



**NORTHUMBERLAND ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS**

**Minutes of the meeting of the County Committee at 10am on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2025, held at County Hall Morpeth.**

**Online:** Cllrs: Liz Dunn, Alan Hall, Sylvia Hillan, Alan Roberts, Dorothy Dickinson, Mike Kirk

**Attendance:** Cllrs: Claire Connolly, Kerry Davison, David Francis, Alan Sambrook, Helen Shaw, Paul Bafton, Gwen Woodman, Jan Casey, Alan Taylor, and Monica Anderton, David Woodard, Alex Wallace,

**Also Present**

Mr Graeme Popay – Chief Officer [Actions marked as CO]

**1: Welcome.**

Cllr David Francis, acting Chair welcomed new members – a vote of thanks to ex-members of this committee who lost their seats or did not stand at the recent elections, in particular a big thank you to John Potts who was the Chair of NALC.

**2: Apologies for Absence.**

Cllrs: David Hughes,

**3: Minutes of the Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

All agreed to accept the minute as a true record.

**4: Matters arising**

None

**5: Finance**

The Financial report was tabled showing the current position. All agreed to accept the report.

**6: National Issues**

Cllr David Francis gave a verbal report on recent national issues including:

- Review of affiliation fees – this will be under way shortly – based on Council tax base rather than number of electors.
- NALC Guide to Responding to Planning is published free online – <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/how-to-respond-to-planning-applications.html>
- NALC national site – low response to sign up in Northumberland – encourage members to sign up – <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/login.html?fr=137e681a&ws=cGl4bDhjcm1SZWdpc3Rlcg%3D%3D>
- Northumberland NALC weekly Update to include National updates.
- Permitted development rights are under review – to include PV & EV Charging
- Star Council Awards has been launched – encourage members to nominate



## NORTHUMBERLAND ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

### **7: Issues raised by County Committee members.**

Cllr Simon Taylor – Consultation with Forestry England and NCC Highways on Uswayford Forest Timber Transport Plan, including issues connected with the Agreed Timber Transport Routes Map and Draft Cheviot Forest Plan.

Simon reported that there had been little consultation with NCC over the proposed routes for timber lorries which has resulted in the unclassified single track in the Coquet valley being the preferred route which now requires approx £2 million spent to make it suitable for the anticipated traffic

Cllr Taylor is flagging this up to the Committee to make members aware that this is a breach of the Charter which sets out the consultation process with a Parish Council, which, in this case did not happen.

Cllr Alan Sambrook – we need to get the new Mayor around the table to discuss investment in the County – Alex Wallace suggested Glen Sanderson may be a better person as he is a member of the Mayoral cabinet – **ACTION** CO to contact Cllr Glen Sanderson and invite him to the July meeting

### **8: Elections**

A paper was circulated detailing the election results of the 1<sup>st</sup> May process:

There were 115 quorate uncontested unwarded Parishes,

57 quorate uncontested Parish and

12 inquorate uncontested unwarded Parishes.

Of the 12 inquorate, a re-run of the elections was carried out and 3 of the Parishes (Hedley, Norham & Thirston) became quorate – the remaining 9 remained inquorate and a 2<sup>nd</sup> re-run was scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> July – these 9 Parishes (Akeld, Bewick, Earle, Ewart, Hartleyburn, Ilderton (grouped with Roddam), Kilham, Roddam (grouped with Ilderton), Snitter) have been dormant for several years.

A paper showing committee members following the 1<sup>st</sup> May elections was circulated.

### **9: Training**

Rob Murfin has offered to run the following online training

- An overview of planning for new members/refresher for existing
- An overview of the Gov's new agenda for planning, the implications of the new higher mandatory housing targets and our Local Plan review etc

It was agreed to run the overview as early as possible for new Councillors – possibly early July or late June pending his availability. The follow up training could be in Autumn



## NORTHUMBERLAND ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

The CO would be delivering training face to face to PC's that requested it – he already had carried out training in May and had several bookings for June and July.

### **10: County and Parish Website**

The CO presented a paper that had been previously circulated.

Following discussion, it was agreed to support the move to HugoFox, HugoFox would make an introductory 50% fee reduction in year one and this meeting agreed to support the papers recommendation to support further support 50% of the Bronze package fee (less VAT) for Councils transferring from the existing provider to HugoFox

**.gov.uk Email address** – HugoFox could provide a .gov.uk address for £2.49 + VAT per month. This would be up to individual Councils to decide and pay for – however the CO had contacted NCC to see if they could provide email addresses free or at a cheaper rate –

**ACTION** – CO would follow this up with an email to Cllr Glen Sanderson

### **11: Next Meeting of the Committee**

- **Saturday 19th July - County Hall & Hybrid –**
- **Saturday 20th September – AGM Venue to be agreed**
- **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October – County Hall & Hybrid**
- **Saturday 1st November - Online only**

### **12: Any Other Urgent Business - none**

**Meeting Closed at 11.40**