



COLCHESTER ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Meeting notes of the meeting held on Thursday 18th April 2019 at West Bergholt Village Hall at 7pm to discuss the Clerks Forum and CALC

Present: John Gili-Ross (JGR) – (Chairman), Paula Moore West Mersea, Mick Mead Gt. Horkesley, Graham Barney Copford with Easthorpe, Elaine Bowtle and Angela Balcombe Birch, Laura Walkinshaw, Chris Stephenson West Bergholt, Gemma Humphries and Allan Walker Marks Tey, Dawn Marriott and John Lindsay Messingcum-Inworth, Maria Oats and Roger Drury Lt. Horkesley, Karen Thompson Boxted, Robert Kean Winstred Hundred, Roger Mannion Tiptree, Sheila Beeton Dedham, Robert Johnstone Myland.

John Gili-Ross - Chairman of CALC, called the meeting as a result of the attached invitation letter to Parish & Town Council Chairs and Clerks.

JGR welcomed everyone and outlined the purpose of the meeting. At the March CALC meeting Pam Donnelly (CBC) informed the meeting of the lack of attendees at the Clerk's forum, attended by only 7 Parish/Town Clerks. She was finding it difficult to justify the cost and time spent organising the Clerks Forum with such a low turn out.

Members and Clerks discussed in detail the Clerk's Forum and CALC Future. The main points discussed are shown in bullet form as follows:

Clerk's Forum

- The Clerk's Forum is excellent and it is hoped it will continue.
- Clerks are given appropriate time to speak with CBC officers, which is most helpful in carrying out their duties.
- There is not always sufficient notification of when the meetings are to take place.
- Clerks have a significant workload and sometimes there is not enough hours left to attend meetings.
- The topics are good, varied and very relevant.
- Clerks are given an opportunity to network with other Clerks.
- Whilst the Clerks Forum lost its way some years ago its subsequent management by CBC has generated new life into the forums.
- All agreed that meetings are better held during the day and it is appreciated this attracts better speakers.
- A better start time would be 10am to accommodate school runs and onward travel into Colchester town.
- The venue is excellent as it has public transport links and parking.
- Quarterly meetings dates should be set annually and published to allow appropriate diary planning.
- All hoped that CBC will continue its support of the Clerk's Forum.



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CALC way forward - Does the CALC add value?

- Chairs of all Councils should be asked “What do they need from CALC”
- CALC Members should attend PC/TC meetings to inform them of what CALC stands for.
- CALC meetings are very informative providing good networking opportunities
- The Guest speakers are good but they could be more varied on their specialised subjects.
- A short description of what CALC does for new Councillors would be helpful.
- Councils to be asked to send their Full Council meeting dates to Kevin Money.
- CALC needs to sell itself better.
- At the June meeting CALC positions for the year will be agreed. JGR informed the meeting that he will not be standing as the LHP Representative in the future.
- Governance Board at CBC has not sat for several years indicating that Councillors are acting appropriately.
- CALC should be more proactive in promoting the Clerk’s Forum with P&T Councils.
- One Clerk mentioned they are not permitted to claim meeting mileage expenses by their Council. The Clerks Forum is a legitimate training expense item and Councils should plan adequately in their budget.

JGR to produce a response letter for Pam Donnelly that details the findings of the Clerks Forum debate and thanking CBC and specifically Pam Donnelly for the support given to P&TC Clerks.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm and thanked everyone for attending and providing valuable feedback.

Signed20th. June 2019

John Gili-Ross