



# Kent Association of Local Councils

## **MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION PACK**

### **FOR THE**

### **2018/2019 YEAR**

Please bring this information pack, and accompanying information, to the attention of your Council/Meeting at its **NEXT MEETING** so that the enclosed **SUBSCRIPTION INVOICE** can be authorised for payment. The full range of services provided by both the National Association (NALC) and the Kent Association are shown in this information pack and the NALC Benefits of Membership briefing note.

As the first tier of local government closest to their communities, Parish and Town Councils and Parish Meetings (Local Councils) have a key role to play in shaping their localities. With national and local debates around the devolution of services, and changes in the Audit Framework and the new EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) coming into effect on 25 May 2018, it will be difficult for you to provide a full service to your electorate if your Council stands alone without the support of the Kent and National Associations' professional expertise. This vital support is available to your Council through membership of the Kent Association (KALC) and NALC. We are delighted that 304 Local Councils across Kent and Medway are currently members of KALC and NALC which represents 96.2% membership.

KALC continues to refine its services to ensure maximum benefit for member Councils through feedback from our Annual Membership Survey.

- Following feedback, we have continued to update our website to make it easier for councillors and clerks to access information and our Events Management on-line booking system for registering for Conferences and Workshops.
- Also as a direct result of the Membership Survey, we set up an HR Advice Service with a specialist HR company (HR Services Partnership), who provide advice at a reduced rate for KALC member councils. We also have a Locum Advice Service in operation to ensure that we continue to provide member Councils with an excellent advice service when the Local Councils Adviser is on holiday. The feedback on this service continues to be very positive.
- The Learning and Development Programme has continued to evolve to cover a wider range of topics/issues to provide bespoke training on request, where the training has been held in the Parish. Topics delivered this year include: Councillor Training; Finance; Planning; Code of Conduct; and GDPR.
- There were a significant number of county and national consultations over the last year, which we responded to on behalf of our members, for example: DCLG Provisional 2018/2019 Local Government Finance Settlement; DCLG Disqualification Criteria for Councillors and Mayors; Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places.
- We participated in a number of national meetings/events with NALC and Government, including on Standards/Code of Conduct.
- At County level we have regular meetings with KCC Highways and Community Safety, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, Kent Police and the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner.
- KALC representatives participate on a number of outside bodies including the Kent Community Safety Partnership, Kent Estates Partnership Board, Operation Kindle (HGV Fly Parking), Kent Rural Board, Kent Downs AONB Joint Advisory Committee, ACRK Management Committee, Crime Rural Advisory Group, Kent Flood Risk Management Committee and the Medway Flood Partnership Strategic and Practitioner Groups.
- As part of NALC Lobby Day on 28 March 2017, KALC met with several Kent and Medway MPs to promote the importance of the sector and the issues affecting our member Councils in Kent and Medway, including referendum principles and HGV Fly Parking. KALC is taking an active part in the NALC Lobby Day on 20 March 2018 and has already set up meetings with 5 MPs to discuss, planning, infrastructure and transport issues, including HGV fly parking and HGVs using unsuitable roads.
- We have also set up 3 Advisory Committees for Devolution, Planning and Transport, who provide advice and guidance to the KALC Executive Committee.
- We continue to develop our relationships and partnership working with key stakeholders in Kent and Medway and nationally. Recent examples include: the KALC Community Awards Scheme 2018, supported by the High Sheriff of Kent, Chairman of Kent County Council and Mayor of Medway; the Fire Hydrants initiative with Kent Fire

& Rescue Service which gained national recognition when we came runner-up in the NALC Star Council Awards 2016 – CALC Outstanding Project of the Year; and our Public Access Defibrillators (PADs) project, which gained national recognition when we won the NALC Star Council Awards 2017 – CALC Outstanding Project of the Year. We were delighted to hear that 3 lives have been saved using the PADs in Rolvenden and Tenterden.

### **National Association of Local Councils (NALC)**

NALC is the national body representing the interests of Local Councils or Meetings; articulating County Associations (CALCs) and member Councils views to Government, the media and other national organisations. They provide advice and guidance in partnership with KALC to ensure Local Councils are the voice of local communities listened to by everyone. A copy of the NALC Benefits of Membership briefing note – January 2018 is attached.

### **ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION**

Your Council's annual subscription is based on the number of equivalent band D properties in your Council area, though in some cases only up to a maximum. Members may recall that at the Annual Meeting on 18 November 2017 the membership agreed that subscriptions for 2018/2019 be based on equivalent Band D properties for 2017/2018 as set out below:

*“58p per equivalent band D property subject to a maximum of £1,215, plus a standing charge of £60, all subject to VAT, and that all Councils should pay at least the NALC subscription plus 1p per equivalent band D property”.*

**MEMBERSHIP runs from 1 April to 31 March.** It is appreciated that your meetings programme may not allow for immediate payment, but you are asked to ensure that payment be agreed and forwarded at the first available opportunity and not later than 30 June 2018. A KALC representative will be pleased to visit your Council should you need clarification about the benefits of membership. The annual subscription covers membership of both KALC and NALC.

### **BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE KENT ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS & NALC**



## **LEGAL, FINANCIAL, PROCEDURAL or GENERAL ADVICE**

This is free of charge as part of your subscription. Throughout the working week advice can be obtained from the Local Councils Adviser or, in his absence, the Chief Executive will refer your enquiry on to our Locum Advice Service. Please remember that it is the Council that is in membership. Therefore, any request for advice must come from the Clerk (Proper Officer) to the Council or the Chairman or, in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Chief Executive, from a Councillor.

If your Council requires definitive advice on an issue please put your query in writing. Our written reply will ensure that it has been fully researched and can be referred to with confidence. Please be wary of advice from District Council Officers as Local Council law differs in minor, but important, ways from the law governing District Councils. The HR Advice Service provided specialist advice to member councils at a reduced rate. Please contact the Local Councils Adviser for further details.

KALC is front of house for access to the NALC Legal Service which deals with more complex cases. **If you require the NALC Legal Service, you should contact KALC first (except in the case of Direct Access Councils).** This advice is FREE as part of your subscription. Legal Topic Notes are available in the Members Section of the NALC and KALC websites.

NALC also provides briefing documents on the Local Council A-Z of services, from allotments, burial grounds, finance and auditing to planning, the environment and village greens.

## **CONSULTATION AND REPRESENTATION**

Whenever a new issue emerges in Kent that affects more than one Local Council - be it the Local Governance Finance Settlement, Planning, Transport, HGVs, Devolution, Local Audit - KALC aims to ensure that all members receive full information, and, where appropriate, a draft reply as part of the service to Member Councils.

At national level KALC works closely with NALC to represent and lobby, on behalf of member Councils, the government, opposition parties, civil servants and other parts of the public, private and charity sectors.

**KALC has extensive networking arrangements** with the Principal Authorities, and many national and countywide bodies. This includes Kent Police, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, South East Coast Ambulance Service, Action with Communities in Rural Kent, Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, Imago and the Kent Equality Cohesion Council.



**ANNUAL MEETING:** The KALC Annual Meeting will be taking place on Saturday 17th November 2018 at Ditton Community Centre. Councils are entitled to send two representatives to the AGM, regardless of whether they are the appointed representatives to the KALC Area Committee.

## LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN 2018/2019

KALC continues to evolve its Learning and Development Programme, with new topics being added to its already extensive list of over 50 modules. The L&D programme provides:

- four themed annual Conferences: Clerks Conference, Councillors Conference, Finance Conference and Planning Conference.
- biennial conferences on: Chairmanship; Resilience & Emergency Planning; Governance, Procedures & Transparency; and Crime Prevention and Safety.
- modular courses.

KALC also organises additional Conferences as and when required. NALC also runs conferences which we advertise in Parish News and on the KALC website.

We also provide modular training courses at foundation level for officers and members and specialised courses on topics such as:

- |                   |                        |                       |
|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| - Planning        | - Finance              | - Chairmanship skills |
| - Information law | - Health and Safety    | - Burial Law          |
| - Allotments      | - Openness Regulations | - VAT                 |

All our conferences and workshops carry Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points. The half day modular training courses are demand-led and work with smaller groups to assist personal development and the long term aims of your Council. A full brochure of KALC courses is available on the website, which allows members to select the courses more efficiently.

We have also included a Councillors Development Roadmap on the website to help navigate the courses on offer to help Councillors undertake their important role.

The KALC Executive Committee strongly encourages all Councillors and Clerks to undertake training and for the Council to ensure that it has a training budget and training policy and plan in place.

***With lots going on it is important to regularly visit the training section on our website and to engage with our Learning and Development updates.***

## COMMUNICATION



The last issue of our Newsletter came out just before Christmas 2017. Hard to believe, but that was only just over six weeks ago, and we now find ourselves well and truly in a new calendar year. Lots has happened internationally, nationally and throughout our regions and the work that local councils do carries on as normal!

Our own work also carries on and it is very much "Business As Usual". There have been some more improvements made to our website and we hope that you find the altered "look and feel" easier to navigate. Likewise, we are currently refreshing our Learning and Development brochures and programmes and hope to have a new and improved corporate logo in the near future.

We have renamed our newsletter as above, so that it reflects our whole membership, and have made minor adjust-

ments to the layout so that it is easier to read.

We would encourage everyone to take advantage of all our resources that are now held online. Our event booking should be done via our website where possible but of course if you have a problem doing this, we can assist you.



Members will be acutely aware that the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) will come into force on 25 May 2018.

KALC set up four events on the subject and these were very well received by the many who attended the sessions in various

parts of our county. In response to your feedback, we have dedicated a page on our website so that our Councils are kept abreast of the latest news regarding the implementation of the GDPR.

If you need to access information, you can find relevant documents, briefings and so on by following this link:

<http://www.kentalc.gov.uk/Information-Law/Data-Protection>

You will also find a quick guide on page 3 that should help you with the Guiding Principles of the Regulations on an "everyday basis".

We will, naturally, update you with any future publications that help with the process as soon as we have them.

NALC has a quarterly magazine, Local Council Review, a Direct Information Service, and a weekly Bulletin from the NALC Chief Executive.

**WEBSITE:** The KALC website ([www.kentalc.gov.uk](http://www.kentalc.gov.uk)) includes an Events Management on-line booking service for registering for a Conference or Workshop. It gives details of KALC, membership, training and clerks' vacancies etc. More significantly there is a Resources page with access restricted to member Councils, containing up-to-date information on latest developments, such as: Clerk's salaries; recent legislation (e.g. GDPR) and consultations; NALC Legal Topic Notes; minutes of the KALC Executive Committee; KALC Area Committee meetings; and the **News**. You are reminded that the Resources Section is only available to member Councils and is password protected.

The NALC website also has member only access areas, where member Councils can download information and toolkits such as the Communications Toolkit or the Devo+ Toolkit.

**CLERKS:** Many Councils in Kent and Medway make good use of KALC. KALC issues a Welcome Pack to all new Clerks, which hopefully enables them to function more efficiently knowing that help from KALC is only a letter, or phone call away. We are also happy to advertise Clerk vacancies on our website, which is provided free as a benefit of membership.

**AREA COMMITTEES:** In response to feedback from the Membership Survey we have held workshops for Area Committee Chairmen and Vice Chairmen to share information and good practice. We would strongly encourage all member Councils to send representatives to the

Area Committee meeting, as the Committee is extremely important in tackling issues of concern within their particular District/Borough, even more so given the Localism and Devolution Agendas. They are also an excellent forum for sharing ideas and networking. Please ensure that your Council assists by continuing to send two representatives to Area Committee Meetings.



### **BORROWING APPROVAL**

One of the powers of Local Councils is the ability to borrow money. However, it is unlawful to borrow capital finance from any source without first having received approval from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. If your Council is contemplating borrowing then you must first contact KALC, who will provide official applications forms and guidance. Failure to obtain this approval from Government could have serious consequences.

**KALC PRESIDENT – Cllr John Rivers**

**KALC CHAIRMAN – Cllr Sarah Barker**

## **SECRETARIAT**

### **Chief Executive**

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**Terry Martin**

Organisation and management of the Kent Association  
Servicing of Committee meetings and the Annual General Meeting  
Production of Annual Report  
Policy issues of a National, Regional and County nature  
Creation of new Local Councils  
Borrowing approval  
Partnership Working

### **Local Councils Adviser and Learning & Development Manager**

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**Clive Powell**

Advice on legal and procedural issues  
Managing the KALC Learning & Development Programme and  
delivering training courses  
Partnership Working/Outreach

### **Finance & Administration Manager**

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**Laura Dyer**

Finance  
Subscriptions  
Course bookings  
Maintenance of Website  
Membership Database  
Publications  
General administrative duties

### **Communications Officer**

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**Tricia Casey-Green**

Course bookings  
News  
Training Database  
Publications  
General administrative duties



## THE KALC STAFF



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