

Wiltshire Association of Local Councils

Unit C2,
Beacon Business Centre
Hopton Park
Devizes
SN10 2EY

22 November 2022

Dear Member Councils

Action Needed

As you are all aware Katie Fielding left at the beginning of this year and I took up employment as County Secretary in April. During the last seven months I have had the opportunity to speak to many of you, either on the telephone or face to face; to renew old, and strike up new, acquaintances.

In my conversations it is very clear that being able to pick up the phone, or write a quick email, and ask for advice or very often just confirmation is welcomed by Members. This service is paid for from part of your yearly subscription. The remaining yearly subscription goes towards subsidised training, access to National advice and updates, representation at meetings with partners within Wiltshire, the South West and Nationally.

Now that budget time has come around again Cllr Scragg has asked me to write to all members. He wishes to invite a representative from each member council to attend a zoom meeting on Wednesday 18th January 2023 at 6.30pm. The WALC Annual Subs for 2023/24 will be set at this meeting. We are, on this occasion, seeking broader representation than is currently facilitated through the Executive Committee as laid down in the Associations constitution. The National Association has already set out their requirements from each County Affiliate.

Cllr Scragg and the very small number of active Executive members hope that they can encourage more people to take a pro-active role in the future of WALC. In discussions with me, Cllr Scragg has said, "I do hope that we can encourage new blood into the Executive Committee." Currently there are many vacancies, some of which have existed for the past two or three years at least. The constitution sets out how the Executive should be constructed, which is a little clumsy and may be the reason for many councils becoming either confused or disheartened with the process.

Cllr Scragg also commented, "WALC is a membership organisation, and therefore we must provide what its members want. Now is the time, with new staff members and [hopefully] new Executive members, to reinvigorate the organisation and offer a more refined service, reflecting the growing professionalism of Town and Parish Councils within Wiltshire." The Annual General Meeting took place on 10th October 2022 and was very poorly attended. At that meeting members present articulated their frustration at the poor representation and asked that Cllr Scragg and myself take action to reverse this indifference and to rejuvenate interest of your organisation.

Cllr Scragg wished to leave you all with one final thought, "WALC provides a service to those local councils or meetings that choose to join. Joining is a very good first decision to make, build on that initial positive choice and make your second decision one that will influence the management of WALC, become a member of the Executive Committee."

Repeated for entry into diaries: Wednesday **18th January 2023 at 6.30pm** via the ZOOM platform – link will be sent out in the New Year. I would greatly appreciate a response to indicate your Councils intentions to attend so that appropriate arrangements can be made to manage the meeting.

Yours faithfully

DEBORAH BOURNE CertHE, PSLCC
County Secretary