

**Minutes of the 72nd Annual General Meeting of the
Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils**

**Held at Moulton Community Centre, Moulton, Northampton on
Saturday 5 October 2019**

Item																											
<p>1. Welcome & housekeeping.</p> <p>Northants CALC Deputy CEO, Lesley Sambrook Smith opened the meeting and welcomed delegates. There were over 150 attendees in total, with 138 registered councillors and clerks representing over ninety member councils.</p>																											
<p>2. Election of Honorary Officers of the Association for the year 2019/2020.</p> <p>a) Appointment of a new President deferred due to Local Government Reorganisation.</p> <p>The following honorary offers were nominated and duly elected:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">b) Vice Presidents</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Cllr Catherine Lomax Mr Jeffrey Greenwell Mr Gordon Shorley Mrs Gwen Radcliffe</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">c) Auditor</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Kate Brown Accountants</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	b) Vice Presidents	Cllr Catherine Lomax Mr Jeffrey Greenwell Mr Gordon Shorley Mrs Gwen Radcliffe	c) Auditor	Kate Brown Accountants																							
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<p>3. To receive the recommendations of the Appointments Panel on persons to be appointed to the board of directors for 2019/20.</p> <p>The Appointments Panel recommended the following for appointment at the AGM:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="padding: 5px;">No.</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">Name</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">Qualifying Council</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">1.</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Peter Allen</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Towcester Town Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">2.</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Chris Horsman</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Little Stanion Parish Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">3.</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Lynn Lavender</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Litchborough Parish Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">4.</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Richard Lewis</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Rushden Town Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">5.</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Mike Scott</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Great Addington Parish Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">6.</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Lynne Taylor</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Daventry Town Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">7.</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Julia Tufnail</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Finedon Town Council</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">8.</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Gill Wells</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">West Haddon Parish Council</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>RESOLVED: That the eight candidates be appointed en bloc as directors for the year 2019/20.</p>	No.	Name	Qualifying Council	1.	Peter Allen	Towcester Town Council	2.	Chris Horsman	Little Stanion Parish Council	3.	Lynn Lavender	Litchborough Parish Council	4.	Richard Lewis	Rushden Town Council	5.	Mike Scott	Great Addington Parish Council	6.	Lynne Taylor	Daventry Town Council	7.	Julia Tufnail	Finedon Town Council	8.	Gill Wells	West Haddon Parish Council
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<p>4. Confirmation of the minutes of the 71st AGM held on 6 October 2018.</p> <p>The minutes were signed as a true and correct record of the meeting.</p>																											

5. To receive the Annual Report for the year ending 31 March 2019 including the Annual Statement of Accounts and balance sheet for the year ending 31 March 2019.

Northants CALC Chairman, Lynne Taylor, presented the Annual Report and Accounts and commended it to the AGM.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report & Accounts be received and noted.

6. To determine subscription levels for the year 2020/2021.

The board of directors recommended that the per council element of the Northants CALC membership fee for the year starting 1 April 2020 and ending 31 March 2021 be increased by inflation (CPIH July 2019 – 2.0%) from £158.38 to £161.55 and that the per elector element of the Northants CALC membership fee be increased by inflation (CPIH July 2019 – 2.0%) from 23.76 pence to 24.24 pence.

Larger councils (10,000 – 30,000 electorate) are charged a fixed fee for membership of Northants CALC. The board of directors recommended the fixed fee per council for the year starting 1 April 2020 and ending 31 March 2021 be increased by inflation (CPIH July 2019 – 2.0%) from £2,534.14 per council to £2,584.83 per council. The total fee payable will therefore be (£2,584.83 + NALC Affiliation fee). The equivalent fee for super councils (30,000 + electors) is increased from £4,603.50 to £4,695.57.

The board of directors recommended that Parish Meetings with less than 100 electors AND no precept are offered affiliate membership for 2020/21 free of charge.

The maximum fee that any council or parish meeting pays is capped at £1 per elector.

RESOLVED: That the board's recommendations be approved.

7. To consider motions put by member councils.

None received.

8. Launch of the *Building Communities* Prospectus

Danny Moody spoke about the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) workshops, focus groups, surveys, and research that Northants CALC had done over the past two years and said that all the engagement work had been distilled into the *Building Communities* prospectus, which sets out the role of parish and town councils in the context of unitary local government, building stronger and safer communities and acting as the bridge between communities and the unitary councils. Danny Moody thanked the parish and town council clerks and councillors that had attended the meetings and workshops and given their valuable input, and Deputy CEO, Lesley Sambrook Smith, who over a relatively short time has become an expert on LGR.

The document is aimed at those with an interest in designing better public services and stronger communities in Northamptonshire, from individual parish and town clerks and councillors to the Leaders and Chief Executives of the principal councils and other public sector organisations.

At the core of Building Communities is a proposal that each unitary council, West Northamptonshire Council and North Northamptonshire Council establishes a Community Partnerships Office (CPO) to act as a first point of contact between the unitary council and the parish and town councils in its area. Northants CALC believes that establishing good communications is fundamental to building an effective and respectful relationship between the two tiers of local government.

The document was published on the Northants CALC web site during the conference and a copy was emailed to every member parish and town council. Danny Moody asked delegates to go back to their councils and discuss *Building Communities* with them and to talk to their borough, district and county councillors about LGR and what the impact will be for communities.

9. Keynote Address - Life after Unitary Reorganisation – The Parish & Town Council Perspective

Sarah Mason, Chief Executive of the Cornwall Association of Local Councils, gave a thought-provoking presentation on the journey that parish and town councils had been on since Cornwall went unitary in 2009. She outlined that services that had previously been delivered by the principal councils now fell to parish and town councils to continue if they wanted to, and the inescapable realities that brought in terms

of increased Band D tax rates levied by parish and town councils (average £56.50 in 2008/9 to £124.65 in 2018/19).

Sarah described the challenges of change and said that for councils that wanted to achieve it was a great opportunity. She said that “*The biggest challenge is your mindset*” and pointed out that it would take at least three or four electoral cycles for unitary local government to be considered the normal way of doing things (as opposed to the “new” way). Sarah said that parish and town council must prepare by mapping everything in their communities and having a conversation with the electorate about what was important to them to protect.

Sarah described the key role that the Cornwall Association plays in being the bridge between parish and town councils and Cornwall Council.

She ended by saying that divorce, death and moving are known to be highly stressful life events, and that in some ways Local Government Reorganisation was like all three rolled together.

After such a thought-provoking and challenging presentation there were lots of questions, with subjects ranging from how to “sell” Band D increases to the electorate, the status of Neighbourhood Plans after LGR, and how new councils are created in previously unparished areas.

10. Keynote Address – National challenges facing the first tier of local government

Dr Jonathan Owen, Chief Executive of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) wished Northants CALC a happy 72nd birthday and said that it was nationally recognised as a leading CALC. He praised the *Building Communities* prospectus and said that he supported its central tenets of building relationships, partnerships and trust.

Jonathan listed NALC’s lobbying successes recently, particularly the exemption for parish and town councils from Council Tax Referendum Principles and the removal of business rates on public loos. He said that national events made dealing with parliament challenging but that NALC was achieving some notable wins. Jonathan noted that parish and town councils are moving into different service areas, such as health and wellbeing, and that they now provided a vast array of services. He invited delegates to state some of the things their councils were doing, and it was a big list. He illustrated that government supports the parish sector and there had been recent positive comments from the Secretary of State and local government ministers.

NALC is working on important policy initiatives, such as reducing loneliness and social isolation, which now kills more people than smoking. Jonathan said the parish sector is alive and kicking and that press coverage was sometimes not truly reflective of all the good things it is doing. He noted the lack of diversity in the sector and urged all delegates present to encourage new candidates to come forward for election in May 2020. Finally, he called for all councils to invest more in training and development in order to build the capacity of the sector.

A range of questions followed on such diverse subjects as youth councils, parish charters with principal councils, and climate change.

11. Presentations: CiLCA & Council of the Year

The AGM recognised those clerks that had achieved the sector qualification, the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) since the last AGM:

Lesley Sambrook Smith	Northants CALC
Helen du Bois	Helmdon Parish Council and Greatworth Parish Council
Hanneke Soans	Irthlingborough Town Council and Pilton, Stoke Doyle & Wadenhoe Parish Council
Malcolm Stewart	Boddington Parish Council
John Scott	Shutlanger Parish Council

Danny Moody then read out the commendation for the Northamptonshire Council of the Year Award, which went to Daventry Town Council in recognition of its efforts to have services and assets devolved to it from Daventry District Council so that they can be delivered at the most local level possible. It has

been a resource-intensive and challenging negotiation and the council has taken it on positively and enthusiastically.

After a redraw due to the first winner not being present, the prize draw was won by Cllr John Coatsworth from Helmdon Parish Council. The prize of £300 in vouchers and a bottle of champagne was generously donated by Wicksteed Playgrounds and was presented to Cllr Coatsworth by Vice President, Jeffrey Greenwell.

12. Close.

Jeffrey Greenwell thanked the sponsors and exhibitors for their support, Moulton Parish Council for hosting again, the principal council guests for attending, and the two speakers for their thought-provoking talks. Jeffrey thanked all the delegates for their attendance and participation, and finally Danny Moody and Lesley Sambrook Smith for arranging the conference and for all the good work they do for parish and town councils in Northamptonshire.

The meeting closed at 12:48 p.m.

Signed: _____

Date: _____