

MANAGEMENT BOARD | DRAFT MINUTES

Date: 29 March 2022

Time: 10:00 – 12:00

Venue: Zoom

Present:

Cllr Bob Blezzard, Cllr Peter Davey (vice-chair finance), Cllr Mike Drew (vice-chair member services), Cllr Graham Ford, Cllr David Francis, Cllr Paul Harvey, Cllr Richard Parry, Cllr Keith Stevens (NALC chair), Jonathan Owen, chief executive, Anders Hanson, project manager member services, Steve Walker, head of finance and administration, Justin Griggs head of policy and communications.

1. Minutes 11 January 2022 and notes of informal meeting 14 February 2022

These were received, subject to corrections and clarifications of the items on the risk register, officer attendance at the informal meetings and make-up of the governance task and finish group.

There was agreement that in future draft minutes should be distributed within one week of the meeting to management board for comment. The board would be given a week to respond, and the minutes would then be published on the website.

There were a range of views on how agenda and papers were best distributed, by PDF or by link to the website. This could be picked up in the governance task and finish group.

2. Filling vacant assembly positions on the board and committees.

There had been three expressions of interest for the vacant assembly positions on the board and committees, including three for the Management Board (Lillian Burns, Lorraine Rappe and Pat Ansell) and one for the Larger Councils Committee (Pat Ansell).

Cllr Burns had expressed an interest to ensure female representation on the board and from the northern region. She had requested that the rule which prevented National Assembly members being on both Policy Committee and Management Board be set aside to fill this vacancy. Management Board considered this request but was unable to support and thanked Lillian for her interest.

Accordingly, it was agreed to recommend that the National Assembly recommend Cllr Lorraine and Cllr Pat be appointed to the Management Board and Cllr Ansel to the Larger Councils Committee as well.

It was also agreed to highlight the continuing vacancies to National Assembly and seek volunteers.

Cllr Blezzard expressed his continued concern at the operation of the Hampshire Association of Local Councils.

3. National employment contract

The chief executive reported that the comments received on the earlier draft contract from Management Board and other stakeholders had been passed on and a revised draft was in preparation.

4. Support for county associations

The chief executive presented a report setting out steps that could be taken to support county officers and associations to help address NALC's strategic aim of effective national and county associations working together to deliver our vision. This included several initiatives which would require additional investment including a "grand reunion" to thank assembly members and partners for their support during the pandemic; a programme of regional engagement and team building with county officers.

Management Board broadly endorsed the proposals for further consideration with county associations and agreed to consider further at a future meeting.

5. NALC governance review

Draft terms of reference would be circulated for comment at assembly. Paul Harvey suggested that larger council committee best practice visits had been a good way to encourage people to get involved. Bob Blezzard indicated that consideration should be given to a formal role for regional groupings.

6. Member services update

Anders Hanson provided an update on member services in the absence of Jane Moore. This included progress with local council award scheme; peer challenges; on-line learning and the website review.

The board stressed the importance of moving forward quickly with the website review and asked for regular updates on timescales, specifications and delivery to the board's formal or informal meetings.

It also requested that consideration be given to making it easier to find committee papers on the current website.

The board welcomed the progress made on the on-line learning project and endorsed the proposals to develop the initiative.

7. Finance and administration update

The board considered: the minutes of the Finance and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 February; a summary financial report as of 31 December and an estimate of the cash reserves position for the first quarter of the 2022 financial review. These would be reported to National Assembly.

Whilst the association's financial position was sound, overall reserves were still short of the required sum to cover 12 - 18 weeks expenditure and the board endorsed the finance and scrutiny committee's commitment to addressing this gap. This was particularly important given current national/international uncertainties, inflation; and the timing of affiliation fee payments which it had been agreed should be the cornerstone of the association's income. The head of finance and administration reported that if all county associations did not pay the first tranche of councils' affiliation fees until the due date of end June, the association would have a cash-flow problem. Management Board repeated its encouragement to county associations to make early payment.

The board welcomed the material it had received which would also be communicated to the assembly as part of the association's commitment to transparency and improved financial reporting.

Cllr Parry offering the opinion that to minimise risk he usually used more than one fund, he asked why are the associations assets held in one fund? This will be considered by the Finance and Scrutiny Committee.

8. Policy and communications update

Justin Griggs reported on the recent lobby day indicating that he would be conducting a review to inform next year's approach.

He reported that as part of the association's commitment to "digital first" and tackling the climate emergency, the magazine LCR's content would be included in the new website. The board endorsed this approach.

The board welcomed the recent article on the potential of parish and town councils in the Financial Times. It agreed that a priority for policy and lobbying should be

ensuring that the levelling up agenda reflected the association's ambitions. Accordingly, it agreed to set aside resources to publicise the FT article and showcase the work of parish and town councils at the LGA and party conference including considering having a stand at the conservative party conference as the governing party.

9. External affairs

The board received confidential notes from meetings of JPAG, SAAA board and civility and respect project board.

Whilst it was noted that elements of these notes were properly confidential, others were not and could benefit from greater accessibility. This was particularly true of JPAG and Cllr Francis re-iterated his view that there should be fuller consultation and explanation of proposed changes.

10. Dates of future meetings

Informal meetings of the board

To note that the board will meet informally on the following dates at 11 am via zoom for 30 minutes.

- 11 April 2022
- 13 June 2022
- 8 August 2022
- 10 October 2022
- 12 December 2022

Date and times of next meetings

The next meeting of the board be held on 5 July face-to-face/hybrid.

The following meetings will be held at 10.00 am remotely on:

- 20 September 2022
- 22 November 2022