

BRAINTREE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Supporting parish and town councils in the District of Braintree

Chairman Cllr Martin Lee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 18TH MAY 2022

Via Zoom and in person at Witham Town Hall

In attendance: Martin Lee (Chairman) (Sible Hedingham), Dave Gronland (Halstead), Ann Hooks (Rayne), Michael Lager (Witham), Jane Taylor (White Colne), Mick Radley (Halstead) India Jayatillake (Kelvedon) Lucy Orrow (Colne Engaine), Derek Hamblin (Greenstead Green & Halstead Rural) Philip Rawlinson (Great Yeldham) Peter Gentry (Little Yeldham, Tillbury, Juxta Clare & Ovington) Melanie A'Lee (Rivenhall) Roger Duffin (Finchingfield) Dorothy Griffin (Great Notley) Kerry Barnes (Steeple Bumpstead), Paul Lees (Feering) Lynsi Haywood-Smith (Gt Bardfield), Phil King, John Pearce (Wethersfield), Grahame Walkingshaw (BALC Clerk)

1. Election of Chairman – Martin Lee

Cllr Ann Hooks proposed Martin Lee for Chairman

Proposed: Cllr Ann Hooks

Seconded: Cllr Paul Lees

Agreed by all

2. Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr Martin Lee proposed Paul Lees for Vice-Chairman

Proposed: Cllr Martin Lee

Seconded: Cllr Ann Hooks

3. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Garry Southgate (Castle Hedingham), David Smith (Gestlingthorpe), Ken McDonald (Silver End) & Jo Beavis (Gosfield).

4. Welcome from the Chairman and Executive Committee

The Chairman welcomed everyone on behalf of the Executive Committee to the meeting.

5. To receive reports:

a) Finance Report

The BALC Clerk reported that there were 2 payments.

Clerk Salary April	£84.39
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Clerk Salary May	<u>£97.89</u>
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Total	<u>£182.28</u>
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b) Local Highways Panel

Cllr Dave Gronland reported that John Bendall had resigned from the Local Highways Panel and that there was now a vacancy to be filled. Cllr Kerry Barnes will fill the vacant position on the Local Highways Panel.

Cllr Philip Rawlinson asked whether it would be possible to receive weekly updates from the Local Highways Panel.

c) BDC Standards Sub Committee

Nothing to Report

d) EALC executive

Cllr Martin Lee informed the meeting that discussions had been on training & finance officers.

Cllr Paul Lees informed the meeting of £55,000 of food bank money currently held by EALC and that 6 grant applications had been successful. Cllr Paul Lees asked the BALC Representatives to attend the EALC AGM in September to make sure BALC voices were being heard.

6. Guest Speaker: Roger Duffin & John Pearce (Finchingfield)

The Chairman, Martin Lee introduced Guest Speaker Roger Duffin (Finchingfield) & John Pearce (Wethersfield) to the meeting.

Roger Duffin gave a brief introduction about himself, and explained he was a relatively new councillor at Finchingfield.

Finchingfield Parish Council had discussed the levelling up report in January 2022 meeting when an Essex County Councillor brought it to their attention.

He mentioned details on page 4 of the report discussed low education, poor connectivity & poor health as some of the issues raised.

He informed the meeting that according to the White paper, Essex had 123,000 people in deprivation and is regarded as one of the most deprived areas in the country, this had doubled since 2007. The report talked about the impact of deprivation and explained that the average life expectancy in deprived areas is 12 years less.

He explained that page 12 of the report stated 6 out of the 10 most deprived areas in the country were in Essex – this included Tendring, Canvey Island & Basildon but did not include major cities such as Manchester, Liverpool, Grimsby, Hull or any of the London Boroughs.

A rise in housing from 560,000 in 2001 to 690,000 houses in 2020, with a further 140,000 planned to be built in the next 15 years would represent a 41% increase in housing over a mere 34 years.

Cllr Martin Lee asked the Balc representatives present to indicate whether this had been brought up at any of their Parish Council meetings, 4 hands were raised to indicate that it had.

Cllr Paul Lees informed the meeting that during covid struck he was shocked at the number of people using food banks in Kelvedon and Feering.

Cllr India Jayatillake reported a higher number of people asking for free school meals. She informed the meeting that due to the poor bus scheduling and service, people were more reliant on using their own cars. The poorest hit people in general did not own their own cars.

Cllr Martin Lee requested that the Clerk send out a copy of the Levelling Up White Paper to all Balc Representatives.

7. Information Sharing – an opportunity for Councils to ask questions and share their experiences

Cllr Jane Taylor informed the meeting that she had attended a climate focus event at the university and reported that it was a worthwhile meeting to attend.

Cllr Peter Gentry informed the meeting about rural verge cutting over the next three years and plans from BDC & ECC to make this an annual event. Cllr Lucy Orrow & Cllr India Jayatillake informed the meeting that any concerns should be raised with Essex Highways.

Cllr Martin Lee informed the meeting that if signs were impeded by vegetation then they could become dangerous if not properly maintained.

Cllr Ann Hooks reported that Rayne now has double red lines, even though they had not been informed this would be the case. Double red lines mean you cannot stop at any time and requires less policing.

8. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 20th July 2022 at 7.00 p.m.

Venue – Feering

Guest Speaker at next meeting: TBC. The meeting closed at 8.56 p.m.