

Memorandum of understanding between the Northumberland Association of Local Councils and Community Action Northumberland

(1) Purpose

This memorandum sets out the respective roles of and relationships between NALC (the Northumberland Association of Local Councils) and CAN (Community Action Northumberland) in their support for the parish councils' sector.

(2) Context

NALC is an association of Local (ie parish and town) councils covering the historical county of Northumberland (i.e. including what are now Newcastle and North Tyneside) and is affiliated to the National ALC. NALC exists to support and promote the interests of its member councils. CAN is a voluntary organisation covering the present (i.e. post-1974) county of Northumberland, committed to a vision of 'communities which are vibrant, inclusive, confident, effective and capable of sustaining themselves'. Constitutionally, CAN is a charitable company which was formed in 2011, although originally established in 1951. A key part of CAN's work is to support community organisations, including local councils, in their roles as a voice of local communities and as providers of local services. NALC and CAN mutually recognise their common objectives in relation to local councils and aim to provide an integrated and seamless service to local councils, whilst recognising and respecting the right of each body to make its own decisions.

(3) The Service

In order to minimise duplication and to make effective use of limited resources in what is a relatively sparsely populated area, NALC arranges for CAN to provide a number of services as follows:

- (i) Administrative support and financial management for NALC as an organisation
- (ii) Professional advice to NALC, and executive implementation of NALC's policies and decisions, including policy and partnership work with central and local government
- (iii) Professional advice and training to individual local councils in membership of NALC, mostly on matters of law, procedures, good practice, public accountability and management issues.

In addition CAN, in its own right and as resources permit, endeavours to provide further services to local councils and others in relation to such issues as project development, funding, community development and local service provision.

(4) Roles & Responsibilities

- (i) The governing body of NALC is its County Committee, composed of representatives (councillors and clerks) of member councils
- (ii) The governing body of CAN is its Board, composed of representatives from a wide variety of organisations and individuals
- (iii) CAN provides an office and an employment and development service for the NALC chief officer. In addition, CAN's staff provide financial and other support services to NALC. Together, these fulfil the agreed service, as above.

(iv) NALC's support to individual local councils is coordinated by the NALC chief officer.

(5) Finance

(i) NALC's annual income is derived almost entirely from members' subscriptions, which in turn are derived almost entirely from local residents' council tax payments. This budget is applied to National ALC (on a 'pence per elector' basis) and to CAN, for the provision of services

(ii) The value of CAN's normal annual services to and through NALC is £30,000 (as at 1 April 2021) which is fully funded by the NALC contribution (as above). This contribution will be reviewed at the end of the second year of this Memorandum.

(iii) In addition, NALC meets directly the room-hire, refreshments and associated costs incurred in delivering training.

(iv) NALC and CAN seek opportunities to generate additional income from new sources, for mutual benefit.

(6) Management & Responsibility

(i) CAN makes available a place on its Board for NALC representation.

(ii) The work programme of the NALC chief officer will be agreed by the NALC County Committee.

(iii) For management purposes, the NALC chief officer will be responsible to CAN's Chief Executive Officer who will carry out an annual review of performance with involvement from a member of the NALC County Committee.

(iv) NALC's County Committee and all local councils are invited to attend CAN's AGM and Spring Meeting

(v) The financial administration of NALC by CAN staff is overseen by NALC's own Honorary Treasurer and its own Auditor

(vi) The NALC chief officer forms part of the CAN staff team and contributes to CAN's forward planning.

(7) Timescale and Review

This Memorandum will run for three years from 1 April 2021 with a formal review at the end of the second year carried out jointly between NALC and CAN.

Any conflict or dispute will be addressed through the chairmen of NALC's County Committee and CAN's Board, respectively.

NALC and CAN

February 2021