

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING I AGENDA

Date: 13 November 2025

Time: 10.00 – 13.00

Location: Zoom

1. Election of chair of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) [10.00 - 10.05]

- 1.1. To agree that NALC's vice president, Cllr Sue Baxter, chairs the meeting.
- 1.2. Chair's announcements.

2. Minutes of the AGM 2024 [10.05 - 10.15]

- 2.1. To approve the [draft minutes](#) of the AGM held on 6 November 2024 and to note any matters not covered elsewhere on the agenda (Appendix 2.1).
- 2.2. Matters arising: To receive an update from the Task and Finish Group set up to review the basis of NALC's Affiliation Fees. (Appendix 2.2).

NB: If representatives have any comments on the accuracy of the draft minutes, please contact Claire FitzGerald at nalccommittees@nalc.gov.uk before the meeting.

3. Review of the year and Annual Report and Accounts (2024/25) [10.15 - 10.50]

- 3.1. To receive the [Annual Report and Accounts](#) and an update on activity since their publication NALC's external auditors, Milton Avis, will also be present. (Appendix 3.1).

4. Affiliation fee [10.50 - 11.20]

- 4.1. To consider a motion from the National Assembly that NALC's affiliation fee for 2026/27 be set at 8.6 pence per elector, capped at £2,216 for larger councils.

(For information the affiliation fee for 2025/26 was 8.34 pence per elector capped at £2,139 for the largest councils.)

Break [11.20 - 11.40]

Breakout rooms to enable representatives to have an informal chat and network.

5. The Climate Emergency [11.40-12.50]

(For information at the AGM in 2019 NALC declared a [climate emergency](#). Since then we have moved to a digital first policy, published advice and guidance to county associations and councils, held events and established a [climate change network](#).)

- 5.1. Presentation by Simon Oldridge, lead organiser, [National Emergency Briefing](#), on the climate and nature crisis.
- 5.2. Presentation from [Suffolk Association of Local Councils](#), NALC's Star Council Awards 2025 county association of the year, on its approach to a number of nationally significant infrastructure projects and supporting parish and town councils.
- 5.3. Policy motion on Net Zero engagement from the Lancashire Association of Local Councils, as amended and supported by National Assembly (Appendix 5.3).

"That NALC supports and advocates for urgent national action to ensure local knowledge is integrated through effective engagement with parish and town councils in the early stages of Net Zero energy development. This will ensure:

- Connection points for energy infrastructure are shaped by local communities, not just developers, National Grid PLC or National Energy System Operator, aligning with regional needs and priorities.
- The development of a coordinated, efficient, and economically viable electricity transmission system that promotes sustainability and cost-effectiveness.
- Ofgem enforces compliance with these principles to enable faster, smarter, and more affordable energy growth, supporting the transition to Net Zero.
- Developers are incentivised to improve route and site selections throughout the planning process.

The Department for Energy, Security and Net Zero, Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Ofgem, National Energy System Operator, and Parliament, are urged to work closely with NALC, county associations and councils to promote a more trusted, more locally-informed, efficient, coordinated and economical energy system that benefits communities and supports a faster, smarter, and cheaper

national Net Zero transition, including the provision of training, education and specialist expertise in energy development accessible for members.”

6. Appointments [12.50 -12.55]

- 6.1. President: To agree on the appointment of the president until the AGM 2026. (Appendix 6).
- 6.2. Vice-presidents: To agree on the appointment of vice-presidents until the AGM 2026, including delegation to chair and chief executive to complete appointments if necessary. (Appendix 6).
- 6.3. External auditor: To agree that NALC's external auditor, Milton Avis, continues in post for 2025/26. The Scrutiny Committee will be tendering the service in 2026.

7. Date and time of next AGM

- 7.1. To note the proposed date for AGM 2026 on Tuesday 10 November 2026 via Zoom.

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Review of NALC affiliation fees

Last year's AGM agreed a proposal from National Assembly that a Task and Finish Group be set up to review the basis of NALC's Affiliation Fee and invited Management Board to draw up terms of reference and agree necessary resourcing.

Management Board on 14 April agreed to "establish a task and finish group to consider a review of the affiliation fees including basing the calculation on tax base rather than electorate numbers. The chief executive would circulate details of previous reviews if available and the previous paper prepared by Cllr Blezzard. The review would also enable queries raised by county officers to be resolved.

The affiliation review task and finish group was set up and included Cllrs Baxter, Davey, Drew and Francis and Robert Pritchard (county officer Staffordshire) supported by Jonathan Owen, Lisa Stockdale, Claire FitzGerald and Laura Culbert

The TFG considered earlier papers on affiliation fee review dating back to 2016, papers from the Isle of Wight on its move to a tax base model, and feedback from a recent county officers' forum meeting.

They identified the following questions to be addressed

1. How do county associations collect their fees (and NALCs) - do they charge VAT?
2. Are NALC rules clear as set out in constitution and process for collecting data?
3. Is there support for a shift from electorate to tax base?
4. Are there other possible models?
5. Is there support for a minimum fee?
6. Is there support for free membership for the smallest councils and parish meetings?
7. Should NALC fees be collected via county associations or direct?
8. What are the pros and cons of a collection fee levied on councils or NALC?
9. What are the implications of any changes to the revenue base of the national and county associations?
10. What are the implications for membership or levels?

Key Takeaways from the TFG discussion

- General support for exploring a shift from electorate-based to council tax base-based fee calculation
- Agreement to survey county associations on current practices and views on potential change
- Consensus to maintain fee collection via county associations rather than direct NALC billing
- Need to address concerns about collection costs for some county association

Electorate vs Council Tax Base Fee Calculation

- Current system based on electorate numbers may not accurately reflect councils' ability to pay
- Council tax base seen as potentially fairer metric, aligning more closely with councils' resource
- Shift would require careful transition planning due to significant changes for some council
- Data availability has improved since previous 2016 review, making tax base calculations more feasible

Minimum/Maximum Fees and Free Membership

- Mixed views on implementing minimum fees; concerns about equity and administrative burden
- Support for considering free limited membership for smallest councils/parish meeting
- Previous work explored logarithmic curve for largest councils to avoid abrupt fee plateau
- Need to balance fair contribution with recognition of disproportionate support needs of smaller council

Fee Collection Process

- Strong consensus to maintain collection via county associations rather than direct NALC billing
- Benefits: local relationships, understanding of council circumstances, unified membership offering
- Concerns raised about collection costs for some county association
- Suggestion to explore targeted compensation for associations with demonstrable additional cost

VAT on Membership Fees

- Variation in VAT practices across associations identified as potential issue
- Agreement to cautiously explore current practices before considering any change

Conclusion and next steps

Important to cautiously explore current practices and future developments before undertaking change, so aim to report in 2026.

Issue questionnaire before end 2025 to county associations to inform next steps.

Jonathan Owen
Chief executive

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APPENDIX 3.1 | ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING | 13 NOVEMBER 2025

NALC AGM – update since publication of annual report and accounts

This paper provides a brief update on key activity since the Annual report and accounts were published. It provides information on

- Policy and Public Affairs
- Publications, resources and events
- Staffing
- Membership and Finances

1. Policy and public affairs (supported by Connect)

- Achieving a major breakthrough for parish and town councils, as the [government has backed a proposal to reintroduce remote and hybrid council meetings](#).
- We [launched our Westminster Forum](#) to strengthen the voice of England's 10,000 parish and town councils in national politics.
- Our president, Baroness Ros Scott, called on the government to ensure that the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill lives up to its promise of delivering genuine local power in her article for [PoliticsHome](#).
- We gave oral evidence to the Public Bill Committee on 16 September 2025. During the [session](#), we answered questions from MPs covering various issues set out in our [parliamentary briefing](#) on the Bill.
- We attended the LGA conference in July with a stand, fringe event and showcased the work of Falmouth our Council of the Year
- We attended the [Labour Annual Conference 2025](#) in Liverpool, where we had an exhibition stand to raise the voices of parish and town councils.
- We successfully lobbied the government to introduce a rise in the upper threshold for smaller authorities, as the current £6.5 million threshold has not changed since 2014.

2. Publications, guidance, and events

- NALC's website has around 9000 individual registrations from 5000 member councils
- We [published the 2025 edition of the Practitioners' Guide](#). The most notable changes were the requirement for parish and town councils to have

a generic email account hosted on an authority-owned domain and a new Assertion 10.

- We published a joint [guide on responding to planning applications](#) with the CPRE to empower communities to shape local development.
- We [unveiled the all-new digital edition of Local Councils Explained](#), a must-read guide for anyone involved in parish and town councils. Fully updated for today's legal and digital landscape.
- We [published guidance on the local government services pay agreement 2025/26](#).
- We [published an updated advice note on council email addresses](#) following the introduction of Assertion 10 to the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- We [published our annual analysis of parish and town council tax levels for 2025/26](#), showing that precepts continue to grow in scale and importance.
- We [published our analysis of the parish and town elections](#) held earlier this year in May.
- Our [new research with the London School of Economics](#) reveals that parish and town councils have become vital yet often overlooked first responders in local emergencies.
- Launching the [Star Council Awards 2025/26](#). The only national awards celebrating the incredible contributions of England's parish and town councils.
- 700 people attended NALC events including our sold-out [Power Shift 2025](#) conference in London, our sold-out [study tour at Braunstone Town Council](#) and an online event on [strengthening local connections](#) and other sold-out and record-breaking online events on [navigating devolution in parks and open spaces](#) and [exploring alternative income sources](#).

3. Staffing

- We have said farewell over the last year or so to several longstanding staff including Head of Finance and Administration, Steve Walker, Head of Member Services, Charlotte Eisenhart, Solicitors Martin Fine and Gurvynda Paddan-White, and Finance and Administration officer, Beverley Brown.
- Other staff have been promoted, recruited, or appointed to new roles including Deputy Chief Executive, Justin Griggs, Head of Finance, Laura

Culbert, Data and Systems Manager, Lisa Stockdale, Senior Finance Officer Greg Henry, Member services officers: Olivia Kane, and Silvia Nicole.

- Other staff are being recruited to vacancies or alternative arrangements being established.
- A staffing review has been conducted by the chief executive with a new structure being set up with an emphasis on member services, financial reporting and policy and communications. The intention is also to reduce staffing costs as a percentage of affiliation fees and build resilience.
- Details of staff responsibilities will be circulated once the review and recruitment is completed.
- Thanks to departing current and new staff for their endeavours during a period of change in a comparatively small national organisation.

4. Membership and Finances

- The number of councils in membership is stable at around 7500, though final figures are awaited. Total electorate numbers are up from 16.3m to 16.8m. There are issues in some county association areas which we are working to address. It is anticipated that membership will continue to grow as local government re-organisation gathers pace with many new councils planned.
- The new head of finance with the support of the vice-chair (finance) is recruiting a new small focused team and reviewing NALC's finances and budget processes
- 2025/2026 expenditure is being closely monitored by officers against the budget previously set. Affiliation fee income remains robust. Salary costs are being maintained and accommodation costs stable. Income remains on trend though targets for events, sponsorship and external grants are volatile. There have been additional challenges from decisions to make Local Councils Explained free to members, AI, addressing copyright issues and the costs of the staffing review.
- Resources were allocated from reserves to cover the costs of promoting the sector with the new Parliament and the additional decision by Assembly to review NALC's forward strategy in response to "thriving together" will also need resourcing.
- The senior management team are working to deliver an operating position in line with the projected budget, especially with additional external support to improve councils' governance and accountability in conjunction with SAAA.

- Assembly agreed on 8 July to a “Three-year budget strategy to be based on CPI increase 30/6 (any further increase subject to case agreed) – and amended in light of current affiliation fee review. This enables county associations views to be sought for final agreement in the autumn at AGM.” Accordingly, Assembly members were informed that this year’s fee (based on 3.6% CPI increase) would be 8.6p per elector capped at £2,216 for the largest councils. After receiving feedback from Assembly members this proposal was agreed as a motion to the AGM by Assembly on 7 October. This motion is on the agenda for consideration later.
- Officers have modelled the implications of this decision for next year’s budget and with focus and hard work can deliver with a small but manageable deficit. (see attached).
- NALC will continue to keep a close eye on accommodation costs and opportunities, including co-locating with the LGA. The Scrutiny Committee will be advising on the Association’s investment strategy which at present focuses on generating income to support member services and cover business closure costs.

Jonathan Owen
Chief Executive
21 October 2025

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National Association of Local Councils

pence per elector fee	7.94	8.34	8.6
fee cap	£2,037	£2,139	£2,216
	Actual	Budget	Proposed
	24/25	25/26	Budget
			26/27
Affiliation fees	1,257,140	1,316,838	1,388,000
Publications, Advertising & Events	63,967	115,000	64,290
Commissions & Other Income	248,309	215,500	202,310
Development & Project Income	29,075	30,000	20,340
TOTAL NET INCOME	1,598,491	1,677,338	1,674,940
Expenditure			
Office costs	221,026	218,525	241,640
Staffing costs	1,122,468	1,241,500	1,237,110
Democracy	21,472	28,500	27,140
Promotions	29,244	30,000	35,000
Operating expenses & sundries	189,314	162,000	139,050
TOTAL OTHER EXPENDITURE	1,583,524	1,680,525	1,679,940
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) FUNDED BY GENERAL RESERVES	14,967	(3,187)	(5,000)
EXPENDITURE FUNDED BY OTHER RESERVES			
Publication	(14,290)		
Promotion	(46,970)	(53,030)	
TOTAL SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(46,294)	(56,217)	

APPENDIX 5.3 | ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING | 13 NOVEMBER 2025

Motion from Lancashire Association of Local Councils

That NALC supports and advocates for urgent national action to ensure local knowledge is integrated through effective engagement with parish and town councils in the early stages of Net Zero energy development. This will ensure:

- Connection points for energy infrastructure are shaped by local communities, not just developers, National Grid PLC or National Energy System Operator, aligning with regional needs and priorities.
- The development of a coordinated, efficient, and economically viable electricity transmission system that promotes sustainability and cost-effectiveness.
- Ofgem enforces compliance with these principles to enable faster, smarter, and more affordable energy growth, supporting the transition to Net Zero.
- Developers are incentivised to improve route and site selections throughout the planning process.

The Department for Energy, Security and Net Zero, Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Ofgem, National Energy System Operator, and Parliament, are urged to work closely with NALC, county associations and councils to promote a more trusted, more locally-informed, efficient, coordinated and economical energy system that benefits communities and supports a faster, smarter, and cheaper national Net Zero transition, including the provision of training, education and specialist expertise in energy development accessible for members.

Supporting Information

Realising a Faster Smarter Cheaper Net Zero Transition –

Lancashire Association of Local Councils

Our Association's Interest

Our Lancashire association is submitting this motion, because – like many others across the nation – it is faced with what feels like, the needless imposition of energy related NSIP projects, without effective adoption of local knowledge. The result is the prospect of unnecessary expense, diversion of resources and damaging project impacts, in conflict with our nationally approved local plans. At higher cost and greater risk. Undermining confidence and trust in the system of governance.

Why it is of National Interest

National Government has created a legally enshrined target to achieve “Net-Zero” by 2050. It has also set out interim targets to be met by 2030. All of which will require considerable energy infrastructure development. Government has set out an additional planning process to realise projects with the designation of “NSIP”. Such projects, similar to those ones in Lancashire, are already being rolled out across the country.

A Constructive Approach

We think that collaborative, multi-agency working at the absolute outset and throughout projects is vital. This needs to be in full compliance with the intent and letter of the applicable nationally approved local plans, policies and legislation. With the assurance of best practice regulation, this will transform the performance of projects for the better and secure confidence and trust.

Our Call to Action

Our Call to Action then is that: NALC supports and advocates for urgent national action to ensure local knowledge is integrated through effective engagement with Parish & Town Councils in the early stages of Net Zero energy development.

DESNZ, MHCLG, Ofgem, NESO, and Parliament, are urged to work closely with NALC, county associations and councils to promote a more trusted, more locally informed, efficient, coordinated and economical energy system that benefits communities and supports a faster, smarter, and cheaper national Net Zero transition,

Importantly, there should be provision of training, education and specialist expertise in energy development accessible for members. This is so as to recognise and respond to the impacts & opportunities; individually, collectively & cumulatively; at the earliest opportunity and throughout the planning, development & life of projects.

We have three NSIP projects to save £1.5bn off our energy bills to test this with and there are clearly more opportunities & issues across our associations.

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Appointments

6.1 To agree on the appointments of the president

- President: Baroness Scott of Needham Market (Lib-Dem) – reappointment

6.2 To agree on the appointments of NALC vice-presidents

- Vice-president: Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle (Green) – reappointment
- Vice-president: The Earl of Lytton (Cross Bencher) – reappointment
- Vice-president; Shaun Davies MP (Conservative) – reappointment
- Vice-president: Baroness Scott of Bybrook, (Labour) – reappointment
- Working vice-president: Cllr Sue Baxter – reappointment.

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