

Essex Association of Local Councils
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LARGER
LOCAL COUNCIL FORUM
13th FEBRUARY 2018 10.00 am – 12.30 noon
 hosted by
WEST MERSEA TOWN COUNCIL

Present:

Cllr Peter Davey	Ingatstone & Fryerning PC Chair EALC	Mike Letch Clerk	Broomfield PC
Cllr Vivien Chapman	Brightlingsea TC	Margaret Saunders	Danbury PC
Myrna Liles Clerk	Frinton & Walton TC	Cllr Keith Miles	Sth Woodham Ferrers
Cllr Jim Devlin	Billericay TC	Deborah Tonkiss	Billericay TC Clerk
Mark Squire	Witham TC	Cllr Jo Clark	Billericay TC
Cllr Patrick Horner	Witham TC	Diane McCarthy	Billericay TC
Cllr JoAnn Williams	Witham TC Mayor	Cllr Colin Golding	Shalford PC
Cllr David Wixley	Loughton TC	Cllr Terry Moore	Dunmow TC
Joy Darby	EALC CEO	Cllr Sheila Jackman	EALC Vice Chair/ North Weald PC
Steve Darby	EALC	David Jackman	
Helen Symmons	Leigh on Sea TC	Linda Golding	EALC Assist. CEO
Petra Palfreyman	West Mersea TC	Cllr Allan Walker	Marks Tey PC
Cllr Bernard Hart	West Mersea TC	Pearl Willcox	County Training Officer
Cllr Bob Jenkins	West Mersea TC	Cllr Pat Moore	West Mersea TC
Cllr Carl Powling	West Mersea TC	Janetta Sosin	Gt Baddow PC

Also present

Speakers: Oliver Hutchinson & Richard & Tom Haward

In the Chair: Cllr Keith Miles

Opening Introductions by the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed delegates saying it was good to see everyone in West Mersea this morning and told those present we have a very “Mersey themed” meeting this morning which I hope you will enjoy. This is the first time the Larger Local Council Meeting has been held on Mersea and we would like to thank Mersey Town Council for acting as hosts.

Sadly this meeting will be the last meeting attended by two of our regular Clerks, as they are leaving their Councils before the next Meeting in June. These are Margaret Saunders from Danbury Parish Council and Myrna Liles from Frinton & Walton Town Council. We want to take the opportunity of thanking them for the support they have given us which has been really appreciated. Both ladies have given SLCC updates at these meetings.

The list of apologies received was read out by Linda Golding

Cllr Stuart Berlyn	Danbury PC	Aimi Middlehurst & James Browning	Ongar TC Clerk
Barbara Larkin	Springfield Parish Council	Kathryn Richmond Town Clerk	Waltham Abbey TC
Cllrs Roy & Sue Martin	Hockley PC	Jane Coleman Town Clerk	Maldon TC
Karen Hawkes Clerk	Woodham Ferrers TC	Kevin O'Brien Clerk	Buckhurst Hill PC
Cllr Guglielmi	Lawford PC	Enid Walsh Town Clerk	Loughton Town Council

Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Larger Local Council Form

Cllr Keith Miles told delegates both he and Cllr Stuart Berlyn were both willing to stand again this year as Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively if no further nominations were received.

Cllr Keith Miles called for nominations for Chairman – no nominations were received so Cllr Miles was proposed as Chairman for the coming year by Cllr Peter Davey and seconded by Cllr Colin Golding.

Cllr Miles then called for nominations for Vice-Chairman – no nominations were received so Cllr Stuart Berlyn was proposed by Cllr Keith Miles and seconded by Cllr Peter Davey.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 12th October 2017 having been circulated and one amendment made to include Myrna Liles in the apology list they were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

Welcome from Cllr Bernard Hart from West Mersea Town Council

Cllr Bernard Hart welcomed everyone to West Mersea on behalf of the Town Council. He told delegates he had only moved to Mersea 4 years ago so he was quite new to the area but said what a tremendous community spirit there was on the island with clubs and activities and the regatta, and you can walk into town so everything is convenient. East Mersea offers its parks and is a thriving community which can boast not only a pub and a Church but also a vineyard and a restaurant.

Presentation by Oliver Hutchinson from CITIZAN entitled 2 Years at the Beach

Oliver gave an extremely interesting presentation to delegates and showed a number of pictures about the work being done along the shore of Mersea Island and the archaeological discoveries that have been made in the 5 sites they have been exploring and how local people from a vast age range had become involved.

A survey by the CITIZAN team recorded various features on the adjacent foreshore, including the remains of a post and wattle structure. This had not been visible on a previous visit, demonstrating how aggressive the erosion is in this reach. Samples from the wattlework have now been dated to between AD1461 and 1636. Initial interpretations suggest it may have been part of a fish trap, perhaps used by the garrison to augment their food supplies. Oliver also told delegates about the exciting find of a mammoth tusk found during a 'field walk' which will be going on display in the local museum. It is hoped more work will be carried out at the 5 sites but new funding needs to be sourced to continue this interesting work.

Delegates listened intently to his talk and applauded him when he finished.

The Chairman thanked him for coming to the meeting and for his presentation.

SLCC Update

Margaret Saunders, Clerk at Danbury Parish Council, gave the SLCC update. She told delegates 3 of the Essex Branch of the SLCC Executives would be retiring this year so there would be some vacancies to fill! There next meeting will be on the 15th March at Little Channels which would include a presentation on Data Protection and for the first time there would be a charge of £25. The AGM would take in the middle of the day's events.

NALC Update

Cllr Peter Davey the EALC NALC Representative gave an update to delegates.

His Appointments including Chair of the EALC – November 2017

Chair of the Finance and Scrutiny Committee NALC – December 2017

Member of the Management Board NALC – December 2017

109 Initiative

Data Protection Bill and GDPR

The Board authorised officers to continue to lobby to mitigate the implications for the sector of the new GDPR; publish a supporting toolkit as soon as practicable; encourage councils to demonstrate they have a route map to compliance; seek to work with the SLCC; explore options for a national DPO service; and consider setting up a sector body for data protection and cyber security to co-ordinate future activity and support.

- NALC confirmed that Clerks and Responsible Finance Officers cannot be the Data Protection Officer.
- Review of local government ethical standards

The Committee on Standards in Public Life launched their review of local government ethical standards at the end of January, focussing on councillor conduct (codes, sanctions, investigation and interests).

- The County Officers Forum met on the 31 January 2018 and around 25 county officers met to discuss GDPR, external audit, code of conduct and other matters. The forum also identified members' expertise to support NALC's activities and working groups.
- Diversity Commission
The annual conference saw our Diversity Commission – whose aim is to promote and increase the diversity of councillors in local councils as well as in County Associations and NALC – launch a number of important strands of its work. These include a new webpage providing more information about the Commission and its work, a Census Survey of Parish Councillors
- Transparency Fund
The Transparency Fund project board has met twice since our last report approving 257 applications from smaller councils to the Transparency Fund totalling £193,000. This takes grants awarded in 2017/18 so far to just over £750,000. We are now down to the final £40k to award out of a total of 4.7m awarded during the scheme.
- New Parishes
Ben Murray and Justin Griggs from our policy and development team were in Ealing, London to address a meeting of two neighborhood forums looking into the creation of new parish councils.

- Lobby Day 2018 will be on the 20th March. Essex should have 7 MP's wishing to meet us.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Peter Davey for his update on NALC matters.

EALC Update by Joy Darby, CEO

GDPR

- NALC is advising Councils not to make decisions before full information is available via the County Associations.
- Councils are generally low risk and there is no need to rush into contracts that you may not need.
- It is most unlikely that the Clerk or RFO will be able to hold the post of the Data Protection Officer – this is because they will not meet the 'independence' criteria laid down by the ICO.
- NALC advice is verified by the ICO at the highest level.
- The NALC Toolkit will be available in the next 2 weeks (this has been written by a team of solicitors and will be verified by NALC).
- NALC is seeking to work with the SLCC to give advice on this subject.
- The EALC is continuing to offer training in Great Dunmow or we can bring this training to you.
- The EALC is looking at extending this training to support Data Protection Officers – news on this to follow
- The EALC is likely to develop a Data Protection Officer data base, much like the Clerks and Auditors bank.
- The EALC is consulting with ECC on the support that may become available
- The next Legal Update Newsletter contains further advice and information
- Please use the NALC Legal Topic Notes available to Member Councils www.nalc.gov.uk

Transparency Fund – this is now closed

Local Service Fund – work continuing with Louise Gambardella

Legal Update – next edition GDPR

Training – Developing more HR Training at the request of SLCC Members

The Chairman thanked Joy for her update.

Presentation Mersea Oyster Cultivation By Richard Haward

Richard gave an interesting presentation to delegates about the history of the Mersea oysters and how they came to Mersea and are now cultivated and sold. Since the 1700s the Haward Family have been cultivating oysters in Mersea Island, Essex. These oysters are from the River Blackwater and are some of the finest in the world. Richard Haward is the seventh generation oysterman and his sons Bram and Tom are eighth. The core to cultivating oysters continues to be respecting nature and honouring the history of this unique industry. His son Tom showed some photographs to accompany the informative talk.

The Chairman thanked Richard for coming along to the meeting particularly as he had agreed to give his presentation at very short notice.

LARGER LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Cllr Peter Davey, Chairman of the Local Council Award Scheme, had great pleasure in presenting Billericay Town Council and Witham Town Council with their Foundation Level Awards. Leigh on Sea Town Council had also achieved Foundation Level but they were having their Award presented at a District Meeting in Southend.

Cllr Keith Miles presented Myrna Liles and Margaret Saunders the two clerks leaving their Councils before the next meeting with a small gift on behalf of the LCCF.

Open Forum Time

There were no subjects delegates wished to discuss in the open forum time so the Chairman closed the meeting.

The next meetings of the Larger Local Councils

The next meeting will be hosted by Dunmow Town Council on the 28th June 2018.

The Chairman thanked West Mersea Town Council for hosting the meeting and to Linda and Pearl for arranging the meeting.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 12.30

Signed..... Date