

April 2023

CHAIR OF THE IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Role description and person specification

The improvement and development board (IDB) oversees improvement initiatives for town and parish (local) councils and is looking for an independent chair. This is an opportunity to drive change within the most local tier of local government at a pivotal moment for the sector. We are looking for someone with a passion for local democracy, who can play a leading role in supporting the work of the national bodies in the sector, providing a fresh perspective and constructive challenge.

About the Improvement and Development Board

The Improvement and Development Board was established by agreement between the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks to develop the strategy for and oversee the operation of improvement and development initiatives in the local council sector in England.

The core aims of the IDB are to:

- Promote and maintain quality and consistency and develop a sustainable funding model for national sector improvement and development initiatives.
- Support County Associations of Local Councils and SLCC branches by providing strategic direction and a forum for discussion, consultation and collaboration for improvement and development initiatives.
- Engage with external stakeholders, including central government departments and the Local Government Association, on improvement and development issues affecting local councils.

Context and key themes within the sector

- Impact and lessons from the pandemic - many town and parish councils reacted swiftly to support their communities as COVID emerged and throughout the pandemic – NALC collated [a number of case studies](#) from this time. It has put a spotlight on the impactful role that local councils can play, but we are also now seeing a large turnover of staff and councillors which is creating a challenge for the resilience and capacity of the sector. Another unintended consequence of the pandemic was the adoption of

online council meetings. While this is no longer an option for local councils the speed of adoption and desire to keep online meetings has highlighted how local councils are able to adapt and modernise at pace and the appetite that can exist for such change.

- Civility and respect – the issue of bullying and harassment in the sector has been a key focus of the last year with the creation of the [civility and respect project](#). This project has made significant progress and it is time to consider how its outcomes and lessons can be truly embedded into the work of the organisations that have supported it.
- Flagship IDB initiatives – The improvement and development board oversees a range of work from its stakeholders, but the two key flagship initiatives are:
 - Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) - CiLCA is a foundation qualification which tests whether you have a broad knowledge of all the aspects of a clerk's work – roles and responsibilities, the law, procedures, finance planning and community involvement. It is recognised in legislation and the key qualification for local council Clerks.
 - Local Council Award Scheme - The Local Council Award Scheme has been designed to celebrate the successes of the very best local councils and to provide a framework to support all local councils to improve and develop to meet their full potential. The scheme offers councils the opportunity to show that they meet the standards set by the sector, assessed them by their peers, and put in place the conditions for continued improvement.

Personal Specification

We are looking for a chair who has the following qualities:

Essential

- Independent of the stakeholder organisations of the improvement and development board
- A good understanding of town and parish councils, membership organisations and national and local government
- Ability to think in the interests of the sector rather than individual counties or councils
- A strong strategic thinker and problem solver
- A team player and someone who can build relationships with a wide range of national and local organisations

- Proven leadership skills
- A strong network of contacts across local government and national organisations including government
- Ability to work positively with officers to set agenda/priorities
- Credibility in the local government sector and beyond
- An interest in improvement initiatives and an understanding of how to drive improvement and change at a national level

Desirable:

- Experience and understanding of the civility and respect agenda

Time commitment and remuneration

The IDB normally meets four times a year, although this is flexible to allow it to be responsive to events in the sector. All meetings have been virtual since 2021 and it is likely this is to remain the case in the future with the option of perhaps one meeting per year face-to-face if the board members feel that would be a positive step.

The IDB chair will receive £250/day.

How to apply

If you would like more information about the role then please contact Charlotte Eisenhart, head of member services at NALC at charlotte.eisenhart@nalc.gov.uk and we can arrange an informal chat.