

NALC GOVERNANCE TASK AND FINISH GROUP 2022

MEMBERSHIP

Regional nominations

- Cllr Paul Harvey - chair
- Cllr Allan Blakemore - Durham, Cleveland and Northumberland (Steve Ragg)
- Cllr Peter Allison - Yorkshire and Humber (Sheena Spence)
- Cllr Tony Howard - FEMALC (Katerina Evans)
- Cllr Lillian Burns - North West (Jackie Weaver)
- Cllr Steve Cosser - SERCAF (Trevor Leggo)
- Cllr Will Jackson - West Midlands (Lynda Wilcox)
- Cllr Mike Drew - South West (Deborah White)
- Cllr Sue Baxter - vice-president

Expressions of interest directly from National Assembly members

- Cllr David Beechy - Shropshire
- Cllr John Plant - Derbyshire
- Cllr Mick Baker - East Midlands
- Cllr Ray Wickson - Shropshire

MEETING ONE - QUESTION ONE

Increasing engagement and participation with the sector bodies.

Background:

Recent NALC elections have not been heavily contested and change in membership slow. (see results of elections documents).

County associations also often have similar challenges getting people involved in their governance arrangements (members may want to comment/identify good practice).

Questions one and two:

How do we get more people from all backgrounds involved in their county and national association and how do we ensure wider engagement with sector and succession planning?

Notes from meeting one

- Many organisations face similar challenges of involvement and survive. This is true of NALC, CALCs and the sector generally.
- The TFG discussed potential to set quotas or targets for involvement by different people, but generally did not support. Though steps should be taken to encourage associations to consider balance and to be open to wider involvement. CALCs should consider a number of things when they appoint a rep to NALC for e.g. diversity, succession planning etc.
- There was some discussions around how to get people more involved in the sector. Make our work more glamorous and publicise the work of county associations and NALC more effectively to reach wider audiences. Share roles around, separate role of chair of associations from assembly rep to ensure knowledge if one leaves.
- Continuation of remote and hybrid committees will help especially engaging with counties a long way away.
- Be clearer about what skills and expertise are required and cascade across all levels – district associations where they exist, counties and NALC.

RECOMMENDATIONS Q1/2

- Support continuation of NALC approach to remote and hybrid meetings. Most to continue as remote with perhaps one face-to-face or hybrid meeting per “committee” per year.
- Publicise the work of county associations and NALC more effectively demonstrating their value and contribution.
- Identify skills and expertise and role specification for the various roles and cascade across tiers.
- Encourage county associations to think about who they appoint to the assembly role taking into account diversity, rotation, and succession planning.
- Possible use of assembly deputies, direct elections to committees and co-optees (from outside the assembly) to address shortages.

ELECTIONS AND VOTING METHODOLOGY

Q3 & 4

Background

- In 2021 NALC held its office holder and committee elections (assembly and directly elected) using a web platform provided by an independent external company to enable electronic voting. With some teething issues this worked well. This replaced the previous pre-pandemic on-the-day ballot.
- Many National Assembly members argued that this made it easier to adopt a single transferable vote (STV) approach which NALC should consider. Mike Drew provided a background paper.
- Q3 - Should we continue with electronic voting?
- Q4 - Should we move to STV voting?

Q3 & 4 VOTING METHODOLOGY - DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Q3. Electoral voting process** - There was some discussions around the elections platform used last year, majority felt it went really well and there is merit in using an electronic voting system as it allows flexibility to any last minute changes, looks professional and flows better in meetings.
- The group recommended that NALC continue to use electronic voting for assembly as well as directly elected elections moving forward.
- **Q4. Single transferable vote** - There were strong views in favour and against this proposal.
- The group felt that this would need to be taken to National Assembly and AGM to make a further decision and may be considered a constitutional change.

Q5. SCOPE OF TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Q5. How radical do you want the group or its proposals to be? Wholesale review or addressing some of the specific issues already identified (report to follow). Some county officers have argued for a move from solely election to appointment or selection on skills grounds to promote excellence

What others do:

- NCVO has a mixed Management Board directly elected by membership and selected co-optees <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/about-us/our-governance>
- The LGA's management board is directly elected by its general assembly <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/LGA%20Articles%20of%20Association%20-%20July%202021.pdf#page12>
- CPRE appears to appoint its trustees and board <https://volunteer.cpre.org.uk/opportunities/26062-trustee-national-cpre-2022-02-21>
- (NALC provides for co-optees which could help address these issues)

Q5 How radical do you want the group or its proposals to be? Discussion and recommendations

- The TFG discussed at length what the group should focus on and how wide its proposals should go.
- In general the consensus was that there was no need to throw the baby out with the bathwater. Management Board worked well as did Finance and Scrutiny.
- The new national networks encourage greater involvement but need to be clear how they feed into NALC policy and ensure they have officer support (where appropriate).
- The definition of larger and smaller councils needed further consideration and the current survey of smaller councils may provide relevant intelligence
- **RECOMMENDATION** - That the TFG focus on the discrete issues previously identified rather than range more widely.

Next Meeting

- 28 June at 11.00 via zoom.