

## WATERBEACH PARISH COUNCIL

### SUBSCRIPTION TO LOCAL COUNCIL PUBLIC ADVISORY SERVICES

Agenda item 17/54

#### **Note by the Clerk**

The Parish Council agreed in April to defer a decision on whether to renew its subscription to CAPALC until outstanding issues raised in the Confidential section of previous Council meetings were resolved.

CAPALC have hitherto been the main source of advice for the Clerk to get advice on a wide range of issues, including many operational ones, to help undertake the day to day responsibilities of the job. More recently I have made increasing use of the advice service provided by SLCC. This however has limitations because the organisation is very clear that it supports the Clerk and not the Council itself.

It would be prudent for the Council to have access to specialised advice when needed and I have been looking into alternative advice sources. The Local Council Public Advisory Service <http://www.lcpas.co.uk/> offers a similar service to CAPALC. Although a Suffolk-based organisation, LCPAS is not aligned to any one County or administrative District and membership is open to all. It runs both training courses and offers advice (which is backed by insurance, and with any legal opinion supported by their Solicitor Partners Marshall Hatchick). However unlike CAPALC it is not allied to NALC so that channel will remain closed off unless/until CAPALC membership is reinstated.

Informal feedback from a number of other Parish Clerks has resulted in positive feedback about LCPAS both in terms of their membership rates and their responsiveness and quality of advice.

The fee rate is £100 p.a for a Parish Council.

In view of the absence of an alternative to provide ready advice, and bearing in mind the low cost and favourable feedback from other Clerks, can the Council agree that we take out a subscription?