

**Minutes of Meeting of IWALC Communications Group  
held on Thursday 20 January 2022 at 2 pm via Zoom**

**Present:** Diana Conyers (chair), Simon Cooke, John Graney, Sue Hardy, Dave Hardy, Helena Hewston, Mick Lyons, Heather Rowell (County Officer), Jill Webster (Communications Officer).

1. **Welcome and Apologies:** Diana welcomed everyone. She introduced Simon Cooke, Ryde Town Council's IWALC representative, who is a professional web designer, and thanked him for coming.
2. **Minutes of Meeting held on 31 August 2021:** These were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.
3. **Website:** Dave explained that, since Alex Watts had been unable to help as planned, he had taken on the task of redesigning the website himself, using the existing domain name (iwalc.org). He had also investigated possible professional support. Having established that Wight Computers were unable to host it, he had approached Design and Print, an Island-based company that offered to set it up for £574 and host it for £144 a year, and LCN, a nationwide company, that would charge £150 (plus VAT) a year, including the initial set-up. Simon, Dave and John went on to explain that there are two main types of site: 'static' and 'dynamic'. They explained that both the original version set up by John and the one that Dave has set up are static sites, but that a dynamic site (also known as 'data-based' or 'WordPress'-type) is better because it is more flexible and easier to post information on. Dave said that LCN had offered to convert his to WordPress, but Simon questioned whether this was possible. He agreed to investigate this further. He also asked whether the website needed to meet recent accessibility requirements. Dave said that NALC and county associations were not required to do so but members agreed that it would be desirable, especially since we have recently signed up to the Digital Friendly Island scheme. Simon offered to help with the design of a dynamic site and, if required, to host it, but said that he would not be able to do this immediately because he is currently working on Ryde TC's websites. ***It was eventually decided to use the site that Dave has set up until Simon is able to provide further advice and support and that Heather and Jill will send material to him for posting.*** John and Dave were thanked for all the work they have put in on a totally voluntary basis and Simon for his advice and offer.
4. **Bulletin:** Jill asked members to consider the frequency of the *Bulletin* (including the possibility of producing some sections monthly and others bi-monthly) and its circulation. Diana reminded members that the *Bulletin* was frequently complimented, most recently by Trevor Leggo and Jackie Weaver. ***It was therefore agreed to continue to produce it monthly, with breaks in January and August, and to add IW councillors to the distribution list.*** It was noted that it was necessary for all councils or organisations to contribute every month and that contributions from commercial companies should continue to be included provided that the focus is on providing information rather than purely advertising.

5. **Social media:** Members noted that IWALC's Facebook page is still not widely used and the Twitter account not used at all. Simon pointed out that, with a dynamic website, items could be automatically posted onto the Facebook page. ***It was decided that the website was a more important means of communication but that the social media sites, especially Facebook, should be maintained.***
  
6. **Communication within IWALC:** Jill noted that communication with some councils is easier than others and that communication with individual councillors is hampered because some representatives and/or clerks appear not to circulate IWALC messages to all their members. ***It was agreed to raise this at the January Executive meeting and to emphasise that it is the responsibility of IWALC representatives to ensure that messages from IWALC are circulated to all councillors, that responses are sent if required, and that the council contributes to the Bulletin when appropriate.***
  
7. **Social Media training:** Members' noted that Alex Watts' offer to run a course on social media had been welcomed by Executive members but assumed that he was not able to do this at present. Members felt that such a course would still be useful and that it should include the potential uses of social media for councillors and security precautions. ***It was agreed to ask Executive members whether anyone else was able to provide such training and, if not, to postpone it until either Alex or another provider was available.***
  
8. **Date of next meeting:** It was agreed that the next meeting will be called when the need arises.

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