

General Secretary's Report

This is the first report as your General Secretary and I hope it won't be the last. So what have we done? Some may say not much, but when you are in a relatively new role with a myriad of different problems, I think the small Committee are doing the best they can within the challenging year.

The Association has supported over 150 of your Colleagues with employment issues ranging from questions on contracts to sending Employment Support Officers to support Clerks raising grievances or having to attend disciplinary hearings and everything in between.

By the time this report is adopted at the AGM, the survey on Pensions will be have been completed and hopefully there will be some interim results with an idea of how we can encourage Councils of all sizes to arrange pensions for their Clerks and other staff.

Membership of the Association has stayed stable with a core number but the overall figures do not appear to be keeping up; the SLCC has been supporting ALCC for the last three years and at the end of 2019 this financial support will stop; this means that in the coming year, as it stands, the stark reality for the Association will be running into deficit. Hence the first sentence in my report.

So how can we prevent this? The options are as follows:

To increase the membership fee – the Committee have already stated they they do not wish to do this.

Increase the number of members we have, and while this is taking place find some other means of obtaining some short-term funding

Request that one of the larger unions take over the Association within a separate Local Government section, or finally:

To dissolve the Association completely – again the committee have stated this is something they feel reluctant to do.

So what can you do? You will help by attending the AGM; we need 60 to be quorate, and encouraging your neighbouring Clerks to the Join the Association as soon as possible. With increased numbers it will also prove to NALC that we are an organisation to be reckoned with; which is very difficult on the current membership numbers. So I hope to be writing a second report next August and wish you well in the coming year.

Linda Hedley
General Secretary

Some examples of help given to members:

Gave advice and accompanied a person (through an Employment Support Officer (ESO)), who had a grievance taken out against them by another member of staff.

Continued representation and advice given to an employee suspended for some time.

Representation by ESO's to people at formal disciplinary investigations.

Advice on negotiating settlement agreement to person and advice to ESO and representation at the meeting.

Several members given advice re their grievances (about bullying from one or more Councillors) and providing an ESO at the meeting to accompany them.

Supported a member seeking regrading and pointed them onto LCC to conduct the evaluation.

ESO represented member at disciplinary hearing, which resulted in all the charges being withdrawn.

And there's plenty more....