



NORTHUMBERLAND ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Minutes of the meeting of the County Committee at 10am on Saturday 19th July 2025, held at County Hall Morpeth.

Online: Cllrs: Liz Dunn, Kerry Davison, Catherine Seymour, Isabel Hunter and Mr Alex Wallace.

Attendance: Cllrs: David Francis, Alan Sambrook, Helen Shaw, Alan Taylor, David Woodard, Natalie Rolls, Alan Hall and Monica Anderton

Also Present

Mr Graeme Popay – Chief Officer [Actions marked as CO]

1: Welcome.

Cllr David Francis, acting Chair welcomed members.

2: Apologies for Absence.

Cllrs: David Hughes. Claire Connolly

3: Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th June 2025

All agreed to accept the minute as a true record.

4: Matters arising

None

5: Finance

The Financial report was circulated showing the current position. All agreed to accept the report.

A revised CAN/NALC Memorandum of understanding had been previously circulated and was tabled - was due for review. Members agreed that NALC were getting value for money from the agreement, the annual payment which covers wages, IT support, office space, photocopying and office supplies etc. The agreement had not changed for several years. It was agreed to accept the new MOU – **ACTION** CO to contact Andy Dean at CAN to confirm acceptance.

6: New Community Partnerships – a paper had been circulated - County Cllr Isabel Hunter was invited to the meeting to explain how the new Community Partnership meetings would work. Members were content that the new format was a productive step forward and welcomed the change.

The T&PCLWG would continue and would concentrate on strategic issues.

Alex Wallace raised concerns over the merger of Standards and Audit into one committee – it was agreed to take this up with NCC.



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7: National Issues

Cllr David Francis gave a verbal report on recent national issues including:

- Star Council Awards – reminder to encourage members to nominate
- Devolution Bill is now going through Parliament – second reading scheduled for Sept 2025 read more [HERE](#)
- NALC is disappointed that the Government has decided to axe funding for neighbourhood planning – read more [HERE](#)
- The Practitioners Guide has been rewritten – read more [HERE](#)
- NALC urges Parish and Town Councils to move to .gov.uk domain read more [HERE](#)
- Local Council explained has been fully revised and can be downloaded for free [HERE](#)

8: Issues raised by County Committee members.

For information - Northumberland Local Plan was adopted in March 2022 and is under review. It was last reviewed in 2022 – see more [HERE](#) This will increase the local housing need figure dramatically and will impact on development withing our Parishes and Towns.

No County Conference this Autumn – scheduled for early spring 2026 at County Hall

9: County and Parish Websites update.

All Parish and Town Councils with a NALC supported website have been contacted and advised that the service will cease on 31st March 2026. The proposal agreed at the last County Meeting - 6 months free from HugoFox and 6 months (less VAT) covered by NALC – has been communicated to Clerks and the CO has asked Clerks to add to their next agenda the following questions and report back – “The Council will move to HugoFox” or “The Council will find its own website provider”.

10: Training

The CO has delivered training to several councils and has bookings to deliver more.

Parkinson Financial Training courses have been relaunched and have had a good take up

11: County Committee AGM

A draft of the AGM paperwork was circulated - members to contact the CO with questions/comments

Membership fee for 2026/2027 - after discussion it was agreed that the committee would recommend to the AGM a zero increase in membership

12: Next Meeting of the Committee

- **Saturday 11th October – County Hall & Hybrid**
- **Saturday 15th November – AGM County Hall**

12: Any Other Urgent Business – none - Meeting Closed at 11.25am