

Mini eUpdate from Northants CALC

To Member Councils in Northamptonshire:

[Please read and circulate to all councillors]

Civil Unrest

Community cohesion and law and order in the UK have been under threat over the past ten days. On Wednesday, Deputy Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police, Ash Tuckley, sent a message to Police Liaison Representatives (PLRs) with an update on the operational situation in the county and advice on how communities can respond. Please ask your PLR for a copy if it hasn't already been disseminated.

Councillors who hold strong political beliefs must be mindful about what they are saying in public and what they are writing on social media at all times, but especially when tensions are high. Councillors are of course entitled to a private life outside their council life, and are entitled to freedom of speech, but when a councillor "*...acts or gives the impression of acting in their official capacity*", which is the case if their social media feed refers to their role as a councillor, then the **Code of Conduct** is engaged and what the councillor is saying or writing is measured against the requirements of the Nolan Principles, including **Leadership** and **Objectivity**. Inappropriate commentary may also give rise to criminal complaints. Racism, discrimination, and intolerance are not acceptable in local government, in public life, or in the world we live in.

Government's Plans on Planning Reform and Housebuilding

Last week, the government announced an overhaul of the planning system and **a plan to increase housebuilding**. Northamptonshire has already seen massive housing growth over the past decade and that is now set to continue and to increase. Under the plans, the current target of 1,856 new homes every year for North Northamptonshire, would be increased to **2,064 (up 11%)**, and for West Northamptonshire the current target of 2,124 per year would be increased to **2,584 (up 21%)**. The government plans to deliver 1.5 million new homes over the next five years and will make changes to the National Planning Policy Framework where necessary to ensure it happens. The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has launched a consultation on the plans, which you can find at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system>. Should you or your council wish to respond, the deadline is **24 September 2024**.

Council Vacancies

Just over the border in Warwickshire, between Daventry and Rugby is the large village of Dunchurch with a population of just over 4,000. **Dunchurch Parish Council** has a vacancy for a Clerk/RFO working 15 hours per week. The deadline for applications is **5pm on 16 August 2024**.

Meanwhile, back in Northamptonshire, we are aware of a couple of vacancies coming up at small councils in the south of the county between Towcester and Brackley. Please get in touch with Northants CALC if you would like to find out more.

Full details of all the above vacancies please see <https://www.northantscalc.com/council-vacancies>.

I hope you have a good weekend.

Best regards,

Danny.