

**Minutes of meeting of Leicestershire & Rutland Branch of SLCC held
13 June 2024 at 10 am – Syston Town Council**

- 1 Chairman's Welcome and Introductions**
Chairman, Stuart Bacon, welcomed everyone to the meeting, he thanked Syston Town Council for hosting the meeting.

- 2. Apologies**
Officers Vicki Jepson and Jack Fargher and main list filed.

- 3. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held 13 March 2024**
The minutes were signed as an accurate record.

Guest Speaker: Presentation from Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Resilience Partnership – Naheem Tarmohamed and Zoe Heath.

Slides to be circulated. Presentation emphasising the importance of town and parish councils signing up to the LLR prepared Community Emergency Plan – which is infiltrated with details relating specifically to the town/parish.

- 4. Appointment of Officers**

(a) Branch Chairman

It was proposed and seconded to elect Stuart Bacon of Huncote Parish Council as Branch Chairman - unanimously approved.

(b) Branch Vice Chairman

It was proposed and seconded to elect Jack Fargher of Ashby-de-la-Zouch Town Council as Branch Vice Chairman - unanimously approved.

(c) Branch Treasurer

It was proposed and seconded to elect Vicki Jepson of Blaby Parish Council to the post of Branch Treasurer - unanimously approved.

(d) Branch Secretary

It was proposed and seconded to elect Cathy Voyce of Syston Town Council to the post of Branch Secretary - unanimously approved.

- 5. Confirmation of Branch Mentor**
L Hawkes of Anstey Parish Council had been in post for three years and members thanked her for her work on behalf of the branch. Unanimous approval for L Hawkes to continue in this role.

- 6. Appointment of National Forum Representative and Deputy Representative**

It was proposed and seconded to elect Mel Mitchell of Ashby de la Zouch Town Council to National Forum Representative for a further term of two years - unanimously approved.

It was proposed and seconded to elect Stuart Bacon of Huncote Parish Council to Deputy National Forum Representative for a term of two years - unanimously approved.

7. **LRALC Report**

J Kilcoyne reminded members it was “business as usual” during the pre-general election period. Although the promoting of individual Councillors and their work or that of political parties was prohibited. Any queries should be directed to the respective Monitoring Officer.

Chairman Training was available for 20 June 2024.

Letters from Lloyds Financial Compensation Scheme should be ignored.

Training available on new Financial Regulations for different levels of Councils. This was available free of charge. Members were of the impression that the revised FRs were not so workable for a large town/parish council.

STAR Council Awards entries were now open. All councils encouraged to enter. A new category this year – Climate Response.

Annual LRALC/LCC Conference on 1 July including an introduction to bio-diversity net gain.

LRALC AGM would be held at Mountsorrel Parish Council on 5 October – this would be a physical meeting only.

8. **Items for SLCC/LRALC Joint meeting agenda**

- March meeting postponed. New date to be agreed upon.
- Partnership Agreement to be signed.
- Websites/Domain.
- Police Liaison Project.
- LCC response levels improving.
- Code of Conduct.
- New LRALC Chairman.
- Local Council Award Scheme ends at the end of June 2024; members requested that six months’ notice be given in future.

J Kilcoyne left the meeting at 11 am.

9. **Report from National Forum Representative**

M Mitchell on annual leave so not present. Minutes were circulated.

10. **Chairman’s Report**

SB thanked members for voting him in as Chairman for a third term and provided an overview of current topical news in the sector:

- Model NALC Financial Regulations – watch out for spelling errors.
- New Clerk Award – nominations via SLCC site
- National Conference 2024 – Leonardo Hotel, Hinckley 8 & 9 October 2024 and via E-Learning.

11. **Treasurer's Report**

V Jepson on annual leave, report provided as follows:

Signatories have now been updated on the Societies bank account and they were as follows:-

- Stuart Bacon – Chairman
- Jack Fargher – Vice-Chairman
- Cathy Voyce – Secretary
- Vicki Jepson – Treasurer
- Sandra Clifton – Deputy Manager at Blaby Parish Council

Online banking has also been set up which should enable easier paying of invoices for room hire and buffets.

Total income £1,661.12, Total expenditure £1056.15. Closing balance as at 1 February 2024: £599.97.

Bank charges of £5.40 from 1 April to 30 April 2024 would show on next bank statement.

12. **Secretary Report**

C Voyce provided an overview of the branch activities over the last twelve months.

Branch met on four occasions.

Venues: Ashby de la Zouch Town Council, Leicester Forest East Parish Council, Council Chambers, Charnwood Borough Council, Blaby Parish Council.

All meetings were also attended remotely via Zoom except December meeting which was followed by a Christmas lunch.

Guest Speakers:

Linda Carter, President of SLCC

Jamie Charters (CCLA) and John Kilcoyne (LRALC)

Mr Matt Wilson of Aubergine Website Design

Main Discussion Topics:

- Appointment of Officers
- Confirmation of Branch Mentor
- Appointment of
- Appointment of Deputy National Forum Representative
- LRALC Reports
- National Forum reports
- Officer reports
- NALC survey on remote meetings
- Kings Coronation events and Kings Charles portrait
- Download Festival gridlock
- CCLA funding portfolio and sustainable investing
- LRALC internal audit services

- DMU/SLCC Masters Degree in Public Leadership
- Local Government pay claim and ALCC input not invited
- SLCC training, events and conferences
- Jo Small Award
- Precept and budget setting
- Behaviour and standards and issues of abuse towards councillors and staff
- Net Zero
- Accessibility compliant websites
- Martyns Law
- Flooding across Leicestershire and Rutland
- D-Day event planning
- Away days and other social events

Average attendance was 18 including Zoom.

Latest news from the sector was shared.

13. **Guest Speaker – Malcolm Nicholson – SLCC President**

Mr Nicholson provided an entertaining talk about the chain of office, his experiences from 42 years of working in local government in the legal department and as Monitoring Officer as well as 15 years as Clerk at Weston-Super-Mare Town Council.

Mr Nicholson gave out raffle tickets and members donated to his nominated charity Alzheimer's Society. L Hawkes won the top prize of a bottle of Gin. Members showed their appreciation to Mr Nicholson.

14. **Feedback from D-Day 80**

Members shared their experiences of hosting their D-Day 80 events in their parishes.

15. **Feedback from Internal/External Audit**

Internal audit experiences were discussed. One parish had reported an account of dissatisfaction with their internal audit service and was seeking an alternative provider. Members suggested other services.

16. **Official portraits of King Charles III**

Most members had received their free framed portrait of King Charles III. It was normal practice for public buildings to display a portrait of the current Monarch.

17. **Christmas Meeting**

Castle Donnington and the City Rooms, Leicester, both suggested. Members were asked to send their ideas to V Jepson.

18. **Trip to Parliament**

A trip to London combined with maybe going to a west end show was discussed. There appeared to be an appetite for this. Agreed to put this suggestion out to all members for a trip in 2025.

19. **SLCC Training and Events**
(a) EXPO – first for local council clerks
Those that attended said it was well-received, providing a good chance to meet with exhibitors, some interest shown in attending December branch meeting. Some interesting presentations/discussions.
- (b) National Conference 2024
Leonardo Hotel, Hinckley 8 & 9 October 2024 and via E-Learning. AGM the day prior to the conference.
20. **Jo Small Award**
Award open to all for any contribution towards the sector. Circulate nomination form with minutes for return by November. Self-nominations accepted. Branch Officers to decide, ideally by most number of nominations.
21. **Questions / hot topics for general discussion**
ALCC – a member had a problem with renewing membership using on-line form to update payment details – continually rejected. Two queries to the ALCC for assistance went unanswered. Noted that the membership did not include tribunal costs although it was common practice for house insurance to cover this cost. Email linda.hedley@alcc.co.uk for queries.
20. **Next Meeting, 11 September 2024 – Jubilee Hall, Anstey Parish Council– guest speaker – agreed to SOS Net Zero presentation (a charity) and to pay them £50 plus expenses. C Voyce had recently passed a net zero course run by the organisation.**
21. **Future Meetings 2024**
11 September, 13 December 2024 – guest speaker for December – tbc.

The meeting closed at 1 pm – thanks to all those whom attended in person and via Zoom (apologies to those attending via Zoom that had connection problems).