



Essex Association of Local Councils

EALC Executive Meeting Minutes Thursday 21st July 2022 at 10 am

Members Present Representing

Cllr Peter Davey Chair
Cllr Paul Lees
Cllr Sheila Jackman
Cllr Mike Eldred
Cllr David McPherson Davis
Cllr John Gili-Ross
Cllr Stephanie Gill
Beverley Rumsey
Cllr Abdul Hafiz
Also in attendance
Charlene Slade
Pearl Willcox
Stephanie Robinson
Jane Gardner
Commissioner via zoom

Brentwood
Braintree
Epping Forest
Local Councils Forum
Basildon
Colchester
Uttlesford
Epping Forest
Maldon

Chief Executive Officer
Executive County Training Officer
Financial Controller
Deputy Police, Fire and Crime

Apologies for Absence

Nick Shuttleworth
Jane Moore
Cllr Lewis Barber
Cllr Alan Townsend
Cllr Richard North
Cllr Danny Botterell
Cllr Sue Martin
Cllr Wendy Stamp
Cllr Jim Devlin
Cllr Angelina Marriott
Cllr Martin Lee

RCCE
NALC
Essex County Council
Uttlesford
Brentwood
Tendring
Rochford
Maldon
Basildon
Rochford
Braintree

1 Chairman's Welcome

The Chair welcomed those present including Cllr Hafiz who joined online. The Chair acknowledged that Executive Committee members often have other commitments or work

full time and it can be challenging to attend all planned meetings. Executive meetings need to be quorate for business to be able to take place. The Chairman believes it is important to have EALC executive meetings in person whenever practical.

The Chair acknowledges the work of the members who are not present at the meeting.

The Chairman attended the following meetings:

29 th May	Platinum Jubilee Celebration Chelmsford Cathedral
8 th June	Meeting with the Chairman of the SLCC with NALC in London
13 th June	NALC CVC remote meeting and NALC MB meeting
22 nd June	EALC Personnel remote meeting
23 rd June	ERP Board remote meeting
23 rd June	CVC meeting County Hall
27 th June	NALC Council/Councillor of the Year panel remote meeting
28 th June	Community Safety Hub Conference – Chelmsford
29 th June	EALC Finance remote meeting and EA(2013) Ltd AGM
4 th July	NALC Finance and Scrutiny Committee
5 th July	NALC Members meeting in London and visit to the House of Lords to meet Lords and MPs to champion sector
6 th July	Safer Essex remote meeting
8 th July	ECC Chair Annual Reception – Margaretting
11 th July	NALC CVC remote meeting
12 th July	NALC National Assembly meeting in London
19 th July	Meeting at Hyland's House with PFCC & ECC
20 th July	EHWB meeting at County Hall – Dementia, Health & wellbeing within the County. Jane Gardner Chair of Committee, very passionate.
21 st July	EALC Executive

3. Minutes

3.1 Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 26th May 2022.

A material change is required to page 955 of the minutes under item 12.11 with the following amendment:

12.11 Uttlesford

Cllr S Gill was asked to sit on the stakeholder interview panel for the Uttlesford New Planning Director.

This is a material change. Members were reminded that non material alterations to minutes should be requested prior to meetings taking place so the minutes can be corrected accordingly to save time at the meeting. Material changes should be raised as an item on the next agenda. It was noted that the draft minutes had been circulated late.

Proposed: Cllr John Gili-Ross
Seconded: Cllr David McPherson-Davis

Cllr Gill abstained from voting.

All those in favour agree to the minutes subject the above change.

The minutes of the meeting held on the 26th May 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Clarification to confirm the minute from the meeting held on 26th May 2022, minute number 4.1 states:

Exit interviews are being carried out by Vice Chairman Cllr Wendy Stamp to ensure continuity so that the EALC can learn from the feedback received from exiting staff and move the association forward. The reports will be confidential to the personnel sub-committee.

4. Personnel – The Personnel Committee update.

4.1 Update from the Chief Executive Officer.

A warm welcome was extended to the new EALC staff members

- Stephanie Robinson, Financial Controller
- Caroline Brown, Grant Funding Officer who is reporting to the Financial Controller,
- Sophie Wolker, Communications Coordinator starting on Monday 25th July, will be undertaking all communications for EALC, bulletins etc.

Interviews are being arranged for the position of Sage Administrator and Office Administrator.

The CEO has modified her approach to the recruitment processes by phoning the candidates, going through the role with the applicant and determining if they are suitable and available prior an interview being offered.

A staff announcement will be presented to the membership to introduce new members of the team.

Following the receipt of 3 quotes for office cleaning, one company has been selected and commenced on the 20th July cleaning twice per week.

Pearl Willcox and Stephanie Robinson were thanked for their part in the contractor selection process.

4.2 Personnel Sub Committee Vacancy Nominations:-

Nominations were received for the vacancies on the personnel sub-committee for Cllr Mike Eldred to join the Personnel Committee.

Proposed: by Cllr Stephanie Gill.
Seconded: by Sheila Jackman.

Nominations were received for Beverley Rumsey to join the Personnel Committee.
Proposed: by Cllr Stephanie Gill.
Seconded: by Mike Eldred.

Both nominees gave brief career profiles and there being no other nominations it was Resolved that Cllr Mike Eldred and Beverley Rumsey be duly elected to the EALC Personnel Sub-Committee.

5. Finance

5.1 Draft Minutes of the Finance Sub-Committee Meetings held on 29th June 2022.

The minutes for the 29th June have not yet been approved by the Finance Sub-Committee, therefore have not been shared at this meeting. The minutes of the meeting held on the 25th May have been shared with the Executive committee and are in the google drive for noting. Noted.

Stephanie Robinson, Financial Controller, and Cllr Macpherson Davis, Treasurer, answered questions that arose on the following;

5.2 Revised Budget Report was presented with a lot of historical information which is going to change and will be revised accordingly to reflect the current inflation levels in the two plan years.

Column 3, year to date includes the current figures for April and May 2022 only.

Column 4, forecast reflects the remainder of the year as a best estimate. The forecast is based on the figures currently booked in the training calendar up to December.

Line 16, payroll contains a rise of 7%, this is cautious as the historical rise of 1-2% in pay increases is less likely and is expected to be higher. This will leave a surplus for the year to date column three. The Finance Sub-Committee have suggested to take the budget report figure to 4%.

The plan years are historical figures and will change. The VAT component has been removed from the income line.

The training income will be looked at in detail with some modelling and this needs to be significantly increased in the plan years.

Column 6-7, plan years for 23/24 and 24/25 will change significantly.

The budget reflects 3% on the affiliation fees.

The prices of the courses need to be looked at for the future of training income.

Cllr Sheila Jackman, asked that a vote of thanks be minuted to Pearl Willcox for all her hard work with the training for the Association.

5.3 Bank Balances are the latest version tabled at the meeting and shared on the screen.

The level of grants being held appears that the Association is currently holding a large amount of various Funds.

The level of grants being held is less than previously reported as the COMF fund balance has been paid back to ECC.

The Ride London fund is still held by EALC until ECC resolve their decision on whether EALC are to return the funds to them.

The Finance Sub-Committee have discussed opening banks in line with ECC.

Cllr John Gili Ross asked if there any reason why we don't qualify for NSI savings account. EALC already have an NS&I investment saving bond holding £90,000 which received interest into the current account. Financial Controller will verify its status. The Finance Sub-Committee will need to have a discussion about investment funds.

Action: Stephanie Robinson will confirm the status of the NS&I Bond.

The financial controller now has access to the online accounts, with the exception of Barclays. The bank branch in Dunmow will close and the need to deposit cheques will have to be reviewed and possibly to change the financial regulations to deposit cheques into the Unity currently account.

The Finance Sub-Committee are fully aware and are working with the Financial Controller to ensure there is sufficient bank accounts to hold funds for the EALC and third party client money.

5.4 Weekly Grant Report latest version presented. The report will be provided monthly, instead of weekly, as grants being administered and funds held are less.

CIF has been launched and funds will be received at an appropriate time later in the year. The latest Foodbank grant administered on behalf of ECC awarded £130k which was received and processed within 3 days. EALC are purely asked to processes the payments inline with their approval system on behalf of ECC to the approved foodbanks.

5.5 EALC Reserve's Policy.

There is no report. The main element relates to staff changes & payroll.

Stephanie Robinson to action: A request to provide a breakdown of termination reserves into separate categories.

Cllr Peter Davey thanked Stephanie Robinson for all her hard work with the finances.

6. Vice Chairman Report – Cllr John Gili-Ross

Cllr John Gili- Ross: Feedback

The Vice-Chairman attended the following meetings and provided an update at the meeting to the Executive members.

20 June - Essex Police Fire and Crime Panel Meeting Review

22 June - Personnel Meeting

22 June - Wivenhoe TC Open Evening on Sustainability – environmental sustainability.

23 June - Essex Police Fire and Crime Panel AGM

23 June - EALC Chair and Vice Chair Meeting in County Hall

8 July - ECC Chairman's Reception

11 July - NALC Annual Conference in London

7. Vice Chairman Report – Cllr Wendy Stamp

Cllr Wendy Stamp: Feedback –

No update provided.

8. Essex Matters

Health & Wellbeing Officer and Climate Change Officer. EALC is still negotiating on a service level agreement, with officers at ECC, the roles are similar jobs and intentions and there is a request for a common template.

There is concern that the EALC would be recruiting at the wrong level under the current agreement presented. ECC will be funding the positions. Concerns expressed by Chairman there is an inconsistent amount of time for both positions at part time rate, there is a need for the roles to be the same.

Final Service Level Agreements will need to go through Personnel and Finance Sub-Committee for approval.

8.1 Essex County Council Report

Apologies sent from Cllr Lewis Barber

8.2 EALC/ECC Initiative Climate Change and Health & Wellbeing – Service Level Agreements . No further discussion see minutes under Item 8.

9. NALC Update.

Apologies sent from Jane Moore.

11:44 Beverley Rumsey left the meeting

10. RCCE / ERP Update.

Apologies sent from Nick Shuttleworth.

11:45 Jane Gardner Joined the meeting

11:47 Beverley Rumsey Joined the meeting

11:47 Cllr Peter Davey Left the meeting

11. PFCC Update – Jane Gardner via zoom

The Chair welcomed Jane Gardner to the meeting to provide an update to the Executive from the PFCC.

It is ASB (Anti-Social Behaviour) week this week. There are many good stories coming from the PFCC about ASB and the ongoing work to target intervention on criminal behaviour.

11:49 Cllr Peter Davey joined the meeting

Fire and Rescue service has received 300 calls per day for incidents, and have been extremely busy. There have been some Tragic events with a big impact on our crews and their families with a couple of fatalities.

The PFCC held the Essex Conference at the Tilbury Port Terminal which came on the back of the tragic deaths of 39 Vietnamese trafficking victims that died. The event was powerful to bring awareness and key messages of our responsibilities to be awareness of trafficking and the consequences.

The PFCC will provide updates as and when new events are launched.

The Health and Wellbeing board chaired by Jane Gardner sends a clear message in regards to Suicide prevention in Southend, Essex and Thurrock. There were various statistics shared and a report written will be shared with the Executive Committee.

Cllr Peter Davey thanked Jane Gardener for attending the meeting.

12:10 Pearl Willcox left the meeting

12:11 Cllr John Gili-Ross and Cllr Mike Eldred Left the meeting

12:12 Cllr Mike Eldred joined the meeting

Item 13 taken here with the agreement of those present.

13. District Association Representatives Feedback.

Each representative from each District gave an update to members around the table.

12:17 Pearl Willcox joined the meeting

13.1 Epping Forest

Cllr Sheila Jackman – Stated that Epping Forest Association Local Councils are concerned that legal enquiries are not being responded to correctly or promptly and some are not happy with the service received from the EALC. Clerks and Parish Councils are going elsewhere for legal advice. There appears to be a lack of knowledge with respect to handling of legal enquiries.

12:20 Abdul Hafiz left the meeting

12:21 Abdul Hafiz joined the meeting

12:25 Charlene Slade left the meeting

Beverley Rumsey Epping Forest. Ride London is going to take place again, though the route is not known and asked what is going to happen in the future regarding this event. Beverley commented on the lack of funding available for the playground in the area and sector generally. There should be a platform for Councils to lobby.

13.2 Basildon Cllr David McPherson-Davis advised seeking information from Basildon Borough Council on devolution of services down from the Borough to the Parishes – proposals appear fraught with danger.

12:28 Charlene Slade joined the meeting

13.3 Braintree Cllr Paul Lees asked about the legal status of District Associations, especially in relation to employment. EALC will look at its insurance on this as to whether

the Associations' insurance covers the group. BHIB to be asked for advice as well as existing provider.

Cllr Lees stated that BALC had concerns with the support provided by the EALC with respect to legal enquiries. Recruitment is underway to improve the generalised support for legal enquiries however members were reminded that NALC currently provide legal support to member councils.

13.4 Brentwood Are currently creating a parish liaison meeting.

13.5 Colchester no report as Cllr Gili-Ross had left the meeting by this time as he had to attend a Police Fire Crime Panel meeting in Chelmsford.

13.6 Maldon no report

13.7 Rochford no report

13.8 Tendring no report

13.9 Uttlesford – Cllr Stephanie Gill advised that the UALC AGM did not have enough people to be quorate, despite the April meeting being well attended. The next meeting is planned for the 14th September. The new Uttlesford District Council CEO has been hosting many forums which may be the reason for poor attendance at the UALC AGM.

The meeting is now quorate. The Chairman reverted back to item 12 with the agreement of those present.

12. New Initiatives and other matters for discussion.

Various Members were required to leave as the meeting had overrun.
The meeting is no longer quorate.

12.1 EALC Website/IT development update. The website has been updated to WordPress so that further development and improvement can now take place.

12.2 AGM & Conferences update – Hylands House. The Chair provided an update and everything is on track for a successful event.

14. Staff Reports

14.1 Chief Executive Report - Noted

14.2 Executive County Training Officer Report - Noted

14.3 Financial Controller Report - Noted.

15. Clarification - Summary of points raised under following items

13. The Chairman reminded the members that visiting District Associations by the EALC Chair was important and that whenever possible these visits should include the CEO.

13.1 Beverley Rumsey suggested that many districts had Clerks forums, the Chair and CEO would be welcome to attend one of their meetings.

13.1 Cllr Sheila Jackman asked why the Local Council Award Scheme administration had been transferred to NALC. The Chair reminded members that the accreditation panel still remains in Essex but the background support and administration has been transferred to NALC as is the case for all other County Associations.

4. Some Executive members were asked questions relating to the exit interviews undertaken by Cllr Stamp and whether the exit interviews would be shared with the Executive Committee. The members were reminded that a summary report was being prepared by Cllr Stamp which would be presented to the Personnel Committee. This summary report is expected to include any recommendations and with the agreement of the personnel sub-committee, the recommendations would be shared with the EALC Executive members. The exit interviews are subject to confidentiality between the leaver and Cllr Stamp and will be destroyed.

4.1 Cllr Peter Davey stated that an announcement needs to be made to the membership introducing the new staff. The website must also be updated with details of current staff.

16. Date of Next Meetings

1st September 2022

Annual General Meeting 22nd September 2022 to be held at Hylands House. The AGM will be followed by an all-day event showcasing the Police and Fire and Rescue services and Essex County Council.

17. Matters for future agenda items

None noted.

18. Meeting Closed at 12:31pm