been awarded the Honour of Dame Commander of The Royal Victorian Order, the Chairman of WSALC has written a letter of congratulations to Dame Susan and received a very gracious reply.
- g) Resilience Plans: Trevor continues to encourage all parishes to produce a robust resilience plan. He is piloting a support scheme in West Sussex with the use of a

professional who can be appointed by a member council to draft a plan on their behalf.

- h) Travelling community: Trevor reported that a few parishes have experienced issues recently and reminded member councils to ensure that all empty public spaces are secure from entry by the travelling community.

7. Services provided by WSALC & NALC:

Anna Beams advised that WSALC currently offer a training programme for councillors and officers in association with Mulberry & Co, service providers to WSALC. Topics include basic councillor training, new clerks training, planning and finance. She added that bookings are as expected and that the programme is being well received.

It was suggested and confirmed that a monthly list of upcoming training is circulated to clerks.

Some members stated that they had attended a recent Carbon Neutrality Workshop provided by ESALC and WSALC and suggested that it should be made clear when a commercial firm are providing the briefing as they have an interest in selling their services.

8. SDNP Report

Cllr Andrew Shaxson referred to his report (appendix B).

He added that he has received information that water consumption per individual rose by 25% during the pandemic lockdown and that, although levels have since dropped, they are not back to a pre-pandemic level.

9. CHC Report

Cllr Jean Barrett reported that there is no further update since the last meeting. Cllr Nicolette Pike added that she will officially become the representative for the Conservancy in July and therefore has not yet attended any meetings other than a planning meeting.

10. Matters of concern to your council not on the agenda

Birdham Parish Council: Cllr Timothy Firmston enquired whether other member councils have had issues with the CDC Planning Department, for example; making determinations before closing dates and failing to notify the harbour conservancy of applications directly affecting the harbour. Other members reported that they have experienced similar issues.

It was noted that the planning department is under pressure and members were reminded that they can request an extension so that the application may be heard at parish council before determination.

It was suggested that CDC could offer a training in the planning process to town and parish councils and also invite comments. It was further suggested that CDALC could approach CDC as an association in order to establish a dialogue to address issues currently being experienced.

Westbourne Parish Council: Cllr Richard Hitchcock advised that he had attended a recent focus group attended by Chief Inspector Nick Bowman and that it was a useful exercise to be able to share concerns with the Chief Inspector and PCC office.

Cllr Hitchcock expressed concern at the meeting that the level of engagement with the PCSO has not been as hoped and was informed that the local Police Sergeant would be in contact.

He has not received any communications as yet however Trevor Leggo confirmed that Sgt. Coles has been tasked by Insp. Wickins with solving the issue of PCSO visibility and that matter is in hand.

11. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 14th September 2022 @ 7pm by Zoom

The meeting closed at 8.27pm

Signed:

Dated:

Chairman

DRAFT

CDALC YEAR-END ACCOUNTS
01/04/2021 - 31/03/2022

2022

RECEIPTS

Local Councils' subscriptions	£0.00
Conference	£0.00
Grant from WSALC	£500.00
Interest on cash at bank	£0.00

TOTAL RECEIPTS **£500.00**

PAYMENTS

Professional secretarial services	£0.00
Postage	£0.00
Refreshments	£0.00
Meeting room hire	£0.00
Leaving gifts	£0.00
Audit fee	£0.00

TOTAL PAYMENTS **£0.00**

NET RECEIPTS **£500.00**

CASH AT BANK START OF YEAR **£1,088.76**

CASH AT BANK END OF YEAR **£1,588.76**

NOTES TO THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES AND CASH AT BANK1. Accounting basis

This statement of financial activities and cash at bank has been prepared on the receipts and payments basis.

Opening	Balance 01/04/21	£1,088.76
	Receipts	£500.00
		<hr/> £1,588.76
	Less unrepresented payments	<hr/>
		£1,588.76
	Payments	£0.00
		<hr/>
Closing	Balance 31/03/22	£1,588.76

Appendix A

There is no financial information available prior to October 2021 as the CDALC bank account remained frozen. A new account was opened in Oct 2021 and the remaining credit of £1088.76 from the frozen account was transferred.

SDNPA report to CDALC – 6th June 2022

It is only 2 months since I produced my last report to CDALC parishes, and there has been no fundamentally changes during that time. Consequently it is both a short report and some of what is written will echo aspects of the April report. Whilst still having to take account of **Covid** the SDNPA has largely returned to the methods of working suspended more than two years ago, with one major difference. Virtual meetings are now being used WHERE THEY CAN BE, it having been found that there are few disadvantages faced by the SDNPA by not having the participants drive for many miles to talk face to face. It has the added advantage of benefitting the organisation financially, and financial issues are ever more relevant.

The SDNPA have formerly replied to the consultation on the Government's reaction to the **Glover Report**, and we await outcomes. How long will that take; the government has many other things to concentrate at present? It is worth noting that if there are major changes they are most unlikely to be enacted for some years.

I previously referred to the renewal of the **agency agreement with CDC** to undertake planning services on behalf of the SDNPA. A most important plus factor of this arrangement is the positive impact on the budgets of both organisations. Some improved checks will be introduced, but to ensure that both CDC and the SDNPA are kept informed of how the service is working Parish Councils should consider monitoring planning and enforcement delivery. It is worth noting that whilst CDC are paid according to the number of planning applications they handle, a lump sum covers planning enforcement.

As mentioned in April, the SDNPA is starting to review the **Local Plan**. This 305 page document was many years in creation, being adopted July 2019. A revised document should be in place by July 2024. Whilst the fundamental document should remain sound for some years to come, as with all such documents there are issues which as time passes need to be addressed. One that has been flagged up is to ensure all policies take fuller account of Climate Change. There appears to be rapidly increasing grass roots interest in many parishes to move policy much faster and further than is currently the case. Has not just Climate Change but the supply / cost implications of Brexit and the Ukraine war forced the issue? The review could be interesting; a West Sussex parishes meeting which will be a briefing on this and Climate change has been scheduled for 18th October to take place face-to-face at Midhurst. Details to follow.

There is understandably a lot of pressure to resolve the **Water Neutrality** issue that is preventing a lot of development not only in the SDNP but all the areas served by the Southern Water works at Hardham. The fundamental issue is that water demand in the South East has long outstripped supply, and the impact on the Arun Valley international wetland sites is the 'canary in the coalmine'. It should be a sobering fact that we now know that a drop of water that falls on the South Downs can take up to 500 years to flow out. Should Havant Thicket be just one of a number of new reservoirs created to enable us to store winter flow that is otherwise lost to the sea?

As I previously reported the SDNPA has been given a **flat cash settlement** by DEFRA for this financial year 2022 – 2023, with the likelihood that this will remain the rate for the following

Appendix B

two years. Inflation is almost certain to be 8% or more this coming year, which will cause the authority not only financial discomfort this year but worse in future years. Alternative means of raising cash to cover the day-to-day costs of running the organisation are very limited. As the relatively young Authority has not had time to build up a reserve of financial 'fat' which might have enabled to slim down without tangible impact, it is having to look fast into ways of cutting back in many areas. One of these is to reduce the number of meetings of the Authority and its committees, including planning. Also, there will be cutbacks of staff by more than 5% by the autumn. To do this staff are being invited to take early retirement and voluntary redundancies, but if necessary there will be compulsory redundancies. The resources available to parishes will be further restricted; are there ways the 47 National Park parishes in the CDALC area (noting that we are collectively more than 1/4 of all SDNP parishes) can act together for mutual benefit?

I am very happy to expand on any of these items or address any other SDNP and SDNPA issues that you might like to raise.

Andrew Shaxson