

Essex Association of Local Councils



THE 73rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 20th September 2018 at 12 noon
at Foakes Hall, Great Dunmow, Essex

The President Cllr John Jowers and Vice President Cllr Dominic Petre With the Executive Members and EALC Staff

Cllr J Devlin	Basildon	Cllr McPherson-Davis	Treasurer Basildon
Cllr P Davey Chairman	Brentwood	Cllr Richard North	Brentwood
Cllr A Acott	Castlepoint	Cllr A Townsend	Uttlesford
Cllr S Berlyn	Chelmsford	Cllr P Brown	Chelmsford
Cllr J Gili-Ross EALC Vice Chair	Colchester	Cllr A Walker	Colchester
Cllr S Jackman EALC Vice Chairman	Epping Forest	Mrs K Richmond	Epping Forest
Cllr M Cohen	Rochford	Cllr R Martin	Rochford
Cllr H McIlwrick	Uttlesford	Cllr J Anderson	Maldon
Cllr L Belgrove	Tendring	Cllr M Talbot	Tendring
Mrs Symonds	Southend	Cllr Sue Lissimore	Essex County Council

Essex Association of Local Councils Staff Present

Joy Darby	Chief Executive Officer	Linda Golding	Assist CEO
Pearl Willcox	County Training Officer	Charlene Slade	RFO
Amanda Brown	Parish Support Officer	Kerry Wood	Office & Training Administrator
Louise Gambardella	Office & Training Administrator	Tracy Millard	Catering

Present on the day:

3	President and Vice Presidents
7	Dignitaries/Essex County Council
2	Partner Organisations
122	Delegates
106	Delegates from Member Councils
73	Member Councils
8	Staff
3	Speakers
14	Stand Holders
2	County Broadband offering IT support

In the Chair: The President, Cllr John Jowers

1. Welcome

The President, John Jowers, welcomed Member Councils and Guests to the 73rd Annual General Meeting of the Essex Association of Local Councils. The President opened the meeting by saying that Essex was the best place in Europe and had a huge number of parishes (over 300) who made a considerable contribution to the County and helped to shape Essex which always comes up to the mark! He spoke about the excellent work of the Officers and Members of the EALC.

2. Apologies for Absence

The EALC had received a number of apologies which are appended to these minutes.

3. Signing of Minutes from 2017 AGM

The President asked for any amendments - No amendments were tabled.

The President asked for a Proposer

Katherine Richmond – Waltham Abbey Town Council proposed acceptance of the minutes.

The President asked for a Seconder

Cllr Roy Martin Hockley Parish Council seconded the motion.

Those present voted unanimously to agree the minutes as a correct record of proceedings and the President duly signed the Minutes.

4. Annual Report 2017/2018

Cllr Peter Davey presented the Annual Report to the Membership. He told the meeting the EALC continues to be recognised nationally in its own right for the work it carries out in support of the Parish and Town sector within Essex. Through our highly professional training programme and legal support services which will always remain our top priority, whilst looking for new areas where value can be added to member Councils. To meet the challenges presented during the year, it is essential that we work diligently and successfully with our partners to create mutual benefit. As the County Association

we must exploit every opportunity to work on your behalf, primarily with Essex County Council and the National Association of Local Councils. I would also like to express my thanks to our Treasurer Cllr David McPherson-Davis for the hard work he undertakes for the Essex Association.

The President called for questions on the Annual Report.

There were no questions from delegates so the President called for a Proposer
Cllr Michael Talbot – St Osyth Parish Council and Executive Member proposed the acceptance of the Report.

The President asked for a Seconder
Cllr Mandy Cohen – Barling Magna Parish Council and an Executive Member seconded the motion.

The Membership unanimously agreed the acceptance of the Annual Report 2017/2018

5. EALC Annual Financial Accounts

The President called on the Treasurer, Cllr David McPherson-Davis, to address the meeting and present the Accounts of the Association for the year 2017/2018.

Cllr McPherson-Davis explained the new layout of the accounts showing the pie charts which will assist the reader in understanding the accounts. He explained that he was pleased to show a surplus of £4238.02 - this was expected as the previous year also showed a small surplus. The surplus is reflected in the increase of courses run throughout the year. However, Cllr David McPherson-Davis explained that he does not anticipate a surplus for the coming year, due to a rise in inflation which is currently at 3.7%

The Treasurer thanked the EALC staff for the hard work that they put into the Association and expressed particular thanks to Essex County Council for their continued support and the grants they provide to the EALC.

The President asked for questions to the Treasurer

There was one question from Clavering Parish Council regarding grants received by the Association which the Treasurer answered.

The President told the meeting that Essex County Council had to cut budgets by £60m for the past three years and the EALC support from them had survived those cuts!!

He then asked for a Proposer
Cllr Berlyn – Danbury Parish Council proposed the acceptance of the Accounts for 2017/18 for EALC and EA (2013) Ltd and the Financial Report.

The President asked for a Seconder
Cllr Roy Martin – Hockley Parish Council seconded the motion.

The Membership unanimously agreed to accept the accounts and Annual Financial Report.

6. Affiliation Fees

Affiliation Fee request for 2019/2020 2% increase for the EALC proportion of the fee.

Cllr McPherson-Davis told the meeting following debates on various committees it was agreed we should ask the Membership to accept an increase of 2% on the EALC portion of the fee.

NALC will set the NALC fee at their AGM in October 2017. It is expected that the fee will be set at 1.9%.

The President asked for a Proposer

Cllr John Anderson – Southminster Parish Council and Executive member made the proposal to increase the fees next year by 2%.

The President asked for a Seconder

Cllr Mandy Cohen – Barling Magna Parish Council seconded the motion.

The Membership unanimously agreed the increase of 2% with no one voting against and no abstentions.

7. Appointment of the EALC Auditor

Cllr McPherson-Davis the Treasurer told the meeting Mr Maurice Howard CIPFA had agreed to stand as Auditor for the year 2018/2019, the Membership was asked to approve this appointment.

The President asked for a Proposer

Kathryn Richmond Waltham Abbey Town Council Clerk and EALC Executive Member proposed his appointment.

The President asked for a Seconder

Cllr Chris Stevenson West Bergholt Parish Council seconded the motion.

The motion was carried unanimously.

8. Motion

The President asked Cllr Mrs Belgrove from Alresford Parish Council and an EALC Executive Member to present the motion.

The Tendring District Association of Local Councils seeks the support of this Annual General Meeting in sending to our National Association the following motion:

Currently if a Town or Parish Council anywhere in England has a dispute with its principal authorities the only way to progress its complaint, if local discussion or remedy fails is:

- (1) Where negligence, incompetence misinterpretation of law or policy has taken place, the only legal recourse is Judicial Review.
- (2) Where suspected criminal negligence or where there is evidence of corruption or cronyism, a complaint to the Police is the only action a Town or Parish can take.

Both of the above courses of action can be very costly.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman informs us that Section 27(1)(a) Local Government Act 1974, precludes it from investigating complaints from public bodies. We request that the National Association of Local Councils take this issue up with government to repeal that part of Section 27(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1974 that currently prevents matters such as the above, emanating from a Town or Parish Council being dealt with by The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

A debate on the matter was held with many delegates supporting the motion. A number of issues were raised including the following:

- Can Judicial Review still be an option, if the sector was allowed to go to the Ombudsman?
- Starting the process is important, how long it will take is unknown
- Will the ombudsman being able to advise the sector
- Can this be widened to make Parish Sector Councils accountable to the Ombudsman?

The CEO spoke that it is important to come to vote on whether to accept the motion or not. Pointing out if the EALC were to go back for more information it would be 1 year before this could be debated again.

There were a number of questions and statements from delegates present showing agreement to the motion.

The President called for the motion to be put to the AGM
Cllr Linda Belgrove Alresford Parish Council and Executive Member proposed the motion

The President called for a seconder
Cllr Michael Talbot St Osyth Parish Council and Executive Member seconded the motion.

The President called for a vote asking those in favor to show their green card.

The EALC AGM unanimously voted in favor of the motion.

The President thanked all the delegates for an excellent debate.

9. Chief Executive Report – Joy Darby

The Chief Executive Officer addressed the meeting telling those present that during the last year the EALC team had had to develop new strengths, looking at how we work and assessing where we think we will be going in the future.

In the Autumn we will be going out to consultation to ask you the membership to take an active role in the development of the next EALC Strategic Plan, from this we will develop an action plan to ensure that the voice of the membership is heard.

In the last few years the emphasis has been on supporting our Member Councils, developing an excellent training programme and starting to place an emphasis on Council development. The Training

programme has grown from strength to strength under the leadership of Pearl Willcox. We are delivering more courses year on year, including certificated courses, and the Clerks qualification. The EALC team of tutors do amazing work, achieving a high level of success throughout our programme. The year has been dominated by GDPR. Training and Development go hand in hand, so we are starting to act more proactively and support Councils through the Local Council Award scheme. We have continued to develop the way we communicate with you and Kerry Wood is responsible for this and has over the last few months made the web site more appropriate. Our e bulletins are an important part of the work she undertakes.

Linda Golding has continued to support the governance of the EALC, manage the LLCF and of course act as Assistant CEO. She manages the Clerks Bursary, has provided you with the County Update, organises the peripatetic courses, and has a hand in all that is good that happens at the EALC.

Behind our work we need an excellent Responsible Financial Officer, and Charlene Slade has implemented new ways of working. She has simplified what we do and gives us good information to enable the EALC to keep the budgets under control.

We have been working hard with our partners to help support the needs of the communities we serve. The Local Service fund headed up by Louise Gambardella, has provided £ 254,587 to Local Councils and properly constituted community groups, over two rounds of funding. She is now working towards the next funding round on the 6th December 2018. This fund is an excellent example of how we can work with ECC. Our thanks to Cllr David Finch for providing the scheme, Cllr Anne Brown and Mick Page who support it and this work has been shortlisted for NALC Star Award, we will find out if we win at the end of October.

During the next few months we shall be looking at the way Councils in Essex help support their communities and contribute to health and wellbeing. We will be focusing on helping ECC to roll out the Mental Health Training.

During the Autumn we will be looking at social media, how it can assist us, and how we can use it to ensure that communities hear about the funds we hold and distribute for Essex County Council.

Again, in the Autumn thanks to Cllr David Finch and Cllr Kevin Bentley, we will be working in a different way with ECC Highways. The District/Borough/City Associations will be able by right to have one seat on the Highway Panels, with full voting rights. This is something we have raised in the past and I am delighted that Essex County Council has made that provision. Additionally, we will be sending information out relating to the Devolution of some Highway work, enabling this tier to take on work from Essex County Council, with funding attached. We will be seeking 30 – 40 Councils approximately 2-3 per district to come forward to take part in the pilot.

In the autumn last year a major crisis hit the EALC. Four of our 8 staff and a principle trainer all had life changing issues in their personal lives. How the staff managed to keep the EALC going was an amazing feat and I pay tribute to them all for their hard work and diligence. This is how good this team is – they put the heads down and just worked to ensure everything was completed as far as possible. Other Trainers helped and our course programme continued.

We also experienced other sadness: We lost a number of Councillors during the year, notably Cllr Keith Miles, Chairman of the Larger Local Councils Forum and an Executive member, Cllr Donald Fraser from Leigh-on-Sea TC who had been there since the creation of the Council died, along with Cllr Jim Tredgett High Roding Parish Council, Cllr Tony Belford Canvey Island Town Council, Cllr Janet Bicknall Ongar Town Council and probably many more throughout the County who had given such great service to the sector.

The EALC is your Association, managed by you the Membership. Together we work in partnership to ensure that the Councils in Essex are the very best. We have many partners, primarily ECC and of course our trainers, our locum clerks and those that go to help Councils in difficult times. I would also like to record my thanks to the EALC Executive Members, The Chairman, Vice Chairmen, Treasurer and of course the EALC Membership – together we can help make Essex even better that it is.

My thanks to the staff for their loyal service throughout the year. Without out their determination, and drive EALC would not be the Association it is.

11. The President’s Address

The President told the meeting he had a passion for parishes starting with Mersey Town Council which had been an urban council and back in 1962 had achieved a full page article in the Daily Express asking “Is this the most corrupt Council in Britain!” Parishes are good at doing certain things including the need for Neighbourhood Plans and grass root decisions, being the lead on records of floods in your area, and the many achievements little Councils have made. Open your minds and Essex County Council will help you. The CIF Fund has given £18m away over the past 13 years. Parishes must guide principal authorities. At the end of the day it all comes down to trust and as the old saying goes “ask the fellow who cuts the hay” they are the social glue that binds the community together. Parish and Town Councillors are important and you represent your communities.

The President then thanked everyone for coming and said “its all about Partnership – well done to all of you”!

The President took one question from the floor about NALC grants to which he replied NALC funding came from Central Government.

12. 74th Annual General Meeting

The President announced the date of the 72nd EALC AGM as the 19th September 2019

13. Meeting Closure

The President closed the 73rd Annual General Meeting

Signature Date

Apologies For Absence

Name	Representing
Simon Hall	Former High Sherriff
Sue Griffiths	Berden PC
Mayor & Deputy Mayor	Chelmsford City Council
Miriam Holden	Clk Dengie Hundred Group
Cllr Peter Chillingworth	Colchester Mayor
Ian Willett	EALC Tutor
Cllr Pat Seager	Epping Forest DC
Lord Lieutenant	Essex Lieutenant
Mr Harrington	Essex Police
Mr Kavanagh	Essex Police
Cllr Helen Edwards	Feering PC and EALC Executive
Cllr Henry Bass	Maldon District Council
Jane Coleman	Maldon TC
Cllr J Hafiz	Maldon TC and EALC Executive
Mayor & Deputy Mayor	Maldon TC and EALC Executive
Cllr Jeanette Stilts	Maldon TC and EALC Executive
Katherine Hoyer	Pentlow
Roger Hirst	Essex Police & Fire
Jane Gardner	Essex Police & Fire
Cllr Don Smith	Rayne PC and EALC Executive
Karen Hawkes	South Woodham Ferrers TC
Adriana Jones	Stanford Rivers PC
Ann Wood	Tiptree Parish Council
Mick Page	Vice President

ATTENDANCE LIST

PARISH	DELEGATE	Clk/Cllr
Ashingdon PC	Terry Flowers	Chairman
Alresford PC	Linda Belgrove	Cllr
Ashdon PC	Mr P Player	Cllr
Ashdon PC	Mrs S Player	Cllr
Aythorpe Roding PC	Barbara Read	Cllr
Barling Magna PC	Mandy Cohen	Chairman
Billericay TC	Deborah Tonkiss	Town Clerk
Billericay TC	Jim Devlin	Chairman
Bowers Gifford & Nth Benfleet PC	Christine Barlow	Clk
Bradwell with Pattiswick PC	Christine Marshall	Clk
Broomfield PC	Ros Mercer	Cllr
Buckhurst Hill PC	Julie Taylor	Assist Clk
Bulmer PC	Pat Roberts	Clk
Burnham on Crouch TC	Wendy Stamp	Mayor
Canvey Island TC	Alan Acott	Cllr
Castle Hedingham PC	Jill Toocaram	Cllr
Castle Point Borough Council	Colin Riley	Deputy Mayor
Clavering PC	Stephanie Gill	Chairman
Council for Voluntary Service Uttleford	Clive Emmett	CEO
Danbury PC	Michelle Harper	Clk
Danbury PC	Stuart Berlyn	Chairman
EALC	Dominic Petre	Vice President
EALC	Margaret Grimster	Vice President
ECC	J.Aldridge	Cllr
Epping TC	Beverley Rumsey	Town Clerk
Essex County Council	John Jowers	EALC President
Essex County Council	Sue Lissimore	Cllr
Essex County Council	David Finch	Leader of ECC
Essex County Council	Kirsty O'Callaghan	Cllr
Finchingfield PC	Ian Brown	Clk
Galleywood PC	Tory Melhuish	Clk
Great Baddow PC	Veronica Sadowsky	Cllr

Great Dunmow TC	Danielle Frost	Cllr
Great Dunmow TC	Caroline Fuller	Town Clerk
Great Dunmow TC	Barrie Easter	Mayor
Great Dunmow TC	Emma Marcus	Deputy Mayor
Great Hallingbury PC	Alan Townsend	Chairman
Great Notley PC	Suzanne Walker	Clk
Great Sailing PC	Cathryn Carlisle	Clk
Great Wakering PC	Sharon Hyatt	Clk
Gt Burstead & Sth Green Village Council	Bob Chapman	Cllr
Hadstock PC	Hamish McIlwrick	Cllr
Halstead TC	Dave Gronland	Cllr
Halstead TC	Sarah Greatorex	Town Clerk
Halstead TC	Mick Radley	Vice Chairman
Helions Bumpstead PC	Cathryn Carlisle	Clk
Heybridge PC	Amanda Hilton	Clk
Heybridge PC	John Harrison	Cllr
Heybridge PC	Richard Perry	Chairman
High Sheriff of Essex	Bryan Burrough	
Hockley PC	Roy Martin	Cllr
Hockley PC	Sue Martin	Cllr
Ingatestone & Fryerning PC	Peter Davey	Chairman/Cllr
Kelvedon PC	Philippa Potter	Clk
Kelvedon Hatch PC	Richard North	Cllr
Langford & Ulting PC	Vicky Anfilogoff	Chairman
Langford & Ulting PC	Irene Allen	Cllr
Leigh on Sea TC	Helen Symmons	Town Clerk
Leigh on Sea TC	Jill Healey	Cllr
Little Bardfield PC	Terry Cutmore	Vice Chairman
Little Burstead PC	Chrstine Barlow	Clk
Little Dunmow PC	Angela Balcombe	Clk
Little Easton PC	Ian Brown	Clk
Little Hallingbury PC	Sue Meyer	Cllr
Little Waltham PC	Suzanne Walker	Clk
Little Waltham PC	Peter Brown	Cllr
Loughton TC	Brent Smith	Assist Town Clk

Loughton TC	David Wixley	Cllr
Manuden PC	Julie Kershaw	Chairman
Manuden PC	Charles Bartram	Clk
Manuden PC	Valerie Bartram	Guest
Manuden PC	Sheila Hannington	Cllr
Marks Tey PC	Allan Walker	Chairman
Mistley PC	Martin Rayner	Chairman
North Weald PC	Sheila Jackman MBE	Cllr
Radwinter PC	Cathryn Carlisle	Clk
Ramsden Bell House PC	Georgina Bassett	Clk
Ramsden Crays PC	David McPherson-Davis	Treasurer/Chair
Ramsden Crays PC	Georgina Bassett	Clk
Rayleigh TC	Jack Lawmon	Chairman
Rayne PC	Paul Willis	Cllr
Rayne PC	Simon Tibbetts	Cllr
RCCE	Nick Shuttleworth	Exec Director
RCCE	Sarah Sapsford	Manager
Rochford PC	Robert Tout	Cllr
Rochford PC	Janice Rigby	Clk
Saffron Walden TC	Lisa Courtney	Town Clerk
Saffron Walden TC	Richard Freeman	Cllr
Shalford PC	Colin Golding	Chairman
Shalford PC	Cathryn Carlisle	Clk
Sheering PC	Rodney Northwood	Cllr
Sheering PC	Debbie Tennant	Clk
Shotgate PC	Mark Biddle	Chairman
Shotgate PC	Jackie Woolf	Cllr
Shotgate PC	Karen Kuderovitch	Clk
Shotgate PC	Clive Burton	Cllr
Southminster PC	John Anderson	Chairman
Springfield PC	Sue Sullivan	Chair
St Osyth PC	Michael Talbot	Cllr
Stisted PC	Alan Moor	Chairman
Stisted PC	Christine Marshall	Clk
Sturmer PC	Diana Garrod	Chairman

Sturmer PC	Ian Brown	Clk
Thaxted PC	Dena Ludford	Clk
The Henny's Middleton & Twinstead PC	Alan Smart	Cllr
Tolleshunt D'Arcy PC	Lynda Young	Cllr
Waltham Abbey TC	Kathryn Richmond	Clk
West Bergholt PC	John Gili-Ross	Vice Chair/Cllr
West Bergholt PC	Chris Stevenson	Chairman
West Hanningfield PC	Karen Jane	Chairman
White Notley PC	Angela Balcombe	Clk
White Roding PC	Pat Roberts	Clk
Witham TC	Patrick Horner	Cllr
Witham TC	Patrick Horner	Cllr
Witham TC	Ron Ramage	Chairman
Witham TC	Mark Squire	Town Clerk
Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre PC	June Saltmarsh	Chairman
Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre PC	Lucy White	Cllr
Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre PC	Karen Kuderovitch	Clk
Writtle PC	Wendy Walker	Cllr
Writtle PC	David Walker	RFO