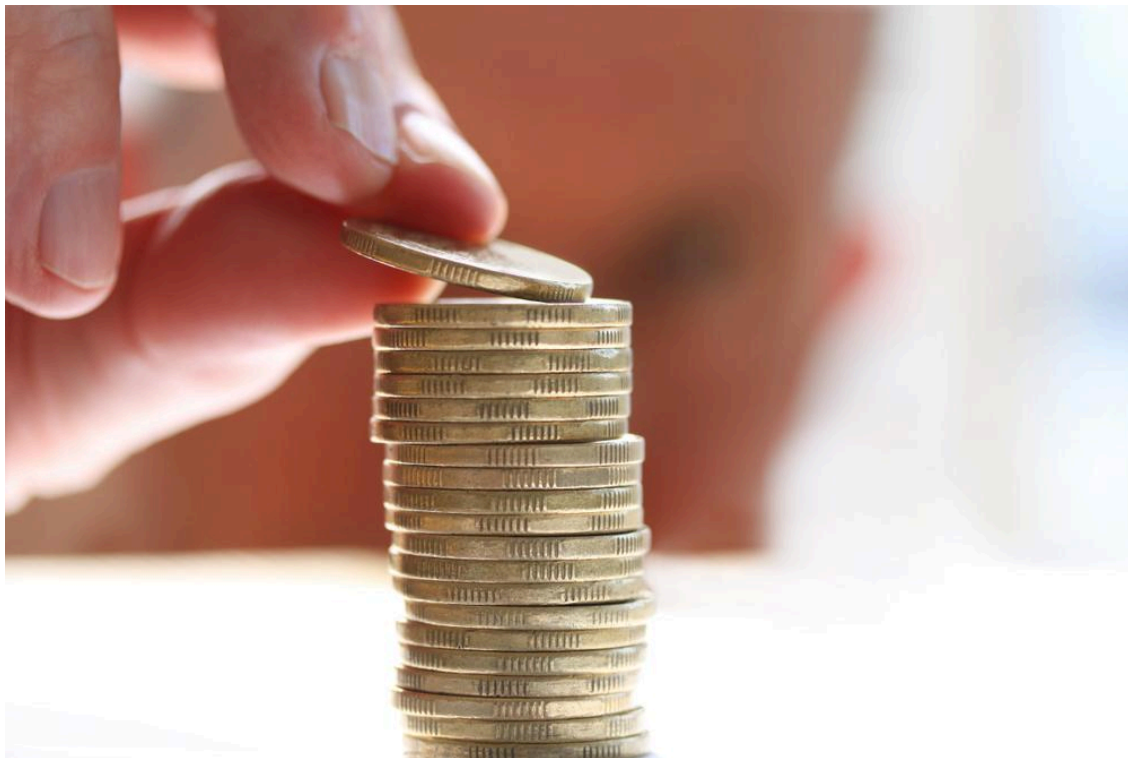




Northumberland Association of Local Councils



NALC publishes updated local government pay scales for 2026/27

We have published an updated advice note covering the local government services pay agreement for 2026/27.

The National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services has agreed a 3.3% increase in pay rates and allowances applicable from 1

The advice note sets out the revised annual salaries and hourly rates for clerks and other employees employed under the terms of the model contract, including salary points 50 and above. The new rates should be applied retrospectively from 1 April 2026.

It also provides guidance on backpay for employees who have left their employment since that date. Where a former employee requests payment, we recommend parish and town councils pay any money owed from 1 April 2026 until their final day of employment.

Hourly rates have been calculated using the NJC-agreed formula based on a standard 37-hour working week. The updated scales also reflect the deletion of salary point 2 from 1 April 2026.

More information and a list of pay scales can be found [HERE](#)



THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE NORTHUMBERLAND ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

Will take place on Saturday 12th September 2026 starting at 10.00 am
at County Hall Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 2AP

Everyone is welcome. Please RSVP by Friday 11th September by
emailing info@northumberlandalc.uk



NALC urges the government to deliver remote meetings reform

We have written to Jim McMahon OBE MP, the new Minister for Local Government, Devolution and Growth, welcoming the inclusion of parish and town councils within his ministerial responsibilities.

In our letter, our chair, Cllr Iain Hamilton, welcomed the government's commitment to devolution and the recognition of parish and town councils in the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act. We also stressed that parish and town councils must remain central to the devolution settlement, ensuring power reaches every city, town and village.

Modernising local democracy was a key focus of our letter. We highlighted our long-standing campaign for parish and town councils to have the flexibility to hold remote meetings. We welcomed the government's previous commitment and consultation on the issue.

Remote and hybrid meetings proved highly effective during the COVID-19 pandemic. They would provide parish and town councils with greater flexibility to meet local needs. They can improve accessibility, increase participation, and make it easier for councillors to balance public service with work, caring responsibilities and disabilities, while helping councils attract and retain a more diverse range of representatives.

Read more [HERE](#)



NALC joins national call to support Remembrance events

We are joining forces with the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Royal British Legion (RBL) to encourage councils across England to support the delivery of Remembrance parades and services in their communities this autumn.

[In our joint letter](#), the three organisations thank councils for their continuing commitment to Remembrance and recognise the important role they play in helping communities come together to honour those who have served in the Armed Forces.

This year's letter highlights the practical support all tiers of councils can provide to help ensure Remembrance events can take place, particularly at a time when budgets are under pressure. It notes that measures such as waiving road closure fees, providing street signage and coordinating parade routes can make a significant difference to local commemorations.

Read more [HERE](#)

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Star Council Awards

Nominations for the 2026/27 Star Council Awards close on 25th September 2026.

Our Star Council Awards are the pinnacle of nationwide recognition for parish and town councils. These prestigious awards celebrate the innovation, dedication, and outstanding achievements of parish and town councils, councillors, young councillors, county associations, and clerks. Parish and town councils are the heartbeat of communities, driving initiatives that enrich the lives of residents and enhance the vitality of local areas. These awards highlight the exceptional efforts of these councils, showcasing the remarkable projects and services that make a difference every day.

The awards span various categories, ensuring every aspect of parish and town council work is celebrated:

- Council of the Year — Honouring councils that exemplify excellence in service delivery and impact, leadership, collaboration and community engagement.
- Councillor of the Year — Acknowledging councillors whose efforts have made a significant difference in their community.
- Young Councillor of the Year — Celebrating the contributions of young leaders who bring fresh perspectives and energy to local governance.
- Climate Response of the Year — Highlighting innovative projects that show an understanding of climate change and how its impact

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County Association of the Year. Encouraging the support county associations provide councils through guidance, training, events, managing projects and producing publications.

- Clerk of the Year — Recognising exceptional clerks whose dedication and expertise have significantly impacted their council.

The Star Council Awards will culminate in a parliamentary reception at the House of Lords on 23 February 2027, where winners will be announced and celebrated. This event is more than an awards night. It celebrates the power of local governance and community spirit. It's an opportunity to network, share success stories, and inspire others. For more information and to find out how to submit a nomination read more [HERE](#).



Digital AGAR Portal Communications – Confirmation of Authenticity

We understand that some Parish and Town Councils are querying the authenticity of an email sent by SAAA regarding the forthcoming Digital AGAR Portal.

The email in question is genuine and was sent by SAAA as part of our preparations for the introduction of the new portal. As part of this process, we are asking authorities to confirm their contact details, including email addresses and key contacts, to ensure that portal registration and sign-up information is accurate. Later this year, they will also provide small authorities with further information about free portal training offered by NALC, SLCC and ADA.

We recognise that some may not be familiar with SAAA, as historically their role in the smaller authority audit regime has largely been

arrangements, authorities will naturally become more familiar with SAAA and their responsibilities.

To provide additional reassurance, SAA have placed a notice on the homepage of their website confirming that these communications are genuine. Authorities can view this notice at [SAAA website](https://www.saaa.co.uk).

www.saaa.co.uk



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This process helps protect your personal information and ensures that only you can choose to receive communications from us. Resubscribing only takes a moment and guarantees you continue receiving the latest news, updates, and announcements directly to your inbox.

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Northumberland County Office is only an email away.

Best regards

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info@northumberlandalc.uk

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info@northumberlandalc.uk

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