



NORTHUMBERLAND ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Minutes of the meeting of the County Committee at 10am on Saturday 19th November 2022 in the Stakeford and Bomarsund Social Welfare Centre, West Gordon Terrace. Stakeford. Northumberland

Present:

Councillors: Graham Curry, Gwen Woodman, Sylvia Hillan, Michael Wood, Colin Wakeling, John Potts, David Francis, Keith Grimes, Paul Vaughan, Simon Taylor, Paul Hedley, Paul Dancer, David Nicholson, Liz Dunn, Alan Taylor, Matthew Cuthbert, Monica Anderton, Alex Wallace.

Also Present

Mr David Woodard – President
Ms Gillian Turner - Treasurer
Mr Graeme Popay – Chief Officer [Actions marked as GP]

1: Welcome.

Alex welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Stakeford and Bomarsund Social Welfare Centre for the use of their super venue.

2: Committee Membership and Appointments.

Cllr Peter Coates and Vice Chair Tony Hood have stepped down from the County Committee. David Francis will now represent Alnwick Constituency Area.

3: Apologies for Absence.

Councillors: Graham Eastwood, Alan Sambrook, Deb Wilson, Martin Dickson-Green, David Hughes, Adam Hogg.

4: To elect a Chairman and Vice Chairmen for the forth-coming year.

Nominations received are as follows:

- Chairman – Alex Wallace
- Vice Chairman – David Francis
- Vice Chairman – John Potts
- Vice Chairman – Mike Wood

Outcome – All agreed

5: Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 July 2022

Discussion over storm Arwen related issue including: The resilience of the National Power Grid, issues with BT Digital voice calls, Mobile masts not operating during power outage.

Outcome – All agreed to accept the minute as a true record.



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6: Matter Arising

Election recharges – Action carried over from Stephen Rickitt, GP to investigate and report back

7: Minutes of the AGM Meeting held on 8 October 2022

Outcome – All agreed to accept the minute as a true record.

8: Newcastle City Council

The CO reported that on the 19th December an Informal meeting of the Chairs of the Six Newcastle Local Councils had been set with Pam Smith the Chief Executive of Newcastle City Council. The CO reported that he had already met the Newcastle City Council Electoral team to discuss the 2023 Elections in Newcastle and the changes to proof of ID – from May 2023, voters will need to show an accepted form of photographic identification (photo ID) in order to cast their vote in a polling station.

9: Finance

A financial report was tabled showing the current position

Outcome - All agreed to accept the report.

10: National issues

A report from the National Association was tabled and David Francis gave an additional verbal report on national key issues

11: Issues raised by Committee members

This was an opportunity for Committee Members to raise matters which may be of general interest affecting Local Councils in Newcastle and Northumberland, Paul Vaughan had requested the Committee discuss “What do we get from the NALC County meetings and what benefit are these meetings to our members”

Paul Vaughan - This is our Powerhouse, but how do we make it more powerful for our Parish Councils? How do we make all our voices heard, not just the larger Town and Parish Councils? How do we move ourselves forward and how do we take our politics forward? Some of our smaller Parish Councils feel overlooked and may need help and support as our Parish responsibilities get larger – such as Bus Shelters, allotments and grant funding?

The Chair thanked Paul for raising the subject and gave examples of existing good practice and links with NCC - the County Leadership had previously visited Parish Councils and gave examples when the Chairman and Vice Chairmen were kept in the loop by NCC. Pre Covid Paul Jones had organised regular liaison working groups with PC's We also have the Town & Parish Council working group.



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David Francis highlighted the value of our membership of the National and County Association and how together we have a collective voice, he added that that we need to be governed by our constitution

Discussion followed and there was agreement that we needed to identify specific issues to enable future agenda items.

Colin Wakeling raised meeting venues and the merits of hybrid meetings

Simon Taylor suggested that particular topics could be taken up by a wider forum and priorities set for the year ahead.

The CO summarised the position – we need to identify a common thread before we can move forward, we need to find out what are the issues and topics of concern effecting our Town and Parish Councils. The CO suggested using the NALC ENews as a means to gather this information.

Action GP to include this in the next NALC ENews.

12: The Briefing Programme 2022

Summary of 2022 briefing programme was noted. A programme for 2023 is being prepared and the Committee will be updated when it is prepared, it will include online sessions by Rob Murfin covering planning, Neighbourhood Plans and the now adopted Northumberland Local Plan. The CO is also investigating Training opportunities from other providers.

13: Any Other Urgent Business

None.

13: Future Meeting of the Committee

To be confirmed

Meeting Closed at 12:10