

Update

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THE CHIEF'S BRIEF

By Danny Moody, Chief Executive, Northants CALC

It's been all go here for the last several months. The focus has been the development of the Northamptonshire Councils' Charter and I would like to give my personal thanks to all those councils that sent in a response to the consultation. I know that all councils are busy so your input is much appreciated. There's a full article on the Charter below.

I am delighted to announce that Northants CALC will shortly become a limited company. Up until now Northants CALC has been an unincorporated association, which is no longer appropriate for an organisation that employs three staff, leases its own premises and enters in to contracts for tens of thousands of pounds. On 15 May 2010 a Special General Meeting of member local councils was held at Towcester Town Hall that resolved to dissolve the unincorporated association and transfer its assets to a company limited by guarantee called the Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Ltd (Northants CALC Ltd). The only impact of this on member local councils is that £1 of the subscription fees for the year starting 1 April 2010 will be ring-fenced in the Association's accounts as the guarantee should the company ever need to be wound up. Our incorporation allows us to operate properly and with confidence and protects the interests of member local councils and those individuals that serve on the Association's County Committee. Northants CALC is only the second CALC in England to incorporate, so I am pleased to say that once again we are at the forefront of CALC modernisation and development.

Christine Dryden, our new Finance & Resources Officer (FRO) who started in March is well in to the ascent of her steep learning curve. Christine has spoken to many clerks and councillors and is already demonstrating that she is a model of efficiency and organisation.

On 21 April I attended a national meeting of all CALC officers that, quite fortuitously, was held at the Hellidon Lakes Country Club near Daventry. It was an excellent day and I learnt a lot from fellow CALC officers that hopefully I can use for the benefit of members in Northamptonshire. By sharing good practice the whole sector can benefit so I hope there are many more networking opportunities of this type.

April and May are busy months for Local Councils as it is normally when the Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Meeting of the Council take place. Remember that these are two entirely separate meetings; the former being a meeting of the electors in the parish, the latter being a meeting of the council. It is good practice to hold them on different occasions to avoid any confusion. I have been extremely lucky to attend a number of these annual meetings and it has been very enjoyable getting out and about and meeting the people behind the e-mail addresses!

The General Election was a fascinating affair for Northamptonshire and it was interesting to see the whole county go blue. I have written to all seven members of parliament for Northamptonshire and I hope that they will support legislative changes that will be of benefit to Local Councils. In the pipeline is legislation that will hopefully modernise, or at least bring up to date, the methods with which Local Councils can make payments so I hope to secure the support of the local MPs on that issue. All seven MPs have responded to my message with various statements on the importance of Local Councils and the part they play in the overall governance of the county.

In April I attended the Wellingborough Parishes Forum that was held in the very impressive Finedon Town Hall. I would urge all parishes to engage with their local forum meetings, which are normally organised by the relevant district or borough council. They are partnership events at which Principle Councils can gather the views of Local Councils, who can (if they wish), present a united and strong voice. Forum meetings are an excellent way to build personal relationships, both with neighbouring Local Councils and with the Principle Councils for the area.

Finally, the County Committee recently agreed a mission statement for the Association that I thought worth sharing with you. Our mission is to:

Empower Local Councils in Northamptonshire to be at the heart of community leadership and development, providing them with information and services and enabling them to promote the social, economic and environmental well being of their community. Northants CALC will be the voice of the first tier of local government in Northamptonshire and will understand and represent locally, regionally and nationally the views of the 208 parish and town councils and 51 parish meetings in the county.

And finally, finally, I would like to offer my personal congratulations to George Sneddon (Burton Latimer Town Council), John Marshall (Roade Parish Council) and Julie Friell (Hannington Parish Council), who have all recently been awarded with the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA). And to Brixworth, Scaldwell, Kilsby, and Barby & Onley Parish Councils, who are now eligible to operate the Power of Wellbeing and to Brixworth Parish Council (again!) for becoming Northamptonshire's 14th Quality Parish Council. Warm congratulations to you all.

“PARISH POWER” - NEW PHOTO COMPETITION

The walls at Northants CALC's Litchborough offices are plain white and a bit bare so we would like to brighten the place up with some photographs that relate to our members' activities. We are therefore pleased to announce the inaugural Northants CALC “Parish Power” photo competition.

Entry is open to any parish or town council or parish meeting in membership of the Association and the photo should reflect your council's identity or purpose. Examples might be:

- A photo of new play equipment installed by the council
- The opening/reopening of a building that the council has contributed to
- A photo of people using a council facility (not the loos though!)
- A photo of the clerk or councillors at work
- A view of a pocket park or playing field that the council owns

The possibilities are endless but the winning photo will encapsulate what is good about Local Councils.

The photos can be sent in any format but should be high resolution and a minimum of 1024 x 768 pixels. Electronic photos should be sent to info@northantscalc.gov.uk with subject line “Parish Power Photo Competition”. All photos should be accompanied with up to 100 words of text describing the subject matter of the photo. All photos must reach Northants CALC by midday on **Friday 10 September 2010**.

The entries will be whittled down to the top



five by Northants CALC's Executive Committee and then the winner will be chosen at the Association's AGM on Wednesday 20 October 2010. The winning photo will take pride of place in the entrance lobby at Northants CALC's Litchborough offices and the runners up will be displayed around the building.

For a full copy of the terms and conditions please send an e-mail to:

info@northantscalc.gov.uk.

This is a great way for Local Councils to think about what they have achieved and to celebrate their success. We look forward to your entries!

COME ON, COME ON LET'S WORK TOGETHER

As American blues-rock band "Canned Heat" put it "*Together we'll stand, Divided we'll fall, Come on now people, Let's get on the ball, And work together, Come on, come on, Let's work together*".

For over a year now Northants CALC has been working on the development of the Northamptonshire Councils' Charter, a document that describes the working relationships between Local Councils and Principal Councils in Northamptonshire.

As is often the case, the development process has been as important, if not more so, than the final document and it has been a pleasure to make new connections with a whole range of people right across the public sector in Northamptonshire. These connections may never have been made if it were not for the desire to do things together; to make a difference by working as a team.

What has struck me most is that the success or failure of the Charter depends entirely on the will of those involved in its implementation. If the will exists to make it work then differences will be put aside, technicalities will be addressed and barriers will be overcome. If the will does not exist then those things will become insurmountable and the Charter will collapse. And really, whilst the words used in the Charter are important, it is the unwritten commitment of councillors, leaders and officers to work positively together that will make the difference.

The Charter attempts to put in writing things that work well now, to identify areas for improvement and to set out a programme of activities that all Northamptonshire Councils can work on together.

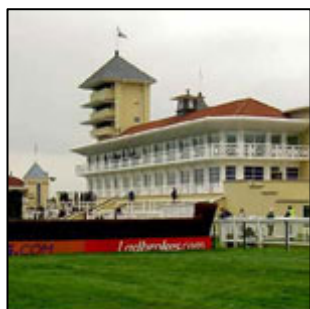
The plan is that those Principal Councils wishing to work in this new way with Local Councils sign up to the Charter at the Local Councils Conference on 16 June 2010 at Towcester Racecourse. Northants CALC has agreed to sign on 16 June on behalf of the local council sector in Northamptonshire as a whole. Individual councils are not automatically signatories to the Charter but may choose a level of involvement that suits them and is proportionate to their size and capacity.

The Charter marks the beginning of a new conversation about the delivery of public services at parish level in the county. It builds on existing work and aims to ensure that when services are delivered in parished areas by Northamptonshire Councils they are efficient and effective and that the services are provided by the council best placed to deliver that service. The Charter may unlock the potential of Local Councils to contribute to the wider effort. Local councils have much to offer – they operate right at the heart of community life and are in touch with their area and electorate in a way that just isn't possible for larger authorities. Conversely, Local Councils have a relatively small area of focus and don't always have the resources to consider the wider picture, which is the great strength of the Principal Councils. Combining the strategic view of Principal Councils with the community focus of Local Councils should ensure that services are targeted, efficient and effective.

The Charter is unlikely to be the panacea for local government in Northamptonshire, but it is a jolly good start.

LOCAL COUNCIL CONFERENCE 2010

As mentioned above, the Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) sponsored **Local Councils' Conference** will be held this year on **Wednesday 16 June 2010** at Towcester Racecourse from 3:00 – 8:00 p.m. The Conference will address topical issues for parish and town councils and will include lots of discussion and debate. Formal invitations have been sent to all parishes in the county and the responses are coming in thick and fast. This conference will be a great



opportunity to put questions to NCC, Northamptonshire Police and other public sector bodies. Among the attendees will be Northamptonshire's new Chief Constable, Adrian Lee, and the Acting Chief Executive of NCC, Paul Blantern. If your council hasn't already done so, please consider appointing a delegate to the Conference – it will be well worth it. The deadline for registration is 27 May 2010.

NEW MILEAGE RATES & PAY UPDATE

The National Joint Council for Local Government Services (“NJC”) car allowance rates for 2010/11 have now been agreed. The new rates, with effect from 1 April 2010, apply to the mileage rates paid to council staff. There are no nationally agreed rates for councillors any more – each council must make their own decision about the mileage rates, if any, paid to councillors.

Most clerks will be casual users of motor vehicles. The rates are:

	451 – 999cc	1,000 – 1,199cc	1,200cc +
Essential Users			
Lump sum per annum	£846	£963	£1,239
Per mile first 8,500	36.9p	40.9p	50.5p
Per mile after 8,500	13.7p	14.4p	16.4p
Petrol Element	9.406p	10.366p	11.288p
Amount of VAT per mile in petrol element	1.400p	1.543p	1.681p
Casual Users			
Per mile first 8,500	46.9	52.2p	65.0p
Per mile after 8,500	13.7p	14.4p	16.4p
Petrol Element	9.406p	10.366p	11.288p
Amount of VAT per mile in petrol element	1.400p	1.543p	1.681p

There has been no news regarding any pay award for clerks for 2010/2011. On 20 January 2010, the Employers’ Side of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (‘The Employers’) formally responded to the trade union pay claim which was submitted in October 2009. The claim was for 2.5% or £500, whichever is the greater. The Employers informed the unions that they are unable to offer any increases in pay. They had decided that a pay increase was not affordable, would compromise the ability of councils to protect services and would jeopardise council jobs.

The Employers’ decision does not affect the payment of contractual increments during 2010/2011. If an employee is contractually entitled to an annual increment during 2010/2011, he or she should still receive it.

THERE'S (PROBABLY) ONE IN EVERY PARISH

Most of us have come across them at one time or another – it's the member of the public that has made it their life's work to make the clerk's and councillors' lives a misery. They submit constant complaints, frequent freedom of information requests, and make continuous Code of Conduct allegations. Welcome to a council's worst nightmare!

Motivation

The first thing to consider is what is motivating these people? Sometimes they are ex-councillors or ex-clerks themselves – perhaps they left the council under a cloud and have a point to prove. Perhaps they stood for election and were unsuccessful or went for the clerk's job and were turned down. Whatever the case these people are trying to make the point that they consider they had something to offer, if only the electorate/council had been clever enough to see it! Another category of persistent complainer is those that have come in to contact with the council at some point and were less than satisfied... the most common area being planning applications. Perhaps the council objected to their planning application on what the applicant considers to be shaky grounds – perhaps they feel that the council's planning policies are unnecessarily restrictive. Whatever happened they feel aggrieved and are seeking to redress the balance, or “get their own back”. Yet another category is what I call “the nitpickers”... these are people who sometimes can't see the wood for the trees and feel that procedure and process is more important than outcomes. They're the people that would make a Code of Conduct complaint against a councillor simply to illustrate their point.

I think it is important to try to understand what motivates these people; what makes them tick. In all cases a deeper understanding will help a council deal with the person in the most appropriate way and in a very few cases making the effort to understand where a person is coming from may just be sufficient to get them back on side.

Policies and procedures

The next thing is to make sure that the council has a robust set of policies and procedures in place. Don't be surprised if you don't know how to handle a complaint if you haven't got a sound and robust complaints procedure in place! The time to develop these policies is before a complaint arrives – don't wait until

you are dealing with a complainer. Model complaints procedures are available from Northants CALC that can be adapted to any size of council. The council's policies and procedures on complaints help ensure that all complaints are dealt with consistently, fairly and effectively.

What to do when a complaint arrives

The first action when a complaint arrives – the absolute first thing to do is... nothing. Only in a few very rare and exceptional circumstances (e.g. an allegation of fraud or corruption) is it necessary to take immediate action. In all other cases, close the e-mail, put the letter away in a drawer, write down and put away the answer phone message. Give yourself time to calm down and to think rationally and objectively. Never react to a persistent complainer or dance to their tune – it will just make matters worse. After a period of quiet reflection (perhaps even a few days) go back to the e-mail/letter/phone message and read it – carefully. Often letters of complaint will rant and rave and contain a lot of flowery context and background. What you need to do is get to the nub of the issue, the nitty-gritty that is really the substance of the complaint. For instance, the complainant may be verbose in their description of a particularly contentious planning issue, but actually the complaint, when distilled right down is “that the council failed to display a notice of a meeting within the required time period”. Look objectively at exactly what is being complained about – it may not be obvious on first or even second look. The next step is to acknowledge receipt – this should always be done by the clerk, never by the chairman or any other councillor. Remember, the complaint is to the council and should be treated formally. The acknowledgement can be a standard letter and should include an indication of what will happen next and when.

Timeliness

There is no legislation that requires that complaints be resolved within a particular timescale. Complaints should be settled within a reasonable time, and failure to do so can itself lead to further complaints. Some smaller councils still meet only every other month, so there could be more than 60 days between receipt of a complaint and when it is heard by the council. In most cases this would be considered reasonable for the size of council. Some councils may wish to appoint a Complaints Committee that can meet more often or as required. This can help to speed up the process and avoid unnecessary prolongation. Whilst councils

should not “hide behind” their limited capacity it is a really good test of how serious a complainant is if they have to wait 60 days or more for resolution.

Have they got a point?

When the complaint is heard by the council, or the committee appointed for the purpose, the key question should be “has the complainant got a point?” It is very easy for a council to be defensive in the face of a complaint and to want to demonstrate that the complaint is groundless; but that is rarely the case. Even the most extreme complainers rarely make things up or complain about nothing. The complaint itself may not be upheld but there may still have been an element of truth in it, or a couple of points for improvement that the council can identify. Most complainers want to see that the council has listened, understood and, above all, taken action to put right whatever they were complaining about. The outcome, and any resulting action points, should be notified to the complainer in writing within a few days of the hearing/meeting.

Depersonalise

It is extremely important to depersonalise every step of the complaint handling procedure. A complainant may use personal names and direct their comments at named individuals but in the vast majority of cases their complaint is aimed at the office, not the person. Persistent complainers often seem to have a personal vendetta against a councillor or the clerk but if that person leaves the council they are very rarely pursued in their private life. This is the best indication that, however it may seem at the time, the complainer is not meaning to be personal. Any written responses to the complainer should attempt to depersonalise the situation wherever possible. For example, if the complainer says “the chairman said he would write and hasn’t” the response might be “We understand that you have not received the communications you were expecting from this council”.

Has it always been this way?

I don’t think so. The Internet has had a huge effect on the public’s ability to complain; in two ways. Firstly, members of the public have the world’s knowledge at their fingertips and can quickly look up the Code of Conduct, the Freedom of Information Act or even the Local Government Act 1972 and very quickly become au fait with council procedures and regulations and know whether or not they are

being followed. This wasn't so easy five to ten years ago, before broadband. Secondly e-mail has made communication much more instant and demanding than before. Persistent complainers can spray e-mails around easily, cheaply and quickly whereas I imagine many a handwritten letter was thrown away after the writer had a chance to think it through before posting it off. The ease of electronic communications is one of the best reasons not to react immediately to a complaint - it is not unheard of for the clerk and a complainer to have swapped a dozen or more e-mails over the course of a day or two before the clerk even realised they were in a complaint handling situation and should have invoked the council's procedure.

Protection and the law

So can these people just get away with their persistent complaints *ad nauseum*? Well yes and no. If the complaint is justified and substantively different from any previous complaint, then yes... complainers are legally allowed to put in complaint after complaint after complaint. The council, as a public authority, has a duty to deal with those complaints on their merit through its complaints procedure. However, where a complaint has been dealt with and a subsequent complaint is received that is substantively the same, then a reasonable response would be to refer the complainer to the answer already given. Complaints may become vexatious or unreasonably persistent in their frequency or nature.

On the odd occasion a complaint can escalate and the behaviour moves from being unreasonably persistent to behaviour which is unacceptable, for example, abusive, offensive or threatening. Such complainants are in a very small minority, but sometimes a council may find itself in the position of having to restrict access to council premises or even having to resort to legal action to address such behaviour, for example, in the form of anti-social behaviour orders or injunctions. Councils should have policies and procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour and protecting their staff from harassment and harm.

Handling and resolving complaints can (should?) be a positive experience for a council – it's a way of improving services and demonstrating that the council is working on behalf of the people it serves. However it is a complex issue and clerks in particular need to be very knowledgeable about how to deal with complaints effectively. Although Local Councils do not come under the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman you will find a wealth of information, model

policies and case studies on complaint handling and resolution at <http://www.lgo.org.uk>.

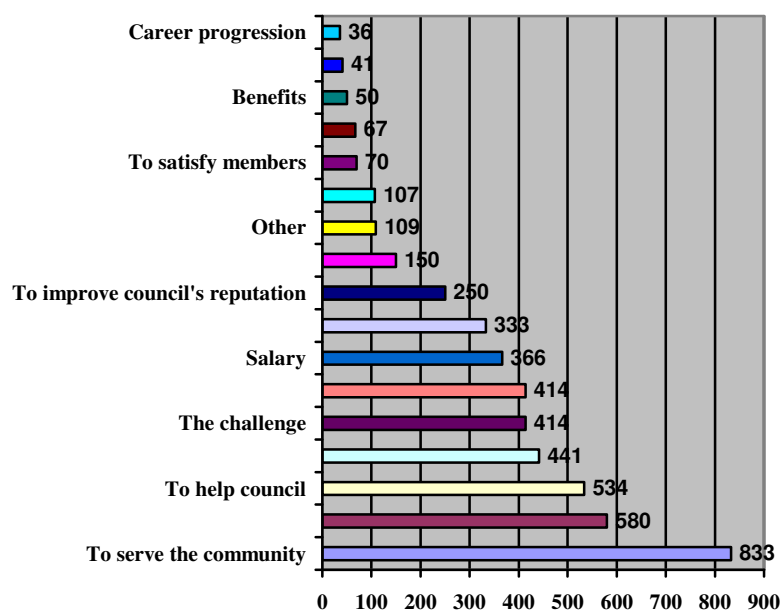
And finally, never forget that a problem shared is a problem halved. Never keep a complaint to yourself or feel that you have to handle the complainant single-handed. Talk to fellow officers/councillors, to staff at Northants CALC or to clerks on the SLCC network. You'll find plenty of help is available if you ask.

PARISH CLERKS - REVEALED

Clerks may remember being asked to contribute to some University of Gloucester research last year. University student Hayley Townsend from Yate Town Council sought to investigate, analyse and evaluate motivations and representation of clerks in the local council sector in England. Hayley has now published her dissertation findings, which make very interesting reading. She looks at a wide variety of aspects, including the age, gender, ethnicity and professional background of clerks. She finds that very few clerks are under thirty years old and that most clerks were not initially motivated to obtain employment as a clerk but are subsequently sufficiently motivated to remain in post once employed. In other words, no one would think of being a clerk, but once you are one you stick with it.

It is interesting to look at the reasons why clerks remain in post:

Figure 16: Motivational Reasons Respondents Continue in Post
(Questions were weighted and the figures shown reveal the weighted totals)



The table shows that the most common reason for clerks remaining in post is to serve the community, followed by location and to help the council.

The research also shows that clerks wish to be respected in their profession and to enjoy the support and confidence of councillors. Bullying by councillors is cited as a common reason for clerks leaving the profession.

Hayley's research is interesting and points the way to further work that needs to be done in understanding, highlighting and publicising the role of clerk.

For a copy of the results, conclusions and recommendations please e-mail info@northantscalc.gov.uk.

THE BLIMP PROJECT

BLIMP is an acronym which stands for Broadband Line Information Monitoring Project. Its aim is to measure the broadband speeds which are being achieved in the real world and store these in a database from which the project team can identify the relative levels of service being delivered across the region and country by different suppliers and make this information publicly available and create an up to date, self maintaining atlas of Internet connectivity.

BLIMP is an initiative supported by a number of English Regional Development Agencies (in this area by the East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA)) with the aim of providing an up to date map of connectivity across the UK at 6 digit post code level without going to the expense of commissioning reports (which will be out of date as soon as they are complete) or deploying expensive hardware based solutions.

<http://www.blimpchecker.co.uk>

The first step is to download a tool from the above address which will make periodic measurements of your line speed and return this data automatically to the BLIMP database. In return, you will have access to a historical log that shows how the speed of your broadband connection is changing over time and you will also be contributing information on broadband infrastructure which is vital if the BLIMP Team is to achieve its goal of creating a broadband network that is in the top tier internationally.

You can uninstall the tool at any time, no personal information is collected and the tool should not significantly impact the performance of either your computer or the speed of your broadband connection. BLIMP is an ethical project. It is not bound to any provider of services and does not accept advertising. It does not seek to access the personal details of anyone using the tool or attempt to monitor such things as their Internet usage or which websites they visit. It does not install any spyware or malware. The BLIMP Team will make the results of their measurements available in the public domain for the use of all and their sole aim is to gain information which will lead to an improvement in the level of broadband services being offered.

To join in please download the tool from <http://www.blimpchecker.co.uk>.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

By Kate Houlihan: Training and Development Officer

Quality Parish Scheme

Congratulations to Brixworth Parish Council who on Monday 17 May became the 14th Quality Council in Northamptonshire. The panel were impressed with the submission and were pleased to see how hard Brixworth Parish Council have worked to develop close working links with other community groups.

Panel member Gwen Radcliffe noted that the council had submitted one of the best sets of evidence that she had seen for the democracy and citizenship test. The council had clearly understood the aims of this test and had been able to give a range of supporting evidence showing that they worked to encourage members of the public to understand the role of the council and to become involved in the council either through standing for election or by participating in council meetings. For any councils considering Quality status more information can be found at http://www.nalc.gov.uk/Toolkits/Quality_Status.aspx. If any council is interested in moving forward to Quality Status then please do let us know as we are keen to support you in putting together your portfolio.

Training and Development

The last two months have, as always, been extremely busy with a wide range of training taking place. Both the "*S106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy*" and the "*Crash Course in Planning*" were over-subscribed. My thanks go to Colm Ryan and the team at Planning Aid for facilitating these excellent sessions. I will be

working with Planning Aid to run additional sessions later in the year and priority will be given to those who missed out. Full details will appear in the next edition of *Update*.

April also saw a new course being offered on “*Managing Allotments*” this proved to be a really informative evening with delegates attending from councils who are already running allotments and councils who are hoping to undertake this role in the future. Karen Kenny of the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Ltd stepped in at the last minute to run this course and I am very appreciative of her time and expertise.

More and more councils are opting to have bespoke training sessions; these “train the council” sessions can be invaluable, firstly in ensuring that all members undergo basic training in key areas such as the Code of Conduct. But also by giving the council the opportunity to take stock of where they are and identify areas for future activity and development. Councils can pick and choose the subjects to be covered and the session can be anything from a 1-hour refresher on the Code of Conduct to a full day’s training session. If your council is interested in discussing this option further then please do give me a call on 01327 831482 or email khoulihan@northantscalc.gov.uk.

Councillor Professional Development

February saw the launch of our *Councillor Professional Development* course. This expands on the previous “*Off to a Flying Start*” course and over the course of three sessions gives councillors the opportunity to look in-depth at many aspects of their role. The course covers the Code of Conduct, meeting procedures, law, finance, community engagement and employment.

Councillors are free to attend all or some of the sessions depending on their own personal preference. Those councillors who attend all three are awarded a “Certificate of Completion” and congratulations are due to Libby Hart and Andrea Raymond of Weedon Bec Parish Council and Pam Bottomley of Roade Parish Council for being the first councillors to successfully complete this course. We are now looking to improve the course still further and will be running the sessions again in the autumn. Based on feedback from attendees and other councillors we will be running the courses both in the evening and at the weekend, with a choice of venues.

If at any time you miss a session you are able to pick this up in the next group of sessions and you will still be awarded the Certificate of Completion. The sessions can be taken in any order. The cost is £29 per session or £75 if you book all three.

Session 1 - Meeting Procedures and the Code of Conduct

This is a great induction for new councillors. The first half of the session looks at meeting procedures and how local council meetings are governed. The session then moves on to look at the Code of Conduct and explain how the code works in practice.

Session 2 - Law and Finance

The workshop looks at the legal framework that local councils operate in. The session explores the powers and duties of local councils and gives details of other legislation e.g. Health and Safety that local councils must comply with. The second half of the session looks at councillors' responsibilities for the finances of the council.

Session 3 - Community Engagement and Employment

The final session looks at effective community engagement. Good community engagement can have a really positive impact on how your council is perceived by the public; this session gives advice on how to achieve this. The course ends by giving delegates an introduction to the difficult but essential topic of employment law and covers all aspects of employment including recruitment, appraisal and staff retention.

Session	Date	Time	Location
Meeting procedures & Code of Conduct	Saturday 25 September	10.00 - 13.00	Northants CALC Offices Litchborough
Meeting procedures & Code of Conduct	Wednesday 29 September	18:30 - 21.30	Saxon Hall, Raunds
Law and Finance	Saturday 23 October	10.00 - 13.00	Northants CALC Offices Litchborough
Law and Finance	Wednesday 27 October	18:30 - 21.30	Saxon Hall, Raunds
Community Engagement and Employment Law	Saturday 20 November	10.00 - 13.00	Northants CALC Offices Litchborough
Community Engagement and Employment Law	Wednesday 24 November	18:30 - 21.30	Saxon Hall, Raunds

Forthcoming Training Courses:

Just a few training courses coming up in the next few weeks to tell you about;

Session	Date	Time	Location
Playground Safety: Hands on course with ROSPA expert Roger Davis.	Thursday 27 May	18:30 - 21.00	Parsons Memorial Hall, Great Houghton
Going Green: Managing Open Space, with Northamptonshire County Council pocket parks Officer Rose Little	Wednesday 9 June	19:00 - 21:00	Caroline Chisholm School, Wootton
Chairmanship Training: An excellent session for new chairman, aspiring chairman and committee chairs	Saturday 17 July	10.00 - 13.00	Northants CALC Offices Litchborough

Please email training@northantscalc.gov.uk if you are interested in booking any of these courses or download a copy of the booking form from our website.

NALC LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD WINNERS

The winner of the Aon Council of the Year is St Erme Parish Council (www.stermeparishcouncil.org.uk) in Cornwall. Cllr Rob Tretheway, chairman of St Erme Parish Council, said: "It is a great honour to be the winner of the Council of Year. A special tribute should be paid to all the councillors and the clerk that work very hard on behalf of the community."

Margot Harbour won the Aon Clerk of the Year. She is the chief officer at Redenhall with Harleston Town Council in Norfolk. Mrs Harbour exclaimed: "When I was appointed to this post, I did not realise at first the sheer range of duties and remit involved in being a clerk. I think anyone doing a clerk's job is amazing and must be congratulated. Without the councillors' support and bravery to take the council forward, I would not be here as the winner. So this award is in their honour."

Ed Houston, from Aon (sponsors of the two awards above), said: "Aon are pleased with the continued success of these awards. The purpose of the awards is to recognise the outstanding work that clerks and councils undertake on a daily basis in their local communities."

SITUATIONS VACANT

There are no situations vacant currently. If you would like to advertise your Local Council vacancies here please e-mail info@northantscalc.gov.uk.

NORTHANTS CALC CONTACTS

Danny Moody	Chief Executive dmoody@northantscalc.gov.uk
Christine Dryden	Finance & Resources Officer cdryden@northantscalc.gov.uk
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Admin/General	info@northantscalc.gov.uk

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www.northantscalc.gov.uk