

The Alliance
Minutes of Annual General Meeting and National General Meeting
Friday 6 June 2008
Nottinghamshire CC

Agenda item 2

A civic welcome was given by the Honourable Cllr Joan Taylor, Chair of Nottinghamshire County Council.

Annual General Meeting

1. Attendance and apologies

Attendance

Cllr J.Devon	National Chair
S. Fothergill	National Secretariat
J. Dixon	National Secretariat
P. O'Mara	National Secretariat
S. Malusky-Bacon	National Secretariat
D. Parry	National Secretariat
P. Slater	Director, Wales
Cllr W. Ayre	Redcar & Cleveland
Cllr R. Goddard	Redcar & Cleveland
Cllr M. Grant	Nth Lincolnshire
Cllr S. Bainbridge	Nth Lincolnshire
S. Price-Jones	Nth Lincolnshire
Cllr W. Eckhardt	Nth Lincolnshire
Cllr S. Carrol	Nottinghamshire CC
G. George	Nottinghamshire CC
Cllr A. Haynes	Nottinghamshire CC
L. Tillman	Doncaster
Cllr K. Knight	Doncaster
Cllr W. Mordue	Doncaster
Cllr S. Wright	Rotherham
Cllr G. Whelbourn	Rotherham
T. O'Connell	Rotherham
Cllr J. Kelly	East Ayrshire
Cllr A. Napier	Easington
Cllr J. Maitland	Easington
A. Forster	Easington
D. Hewet	East Ayrshire
A. McKay	Fife
Cllr T. Adams	Fife
Cllr K. Parry	Wansbeck
Clr R. Heron	Sunderland
Cllr G. Gwillim	Powys
Cllr S. Manion	Dover
B. Hill	Dover
Cllr G. Butler	Nth East Derbyshire
A. Westray-Chapman	Nth East Derbyshire
Cllr K. Cunliffe	Wigan

Cllr J. Greer	Knowsley
Cllr L. McGuire	St Helens
Cllr T. O'Neill	Warrington
Cllr A. Thomas	Neath Port Talbot
Cllr R. Wellington	Torfaen
Cllr John Marshall	Torfaen
Cllr E. Rowbotham	Kent CC
N. Sherwood	Wigan
Cllr P. Kendall	Allerdale
Cllr H. Wormstrup	Copeland
Cllr P. Ansell	Cannock Chase

Apologies

D. Skinner	Derbyshire CC
G. Carlile	Derbyshire CC
Cllr D. Burrows	Bolton
Cllr M. Graham	Gateshead
G. Watts	Gateshead
Cllr C. Hibberd	Kent CC
Cllr J. King	Salford
D. Ivill	Salford
Cllr K. Jackson	Staffordshire Moorlands

2. Chair's Annual Report

2.1. The Chair gave an assessment of the first year of the Alliance including difficulties as well as successes. Reference was made to a number of key campaigns.

3. Financial report

3.1. Cllr Terry O'Neill, Hon Treasurer, introduced this item. The provisional outturn for 2007-08 was noted and the revised budget for 2008-09 adopted.

4. Election of National Officers for 2008-09

4.1. The following were nominated and duly elected:

National Chair	Cllr John Devon (Wansbeck)
Senior Vice-chair	Cllr Eion Watts (Bolsover)
Vice- chairs	Cllr Bob Wellington (Torfaen)
	Cllr Jimmy Kelly (East Ayrshire)
	Cllr Shaun Wright (Rotherham)
Hon. Secretary	Cllr Alan Napier (Easington)
Hon. Treasurer	Cllr Terry O'Neill (Warrington)

5. Honoraria and allowances

5.1. Cllr O'Neill proposed that there be no increase in the Honoraria for 2008-09. Cllr Wright seconded this proposal and the meeting agreed not to increase payments in the coming year.

6. Dates of meetings

6.1. The proposed dates for national meetings during 2008-2009 were submitted. It was pointed out that the 5 June would clash with European and County Council elections. It was agreed to look at moving the date of this meeting. Local authorities were asked to consider hosting the national meetings.

7. Initial work plan: progress report

7.1. An initial work plan for the Alliance was agreed at the Inaugural Annual General Meeting in June 2007 and a progress report was submitted to the meeting. It was agreed to refer detailed consideration of progress and priorities to the proposed Policy Advisory Group.

7.1. In discussion, reference was made to: closing the gap in educational achievement; the importance of the Sub-National Review and regional devolution; the need to strengthen ties with Government departments

7.2. Cllr Wormstrup (Copeland) asked that a report on comparative Gross Value Added (GVA) be submitted to the next meeting and it was agreed to pursue this.

8. A new Policy Advisory Group

8.1. The recommendation to convene a Policy Advisory Group with a minimum of three nominated officers from each region was agreed.

National General Meeting

9. Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of 18 April 2008

9.1. Item 6.2 - Cllr Manion (Dover) had asked that the Secretariat to write to Coalfield Regeneration Trust (CRT) on the issue of a support worker for Kent. Cllr Wright had sought clarification by email. It was agreed that the Secretariat should write to CRT on this.

9.2. The minutes were then agreed as a correct record and there were no matters arising.

10. Lottery funding

10.1. The meeting was informed of developments with regard to lottery funding and the impact of the 2012 Olympics. The DCMS minister, Andy Burnham MP, had agreed to speak at the Alliance Annual Conference and had shown interest in further research on low take-up of lottery funding in deprived areas. A research proposal from the Secretariat on this had been submitted. In addition, an Early Day Motion was in the process of being tabled in the House of Commons.

11. Incapacity Benefit conference

11.1. Preparations for this important conference were well advanced with a strong platform of speakers. A high turn out was expected.

11.2. In discussion, emphasis was placed on the need to pursue this issue sensitively and constructively.

12. Sub-National Review

12.1. This item covered the preparation and drafting of a response to the government consultation and a Westminster event on 17th July with the minister, John Healey MP. Representatives were asked to comment on the attached draft.

12.2. After a wide ranging discussion it was agreed to make amendments to the draft to try to emphasise 'ownership' of regional strategies by both district and county authorities and to strengthen scrutiny powers.

13. Unadopted roads

13.1. Prompted by the interest shown in unadopted roads by a minister at DCLG, Ian Wright MP, the Secretariat had carried out a survey of Alliance members. Based on its findings, a briefing (attached to the agenda item) had been prepared on the situation in England. It was agreed to adapt the briefing for Scotland and Wales.

14. Health inequalities: progress report

14.1. Preparation work was ongoing including a series of meetings with health professionals in the England, Scotland and Wales. It was expected that a report on this issue would be finalized over the summer with a launch at the Annual Conference in September.

14.2. Delegates made reference to the importance of mental health service provision and the effect of re-organisation of Primary Care Trust on local accountability.

15. Surplus public sector land

15.1. English Partnerships (EP) had asked for discussion with the Alliance Secretariat on surplus public sector land. The aim was to identify land that could be used by new Local Housing Companies to deliver new build. It was agreed that EP should give a presentation on this to the Members' Forum in October.

16. Network Villages

16.1. Network Villages were the next step in the Network Space Initiative supported by English Partnerships. Network Space was seeking help from local authorities to develop this initiative. It was agreed that a presentation could be given on this to the Alliance Annual Conference.

17 EP-Alliance Members Forum

17.1. This event was planned for 9th October in Doncaster. Representatives endorsed the arrangements so far and were asked to put the date in their diaries.

18. Miners pensions

18.1. Further Parliamentary activity to back up the Early Day Motion on miners' pensions would be discussed by MPs on 2 July. A letter from the Alliance Chair had been sent to the relevant minister as yet with no reply. It was agreed to receive a further report on this after the MPs meeting.

19. EUR-ACOM Executive

19.1. This was taking place on 3 July in the European Parliament in Brussels and a report would be given to the next Executive on 18 July.

20 Annual Conference

20.1. Plans for the Annual Conference and progress so far were outlined to the meeting. Representatives were asked to comment on the speakers, the topics being covered and give consideration to examples of best practice within their areas that may be suitable for a workshop.

21. Regional reports

21.1. North West, North East, Yorkshire & Humber and Scotland indicated that all items had been covered on the main agenda.

21.2. In addition - Wales reported that CRT had made presentation to the last meeting; Midlands reported that Junction 29A on the M1 was soon to open; Kent reported that the Snowdown site had now been removed from the Coalfield Programme. Nevertheless, Kent thanked the Alliance for its support.

22. Any other business

22.1. There was no further business and the Chair closed the meeting.