



COLCHESTER ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Minutes of the Colchester Association of Local Councils meeting held on Thursday 5th. March 2015 at 7pm in the Marks Tey Village Hall

Present: Cllr John Gili-Ross (JGR) (Chairman), Andrew Boyce & Chris Grimsey (Wormingford), Rosemary Jones/Harry Stone & Murray Harlow (West Bergholt), Chris Boyce (Birch), Robert Surface & Jinny Gale (Winstred 100), Christina Edwards (Treasurer), Dave Grover/Alan Frost/Simon Dougherty & Doug Kibblewhite (Abberton & Langenhoe), Mark Graham (Mount Bures), John Stewart (Myland), Nigel Fitch (Marks Tey), SF Scrase (Wakes Colne), Mick Mead & Lance Williams (Great Horksley), Carole Sutton (Stanway), Malcolm Bartier (Copford), N. Lodge & I Endean (Wivenhoe), P Case & M. Lilley (Rowhedge), Sheila Beeton & Brian Hindley (Dedham)

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the guest speaker Nick Alston (NA) Police & Crime Commissioner of Essex. Cllr Gili-Ross informed the meeting that due to a follow on civic meeting NA would start his presentation immediately

Guest Speaker - Nick Alston (NA) Essex Police & Crime Commissioner

NA thanked CALC for the invitation to talk and started by giving an explanation of his Role and Responsibilities.

The PCC has a number of statutory responsibilities, which include;

- ❖ Holding the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of policing in Essex
- ❖ Setting and updating a four year police and crime plan
- ❖ Setting the force budget and the council tax contribution to policing (precept)
- ❖ Regularly engaging with the public and communities
- ❖ Allocating grants through the Community Safety Fund and commissioning services
- ❖ Appointing, and where necessary dismissing, the Chief Constable

As the first democratically elected PCC for Essex, NA is determined to deliver the best possible police service for the County.

His passions include tackling the consequences of drug, alcohol abuse and mental health issues.

Excessive alcohol consumption can fuel violent crime, including domestic abuse. There is a strong link between drug abuse and crime (including burglary, vehicle crime and robbery).

A person's mental state can lead to a crisis, where individuals may suffer harm. He estimates that between 15 – 25% of police time is spent on managing mental health incidents. He is now more focused on the police and their partners to tackle this important issue.

He also wants the police to focus on supporting victims of crime as the victims can experience significant trauma following a crime.

NA described the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) and its role in holding the PCC to account.

He informed the meeting that the panel

- Is made up of representatives from each of the district and unitary authorities plus a co-opted member and two independent members.
- agrees the proportion of Council Tax in Essex which goes towards policing
- reviews the Police & Crime Plan
- reviews and scrutinises the decisions and actions of the PCC
- confirms the appointment of the Chief Constable
- The panel does not have responsibilities for initial handling of any complaints against the PCC but this may alter going forward

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NA then turned to reducing domestic abuse and informed the meeting that he has removed the old fashioned "targets" and replaced it with a monthly data.

The Police receive around 80 domestic abuse related calls every day. He thought that this statistic was shocking and more than three-quarters of all domestic offences where a crime was recorded involved actual violence against a person.

He then gave out some figures but only Domestic Abuse Crime was the only figure to go up in 2014. There are 19 domestic burglaries across Essex per day BUT 90 domestic Abuse cases across Essex per day.

The Government continues to cut police budgets and at present 2/3rd of Essex Police budget comes from Government and 1/3rd comes from Council Tax. Essex remains one of the lowest funded service in the UK and to maintain services at the highest affordable level the police precept was been raised by 1.99%.

The meeting was handed over to questions, all being comprehensively addressed.

After a meaningful Q&A session Nick Alston finished with these thoughts

- Please do not give up on notifying the police about crime and make sure it is recorded
- Even though the 101 service is currently not perfect, please keep using it. 20% of people using 101 are not happy with the service received and he continues to work to get this improved
- Have confidence in reporting any crime
- Drug abuse is dangerous and is a crime and in his view should not be legalised
- The police will be held to account as necessary
- The Chief Constable is being held to account by the PCC and PCP as necessary

JGR thanked Nick Alston for his time and the frank approach taken to address all questions from a searching audience which included some ex-police officers.

JGR informed the meeting that EALC was holding a Full Day conference on Wednesday 25th March at Foakes Hall where the keynote speakers are PCC Nick Alston and Chief Constable Stephen Kavanagh.

Main Meeting Agenda Items

Cllr Gili-Ross then went onto the agenda

2) Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Slater, Cllr Johnston and Cllr Youngs

3) To confirm the minutes of the last meeting held on 4th December 2014
The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record

4) Election of Officers & Representatives: Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, LHP Rep.,
Governance Board Reps.

JGR asked that only election of the Chairman would take place at this meeting, leaving the other positions until the June meeting. Malcolm Bartier proposed and Brian Hindley seconded that John Gili-Ross continue as Chairman. There were no other nominations received and this was carried unanimously.

- a) To receive nominations and appoint an additional Colchester member to the EALC Executive for Colchester. This was felt important as JGR has been elected to the position of EALC Chairman

Malcolm Bartier proposed and Sheila Beeton seconded that Brian Hindley serves as the CALC representative on the EALC executive committee. This was carried unanimously.

5) To agree subscription levels for 2015/16 and Treasurers report was taken together
Christina Edwards informed the meeting that there was, at the end of the financial year, a balance in hand of £1183.30p
Annual costs, for Clerks salary, expenses and Hall hire presently amounted to £932 so CALC has sufficient funds in hand to cover 1 years' costs.

Until 2014/15 CALC had 100% membership which gave an income of £1,015. This fell to £980 in 2014/15 with 1 Council not continuing with membership for reasons unknown. This income is still sufficient to cover the coming years cost – plus the balance in hand would cover any unexpected extra costs such as computer or more expensive hall hiring. On this basis, the treasurer proposes that the subscription level remain at £35. This was carried unanimously. JGR thanked Christina for her report.

6) To receive reports:

- a) Treasurer's report update – as above
- b) Local Highways Panel – JGR listed member projects that would receive LHP funding
- c) Governance Board - Malcolm Bartier reported the Governance Board had not met for Parish or Town related issues and therefore there was nothing to report. The clerk to write to the monitoring officer requesting information on any cases dealt with by the Governance Board generally as there is no feedback from CBC
- d) EALC update – JGR other than the police conference already mentioned there is a Superfast Essex broadband seminar being held for Parish & Town Councils at The Essex Records Office Chelmsford on Wednesday 18th. March from 10am – 12 noon.

7) Issues raised by Councils for information exchange

It was discussed that ECC had restricted the footpath cutting in Dedham PC to just 1 cut per year. It was also reported that Cllr Rodney Bass had moved funds from the cutting budget to the potholes budget.

8) Date of next meeting: Thursday 11th. June 2015 at Marks Tey Village Hall at 7pm

There being no other formal business the meeting was closed at 8.50pm

Signed.....Chairman : Dated 11th. June 2015

John Gili-Ross