

Strategic Partnership statement between National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)

NALC and SLCC have committed to developing a strong and effective partnership to support local councils, councillors and clerks deliver for their communities.

We are ambitious for the sector and confident that it can contribute significantly to addressing many of the challenges facing the country at the present time.

We will work together at all levels to ensure

- that the role of local councils as the first tier of local Government is recognised at the local, county, regional and national level
- that councils engage effectively with their communities, empowering residents and community groups and supporting them to deliver community objectives
- that councils have the capacity and capability to deliver their changing role and fulfill their potential.

Critical to achieving these objectives is a respectful and professional relationship between clerks and councillors.

Good councils have a strong team ethos with professional clerks working to deliver councillors' aspirations in an open and positive way.

Good councils have councillors who engage with their communities to identify their priorities and work constructively with clerks and other officers to see them delivered. -

Good councils invest in training and development for clerks and councillors. Clerks and councillors embrace training and development opportunities, understand their respective roles and provide mutual support and understanding.

Councillors are clear about their role as employers and the importance of recruiting, training, supporting and rewarding clerks in their role. Clerks understand that councillors set the strategic direction, reflecting community aspirations and they support and encourage them in this work.

Good councils are part of effective local, county and national networks sharing good practice and learning from each other. NALC and SLCC are clear in their support for councils to be members of their county associations and NALC and for clerks to be members of the SLCC and

active in their county branches. In that way councils get the best possible support for the professional development of clerks; and training and advice for councils and councillors.

NALC and SLCC will work together to raise the sector's reputation with the public, with Government, and with other national and local stakeholders and to ensure that government and other policies support local councils to help local communities.

We will achieve this by:

- highlighting the great things parishes do in the local and national media and telling residents about them as well
- lobbying government to ensure legislative change supports councils' work, with NALC's political leadership setting overall policy objectives and the SLCC providing professional advice, input and experience
- increasing understanding of what local councils do and their potential to do more including providing clear data on the sector's make-up.

NALC and the SLCC will work together to enable and encourage councils and councillors to engage effectively with their communities, including them in discussions about how local places need to change over time and what community investment residents wish to see.

We will work together to encourage more people to get involved and stand for elections and to work towards promoting greater diversity in the sector.

We will work together to support councillors and clerks in inspiring their councils to be proactive on behalf of their communities and fulfill their potential as the first tier of local government. We will do this by building the confidence and capacity of the sector especially through its national improvement strategy, sharing good practice and providing advice and support on the changing nature of local councils as devolution and ultra-localism gain pace.

NALC and SLCC have a good history of joint working and delivering for the sector including: setting up the SAAA saving councils £ms through collective procurement of external audit; successfully resisting the imposition of referendum principles; and raising standards and training in the sector. This joint work will become increasingly important and we will regularly meet through the Improvement and Development Board, twice yearly leadership team meetings and on-going dialogue between HQ staff.

We would like to encourage all councils, councillors and clerks to work with us to seize the opportunity to fulfill the sector's potential and help communities and the country in these challenging times.

Signed on behalf of National Association of Local Councils

S J Baxter

Sue Baxter, Chairman NALC

Signed on behalf of Society of Local Council Clerks

Katherine Owen

Katherine Owen, Chairman SLCC

18 October 2017

Date