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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NACO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Bath, Thursday 12 June 2014, commencing at 0915

Present:

Karen Alexakis	Retired Member	
Jim Babbington	Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea	
Christine Christensen	Ipswich Borough Council	
Michael Cleere	London Borough of Southwark	
Penny Harrison	Retired Member	Secretary
Sarah Holman	Bracknell Forest Council	
Brian Magan	Warrington Borough Council	
Phil O'Brien	Derby City Council	Vice Chairman
Charles Talbot	Kidderminster Charter Trustees	
Ann Tipper	Bath Charter Trustees	
Catherine Wilkinson	Norwich County Council	
Beverley Wilson	Retired Member	

Apologies:

Gill Allwright	London Borough of Southwark	Treasurer
Malcolm Bartlett	Retired Member	
Kate Foxton	Guildford Borough Council	
Margaret Humphrey	London Borough of Camden	
Alex Kowalczyk	Retired Member	
Paul Millward	Nottingham City Council	Chairman
Alison Orde	St Albans City & District Council	
Sandra Robinson	Belfast City Council	
Alasdair Ross	Aberdeen Council	
Pat Seager	Epping Forest District Council	
Sonia Sutton	London Borough of Southwark	
Irene Webster	Scarborough Borough Council	

For Action by:

1.

1		Welcome	
1.1		Phil O'Brien, Acting Chairman, welcomed everyone to the meeting at the offices of the Charter Trustees of Bath and thanked them for attending	

2		Apologies	
2.1		Apologies for absence as listed above	
3		Resignation of Member from Executive Committee and co-option of new member	
3.1		Phil O'Brien reported that Adriana Stapleton had resigned from the Committee because of work commitments. He said he would like to propose the co-option of Sarah Holman from Bracknell-Forest Council to the Executive. This proposal was seconded by Penny and unanimously agreed. The Acting Chairman welcomed Sarah to the Committee	
4.		Election of Executive Officers	
4.1		Phil proposed Paul Millward as Chairman which was seconded by Beverley Penny proposed Phil O'Brien as Vice Chairman which was seconded by Catherine Phil proposed Penny as Secretary which was seconded by Charles Phil proposed Gill as Treasurer which was seconded by Beverley Phil proposed Catherine as Membership Secretary which was seconded by Christine	
4.2		All the above proposals were unanimously agreed by those present	
5		Appointment of Other Officers	
5.1		Phil proposed Jim as Press Officer which was seconded by Catherine Phil proposed that Alasdair remain as Webmaster with the assistance of a Web Support Group (WSG), consisting of Christine, Karen and Sarah. The proposal was seconded by Penny. Catherine proposed and Phil seconded the proposal that the role of Actions Co-ordinator be combined with that of Secretary Phil proposed Ann as Training Officer which was seconded by Christine	
5.2		All the above proposals were unanimously agreed by those present	
6		Appointment of Auditors	
6.1		It was proposed by Phil and seconded by Ann that the London Borough of Southwark be reappointed as Auditors	
6.2		The proposal was carried unanimously	
7		Minutes of last meeting held 31 January in Warrington – accuracy and matters arising other than those listed separately on this Agenda	

	3.11.1	Phil reported that he had been paid his share of the profits from the Derby event but because the accounts for the one at Camden were not yet complete they were awaiting their share.	
	3.12.1	Phil said the Armed Forces Covenant Toolkit had yet to be sent to Alasdair for the Website.	Phil,
	4.10.9	Winning Entries from Civic Office of the Year had yet to go on the Website and it was believed that Paul still had some of the earlier entries	WSG, Christine, Paul
	5.3	EventBright – it was felt that NACO should not be paying for a service which could be handled by the Executive	
7.1		Beverley proposed and Catherine seconded that the minutes be accepted as a true record	
8.		Treasurer's General Report	
8.1		The Treasurer was not present but she had sent a report to say that there was £20,248.02 in the account with some money still to come in from the Camden event; she had not yet received the bill for the catering. See additional information at 10.5	Gill
9		Membership Secretary's Report	
9.1		Catherine reported there were 432 members now and there had been an upsurge in membership after the training day. She had targeted Scotland (with the help of information from Beverley and got a few members. She was now working on Wales.	
9.2		It was agreed that it would be good if information from the Membership Secretary could come out from membership@naco.uk.com . At present the best that could be done was to send it out from info@naco.uk.com but Penny explained she had found some difficulties with this site and she and Catherine agreed to meet to look at the site together. It was agreed that ideally distribution from this site should be named as being from the Secretary, the Membership Secretary, the Press Officer as well as info@naco.uk.com and possibly the Chairman and Vice Chairman if this is feasible. Alasdair and the WSG were asked to look into this	Penny, Catherine, Alasdair, WSG
9.3		A note should be put on the Website saying that addresses of civic officers on a regional basis could be obtained from the Membership Secretary	WSG, Catherine
9.4		Phil asked if Scotland and Wales had town Mayors within their larger districts. Beverley agreed to look into this with regard to Scotland; Catherine said she already had information about Welsh Community Councils	Beverley, Catherine
9.5		Catherine said that her target for membership for the coming year was 500	
10		Review of Camden Training Event	
10.1		The general feeling of the meeting was that it was brilliant. There had been some issues at reception and there were not enough delegate packs.	

10.2		For the first time Survey Monkey had been used. It was believed it would have been better if only one form had been sent out rather than using two different surveys and it was important that it was sent out within a couple of days of the actual event and this would have given a better rate return.	
10.3		In response to an enquiry from Beverley Phil said 50 people had returned the forms; it was agreed the return rate would be better if it had been sent out straight away. The findings were very encouraging and virtually all the comments positive. Disappointingly one response suggested that there had been too little variation in the past three years – something we must address for our 2015 event. Bryan commented that both his apprentice and experienced staff member found the event useful, demonstrating our relevance to members of all levels of service.	
10.4		It was agreed that Survey Monkey should be used again after the 2015 Training Event and that Alison should be asked to manage it again as she now had some experience of using it. It was hoped that it might be possible for replies to come to feedback@naco.uk.com	Alison, WSB
10.5		Gill had reported that so far £10,450 had been received from payments for the Training Event, with expenses of £1,325.57 having been paid. She had yet to receive the bill for the catering from Margaret.	Gill, Margaret
10.6		Gill believed that sending out the invoices with the acknowledgement of booking had been a better system. She said some of the BACS payments just give initials of the payee and could relate to one or two authorities so she needed to check paperwork to find out which invoice they related to. Penny said that all the information about how to pay was on each invoice. However, if there was anything else which could be added which would be helpful she would happily put it on for next year.	Gill, Penny
11		Financial Matters	
11.1		It was agreed that in future cheques should be signed by two of four designated members of the Executive. These would be Gill, Paul, Phil and Penny. Gill was asked to speak to the bank and organise this whilst at the same time having Dave's name removed as a signatory. It would probably be necessary for each of the three new signatories to go into their local branch of the HSBC with identity to sign forms in the presence of a bank employee. It was accepted that in view of the Treasurer's new status, being retired from Southwark Council, all cheques would either have to be signed at meetings by two people or signed by one and then posted to another for signature.	Gill, Paul, Phil, Penny
11.2		Tax – this matter had been raised as a request had been made by one local authority for a reference number. No further action was required	
11.3		As more and more councils were now paying by BACS and there had been very few requests for NACO to	

		accept card payments it was agreed that there was no need to find a way of accepting these especially as it would incur a cost for NACO	
11.4		Gill said that the best rate of interest the bank had been able to offer for a savings account was 0.5% so she said she did not think it worth moving money about. It was agreed that Gill should spend time researching to see if there was any possibility of getting above 1%. Catherine suggested the Unity Trust Bank which is a specialist bank for charities, trade unions, and credit unions. Catherine would contact Gill with the information	Gill, Catherine
11.5		It was estimated that after payment of the caterers' bill there would be approximately £7,000 profit to be divided between NACO and the London Borough of Camden. It was hoped this could be dealt with as soon as possible	Gill, Margaret
11.6		Gill had asked the meeting to agree that the costs of the dinner at a two day event did not come out of the actual training day expenses. It was agreed that the original concept had been for NACO to sponsor such a dinner so that delegates could explain to their authorities that there was no cost to the authorities for this. It was agreed that at future two day training events dinners would be sponsored by NACO (at an amount to be agreed each time) and that this amount would be shown as sponsorship in the Income and Expenditure Account for the training event.	
11.7		Gill had asked for an item of Budget to be included in the Agenda, but as she was not present this could not be expanded on. Whilst we prepare a detailed budget for our annual events, we deferred any further discussion for a future meeting.	Gill
11.8		At the conclusion of the meeting in Warrington Paul (in conversation with Alex) had asked Penny to put an item of Procurement on the Agenda but as neither Paul nor Alex was present this was deferred to a future meeting.	Paul, Alex
12		Constitution Update	
12.1		Bryan suggested that the Constitution should be readopted at each annual meeting. He agreed to go through the present Constitution and suggest any necessary amendments. Penny said she had some notes about possible amendments which she would send to him. He agreed to have his draft amended Constitution available for distribution to the Executive so that it could be circulated along with the Agenda for the next meeting	Bryan, Penny
13		Training Report	
13.1		Phil reported that since Debbie Collins had resigned from the Committee during the early part of the year he had in an ad hoc manner resumed the role but was pleased that the meeting had now appointed Ann to the role.	
13.2		Phil said that Councillor Skills were running 10 sessions this year with an attendance of 166, representing 80 local authorities. None had yet required a subsidy from NACO though one to be held in South Gloucestershire was rather low. It was agreed that Phil, Ann and Catherine	Ann, Phil, Catherine

		would discuss how to promote the event, probably through Catherine providing a list of members local to South Gloucestershire who might be interested.	
13.3		Phil reported that he had reached an agreement with David McGrath, one of our training partners, which would help promote NACO in Wales. Information about the 1 to 1 training session for civic heads which David had devised are already on our website.	
13.4		Michael said NACO training should concentrate on helping civic support staff make civic heads relevant to the present day. He also said that he had organised Andy Cope to give "An Art of being Brilliant" talk in Southwark in aid of the Mayor's Charity and it had been extremely well received. As a result he was repeating the event several times. He agreed to set out a template for how he ran the event which after discussion between him, Ann and Andy Cope could be put on the Website	Michael, Ann, WSG
13.5		Phil said he had been in discussion with Diane Dorrell who was trying to set up a training for Civic Heads and Staff of smaller authorities, such as towns. These sessions would last about 2 hours and would cost in the region of £20. Phil said he would discuss it with Ann and Diane	Ann, Phil
14		NACO Website	
14.1		Current state of the Website – it was agreed that the site itself was fine but needed updating and improving	Alasdair, WSG
14.2		The Web Support Group had now been appointed and it was important that they be given access to the site at the earliest possible. Phil agreed to speak to Alasdair within the week, and ask him, as a matter of urgency, to share with the WSG details of how the NACO site works. This may mean an investment of time up front, perhaps to create a user guide, but it will build the dividend of resilience and improved workflow very quickly.	Phil, Alasdair, WSG
14.3		Penny agreed to send all information she had that needed to go on the Website to the WSG so that they could update the information	Penny, WSG
14.3		Links to other sites and Linkedin need checking and the reference to NACO's Facebook page should be removed.	WSG
14.4		A Vacancy tab where relevant job opportunities could be posted should be included	WSG
14.4		Photographs both of the Executive and also of interesting events either attended by Civic Officers or organised by them should appear	WSG
14.5		It was agreed there should be a members only area where minutes would be published and other matters not for the general public	WSG
14.6		The message board facility should be made to work and should be publicised on the home page	WSG
14.7		It was agreed that once the message board was up and running Penny would check it each week and circulate questions to ensure they receive answers	WSG, Penny

14.8		Other items which needed revising or adding included, Civic Office of the Year winning applications and runners up for as many years as possible, list of the Executive members, the next event and information about booking for the training day last March removed. There should be a report on the 2014 Training Day.	WSG
14.9		Prominence should be given to an Initiative Page for suggestions for events marking WW1 and the National Mourning Document which is about to agreed with Earl Marshal's Office and the Palace	
14.10		Link to Government site about WW1	
14.11		The present advertisement from Councillor Skills was out of date and should be removed. An up to date one, with a more modern logo would be appropriate. It should contain the NACO logo as well. Ann was asked to discuss this with Councillor Skills and then get the WSG to put it on the website	
15		Member Rewards/Benefits/Relationships with Advertisers and Exhibitors	
15.1		A hit counter should be put on the website so that we can show the number of visits to what will hopefully be a much improved site. This would demonstrate that the use of the website makes it worth paying to advertise. NACO will set the criteria as to might advertise on it.	WSG
15.2		Malcolm had sent a message to say that he felt the time may have come to discontinue having exhibitors at Training Events as it was becoming increasingly difficult to attract them and the amount of income did not justify their presence. It was agreed the presence of exhibitors should be discontinued	
16		NACO Training Event 2015	
16.1		A discussion was held as to whether a 1 or 2 day event should be held in 2015 and the general feeling was that the importance of the networking in the evening made a 2 day event preferable	
16.2		Phil reported that Margaret had said Camden was happy to host the event on 10 and 11 March. Margaret would have to find a restaurant with a suitable private room for the Presentation Dinner and this information should be available by the end of June	Margaret
16.3		Michael said that Southwark would also be interested in hosting at a venue within that Borough.	
16.4		Phil proposed that he ask Margaret to hold the dates for a few weeks whilst in the interests of change Michael is asked to come up with a competing bid by the end of June. The event should be held either in late February or early March. This proposal would be circulated to the Executive as soon as it is available with a request for comments within 7 days. Ann, Christine and Sarah were given delegated authority to make the decision as to which authority would host the 2015 Training Event	Phil, Ann, Christine, Sarah
16.5		It was understood that Michael's bid might be for 2016 rather than 2015 or indeed for either year	

16.6		It was agreed that bids for 2016 should be available for the meeting held around June 2015 and that the decision as to where the Training Event 2016 be held be made at that meeting.	
16.7		It was agreed that as soon as the decision as to the dates and venue for the 2015 Training Event had been made in early July a banner announcing the date and venue should be put on the website	WSG
16.8		The cost for delegates would be the same as last time subject to the NACO sponsorship of the dinner to an amount to be agreed	
		A criteria for future bids would be put on the Survey Monkey sent out after the 2015 Training Event. Anyone bidding for 2016 must have their bids ready for the first meeting after the AGM. Penny agreed to draft the criteria which could be agreed at the next meeting	Penny
16.9		<p>Various suggestions were made for Keynote Speakers and Workshops . These were</p> <p>Andy Cope</p> <p>Disabilities and the civic offices</p> <p>Dilwyn Scott</p> <p>Youngest Civic Chairman</p> <p>A workshop based on a topic raised in “The Audience”</p> <p>Making the best of your Civic Head/ Exploiting your civic assets</p> <p>Making the Mayor relevant to 21st century</p> <p>David McGrath and the strategic Chairman</p> <p>VE/VJ – ideas for marking these events May and August 2015</p> <p>Survey monkey to ask for idea for future workshops</p> <p>New in Post in some shape or other</p> <p>Winner of the Civic Officer of the Year – How We Did It</p>	
16.10		A question should be raised on Survey Monkey and in the newsletter asking for suggestions for Workshops	
16.11		Looking ahead at future Training Events the topic of “Heroes of Democracy” marking the 100 th anniversary of female suffrage	
17		Communications Strategy	
17.1		A communications strategy for NACO larger projects is required appropriate to each event	

18		Newsletter	
18.1		It was agreed that Jim should send out a newsletter very shortly which included the names of the new Executive, who the officers are, the membership numbers, reporting that NACO had a healthy balance, explaining the delay in sending out Survey Monkey, asking for suggestions for workshops in the future, the website, the launch of the WW1 initiative, the National Mourning guide, request for co-optees for the Executive, the date and venue of the 2015 training event and that Civic Office the year 2014 would be launched in the Autumn,	Jim
		Catherine would look at the balance of the Executive and see if there were particular types of authority which needed representation. She would let Jim have this information so he could stress this when mentioning possible co-optees	Catherine, Jim
19		Relationship with Earl Marshal's Office	
19.1		Jim reported that he, with Paul, had met the Staff Officer to the Earl Marshal, Colonel Mather, and the Deputy Comptroller in the Lord Chamberlain's Office at Buckingham Palace, Jonathan Spencer. A document regarding National Mourning is virtually now ready, waiting for some small points to be agreed. NACO agreed to review it annually and the Earl Marshal's Office will let us know when they make any revisions. Jim was asked to ensure that the NACO document stated that it had been reviewed by the Earl Marshal.	Jim
19.2		It was agreed that this developing relationship with the Earl Marshal's Office was extremely important and showed the respect now being accorded to NACO	
20		NACO involvement with 100th Anniversary of WW1	
20.1		Phil mentioned that when he had spoken with Claudia Kenyatta he had raised the quote from the Prime Minister in which he said he wanted every town hall to be involved in the WW1 commemoration. Phil asked if NACO could work with the government over this and he and Paul had a meeting with Warwick Hawkins from DCMS and a representative from the LGA. One question is how to connect with the BME. The idea was put forward of a NACO competition for a single symbolic act which all civic heads could do to commemorate WW1 at a very moderate cost. Each civic head would make this act at the same time. DCMS encouraged NACO to develop this initiative. If it can be delivered towards the end of the 2014/15 civic year just started, it may enthuse the subsequent civic heads to continue the momentum.	
20.2		NACO requires ideas from members, the best idea would win a competition and NACO would circulate a template of what should be done.	
20.3		The criteria for the competition would be written by Bryan ready for the launch	Bryan
20.4		The competition would be launched by Friday 19 June, with information on the web site and circulated to all	WSG, Catherine, Jim

		members via Catherine's membership list and would also be on the newsletter	
20.5		Entries to the competition would need to be received by the Secretary by the end of July with the ideas being judged by mid August. Beverley, Bryan and Penny agreed to be the judges, but before announcing the winner NACO will ensure it has DCMS approval. The judges would reserve the right to combine the best elements of more than one entry when the template for the single symbolic act was written.	Beverley, Bryan, Penny
20.6		The prize for the competition would be £250 for the Authority submitting the winning entry	
21		Civic Office of the Year 2014	
21.1		It was agreed that this should continue with Christine also continuing in her present role of Chairman and Co-ordinator.	Christine
21.2		It was felt there should be an extra judge who was not a member of the Executive and one of the training partners or Pascoe Sawyer might be suitable. The other judges would be Sarah (representing the winner from 2013), Christine and Beverley	Christine, Sarah, Beverley
21.3		Jim did suggest a gold standard award for Civic Offices but after discussion it was felt at present this was too complicated.	
22		Request from Bruno Peek	
		Paul was asked to write to Bruno Peek and say that NACO looked forward to working with him and would promote the Commonwealth Fly the Flag 2015	Paul
23		Future Co-optees	
23.1		No particular names were put forward but Jim was asked to include a request for volunteers in the newsletter	
23		Date and Venue of Next Meeting	
23.1		Christine offered to host the next meeting in Ipswich in October and subsequently the date was agreed as Tuesday 7 October.	Christine
24		Thanks to Host	
24.1		The Chairman thanked Ann Tipper for her welcome to Bath and the hospitality shown to the Committee	
25		Any Other Business	
25.1		There was no other business	

The meeting closed at 1600

Penny Harrison
Secretary
NACO
June 2014