



SOMERSET ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Serving Local Councils in Somerset
Affiliated to the National Association of Local Councils



March 2014

As we embark upon a new financial year we are writing to you with information on the benefits of remaining a member of the Somerset Association of Local Councils.

The Association has undergone a change in focus over the last year with new staff and the on-going modernisation of the systems used to provide information and support to member councils.

The Association continues to play a significant role in contributing to sector consultations and lobbying government bodies. Our members continue to have a voice nationally through NALC and we have also strengthened links with both the county and district councils. The Association now has a seat on the influential Somerset Public Sector Chief Executives Group and has forged mutually beneficial links with numerous other outside bodies.

The most obvious enhancement to our service has been the provision of a new website; www.somerset-alc.org.uk, from which members can gain access to an ever expanding bank of up to date information. Members can read and download the full list of NALC Legal Topic Notes as well as a growing and adaptable collection of model documents, policies and publications. They can read the latest news on issues affecting our sector and find answers to common topics requiring advice and information. Member councils can also advertise their job vacancies for free on the site.

In our commitment to ensure Somerset parish and town councils are offered the opportunities they need to succeed we publish an annual schedule of training and information events. The events we offer are designed to meet our councils' demands and they receive in excess of 98% satisfaction ratings. We are also able to offer bespoke training to member councils at significantly reduced rates.

A vital part of our service continues to be the responsive provision to members of both email and telephone support at the time it is needed. In order to improve and expand upon this service we will meet with member councils when they need more hands-on support.

Following the recent significant amendments to financial practices, and as the debate on filming of parish and town council meetings develops, we are committed to keeping our member councils updated and guiding them through the changes that will inevitably follow. Membership of SALC gives councils access to NALC's specialist legal and financial advice.

We hope your council will decide to remain a member of the association and, should it do so, we have taken the liberty of attaching an invoice to this letter for your convenience.

Thank you for your support.

Justin Robinson, County Executive Officer, and

Sam Winter, County Information Officer.

The Somerset Association of Local Councils.