

December 2014

Dear Quality Council,

As you may be aware, the new Local Council Award Scheme will be launched on 6th January 2015 and will replace the Quality Parish and Town Council Scheme.

I am writing firstly to say thank you for taking part in the Quality Council Scheme and for being an example of the very best that town and parish councils can be. Secondly, I'd like to tell you a little about the Local Council Award Scheme and how you can be part in it, as I am very much hoping to see Quality Councils at the forefront of this new scheme.

The new Local Council Award Scheme will recognise and celebrate the successes of the very best councils, providing a framework to support all councils improve and develop to meet their full potential.

The scheme will offer the opportunity to show that your council meets a set of standards and practices set by the sector, assessed by your peers, and to put in place the conditions for continued improvement. You can access further information via your County Association, the *Our Work* pages of the NALC website or by contacting Charlotte Eisenhart who co-ordinates the scheme : at Charlotte.Eisenhart@nalc.gov.uk or 0207 290 0319.

In recognition of the calibre of all existing Quality Councils and your patience and support over the transition period between the schemes, we want to make it as quick and easy as possible for you to be accredited by the new scheme. As one of the best councils in the sector, the new scheme's progress and success will be determined by your involvement.

Your Quality Council Status will expire on 31 January 2015. You can apply for an automatic transition to the Foundation level of the new Local Council Award Scheme - at no cost and without taking part in any accreditation process. Simply fill out the application form here <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/lcawardscheme>. We recommend you do this as a first step and then consider working towards the next two award levels.

Free Foundation award level:

If you would not like a 'break' in your status between the old and new schemes you should complete the simple application form **before 31 January 2015** at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/lcawardscheme>

Your free Foundation level accreditation will last until January 2016.

Quality award level:

Your council can apply for this any time during 2015 at half the normal fee.

Quality Gold award level:

Your council can apply for this any time during 2015 at 75% the normal fee.

The full criteria and guidance for the scheme will be made available at <http://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/local-council-award-scheme> on 6th January when the scheme launches. If you do have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your county association or check out the scheme page on the website.

I very much look forward to your involvement in the Local Council Award Scheme and hope that it does achieve its goals of supporting you to meet your ambitions for your local community.

Kind regards,

Jonathan Owen

NALC Chief Executive