

Report on NALC AGM 27th October 2020 at 11am to 12.30pm
by NALC Representative Lindsey Dedden.

In attendance too: Jill Crouch (Acting Chair DAPTC) & Neil Wedge (CE)

The AGM this year was held online via Zoom with Luke Hall (MP) Minister for Regional Growth & Local Government presenting to delegates at 12 noon. There were just over 110 attendees from around the County Associations and members of NALC Committees.

The AGM was mainly business focused and therefore, was significantly shorter than in previous years where it had been held over two days. There were no exhibitors or additional guest speakers.

Item 1.1

In the absence of a President, Cllr Sue Baxter, NALC Chairman was elected to chair the meeting.

Item 3.1

The minutes of the 2019 AGM were approved with one minor amendment to the attendee list.

Item 3.2

There were 3 candidates in the online poll for the Policy Committee vacancy and Tony Hirons from Leicestershire & Rutland was duly elected; having received the highest number of votes.

Item 4.1

Cllr. Sue Baxter ran through a list of activities undertaken highlighting the impact NALC is having:

- ✓ 5th Annual Lobby Day was held earlier in 2020 which over 100 MPs attended
- ✓ The ‘all party’ democracy group had been reconvened
- ✓ Many small initiatives and issues had been taken up helping create change
- ✓ Kept crucial communications going during a time of difficulty

The Chair concluded by thanking local councils for the pivotal role they play in their communities.

Cllr. Mike Drew updated on behalf of the Member Services Team and highlighted the excellent work done on COVID19 communications, the e-learning pilot launched and the new weekly County Officer call that takes place on a Wednesday.

The Annual Report was approved.

Item 4.2

Cllr. Keith Stevens gave an overview of the accounts and the impact of having to cancel the year end event which meant an impact on income whilst not all costs could be recovered. The key challenge this year was getting all the subscriptions in which meant pressure on the cashflow of the organisation. The financial situation of the organisation is currently very ‘fluid’ and a number of areas are being looked at including a refresh of the website and the London offices.

Cllr. Stevens supported the proposed 3% increase in subscriptions and cited the need to invest in technology and the website as key reasons why an increase was required. Cllr Stevens handed over to Cllr. Davey after which the votes on 4.2, 5.1 and 5.2 would be taken.

Cllr. Peter Davey (Finance Scrutiny) supported the above points by Cllr. Stevens and explained further background to the review of premises and spend needed on technology and the website. In supporting a 3% increase in subscriptions, it would generate 13 weeks cash in the operation in the next year alleviating the problems experienced earlier in 2020.

Voting:

Item 4.2 – The Annual Accounts for 2019/20. For 97% - Approved.

Item 5.1 – To consider the recommendation by National Assembly on 14 July 2020 to increase the affiliation fee to in 2021/22 to 7.42 pence per elector with a cap of £1, 900 for larger councils. 3% increase. For 81%, Against 13% and Abstentions 6%

Item 5.2 – This item was just for noting and not approval.

Item 6.1 – The Planning White Paper

A number of comments were made by members at the meeting about the consultation to which NALC will be making a full response. The response developed by the Policy Committee is considered strong and the AGM were asked to support the submission from NALC to the consultation. Copies would be made available for those who have not seen it.

Vote on Item 6.1: For 94%, Against 3% and Abstain 1%

Item 2.1 – Presentation by Luke Hall MP

Luke Hall started his short presentation by thanking parish and town councils for their contribution during the most challenging years. He went on further to talk about the financial challenges that this created and hoped that the next tier had been supportive during this time.

He wished to convey his support for the Bill to change business rates on public toilets and hoped this would be delivered soon. He said the department were reviewing the devolution submissions for Cumbria, North Yorkshire and Somerset. He concluded by thanking parishes and towns for embracing the opportunities online to keep council business going despite some considerable practical challenges.

His final announcement related to Parish Polls and their suspension until May 2021. Something that had been missed by central government when bringing in new regulations to avoid face to face public meetings. This would be changed at the earliest opportunity.

Item 7 – Appointments

Item 7.1 – Cllr. Sue Baxter reported that the search for a ‘Westminster experienced’ president continues so no nomination was put forward.

Item 7.2 – It was proposed to continue with the current Vice Presidents until next years elections. **Approved.**

Item 7.3 – The review of the auditor is to be deferred and therefore, it was proposed that Milton Avis continue until next year. **Vote:** For 96%, Against 1% and Abstain 3%

Item 8.1 – 25th October 2021 was set as the date on the next AGM for NALC.

End.