

## Item 5 - Report of the Chairman and Chief Executive

### March 2015

#### 1. Strategic Plan Update

The latest progress report on the strategic plan is attached as appendix 1. The following sections highlight the issues currently “amber” or “red” and other progress against the priorities.

#### 2. Delivering quality, value for money services

##### Strategic Plan actions on Red or amber under this priority

- Red: AON relationship, negotiations on-going re new partnership. Amber: New commercial relationships. CCLA and Blachere have signed up for new partnerships. On-going discussions with a number of other companies taking place. External support for options appraisal still underway.
- Amber: service reviews. Conference review reported, Finance and Admin underway, Legal User Group meeting. All these are resource intensive and may take longer than anticipated.
- Amber: Website is rated green as new site launched, but teething problems require resolution.
- Amber: Service Level Agreements, first batch consulted on last year rest to be circulated in March.
- Amber Lord Lytton’s constitutional review, second meeting took place on 3 March and a report of its conclusions will be made to Executive and National Council in the next cycle.

##### *Reporting on performance*

The latest corporate performance dashboard is attached at appendix 2. The Executive Committee agreed to set targets including:

- 5 press releases per month
- 70 tweets per month
- 10 working days average to pay invoices
- 5 working days to respond to letters and e-mails
- 80% of committee papers to be despatched within two weeks
- 90% of legal queries to be dealt with within timeframe set by CALCs/ councils

##### *Improvement and development*

One of the critical success factors for this priority in 2014/15 is to relaunch the Quality Council Scheme and action 5 is to expand our improvement and development work.

The Local Council Awards Scheme was launched on 6<sup>th</sup> January. We now have over 600 registrations, including 35 from councils who had not taken part in the previous Quality Council Scheme, 23 registrations for the Quality Gold award and that 51% of registrations have been from medium sized (income between £25,000 and £250,000) councils. A regular newsletter has been established that will provide updates and information on the Award Scheme. We will also use it to consult with County Associations, local panel coordinators and accreditation panel members.

A number of CALCs have run their own training and briefing events for the Award Scheme. The Improvement and Development Manager has delivered briefing events where CALCs have invited this in Northamptonshire, Leicestershire and Yorkshire with further events planned in Dorset, SLCC practitioner's conference, Hertfordshire, Derbyshire and the joint NE CALCs conference.

CiLCA 2015 will open for registrations on 20<sup>th</sup> April. A key change for CiLCA 2015 is the introduction of recognised CiLCA trainers. This is someone who has attended a CiLCA 2015 'Train the Trainers' workshop and has the endorsement of their County Association or SLCC County Branch. This means that candidates can be confident that the training they choose will be delivered to a high standard. And recognised CiLCA 2015 trainers will receive regularly updated resources to support them. Any CiLCA 2015 training for clerks must be delivered or led by a recognised CiLCA trainer. This means either individual trainers must be accredited, or, if you deliver training as a team, at least one person in the team present at the training must be a recognised CiLCA trainer.

SLCC and NALC will deliver free workshops for CiLCA trainers over March and April this year, in Bristol, York, Birmingham, Manchester and London. After April we will run these 'Train the Trainer' workshops based on demand, so there will be future opportunities as well.

### *Partnership working*

Relations with the County Officer Forum and CALCs generally continue to be good, though there is some frustration at the speed of change within NALC.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairmen are due to meet SLCC representatives on 19 March and a verbal update will be made at National Council. Issues to be addressed include:

- Mutual promotion to councils, recognising respective and different roles
- Copyright material
- encouraging participation in quality council scheme and take-up of CiLCA
- establishing a Sector Led Body to procure audit services
- Joint advice including on working hours
- New model terms and conditions of employment (and code of conduct)
- To work towards a complementary conference programme and joint events
- Support for new councils

- Future structure of SLCC.

### *Organisation and staff development*

A first meeting of the Remuneration Panel as part of Scrutiny's remit has taken place and reported to Finance Committee. It is proposing a move to a reward scheme, within budget, based on delivery of appraisal targets and linked to local government increment scales.

Marie Dill has returned from maternity leave and is now working part-time in Communications and associated savings are funding an extension of Kate Groves temporary appointment to end of August to focus on the Star Councils award and marketing pack.

Charlotte Eisenhart has successfully completed her 6 months probation period. A Policy Intern is being recruited for six months to support policy and parliamentary work around the General Election and related projects.

### **3. Creating new councils and growing membership**

#### **Strategic Plan actions on red or amber under this priority**

- Amber: marketing pack and marketing campaign. A first draft has been agreed by Executive Committee for wider consultation.
- Amber: super councils' network and larger councils offer. One of the issues raised by larger councils has been the desire to link to the LGA in some way through membership of NALC. Following the Chairman's meeting with the LGA Chairman discussions have begun with the LGA on possible corporate membership through NALC enabling larger councils, and possibly CALCs to access some LGA benefits. Executive Committee agreed that this should be worked up in detail.

News on council membership. Clevedon in Avon and Winkfield Parish Council in Berkshire have indicated they will re-join. Sandhurst indicated an interest in joining but not through their home CALC but through membership of a neighbouring CALC which is not permitted by NALC's current constitution. Hatfield who had previously indicated they would be leaving membership have indicated they will stay in membership. Seaham Town Council, County Durham, have indicated that they will be ceasing membership next year. If any members have knowledge of any other councils who may be interested in joining or are considering leaving then please let me know.

Our new councils' programme for 2014-15 is coming to an end; a meeting with DCLG was held on 23 February about continuation of the programme from 2015-16 and NALC was informed that there were proposals to reduce this support from £600,000 to £100,000 which we will be robustly opposing. In summary the programme has delivered (between 1/4/14 and 31/3/15):

- support and funding to 42 campaigns;
- 43 CALC outreach bursaries;

- 8 new councils will have been established by 1 April, 2015 (in Badgers Mount, Chadwick End, Finham, Penrith, Queen's Park, Westgate, Whitehaven and Macclesfield);
- active campaigns in 142 areas
- governance reviews are underway in 5 areas
- 2 networking events for campaign groups and county associations;
- establishment of an online campaign hub; &
- introduction of 'Create a council week'.

The Surrey and Sussex county associations have helped Queen's Park Community Council with recruitment for a permanent clerk; Mike Simpson has been appointed and takes up post shortly and is meeting senior officers on 11 March.

#### **4. Promoting and representing the sector**

##### **Strategic Plan actions on Red or amber under this priority**

- Amber: wider engagement with Government departments. Relations continue to be positive with DCLG and to a lesser extent Cabinet Office. DEFRA relations need to be developed. We have been asked to join the Homes & Communities Agency Rural Housing Advisory Group.

Key developments affecting the sector over the last quarter include the following publications, consultations, regulations and legislation:

- Eric Pickles' letter to NALC regarding Keighley Town Council (appendix 3) and their public interest report, which recognised NALC as "the lead organisation for local authorities in England" which "has been successful in their work to raise standard across local authorities and in tackling poor performance in the sector"; the Executive Committee accordingly agreed to work closely with the Yorkshire County Association to assist Keighley Town Council in its improvement work.
- the final local government settlement in which NALC lobbied successfully – with the support of 400 councils and CALCs - against the extension of referenda principles to town and parish councils
- DCLG consultation on the provisional local government finance settlement and modernising parish polls
- Publication of new audit regulations including the Transparency Code for councils under £25,000.

Key meetings/delegations/events held or attended over the quarter include:

- Delegation led by the Chairman to meet the Local Government Minister Kris Hopkins MP which led to a rethink on referenda principles
- Meeting with Planning and Housing Minister Brandon Lewis MP where we were pressed to promote neighbourhood planning

- Ministerial roundtable on community rights
- Evidence to EFRA Commons Committee on rural broadband
- Local Democracy and Civic Societies APPGs, making the case for better rural broadband and winning support for the perishing of England
- DCLG's Communities Partnership Board ensuring that NALC, CALCs and Councils are involved in partnership delivering localism grants
- NALC Chairman met with the LGA Chairman and it was agreed to meet three times a year to address issues of mutual concern.
- Chief Executive spoke at first national Neighbourhood Planning conference.

A major development this quarter in promoting the work of Parishes nationally was Ken Browse's article in the LGA house magazine which has a very wide readership. (See attached at appendix 4). Other key national, regional and local media coverage highlights since the last National Committee include:

- Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (EFRA) select committee on rural broadband and digital only services in which NALC said the present service delivery strategy is leading to a digital divide in Britain; <http://www.ispreview.co.uk/index.php/2014/12/one-watch-live-oral-evidence-uk-rural-broadband-inquiry.html> You can watch Jonathan Owen giving evidence from about 16.33 the EFRA Select Committee - <http://www.parliamentlive.tv/Main/Player.aspx?meetingId=16692>
- NALC is part of the Rural Coalition who called for the recognition of recognition of the national importance of the countryside and our rural communities on 3<sup>rd</sup> December; <http://skemnews.com/news/countryside-groups-unite-issue-rural-challenge-on-behalf-rural-coalition/>
- NALC's Future Local Conference on 3<sup>rd</sup> December saw three keynote political speakers outline their future plans for this sector; <http://www.publicsectorexecutive.com/Public-Sector-News/parish-power-the-solution-to-the-problems-in-our-society--letwin->
- Cllr Ken Browse, chair of the National Association of Local Councils, on the Local Government Finance Settlement issued in December 2014 said: "We remain opposed to referendum principles being extended to parishes, such interference by government would be a sledgehammer to crack a nut." <http://www.publicsectorexecutive.com/Public-Sector-News/council-spending-power-to-be-cut-by-18-#TODO> <http://www.localgovernmentexecutive.co.uk/news/local-government-finance-settlement-reaction-round-0>>
- Sir Rodney Brooke, said: "Parish councils will play an increasingly important role in plugging service gaps left by bigger authorities." in this interview for The Guardian: [http://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/jan/21/rodney-brooke-fears-local-government-cuts?utm\\_content=bufferda2ce&utm\\_medi](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/jan/21/rodney-brooke-fears-local-government-cuts?utm_content=bufferda2ce&utm_medi)
- New NALC research by the Smaller Councils' has highlighted the truly collaborative nature of local government, with many of England's smallest parish councils coming together to

share services and save money; <http://www.publicsectorexecutive.com/Public-Sector-News/collaboration-key-across-all-local-government->

- NALC's head of policy and development, Justin Griggs, gave an interview to BBC Tees, 0843 (02.43) and 08.46 (02.46) on the developing power of parish councils and on our general elections campaign; <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02hds1f>
- NALC is asking the Government to reconsider its position on parish and town councils being able to have a slice of the business rates via the Sustainable Communities Act; <http://www.localgovernmentexecutive.co.uk/news/local-councils-take-fight-slice-business-rates-back-dclg>

NALC has also published new editions of LCR, DIS and weekly e-newsletter (which includes highlights of NALC's weekly activity) and updates for the website in the intervening period since the last committee meeting.

Media interest in parish councils, not always positive, has also been raised by the TV series "A Casual Vacancy."

## **“A NEW FUTURE”: NALC’s Strategic Plan**

**NALC is determined to**

- **achieve a new and effective strategy for the National Association and the sector as a whole**
- **ensure that the strategy is delivered successfully**
- **secure a new culture of unity and co-operation.**

### **Key objectives**

There are three key objectives, the foremost of these is

- 1. Delivering quality services to County Associations and member councils**

The other key objectives are

- 2. Creating new local councils and aiding membership growth**
- 3. Promotion and representation**

These three objectives will form be the basis for a new culture in our sector, with the National Association, County Associations and member councils all working together with common purpose.

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**NALC - A NEW FUTURE – IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME**

<b>PRIORITY ONE – DELIVERING QUALITY VFM SERVICES TO MEMBER COUNCILS AND COUNCIL ASSOCIATIONS</b>				
Performance Measures  PIs reported to Executive and National Council Legal response rates improved Increased web hits			Critical success factors (2014/15)  SLA agreed and delivered (Amber) Quality Council Scheme launched (Green) New web site set up (Green)	
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Leads and Resource requirements if any</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>RAG progress assessment (quarterly – Jan 15)</b>
<b>Action 1.</b> Agree new working relationship between County Officers Forum and NALC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvement plan agreed and implemented</li> <li>New work programme agreed each year</li> </ul>	NALC CEO/ CoF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First plan agreed June 2014</li> <li>Second plan agreed June 2015</li> <li>Third plan agreed June 2016</li> </ul>	Green – first plan agreed July 2014. Good relations developing with CALCs but more work to do to make NALC more responsive and engage effectively. Latest version of CoF/NALC improvement plan attached.
<b>Action 2.</b> Report on NALC performance through corporate dashboard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance Indicators identified</li> <li>Executive to review and authorise any changes</li> <li>Quarterly report to National Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NALC CMT and Executive Committee</li> <li>Performance improvement may require further investment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting processes agreed September 2014</li> <li>First report to National Council September 2014 (quarterly thereafter)</li> </ul>	Green – Regular reporting to Executive and National Council. Still needs further development.
<b>Action 3.</b> Ensure NALC is providing vfm services, reflecting member requirements and that resources focus on priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rolling programme of review of services establishing current position and what improvements or changes to provision could be made</li> <li>Agree annual Service Level Agreement (SLA)</li> <li>Set rolling three-year budget strategy including affiliation fees to reflect above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CEO/Chairman to agree programme of review</li> <li>NALC Heads of Service to manage reviews</li> <li>National Council to agree SLA</li> <li>Finance/Executive Committee to recommend budget strategy – supported by NALC Head of Finance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete programme of reviews November 2016</li> <li>SLA agreed by national council after AGM each year – December 2014</li> <li>AGM October 14</li> </ul>	Amber: Executive agreed programme of service reviews Sept 2014. Two in progress. Conference review reporting to Exec March. Amber: SLAs being drawn up – target for consultation March. Amber: Three year Budget strategy being developed 2015

<p><b>Action 4.</b> Identify and commission, procure or deliver in-house new services as determined by reviews and appropriate committees</p>	<p>Possible areas to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procurement/ Commissioning</li> <li>• Audit</li> <li>• Employment advice</li> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Property management</li> <li>• Business planning and risk</li> <li>• HR and employment</li> <li>• Finance and income generation</li> <li>• Web/ social media</li> <li>• Lobbying and promotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive/Finance Committee</li> <li>• Resources will need to be accessed for new services or current services dropped or re-prioritised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business cases to be prepared and considered by relevant Committees as appropriate.</li> <li>• To be considered as part of service reviews and annual work programme and SLA</li> </ul>	<p>Green /Amber– new service options reported to Executive Sept 2014. Three areas being developed this year:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Procurement advice being issued by Larger Councils Committee</li> <li>b) Employment workstream commissioned by National Council and working group set up.</li> <li>c) Audit Sector led body being developed</li> </ol>
<p><b>Action 5.</b> Expand and promote NALC's improvement and development work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain Improvement and Development Board for sector</li> <li>• Resource and recruit to vacant post</li> <li>• Launch new scheme and ensure good take-up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NALC Head of Policy and Development / Improvement and Development Board members</li> <li>• Support of CoF</li> <li>• Budget provision to be allocated for post</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheme launched 2014</li> <li>• Recruitment complete September 2014</li> <li>• 50% of councils covered by 2017</li> </ul>	<p>Green: Scheme relaunched Jan 2015 after 2014 pilot. 700 councils signed up</p>
<p><b>Action 6.</b> Establish website as first point of call for information and accessing services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach agreed by Executive June 2014</li> <li>• Project Plan and team agreed</li> <li>• New website launched September</li> <li>• On-going resources secured to support development</li> <li>• New communications strategy and review of publications/ communications agreed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NALC Head of Communications</li> <li>• CALCs and Member councils to use</li> <li>• Member councils to set up own websites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New website launched September 2014</li> <li>• Targets set for web hits growth – in SLA</li> <li>• Business case for on-going budget support in 2015.</li> <li>• New communications strategy agreed March 2015</li> <li>• All member councils to have own web site/ e mail address by December 2017</li> </ul>	<p>Green – new website launched but still work needed. Communications (web) User Group being set up to oversee developments.</p>

<p><b>Action 7.</b> Identify new income streams, future grants and shared services opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure Government and other funding for new programmes and share of top-slice for improvement work</li> <li>• Consult and agree on annual programme of conferences and events</li> <li>• Review publications, identify new ones and ensure paid for ones are well marketed.</li> <li>• Secure commercial partners and sponsorship</li> <li>• Identify and target shared service opportunities</li> <li>• Make best use of assets including 109.</li> </ul>	<p>Finance Committee/Executive Committee to oversee.</p> <p>NALC CMT to be responsible for delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-going – liaison with DCLG etc., lobby for top slice funding post 2015 election. Identify European potential Jan – March 2016</li> <li>• Draft conference programme agreed each summer and consulted on</li> <li>• First review of publications complete November 2014</li> <li>• Opportunities for sponsorship identified February 2015.</li> <li>• Shared services “brainstorm” November 2015</li> <li>• Property options identified November 2014</li> </ul>	<p>Green – positive discussions with Government re on-going grant funding.</p> <p>Green – Conference programme being developed after consultation – report to Exec March 2015</p> <p>Red – AON</p> <p>Amber- Executive agreed work to identify commercial sponsorships</p> <p>Green – 109 valuation</p>
<p><b>Action 8.</b> Address constitutional and committee structure issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commission review of constitution by President and procure legal advice on options.</li> <li>• Report on conclusions and secure agreement by National Council/ AGM.</li> <li>• Identify process to review Committee structures</li> </ul>	<p>Executive Committee. Resources required for legal advice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report to Executive Committee March 2015 and implement agreed timescales.</li> </ul>	<p>Amber – President’s Constitutional Commission underway. Executive Committee agreed approach to review Committees in 2015</p>

**PRIORITY 2 – CREATE NEW COUNCILS AND GROW MEMBERSHIP**

Performance Measures		Critical success factors (2014/15)		
Total membership New council campaign numbers		Marketing pack produced (Amber) Offer for larger councils enhanced (Amber) New councils funding secured for 2015 (Amber)		
Activity	Milestones	Leads and Resource requirements if any	Target Date	RAG progress assessment (quarterly)
<b>Action 9.</b> Prove our worth! Prepare marketing pack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NALC offer clarified</li> <li>Marketing pack produced</li> <li>On-going identification of new services/ benefits</li> <li>Presentations to AGMs etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Communications to lead</li> <li>Use promotions budget to support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First Pack produced October 2014</li> <li>Annual update and target AGMs</li> </ul>	Amber, draft Marketing pack to Exec March... Green attendance at AGMs
<b>Action 10.</b> Increase membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with CALCs to target non-members and win back departing members</li> <li>Set three year target for increasing membership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NALC/ CoF to identify approach and target</li> <li>National Council Members to support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree approach and set target April 2016</li> </ul>	Green, some councils coming back into membership Amber – campaign needs to be developed.
<b>Action 11.</b> Support to larger councils	Relevant and up-to-date services tailored to larger councils needs e.g. town centre management	Larger Councils Committee to oversee  Additional resource may be required for work with other agencies	On-going	Amber/Green – LCC doing some work. Amber: Super councils network formed
<b>Action 12.</b> Deliver and develop new councils programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current programme delivered</li> <li>Engage with DCLG/CO of funding post 2015</li> <li>Assist CALCs to work with principal authorities, local MPs and overcome barriers</li> <li>Support development of local teams to campaign for new councils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Policy and Development to lead</li> <li>Support by CALCs</li> <li>Detailed targets in project plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-going</li> <li>2015 funding secured Jan 2015</li> </ul>	Green – on track

**PRIORITY 3 – TO PROMOTE AND REPRESENT THE SECTOR EFFECTIVELY**

Performance Measures		Critical success factors (2014/15)		
Number of press releases etc.		Manifesto agreed (Green)		
Manifesto targets achieved		Elections material produced (Green)		
Number of ministerial meetings		APPG working well (Green)		
Activity	Milestones	Leads and Resource requirements if any	Target Date	RAG progress assessment (quarterly)
<b>Action 13.</b> Undertake policy review and produce short “manifesto” of key objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy review completed.</li> <li>Manifesto produced and distributed to target audiences</li> </ul>	Head of Policy and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First review completed August 2014</li> <li>Manifesto October 2014</li> </ul>	Green – Policy Review completed and reported to councillors. National Council July discussed manifesto agreed by Policy.  Need to do annually.
<b>Action 14.</b> Agree three year promotion strategy	Strategy to support “manifesto” agreed and options identified including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attendance at political conferences,</li> <li>research,</li> <li>future of local councils work,</li> <li>promoting NALC and</li> <li>Participation in elections.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chairman/ CEO</li> <li>National Council Members, CALC, Member councils to support</li> <li>Grow promotions budget to support – target £80,000 over three years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interim plan agreed September 2014</li> <li>First strategy agreed September 2015</li> </ul>	Green/Amber – attendance at Party Conferences secured, 3 year strategy to be started
<b>Action 15.</b> Support the All Party Parliamentary Group on local democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secretariat support</li> <li>Membership grown</li> <li>Annual work plan set.</li> </ul>	Head of Policy and Development	On-going	Green – new Chair in place, good session on rural broadband, but likely to be slow down in activity in run up to elections.
<b>Action 16.</b> To hold regular meetings with Government Ministers, other national organisations and opinion formers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targets identified</li> <li>Quarterly meetings with DCLG/ DEFRA and CO.</li> <li>Regular engagement with officials</li> <li>Engage with other departments e.g. BIS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chairman, other members. Support from county associations and member councils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targets identified July 2015</li> <li>On-going programme of meetings</li> <li>New official roundtable set up October 2014</li> </ul>	Green on relations with DCLG Amber on wider engagement.

Communications - Performance Management Dashboard - 2014- 2015

	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15
Media Releases	5	5	4	4	4	6	7	3	13	9
Tweets	171	225	225	128	22	116	190	124	156	79
Facebook Posts	18	19	15	20	10	8	17	16	26	19
NALC Hits	5729	6154	5807	4910	4690	5304	5662	4,899	4040	6097
NALC Page Views	26640	27592	28654	23505	22,663	25,117	27,222	31,859	25192	34117
LCR Circulation	4036	4036	4036	4036	4037	4037	4037	4037	4037	4037
DIS Circulation	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	94	94
NALC/Sector Mentions in Media	30 NALC/ 2053 Parish/ 3148 Town	34 NALC 1788 Parish 3041 Town	77 NALC 1217 Parish 2158 Town	38 NALC 1648 Parish 2440 Town	16 NALC 1648 Parish 2440 Town	40 NALC 1755 Parish 1811 Town	12 NALC 1936 Parish 1752 Town	10 NALC 1890 Town 2003 Parish	11 NALC 1628 Town 1726 Parish	18 NALC, 3137 Town 2416 Parish
Twitter Reach	285.4k	78.5k	192.8k	2.1m	192.1k	414.4k	369.2 k	267.8k	140.4k	118.1k
Twitter Mentions	66	87	106	127	72	115	185	97	86	62
Youtube Views	16	79	40	108	19	40	21	15	57	114

## Finance & Admin - Performance Management Dashboard - 2015

	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15
Invoices Paid	52	84	47	69	98	100	103	19
Average Days to Pay Invoices	8	13	6	11	8	8	7	7
Invoices Raised	45	61	40	102	40	46	49	95
Calls to switchboard from CALCs	0	0	0	81	22	24	34	142
Calls to switchboard from P/T Councils	0	0	0	64	66	67	45	60
Calls to switchboard from others	0	0	0	175	183	203	154	125
Number of letter enquiries (not including legal cases)	0	0	0	11	1	1	5	1
Average response days for letter enquiries	0	0	0	3	3	No response needed	2	3
Number of enquiries to nalc@nalc.gov.uk	128	109	92	111	120	166	199	180
Average response days for enquiries to nalc@nalc.gov.uk	8	6	6	8	3	5	2	2
Committee Papers Issued	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Committee Papers Issued late / incomplete	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

## Legal - Performance Management Dashboard 2015

	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15
<b>Total number of written legal advices given</b>	35	55	50	54	46	40	41	36
<b>Number responded to within 15 working days</b>	34	55	50	53	46	40	41	36
<b>Number of those marked urgent</b>	18	27	22	26	24	25	20	23
<b>Number of cases which met their urgent deadline</b>	16	26	21	26	24	25	20	23
<b>LTNs issued</b>	3	0	5	2	1	1	0	1
<b>Legal Briefings Issued</b>	0	1	0	0	2	0	2	0
<b>Employment Briefings Issued</b>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
<b>Legal advices by telephone</b>	20	18	27	25	16	28	22	22
<b>Total number of written accounts &amp; audit advices given</b>	4	5	5	4	5	4	3	6
<b>Number responded to within 15 working days</b>	3	4	4	4	1	3	2	2
<b>Number of those marked urgent</b>	1	1	1	0	4	1	1	3
<b>Number of cases which met their urgent deadline</b>	1	1	1	n/a	4	1	1	1
<b>Financial Briefings issued</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1

## Policy and Development - Performance Management Dashboard

	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15
Consultation responses	0	4	0	2	0	3	1	0	0	2
Consultation response deadlines met	n/a	1	n/a	1	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a	1
Number of ministerial meetings/contacts	1	0	2	1	0	3	2	0	1	2
Parliamentary meetings/contacts		1	5	8	2	9	9	2	2	1
New council campaign numbers				122	122	134	136	136	136	142
Number of Registrations for Award Scheme	n/a	559								
Number of CiLCA clerks	1850	1859	1867	1879	1889	1899	1914	1919	1924	1932
Articles, blog posts etc	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	4	1
Conference/event presentations delivered	1	0	2	0	1	4	5	0	5	1

15/039



Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government

RECEIVED

5 MAR 2015

The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP  
Secretary of State for Communities and Local  
Government

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Jonathan Owen  
Chief Executive  
National Association of Local Councils  
109 Great Russell Street  
London  
WC1B 3LD

0 2 MAR 2015

Dear Jonathan

**KEIGHLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

I am writing to you as the established lead organisation for local authorities in England. I am well aware of NALC's commitment to the local council sector and its role providing support to its members with advice and guidance. I know that NALC has been successful in their work to raise standards across local authorities and in tackling poor performance in the sector.

In the light of this I am drawing your attention to one such situation, of which you may already be aware, that presents an excellent opportunity for NALC to demonstrate active sector leadership. Keighley Town Council's external auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP, published a Report in the Public Interest on 5 November 2014, relating to the financial year 2012/13. A copy of the report is publicly available on the Audit Commission website: <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/audit-regime/audit-reports/public-interest-reports> .

I am sure you will be very concerned by this report and its findings highlighting 'significant weaknesses in governance at Keighley Town Council that led to failures in decision making and actions that may be unlawful'. I am sure that NALC too are alarmed by the identified failures and can agree that prompt action needs to be taken by the council to address these issues and avoid the possibility of bringing the sector into disrepute. My department is getting a growing number of letters from concerned residents of that area highlighting a range of possible issues, a number of which have deeply concerned both me and my department.

I am sure that if they have not already done so, NALC will be taking some form of action and I hope will consider brokering some form of peer support to help Keighley Town Council make the necessary improvements to its internal processes and governance. As I see it there are number of changes that need to be made at Keighley Town Council with a considerable degree of urgency and NALC, with its knowledge, contacts and commitment to the sector, are the ideal organisation to deliver this; whether it be through direct support, the use of County Associations or the help of a "high-performing" peer council. As I see it, support from NALC offers an important opportunity for Keighley Town Council to help get back on track.

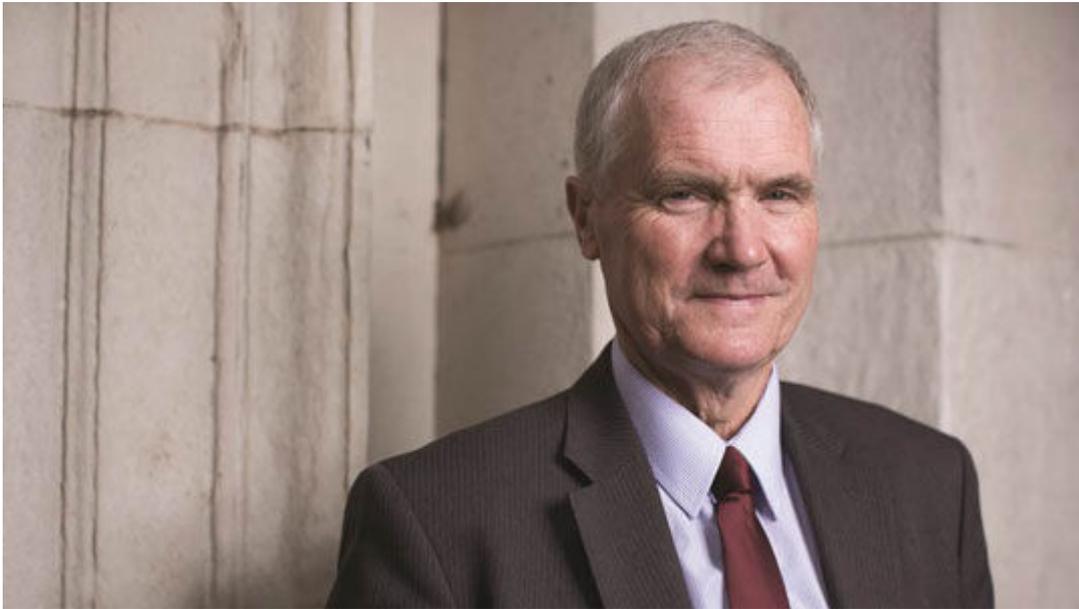
Despite the report in the public interest, correspondence to the Department still infers that this report has yet to be fully acted upon. Given the importance of this issue, I urge you to take action and would be grateful for a response before Parliament rises on 31 March, setting out what you can offer in this regard. My officials are available to meet and discuss this if that would be helpful.

I do understand this may be a challenging issue and it may take time to bring the capacity of Keighley Town Council to a level where these concerns can be alleviated. I hope that NALC will be able to assist in this.

Yours ever  
Eric

THE RT HON ERIC PICKLES MP

# We're all in one local government



The LGA's 100 Days campaign highlights the impact its members can have, not just on the economy but also improving the lives of their residents in these tough times.

In addition to the membership of the LGA, there are more than 9,000 town and parish councils (the National Association of Local Councils) in England making up the most local level of democracy. Our numbers are growing, we are rapidly improving, we are delivering more for our communities than ever and we too are part of the solution, as our Communities in Control manifesto makes clear.

Most of these councils have long been delivering important and visible services, from playgrounds, community centres and sports facilities; to youth projects, transport schemes and crime reduction initiatives.

However, we are also capable of delivering much more than you might expect, such as in social care services. Take Forest Row Parish Council in Sussex for example, who have begun taking on the delivery of meals previously delivered by the County Council.

NALC's members are committed to improving, pushing themselves to meet the challenges faced by the whole local government family. That's why we have worked with LGA, Government and other partners on our newest national improvement programme, which we launched in January.

The Local Council Award scheme – backed by the LGA – allows councils to show they meet the standards set by the sector and assessed by their peers. In the first month alone over 500 councils have registered to take part – testimony to their commitment to improve and to be able to show their capabilities to the partners they work with.

My challenge to those reading this is to think differently about the local councils in their patch. Consider their potential; work together to deliver even more efficient and truly local services. And support each other in your improvement journeys.

**Cllr Ken Browse is Chairman of the National Association of Local Councils.**

[http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/first-opinion/-/journal\\_content/56/10180/6946206/NEWS](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/first-opinion/-/journal_content/56/10180/6946206/NEWS)