

Northumberland Association of Local Councils

Meeting of the County Committee at 10.15 am on Saturday 17 November 2018 at the Storey Park Community Centre, Morpeth

Present:

Councillors Barrell, Dunn, Francis, Gillanders, Hedley, Hillan, Hogg, Hood, Parks, Potts, Price, Rook, Tebbutt, Thurgood, Varley, Wallace (Chairman in the Chair) and Wood

Mr D Woodard (President)

Mr R Butler (Vice-President)

Mrs M Anderton

Ms G Turner (Hon. Treasurer)

SE Rickitt (NALC Chief Officer)

1: Welcome, apologies for absence, changes to membership and declarations of interest

Congratulations were given to Hexham Town Council for achieving Foundation Status in the national Local Council Awards and to Cllr Gregah Roughead (Berwick-upon-Tweed) for being the Runner-Up in the National Young Councillor of the Year Awards.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked all the parish, town and community Councils in Newcastle and Northumberland for the magnificent work in commemorating the Centenary of the 1918 Armistice.

The following apologies were noted:

Councillors Dawson, Roughead, Sambrook and Stanners

2: Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairmen

Councillor Wallace was elected as Chairman for the forthcoming year, and Councillors Hood, Potts and Wood were elected as Vice-Chairmen for the same term.

In thanking his colleagues, Cllr Wallace stated that he would not be standing as Chairman in 2019 as he will have completed the three years permissible by the constitution.

3: Committee Membership and Appointments

3.1 The revised membership following the AGM was noted and Cllr Hillan welcomed to her first meeting.

3.2 Cllr David Hughes (Milfield) was co-opted to represent the Glendale Constituency

3.3 The non-constituency co-options of Cllrs Hedley and Tebbutt were renewed for the forthcoming year.

4: Minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2018

4.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 The following issues were raised

- The County Council has received two applications for the vacant seat on its Standards Committee and it was expected that an appointment will be made by the full Council at its meeting in January 2019. (Item 3.2)
- The relaunch of the local "Newcastle and Northumberland Council of the Year" competition had been delayed and will be undertaken before the next meeting (Item 3.2). **Action AW & SER**
- Cllr Francis was pleased to note that the County Council were to address the settlement boundary and green space identification in the draft Local Plan. (Item 8.1)

5: Financial Issues

5.1 The Committee noted and adopted the financial summary. There were very few unpaid subscriptions and the Chief Officer was asked to write to the Chairmen as well as the clerks of those Councils. [A copy is attached to the signed minutes]

5.2 The Committee noted that the national NALC will be raising its subscriptions by the lower of 3% or the CPI for years 2020/2021 and 2021/2022, meaning that the Association would be asked to approve a similar increase for those years in due course.

6: Annual Report and Annual Meeting

6.1 The Committee noted the draft minutes of the AGM, which Members considered a very successful event.

6.2 The Committee suggested that the 2019 AGM should be in the northern-part of the area and the Chief Officer was authorised to extend an invitation to the Mayor of the North of Tyne Combined Authority.

Action SER

7: Chief Officer's Report

7.1 The Committee considered and adopted the report of the Chief Officer with the further comments below. [A copy is attached to the signed minutes]

7.2 The Committee endorsed the action of the Chairman and Chief Officer in writing to the Chairman of the North of Tyne Combined Authority's Cabinet seeking a local council seat on the Overview and scrutiny committee. It was agreed that the Chairman would be nominated, if a place was made available, with the Vice-Chairmen being substitutes. [A copy of the letter is attached to the signed minutes] **Action SER**

7.3 The Committee agreed that contacts should be made with the Community Councils in Scottish Borders Region. **Action SER**

7.4 The Committee agreed there should be a meeting with their counterparts from Cumbria and Durham. **Action SER**

7.5 The Chairman reminded the Committee of the Social Media Training on 1 December 2018 and urged his colleagues to consider attending.

Action All

8: Newcastle Issues

No specific issues raised which were not covered elsewhere

9: Northumberland Issues

9.1 The Committee noted the actions of the Chief Officer in seeking indicative Band D Equivalents for if, or if not, the County Council made alterations to the Council Tax Support Scheme.

Commented [SR1]: Typo corrected

9.2 The Committee discussed the County Council's proposed imposition of parking charges in tourist locations and at railway stations. In discussions based on experiences the Chief Officer was asked to contact the County Council drawing attention to

- The displacement of parking from car parks to streets and other areas
- Fears that a daily charge of £3.00 at stations would be more than petrol costs to commute to Tyneside, thereby increasing congestion
- The consequential problems for residents and businesses through the lack of enforcement action against unlawfully parked vehicles
- The need to share surpluses with Parish, Town or Community Councils in whose areas charges may be imposed (noting the statutory restrictions on the use of charge and penalty income)

Action SER

9.3 Cllr Hood asked the Chief Officer to research the opportunity for improving mobile phone reception in the county. There is a suspicion that cost-cutting is leading to longer response time for repairs. **Action SER**

10: County Committee Member's Issues

Cllr Rook informed the Committee of the Ambulance Service AGM and her offer to share a note was gratefully accepted. **Action VR & SER**

11: National ALC Issues

11.1 Cllr Francis had provided a report and highlighted several issues, including

- The forthcoming revisions to the accounting guidance and concerns over potential burdens on Councils who are members of joint burial (and other) committees
- His role as the acting Chairman of the national Policy Committee which was welcomed by colleagues.

[A copy of the report is attached to the signed minutes]

11.2 The Committee were advised of a comment made to the national NALC regarding a change in description. Members felt that the current legislation allowing individual councils to choose their description remained appropriate.

12: A Councillor Census

The Committee considered a report comparing the Association 2017 results with the national survey and agreed to repeat our local census in

early 2019. [A copy of the report is attached to the signed minutes]

Action SER

13: Business Plan

The Chairman advised the Committee that the Business Plan Review had formed part of the Chief Officer’s appraisal which he and the CAN Chief Executive had conducted earlier in the week. The review was noted. [A copy of the report is attached to the signed minutes]

14: Confidential Item - Financial Advice

The Committee considered a confidential report and agreed to enter an agreement for the provision of financial advice to the Association. **Action SER**

15: Any other urgent business

None, other than the Chairman wishes all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

16: Date of next meeting – Saturday 19 January 2019

Further meetings in 2019 were noted as

- 23 March 2019
- 8 June 2019 – please note the change of date
- 7 September 2019
- 28 September 2019 – AGM
- 16 November 2019

The meeting closed at 1200

Confirmed as a true record

and signed by the Chairman..... Date.....