

## **POLICY COMMITTEE | AGENDA**

15 March 2022-10:00-Noon

ZOOM teleconference

Any member wishing to submit an apology for this meeting please contact NALC at [NALCcommittees@nalc.gov.uk](mailto:NALCcommittees@nalc.gov.uk) or call on 020 7637 1865.

### **1. Welcome & apologies [10:00 a.m. – 10:10 a.m.]**

- 1.1 Welcome to the session (committee chair).
- 1.2 To receive any apologies (committee chair).
- 1.3 Welcome to and short update from Shelley Parker, SLCC external affairs and policy development manager on current SLCC lobbying priorities.

### **2. Minutes of previous meeting – 25 January 2022 [10:10-10:25]**

2.1. To approve the draft minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2022.

see appendix 2.1

2.2. To note the action log and raise any other matters.

see appendix 2.2

2.3 To receive a verbal update on replacing Cllr Tony Hirons on the committee following his resignation in early February 2022.

### **3. Campaign & work priorities 2022 [10:25 - 11:10]**

3.1 To receive an update on the committee's work programme 2022 - see appendix 3.1 (5 minutes)

3.2 To receive feedback from the informal National Assembly discussion on the Levelling Up White Paper (16 February 2022) (10 minutes) – see appendix 3.2

3.3 Building capacity and capability

(a) Local council elections 2022 (10 minutes).

(b) To consider joining up the different strands of the campaign to secure the Dependants' Carers' Allowance for local councillors (e.g. dormant SCA proposal,

Women's Network discussion and part of remote meetings campaign) and agreeing next steps (5 minutes).

3.4 Climate change – inception session of Climate Emergency Network, 15 February 2022 (5 minutes).

3.5 Young People (5 minutes).

3.6 Fair and secure funding campaign – update from the head of policy and communications regarding the timing and methodology for undertaking a sector survey for evidencing the need for direct funding of local councils (5 minutes).

#### **4. Motions from county associations [11:10- 11:40]**

4.1 To receive a motion from the Kent Association of Local Councils regarding the need for increased regulation of Air BnB and timeshare properties in parished areas [to receive an update from Cllr Chris Turner, c/o KALC] – see appendix 4.1 (15 minutes)

4.2 To receive a motion from the Cheshire Association of Local Councils regarding the need for local councils to be able to use planning imagery as evidence in their objections to planning applications – see appendix 4.2 [to receive an update from a ChALC representative to be confirmed] (15 minutes)

#### **5. Consultations update [11:40-11:45]**

5.1. To receive a short written report from the policy manager with a status update on responses to the following consultations:

- OFCOM review of postal regulation.
- Landscapes Review – see appendix 5.1.

#### **6. NALC Prospectus [11:45-Noon]**

6.1 To receive a short verbal update on publication of the NALC prospectus (5 minutes).

6.2 To agree the formal wording of a new policy position Cllr Burns is proposing that there should be a presumption in favour of freehold transfers, which thereby enable a local (ie parish or town) council to invest in that asset, in the knowledge both that its value may increase and also that it has a greater degree of control over how that asset is used. (5 minutes)

6.3 To agree if the committee would like the physical meeting of the committee to take place at its next session on Tuesday 21 June 2022 and receive an update on a potential venue (5 minutes).

## **7. Date and time of next meeting [Noon]**

7.1. To note the next meeting of the Policy Committee will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday 21 June 2022, likely in-person (venue TBC). © NALC 2022

## Appendix 2.1

### POLICY COMMITTEE | MINUTES

25 January 2022 -10:00-Noon

ZOOM teleconference

#### **Present:**

Cllr David Francis (committee chairman and Northumberland), Cllr Lillian Burns (Cheshire), Cllr Sue Baxter (Worcestershire, appointed), Cllr Peter Allison (Yorkshire), Cllr Colin Peacock (Lancashire), Cllr David Chalmers (Devon), and Cllr Keith Stevens (NALC chair, ex officio).

**Guests in attendance:** Cllr Brian Foster (c/o Hampshire Association of Local Councils) for part, Cllr Gordon Brown (c/o Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils) for part, Simon Fisher (c/o Wiltshire Association of Local Councils) and Cllr Laura Mayes (Wiltshire Council) for part.

**Staff present:** Justin Griggs (head of policy and communications), Chris Borg (policy manager) and Nick Howell (campaigns intern).

#### **1. Welcome and apologies**

1.1 The committee chairman welcomed all attendees to the meeting and congratulated Cllr Keith Stevens on becoming NALC chair.

1.2 Cllr Chalmers submitted an apology for lateness

**Resolved:** That the apology for lateness be noted.

#### **2. Minutes of previous meeting – 13 December 2021**

2.1. To approve the draft minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2021.

**Resolved:** The committee approved the draft minutes.

2.2. To note the action log and raise any other matters.

**Resolved (1):** The committee noted the action log.

**Resolved (2):** That NALC be asked to write to Cllr Tony Hirons for his input to the committee in recent years.

### **3. Introductions, committee campaign & work priorities**

3.1 Each committee member and officer to introduce himself or herself and explain briefly what they would like the committee to achieve in 2022.

The committee chairman explained that everyone had had the chance to introduce themselves at the 13 December 2021 session. Cllr Chalmers introduced himself again under this item as a new member of the committee.

**Resolved:** That the verbal updates be noted.

### **4. Motions from county associations**

4.1 To receive a motion from the Hampshire Association of Local Councils regarding increasing the number of councillors through community governance reviews [to receive an update from Cllr Brian Foster, c/o HALC]

Cllr Foster from HALC provided an update as to why 7 local councils in Hampshire were seeking a simplification of the procedure for conducting Community Governance Reviews to effect an increase to the number of seats on a local council. It was noted that no such requests had recently been put to district councils in this area. Experience from elsewhere showed that such reviews could be simple and efficient, and initiated by the CGR authority without the need for a petition. However, it had been felt for some time that, in other respects the 2010 CGR guidance was in need of updating, something NALC has written to DLUHC about before.

**Resolved:** That the motion not be supported at this time; that HALC members be encouraged to raise the matter directly with East Hampshire District Council.

4.2 To receive a motion from the Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils on building controls [c/o Cllr Gordon Brown, LRALC representative] that adequate liaison between the two functions is facilitated by making Building Control a local authority function or, if not, that Building Control bodies are required to notify planning authorities if they believe that building may be proceeding in breach of the approved plans and planning conditions. It further proposes that mechanisms be put in place to make Building Control bodies accessible to the public."

Cllr Brown confirmed that this matter had been first submitted as an SCA proposal to government, then re-submitted without response as an SCA proposal to government. The problem that developers were not building to

approved plans and drawings. Residents were having to pick up on non compliance by builders and developers with plans and call enforcement teams in from planning authorities themselves - an unacceptable situation. This was also an issue for listed buildings.

Members were happy to support the substance of this motion, but felt that it would not be productive to pursue at this time the removal of the private sector from building control.

**Resolved:** That the motion be adopted, subject to the deletion of the reference to making Building Control exclusively a local authority function..

4.3 To receive a motion from the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils regarding managing the urban gull population [Simon Fisher c/o WALC to field questions on this motion, assisted by Cllr Laura Mayes, Wiltshire Council]

Simon Fisher explained that a change in interpretation of some recent hunting regulation had had the unintended effect of amending the interpretation of licensing applications to manage certain breeds of urban gulls. Over the last two years this had had the calamitous effect of town council applications for licences to manage urban gull populations being rejected, urban gull numbers exploding and the lives of thousands of residents being blighted. NALC committed to explore the extent of this issue around the rest of the country.

**Resolved:** That the motion be adopted, that the extent of the problem throughout the country be explored further, that the matter be referred to the Coastal Communities National Network for discussion and that the Wiltshire lobbying note be circulated to the committee in due course.

## **5. Committee campaign & work priorities**

5.1 To receive ideas from committee members as to how best to implement the agreed 2022 campaign priorities of planning, housing, climate change and youth

The head of policy and communications presented an updated committee work programme for 2022. A discussion followed. Cllr Burns noted that much was expected of the committee, pushing the envelope on its terms of reference. However the work programme was more of an indication of the work that NALC officers would be undertaking in 2022, with committee input.

**Resolved:** That the work programme be noted and that committee members consider how they can input to the main NALC campaign themes for 2022, this year.

5.2 Verbal update from the head of policy and communications on the recommendation to co-opt Shelley Parker, SLCC external affairs and policy development manager to the committee for 2022-23.

The committee chair re-introduced an item from the December 2021 session suggesting that Shelley Parker, the SLCC External Affairs and Policy Development Manager should be co-opted to the committee. There was no opposition to this idea but a better approach was felt to be that Ms Parker should be invited to attend the next session in the first instance. The committee agreed that NALC is keen to forge a closer working relationship with SLCC and the clerks' network on external policy issues and that, as a first step it would invite Shelley Parker to attend and participate in its next meeting.

**Resolved:** That Shelley Parker be invited to attend the 15 March 2022 committee session.

## 6. Consultations update

6.1. To receive a verbal update and short written report from the policy manager with a status update on responses to the following consultations:

- Environmental Permitting Regulations.
- Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2022-23.
- OFCOM review of postal regulation.

The policy manager provided a brief update that responses to the Environmental Permitting Regulations and Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2022-23 consultations had been submitted. The only live current consultation from the list provided was the OFCOM review of postal regulation.

**Resolved:** That the verbal update be noted and the matter of creating a list of live consultations on the NALC site be discussed with NALC officers.

## 7. Campaigns

7.1 Updates on current campaigns:

- Local council elections survey report.
- Climate change – climate change survey report 2021.
- Young People – youth web page and case study document.

The campaigns intern confirmed that the climate change case studies document had been launched in October 2021; that the youth web page and case study document had been launched in November 2021; and that the elections 2021 survey report had been launched the same week.

**Resolved:** That the verbal update be noted.

## **8. Updates to policy register**

8.1 To consider a short paper from the committee vice chair on some essential updates required in 2022 to the full policy register.

Cllr Burns confirmed that a few essential changes were required to the policy register. There was a brief discussion. The minor changes were agreed, noting that the full register was 76 pages long.

**Resolved:** That the essential changes highlighted be made to the policy register.

## **9. NALC Prospectus**

9.1 To receive a short verbal update from the head of policy and communications on publication of the NALC prospectus.

The head of policy communications provided a short verbal update on the development of the prospectus. There was a short discussion. It was agreed that the prospectus should make reference to a desired extension of the General Power of Competence to all local Councils, without specifying detail.

**Resolved (1):** That the verbal update be noted.

**Resolved (2):** That the committee further consider how best to fill the vacancy caused by Cllr Tony Hiron's resignation, taking account of the need to achieve a diversity of representation.

## **10. Date and time of next meeting**

10.1. To note the next meeting of the Policy Committee will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday 15 March 2022, likely via Zoom (TBC). © NALC 2022



## Appendix 2.2

### Action log

Date	Activity	Item number	Action Complete (Y / N)
25 January 2022	<b>Minutes of previous meeting - 13 December 2021.</b>  <b>ACTION:</b> That NALC be asked to write to Cllr Tony Hirons for his input to the committee in recent years.	2.2	Y
25 January 2022	<b>Motions from county associations</b>  <b>ACTION:</b> That the motion be adopted, subject to the deletion of the reference to making Building Control exclusively a local authority function.	4.2	Y
25 January 2022	<b>Motions from county associations</b>  <b>ACTION:</b> That the motion be adopted, that the extent of the problem throughout the country be explored further, that the matter be referred to the Coastal Communities National Network for discussion and that the Wiltshire lobbying note be circulated to the committee in due course.	4.3	Y
25 January 2022	<b>Committee campaign and work priorities 2022</b>  <b>ACTION:</b> That Shelley Parker be invited to attend the 15 March 2022 committee session.	5.2	Y
25 January 2022	<b>Updates to policy register</b>  <b>ACTION:</b> That the essential changes highlighted be made to the policy register.	8.1	Y

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## Appendix 3.1

### Draft Policy Committee work programme

<b>A: Terms of Reference (TOR) – Setting NALC’s strategic policy objectives</b>		
a)	To spearhead the formulation, review and promotion of NALC’s national policy objectives as it relates to all member local (parish and town) councils.	
b)	To advise the National Assembly (NA) and Annual General Meeting (AGM) on the content of NALC’s manifesto and the main campaigns that should be pursued in line with the objectives and resources identified in the strategic plan.	
c)	To consider, adopt, amend or reject proposals for developing national policy for local councils in England based on policy resolutions (and surveys undertaken) from county associations and where appropriate to refer such matters to the NA/AGM for further consideration and action.	
<b>Work programme objectives/activity</b>		
1.	Promote the NALC manifesto and win support from stakeholders and others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise manifesto</li> <li>Identify relevant stakeholders</li> <li>Communicate manifesto to stakeholders</li> </ul>	Q1 Q1 Q1
2.	Develop campaigns for each manifesto pillar that are creative, persuasive and impactful: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider aspects of manifesto at each meeting of committee</li> <li>Introduce new annual finance survey</li> </ul>	Qs 2,3,4 Q2
3.	Continuation of big themes on health and well-being, climate change and young people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining and updating dedicated webpages</li> <li>NALC National Network: climate emergency</li> <li>Involvement in Prime Ministers Dementia Challenge Group and Rural Dementia Group</li> <li>Updating dementia guide</li> <li>NALC events programme</li> </ul>	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Q1 Ongoing

4.	New big themes on housing/planning/neighbourhood planning, levelling up/devolution, culture/sport, community/cultural assets and transport: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Progress proposals for planning support</li><li>• Dedicated housing/planning/neighbourhood planning web page including case studies publication</li><li>• Maintain links with relevant stakeholders eg Locality and Planning Aid</li><li>• Respond to the Levelling Up White Paper</li><li>• Review dedicated devolution web page</li><li>• Support county associations in LGR areas</li><li>• Dedicated culture/sport web page including case studies publication</li></ul>	Q1 Q2  Ongoing  Q1 Q2 Ongoing Early 2023
<b>B: TOR – Detailed policy consideration/implementation</b>		
a)	To maintain and review NALC’s policy register, including developing proposals for legislative and other change to meet NALC’s policy objectives.	
b)	To ensure NALC prepares and submits within the appropriate time limits full written representations on government consultation documents and other papers issued on government and local government policy and proposed legislative changes.	
c)	To contribute and agree where appropriate, the content of NALC’s responses to Government and other consultations.	
d)	To support and provide strategic oversight to NALC’s role as parish selector for proposals rejected under the Sustainable Communities Act (SCA).	
e)	To commission or write policy-related reports which can be used for lobbying purposes and/or as evidence in submissions and/or to promote policy positions or back up campaigns	
<b>Work programme objectives/activity</b>		

1)	<p>Ensure there is an efficient and effective process for developing and publicising responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review policy consultation process</li> <li>- Consider how to make most of digital tools eg MS 365, Survey Monkey etc</li> <li>- Develop a process sheet</li> <li>- Report to Policy Committee</li> <li>- Review media database</li> <li>- Review stakeholder database</li> <li>- Develop process sheet</li> </ul>	<p>Q2 Q2 Q2 Q3 Q2 Q2 Q2</p>
2)	<p>Monitor and respond to consultations, reports and announcements from the government and others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review internal process for monitoring government and stakeholder activity</li> <li>• Report to Policy Committee</li> </ul>	<p>Q2 Q3</p>
3)	<p>Increase responses/feedback from county associations and councils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review policy consultation process</li> <li>- Link between county officer representative and county officers/forum</li> </ul>	<p>Q2 ?</p>
4)	<p>Maintain the policy/SCA registers with adopted policy motions/proposals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update policy register</li> <li>• Identify new policies based on consultation responses and update policy register</li> <li>• Update register of SCA proposals on NALC website</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing Q1/2 Ongoing</p>
5)	<p>Increase take-up of SCA and grant funding from DLUHC through working with county associations to encourage and support councils to submit an SCA proposal on their adopted policy motions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop proposals to raise awareness of SCA</li> <li>• Engage with county associations and develop priority list of policies/policy motions</li> <li>• Coincide physical meeting of committee with consideration of SCA proposal(s)</li> </ul>	<p>Q2 Q2 TBC</p>

<b>C – TOR: Overseeing NALC’s public affairs work</b>		
a)	To recommend to NA/AGM NALC’s overall major public affairs campaign streams.	
b)	To review progress and monitor the delivery of the campaigns including allocating resources as identified in NALC’s budget.	
<b>Work programme objectives/activity</b>		
1)	<p>Hold a Lobby Day and Parliamentary Reception with increased engagement with Parliamentarians especially Peers and ministers/shadow ministers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lobby Day planned for 23 March 2022</li> <li>Develop proposals for parliamentary reception in Summer 2022</li> <li>Committee members to meet at least 50% of MPs from their county areas on Lobby Day</li> </ul>	<p>Q1 Q1/2  Q1</p>
2)	<p>Increase media coverage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and update media database</li> <li>Hold a press roundtable</li> <li>Access to media training for county officers</li> <li>Media training for chair/vice chairs</li> <li>Session by Parliamentary Outreach for county officers</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing Q1  Q1 Q1 Q1</p>
<b>D: TOR – Ways of working</b>		
a)	To facilitate collaborative working between county associations (and their respective regional federations) on policy issues and encourage the submission of motions, evidence and commentaries on government and other consultations.	
b)	To work smartly by e-mail/telecon/virtual meetings to enable quick turnaround of policy positions and consultation responses.	
<b>Work programme objectives/activity</b>		
1)	<p>Facilitate 3 online meetings a year and 1 physical meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree date of physical meeting</li> <li>Facilitate <i>ad hoc</i> online meetings as necessary</li> </ul>	<p>Q1 Ongoing</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain and share contact details between Committee members</li> </ul>	
2)	Make use of MS 365 and Teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider how to use MS 365 and Teams to support the work of the committee</li> </ul>	Q2
3)	Engage with regional groupings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regularly attend meetings of regional groupings of county associations</li> </ul>	Ongoing
4)	Engage proactively with stakeholders on policy issues and consultations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Membership/involvement in government/other stakeholder groups and outside bodies</li> </ul>	Ongoing

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## **Appendix 3.2**

### **NATIONAL ASSEMBLY | INFORMAL SESSION ON LEVELLING UP WHITE PAPER**

On 16 February 2022, the National Assembly of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) came together to discuss and provide a national perspective on the Government's Levelling Up the United Kingdom white paper.

This specially convened remote meeting was attended by over 30 councillor representatives from the 43 county associations and several county officers. A short paper summarising key measures of interest and relevance to the local (parish and town) council sector had been circulated in advance. They considered how the white paper was being perceived on the ground and what the implications may be for communities, local councils as well as county associations and NALC.

Their perception was that there had been little detailed consideration of the white paper in the local media or in community discussions and networks they were involved in. Some county associations and regional groupings were planning to discuss the white paper at their next meetings.

There was a clear message that the Government needs to do more to get across the opportunities and positive implications for local communities. However, there was more discussion taking place in other public sector organisations including principal councils, especially where they were among the 9 areas invited to submit a county deal or were preparing to be considered for future rounds.

For example, Devon was taking a 'Team Devon' approach involving all the tiers of local government to think about the future structure of local government although they were opposed to reorganisation. The Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) had pressed for and had a seat at the table were involved in those discussions. There was a view that local councils had a critical role to play, but it was too early yet for this to be defined. DALC were continuing to work hard to ensure they remained included and that their voice was heard in the ongoing discussions. In Essex, it was being built into the county council's four-year plan. There is some opposition from principal councils in some county areas to having a directly elected mayor.

There was quite a bit of discussion in other counties around the future of Local Enterprise Partnerships as it would appear the white paper is encouraging their integration into devolved arrangements. Elsewhere discussions were limited, so there is more for the government to do to ensure cut-through. There were some concerns that white paper covered such a wide area and so many themes that it was difficult to see how they would be implemented without some prioritisation, much greater detail and clarification of delivery timescales.

As many of the proposals were subject to local influence/decision/interest, there was concern that some areas would be left behind. For example, the creation of further directly elected mayors and county deals would potentially benefit the areas involved, but what would happen to other areas, especially covering rural communities, which didn't participate. There was a real risk they would be further side-lined, and their needs overlooked or not addressed.

This issue was also true of the operation of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), where only some principal councils had chosen to have a charging policy in place. This mixed approach meant that many communities were not seeing the benefit from development, especially local councils through the neighbourhood share and enhanced share for those with a neighbourhood plan, and would be left further behind.

There was a risk that whilst the missions were a positive step, the top-down approach did not appear to genuinely empower people. People's pride in place is very important to lifting-up areas and a top-down approach doesn't necessarily facilitate that.

Similarly, there were views about contradictions in the proposals that needed to be managed; whilst there was a focus on empowerment and communities, this was set alongside nationally determined and decided objectives, especially around planning and housing.

Building relationships with other tiers of government, both generally and to play a part in levelling up, was felt to be important and it was concerning that some district councils were taking a negative view of the proposals including on growing the parish sector.



Likewise, there will be a need to work in partnership more with businesses and organisations like Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and civic societies which may help get a seat at the table. Local councils provided a rich tapestry of community support, service delivery and local democracy but there are some significant holes in those areas without local councils. More needed to be done to complete the tapestry and create more local councils, especially in urban areas.

There was general support for the view that the sector needed to be better understood by policymakers as the first tier of local government and even more importantly the potential of the sector to deliver on some big issues facing communities and the country.

Respect and engagement from across the Government were also important and it was recognised that this would be made easier if local councils were more diverse, had better skills and more contested elections. Planning and neighbourhood planning was seen as important vehicles to deliver much of the levelling up agenda which needed further consideration which should include greater protection for plans.

It was felt important the sector should have a seat at the decision-making tables at all levels of government, most notable in new structures being established by the white paper. Identified opportunities included NALC representation on the Levelling Up Advisory Council and subgroups and by county associations or groups of county associations on local panels and engaging with the proposed levelling up directors. There was a recognition that this could not be delivered by every local council or county association and would require some coordination and co-operation such as by identifying regional leads to provide a single point of contact and representation.

Given the white paper has replaced the devolution white paper previously floated, there were concerns that devolution usually stopped at the regional, county and district level with little onward devolution to local councils.

The importance of building capacity in the sector was stressed including building councillor leadership and clerk expertise.

In conclusion, whilst there were some dissenting voices, there was support for NALC taking a broadly positive view of the potential of the proposals for the sector, especially as there was growing evidence that some key national figures

and think tanks understood the sector and were keen to see it develop. This provided an opportunity to beef up the message of how important the sector was to communities and the levelling up agenda.

The meeting also addressed some specific questions:

What might the sector want to press for (eg powers/legislative change) to ensure local councils can help deliver levelling up?

- A better process for setting up of local councils across England including removing the powers for principal councils to have the final say on their creation and a new right of appeal.
- Local councils to have more of a say over the distribution of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 monies.
- Neighbourhood planning is very important and a way of for the community to express what it wants but plans should be taken more seriously and respected by all levels of government.
- Greater influence over housing.
- Right of appeal on planning matters.
- Easier access to the general power of competence and resources will unleash community power.
- Strengthen standards regime including sanctions for poor behaviour by councillors.
- Resources were important and not just council tax but access to other national government funding streams such as business rates and growth funds.
- More power/rights to be consulted and listened to.
- Local councils should be able to take over a function/service and there should be a presumption that this would be allowed, and that funding would follow function in perpetuity.
- Some areas had BIDs and others did not, leading to some communities not having equal access to support, therefore local councils should be able to levy a business rate where there was no BID.
- Direct access to national funding for example growth funds.
- Greater recognition from the Government and others that the sector has an important role and should not be overlooked from being able to participate in projects, bids and expressions of interest (for example Great British Railways competition) which often stop at principal council leaving local areas out.

What support will councils and councillors need to seize this opportunity and to want to do it?

- Capacity building was key to helping councillors and clerks up their game and step up and NALC should have a share of government funding available to support local government improvement.
- Consideration to building capacity for the future, involving young people in the sector's work and increasing citizenship education, especially in schools.
- Funding for council training and for councils that meet certain standards such as having a democratic mandate for example through the Local Council Award Scheme.
- Share of business rates to strengthen the sector.
- Encourage more people to get involved and stand for elections through NALC's Make a Change campaign.
- Councillor allowances to help people with costs such as travel and caring/dependant responsibilities which can be an obstacle to getting involved.
- Allow the flexibility to hold remote meetings.

How can we ensure the sector is influential in the national, regional and local structures being set up?

- It was important that the sector sought to engage positively and influence all the various initiatives and structures being developed and there needs to be particular emphasis on how county associations can engage with county deals and work together at the regional level.
- Experience shows that it is important to get involved early to secure a place at the table and to make the case for local councils; the white paper should ensure that is made that easier as county deals would need to mention something about robust and effective community governance and involvement.
- NALC and county associations have an important role in sharing intelligence about what is happening in other parts of the country to inform local engagement and negotiations and to share tips about how best to influence and get a seat at the table.
- Engaging MPs continues to be a vital and a means to seek influence in key decision-making forums.
- It should not be forgotten that sector representatives on the county or regional body had a lot to offer, coordinating communication channels and cascading information to all local councils (and their communities) on their patch which might be quite a big sell to those bodies.

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## **Appendix 4.1**

### **Motion from Kent Association of Local Councils**

#### **Subject: Air BnB and timeshare regulation**

##### **1. Text**

“We call for national mandatory registration and strengthened legislation would bring Airbnb under the ambit of regulation as other landlord systems, with powers of inspection and monitoring delegated to local planning enforcement. We urge NALC and KALC to liaise with other local authorities and organisations such as Cornwall County, Lake District National Park and Yorkshire Dales to campaign on the issue of regulation of Airbnb, to introduce appropriate measures.”

##### **2. Reasoning for the motion**

The surge in the number of holidays taken within the UK with a consequent rise in the number of properties being let through the online Airbnb system, has been noted nationally. The immediate effect on particular locations can be detrimental to local neighbourhoods and communities if there is poor management and a lack of monitoring by local authorities.

##### **3. Prospectus theme**

Empower communities

##### **4. How affecting local councils**

For example, in the Dover District the registration level is low, as illustrated in the coastal towns of Deal and Walmer where over 300 properties advertised online, but only 13 officially known about. This lack of monitoring or inspection has led to overcrowding and overdevelopment, with unofficial backyard accommodation and adaptation of housing that can be hazardous. In addition, there is a negative effect on the local rental market with families and incoming workers, with the resulting position that the growth of the local economy is reduced. The younger generation is outpriced in the housing market. Some landlords are extending properties to rent to more and to larger groups of people to increase profitability; councillors are receiving an upsurge of complaints and examples of neighbourhood nuisance, with late night gatherings of parties, causing general noise and disruption and even damage to property.

##### **5. Recommendation**

That Policy Committee reach a decision after consideration of this motion at its session on 15 March, 2022.

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## **Appendix 4.2**

### **Motion from Cheshire Association of Local Councils**

#### **Subject: Planning imagery**

##### **1. Text**

“ChALC calls upon the NALC Policy Committee:

- To carry out the necessary research to discover whether there is a universal requirement to just use verbal statements at planning committee meetings across the country, or if other authorities deal with the issue differently.
- To determine what needs to change to allow local councils to use visual imagery when supporting or objecting to planning applications at a planning committee meeting
- To develop and publicise a position on this matter that can be shared with County Associations and their members.”

##### **2. Reasoning for the motion**

This motion is submitted as a result of a motion being raised and carried at the 2021 ChALC Annual Meeting regarding this issue, where the Association was asked to lobby the principal authorities and to write to NALC to discover if this is a universal issue, or if other authorities deal with the issue in different ways.

##### **3. Prospectus theme**

Build Capacity and Support Councillors

##### **4. How affecting local councils**

Councils presenting and debating this motion stated they are allowed just 5 minutes to present their objections (or support) to a proposed development and must do this verbally. The vast majority of objections to applications rely on maps, plans, geography, and photography, but councils feel that to be expected to do this purely by oral testimony is archaic and does not allow councillors in the planning committee to become fully informed.

Local planning authorities are required to undertake a formal period of public consultation, prior to deciding a planning application. This is prescribed in article 15 of the Development Management Procedure Order (as amended). There are separate arrangements for applications for permission in principle which are set out in Article 5G of the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017 (as amended); for listed buildings which are set out in regulation 5 and regulation 5A of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Regulations 1990 (as

amended) and for applications for prior approval for development which is subject to permitted development rights which are set out in Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

## **5. Recommendation**

That Policy Committee reach a decision after consideration of this motion at its session on 15 March, 2022.

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## **Appendix 5.1**

### **Consultations update**

#### **1. Summary**

Currently NALC officers are engaging with two live consultations as below with central government and its agencies:

- OFCOM Review of Postal Regulation (2022-27); &
- Landscapes Review.

#### **2. Context**

The deadline has now closed for the OFCOM Review of Postal Regulation (2022-27) sector responses to be submitted to NALC. A reasonable number of responses were received from the sector, but since questions were technical only a few actually answered the consultation questions. At the time of writing NALC has drafted a first response out for comment from this committee. Main lines are that:

- Any review of postal regulation must take account of the need for an appropriate programme of continuing and realistic revenue support for the Sub Post Office network, including PO Local and Outreach.
- Local Post Offices are a very important part of the fabric of local communities and the review should recognise that with the majority of their postal revenue coming through Royal Mail business changes to regulation may have an indirect impact on the viability of local Post Offices.

The deadline has not yet elapsed for sector responses from county associations partly or wholly covering national park areas to respond to NALC with their views regarding questions 21,22 and 23 for the DEFRA Landscapes Review consultation. However main lines are likely to be:

#### **Proposal 24: AONBs strengthened with new purposes, powers and resources, renamed as National Landscapes**

In principle NALC supports this proposal as it is a key plank of our support to combat the climate change emergency that we all protect the rural and natural heritage of England as far as we can – especially in parished areas including those in AONBs and National Parks. However as such local councils know their areas best – so it would be an excellent idea to include local council representation (or at least continue to) – on AONB Conservation Boards and Joint Area Committees.



**Proposal 26: Reformed governance to inspire and secure ambition in our national landscapes and better reflect society**

As per the answers above we would counsel retaining strong local council representation on National Park Authorities as local councils are the grassroots knowledge source for National Park Authorities within NPA areas. To lose that would be to cut a historic and effective golden thread which would be hard to replace and would risk creating a knowledge vacuum which other appointees may not entirely be able to replace.

**3. Recommendation:**

That the committee note the report.

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