



NEWSLETTER

No.126 - March 2009

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Boundary Committee Review

I attended a talk given by the Boundary Committee for Local councils. The event was not that well attended for two reasons one being the adverse weather, and the other, being the short notice of the event. The Association, as good as it is, could do nothing about the former. Jackie Weaver our Chief Officer brought the latter matter to the attention of the Chairman of the Boundary Committee - Max Caller.

Their response was that they had to comply with the timelines they had been given. They did however agree that should another meeting be required they would gladly arrange one specifically to address any matters arising from the Town and Parish Councils. The Boundary Committee are basically looking at the Two new Unitary Authorities. They start with an outline of the unitary boundaries and fit the wards into those boundaries. The committee intimated that the current County wards with three councillors are no longer the "norm", and they considered single councillor wards to be best approach. The maximum number they envisaged was two councillors per ward and quoted a recent review on the Isle of Wight where the whole of the island now had single councillor wards with one exception that had two councillors.

As far as parish Councils are concerned the Boundary Committee will not re draw parish boundaries, but IF ASKED they will look at ward boundaries within a parish and help address any democratic anomalies such as having a large number of seats on a small council and vice versa.

The review officer for Cheshire (both

unitaries) is Jessica Metheringham. She can be contacted at the following e-mail address - jmetheringham@electoralcommission.org.uk

Archiving in Cheshire

On another matter - what do you know of the Cheshire and Chester Archivist service? All I knew was of their existence in Duke Street, Chester and that they stored old documents. That is until I was invited to a workshop on their activities. They not only store old documents they store them in conditions that will keep them safe for hundreds of years. During my visit I impressed by enthusiasm of the staff, who were extremely helpful and very knowledgeable.

The service is free to Town and Parish Councils and I would recommend that any clerk who wants to empty a spare room or other storage place at home to give them a call. I can guarantee that you will be amazed at the lengths they go to, to preserve your documents.

Cheshire East and Cheshire West & Chester

You cannot help but notice that Local Government reorganisation is continuing a pace. In both the East and the West we, as Local Councils, are beginning to have a better idea of the way the two authorities will function and the part we might play. The Association has been working hard 'behind the scenes' to ensure that Town and Parish Councils (and ChALC) are seen as key partners in the developing arrangements. I would like to encourage you all to keep involved and to support meetings and requests for information when they are highlighted to you. You will find both Unitaries websites sources of helpful information if you would like to see first hand what is emerging.

STUART HULSE - County Chairman

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UPDATE ON CiLCA Qualification (Certificate in Local Council Administration)

2008 saw changes to the criteria and a new Portfolio Guide was issued. Clerks who had already registered could move to the new portfolio or complete the old one. The information required to produce the portfolio has been revised for some sections and there has also been a new section included 'The Power of Well-Being'. Guidance has recently been received on this section and the information will be incorporated into the training offered by the Training Partnership.

For clerks who already hold the CiLCA qualification, in order for the Council to pursue Quality Status, they will have to complete this section and submit it to the SLCC. There will be a small charge (in the region of £15) to complete and submit this section and further details will be available in due course on how this will be administered.

Copies of the Portfolio Guide are available from the County Training Partnership through the Association, and it is also available to download from the NALC website, www.nalc.gov.uk/Training/CiLCA, or the SLCC website www.slcc.co.uk.

The registration fee for the qualification is £150 and from the date of registration you have 2 years to complete and submit the portfolio of evidence. Registration forms are available from the same sources as the Portfolio Guide. The completed registration form is submitted to the SLCC as per the details on the registration form.

When a portfolio has been submitted and it does not meet the pass criteria there is a re-sit procedure to be followed. Re-sit forms are also available from the sources above.

If a candidate registered prior to 1st April 2008 the re-sit fee will be £55 regardless of

which edition of the portfolio is submitted and how many re-sits are required.

If registration took place after 1st April 2008 there is a revised re-sit structure. The date of registration will determine the rate of re-sit applicable. The revised rates are:

1 module to resit	£40
2 modules to resit	£50
3 or 4 modules to resit	£70
5, 6 or 7 modules to resit	£90
Over 7 modules to resit	£115

If a clerk leaves the employment of a Council and has registered for the CiLCA qualification but has not submitted the portfolio of evidence, the registration can be transferred to the new clerk providing there is at least 3 months of the original registration period remaining. However the portfolio would have to be completed and submitted before the original registration date expired.

The Cheshire County Training Partnership offer a range of training sessions and these are open to clerks and councillors. The current cost for each session per person is £30 for member councils and £40 for non-members.

If anybody would like any further information on the training available or CiLCA qualification please contact Susan Harding on 01948 871314 or susanharding@chalc.org.uk.

The Ash-worth Time Bank

Ash-worth Time Bank began in 2003 to encourage local rural people to share their skills with others - helping other people & receiving help themselves. Everybody has a skill they can share – walking the dog, gardening, listening, computer skills, lifts, companionship, shopping, or making a cup of tea!

Susan Ross-Turner (Project & Grants Manager) with the time bank is looking to develop a project in the Congleton/Macclesfield area. If you think you or your council might be interested, contact Susan on 01829 751398 or ash-worthtime@hotmail.co.uk

Community engagement with museums

Local people are being invited to get involved in the planning and delivery of libraries, museums and archives.

A new paper on Community Engagement and Empowerment, published by the Museums, Libraries and Archives (MLA), is inviting comment to help shape policy in the delivery of cultural services.

“Museums, libraries and archives help to build strong and prosperous communities; support a strong sense of identity, community and well-being and provide opportunities for people to learn, explore and interact,” says the MLA.

The briefing paper aims to inform and provoke debate and sets out the relevant aspects of the Community Empowerment White Paper - describing ways in which museums, libraries and archives can achieve community empowerment outcomes.

The MLA wants to hear views from people in local government and those who work in the museums, libraries and archives sector.

Additionally, it wants examples of best practice and suggestions on the types of research and evidence needed to support this work.

The MLA is a non-departmental public body (NDPB), sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Launched in April 2000 as the strategic body working with and for the museums, archives and libraries sector, tapping into the potential for collaboration between them, MLA replaced the Museums and Galleries Commission (MGC) and the Library and Information Commission (LIC).

The deadline for the consultation is the end of April 2009.

DIS 703/7

The Power of the Promotion of Economic, Social or Environmental Well Being

The ‘power of well-being’ is the informal name given to the statutory power enabling a local authority to do anything which it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of their areas.

The Local Government Act 2000 s2 was amended by the Local Government Involvement in Health Act 2007 s77 to give the power to eligible councils.

If a council meet the criteria then it can use the power rather than the current S137 (which of course is capped). If the council does not meet the criteria then S137 is the only power available where there is no other specific power.

PWB is not, however, an easy fix for everything. When using it you must have regard to the sustainable community strategy drawn up by the principal authority - this implies an express link rather than ‘OK’. It also requires a greater familiarity with that strategy than is currently the norm for most councils.

Eligibility must be established at a full council meeting and remains until the day before the annual meeting after the next ordinary election. The criteria are as follows:

1. At least two thirds of members on the council when exercising the power must have stood for election.
2. At least 80% of members must have attended the relevant training module (available through the CTP).
3. The council must have its own community engagement statement of intent in place.
4. The clerk must be qualified (CiLCA plus additional module for POWB).

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Some examples of where the power might be used include:

- Support for the local school;
- A community shop;
- Affordable housing scheme;
- Opening a train station;
- Building a new war memorial.

It is interesting to note that the POWB can be used for the benefit of a single individual (unlike S137), however, it is anticipated that the power will usually be used for larger projects that Town and Parish Councils currently do not have existing powers to facilitate.

So - if your Council might be interested in exploring what the POWB might offer or if you need additional support for the completion of your CiLCA portfolio on this subject, contact Jackie Weaver or Susan Harding at the County Office (details below).

Working with



Cheshire's Gardens
of Distinction

Home of England's Finest Gardens

Cheshire Year of the Garden 08

Many of you will have been involved in 'Cheshire Year of the Garden 08' and might like a little feedback on what happened during the year.

Looking particularly at the voluntary and community input to the project, the *Community Grant Scheme* was particularly successful. The Grants Panel, comprising Helen Carey (Chairman of the Community Strand); Kate Fitch (Walton Lea Gardens); Peter Heberlet (Groundwork Cheshire); Louise Garforth (Visit Chester and Cheshire); John Gittins (Cheshire Landscape Trust); John Budworth (Norton Priory Gardens) and Roger Taylor (Cheshire County Council) awarded some 88 grants (although there were many more applications) ranging from small projects that needed just a few hundred pounds to much larger community initiatives. In total £44,365 was granted but the total value of the projects was in excess of £238,000 - a brilliant effort!

Parish and Town Councils rose to the challenge and came forward with a number of ideas and projects that they implemented:

Bollington - floral weekend;
Threapwood - garden trail;
Poynton with Worth - 'planting the future'
Great Boughton - full programme of activities;
Little Leigh - bulb planting

to name but a few. In addition the project resulted in a number of case studies; best practice guides and website links. Check out the Groundwork Cheshire Website at:
<http://www.cheshire.groundworknw.org.uk>

VACANCY for a CLERK WESTON & BASFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Applications are invited from suitably qualified persons for the above vacancy. Weston & Basford is a busy, proactive and expanding Parish and the Council is working hard to achieve Quality status. The Parish Council is also actively supporting the preparation of a Parish Plan.

Grade in accordance with NALC/SLCC Salary scales 15-24. Starting point on scale dependent upon experience and qualifications. Preference will be given to candidates who hold the Certificate in Local Council Administration. Other candidates must be prepared to achieve the certification.

7 hours per week (to be worked flexibly) subject to review.

Further information and applications to:

John Cornell (Chair Weston & Basford Parish Council)
Malt Kiln Cottage,
Englesea Brook Lane,
Englesea Brook,
CREWE
CW2 5QW.
Tel. 01270 820247
Email: jcmaltkiln@yahoo.co.uk

ENCLOSURES:

The following documents have been mailed with this newsletter. Please ask your clerk for a copy or contact us directly for additional copies.

Came and Co Parish Council Insurance Scheme details

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