

Northumberland Association of Local Councils

County Committee

8 July 2017

NALC Chief Officer's Report

1: Introduction

I have marked in bold, items where I would appreciate direction or a decision from the Committee

2: Policy Developments

With the General Election, there have been no substantive policy announcements

I shall look at the supporting papers around The Queen's Speech to see if there are any indications of issues for our sector

3: Meetings attended and planned, and General Issues

With the date of the May meeting being delayed, and the start of the training programme, I am working still through issues raised at the last meeting.

There have been opportunities to meet members of the new County Council Administration and the Interim Chief Executive.

4: Issues raised by member councils

These have included

- Co-options and Vacancies
- PAYE and Pensions
- Planning
- Employment

5: Current Training and Transparency

The training programme commenced on 24 May. Attendance was as follows

Event	Location	Date	Numbers Booked	Numbers Attended
<i>Introduction to Local Councils</i>	<i>Dinnington</i>	<i>Mon 24 April</i>	To be rearranged	
Introduction to Local Councils	Choppington	Wed 24 May	7	7
Introduction to Local Councils	Bardon Mill	Wed 31 May	12	12
Introduction to Local Councils	Powburn	Mon 12 June	16	16
Being the Chairman of a larger Local Council	Choppington	Wed 14 June	1	CANCELLED
Chairing Meetings	Pegswood	Mon 19 June	3 and one possible	3
Being the Chairman of a smaller Local Council	Bardon Mill	Tues 27 June	4	5
Being the Chairman of a smaller Local Council	Belford	Wed 28 June	8	8

			<i>Position at 30 June</i>	
Finance	Bardon Mill	Mon 3 July	2	To Be Cancelled
Finance	Belford	Wed 12 July	7	
Introduction to Local Councils	Pegswood	Sat 15 July	3	
Introduction to Local Councils	Bardon Mill	Mon 11 Sept	4	
Introduction to Local Councils	Powburn	Wed 13 Sept	5	

The County Council is finalising the offer of Development Control Training at the July/August round of its Local Area Councils. This will be Part One with a second Part in November. I have also requested a combined Saturday morning event for those unable to attend an LAC.

6: Website and Transparency

6.1 At the date of preparation of this report, 42 Local Councils have signed up for the Portal and more are expressing interest. Initial comments from clerks are very encouraging, especially regarding the ease of adding documents.

6.2 The Association's own new website <https://northumberlandalc.uk/> is being populated. I have requested Member Parishes to let me have policies for use as precedents. **Members of the Committee are asked to reminded their clerks of this request please.**

6.3 On 29 June I attended a Transparency Workshop for northern County Officers in York funded by the national NALC. I shall circulate a note in the next few days.

7: The national NALC

Issues are covered in the report from Cllr Francis, who has given his apologies

8: The Councillor Census

Pressure of work has meant this has been delayed.

9: Northumberland National Park Authority

9.1 There were 4 candidates for the three Southern Constituency places. Hustings and the election of those parish representatives took place in Hexham on 6 June. There were initially only two candidates for the three Northern Constituency Seats, both being declared elected unopposed. The NNPA requested that we rerun the election for the remaining vacancy. Two candidates can forward but one withdrew leading to the remaining candidate being declared elected.

9.2 Details are now with DEFRA for formal appointment. Pressure is being exerted to ensure appoints by the time of the NNPA's annual meeting on 12 July.

9.3 The successful nominees are

Name	Constituency	Member of the following Parish Council
Susan Elizabeth <u>Bolam</u>	North	Harbottle
Christopher Leslie <u>France</u>	North	Hepple
John <u>Wilson</u>	North	Ingram
Valerie Anne <u>Gibson</u>	South	Henshaw
Julian Francis Tarret <u>Morrison-Bell</u>	South	Tarset & Greystead
Andrew David <u>Saunders</u>	South	Henshaw

10: Archives Consultative Committee

There was a meeting on 28 June to consider electronic archives. It is very early days but Northumberland Archives are keen to work with Parishes and I already have a volunteer. I mentioned the work at the Transparency Workshop in York and it became clear that no other County Association is working on this at the present time. The work will be almost entirely done by the Archives.

12: Pay claim 2018-2019

12.1 On 21 June, I circulated Member Councils with details of the claim lodged by the trade unions.

12.2 The national CX commented

Trade union pay claim

- **The local government unions' have this week submitted a pay claim which I am keen to consult on with county associations and local councils.**
- The pay claim (attached) for 2018/19 includes a 5% increase on all NJC pay points, the deletion of NJC pay points 6, 7, 8 & 9 (the deletion of these pay points to occur after the 5% increase has been applied to ensure that no NJC pay points fall below the Foundation Living Wage rate of £8.45 per hour), and would apply the deletions of the NJC pay points to the GLPC pay spine (i.e to delete Inner and Outer London pay points SCPs 6-9).
- Meeting the pay claim in full would increase the national pay bill for councils in England, Wales and Northern Ireland by £559m, according to the National Employers, who have issued the below statement from its chair Cllr Sian Timoney:
 - *"We will be consulting with councils in the coming weeks on pay across the workforce and in particular how we can meet the challenge of the Government's proposed level of the National Living Wage over the next few years. The unions' claim will form part of the consultation. We recognise that public sector workers have had lower than average pay awards for a few years now, but local government continues to face significant financial challenges so we are surprised that the unions are seeking such an ambitious pay award. Local government has lost more than half a million jobs in recent years and meeting this claim would result in many more such job losses."*
- **I am extremely keen to get feedback and comments from county associations and our councils on what impact the staff side proposals would have on you, please can you get back to me by 31 July 2017. I would be grateful if county association colleagues and clerks could ensure this information is communicated on to all councils and councillors.**

12.3 The Committee are asked whether they wish to make any representations in response to the national CX's request for comments

12: Significant items sent to the County Committee

- 15 June – The County Council's Town and Parish Liaison Working Group

13: Significant Items sent to Member Councils and the County Committee

- 21 June – Guidance regarding the Death of a Senior National Figure
- 21 June – Highway and Neighbourhood/Local Services in Northumberland
- 21 June – Pay claim 2018-2019

14: Civic Issues

I recently discovered the National Association of Civic Officers who assist on civic and ceremonial issues. There is no charge and I have joined to obtain access to their forum and website.

15: Holidays

I shall be on annual leave for the three weeks of 24 July, 31 July and 7 August 2017. I am scheduled to return to the office on Tuesday 15 August. I do not expect to be in a position to monitor emails on a regular basis.

Stephen Rickitt

NALC Chief Officer

30 June 2017