

# Mini *eUpdate* from Northants CALC

To Member Councils in Northamptonshire:

[Please read and circulate to all councillors]

## Public Sector Contracts

Since the end of February 2025, open invitations for local authority contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT must be published on **Find a Tender** (<https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk>) rather than on Contracts Finder. Posting an invitation on Contracts Finder is no longer compliant with the law and councils should use Find a Tender instead. This is one of the changes brought about by the Procurement Act 2023, which came into force on 24 February 2025. The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has produced **new Model Financial Regulations and Standing Orders** to reflect the requirements of the Procurement Act, but rather than disseminate whole new documents to adopt, Northants CALC is going to produce a paper that member councils can take to a council meeting just to approve the minor things that have changed. This will be available next week.

## Leading on Health & Wellbeing

On Tuesday, Northants CALC attended an inspirational event hosted by Moulton Parish Council focused on developing the **Moulton Health and Wellbeing Implementation Plan**. The plan articulates how the parish council, GP surgery, schools, and voluntary and community organisations will work together to ensure the health and wellbeing of people living in Moulton and the surrounding villages. The plan will also align local activities with the ten "Live Your Best Life" ambitions in the West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The event was well attended and showed what is possible when community actors work together. For more information, see <https://www.moultonnorthants-pc.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing>.

## Countdown to Close of Nominations

In less than two weeks, nominations for the elections to be held on 1 May 2025 will close. If you wish to be a candidate in the elections, you need to submit your nomination papers, in person, by appointment, by 1600 on Thursday 2 April 2025. This includes **all existing councillors wishing to seek re-election**. For more information, speak to the clerk of your parish or town council or see <https://northantscalc.gov.uk/elections>.

## Cloudy to Clear

The Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) Northamptonshire Branch held its spring meeting yesterday at Harlestone Village Institute with around thirty clerks from across Northamptonshire in attendance. Steve Walker, Head of Local Government Services at Cloudy IT, gave a presentation on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the impact it is having on the parish and town council sector. Cloudy IT has produced **a range of AI tools for councils** to help with meetings, planning, and governance

(<https://www.cloudyit.co.uk/govassist>) and Steve set out clearly how clerks can use AI to improve efficiency. After the main presentation, Lionel Thatcher from the Association of Local Council Clerks (<https://alccunion.co.uk>), the trade union for the local council sector, provided an update including that the ALCC is soon rebranding to the Union for Local Council Staff (ULCS).

### Trustee Positions

Are you looking for a new opportunity to use your expertise, energy, and vision? Our partners at the **University of Northampton** are looking for a new member for the Board of Governors and two committee members. Skills needed include community engagement, finance, and IT. The committee roles are in Audit and Risk, and Remuneration. These positions are voluntary but with expenses reimbursed. Diversity is valued. See <https://tinyurl.com/3an4t7ee> for all the details.

### Section 137 Limit

On Monday, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government announced the **Section 137 expenditure limit** for parish and town councils in England for the 2025/26 financial year. The new limit is **£11.10 per elector**, up from £10.81 in 2024/25. Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows parish and town councils to incur expenditures for purposes that benefit their communities when no specific statutory power is available.

### Local Council Vacancies

**Great Doddington Parish Council** has a vacancy for a clerk. Great Doddington is a medium-sized village just south of the A45 at Wellingborough. There are 919 electors, and the council has 9 seats. The precept for 2024/25 is £30,000. The position is being advertised at just 20 hours per month and the council has instructed Northants CALC to advertise the vacancy despite advice from us that the contracted hours are below the recommended minimum. The deadline for applications is 1700 **TODAY, 21 March 2025**.

Full details of all vacancies are available at <https://northantscalc.gov.uk/council-vacancies>.

I hope you have a good weekend.

Best regards,

Danny.