

### **AGENDA ITEM 13: NALC CALLS FOR THE ABOLITION OF CHARTER TRUSTEES.**

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has urged the government to abolish all charter trustee bodies which have not become local (parish and town) councils by the end of the next parliament.

There are 17 charter trustee bodies including the City of Durham) remaining in England which have still not become local councils and NALC now thinks the number is now up for these

Charter trustee bodies have been variously created, parished or abolished since the Local Government Act, 1972. They were traditionally created where an ancient borough or district was abolished and a new one created – and are usually comprised of principal authority councillors covering the same warded areas.

The role of charter trustees is to protect the civic tradition, mayoralty and regalia for the ancient area they represent. However there are now just 17 of these areas left and traditionally the expectation was that these areas would gain local councils, fully elected local council with precept raising powers, able to better represent the community and spend money on services the community wanted.

Many charter trustee areas such as Bexhill (Sussex) have become a block on new local councils being created. Though elected as district councillors first charter trustees are not elected as charter trustees per se; many of these bodies incur large precepts which have recently increased and in the main charter trustee areas have not become local councils due to fiercely guarded local claims on heritage protection.

Cllr Sue Baxter, chairman of NALC, said: "Most charter trustee bodies seem to have lost their way and have forgotten that they were only ever supposed to be temporary

bodies created as a half-way house to a local council being created. Some recent charter trustee bodies have become very large local councils and are doing an excellent job as fully elected bodies representing their communities – Banbury, Hereford and Kidderminster, for instance. That is why we think charter trustees have had their day and the Government should parish the remaining 17 charter trustee areas by the end of this parliament. If this has not happened by then, the government should act to abolish all remaining charter trust bodies by the end of the next parliament.”

<b>Recommended action</b>	For the information of members.
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