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Clerk: Alan Bravey, 3 Ruskin Way, Brough, East Riding of Yorkshire, HU15 1GW
Telephone: 07932 016856 Email: laxtonpc@btinternet.com

22/05/2025

To: All Members of the Council

You are summoned to attend the **Annual Meeting** of **Laxton Parish Council** that will be held on **Wednesday 28 May 2025, following the Annual Parish Assembly, which begins at 7:00pm**, to transact the business set out below. The meeting will take place at Laxton Victory Hall, Station Road, Laxton, DN14 7TW. Members of the public and press are welcome to attend and may address the Council during the public participation section.

Yours sincerely

Clerk to the Council

A G E N D A

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To elect a Chair until the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2026
3. To elect a Vice-Chair until the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2026
4. To record declarations of interest by any member of the council in respect of the agenda items below.
5. To receive and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, held on Wednesday, 26 March, 2025 as a true and correct record
6. Public Participation - to temporarily suspend the meeting to receive questions from the public.



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7. To agree to reopen the meeting following suspension
8. To decide on the appointment of Personnel Committee Members (currently Councillors Huntley, Watson and Yarrow)
9. To decide on the Appointment to Saltmarshe and Laxton Charity (currently Councillor Yarrow)
10. To decide on the Appointment to Laxton Allotments Committee
11. To agree meeting dates for 2025/26 – 30 July 2025, 24 September 2025, 26 November 2025, 28 January 2026, 25 March 2026 and 27 May 2026.
12. To receive the action log from the Clerk
13. To receive an update from Ward Councillors
14. To receive an update from Parish Councillors
15. To discuss the following correspondence:
 - i. ERYC £500 VE and VJ Funding Grant Funding Approved
 - ii. ERNLLCA, March Newsletter
 - iii. PWLB, Outstanding loan amount
 - iv. ERNLCCA, Section 137 Expenditure Limit
 - v. ERYC, Invite to ERYC Annual Planning Meeting
 - vi. ERYC, Winter Maintenance
 - vii. HFRS, Defibrillator Certificates
 - viii. ERNLLCA, April Newsletter
 - ix. Humber and NY ICB, Goole Hospital Update
 - x. ERNLCCA 2025 Conference
16. To discuss the replacement of trees down Jubilee Avenue.
17. To discuss recent burglaries in the village and if action needs to be taken to increase village security.



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18. To discuss parking arrangements at the village hall ensuring accessibility.
19. To receive an update on the Speedwatch Scheme
20. To agree to submit an exemption for External Audit.
21. To approve the schedule of accounts for payment
22. To agree any agenda items for the next Parish Council meeting in July 2025.

LAXTON PARISH COUNCIL

7pm, 26 March 2025

PRESENT: Councillors Goulden (Chair), Sweeting (Deputy Chair), Huntley, S Yarrow, M Yarrow and Watson.

Apologies for absence were received from and Ward Councillors Aitken, Bayram and Wilkinson

Clerk: Alan Bravey, Poppy Hunt

15/25 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS – There were no declarations of interest.

16 /25 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Wednesday 22nd January 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

17/25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – no members of the public were present.

18/25 VOTE OF THANKS FOR COUNCILLOR COLLINS – The Parish Council spent some time reflecting on the 40 + years of service Councillor Collins gave to both the Parish Council and wider village community. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to Councillor Collin's family.

19/25 ACTION LOG – Agreed – The clerk reported the following to the council:

- The council have signed up to a year's subscription for email storage using their current council email addresses.
- Defibrillator training would be held at the village hall on April 22nd.
- A mobile phone was ordered for the new Clerk to store council information more securely, rather than on personal devices.
- Meeting to be arranged for the Playground Committee.
- There are now 5 confirmed speed watch committee volunteers therefore the council can progress with the scheme and volunteers will be contacted about this.
- Fibre boxes are now fixed
- Risk assessments would be passed to the new clerk withing handover process.
- Road slippage has been reported, and ERYC have committed to address in 25/26. A reporting form would be posted within the WhatsApp chat & village members encouraged to also report this.
- VE Day Grant applied for – the council have held off making any purchase towards this until the outcome of the grant application is known.

20/25 WARD COUNCILLOR UPDATE – No update.

21/25 **PARISH COUNCILLOR UPDATE** – The councillors discussed the following:

- i. As discussed in part of the action log the roads have been reported, the Clerk would post a link within the WhatsApp group and members of the village are encouraged to report this themselves.
- ii. WhatsApp groups were discussed around the current name, purpose of the group and those who are made admins of the group. No further action to be taken.
- iii. As far as the council are aware, it was reported that the Village Hall Committee have between 6 and 8 new volunteers and are beginning the transition process. The council noted once the new committee is up and running to write to the new volunteers and offer any support we can give if needed.
- iv. The trees on Jubilee Avenue. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the Village Hall to discuss.

22/25 **CORRESPONDENCE – Resolved** – i) that the following correspondence should be received by the Council:

1. ICB, Goole District Hospital Update
2. ERYC, Parish Council ID badges
3. Various, Speedwatch Scheme
4. ERYC, Avian Influenza Update
5. ERYC, VE Day and VJ Day Grant Scheme
6. ERYC, Road slippages
7. National Grid, North Humber to High Marnham
8. Gilberdyke Parish Council, campaign on Goole and District Hospital
9. Resident, Littering on Moorfields Lane.
10. ERYC, Closure of Saltmarsh Level Crossing in May
11. ERYC Ward Boundaries Review Consultation
12. Resident, Enquiry about paediatric defibrillator pads

ii) the Clerk would purchase an additional paediatric defibrillator pad for the Saltmarsh Level Crossing

23/25 **TO AGREE ARRANGEMENTS FOR VE DAY 80, 8 MAY 2025 – Resolved** –

Agreed the council will organise the following:

- Beacon to be lit at 9:30pm
- A flag to be purchased and displayed from 9am
- Music to be played during the evening
- Traditional Fish Bites & Chips to be served at 8:45pm along with refreshments.
- A reading to be delivered as the beacon is being lit

25/25 **TO APPROVE THE SCHEDULE OF ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – Resolved** – The accounts were approved.

26 /25 TO RECEIVE AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE 28th May 2025 AND AGREE SCHEDULE FOR PRINTING – It was agreed that Cllr Watson or Cllr Yarrow would print and distribute copies of the agenda to all Cllr's prior to the next meeting and going forward.

27/25 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING - Resolved – that the date of the next meeting of the Parish Council would be 7pm on the 28 May 2025.

SIGNED:

DATE:

Laxton Parish Council Action Log

Action	Status	Lead	Update
Check status of the Cotness Footbridge Bridge.	Ongoing	Clerk	ERYC /Landowner update meeting - W/B 21 November 2023. Outcome not yet clear but getting closer.
Check expected repair time of bridge at Skelton footpath.	Ongoing	Clerk	Badger Sett holding up works. 14/10 update - New bridge required, but badger sett underneath the footings and the placement site and so consultation with Natural England required / underway. Clerk asked Kiplin PC whether they have had update.
Review provision of equipment at the Allotment Gardens	Ongoing	Clerk	Clerk has written to tenants.
Councillor Email Addresses	Ongoing	Clerk	
Arrange Defibrillator Training	Complete	Clerk	
Convene a playground committee meeting with Councillor Watson as the Parish Council's representative.	Ongoing	Clerk	Not yet arranged
Inform the Speed Watch volunteers that registration was open	Complete	Clerk	Verbal Update at the meeting
Write to the Save Goole Hosptial Campaign Organisaers	Complete	Clerk	Fed back to Councillors by WhatsApp
Road Slippage	Ongoing	Clerk	Reported to ERYC, who will endeavor to address in 25/26
Trees at Jubileee Avenue	Complete	Clerk	Verbal Update at the meeting
Purchase additioanl paediatric defib pad for Cotness	Complete	Clerk	

Laxton Parish Council Correspondence Record

26 March to 22 May 2025

The Clerk will circulate correspondence when considered appropriate. If Councillors would like to see a copy of correspondence that has not be circulated, please notify the Clerk on laxtonpc@btinternet.com on 07932 016856.

From	Purpose of Correspondence
ERYC	£500 VE and VJ Funding Grant Funding Approved
ERNLLCA	March Newsletter
PWLB	Outstanding loan amount is £8676.57
ERNLCCA	Section 137 Expenditure Limit set at £11.10 per elector
ERYC	Invite to ERYC Annual Planning Meeting - Thursday 12 June – 5pm or Friday 20 June – 10am by Teams. Draft agenda – Planning Dept Update, Policy Update, Changes to National Legislation, Feedback from T&PC
ERYC	Winter Maintenance – All salt bins will receive a maintenance visit prior to the start of they year. Additional maintenance visits will be on request. Recommend that Parishes carry out regular reviews.
HFRS	Defibrillator Certificates
ERNLLCA	April Newsletter
Humber and NY ICB	Goole Hospital Update - https://letsgetbetter.co.uk/our-next-chapter-goole-and-district-hospital/ - Drop in on Tuesday 28 May at 11am at the Courtyard, Goole

ERNLLA	<p>2025 Conference - Tuesday 21 October 2025 at Lazaat Hotel, Woodhill Way, Cottingham, East Yorkshire, HU16 5SX</p> <p>Civic.ly – John Fagan – Starting Small, Thinking Big on Your Net Zero Journey</p> <p>Woodland Trust – Supporting Nature: The Woodland Trust’s Role in Empowering Town and Parish Councils.</p> <p>Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust – Councils working alongside Wildlife trusts</p> <p>Synergy Grimsby CIC – Claire Wollington – Grant funding, top tips to increase the likelihood of securing the grant funding you apply for including grants for “green” projects and time for questions and answers.</p> <p>CCLA – Investments with ethics</p> <p>Streetscape – Sustainable materials in playgrounds</p> <p>Slow Circular Earth – Amie Watson – Top tips – sustainability ideas for councils</p> <p>WorkNest – HR with your council, common issues and best practice. Includes time for question and answers.</p>
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March 2025 Newsletter

End of Year



PKF Littlejohn (the external auditor for our area) recently sent out the end of year audit letters. If your council hasn't received yours, please get in touch with PKF Littlejohn and ensure they have the latest email address for your council.

Key documentation and forms relating to the 2024/25 audit can be accessed on the PKF Littlejohn website¹.

If you need any help with your audit you can find lots of information on our website - **Finance Advice**². This includes a template letter of engagement for an internal auditor and

¹<https://www.pkf-l.com/services/audit-assurance/limited-assurance-regime/submission-requirements/>

an internal audit checklist. Your council's internal auditor should have a checklist and provide a report detailing what actions and steps you need to take (if any).

Updated Model Finance Regulations

NALC has worked with the local council sector finance advisor, Parkinson Partnership LLP, to update the Model Financial Regulations (England)³.

The regulations were updated because of The Procurement Act 2023 and The Procurement Regulation 2024, which came into force last week. The changes are to Model Financial Regulations 5.4, 5.7 and 5.11.

The Parkinson Partnership has put together a brief summary of the changes below:

The master copy of the **NALC Model Financial Regulations** on the NALC website has had some minor amendments to reference the new procurement legislation. The regulation 5.4 now says:

For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Procurement Act 2023 and The Procurement Regulations 2024 or any superseding legislation (“the Legislation”), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.

In Regulation 5.7, the phrase “public contract” (which now only applies above the thresholds) has been replaced and the word “advertising” has been replaced by “invitations and notices”:

For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation regarding the publication of invitations and notices.

Please note that from 24 February all notices must now be posted on Find-Tender, not Contracts Finder. Footnote 1 in the model has been removed.

In Regulation 5.11, the phrase “into smaller lots” has been removed, because there is now a duty to consider splitting above threshold contracts into lots and the words here could be confusing. It has been reduced to:

Contracts must not be split to avoid compliance with these rules.

It is not urgent for councils to update their Financial Regulations as they should already refer to “any superseding legislation” (unless they are using a pre-2014 version, in which case they don’t seem to be bothered about updating them).

²<https://www.ernlca.gov.uk/advice-support/finance-advice/>

³<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/e/t/c/AE0BA056-4520-44E2-B5D70107F98CB389/?link=F0FE35DC-A264-4EF2-87A9B130AFAAE8B6>

The 2025 Practitioners' Guide is now available

The latest 2025 edition of the Practitioners' Guide is now available. It brings important updates for authorities preparing Annual Governance and Accountability Returns (AGAR) for financial years starting on or after 1 April 2025.

The most notable changes to the Practitioners' Guide this year are:

- **Email management** — Every authority must now have a generic email account hosted on an authority-owned domain, for example, clerk@abcparishcouncil.gov.uk or clerk@abcparishcouncil.org.uk rather than abcparishclerk@gmail.com or abcparishclerk@outlook.com.
- **New Assertion** — A new Assertion 10 has been added to clarify data compliance, previously covered under Assertion 3.
- **Updated Assertion** — Guidance on Assertion 9 (Trust Funds) has been updated to reflect changes to the AGAR for 2025/26 when Cell 11a and Cell 11b will be replaced with a single Cell 11.

The Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (the rebranded JPAG) is responsible for issuing proper practices about the governance and accounts of smaller authorities.

View and download the 2025 Practitioner's Guide from the NALC website.⁴

Government publishes information on council tax levels

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has published information on council tax levels⁵ set by councils in England for the financial year 2025/26.

The average Band D precept charged by local precepting bodies (including parish and town councils) for 2025/26 will be £92.22, an increase of £6.32 or 7.4% in 2025/26 and parish precepts in 2025/26 will total £859 million, which is £76 million higher than in 2024/25 and 1.9% of overall council tax.

Clarification over parish and town council involvement in reorganisation proposals

NALC recently welcomed the government's clarification on parish and town councils' involvement⁶ in developing proposals for unitary local government by local authorities.

⁴<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/practitioners-guide-2025.html>

⁵<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/e/t/c/8A94E0D0-C46B-4542-8E391C8B365A2897/?link=8696F7C8-9E5D-4D61-B185EE0A8C76D0FF>

This follows the representations NALC made to government, including by chair, Cllr Keith Stevens, who wrote directly to the local government and devolution minister, Jim McMahon MP⁷, expressing concern that recent guidance to local authorities failed to include parish and town councils in a list of local partners, stakeholders and public bodies they should engage with.

In response, the minister said, *"This government absolutely values the crucial role played by parish and town councils in local government"*. They clarified that, *"I expect local leaders to seek views from their MPs, as well as ensuring wider engagement with other local partners and stakeholders, residents, workforce and their representatives, and businesses. This should include parish and town councils in the spirit of that guidance"*.

Article by Utility Aid: Energy Saving Top Tips

With energy costs and net-zero targets at the forefront of people's minds, people are eager to reduce their bills and consumption. Often, people aren't sure where to start, but here are some simple steps you can take to save yourself money!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9nzKEfdbSyE>

By using Utility Aid's switching site⁸, you can generate a number of quotes and secure a new deal on your energy contracts in just a few minutes.

If you would like more advice on reducing your consumption and your spending, reach out to Utility Aid today at partnerships@utility-aid.co.uk⁹ or <https://www.utility-aid.co.uk/contactform/ERNLLCA>

Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy

Last year we made available a template policy and procedure by Personnel Advice Solutions. It was produced to take into account legislative changes. The new Worker Protection Act, which came into effect in October 2024, created a duty on employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of their employees in the workplace.

NALC's has a partnership arrangement with employment law and human resources advice company WorkNest. They recently produced an Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy which can be downloaded from the website.

⁶<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/e/t/c/3D664F1A-0A00-4EA9-B066F191D59ED32D/?link=A7B46662-5568-49F1-AD82697CE1733912>

⁷<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/e/t/c/3D664F1A-0A00-4EA9-B066F191D59ED32D/?link=A70BDD28-28B0-4D15-9DD1DCD84308AD49>

⁸[https://switching.utility-aid.co.uk/?source=East Riding and Northern Lincolnshire Local Councils Association &projectname=ua-utility&id=66e0b2ca410322ba4b83c9ac](https://switching.utility-aid.co.uk/?source=East%20Riding%20and%20Northern%20Lincolnshire%20Local%20Councils%20Association&projectname=ua-utility&id=66e0b2ca410322ba4b83c9ac)

⁹<mailto:partnerships@utility-aid.co.uk>

Read the guidance notes and download the policy from the NALC website.¹⁰

Training events



Thank you to everyone that have supported our latest events.

It was great to see so many of you getting involved in a thought provoking day at Drax as part of our Talking Tables event with YLCA.

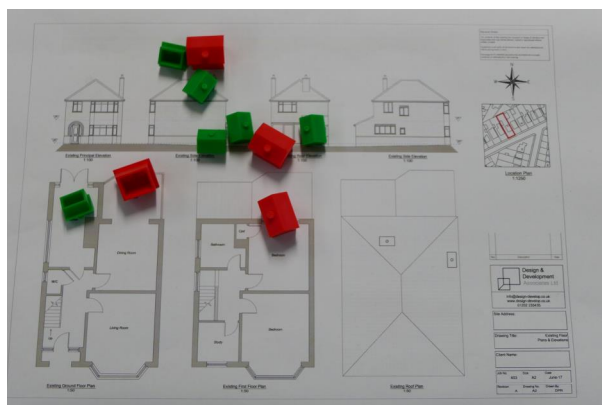
We also had a successful day with Steve Parkinson at our Finance Essentials event at Lazaat.

¹⁰<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/anti-bullying-and-harassment-policy.html>

Don't forget as part of next years membership our Being a Good Councillor and Chair training will be free. This means councillors can benefit from training and we have a number of sessions throughout the year. We also continue to offer free Clerk Induction training.

Clerks need to be logged in to book councillors on training Events | ERNLLCA¹¹

Planning



As you will probably be aware, the government in December announced significant changes to the National Planning Policy Framework. Amongst other things these included the introduction of:

- mandatory housing targets on local planning authorities which include significant increases in housing numbers in many areas
- a new 'Grey Belt' designation covering some areas of previous 'Green Belt' which will see those areas so designated as being opened for development, and
- a much stronger plan-led system including clear time requirements for plans to be agreed and more government powers to enforce the national requirements

Andrew Towler – planning consultant is leading a planning training day covering Reforms and the new NPPF alongside heritage issues, Biodiversity net gain and engaging effectively with the planning system. The training will take place on the 5th June in Wootton, £35/£45 plus VAT per delegate.

For further details please visit Planning Day | ERNLLCA¹²

¹¹https://www.ernllca.gov.uk/council_events/

¹²https://www.ernllca.gov.uk/council_events/planning-day/

Self-help guidance on GOV.UK¹³

Last month Parish Helper Domains published guidance on moving your council to a .gov.uk domain¹⁴ on the GOV.UK¹⁵ website. Presented in a step-by-step format, this is full of practical information for clerks and councillors..

This resource should now be a parish council's first port of call for help and support in their move to a gov.uk domain. Online sessions and email support are still available for anyone needing extra help. There is more information about this, and the GOV.UK¹⁶ guidance, in our recently published Advice Note on understanding and preparing for a move to .gov.uk¹⁷ on the NALC website.

NALC Legal update



Parish poll thresholds

NALC advice note on meetings of parish meetings¹⁸ says: "A poll may be demanded before the conclusion of an assembly on any question arising at the assembly, but no poll shall be taken unless either (i) the person presiding at the meeting consents or (ii) the poll is demanded by not less than ten, or one-third of the local government electors present at the meeting, whichever is less."

This confirms the wording in Paragraph 18 (4) of Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972. Confusion may have arisen because www.legislation.gov.uk¹⁹ shows changes proposed but not appointed rather than the current version in force. The correct position is in the advice note.

¹³<http://gov.uk/>

¹⁴<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-your-parish-council-to-a-govuk-domain>

¹⁵<http://gov.uk/>

¹⁶<http://gov.uk/>

¹⁷<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/understanding-and-preparing-to-move-to-a-gov-uk-domain.html>

¹⁸<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/e/t/c/DA8027AD-91B4-408E-BADC876D6A8708D8/?link=9230D1D1-977B-4621-85895B59EC9B8D20>

¹⁹<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/>

Keeping hens on allotments

An allotment tenant asked can female bird species other than chickens be kept on allotments. There is no definition of "hen" in the Allotments Act 1950. Where an Act does not define a common word the dictionary definition can be used. The Collins English Dictionary²⁰ defines "hen" as "the female of any bird, especially the adult female of the domestic fowl". The Oxford English Dictionary²¹ says, "The female of the domestic chicken, esp. one that lays eggs". It also says, "The female of birds other than chickens". The National Allotment Society guidance²² says, "When referring to hens, the law means the female of the species and excludes cockerels, which aren't needed for hens to lay eggs". The general understanding is that it tends to be female chickens, that is, hens, that are kept on allotments, and that is how the term is understood.

New waste duties

From 31 March 2025 (or 31 March 2027 for micro-firms), all workplaces (businesses and non-domestic premises) in England have a legal duty to separate recycling and food waste²³ from their non-recyclable waste. "Micro-firms" are workplaces with fewer than 10 full-time employees in total. Offices and premises used only or mainly for public meetings are included within the relevant non-domestic premises to which the rules apply. We are seeking urgent clarification from the government as to whether parish and town councils are included within the definition.

Change of town name mistake

A new council was formed following a community governance review, and after a year or so, the council realised that the order had used a slightly different name. The advice was that the name in the order was the legal name for the council but that it should put the issue to the principal authority, who had made the error, for them to deal with any associated costs. NALCs view was that any contracts entered into would still be valid.

²⁰<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/e/t/c/DA8027AD-91B4-408E-BADC876D6A8708D8/?link=18DDB9E7-05BA-4D29-BE25BE90196E89F2>

²¹<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/e/t/c/DA8027AD-91B4-408E-BADC876D6A8708D8/?link=A626CCA4-4EEC-47E3-80624B2F3B5CB73A>

²²<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/e/t/c/DA8027AD-91B4-408E-BADC876D6A8708D8/?link=F3B55B3F-DA80-459A-BB9E1F1CD0AE7F37>

²³<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/e/t/c/DA8027AD-91B4-408E-BADC876D6A8708D8/?link=9EC0F329-925F-4C1F-BDBDBD2743F16C15>



Employment News

The Government's Employment Rights Bill that was published in the Autumn is now going through the Parliamentary process, and a number of changes have been made to planned legislation, which will impact on Town and Parish Councils.

[1. Contact out of Hours](#)

The initial plans were that Employers would be unable to contact Employees via email, phone or other means outside of working hours. For Town and Parish Councils this would have had a profound effect. Many Councillors who have jobs to attend during the week, conduct their Council administration during the evening or at weekends. Times when the Council's Employees are not working. Had this legislation remained in its initial format, those Councillors would have only been able to communicate with staff when they were at work.

This has now been amended so that Employers, including Councillors, can send emails outside of working hours, but cannot expect a response until the Employee is back at work.

[2. Statutory Sick Pay at 80% of Normal Pay](#)

Currently Employees are only entitled to Statutory Sick Pay if they earn £123 or more per week, and it is paid at £116 per week.

The Bill proposes that anyone earning below the £123 threshold will be entitled to sick pay based on 80% of their normal rate of pay.

This means that a number of part time Council Employees, who earn below the £123 threshold, will now be able to receive sick pay. It is also worth noting that the Council cannot claim SSP payments back off the Government and have to absorb the cost.

[3. Miscarriage Bereavement Leave](#)

Currently parents who suffer a miscarriage after week 24 of a pregnancy are entitled to two weeks paid bereavement leave.

This entitlement is to be extended to parents who suffer a miscarriage before week 24. However there is currently no indication of what evidence the parents need to provide of a pregnancy to be able to use this entitlement.

4. Zero Hours Contracts

Although somewhat unpopular in recent years, many Councils still use zero hours contracts. Councils do use them, to good effect for Casual Bar Staff/Community Centre Staff, Caretakers and Groundstaff.

Plans to scrap them as part of the Employment Rights Act have changed. Councils will still be able to employ people on a zero hours contract as long as it is “non-exploitative”. This means that shifts cannot be cancelled at short notice. If that does happen the Employee will be entitled to claim payment for the cancelled shift.

Zero hours Employees who work regular hours per week and have a reasonable expectation of working a certain number of hours, will be able to request a change to a Guaranteed Minimum Hours contract. This will ensure that they get regular pay each week, based on the guaranteed minimum, and remove the uncertainty of a zero hours contract. The Guaranteed Minimum Hours contract will require them to do additional hours if needed, which would be paid at the basic hourly rate.

Statutory Pay Rates from April 2025

Minimum Wage from April 2025

- Workers aged 21 and over (National Living Wage) £12.21
- Workers aged 18 – 20 £10.00
- Workers under 18, apprentices under 19, or over 19 in first year £7.55



April 2025 Newsletter

Training - FREE upcoming webinars

- Keeping Your Council Compliant | proactive tips, best practices, and preparing for change Partners - WorkNest¹ – 13 May 11am
- The Future of Family-Friendly Rights and Leave | simple, actionable advice for employers Partners - WorkNest² – 8 May 2pm
- Webinar – Local Councils Co-option | ERNLLCA³ – 13 May 10am

Get prepared for the annual meeting

All local councils must hold an annual meeting. As the name suggests this needs to happen every year. This year because there is no local election the annual meeting may be held on

¹<https://worknest.com/training/keeping-your-council-compliant-proactive-tips-best-practices-and-preparing-for-change-partners/?v=clem&AID=0016M00002Tvk0vQAB>

²<https://worknest.com/training/the-future-of-family-friendly-rights-and-leave-simple-actionable-advice-for-employers-partners/?v=AOG>

³https://www.ernllca.gov.uk/council_events/webinar-local-councils-co-option/

any day in May. Where the council does not fix a time for the annual meeting, that meeting must be held at 6 pm (LGA 1972, Sch 12, Paras 7 and 8).

At the annual meeting of a council, the first business must be the election of its chair. Upon election the chair must sign a declaration of their acceptance of that office. A chair is elected annually, and therefore, a declaration must be made every year by whoever is elected as chair (LGA 1972, S83(4)(a)).

Most local councils have standing orders setting out the business to be transacted at the annual meeting. Please see section 5 of the NALC model Standing Orders⁴.

Planning



NALC and CPRE launch a new guide – How to respond to planning applications⁵. As planning reforms and rapid development continue to reshape towns and countryside, communities need tools to ensure local voices are heard. The revamped guide is the go-to starting point for anyone who wants to understand – and have a say in – what gets built in their local area.

⁴<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/model-standing-orders-england.html>

⁵<https://f2e4ea65a51ff182257e.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/ERNLLCA/EW2B5qc5hy9Bm7bVeX7TIMMBonwMwygOp-DTCI1eunrPA?e=jLtuDz>

For those that wish to know more about planning reforms and responding to planning we have organised a training day with Andrew Towler on the 5 June 2025. For more details and to book your place please visit Planning Day | ERNLLCA⁶

Recent updates to key documents

There has been a recent update to both the NALC Model Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Please ensure that you implement the latest updates to stay compliant.

The new Practitioners' Guide 2025⁷ is available from the NALC website. Feedback about the new version has highlighted some uncertainty over the requirement for a data protection officer at paragraph 5.124. An addendum has been added to clarify the position for parish and town councils and parish meetings.

Co-option

ERNLLCA have produced new co-option advice and information. If you are going through the process and would like to know more please download our co-option pack⁸. You could also attend the free webinar on 13 May 2025.

Contracts of employment

Please remember to review contracts of employment before a new employee receives one. The latest version of the model contracts can be downloaded from the NALC website⁹.

For example we recently become aware of a contract requiring one months notice in the first 4 years of employment and after that it referred to the amount of time required by legislation. The legislation only requires one weeks notice after being in the job longer than a month¹⁰. In this instance therefore the employee would have had to give more notice in the first year of employment than in the fifth.

⁶https://www.ernllca.gov.uk/council_events/planning-day/

⁷<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/e/t/c/FA4CB0D1-3B37-464B-A403B181731650D0/?link=4B746DB5-C9E4-4020-8439FDA074308569>

⁸https://f2e4ea65a51ff182257e.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/ERNLLCA/Ea1ai7wSxB5Pg61VDSA8HIEBQ8KXa-0Ge5nV_IVEY63ikg?e=7405LR

⁹<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/model-contract-of-employment-for-parish-and-town-councils.html>

¹⁰<https://www.gov.uk/handling-in-your-notice/giving-notice>

Clear Councils Insurance on Martyn's Law

Clear Councils Insurance, has written an article exploring the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025¹¹, known as Martyn's Law. Parish and town councils should consider how the law may apply to their venues, events, and facilities. The article gives key examples of council-managed spaces that may be affected and includes practical guidance councils can take now to prepare for implementation.

Pay offer to NJC 'Green Book' employees

The National Employers for Local Government Services has made a final pay offer¹² to trades unions of a one-year (1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026) offer. The offer is for a 3.20 per cent to all NJC pay points. Pay point 2 would be deleted. A response from the trade unions is awaited. We will continue to provide updates on any developments.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return

Local Council's should have received the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) forms for 2024/25. The deadline for returning completed forms to the external auditor is 30 June 2025. Guidance on completing the AGAR can be found in the Practitioners' Guide 2024¹³ or by contacting your county association.

How has the first Quarter of the year affected the Energy Market?

Article by Utility Aid

Utility Aid has released the latest Energy Outlook, which takes a look at the first Quarter of the year. The report explores the impacts of the energy market and how this may affect the rest of the year.

Use the following link to watch¹⁴ Stephanie Steele, Partnership Coordinator at Utility Aid, talk you through the report.

Or visit Utility Aid's website¹⁵ to see the online report. If you have any questions about the energy market, or would like some advice about your energy contract, get in touch today! <https://www.utility-aid.co.uk/contactform/ERNLLCA>

¹¹<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/e/t/c/0EFF57E9-C9EA-47C1-A49A271BA09928E1/?link=E4FB8C4B-066A-4891-842DEDDC60769E75>

¹²<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/e/t/c/DE8F6B53-6E66-42C9-9EC7E0C0DC015F87/?link=5FFE500C-CAAA-451A-B4C27077DDC00C64>

¹³<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/e/t/c/FA4CB0D1-3B37-464B-A403B181731650D0/?link=C3725A80-7098-4D81-91CD85192F238218>

¹⁴<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLY9XLgeZQ4>



Practical Steps to Prevent Harassment

The Employment Rights Act 2025 includes provisions which make Councils and other Employers liable for harassment of their staff by members of the public and other third parties. This is in addition to Sexual Harassment legislation which came into effect in October 2024, which put the same obligation onto Employers.

For Town and Parish Councils this represents a significant obligation, as most Employees are in public contact roles and/or have regular contact with other third parties, such as Contractors.

Councils will be able to defend themselves against such claims if they have taken 'Reasonable Steps' to try and prevent the problem. The following steps will help Councils to protect themselves and their staff.

1. Since October 2024 Councils have been required to have adopted an up-to-date Anti-Harassment Policy and Procedure. This should include conducting risk assessments for public facing jobs, as well as action to be taken against the public and other third parties who breach it.
2. Ensure staff are engaged and consulted during the drafting of the policy document, and are able to recommend changes. The consultation process could also include Trade Union Representatives.

The Employment Rights Act 2025 includes provisions which make Councils and other Employers liable for harassment of their staff by members of the public and other third parties.

3. Provide training to staff to ensure they know what to do if harassment happens. Managers/Clerks also need training in how to respond to Employee complaints.

¹⁵<https://utility-aid.co.uk/energy-report>

4. Ensure there is a simple, accessible and workable Grievance process as part of the Anti-Harassment Policy, to enable Employees to report problems.
5. Appoint a Member of the Council as an Employees' Champion. They have no management responsibility but can act as someone who staff can bring their concerns to in confidence, and be confident that they will be addressed by an appropriate body within the Council.
6. Contracts with third parties, such as Contractors, should include a clause that holds them accountable for harassment by their staff, or anyone associated with them. This could include contracts with people who hire facilities such as Village Halls, and invite people in. Any harassment by their guests would be the Hirer's responsibility to address, and potentially compensate.
7. Publicise the Council's zero tolerance of third-party harassment. Anyone who is responsible for harassment could be banned from Council facilities, as well as reported to the Police.

[The Fair Work Agency](#)

The Employment Rights Act 2025 (currently the Employment Rights Bill) will create the Fair Work Agency, who will have a number of statutory powers:

- The ability to bring Employment Tribunal claims on behalf of workers – even if they don't want to claim themselves.
- The power to offer legal assistance for employment cases, with the Fair Work Agency's costs potentially recoverable from Councils if the claim succeeds.
- The authority to pursue Councils for unpaid holiday pay and sick pay, and impose financial penalties on top which go straight to the government.

Councils who previously relied on Employee reluctance to claim may now find the Fair Work Agency stepping in instead.

Proposed powers of the Fair Work Agency:

Many are looking to review their current staff structure to ensure they have the skills, people and resources to meet the challenges.

- Entry to Council Premises: FWA officers are authorized to enter business premises to examine documents, require individuals to produce records, and inspect equipment used for processing or storing information. They also have the authority to seize relevant documents during their investigations.

- **Entry to Private Dwellings:** In certain circumstances, FWA officers may enter private residences of Council Officers and Members if Council work activity is conducted at the premises. To do so, they must obtain a court warrant, demonstrating reasonable grounds for entry. This measure acknowledges the increasing prevalence of home-working and aims to ensure compliance with employment laws in such settings.
- **Arrest Powers:** Enforcement officers will possess powers comparable to those of the police, including the ability to make arrests during investigations into Employment Law breaches.

This may be subject to change prior to the Bill receiving Royal Assent in July.

Finally

The Town and Parish Council sector is facing major challenges due to devolution, significant increases in house building and a raft of new legislation. Many are looking to review their current staff structure to ensure they have the skills, people and resources to meet the challenges.

www.personneladviceandsolutions.co.uk¹⁶

¹⁶<http://www.personneladviceandsolutions.co.uk/>



May 2025 Newsletter

Civic Pride at Buckingham Palace Garden Party

Riston Parish Council Chair Cllr Rebecca Wilson and Cllr Richard Wilson had the honour of attending the 2025 Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. Set against the backdrop of a glorious spring afternoon, the event welcomed some 8,000 guests and members of the Royal Family, including King Charles III and Queen Camilla.

The councillors were proud to stand alongside community leaders from across the UK, celebrating the value and vital work of local councils. They described the experience as a “once-in-a-lifetime” moment and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to represent both Riston Parish Council and ERNLLCA.

“It was an honour beyond words to attend the Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. We were proud to represent ERNLLCA and Riston Parish Council, meet so many wonderful people, and be part of a truly historic and beautiful occasion.”

Councillor Rebecca Wilson, Riston Parish Council Chair





Training



Planning

NALC and CPRE launch a new guide – How to respond to planning applications¹. As planning reforms and rapid development continue to reshape towns and countryside, communities need tools to ensure local voices are heard. The revamped guide is the go-to starting point for anyone who wants to understand – and have a say in – what gets built in their local area.

For those that wish to know more about planning reforms and responding to planning we have organised a training day with Andrew Towler on the 5 June 2025. For more details and to book your place please log in and visit Planning Day | ERNLLCA²

HR Training

Back by popular demand we have arranged for more HR training sessions with Chris Moses from Personnel Advice and Solutions.

- **HR Essentials** – 15th July 10am – Successful recruitment, inductions, contracts, sickness and grievance and disciplinary issues
- **Addressing conflict between employees and members** – 20th September 6.30pm
- **Misuse of social media for intimidation and harassment** – 29th October 6.30pm

Prices are £20/£30 depending on Electorate size.

Please log in to our website to book Events | ERNLLCA³

Coming Together for VE Day 80



VE Day 80 has been a fantastic chance for communities to come together in a spirit of shared respect and remembrance. It's been heartwarming to see so many local councils putting on events that not only honour the past but also bring people together in meaningful ways.

¹<https://f2e4ea65a51ff182257e.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/ERNLLCA/EW2B5qc5hy9Bm7bVeX7TIMMBonwMwygOp-DTCI1eunrPA?e=jLtuDz>

²https://www.ernllca.gov.uk/council_events/planning-day/

³https://www.ernllca.gov.uk/council_events/

These kinds of events really show the power of community—whether it's neighbours chatting over tea, kids learning local history, or families coming out to enjoy a day together.

When councils get involved like this, it makes a real difference. It helps people feel more connected to where they live, encourages community engagement, and even inspires others to step up and get involved—maybe even as future councillors! It's a great reminder that local government can be a real force for good when it's rooted in community and shared purpose.

Precept Figures for 2025-26

For those of you who are excited by spreadsheets, you might be interested in the government's Council Tax Live Tables⁴. Recently information was added about the 2025-26 precept levels of parish and town councils.

The government spreadsheet for 2025-26 is not that user friendly. We have attempted to make it simpler to use. Our spreadsheet is focused only on the ERNLLCA area. You can view information for the whole ERNLLCA area and by district.⁵

The inspiration for making our spreadsheet was a comment from a clerk that their council was 'small.' The council in question has in fact a council tax base that is about 300-400 council tax payers more than the average for our area.

The figures make for interesting reading. For example, the 2025-26 council tax base for the ERNLLCA area is 177,583.91 and £11,997,633 in precept will be collected.

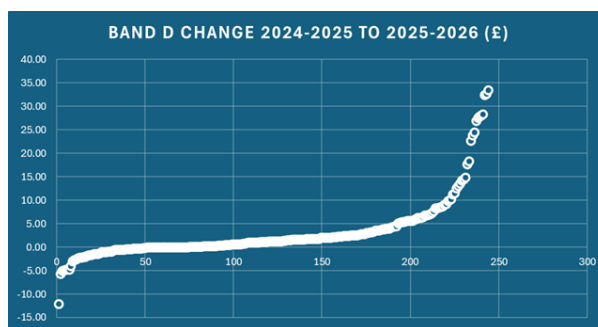
About 75% of the precept for the ERNLLCA area will come from the East Riding of Yorkshire. Goole Town Council (East Riding) will collect the most precept at £1,415,000. However, Goole's tax base is 5,602.2 whereas Bridlington's is much larger at 11,755.6.

At the other end of the scale is West Ravendale (North East Lincolnshire) which has a tax base of 8.81. Ravendale is so expansive that there is also an East Ravendale with a tax base of 38.13. The North East Lincolnshire area is interesting in that seven (one third) of the local councils have not set a precept. In the wider ERNLLCA area there are that have a precept of £1,000 or less.

There are lots of ways of looking at the information, but the graph below is helpful. It shows the Band D change in pounds of every local council in the ERNLLCA area between 2024-25 and 2025-26. In other words, the increase or decrease a Band D property will pay from one year to the next.

⁴<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-council-tax>

⁵https://f2e4ea65a51ff182257e.sharepoint.com/:x:/s/ERNLLCA/EYEDtVLigxdOiwr0jUVQG_gBkxpvIUURNPWnJug5Vu85hA?e=HMI16L



The graph shows some Band D council tax went down. This can be because of a variety of factors and could include a reduction in the precept or changes to the tax base because of house building.

What is most interesting however is that 222 out of 245 local councils (90.61%) had a Band D change of £10.01 or less. Even at the 'higher' end of £10.01 extra per year the change equates to about 19p more a week.

What is most useful about the data is that it shows the wide variation in the area. A local council can have a large tax base (and therefore population) with a low precept (either the total collected or Band D) and vice versa.

It is also worth keeping in mind that the precept is only part of the story. Some local councils generate income through things such as the provision of services, grants and venue hire.

Please note that the original data was been sourced from the government website and there might be issues we are not aware of with it. We have also simplified the presentation of the data, and it is possible that mistakes have been made. This is our first attempt at doing something like this. If, however, you spot an issue or have a comment, please get in touch.

New Complaints Policy Template

Most local councils will get a complaint once in a while. It is important that your council is ready for those complaints.

One way your local council can be prepared is by having a complaints policy. ERNLLCA has created a new template complaints policy for local councils to adapt and use.

The policy is one that has been designed with smaller councils in mind. It will need adapting to a council's specific needs. It is likely that larger councils will need something that is more bespoke. It is also worth bearing in mind that each council has a different character and it is unlikely that any two councils will have an identical approach.

The policy can be download via the ERNLLCA website.⁶

⁶https://f2e4ea65a51ff182257e.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/ERNLLCA/EcUrnIVr7nFlu8DX5xOy6h4BDZi9_Z2wZNJ9Tsb3M7kzGA?e=jjgYBq

Insurance

Are you correctly insured?

There can be an over reliance on incorrect figures that have been listed in the asset register for a nominal value as a gift or solely for the original cost, which may not reflect the replacement cost and leave the council exposed as under insured. This can create a problem leaving councils to pay the difference between the insurance valuation and the actual cost of a claim.

What happens if you are not insured correctly?

If you over insure you are paying more than you need, but if you under insure then you run the risk of the 'average' being applied to any claim. If your building was insured for £250,000 but the actual cost of rebuilding was £500,000 a claim could be reduced by 50%. The council in such a circumstance would then have to pay the difference. This averaging process can also apply to items such as play equipment, surfaces, skate parks etc. In terms of infrastructure items (benches, bins, signs etc) then the sum insured needs to represent the total value of them all, not just what might be lost in one claim, as otherwise the average could be applied to this too.

Are you correctly insured?

What to look out for?

- War memorials and statues. These are often under insured because they often haven't had proper valuations done recently and in some cases ever. There can sometimes be an over reliance on the original purchase cost.
- Contents. You should generally insure for the replacement value of items.
- Art, antiques, regalia and silverware. Despite being expensive they can be overlooked when it comes to insurance. It may be appropriate to have regular valuations. It can sometimes come as a shock to a council to find out how much some individual items are worth and would cost of replacement.
- Terms and Conditions. It is also worth noting terms and conditions for example storage of items of regalia. It can invalidate a claim where mayoral chains are kept overnight at the mayors house following a civic event, when the terms stipulate they must be in a safe at the council office.

What about buildings?

When it comes to insuring buildings you might wish to seek a reinstatement valuation. This covers demolition, site clearance and rebuild costs including professional fees. For buildings of a standard construction it might be worth repeating the exercise once every 3 years. For buildings that are listed or non-standard construction then more frequent valuations and physical surveys may be required more often. Your insurance provider can help you with guidance on what is required.

The Council must ensure assets have up to date insurance values and that insurance documents are carefully reviewed to accurately reflects those values.

HR Update



Personnel Advice and Solutions have provided the following guides that may be of interest to your council. If you need any specific employment support ERNLLCA can refer you to Chris Moses at Personnel Advice and Solutions, however there may be a charge for anything beyond general advice.

How to guide - conducting formal disciplinary action⁷

Basic sickness management procedure⁸

⁷https://f2e4ea65a51ff182257e.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/ERNLLCA/EcLIN0KmxExBlvaJhWLWP_wB5F3D-jll_4KnzhpaawDSKA?e=ALpvFp

⁸https://f2e4ea65a51ff182257e.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/ERNLLCA/EV_e2eun4hdBsRp7XTg09z4ByLhGwIFkbiCE7Alyc0f_1Q?e=VDqyKB

Laxton Parish Council

Accounts for Payment – May / June 2025

Payments made to be noted

Payee	Details	Total £
J Huntley	VE Day Refreshments	400
Clerk	Defib Pads	204
ERNLCCA	Membership Invoice	327.60
A Bradburn	Gardening	100
Tesco Mobile	Mobile Contract	10.50
Poppy Hunt	Phone Payment	10.50
Public Works Loan Board	Loan Payment	1570.72
Best Flag	VE Day Flag	29.95
ERYC	Salt Bin Filling	62.40
ERNLLCA	Training	24.00
Clerk	Cost of Annual Email Subs	53.86

Receipts to be noted

- Precept – £3864.17
- Allotment Rent - £70

Payments to be Authorised

Payee	Details	Total £
Poppy Hunt	June and July Salary	£226
HMRC	June and July PAYE	£39.2
Alan Bravey	2024/25 Expenses	£152.92 (£100 working from home allowance + £52.92 M365)
Poppy Hunt	2024/25 Expenses	£41 working from home allowance
A Bradburn	Gardening	£200