

**MINUTES OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CIVIC OFFICERS**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**HELD WEDNESDAY 17 MARCH 2016**

**at 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH**

**Present: 90 Members of the Association**

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from:

Malcolm Bartlett, Bryan Magan, Pat Seager, Alex Kowalczuk, Amanda Clayton, Lisa Wells, Claire Mayhew, Helen Dobie, Rachel Mozley, Ann Sewell, Tracey Pointon, Kate Foxton, Denise Haylett

2. **MINUTES OF THE AGM 2015**

2.1 The minutes of the Association’s AGM held on Wednesday 10 March 2015 at the offices of Camden Borough Council were approved as a true record.

3. **CHAIR’S REPORT**

3.1 The Chair presented his Report which had been previously circulated to those present and which would be displayed on the Association’s website, [www.naco.uk.com](http://www.naco.uk.com) .

3.2 There were no questions and the meeting agreed to note the Chair’s report.

4. **SECRETARY’S REPORT**

4.1 The Secretary’s report had been circulated to those present and would be displayed on the Association’s website after the AGM.

4.2 The Secretary said that she was pleased to say that since she had written her report membership had grown to 457.

4.3 There were no questions and the meeting agreed to note the Secretary’s Report

5. **TREASURER’S REPORT**

5.1 The Association’s Balance Sheet for the accounting year ending 31December 2015 had been circulated to those present. A note would be placed on the website stating that if other members wished to view this they could contact the Secretary.

5.2 At the end of the financial year the balance was £11,325.57. She felt this was a very healthy amount particularly in view of the fact that some monies had been spent to set up the new website and Mail Chimp.

5.3 The Treasurer also stated that the NACO bank account showed a balance of £16,386.37 as at 17 March 2016.

5.4 She said that money was still being received in relation to the 2016 Training Event but very little expenditure had yet been met. However, she calculated that some 80% of the delegates fees had been received. She was confident that after all income and expenditure had been taken into account the Association would remain financially stable.

5.5 There were no questions and the Treasurer’s Report was approved.

6. **CO-OPTION OF MEMBERS TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2015-16**

6.1 Loraine Radcliffe from Bradford City Council had been co-opted to the Committee in June 2015

7. **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION 2015-16**

7.1 The Chairman reported that there had been no changes to the Constitution during the 2015-2016 year

8. **MEMBERSHIP FEE 2016-17**

8.1 It was proposed by the Chair, and seconded by the Secretary, that the Membership Fee for the ensuing year should again be nil.

8.2 The proposal was agreed unanimously

9. **ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2015-2016**

9.1 The following 27 nominations were received: -

Gillian Allwright Retired Civic Officer

Jim Babbington Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

Malcolm Bartlett Retired Civic Services Manager

Jacqui Brazil London Borough of Southwark

Jackie Cansick Stevenage Borough Council

Christine Christensen Ipswich Borough Council

Michael Cleere London Borough of Southwark

Michelle Davies London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

Penny Frost Chelmsford City Council

Fiona Garth Lewes Town Council

Penny Harrison Retired Civic Officer

Mike Hollingworth Charnwood Borough Council

Margaret Humphrey London Borough of Camden

Alexandra Kowalczuk Former Civic Officer

Bryan Magan Warrington Borough Council

Hannah Marr Crewe Town Council

Paul Millward Nottingham City Council

Phil O’Brien Erewash Borough Council

Alison Orde St Albans City & District Council

Sandra Robinson Belfast City Council

Alasdair Ross Aberdeen Council

Pat Seager Epping Forest District Council

Charles Talbot Retired Clerk to Charter Trustees

Martin Warren Brighton & Hove City Council

Irene Webster Scarborough Borough Council..

Marsha Whiteway Canterbury City Council

Beverley Wilson Retired Clerk to the Lieutenancy

9.2 The Chair proposed that the nominations be approved *en masse* and this was agreed.

9.3 The meeting agreed that the 27 nominations should be appointed as members of the Executive Committee 2016-17.

10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

10.1 There were no items of business received within the prescribed 14 day period of notice.

**Penny Harrison**

**Secretary**

**NACO**

**Tel: 01553 760961**

**Email: secretary@naco.uk.com**

**March 2016**

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CIVIC OFFICERS**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**17 March 2016**

**Chair’s Report**

**Introduction**

Today’s AGM is the 18th in the history of NACO. NACO continues to be in good shape and financial health although as you will see from the accounts we have been doing some spending. As you know over the past few years we have tried both to improve our communications and our membership. We finally decided that it was essential to pay for a professionally designed website and this has been done. I know that many of you have looked at this and I am sure you will agree with me that it is money well spent. At the same time we also paid to create a better system of circulating information to our members and I think it has been noticeable over the past few months that we have been able to send out more information.

Today’s event has again proved very popular away. It is heartening to see that Councils still recognise the need and benefit of our events for its staff.

I am pleased to report that our membership is now larger than ever but with no membership fee we require a reasonable profit from Training Days and any future events. The Training Event in Camden last year made a profit for both NACO and LB Camden Council and this enables us to continue our work. Today’s event should make a reasonable profit for both NACO and LB Southwark, which has enabled the Executive Committee to continue to recommend a nil membership fee.

**Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee has met on three occasions since the 2015 AGM on 10 March 2015, with these meetings being held in Southwark on 9 June 2015, Richmond upon Thames on 29 September 2015 and Stevenage on 12 January 2016. The minutes of these meetings are available on the NACO website (www.naco.uk.com). Should any member wish for a ‘hard copy’ to be sent to them they can do so by contacting the Secretary, Penny Harrison, by email: [secretary@naco.uk.com](mailto:secretary@naco.uk.com)

The Executive Committee had 25 members following the last AGM but there has been one resignation and one co-option since so there are still 25 members. Meetings have been well attended.

Following the appointment of the Executive Committee at the 2015 AGM held in Camden on 10 March 2015, the following people were appointed to the named Officer posts at the Executive Committee meeting on 9 June 2015.

Chair – Paul Millward;

Vice-Chair – Jim Babbington;

Secretary – Penny Harrison;

Treasurer – Gillian Allwright;

The Executive Committee made further appointments to the posts of:

Press Officer – Jim Babbington;

Training Officer – Christine Christensen;

At that meeting the Secretary, Penny Harrison, agreed to take over responsibility for Membership on a temporary basis and at the meeting in Richmond on 29 September the Committee agreed to merge the post of Membership Secretary with that of Secretary

As ever, we really do encourage members of NACO to join the Executive Committee if they can. We are very keen that there should be as wide a representation of various types of authorities on the Executive as possible.

**Co-option to the Executive Committee 2015/6**

There was one co-optee to the Executive Committee this year;

Loraine Radcliffe – Bradford City Council

**Amendments to the constitution 2015/16**

The Executive Committee did not make any changes to the Constitution.

**Membership Fee**

The Executive Committee is recommending, later in the agenda, that the membership fee remain FREE for 2016/17. The Executive Committee debated this issue and has concluded that there are sufficient funds to make this gesture for the sixth year running to members and their councils in these times of financial hardship. The Treasurer’s report will show that the finances of the Association remain healthy.

The administration costs of the Association are minimal. However, any work arising from meetings undertaken by any Executive Committee member is refunded where necessary. We seek neither to build up a ‘cash fund’ to spend on large initiatives nor to fund a ‘give-away’.

I have always been cautious about the use of member’s fees and the long term viability of the Association. The Association is well placed to weather the current financial storm and it is our intention to be there for our members. My personal view is that the Association needs to have sufficient reserves to fund any losses from a ‘disastrous’ conference/training event. The constitution requires us to have a positive bank balance at the end of each accounting year.

**Membership**

When we met in Camden for the 2015 AGM I had to say that membership was well down on the previous year, mainly because the Membership Secretary was no longer in a position to maintain the membership database. At that date membership was at 292. I am delighted to say that, and I think mainly because of our improved communication system, it now stands at 452.

The spread of membership is similar to previous years but we are still under-represented in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Nevertheless, our generic database of council e-mail addresses has both expanded and improved, enabling us to target our messages to the correct person where possible.

**Training Event and AGM 2015**

The 2015 Training Event and AGM was held in Camden and hosted by Margaret Humphrey and LB of Camden Council. I am immensely grateful to Margaret for taking on, yet again, the work associated with hosting a NACO event. Once again, the event attracted a good number of delegates and was well received and ‘customer feedback’ was very pleasing. The Executive Committee had agreed to promote the conference jointly between the Association and LB Camden with both parties liable for 50% of the profit of the conference, which as the Treasurer’s report shows, was achieved.

We held a choice of six workshops and had two keynote speakers, Jonathan Spencer from Lord Chamberlain’s Office and Andy Whittaker on the Art of Brilliance – Motivation’. Delegate feedback was hearteningly warm.

**Civic Office of the Year**

The Association has been pleased to continue the Civic Office of the Year Awards. The Association remains committed to the exchange of best practice and we consider that the awards are an excellent way not only to highlight the work of Civic Offices but also to spread good practice. It has been heartening to see so many high quality entries over the years and it is clear to me that there is a lot of unsung work and pride in many Civic Offices throughout the country.

My thanks to Vaughtons and Logocloth for their continued support and the judges for this year’s awards. My thanks also go to Christine Christensen and Malcolm Bartlett, who co-ordinate the scheme.

Copies of previous winning entries are on our website.

**Website**

As I noted previously the Executive decided to employ a professional web designer and I am sure you will agree with me that we now have a website which is clear and simple to use. Members of the Executive have put a lot of thought into this website and I would like to thank those who were most closely involved for all that they did in this respect

Please bookmark our address - www.naco.uk.com

**Single Commemorative Act to mark WW1**

As I write this towards the end of February, it is clear than a good number of councils will again be participating in NACO’s Single Commemorative Act on 14 March to mark the centenary of WW1. NACO has worked with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, The Local Government Association and latterly with Bruno Peek in tying this event in with the Commonwealth Day celebrations.

**Guidance on the Death of a Senior National Figure**

As many of you will know, NACO has developed the document “Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure” with help, support and guidance from The Earl Marshal’s office and Buckingham Palace. This document is not available on the website but if you wish to have a copy please email the Secretary on secretary@naco.uk.com.

**Communication with members**

The improvements I have mentioned in communication with members will, I hope, continue over the next 12 months.

**Training**

The Association continues to put emphasis on the training of its members and this year we have, once again, been successful in holding NACO events in most regions throughout the UK with the help of our ‘partner’ Councillor Skills.

I should remind members that NACO offers a financial loss guarantee for these events and they virtually always make a profit for the host organisation whilst also raising the profile of the Civic office in the eyes of its own council.

Councillor Skills have already confirmed seven dates for 2016 which are contained in your delegates’ packs and which will be on the website

.

**Thanks**

I would like to thank all the members of the Executive Committee who helped during the past year. It’s been a particularly tough year with a number of Executive members being ‘withdrawn’ by their Councils or being appointed to new posts which has lessened their ability to attend meetings or be involved. Other Executive members have given notice of impending problems. I am sure that members will appreciate that it is difficult to drive the work of the Association forward whilst also holding down full time jobs and that this commitment will become increasingly difficult in the coming years. The Association has increasingly relied on ‘retired’ members to support our work and this has been of tremendous value to me personally. However, I have always said that we should be an Association of the ‘living’ and I very much hope that new ‘serving’ civic officers will feel able to join the Executive Committee and play a prominent role in the Association.

Paul Millward

Chair

National Association of Civic Officers

Nottingham

February 2016

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**Secretary’s Report**

At the AGM last year I explained that the Membership Secretary had had to resign in October 2014 as she had left the Council for which she had been working and her new post did not give her the time to continue. One of the consequences of her leaving was that many of the renewals of membership which she was processing at the time were not received by her. I said that I would shortly be meeting with her so that she could hand all the information she had about membership to me and I would endeavour to update it as far as I could.

During the course of the year the Executive asked me if I would amalgamate the role of Membership Secretary with that of Secretary. I have been updating the membership data over the past months and I am pleased to say that although we were only able to show a membership of 303 members when we met in 2015 we now have a membership of 445 which I think is the highest ever. I am still working through the names of those who did not appear to renew in 2014 so hopefully there will be more to add.

As you know our new website is now live and I am finding it very useful, particularly the online membership form. All of you who are already members of NACO will know that we are now contacting our members via mailchimp which helps to get information to you much quicker. I am gradually learning how to operate this system.

It has been a pleasure for me to work with the members of the Executive over the past year and also to keep in contact with many of our members whom I have got to know either at Training Events or because they email NACO and I am frequently the first point of call.

I look forward to the coming year as I believe that, now we have our long promised new website up and running and improved communications, NACO will continue to flourish.

WOULD MEMBERS WISHING TO SEE A COPY OF THE AUDITED ACCOUNTS PLEASE CONTACT THE SECRETARY AT secretary@naco.uk.com