

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY | DRAFT MINUTES

Date: 29 November 2023

Time: 11.00 – 13.00

Venue: The Local Government Association, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Present:

- Cllr Mike Drew, Avon Local Councils Association
- Cllr Liz Luder, Bedfordshire Association of Town, and Parish Councils,
- Cllr Roland Cundy, Berkshire Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Paul Harvey, Buckinghamshire, and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Malcolm Watson, Cambridgeshire, and Peterborough Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Luke Trevaskis, Cheshire Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Clare Gamble, Cleveland Local Councils Association,
- Cllr Stuart Roden, Cornwall Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Mary Bradley, Cumbria Association of Local Councils
- Cllr Allan Blakemore, County Durham Association of Local Councils
- Cllr Ian Cowling, Devon Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Janet Wallace, Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils,
- Cllr Keith Stevens, East Sussex Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Peter Davey, Essex Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Loraine Rappé, Hampshire Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Marcus Allen, Herefordshire Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Bill Pryce, Hertfordshire Association of Local Councils
- Cllr Bob Blezzard, Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Neville Hudson, Kent Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Alan Neal, Lancashire Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Ron Simpson, Leicestershire, and Rutland Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Iain Hamilton, Merseyside Association of Local Councils
- Cllr Heather Phillips, North Yorkshire Association of Local Councils
- Cllr Mike Scott, Northamptonshire Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Mick Baker, Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr David Francis, Northumberland Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Katharine Keats-Rohan, Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Duncan Wright, South Yorkshire Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Patricia Ansell, Staffordshire Association of Local Councils
- Cllr Mark Valladares, Suffolk Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Loretta Whetlor, Somerset Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Ray Wickson, Shropshire Association of Local Councils
- Cllr Peter Allison, West Yorkshire Association of Local Councils,

- Cllr Douglas Denham St Pinnock, West Sussex Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr John Scragg, Wiltshire Association of Local Councils,
- Cllr Ian Davis, Warwickshire Association of Local Councils
- Cllr Sue Baxter, Worcestershire Association of Local Councils.

Observers:

- Cllr Mike Eldred, Essex Association of Local Councils

Apologies received:

None

NALC staff and speakers

- Jonathan Owen, chief executive,
- Steve Walker, head of finance and administration,
- Justin Griggs, head of policy and communications,
- Charlotte Eisenhart, head of member services,
- Farhana Miah, executive officer,
- Claire FitzGerald, administration manager,
- Jessica Lancod-Frost, policy officer,
- Olivia Kane, receptionist, and administrator,
- Greg Henry, finance, and administration officer,
- Rajiv Dudakia, digital communications manager,
- Daisy Petrow, communications officer
- Nadoya Reid, communications officer
- Chris Borg, policy manager
- Cllr Mark Edwardson, Congleton Parish Council,
- Su Moore, Jo Cox Foundation (remote).

1. Election of chair

The chief executive noted that Cllr Keith Stevens had been elected as chair of the association and passed the chair to him.

Resolved: that Cllr Keith Stevens be elected chair of the association for the two-year term of office for 2024/25. This is second term of office.

2. White Ribbon Campaign:

Cllr Mark Edwardson, from Congleton Town Council, delivered a presentation on the White Ribbon Accreditation. During his talk, he discussed the ways in which councils and organizations can actively participate in this initiative. The campaign aims to inspire men and boys to take a stand against violence towards women and girls in the workplace. Cllr Edwardson outlined the steps for councils to achieve accreditation:

- Formulating appropriate policies
- Educating both colleagues and customers
- Fostering awareness internally and externally
- Ensuring that communications and processes promote desirable behaviours.
- Identifying and addressing instances of sexism and misogyny
- Supporting White Ribbon Day
- Paying an annual fee

Emphasising that White Ribbon Accreditation presents an opportunity for NALC to create a safe working environment for both women and men, Cllr Edwardson highlighted the chance to enhance staff skills and transform them into agents of positive change. He encouraged National Assembly members to advocate for County Associations of Local Councils (CALCs) to explore the advantages of obtaining White Ribbon Accreditation for their local councils (parish and town), communities, and workplaces. The chair thanked Cllr Edwardson for his presentation, please [click here](#) to read full presentation.

3. NALC Committees election results:

To note the following:

National assembly elections

- **Resolved** that Cllr Keith Stevens be elected unopposed to the position chair of the association for the two-year term of office for 2024/25. This is his second term of office.
- **Resolved** that Cllr Peter Davey be elected unopposed to the position of vice chair (finance) for the two-year term of office for 2024/25. This is his second term of office.

- **Resolved** that Cllr David Francis, be elected to the position of vice chair (member services) for his first term of office for 2024/25.
- **Resolved** that Cllrs Bob Blezzard, Loraine Rappé, Paul Harvey, Sue Baxter, Mike Drew, and Luke Trevaskis, be elected to the Management Board for the two-year term of office 2024/25.
- **Resolved** that Cllrs Duncan Wright, Ian Cowling, Mike Scott, Alan Neal be elected to the Finance and Scrutiny Committee for the two- year term of office 2024/25.
- **Resolved** that Cllrs Peter Allison, Neville Hudson, Richard Page, Mike Drew and Iain Hamilton be elected to the Policy Committee for the two-year term of office 2024/25.
- **Resolved** that the following be elected to Smaller Councils Committee for the two-year term of office 2024/25: Cllrs Marcus Allen, Mick Baker, David Francis, Allan Blakemore and Alan Neal be elected as National Assembly representatives.
- **Resolved** that the following be elected to Larger Councils Committee for the two-year term of office 2024/25: Cllrs Paul Harvey, Cllr Dr Katharine Keats-Rohan and Cllr Iain Hamilton be elected as National Assembly representatives.

Direct elections to Larger and Smaller Councils Committees

- **Resolved** that the following be elected to the Smaller Councils Committee, for the two-year term of office 2024/25: Cllr John Cowan of Barnham Broom Parish, Mr Stephen Ashfield of Shorncliffe Parish Council, and Mrs Vanessa Lowe of Alcester Town Council were elected directly to the committee.
- **Resolved** that the following be elected to the Larger Councils Committee, for the two-year term of office 2024/25: Ms Imogen Makepeace Lewes Town Council, East Sussex, Mrs Isabella Roberts Horden Parish Council, Cllr Peter Quinn Shildon Town Council, Miss Sophia Vaughan-Hodkinson Storchley and Brookside Parish Council, Mr Rufus Lunn Farringdon Town Council, Cllr Peter Astell Beverley Town Council ERNLLCA, Cllr Mike Drew Yate Town Council, Avon, Ms Kellie Hinton Henley Town Council, Oxfordshire as directly elected councillors.
- **Resolved** that the following be elected to the Larger Councils Committee as directly elected clerks for the two-year term of office 2024/25: Mrs Shar Roselman Newport Pagnell Town Council, Mr Carl Hearn Tavistock Town Council, Mr Steve McNay Woughton Community Council and Mr Luke Trevaskis Morecambe Town Council.

Full election declarations have been attached to the minutes.

4. Changes in representatives:

The chair invited new representatives to give a brief introduction to Assembly.

- Cllr Roland Cundy from Berkshire Association of Local Councils had been working in the sector for over 15 years, also chair of Berkshire which recently had a successful AGM and looking forward to working closely with NALC.
- Cllr Malcolm Watson from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough ALC joined the CALC board in July and has a background in working in banking.
- Cllr Ian Davis, Warwickshire ALC, chair of a small parish council and has been working in the sector for five years.

The chair thanked all the outgoing members of the assembly for all their hard work.

5. Minutes of the meeting of Assembly held on 3 October 2023

National Assembly confirmed that the minutes from 3 October 2023 were accurate.

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2023 be approved.

6. Finance update

Cllr Davey provided an update on the finance summary report. He discussed key highlights from the report, covering various aspects:

Firstly, he reported on the successful completion of the sale of the property at 109 Great Russell Street, following the conclusion of the fiscal year. The net surplus from this sale amounted to £188,723, reflecting the gain over the balance sheet value. This figure considered direct costs, including professional fees. The Profit and Loss summary report incorporated this net surplus as an adjustment to the book value. Additionally, Councillor Davey noted that deposited funds exceeded the budget, thanks to stable interest rates. To enhance clarity, the Profit and Loss statement underwent a reorganization to distinguish between regular trading and exceptional activities.

For a comparative perspective, Cllr Davey referenced the audited account figures for the 12 months ending on March 31, 2023. These figures included the reserve transfer movement, indicating the utilization of reserves established in the

previous year for IT development and the shared Civility & Respect project with SLCC.

Turning to the management accounts as of the end of the 2nd quarter, Cllr Davey highlighted a deficit of £15,136 in normal activities. While acknowledging an overspend of £19,934 compared to the budget as of September 30, he reassured the assembly that there was no anticipation of further worsening by the year-end.

As of the end of May 2023, NALC experienced a notable increase in affiliation fees compared to the previous year, amounting to £153,000. However, by the end of June, the total affiliation fees received showed an adverse difference of £53,000 compared to the same period last year. Currently, there are eight outstanding payments. This situation has led the Association to be down to approximately seven weeks in reserves.

Cllr Davey expressed gratitude to the head of finance and administration for his work and unwavering support.

7. National Assembly and committee processes.

The chief executive addressed the committee process report, emphasizing that with the introduction of a fresh start, involving newly elected chair, vice-chairs, and committee members, along with the commencement of a new two-year cycle for the Assembly, this is a valuable opportunity to assess and enhance various committee processes. The focus is on improving and clarifying arrangements rather than conducting a governance review. The aim is to optimize NALC's existing practices and ensure more effective execution of NALC's responsibilities. Alongside the information outlined in the roles and responsibilities pack, new members would be furnished with a welcome pack, and a meeting would be arranged with the chair of the association. This initiative aimed to ensure that newcomers received comprehensive information and a warm welcome, facilitating a smooth integration into their respective roles and responsibilities within the organization. He reported on the two-year programme for National Assembly:

- In the initial development session (induction), the focus would be on roles and responsibilities, outlining the expectations for members such as feeding in and back to county associations on the work NALC is doing, and elucidating the benefits available to them.
- Second session will be on communications facilitated by breakthrough communications.
- Third session will be on parliamentary engagement and lobbying.

He discussed the NALC consent form, urging members to complete and promptly return it to nalccommittees@nalc.gov.uk. Emphasizing the importance of NALC obtaining consent from members, he highlighted that this step is crucial for the sharing of their details.

There was a discussion on the report and noted the following points:

Cllr Gamble inquired about the possibility of including the full names of members and NALC colleagues in the minutes, rather than using initials.

Cllr Rappe raised the question of whether deputy assembly members would be taken into consideration for development planning, emphasizing the potential benefits for succession planning.

Cllr Blezzard proposed incorporating flexibility in meeting timings.

The chair urged assembly members to share updates with CALC's regarding the ongoing initiatives and work conducted by NALC, emphasizing that certain CALC's may currently be uncertain about these matters.

The chief executive reported that training and development sessions would be arranged for the chairs and vice-chairs of the committees. Additionally, meetings with NALC staff would be scheduled. Media training would also be on the agenda for chairs, vice-chairs, and the chair of the Policy Committee. Changes to the agenda format, ensuring consistency in minutes, and enforcing timely completion of meetings were highlighted.

The chief executive addressed the topic of co-option to committees, explaining that committees have the authority to co-opt up to four members. They encouraged committees to consider diversity and inclusivity when co-opting members, urging them to actively involve individuals with diverse backgrounds. The chief executive emphasized the importance of encouraging people to engage with NALC, particularly by assessing their skill sets in relation to committee needs.

Work programme:

The chief executive addressed the work programme for the next two years, highlighting the current themes and campaigns: climate change, health and wellbeing, young people, make a change, and planning, with a focused piece of work identified for each. During the discussion, the chief executive proposed the inclusion of a new theme, Community Safety, in the work programme. This addition was suggested based on the significant efforts made by parish and town councils in this area. The chief executive emphasized that this theme should be

publicised to national stakeholders and supported by web resources and webinars. He noted the following themes:

- Sector financial resilience
- Workforce issues and strategy
- Sector risk register
- NALC manifesto
- Artificial intelligence
- Sector survey and data

He added that NALC staff working on committees would be provided with training and support to effectively deliver these objectives.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

8. Calendar of meetings:

The assembly noted the calendar of meetings for 2024. The chief executive reported that the timings for calendar of meetings would be added and will shortly be uploaded to the NALC website.

Resolved: That the calendar of meetings be noted.

9. The Jo Cox foundation:

Su Moore, Chief Executive of the Jo Cox Foundation, was warmly welcomed by the assembly. She provided insights into the foundation's work on promoting civility in politics. Established in 2016, the foundation operates on three main fronts: internationally, locally, and within the realm of respectful politics. She noted that Jo Cox, was particularly passionate about empowering women in politics.

She introduced the Jo Cox Civility Commission, emphasizing the complexity of the issue and the need for solutions across various sectors. Since its launch in February, the foundation has engaged with over 100 stakeholders, utilizing their website for consultations with local politicians and conducting one-on-one interviews with individuals in security and justice. Currently, they are in the stages of formulating recommendations, which will be presented in January. These recommendations span from smaller, short-term implementable changes to more substantial solutions that will take time to materialize. The foundation's ultimate goal is to bring about positive change for those involved in politics. The commission outlined several key themes they would address, including policing

and security, behaviour during elections, social media and mainstream media, local government, and political education. Su shared some headline recommendations for local government, proposing that police protection, currently available at a national level, should be extended to a local level. Additionally, the commission recommended expanding social media provisions for politicians to the local level and providing clearer guidance on reporting abuse and intimidation to the police.

Charlotte Eisenhart head of member services, offered context for the Civility and Respect project, noting that 13,000 councils have pledged their commitment to it. She expressed gratitude to Su for participating in the meeting.

A number of points were raised:

- Cllr Allen raised concerns about the shortage of police officers in Herefordshire. Su acknowledged this issue and highlighted an inconsistency and lack of understanding about local politicians among police departments. She mentioned that the foundation would be advocating for additional resources to address this.
- Cllr Neal expressed concerns about the recent behaviour of MPs in Parliament. Su reported that a model for good behaviour would be proposed for all politicians.
- Cllr Keats-Rohan expressed that 13,000 is a low number and this should be promoted more nationally.
- Cllr Baxter emphasised the need for social media platforms to be more considerate of unintended attacks. Su referred to the Committee Standards in Public Life, noting that social media plays a part in the problem rather than being the problem itself. While provisions exist in the Online Safety Act, efforts are being made to ensure that the Social Media Regulations Act focuses on safety measures for politicians.
- Cllr Roden addressed the need for sanctions on behaviours in councils and inquired about the possibility of a similar principle at a local level. Su reported that the Civility Commission had collaborated closely with the LGA (Local Government Association), and a suggestion was made regarding candidate selection during elections to prevent future problems. However, more work is planned on the development of sanctions.

Assembly was invited to express their gratitude to Su for her time and for sharing her insights during the presentation.

The chief executive encouraged assembly members to engage CALCs in the White Ribbon Campaign's initiatives. Cllr Mark Edwardson offered to speak to them on this matter. If interested, assembly members were encouraged to visit the Congleton Town Council [website](#) for further details.

10. Next meeting:

To note that the next meeting will be taking place on 9 April 2024 at 10.00 via Zoom.

© NALC 2023

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

DECLARATION OF

RESULT

MANAGEMENT BOARD

As Returning Officer for the Management Board held between Wednesday, 1 November 2023 and Wednesday, 15 November 2023, I hereby give notice that the number of votes recorded for each candidate was as follows:

Name of Candidates	Stage Elected
Sue Baxter	1st
Mike Drew	1st
Bob Blezzard	1st
David Francis	1st
Paul Harvey	5th
Lorraine Rappe	5th
Luke Trevaskis	6th Not Elected
Stuart Roden	7th Not Elected

This election was conducted using the Single Transferable (ERS97) Methodology and a full copy of the result appends this declaration.

Electorate:	44
Total Number of Ballots Received:	31
Turnout:	70.45%
Invalid Votes (see below):	0
Total Valid Votes:	31
Quota:	4.43

The number of ballot papers rejected was as follows

No Declaration of Identity received:	0
No unique identifier:	0
First preference for more than one candidate	0
Writing or other identifying mark	0
Unmarked Ballot paper	0

Craig Poyser
Returning Officer

UK Engage, Image House, 10 Acorn Business Park, Heaton Lane, Stockport SK4 1AS

Tel: 0345 209 3770

15 November 2023

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

DECLARATION OF

RESULT

VICE CHAIR (MEMBER SERVICES)

As Returning Officer for the Vice Chair (member services) held between Wednesday, 1 November 2023 and Wednesday, 15 November 2023, I hereby give notice that the number of votes recorded for each candidate was as follows:

Name of Candidates	Stage Elected
David Francis	1st

This election was conducted using the Single Transferable (ERS97) Methodology and a full copy of the result appends this declaration.

Electorate:	44
Total Number of Ballots Received:	31
Turnout:	70.45%
Invalid Votes (see below):	0
Total Valid Votes:	31
Quota:	15.50

The number of ballot papers rejected was as follows

No Declaration of Identity received:	0
No unique identifier:	0
First preference for more than one candidate	0
Writing or other identifying mark	0
Unmarked Ballot paper	0

Craig Poyser
Returning Officer

UK Engage, Image House, 10 Acorn Business Park, Heaton Lane, Stockport SK4 1AS

Tel: 0345 209 3770

15 November 2023

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

DECLARATION OF

RESULT

DIRECT ELECTIONS

As Returning Officer for the Directly elected councillor seats from larger councils between Wednesday, 1 November 2023 and Wednesday, 22 November 2023, I hereby give notice that the number of votes recorded for each candidate was as follows:

Name of Candidates	Stage Elected
Kellie Hinton	1st
Mike Drew	1st
Peter Astell	1st
Isobella Roberts	1st
Rufus Lunn	2nd
Sophia Vaughan-Hodkinson	2nd
Peter Quinn	3rd
Imogen Makepeace	4th

This election was conducted using the Single Transferable (ERS97) Methodology and a full copy of the result appends this declaration.

Electorate:	43
Total Number of Ballots Received:	22
Turnout:	51.16%
Invalid Votes (see below):	0
Total Valid Votes:	22
Quota:	2.45

The number of ballot papers rejected was as follows.

No Declaration of Identity received:	0
No unique identifier:	0
First preference for more than one candidate	0
Writing or other identifying mark	0
Unmarked Ballot paper	0

Craig Poyser
Returning Officer

UK Engage, Image House, 10 Acorn Business Park, Heaton Lane, Stockport SK4 1AS.

Tel: 0345 209 3770

22 November 2023

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

DECLARATION OF

RESULT

DIRECT ELECTIONS

As Returning Officer for the directly elected non-voting clerks seats from larger councils between Wednesday, 1 November 2023 and Wednesday, 22 November 2023, I hereby give notice that the number of votes recorded for each candidate was as follows:

Name of Candidates	Stage Elected
Carl Hearn	1st
Steve McNay	1st
Shar Roselman	2nd
Luke Trevaskis	3rd

This election was conducted using the Single Transferable (ERS97) Methodology and a full copy of the result appends this declaration.

Electorate:	43
Total Number of Ballots Received:	29
Turnout:	67.44%
Invalid Votes (see below):	0
Total Valid Votes:	29
Quota:	5.8

The number of ballot papers rejected was as follows.

No Declaration of Identity received:	0
No unique identifier:	0
First preference for more than one candidate	0
Writing or other identifying mark	0
Unmarked Ballot paper	0

Craig Poyser
Returning Officer

UK Engage, Image House, 10 Acorn Business Park, Heaton Lane, Stockport SK4 1AS.

Tel: 0345 209 3770

22 November 2023

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

DECLARATION OF

RESULT

DIRECT ELECTIONS

As Returning Officer for the direct election seats to the smaller councils Committee between Wednesday, 1 November 2023 and Wednesday, 22 November 2023, I hereby give notice that the number of votes recorded for each candidate was as follows:

Name of Candidates	Stage Elected
Vanessa Lowe	1st
Stephen Ashfield	3rd
John Cowan	3rd

This election was conducted using the Single Transferable (ERS97) Methodology and a full copy of the result appends this declaration.

Electorate:	31
Total Number of Ballots Received:	14
Turnout:	45.16%
Invalid Votes (see below):	0
Total Valid Votes:	14
Quota:	3.5

The number of ballot papers rejected was as follows.

No Declaration of Identity received:	0
No unique identifier:	0
First preference for more than one candidate	0
Writing or other identifying mark	0
Unmarked Ballot paper	0

Craig Poyser
Returning Officer

UK Engage, Image House, 10 Acorn Business Park, Heaton Lane, Stockport SK4 1AS.

Tel: 0345 209 3770

22 November 2023