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Partnership Forum

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# LOCAL COUNCILS – CHANGING FAST – AND POTENTIAL VAST!

- NALC represents 10000 local (parish and town) councils and 100000 councillors
- Working closely with a network of 43 brilliant county associations to raise understanding of their potential, build capacity and confidence and help them fulfil their potential to work with others to support their communities
- £1bn spend, contributing £3bn to local communities
- All very, very, different – size, spend and ambition
- Cover 30% of the country but growing – Northampton Town, Queens’ Park London and Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham
- Doing more – devolution, health and wellbeing, climate emergency...
- Potential to be at the heart of place shaping partnerships – work with each other!

# COMPLICATED, CHALLENGING TIMES DEMAND INCLUSIVE, CO-OPERATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

- Post(?) COVID world
- Inclusion and diversity
- Health and wellbeing, mental health
- Housing and Planning
- Cost of living
- Devo deals
- Loneliness and isolation
- Climate emergency
- Rural inequality
- Transport and connectivity
- Ukraine
- Levelling up

## PARISHES AND PARTNERSHIPS -SOME TESTIMONIALS

“The potential of parish and town councils to contribute to vibrant and successful local and community governance has grown noticeably in the last decade.” (LGA report 2021)

“Joint-working, cooperation and collaboration between councils and between councils and other organisations provides for efficiency, effectiveness and ...public service improvement” (DCN report 2022)

## Local service delivery and place-shaping: A framework to support parish and town councils



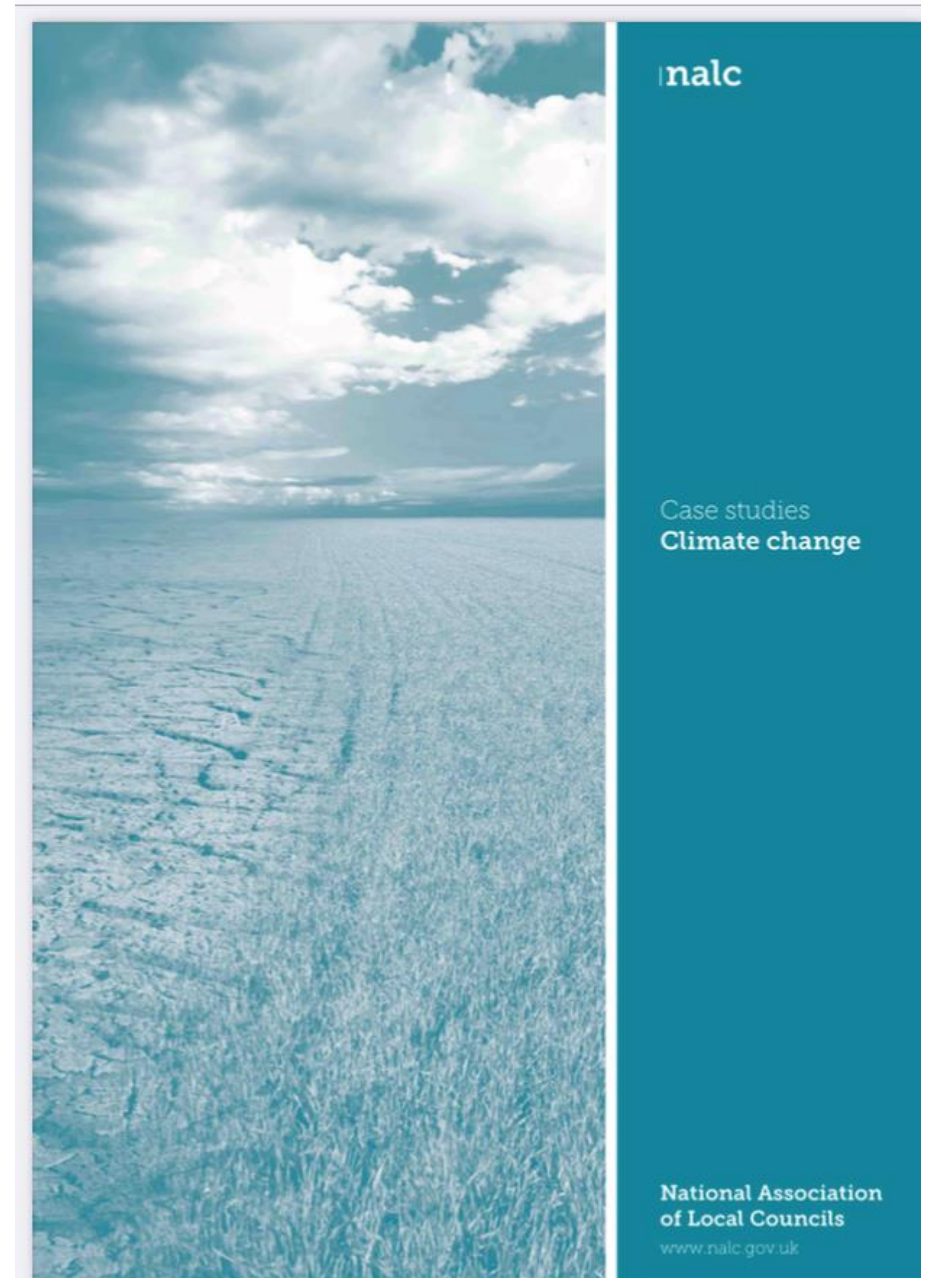
The screenshot shows the top portion of a document cover. On the left, there is a logo for 'Leicestershire and Rutland County Council' with the text 'Leicestershire and Rutland County Council' and 'Supporting parish and town councils' below it. To the right of the logo, the title 'Local service delivery and place-shaping: A framework to support parish and town councils' is displayed in a purple font. Below the title, a summary text reads: 'This document presents a framework for principal councils looking to support parish and town (local) councils to play an increased role in local service delivery and place-shaping. While aimed at principal councils, the research has also been steered by interviews with representatives of the local authorities.' At the bottom right of the document cover, there are two buttons: a 'Print' button with a printer icon and a purple button with a white upward-pointing arrow.





## CLIMATE EMERGENCY

- 40% of local councils have declared a climate emergency
- Falmouth Town Council (Cornwall) – signatory to Motion4theOcean
- Forest Row (East Sussex) – Repair café
- Frome Town Council (Somerset) – neighbourhood plan: greener housing, integrated transport
- Bembridge (IoW) – electric charging point at parish office
- Blakesley (Northants) – ground source heat pump for hall
- Wealden Wheels (Kent) – 5 parish councils support community transport scheme



## HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- Feock parish council (Cornwall) – collaboration with VCSOs to reduce isolation and loneliness
- Milton parish council (Cambs) – Community warden scheme
- Devon – Dementia friendly parishes around the Yealm. 5 small parishes working together.
- Corbridge parish council (Northumberland) – Loneliness campaign with NHS, churches and Age UK
- Audlem and 5 parishes (Cheshire) – carers respite
- Essex county association – mental health first aid training

## TOPICS

Creating healthier communities

Crohn's and Colitis

Dementia

Epilepsy

Healthwatch

Loneliness

Mental health

## SUPPORTING COMMUNITY BUSINESS (Plunkett Foundation/ Power to change report).

- Hailsham Town Council (Sussex) – set up CIC to keep local post office
- Church Fenton parish council (Yorks) – set up community benefit society to support pub and community hub
- Much Wenlock Town Council and 5 others (Shropshire) – Friendly bus
- Tollerton Parish Council (Notts) – helped fund Tollerton Flying Club pub through public works loan.



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## THE GOOD COUNCILLOR'S GUIDE TO COMMUNITY BUSINESS



# LEVELLING UP MUST ADDRESS RURAL INEQUALITY TOO

- National initiatives on devolution and levelling up
- Recognise role of parish and town councils and voluntary and community sector
- Must not just be a North/South or Urban issue
- High levels of rural inequality must be addressed too
- Rural communities and partnerships must work together to shout loudly and influence agenda

## Parishes lined up for greater powers in devo White Paper

By Michael Burton

More powers for town and parish councils are earmarked in a radical shake-up of town and county hall structures due in the autumn White Paper on devolution.

Confirming last week the Government will be 'pressing ahead with the publication of our White Paper on devolution and local recovery this autumn' local government minister Simon Clarke said the plans would 'remove the complexity of governance and reduce costs to the taxpayer while making space for town and parish councils to be genuinely empowered'.

Speaking at the Local Government Association virtual conference he added: 'I'm acutely aware of the vital contribution that town and parish councils make to everyday life, whether it's keeping public toilets open, running car parks or maintaining natural spaces which have been a lifeline to many throughout this time.' He added: 'I really do want to say a thank you to parish and town councils who have been doing amazing work.'

Justin Griggs, head of policy at the National Association of Local Councils, said: 'We need to recognise that many parish and town councils have stepped up during the pandemic and must be part of the devo agenda. When reorganisation takes place



Simon Clarke (pictured with chancellor Rishi Sunak) had praise for parish and town councils

He said the paper would include plans for 'more elected mayors and unitaries as in Dorset, Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire'

he said: 'We don't want councils to make serious in-year savings or issue s114 notices when it's not required.'  
In advance of the White Paper many

### Councils still at risk despite £500m boost

The head of Parliament's financial watchdog has warned 'a lot' of councils remained at risk of 'effectively going bankrupt' despite a £500m cash injection.

Communities secretary Robert Jenrick last week announced an unringfenced £500m and will allow council and business rates tax deficits to be repaid over three years instead of the usual one. In addition, where losses are more than 5% of a local authority's planned income from sales, fees and charges, the Government will cover 75p for every pound lost.

Despite the latest package, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has conceded that councils could still be left with unmanageable pressures and urged any authority thinking of issuing a Section 114 notice to contact the department.

But chair of the Public Accounts Committee, Meg Hillier, said this week: 'My concern is that s114 notices could effectively be delayed rather than prevented, that local government is already having to make tough decisions about its spending, notwithstanding the announcement made





## NOT ALL PLAIN SAILING

- Lack of awareness of role of local councils, locally and nationally
- The diversity challenge
- Encourage more people to stand for election
- Communications with residents
- Training and standards
- General power of competence & confidence
- Seize the opportunity!

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# Election 2021: What about parish councils?

By Rob England and Jacob Tomlinson  
BBC News

23 April 2021



## IS THERE A NEW COMMUNITY SPIRIT AND HOW CAN IT BE HARNESSSED TO SUPPORT PARTNERSHIPS?

“There’s nothing more local than the parish or town council. They know their community street by street and to say they inspired and supported local volunteering in response to Covid is an understatement”

(Royal Voluntary Service report (March 2021))



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on them

- A massive 12.4 million people volunteered during the pandemic, 4.6 million of them for the first time, of whom 75% would volunteer again

*"We found a clear public appetite for a society in which we are more connected to each other and the community spirit of 2020 is kept alive."*

- Bishop Nick Baines, Chair of  
**/together** trustees