

## PROTOCOL BETWEEN THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS AND THE SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS

### Introduction

1. This Protocol is an agreement between the National Association of Local Councils together with the independent County Associations and the Society of Local Council Clerks and its County Branches. It sets out arrangements for bilateral recognition, mutual promotion and joint working.

### Recognition

2. The Association recognises the Society as the sole representative body for local council clerks, deputy and assistant clerks (or other job titles used by local councils for personnel carrying out these roles) in its role as both a professional association and as a trade union.

*(NB As the employers' representative body NALC/CALCs need to support councils as the employers of many types of employees and therefore NALC/CALCs may form and maintain partnerships with other employee representative bodies. This may impact on the relationship with the SLCC as NALC/CALCs will need to balance the needs and always act in the best interest of the council as employers.)*

3. The Society recognises the National Association as a local authority association and as the sole representative body for town and parish councils.

### Co-operation and Communication

4. The National Association and the Society agree to work together to promote the best interests of the local councils sector and its employees and their contribution to the wellbeing of communities. It is recognised that the interests of local councils and those of their clerks may not always coincide and that each body retains the right to determine and promote its own policies. Where different views exist however, both bodies will make every attempt to minimise differences and identify common ground. Where this is not possible the respective CEOs will agree a public line to limit damage to the reputation of the sector.
5. The National Association and the Society will ensure that there is good mutual communication and co-ordination including:
  - A meeting between respective elected office holders every six months and the first in the new series to take place in Autumn 2014. [NALC may wish to nominate others than vice-chairs]
  - Regular communication at officer level at national, regional and county level

- A meeting between the Chief Executives every three months including respective management team members as appropriate
- Exchange of bulletins, updates or other general communications sent to members by the national offices of each organisation
- Free exchange of journals produced at national level
- Attendance by reciprocal arrangement at the respective organisation's national conferences – two free places per conference. (Not travel or accommodation)
- Consultation in good time on each other's proposed conference programme
- Links between each other's websites
- The opportunity to update each other's membership on the work of SLCC/NALC e.g. by presentation at Conferences, National Councils and committee meetings etc.

The principle of open exchange and co-operation is agreed at all levels. Specific arrangements for the exchange of local information will be determined by discussion between individual county associations and the appropriate level of the SLCC.

6. The National Association and the Society will ensure that there is mutual communication and as much co-operation as possible at all levels in the planning of events and other initiatives. For example notice of the timing and content of national, regional or local events should be exchanged as a matter of courtesy with the relevant office of the SLCC or of the National and County Associations. Specific contact points will be identified for this purpose.

### **Mutual Promotion**

7. The National Association will encourage membership of the Society among local council clerks, deputy and assistant clerks and recommend member councils to encourage and promote such membership.
8. The Society will encourage membership of the Association among Councils and recommend its members to promote councils' membership of the National Association through joining their local county association.
9. Both organisations support 100% membership of the Association and the Society. Under no circumstances will either organisation take any action which encourages disaffiliation of clerks or councils from the respective organisations.
10. The Association and the Society undertake to make every effort to ensure that their activities are complementary and that the activities of each do not undermine the other. In particular, it is recognised that councils should use the National and County Associations as their primary source of advice and information; that the Society is the primary source of advice and information for clerks in their professional capacity and as employees. To this end the Associations and the Society will work together to ensure that there is a joined up, coherent, effective and efficient advisory framework to support the needs of the sector.



## Employment

11. The National Association will encourage and recommend its member councils to apply proper standards of reward, training and development in their employment practice. SLCC and NALC will work together to promote joint advice and model procedures including terms and conditions, contracts, recruitment, performance management and working hours.

## Policy Co-ordination

12. While both the National Association and the Society recognise that they are independent bodies with the right to determine policy and make representation to government and other organisations, both bodies will actively exchange information on policy issues and will seek to collaborate where there is a common interest.

## Shared Services

13. SLCC and NALC recognise that there are some areas of common activity and in the current period of retrenchment in public finance we should be looking to co-operate and share services where possible.

## Annual Work Programme

14. SLCC and NALC will agree an annual work programme to give effect to this protocol. For 2015/16 this will include:
- Encouraging participation in Local Council Award 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
  - To work towards a complementary conference programme and joint events

*Ken D Brouse* ..... Chair, NALC

*Kathleen Power* ..... Chair, SLCC

*Sharon* ..... Chief Executive, NALC

*[Signature]* ..... Chief Executive, SLCC

Date ..... 11<sup>th</sup> October 2014