



nalc

Information
Quarterly
summary report

**National Association
of Local Councils**

www.nalc.gov.uk

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109 Great Russell Street
London
WC1B 3LD

020 7637 1865
nalc@nalc.gov.uk
www.nalc.gov.uk

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INTRODUCTION

This report sets out progress delivering NALC's strategic plan including information on important internal issues, progress with our parliamentary and government affairs work, events, media coverage and publications and legal advice. The report will be largely work around the aims set out in the strategic plan and how we are working to achieve those aims. This report covers the period April - June.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE HIGHLIGHTS

I'm looking forward to meeting many of you again on 12 July as we begin to develop a mix of remote and face to face meetings.

- **Hybrid meetings** - NALC staff continue to develop a hybrid mix of working at home and coming into the office one day a week. We will review this over the summer. One meeting of all staff led to a small covid outbreak so we need to continue to be vigilant.
- **IT systems** - We have also been migrating our IT office systems to office 365 which has generally gone well and will enable us to continue this hybrid model more effectively. These developments will enable us to consider the future of our HQ building.
- **Levelling up** - The national political scene continues to be fast paced and I'm glad the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill provides an opportunity to highlight the potential of parish groups. Can I remind you to work regionally to identify a lead contact for the levelling up directors.
- **Task and Finish Group** - The group has had some interesting debates especially around voting methods, and we will report on these in due course.

POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS

- **Engaging with government/Parliament** - NALC's chair, Cllr Keith Stevens, held an introductory meeting with Kemi Badenoch MP, minister for Levelling Up Communities. We published a [statement](#) on the government's response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life report on local government ethical standards. The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on local democracy [held their annual meeting to elect officers, review the last year and agree their work programme for the year ahead](#). Consultation responses included on climate change, land use and landscapes. Government officials attended meetings of the Larger Councils Committee and Super Councils network to receive feedback on funding simplification and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. On 5 July, NALC's president, Baroness Scott of Needham Market and the APPG hosted a parliamentary reception.

- **Bills and legislation** - The Queen's Speech on 10 May set out the government's legislative programme including a Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. The Policy Committee held an extra meeting to consider the Bill, MP's were briefed on key issues and concerns and we gave oral evidence to the Public Bill Committee on 23 June.
- **Campaigns/big themes** - May's local elections included 1100 local councils in 15 county association areas and we published new video resources as part of our Make a Change campaign, a targeted Twitter advertising campaign and liaised with several media outlets on their local elections information. The Policy Committee's task and finish group (TFG) on funding published a survey as part of their work to build an evidence base to lobby for access to dedicated government funding. New research backed our ongoing campaign for councils to have the ability to hold remote meetings.
- **Sharing good practice** - Entries to NALC's Star Councils Awards 2022 are being assessed by our judging panels; the online ceremony will take place in October. We announced our Empowering Communities hybrid conference which will take place on 7 November in London. Climate change and neighbourhood planning were the themes of our sold-out online events.

Next quarter's objectives:

- House of Commons Committee stage of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.
- Analysis of local elections, dementia and funding surveys and meeting of funding TFG.
- Publish NALC chairs open letter, Points of Light and LCR magazine.
- Online events on housing and working between the tiers.
- NALC National Networks for LGBT+ councillors, coastal communities, young councillors and women councillors.
- Party political conferences.

MEMBER SERVICES

- **Team changes** - There have been many changes in the team over the last quarter. Charlotte Eisenhart, head of member services, returned from maternity leave in April. In the legal team Gurvynda Paddan-White returned from maternity leave at the end of April and to doing three days a week (Wednesday to Friday). Gary Barker has returned to working two days per week (Monday and Tuesday). Martin Fine continues to work circa one day per week.
- **Legal queries** - We received 126 written and telephone queries in April, May and June, and the legal team provided 73 informal advices.
- **Legal updates** - In this period the team updated and reissued Model Standing Order 18 to take account of the changes to the procurement thresholds. LTN 80 (Members' conduct and the registration and disclosure of their interests (England)) was reissued further to the government's response to the 2019 Committee on Standards in Public Life recommendations and for the purposes

of Wales only, LTN 5W and 8. A legal bulletin was distributed with updates for county officers in April and June. We will soon be reissuing LTN 8 to take account of upcoming legislative changes.

- **Local Council Award Scheme** – 63 councils were accredited in 2021 across local and national panels. The first round of national panel accreditations for 2022 received 10 applications. Round two is currently underway with 12 applications. The Triage process for these is complete and applications are being prepared ahead of the panel assessments in July.
- **Improvement and Development Board** – Received a NALC summary report on the Implications of Levelling Up in March, following the publication of the government's white paper. The Board is to agree the commencement of the recruitment process for a new Chair and receive updates on peer challenge and support in June.
- **Working with county officers** – Fortnightly Zoom meetings have continued. Meetings are a mix of guest speakers from partner organisations and updates from NALC staff and county officers.
- **Civility and Respect** – A programme of work was approved by the joint Civility Board which included: key documentation designed to strengthen governance relating to civility, bespoke training packages with a focus on developing skills to minimise the impacts of incivility; and various tools designed to increase the profile of the project and promote good behaviours, including the Civility and Respect Pledge. Jane as a governance workstream lead for the Civility & Respect project will be co-ordinating the production of several documents, with expected publication dates for some by the end of summer.

Next quarter's objectives:

- **Website review** – Having spent some time setting down in a document the aims and objectives of the website project we are arranging online demos and conversations with a number of website providers so we can narrow down the options and to get a better understanding of what they are able to supply and how they meet our aims for a new website.
- **Civility** – The planned launch month for the pledge is July, and this will include a suite of marketing to maximise exposure and take up. Development of the training workshops and governance documents will continue over the summer with planned delivery starting in August.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

- **Team changes** – Silvia Nicole has recently started Maternity leave. This leaves a maternity leave vacancy which we are recruiting for. In the meanwhile the team will cover the payments aspects of her role until such time as a replacement has been found.

- **Governance and remote meetings** - NALC governance continues to successfully operate both remotely but with a return to some hybrid meetings.
- **Building management 109** - We continue to ensure that 109 is well maintained during this period and to work to ensure the building is appropriately managed or adapted to ensure covid safety as restrictions have been removed.
- **Building management 109** - We have carried out a good deal of remedial work throughout the building, especially replastering, painting and decorating some areas that suffered from damp.
- **Electrical testing** - PAT testing on all electrical equipment used by staff has recently been completed this includes laptops and other items used in the home office.
- **Events** - We continue to deliver the administration support and process payments for numerous online events
- **Upgrading NALC systems** - As part of the upgrading of NALC systems, we have now moved all NALC systems to the cloud, predominantly using Microsoft 365. Working with our new IT support provider, Cloudy IT. We have reviewed data structures and created new libraries, teams and channels using SharePoint and Teams, to help facilitate collaborative working. We have archived some files and identified areas that need further consideration. A hardware audit was completed and NALC laptops have been enrolled to mobile device and application management service, that enables central management of the devices. All redundant hardware has been data wiped and is ready for donation or recycling as appropriate.
- **Employee Assistance Programme** - This programme has been re-launched recently covering all NALC staff and staff at county associations. We continue to review this programme and whether it is effective and useful to colleagues.
- **HR support** - On-going provision of HR support with support from Work-nest to NALC staff including contracts to new staff members, and management of other personnel matters including appraisals and recruitment.
- **NALC Staff handbook** - An updated staff handbook has been recently released to all staff. We have agreed a timetable to update the handbook annually with a release date of 1 April.

Next quarters objectives:

- **HR support** - Continuation to ensure that all HR policies are up to date and compliant with HR legislation.

- **HR self service system** – We are currently looking at HR systems to manage all key staff employment data and to ensure that staff can manage their own sickness and leave bookings.
- **Health and Safety** – The team will focus on ensuring that all staff have up-to-date desk assessments in the office and also the home office
- **Building management 109** – A programme of work is being carried out to ensure that we are compliant with all regulations.
- **Policies and procedures** - Ensuring all internal documents are up-to-date and easily accessible to NALC staff. Ensure that policies such as the NALC constitution, standing orders are up to date.
- **Governance review**- To assist consideration of existing policies and review documents.
- **IT/Telephony** – The next steps of this project include, staff training on use on 365, better use of individual and shared calendars, centralised management of signatures, moving our telephony systems from 3CX to MS teams, further archiving of files in line with retention schedules, exploring all staff being issued with mobile phones and ensuring that all staff have suitable IT equipment.
- **Cyber Security/Data Protection** – We will be commencing the process for Cyber Essentials accreditation, alongside a Data Protection audit which will include a review of privacy notices, data asset register, staff training, breach register, checks for new projects/systems, data processors/sharing arrangements, data retention and ongoing compliance monitoring.
- **Support** – Our service area provides support to continue to work with other service areas to provide reliable support to our colleagues
- **Year-end audit** – We are working with Milton Avis to complete the audit of 2021-22 accounts.
- **Budget** – Work has commenced on setting the budget for the next three years.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI)

County association membership numbers are attached to this report.

If you would like to see the full set of data, they are available on request.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more details and updates on NALC's activity, please read the chief executive's bulletin, which is circulated every Friday. If you are not subscribed to the bulletin, you can do so at www.nalc.gov.uk/newsletter.

LIST OF COUNTIES	2021/22 FINAL Fee	No. of Capped councils	No of Councils In Membership	No Councils In County	% membership-Councils 2021/22	% membership-Councils 2020/21
Avon	£ 24,788	0	126	134	94.00%	93.9%
Bedfordshire	£ 19,766	2	116	118	98.30%	98.3%
Berkshire	£ 21,378	1	86	95	90.50%	93.6%
Buckinghamshire	£ 37,630	1	176	182	96.70%	96.2%
Cambridgeshire	£ 27,908	0	204	238	85.70%	82.3%
Cheshire	£ 26,553	2	168	224	75.00%	71.4%
Cleveland	£ 10,090	1	22	32	68.80%	71.9%
Cornwall	£ 29,567	0	171	197	86.80%	85.3%
Cumbria	£ 21,761	0	228	232	98.30%	97.8%
Derbyshire	£ 26,163	0	183	204	89.70%	86.3%
Devon	£ 39,438	1	344	362	95.00%	93.6%
Dorset	£ 23,551	1	155	161	96.30%	97.5%
Durham	£ 24,145	0	102	116	87.90%	92.6%
ERNLLCA	£ 24,769	1	167	235	71.10%	68.5%
Essex	£ 49,298	1	274	275	99.60%	100.0%
Gloucestershire	£ 25,138	0	216	226	95.60%	89.4%
Hampshire	£ 39,670	1	204	244	83.60%	88.9%
Hereford	£ 6,065	0	101	133	75.90%	70.7%
Hertfordshire	£ 29,738	3	103	115	89.60%	88.7%
Isle of Wight	£ 6,432	0	26	33	78.80%	75.8%
Kent	£ 54,963	2	299	307	97.40%	97.1%
Lancashire & Merseyside	£ 38,942	1	167	227	73.60%	70.9%
Leicestershire & Rutland	£ 29,085	0	197	197	100.00%	100.0%
Lincolnshire	£ 30,625	0	325	517	62.90%	62.1%
Norfolk	£ 30,602	0	302	484	62.40%	62.4%
Northamptonshire	£ 32,688	4	216	220	98.20%	95.8%
Northumberland	£ 19,239	1	142	156	91.00%	88.5%
Nottinghamshire	£ 17,916	0	154	161	95.70%	95.7%
Oxfordshire	£ 30,103	2	239	249	96.00%	96.0%
Shropshire	£ 25,502	1	177	180	98.30%	96.1%
Somerset	£ 29,051	1	265	275	96.40%	93.2%
Staffordshire	£ 29,371	0	155	181	85.60%	82.9%
Suffolk	£ 30,152	1	347	372	93.30%	90.3%
Surrey	£ 20,100	1	82	83	98.80%	98.8%
Sussex East	£ 20,160	1	94	94	100.00%	100.0%
Sussex West	£ 29,449	0	123	138	89.10%	96.4%
Warwick	£ 22,542	2	178	187	95.20%	94.7%
Wiltshire	£ 34,901	4	216	253	85.40%	86.2%
Worcester	£ 18,309	1	151	151	100.00%	96.0%
Yorkshire North	£ 30,588	0	356	445	80.00%	78.0%
Yorkshire South	£ 20,725	0	77	84	91.70%	90.5%
Yorkshire West	£ 34,944	0	86	89	96.60%	93.3%
	£ 1,143,805	37	7520	8606		