



LANCASHIRE
ASSOCIATION
OF
LOCAL COUNCILS

NEWSLETTER JUNE 2018

Annual Conference



Report—see pages 2/3

Report from the LALC conference 28th April 2018

In his opening address, Sir Robert Atkins said it was a privilege to be asked to act as LALC President and it was important for delegates to understand how vital the sector was. It was the first tier of local government. He then introduced the first speaker.

Audrey Smith Former National chairman of the Inland Waterways Association

Mrs Smith spoke about the history of canals and waterways, from their inception by men such as Lord Bridgewater and Josiah Wedgwood, and their importance to trade and industry from the 18th century up to their being superseded by the railways.

The main canals in Lancashire are the Leeds and Liverpool and the Lancaster canal. They are now mainly used for leisure pursuits, which help with learning, history, health, education and general wellbeing.

The restoration of canals is always ongoing and there had been a surge of work after the millennium, which resulted in the completion of the Ribble link. It is hoped to restore at least part of the final link to Kendal in the next years.

Jonathan Owen, Chief Officer of NALC

Mr Owen began by congratulating Lancashire and Merseyside for their utilisation of £54K of the Transparency Fund, for being equally active in Neighbourhood Planning and congratulated Halewood on being NALC's Council of the Year in 2017.

NALC works with 43 CALC's and lobbies government on their behalf. It was this lobbying that, in part, encouraged the government to exempt parish and town councils from the capping that has devastated some principal authorities.

The sector is a growing community that contributes millions to communities. He invited members to report on projects carried out in their area.

He said there were several ways a council could improve effectiveness. They should behave like the first tier of government and embrace change in order to develop.

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A NALC Survey had shown that; 39% of councillors are women, 10% are under 45, 93% are white, 60% are Christian, 80% are heterosexual and 10% are disabled.

Mr Owen said NALC doesn't support mandatory training but believes training is vital for councillors and especially clerks. He said the National Improvement Strategy builds on the National Training Strategy.

Consultation on local government ethical standards shows, that 10% of councils have standards issues. The survey seems to show that although standards haven't decreased, 70% feel that sanctions need to be sharpened and that training should be linked to standards and should therefore be mandatory.

There was then a brief update on GDPR. NALC have issued a toolkit for councils and the latest news was that the government has tabled an amendment to its own bill, to exempt parish and town councils from having to appoint a DPO. (Data Protection Officer). He said GDPR was a journey, rather than a destination. Mr Owen answered questions from delegates.

Playground Safety

There was then a comprehensive presentation on inspection and safety of playground and exercise equipment by Mike Clark from Kompan play equipment and John Dalton from the Play Inspection Company. It was said the aim was not to make equipment as safe as possible but as safe as necessary.

It is also necessary to acknowledge that injuries can be reduced but not eliminated. Playground accidents account for a low percentage of accidents. Mr Dalton said playgrounds help children to manage risk, while having a sense of achievement.

He said playground inspections are mainly common sense and that the Occupiers Liability Act limits the use of notices

The final session was led by LALC Chairman Phil Orme and was part of a NALC survey on **ethical standards**. It engendered some interesting and at times, controversial comments. The questionnaire papers were handed in and observations will be forwarded to NALC.

Workshops

As a result of the demand for places, a second New Councillors and Clerks course will be held on September 22nd and 29th. There are still places available.

The Association has organised a workshop to be presented by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) on Neighbourhood Planning. This workshop will be held at Howick House on July 24th. A few places are still available.

Please contact the office for further information



Dementia-friendly Communities

Both NALC and the Devon county association have been active members of the Prime Minister's Rural Dementia Task and Finish Group.

Devon recently launched the Alzheimer's Society's new [rural communities guide](#) which is designed to help all types of rural communities increase awareness of dementia and become more dementia-friendly.

The guide gives best practice advice on how to create a dementia-friendly community in rural areas and shares successful case studies from across the country such as the great work by parishes in Devon and West Sussex.

If you are one of the many councils who got involved in the Dementia Action Week – such as the [Kent Association of Local Councils](#) who are backing NALC's dementia campaign through their own local strategic commitment – NALC would love to hear more to be able to share this more widely as part of the dementia campaign.

Do drop a line to policycomms@nalc.gov.uk to tell us what you did.

NALC Annual Conference & Exhibition –
30-31 October 2018
at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Milton Keynes

This will be a brilliant opportunity for councillors, clerks, county officers and members, exhibitors and sponsors to network, share good practice and gain solutions to local issues from a platform which puts local councils at the heart of local government.

Register your place at: www.nalc.gov.uk/annualconference .

Data Protection Bill

Please note that the amendment to the Act exempts parish and town councils from the requirement to appoint Data Protection Officers.

The Information Commissioner's Office has issued a statement of reassurance setting out their views on the challenges facing local Councils.

"The commissioner wants to reassure councils that if they have a positive attitude to finding practical solutions to some of the challenges of implementation, they will find a pragmatic , fair and proportionate regulator"

ROLE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIRMAN:

Elected by members at Annual Parish/Town meeting and signs Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Signs Minutes as correct record

Has original and casting vote

Presides and opens and closes meetings and ensures quorum

Manages the meeting in accordance with Law and Standing Orders

Manages meeting impartially and is the authority at meetings

Encourages participation of members and preserves order

Ensures each councillor has the opportunity to speak

Ensures clear decisions are made

Cannot act alone or make decisions on behalf of the council

Is often the face of the council, but must only represent the views of the council

Calls Extraordinary meetings

Convenes Annual Parish/Town meeting

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ACCURACY

The Lancashire Association of Local Councils has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the articles contained in this newsletter and can not in any circumstances accept responsibility for errors, omissions or advice given.