



The purpose of this Report is to ask Members to consider the inability of the Isle of Wight Association of Local Councils' (IWALC) to comply with the decision of its Annual General Meeting to hold a Workshop in October to consider its future.

No. DETAILS

1) BACKGROUND

- a) One of the resolutions at IWALC's Annual General Meeting of 20 July 2017 was: *It was agreed that the October workshop should be to discuss how IWALC works and where we were going.*
 - b) An email from its Secretary of 15 August set out the proposed approach to the workshop: *At our AGM last month it was agreed that we would hold a workshop to discuss the way forward for IWALC and how we can improve the service we provide for our members. We have therefore arranged for a workshop to be held at 7.00p.m. on Tuesday 31 October at the Riverside Centre for a small group of up to 10 councillors and clerks to discuss ways we can do things better for you. I would be grateful if you could let me know if you would like to form part of the workshop and, if so, if you could give some thought as to how we can do things better.*
 - c) However, a further email from the Secretary on 4 October announced that: *Due to the lack of response to our invitation for members to form a small workshop on the 31 October to discuss how IWALC could improve going forward, it has been decided to cancel it. If the topic is brought up by members in the future then we will review the situation.*
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2) FIT FOR PURPOSE?

- a) The fact that the only expressions of interest in joining the Workshop were from one Clerk and two Executive Committee Members is itself evidence that IWALC is not fit for delivering the purposes set out in section 2 of its Constitution:
 - (a) To represent the interests of the first tier of statutory local government, comprising of Town and Parish Councils in the Isle of Wight, hereinafter called collectively '**Local Councils**'.
 - (b) To provide support and co-ordination to all aspects of the work of Local Councils, as embodied in the following principles of good local government.
 - To promote the health, safety and wellbeing, both material and cultural of the people in its various communities.
 - To attract and hold the interests of its citizens.
 - To develop inherent strength to deal with, and work with all other tiers of local, regional and national government.
 - To adapt itself to change in response to the needs of citizens in the local community.
 - To protect, consolidate and develop the existing rights, privileges and functions of Local Councils.
 - b) The other evidence of the need for change is not hard to find.
 - c) *Membership*: its current Membership includes only 75% of the Island's Town & Parish Councils (25 of 33) with Bembridge Parish Council, Calbourne Parish Council, East Cowes Town Council Nettlestone & Seaview Parish Council, Shanklin Town Council, Totland Parish Council and Whippingham Parish Council choosing not to participate.
 - d) *Meetings*: its Members only meet every other month – six times a year – to conduct business.
 - e) *Attendance*: Each of its past two meetings – the Annual General Meeting of 20 July and its latest Executive Meeting of 21 September - was only attended by two-thirds of its existing Membership (16/25).
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- f) *Resources*: its total income in 2017/17 was £12,949 against expenditure of £15,644; over the course of the last two years its balance has declined by 25%, from £19,547 at 31 March 2015 to £14,643 at 31 March 2017.
 - g) *Staff*: its only staff member, the Secretary, is employed for just 9 hours a week at £11/hour
 - h) *Structure*: because it chooses to call what in other organisations would be regarded as a General Meeting (one all Members are entitled to attend) its Executive and has no sub-committees or Working Groups it has no mechanism for policy development or strategic or operational planning.
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3) RESPONSE

- a) I had planned to submit a Discussion Paper to the Workshop originally set for 31 October.
 - b) That opportunity has now been removed, but given that the cost of membership to Ventnor Town Council this year was £995 I would like to complete and circulate that Paper to both IWALC and the Island's Clerks.
 - c) It would, of course, be clear that the views expressed in the Paper were my personal views and not those of Ventnor Town Council.
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