

1. IWALC WORKSHOP:

The key issues, in no particular priority order was reported back by delegates from the two groups, as follows:

- ☑ IWALC has assisted Councils well in the transition of services from IOW Council
- ☑ IWALC has a good track record for training
- ☑ The need to avoid party politics in IWALC
- ☑ The IWALC Bulletin is a very good communications vehicle
- ☑ IWALC has become bogged down by the dispute with HALC and needs to rise above it
- ☑ Concentrate on the future and not harp back to the past
- ☑ The need to improve partnership working with other agencies and the community
- ☑ Build on the community spirit that has developed during the pandemic
- ☑ Build on the success of the Community Hubs
- ☑ Need to develop a relationship with the IOW Branch of the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)
- ☑ An improved Communications Strategy is required using all forms of media and local contacts
- ☑ IWALC must develop a positive approach and build momentum going forward
- ☑ A need to take the 'moral high ground' and rise above local difficulties, concentrating on a positive future for IWALC services for both large and small councils.
- ☑ The need to make the most of opportunities post the May 2021 elections to 're-brand' IWALC
- ☑ The need to make the most of the interim period to build a firm basis on which to move forward
- ☑ Additional funding is required for IWALC through sponsorship

2. TRAINING:

It was agreed to run the programme of training for this year as follows, with some flexibility depending upon Covid-19 restrictions:

- a) Basic Skills Training – 2, 2-hour sessions at weekly intervals held in June 2021
 - b) Chairmanship Training – 2, 2-hour sessions at weekly intervals (to include if possible, a mock parish meeting) in July 2021
 - c) Introduction to Planning – 1, 2-hour session in September 2021
 - d) Finance – 1, 2 ½-hour session, October/November 2021
- Sessions on Council as an Employer and Code of Conduct will be arranged later.

3. COMMUNICATIONS:

To establish a communications group as a permanent sub committee of IWALC

1. The purpose of the Group is to advise and support the Executive on communication matters, with the aim of ensuring adequate and appropriate communication within IWALC and with external organisations and the media.
2. In order to achieve this, the Group will:
 - ☑ Prepare and oversee a policy on communication with the media
 - ☑ Oversee the production of the IWALC Bulletin
 - ☑ Oversee the development and use of the IWALC website
 - ☑ Oversee the development and use of the IWALC Facebook page and other social media outlets.
3. The members of the Group will be appointed by the Executive.

4. The Group will meet as and when needed, at least twice a year.
5. The Group will report to the Executive.

4. PLANNING ISSUES:

Enforcement has been affected by a backlog of cases and such obstacles as access to the local Records Office. Some parishes felt that their views were not taken into account when planning decisions were made and that a lack of enforcement personnel was a problem. Councils were encouraged to keep a log of those applications which are rejected at Parish level and then go on to be passed.

5. IWC'S failure to maintain public open space in Shalfleet:

There are problems in this parish with the IWC maintaining some of the public areas and the PC stepping in to fund certain areas. Several Parish Cllrs are not happy about the PC taking on works to IWC owned land but unfortunately it appears to be a sign of the times - the IWC has not got the budgets to keep some areas tidy. Some Parish Cllrs see this as double taxation to residents.

Because of the increasing financial pressure on the Isle of Wight Council due to Covid, local councils will be required to contribute to even more services in the coming financial year, including such things as the maintenance of beaches and buoys. The IWC will no longer give them a share of the Local Council Tax Support Grant it receives from the Government. This has forced many local councils to increase their 'precept' In other words, taxpayers will have to pay more tax to their local council as well as to the Isle of Wight Council in the coming financial year. It has also been done without consultation with parish and town councils.

6. APRIL TOPIC MEETING

Due on 29th April but will probably not take place due to proximity to the elections.

Cheryl Fontana 23 March 2021