

ERNLLCA

East Riding and Northern Lincolnshire
Local Councils Association

5 April 2018

Dear Colleague,

The next meeting of the **North East Lincolnshire District Committee** will be held as follows:

Date: Thursday 19 April 2018
Time: 7.00pm
Venue: Brigsley Village hall

The hall can be found on St Helens Crescent and there is car-parking available. Turn off Waltham Road onto St Helens Crescent, take the road to the right and the hall is at the end of the road.

We do not seem to have received the minutes of the last meeting, hence there omission from the attached papers. If the minutes could be forwarded to the ERNLLCA office, we can email them to member councils.

You will recall that the Executive Committee resolved to run a trial during 2017 whereby the Executive Officer would only attend one meeting during the year. Attendance at the majority of district committee meetings had been very low whereas the demand placed on the services such as the Desktop Advisory Service continued to grow. In order to make the optimum use of staff time, it was been agreed that the Executive Officer would not attend the April or October round of meetings.

All Councillors and Clerks are welcome to attend, although only two representatives per Council are invited to vote. The Clerk may be a voting delegate. Please be kind enough to forward the enclosed agenda papers to your Council's delegates and any other members who may wish to attend. Additional copies of the documentation can be downloaded from the ERNLLCA website.

Yours sincerely



Alan Barker
Executive Officer

AGENDA

- 1 Introductions and apologies
- 2 To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2017
- 3 Matters arising from the minutes
- 4 Executive Committee report
- 5 To note ERNLLCA Annual Conference 23 November 2018 – further details will be issued in due course
- 6 General Data Protection Regulation – opportunity to discuss the forthcoming changes which have been communicated to member councils by ERNLLCA and to be updated by the Chair on the Government influencing work being carried out by NALC.
- 7 Open Forum (time permitting and at the Chairman's discretion)
- 8 Agenda items for future meetings
- 9 Dates agreed for future meetings:
 - 19 July 2018 (Annual Meeting)

Venues are currently being booked.

**EAST RIDING AND NORTHERN LINCOLNSHIRE
LOCAL COUNCILS ASSOCIATION**

Report title: Executive Committee report

Report prepared for: North East Lincolnshire District Committee

Agenda number: 4

Date: 19 April 2018

Status: Open

Report prepared by: Alan Barker

Recommendations: That the report is received

The major item of business discussed at the last meeting was the Budget for 2018/2019. The Executive Officer reported that 2018/2019 will be the final year of the four-yearly council cycle, with elections due in May 2019, and he suggested that there will not be a high demand for training. In order not to further discourage participation, it proposed and agreed that training fees be left at the 2017/2018 level, i.e. -

- a fee for larger councils of £37.50+VAT which is in line with that charged by other county associations;
- a fee of £18.75+VAT for councils with an electorate of 2000 or under, which is more generous than that charged by many other county associations.

The Executive Committee was advised that these fees will have to be re-visited for 2019/2020 as there is clear evidence that venue costs are rising.

It was further reported that ERNLLCA conferences were now very popular and that fees had been held at the same level since 2015. Venue and speaker costs continue to increase. It was proposed and agreed that the fees are increased to £90+VAT and that an increased offer, from ten (10) to fifteen (15) places for small councils, is made and offered at £45+VAT. The Committee was informed that NALC charges in excess of £200+VAT for a day conference and, more locally, the Yorkshire Local Councils Association charges £130.

2017/2018 had seen the highest level of late payment of membership fees. Whilst all of the fees were been gathered in, late payments had an adverse affect on our ability to reclaim the full entitlement of VAT claimable under the Partial Exemption rules. The net result is that late payers cause this Association to have less money to spend on member services. Officers intend to try and, once again, get across to member councils that late payment hurts the organisation.

It was agreed that membership fees be increased by 2% for the year 2018/2019.

A resolution was agreed at the 2017 Annual General Meeting that ERNLLCA should be provide a Desktop Advisory Service that "That the Executive Committee be instructed to explore the

provision of a Desktop Advisory Service during all office hours and present costed options to the membership". This resolution has its origins in concerns raised by a parish council that it is not able to contact ERNLLCA for advice on a five day a week, fifty-two week of the year basis, albeit that the council concerned has now accepted that closure over the Christmas period was to be expected.

Two options were examined, firstly to employ additional staff to maintain fifty-one weeks of cover. If "desk-sharing" were to be assumed and hours worked to cover the time for which the present Local Councils Development Officer is not employed, and for his annual leave, the value of staff time (including employment overheads) would equate to an increase in membership fees of 18.5%. There would be additional recruitment costs which would bring the first year cost increase up to 20.5%. It was pointed out that the ERNLLCA office is now very tight for space, indeed there is no storage space left. If additional office space can be found within our existing premises, that would increase membership fees by 28%. Again there would first-year costs bringing the increase up to just over 30%.

The second option was to purchase required cover from another county association. All county associations are busy with very little spare capacity. An open-ended contract with another county association to purchase the required time would increase ERNLLCA membership fees by 37%. There was a sub-option within this heading whereby it may be possible to obtain advice on a case by case basis. This is likely to cost between £40 and £50 per piece of advice and a similar hourly rate for anything beyond an hour. It will be very difficult to budget for such additional costs until such time as a few years of use had passed.

The findings will be put to the 2018 Annual General Meeting.

During period April to October, the Desktop Advisory Service (DAS) received nine hundred and forty three (943) enquiries, an increase of 9.9% over the same period last year. The major topic areas during the year to date were:

- Governance issues (22% of enquiries)
- Employment (16% of enquiries)
- Financial (14% of enquiries)
- Transparency Code (9% of enquiries)

The Committee was informed that turnover of Clerks remained a problem. Induction events for new Clerks were held during the year.

The Being a Good Councillor course was concluded in September. In all, two hundred and thirty single sessions were booked for the course which was delivered at five different venues. Some councillors attended single sessions but overall seventy-seven councillors completed the whole course.

Up to 31 October 2017 sixty-eight applied for funding and £54,441.48 was allocated. ERNLLCA continued to perform very well, if measurement is to be made by the amount of funding allocated.

There was growing evidence that NALC is carrying out an audit of councils which have received funding to ensure that their websites are up and running. It remained unclear how the Code will be policed in future but ERNLLCA Officers continued to advise councils that if they do not comply with the Code, their internal auditors will not be able to "sign off" on their report which will then place those councils in the difficult position of not being able to publish a completed Annual Return.