

# Essex Association of Local Councils



42b High Street  
Great Dunmow, Essex CM6 1AH

## THE 70<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2015 at  
Foakes Hall, Great Dunmow, Essex  
The meeting commenced at 1.00pm

### Executive Members and Officers of the Association Present

The President	Mr Chris Manning-Press	Vice President	Margaret Grimster
Chairman John Gili-Ross	Colchester-East Bergholt PC	Vice-President	Cllr Peter Martin
Vice Chairman Cllr John Buchanan	Basildon -Billericay TC	Chairman Cllr Sheila Jackman MBE	Epping Forest –Ongar TC
Treasurer Cllr McPherson-Davis	Basildon - Ramsden Crays PC	Vice Chairman Cllr Peter Davey	Brentwood -Ingatstone & Fryerning PC
Cllr Stuart Berlyn	Chelmsford –Danbury PC	Cllr Richard North	Brentwood - Kelveden Hatch PC
Cllr Helen Edwards	Braintree – Feering PC	Kathryn Richmond	Epping Forest - Waltham Abbey TC
Cllr Roy Martin	Rochford – Hockley PC	Cllr Hamish McIlwick	Uttlesford – Hadstock PC
Cllr Michael Talbot	Tendring – St Osyth PC	Cllr Colin Letchford	Castlepoint – Canvey Island TC
Cllr Linda Belgrove	Colchester – Alresford PC	Brian Hindley	Colchester- Dedham PC

**Note: There were 93 delegates representing 56 Member Councils present. The quorum required for the meeting was 40**

**Essex Association of Local Councils Staff Present**

Joy Darby	Chief Executive Officer	Linda Golding	Deputy to CEO
Pearl Willcox	Training Officer	Carol Hartley	Finance Officer
Sian Morris	Junior Office & Training coordinator	Kerry Rolf	Office & Training Administrator

**In the Chair: The President, Chris Manning-Press**

**1) President's Welcome**

The President began by welcoming everyone to the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Essex Association of Local Councils expressing his pleasure at seeing so many people present. He told delegates he was retiring at this meeting as President, an office he had held and enjoyed for many years.

**2) Housekeeping Announcements**

Pearl Willcox made the housekeeping announcements.

**3) Apologies for Absence** (Appendix 2) Apologies received were read out by the CEO

**4) Election of New President Proposed by Chairman Cllr John Gili-Ross**

Cllr Gili-Ross told the meeting it gave him the greatest pleasure to nominate Cllr John Jowers, who he felt was the best person possible, and that many people in the room would appreciate what John has done for Essex, through his work at Essex County Council, how he is inspiring and a man of the community and a great supporter of our work with Parish and Town Councils.

**Cllr John Gili-Ross proposed the election of Cllr John Jowers as President of the EALC**

**This was seconded by Cllr Sheila Jackman** who told the meeting the new President was extremely supportive of this Association over many years and he will enjoy his new role.

**The motion was carried.**

**Cllr John Jowers then took over the Chair from Chris Manning-Press as the new President.**

### **Thanks from the retiring President**

Chris Manning-Press told those present he was unsure how long he had actually been President but he had been involved with the EALC for some 35 years having been at the start of the Association when he left the army. He was taken on for a 3 month probation period which started on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 1983. It was a strange Association back in those days with a couple of dedicated staff without whom the organization would have collapsed. The current CEO's predecessor, Bob Richmond, joined them later and luckily he knew something about Local Government, there was also a Field Officer just out of university. Tony Hayward was a great help to them at that time. He found himself getting a couple of Bills passed in the House of Lords and the Essex Bill still exists today.

He thanked Joy and the staff for all the help he had received over the years. Wished the Association a prosperous future and said if asked had he enjoyed the past 30+ years he would say "Yes I enjoyed it".

**Cllr John Jowers responded** saying he had huge shoes to fill! He said he felt amongst friends and that you could talk to real people about villages and communities. He thought the EALC is a brilliant organisation and gives you a chance to do what people say and "put something back"!

### **5) Formal thanks to Chris Manning-Press by the EALC Chairman of behalf of the EALC and a presentation of him and his wife.**

Cllr John Gili-Ross thanked Chris for all he had done for the Association and made a presentation to him from the EALC which included a handmade gavel by Malcolm Moore from Ashdon.

Cllr Sheila Jackman also made a presentation to Jan Manning-Press of a bouquet of flowers saying "behind every successful man there is a successful women".

### **6) Approval and signing of the Minutes from the last Annual General Meeting**

Proposed by Kathryn Richmond  
Seconded by Cllr Richard North

The motion was carried and the minutes were signed by the new President Cllr John Jowers.

### **7) EALC Annual Report 2014/15 presented by the Chairman, Cllr John Gili-Ross.**

Cllr Gili-Ross told the meeting this was his first year as Chairman. The Executive Committee of the EALC of which he is part is an excellent committee. He offered special thanks to Cllr Sheila Jackman and Cllr John Buchanan previous Chairman from whom he had learnt so much.

On this 70th anniversary it is encouraging to note that it has again been a year of “firsts” and continual change for the Association. Change is a challenge and in many respects essential if we are to continue to meet the expectations of the membership who work tirelessly to provide benefit for their respective communities.

For the second year in succession the EALC remains the first and only County Association in England with 100% membership. Whilst this is a great achievement we are acutely aware this is only sustainable if we clearly demonstrate value for money for our membership and maintain and strengthen the links we have within the County as well as Nationally through the NALC and hence Government.

My theme for the year is Improving Communications with our Members and working with our Partners and Sponsors. I tried to attend all District Association meeting at least once in the year and will continue to do. I take every opportunity to meet with Councillors and Clerks either through Coffee mornings, training courses or presentation events. Training of our sector remains a top priority and the number of courses has increased substantially over the last three years with this year already at a 50% increase more than last year.

The EALC was chosen to run the National Pilot of the Local Councils Award Scheme. The new Clerks CILCA training was launched this year and is now a level 4 qualification and the EALC is the only accredited provider in Essex for this training.

As a County Association we have a representative on the NALC Executive and Cllr John Buchanan has represented us in recent years. The Association has provided input to the NALC work as part of a Parishes Bill which when finalised will include a list of initiatives aimed at increasing powers and benefits for the sector.

The May elections saw some changes in our Executive membership. I would like to thank all past members for their work and commitment. We welcome the new members and the contribution each brings.

The Essex Association’s involvement in wider County Initiatives include: ECC Superfast Broadband Programme, Essex Rural Partnership, Economic Action Group, The Environmental Action Group and the Rural Crime Forum.

Cllr Gili-Ross proposed the adoption of the Annual Report 2014/15

Seconded by Cllr Sheila Jackman

The President called for the motion to be put to the vote and the motion was carried unanimously.

## **8) There were no questions to the Chairman**

## **9) The Treasurer, Cllr David McPherson-Davis Presented the Accounts of the Association for the Year 2014/15**

Cllr David McPherson-Davis presented the Financial Report and Audited Accounts to the Meeting. He hoped everyone had seen a copy of the accounts.

He gave a brief overview of the accounts explaining that the Association had worked hard to increase income and decrease expenditure. Having been in the offices at 42B High Street for over a year it was now much easier to budget for the costs of electricity and gas etc. The number of courses delivered had increased immeasurably and the number of Councils and Councillors attending training had risen partly due to the elections back in May 2015. However the course revenue could not be guaranteed for the next year.

## **10) Cllr McPherson-Davis took Questions from Member Councils relating to the Financial Report 2014/2015**

A question was raised on an issue of why the EALC had debtors, and the Treasurer and Finance Officer explained that they were outstanding invoices, most likely for courses that had been invoiced but were waiting for Councils to pay. The level of debtors was much reduced from previous years.

A second question was raised on the EA (2013) Ltd and the Treasurer explained that it was a company set up to protect the EALC and solely for paying the rent on the EALC premises.

## **11) Cllr McPherson-Davis gave official thanks to Essex County Council for the grants received in 2013/2014 and their commitment to the move to the new premises**

Cllr McPherson-Davis expressed the Association's thanks to Essex County Council for grants received during 2014/15 and for their continued support, and the move to new premises and the 6 years of guaranteed funding to enable this to be managed. The Treasurer explained the importance of these grants and the benefit to the Parish and Town Councils and communities in Essex. Members in attendance were in agreement for the official thanks of the Association were properly noted.

## **12) Cllr McPherson-Davis asked members to approve the accounts and accept the Annual Financial Report.**

The proposal to accept the 2014/15 accounts was proposed by Cllr Michael Talbot who added it gave him great pleasure to make this proposal.

Seconded by Cllr Davey who told the meeting they were a very professional set of accounts for 2014/15 and a credit to the Association.

The President called for the motion to be put to the vote and the motion was carried unanimously.

### **13) The Essex Association of Local Councils Affiliation Fees for the Year 2014/15**

The Treasurer on behalf of the EALC Executive asked the membership to approve a 2% increase on fees for the financial year 2016/2017. He gave examples of what the increase would mean in real terms to different size Councils. The increase would actually generate £1400 in additional funds for the Association. The EALC major cost is payroll and April next year there will be pay awards which will need funding

Cllr Don Avery queried if the figures given by the Treasurer included the NALC subscriptions to which he replied no purely EALC fees.

One Member questioned whether the increase was great enough.

There were no further questions to the Treasurer

Cllr Peter Davey proposed that the affiliation fees be increased by 2% for the financial year 2016/17 and added thanks to the Treasurer for his continued work.

The president called on Cllr Stuart Berlyn to second the motion.

Cllr Stuart Berlyn seconded the proposal.

The President called for the motion to be put to the vote and the motion was carried unanimously.

### **14) Appointment of Auditor Mr Maurice Howard 2015/16**

Mr Howard was unable to be present but had agreed for his name to be put forward.

The President called upon Mrs Richmond Waltham Abbey Town Clerk to make the proposal.

Kathryn Richmond proposed the appointment of Mr Howard as Auditor for the year 2015/2016.

The President called on Cllr Richard North to second the motion.

Cllr Richard North seconded the motion.

The President put the motion to a vote which was carried unanimously with no abstentions.

### **15) Motions:**

**Cllr Michael Talbot explained the motion put forward by St Osyth Parish Council**

***Unelected (co-opted) Councillors be entitled to receive allowances, whether they choose to accept them or not***

There followed a short debate between members about the motion and it was felt that this should be put to NALC for lobbying to Government.

Proposed by Cllr Michael Talbot  
Seconded by Cllr White

The President called for the motion to be put to the vote

The motion was carried by a majority voting in favour with only 8 against and 9 abstentions.

## **16) The Chief Executive Report on the achievements of the last 12 months and plans for 2015/16**

The CEO, Joy Darby, told those present I am pleased to report another successful year. The challenges have been many and there are many more to come. Small Councils (under 25k) will be facing a new audit regime, with the EALC providing support and in some cases funding through the new transparency fund administered by the NALC. Larger Councils will be considering the devolvement of power, with the smaller Council having to make important decisions on how they work and how they embrace the ever changing face of Local Government. All of this means the Association will need to focus on what is changing support the Councils. The new Local Council Awards Scheme will be an important check list to ensure that they are running professionally.

In November last year Cllr John Gili-Ross became Chairman with Cllr Sheila Jackman and Cllr Peter Davey as Vice Chairman and they have made a strong leadership team. The EALC has new stronger system of providing information in a more user friendly way. We have provided a great deal of training in social media and have looked at web sites. During the next year the EALC will be making decisions about 'Twitter' and 'facebook'

We continue to work with Partners. I would like to thank Cllr Roger Hirst and Cllr Mick Page for the working partnership we share. Cllr Mick Page sits on the EALC Executive and makes a valuable contribution to our work. I look forward to developing a new partnership with Cllr Anne Brown Cabinet Member ECC. The support given to us by Officers at Essex is really good. Angela Balcombe ECC Officer plays an important role as the interface between Councils and ECC. Many of you will know her through the Community Initiative Fund.

The number of courses we have run has increased again and many new courses introduced. The EALC has responded to requests wherever possible. In 2014 we started to deliver more certificated courses, due to the increasing responsibilities of Councils. Risk Assessment, Fire Safety, first aid and food and hygiene all proving popular. The new Clerks qualification is currently being delivered by Angela Balcombe and Kelly Holland.

The Training Officer and her staff work extremely hard ensuring that courses are well managed and diverse in subject. The team makes the training successful and they are responsible for increasing the contributions to our overheads.

Linda Golding manages the short courses and the Larger Local Council Forum which has grown in popularity due to the excellent speakers it attracts and the diverse subjects delivered.

In 2015 we lost a valued Member of staff Marisa Baltrock, and this provided the EALC Personnel Committee with an opportunity to restructure. Linda Golding becomes Assistant Chief Executive, re introducing the role to ensure that the office is covered in the absence of the CEO. Sian Morris having passed her apprenticeship qualifications becomes the Office and Training Coordinator. Currently the EALC is advertising the post of Parish Support Officer. The Finance Officer, Training Officer and Office Assistant posts remain the same. Kelly Holland has joined us on a temporary contract to set up the transparency fund and work with the Local Council Awards.

The challenges of the staffing budget are very evident; however we must ensure that the salaries we offer are comparable to our partners in Essex. This will encourage good quality applications when posts are advertised.

I would now like to give my thanks to a number of people who play important roles with the EALC. Firstly the Chairman and Vice Chairmen who assist and support the office staff in their roles. The Treasurer Cllr David McPherson-Davis plays a pivotal role, working with the FO and leading the Finance Committee. The Executive Members; we have lost a number of them following the elections and others throughout the year. Due to the high turnover I am sorry to say that the first edition of the Annual Report did not include all Executive Members names. Subsequent editions are amended.

I would like this meeting to send best wishes to Cllr Mrs Tilly Pink who cannot be with us today. Tilly is well known in the County for her hard work and she has made a great personal contribution to the EALC over the years.

I would like to thank my staff, each of them make huge contributions to the EALC. Lastly one of our staff has a very special event this year – the EALC Executive would like to make a special presentation to Kerry who gets married in October. We all hope she has a great day.

I would like to announce that this Association once again has 100% membership, due I believe to the quality of the Councils in Essex. In all we do at the Association we have to ensure that there is a positive outcome for our customers, making sure the needs of Local Councils in Essex are met. Lastly, I would like to thank you the Membership.

**The EALC Chairman presented Kerry with a wedding gift from the Executive Committee.**

**The President thanked Joy for her address**

**A Long Service Presentation was made to Cllr Tony Hayward OBE by Cllr John Gili-Ross as he had retired from the Executive Committee in May.**

Cllr Gili-Ross told members Tony Hayward had paid an important role within the Association since 1979, giving 36 years of service. During his time he has seen the Association grown and develop into the EALC of today. He had served on many Committees contributing to the finances and staffing strategy, and supporting the many staff that have been employed over the years. During this period he went on to be the NALC Council member for Essex, and then NALC Chairman, followed by a Vice President a couple of years ago. Tony Hayward has made a considerable contribution and the EALC is pleased to make this long service award. He retired as a Councillor at the May elections.

Tony Hayward thanked the membership for their kindness and unexpected gift.

**17, 18 & 19) The President – Address and to take any final questions**

There were no further questions from members so the President then brought the meeting to a close. He announced the 71st Annual General Meeting of the Essex Association of Local Councils will be held on the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2015 at Foakes Hall, Great Dunmow. He thanked everyone for their attendance and invited them to enjoy the celebration tea about to be served.

**The Meeting was closed by the President at 3.30 pm**

**Signature .....**      **Date.....**

## ATTENDANCE APPENDIX 1

Alresford	Frank Belgrove	Cllr
Ashingdon	Terry Flowers	Cllr
Aythorpe Roding	Barbara Read	Cllr
Basildon DC	Daniel Lawrence	Cllr
Bowers Gifford & N Benfleet	Chris Barlow	Clerk
Bowers Gifford & N Benfleet	Cllr Foster	
Braintree DC	Cllr Schwier	Cllr
Canvey Island	Ellea Hunt	Assist. Clerk
Colne Engaine	Rebecca Taylor	Cllr
Danbury	Margaret Saunders	Clerk
Earls Colne	George Branagh	Cllr
East Bergholt	John Stevenson	Cllr
ECC	Anne Brown	Cllr/Cabinet member
ECC	Pat Roberts	Officer
ECC	Angie Balcombe	Officer
ECC	Roger Hirst	Cllr
Epping	Michael Wright	Cllr
Epping	Barbara Scruton	Cllr
Epping	Beverley Rumsey	Acting Clerk
Felsted	Andy Bennett	Cllr
Great Baddow	Ann Wood	Clerk
Great Burstead & S Green	Bert Cottie	Cllr
Great Dunmow	Phil Milne	Cllr
Great Dunmow	John Davey	Cllr
Great Hallingbury	Alan Townsend	Cllr
Great Hallingbury	Freda Townsend	Clerk
Great Maplestead	Ann Crisp	Clerk
Great Waltham	Alex McDevitt	Cllr
Great Dunmow	Barrie Easter	Cllr
Guest	Tony Hayward	Ex Executive
Halstead	Dave Gronland	Cllr
Hawkwell	Vic Leach	Cllr
Hockley	Sue Martin	Cllr
Leigh on Sea	Jane Ward	Cllr

Leigh on Sea	Paul Beckerson	Clerk
Little Hallingbury/Uttlesford Association	Sue Meyer	Clr
Loughton	David Wixley	Clr
Loughton	Enid Walsh	Clerk
Maldon	Stephen Savage	Clr
Marks Tey	Allan Walker	Clr
Messing Cum Inworth	Dawn Marriot	Clerk
Messing Cum Inworth	Bob Suckling	Clr
Moreton Bobbingworth & S. Rivers	Adriana Jones	Clerk
NALC	Jonathan Owen	
Nazeing	Chris Evans	Clr
North Weald	Sue de Luca	Clerk
Ongar	Andrew Kaye	Clr
RCCE	Nick Shuttleworth	
RCCE	Sarah Sapsford	
Ridgewel	Christine Hale	Clr
Rivernhall	Jack Prime	Clr
Rochford	Don Avery	Clr
Rochford	Janice Rigby	Clerk
Saffron Walden	Sandra Eden	Clr
Saffron Walden	Sharon Morris	Clr
Shalford	Colin Golding	Clr
Sheering	Rodney Northwood	Clr
Sible Hedingham	Gillian Jefferson	Clrs
Sible Hedingham	John Nicholson	Clr
Southminster	John Anderson	Clr
Southminster	Brian Beale	Clr
Springfield	Steve Lewis	Clr
St Osyth	Michele Thomas	Clerk
Stapleford Abbots	John Farren	Clr
Sth Woodham Ferrers	Derek Farr	Clerk
Stow Maries	Rita Chappel	Clr
Tiptree	Diana Littler	Clr
West Bergholt	Chris Stevenson	Clr
Wickham Bishops	Ian Wardrop	Clr
Witham	Patrick Horner	Clr
Witham	Ron Ramage	Clr

Wivenhoe	Neil Lodge	Cllr
Wivenhoe	Shaun Boughton	Cllr
Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre	June Saltmarsh	Cllr
Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre	Karen Kuderovitch	Clerk

**Appendix 2 - Apologies were received from the following:-**

Basildon DC	Cllr Don Morris
Brightlingsea	Vivienne Chapman
Castlepoint DC	Cllr Sheldon
Chigwell Parish Council	Chairman, Clerk and Councillors
Colchester BC	Cllr Theresa Higgins
EALC Executive	Cllr Bryan Ledger
EALC Executive Member	Cllr Kieth Miles
EALC Executive Member	Cllr Don Smith
EALC Executive Members	Cllr Mrs Tilly Pink
EALC Trainer	Ian Willet
EALC Trainer	Kelly Holland
EALC Vice President	Dominic Petre
East Hanningfield PC	Chairman, Clerk and Councillors
ECC Chairman	Cllr Norman Hume
ECC Vice Chairman	Cllr John Aldridge
Epping Forest DC	Cllr Liz Webster
Frinton and Walton Tc	Chairman, Clerk and Councillors
Langford and Ulting PC	Jenny Clemo
Maldon	Andrew Wately
Nazeing Parish Council	Cllr Arnold
Nazeing Parish Council	Lorraine Ellis
Ongar	James Browning
Ramsden Bellhouse	Chairman, Clerk and Councillors
Rochford DC	Cllr Heather Glyn
Shotgate and Ramsden Crays	Georgina Bassett
Stanway PC	Colleen Moss Clerk
Stanway PC	Councillors
Tendring DC	Cllr Fred Nicholls

