



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BULLETIN

22 April 2023 09:43

Subject	 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BULLETIN
From	National Association of Local Councils
To	clerkblackthornpc@gmail.com
Sent	21 April 2023 10:25

nalc

Chief executive's bulletin

14 April 2023

NALC 109 sale

I am delighted to report that we've completed the 109 Great Russell Street sale. It's been NALC headquarters for the last 30 years! We're moving into our new offices on 1 May 2023. There will be no changes to our email addresses or telephone numbers, but you can continue to write to our current address until the end of April. I want to thank NALC staff, councillors, county associations and clerks for their support, and we look forward to a bigger and brighter future in our new headquarters.

Meeting with BHIB Insurance Brokers

Our chair, Cllr Keith Stevens, and I met with BHIB Insurance Brokers managing director Julie Walker and account broker Lee Cleaver on 13 April 2023 to reaffirm our partnership at the end of its fifth year. BHIB Insurance Brokers has seen significant growth in the sector over the last year, with over 2,000 policies in place, and they continue to retain over 98% of existing customers. They are often seen at sector events ensuring they understand the sector well. There is also a wealth of advice on their website and their blogs on the NALC website. We are very grateful that they continue to sponsor our Star Councils Awards - and this year's entries will open soon. They are contacting current customers about renewal terms, and if you have yet to receive them or have any questions, [please get in touch with their friendly team](#).

National Employment Strategy Steering Group

The National Employment Strategy Steering Group comprises representatives from NALC, the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and county associations. This steering group meeting on 17 April 2023 confirmed the completion of the update to The Good Councillor's guide to employment, which will be launched very soon – watch this space! They approved a work plan for reviewing and updating NALC's suite of HR template policies and how-to guides, all accessible to NALC member councils through our website. There were also broader discussions about the sector's strategic issues related to employment matters and a renewed commitment to the need for a new national employment strategy.

NALC attends the Co-operative Party Rural Commission Report launch

NALC's head of policy and communications, Justin Griggs, and other stakeholders, such as the Plunkett Foundation and Action with Communities in Rural England, attended the [Co-operative Party Rural Commission Report launch](#) on 17 April 2023. I was pleased to see the report draw heavily on [NALC's manifesto](#) with strengthening local (parish and town) councils among recommendations to address the challenges rural communities face. Speakers included the Commission's chair, Lord Bassam of Brighton and shadow secretary of state for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Jim McMahon MP, who, in their remarks, commented that local councils had for too long been overlooked by the Labour Party and they play an essential part in rural communities, so strengthening rural governance was among the report's key proposals. Recommendations include establishing a Standing Commission to monitor departments' rural proofing' policies, more significant investment in local councils with more powers and say over the development and management of local services and facilities, investment in training and the development of those wishing to become councillors, and strengthening of the Localism Act to preserve local communal assets and an improved community ownership fund.

Local Council Award Scheme triage coordinator

We are seeking someone to [join our team as a triage coordinator](#) for the Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS). Triage coordinators play a crucial role within the scheme, supporting local councils to submit the best application possible. They bring a strong knowledge of how local councils operate and a strong customer service ethos to ensure everyone has a positive experience of participating in the scheme. If that sounds like an exciting opportunity for you, then please apply. The application deadline is 1 June 2023.

NALC works with Cloudy Foundation to produce a new app

We have been working with the [Cloudy Foundation Enterprise Academy](#) to produce a new app to help NALC manage the LCAS administration. The app has been created by school and college students using tools from Microsoft Office 365, and this week they presented their project back to NALC. The students have worked collaboratively on the project twice a week over one term, learning valuable technical, personal and technical skills that will be useful for them in the future. They also spent time over their Easter holidays to complete the presentation, which can be viewed on [YouTube](#). The new app will help NALC replace several different forms and spreadsheets and automate parts of the scheme's administration. Cloudy IT will now complete the app's work to ensure it is ready.

Fortnightly meeting with county officers

This week's meeting between NALC and county officers saw an update from Steve Parkinson of the Parkinson Partnership, who will now be part of our support service on finance and audit. Over the coming months, he will work on an update of the financial regulations and advice on procurement and investment for local councils. This will be in addition to the current support for county associations provided by Derek Kemp of DCK Accounting Solution. There was also a climate change place-based framework presentation from Andrew Maliphant, NALC's representative of the government's Local Net Zero Forum on the climate emergency.

Legal bulletin

Also, this week, we issued our April legal bulletin to update county officers. The bulletin contains guidance on rent

increases in allotment tenancies, the Subsidy Control Act 2022, parish councillors working for county associations, councillors attending demonstrations and annual parish meetings where there is one joint parish council.

On the blog: Coxhoe Parish Council

This week's blog from Coxhoe Parish Council spotlights how they continue to react to the cost-of-living crisis and address local food waste issues with initiatives such as The Community Pantry, feeding those in need, in conjunction with a Warm Spaces session twice weekly. As well as supporting local non-profit groups and freezing council tax for 2023/24. [Read the blog](#) to find out more! You can find more on our website with our dedicated [cost-of-living webpage](#). Let us know how your council supports residents and the community through the crisis at policycomms@nalc.gov.uk.

Out and about

Charlotte Eisenhart, head of member services, joined on 20 April 2023 the Suffolk Association of Local Council online meeting of the Larger Councils Forum. She spoke about the new enhancements to NALC's HR advisory service, ways of getting involved with NALC through our [national networks](#) and campaigns, and the [cost of living crisis](#). And on the same day, Justin Griggs, head of policy and communication, was in Leicester for a two-day workshop and masterclass in design leadership for local council professionals run by De Montfort University. The event was facilitated by creative design practitioners and academics and looked at how design thinking could be applied to addressing issues such as promoting the sector to principal councils, reforms to make the work of councils easier, and engagement with government and other stakeholders.

And finally...

I'm pleased to announce that Hazel Broatch joined us this week as our new project manager for the Civility and Respect Project. She'll take on the role for the next six months and continue to drive many materials forward from the workstreams. Discover more about [the project](#), and remember to [sign up for the pledge](#).

Jonathan Owen



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