



Briefing Pack for new Surrey Town & Parish Councillors

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NEW COUNCILLOR WELCOME PACK

Congratulations on becoming a parish/town councillor. Many find this a hugely rewarding role. You may find it all very bewildering at first but your Clerk and fellow Councillors will be there to assist you on your journey as a new Councillor.

Your Surrey Association of Local Councils is also there to support you and offer you training throughout your time as a Councillor.

This guide will hopefully direct you to some of the information you will require in your first few months.





Understanding your new Role

To help you understand your new role as a Councillor and other roles within your Council, the following documents are available and can be obtained from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

- [NALC Good Councillors Guide](#)
- [NALC Good Councillor Guide to Being a Good Employer](#)
- [NALC Good Councillor Guide to Finance & Transparency](#)
- NALC Good Councillor Guides – [further reading](#)

Who is NALC?

Established in 1947, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) is the only national body representing the interests of local (parish and town) councils. County Associations such as Surrey ALC are members of NALC and both the National and County Organisation work in close partnership with the primary objective of supporting, promoting and improving local councils. The organisations meet fortnightly which provides an excellent opportunity to learn from each other and share experiences.

Town and Parish Councils also pay a subscription to NALC which is collected through the County Associations.

NALC is the 'voice' of Town and Parish Councils at Central Government level and meets regularly with Government Ministers so that there is an understanding of the work of Town and Parish Councils.

NALC also, and importantly, produces a wide range of information for Member Councils including guidance publications for councillors, legal topic notes and policy templates. These are available on their website. Information can also be accessed through the Surrey Association of Local Council's website. www.surreyalc.co.uk

Surrey ALC is affiliated with NALC and as a member of our Association your Council is automatically a member of the National Association.



nalc



Who is Surrey ALC (SALC)?

Surrey ALC is a membership representative organisation providing legal and procedural advice to Surrey town and parish councils. Surrey ALC guides its member councils on a range of matters including governance, legal, planning, HR and finance and provides access to a comprehensive training programme on most of these topics and many more.

Surrey ALC is affiliated to the [National Association of Local Councils \(NALC\)](#) which enables us to ensure that our members receive the most up-to-date advice and changes to policy, procedures and law whilst endeavouring, as part of our 'value for money' commitment, to keep subscriptions at an affordable level.

Surrey ALC membership is like an insurance policy – sometimes its importance is not appreciated until something occurs which requires advice and support!

The Services provided by the Association include -

- Oral and written advice
- Website with dedicated members area: www.surreyalc.co.uk
- Legislative updates and publications
- Regular members forums
- Members bulletins and newsletters
- Access to a comprehensive training programme*
- Access to Legal and Finance advice **
- Access to Planning expertise.

**Delivered externally by our preferred suppliers - a member's reduced fee may apply*

***Interim advice is available as part of the subscription*

The SALC Team



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Who are the SALC Board?

Surrey ALC is a limited company with a Board of Directors who are elected councillors of Surrey Town and Parish Councils. They are elected annually at the Surrey ALC AGM.

The Board meet 3 to 4 times a year at different venues or on Zoom. Its aims and objectives are to ensure that Surrey ALC provides the very best service it can to its member councils. This includes working closely with all key organisations so that local councils continue to have a role in decision making as the councils closest to their community.



Chair
Cllr Christine Howard, Wonersh Parish Council
chair@surreyalc.co.uk



Vice Chair
Cllr Katia Malcaus Cooper, Windlesham Parish Council
vicechair@surreyalc.co.uk



Director
Cllr Graham Alleway, West End Parish Council



Director
Cllr Dr Paul Cragg, Worplesdon Parish Council



Director
Cllr Mike George, Horley Town Council



Director
Cllr Stuart McLachlan, Capel Parish Council



About Parish/Town Councils

Town and Parish Councils, in addition to the statutory Full Council Meetings, also sometimes appoint committees and subcommittees to delegate certain functions. This could include a Planning Committee, Finance and Audit Committee, or a Personnel Committee. Councillors are also sometimes appointed to outside bodies to represent the Council. This provides elected councillors with the opportunity to get involved in a wide range of areas of the Council's business.

Meetings

Full Council meetings are usually held monthly in the evenings while committee meetings are held at various times. Check with your Clerk for details of the meetings you need to attend.

All information on meetings is published on your council's website and posted on the village notice boards. All meetings are open to the public.

Council Policies

Make sure you read up on your council's key documents including Standing Orders and Code of Conduct.





Training for New Councillors

It is very important that all councillors receive training to fully understand their role, powers and responsibilities, including local government finance, and the Members Code of Conduct. These are key and essential to good decision making.

In the first instance your Clerk and Chairperson will give you initial induction training and will be there to assist you as you learn on the job.

Surrey ALC highly recommend that all newly elected councillors undertake official training as soon as possible after the elections, and in particular on

- The Role of Parish Councillor
- Introduction to Planning
- Local Government Finance for Councillors

Details of these and other key training events can be found by accessing the Surrey ALC website which will signpost you to where you can access training www.surreyalc.co.uk/training

All councillors are also recommended to read the summary of functions of local councils (powers & duties) on the Surrey ALC website. www.surreyalc.co.uk/meetingsandlaw

Suggested further information for clerks to give new Councillors

- Declaration of Acceptance form
- Register of Interest form
- Business Plan or Visioning document
- Standing Orders
- Code of Conduct

Wishing you a very positive and enjoyable time as a parish/town councillor.

