

July 2009

MEETINGS OF PARISH MEETINGS

Introduction

1. The law in respect of parish meetings is set out in sections 9 and 13 and Part 3 of Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972.
2. A parish meeting consists of the local government electors of a parish and the purpose of the meeting is to discuss parish affairs. There is no statutory definition or caselaw to determine what constitutes a "parish affair". NALC is of the view that a parish affair could be any local issue, activity, subject matter which specifically affects a particular parish and which a parish meeting may wish to discuss, debate and potentially influence. It would exclude matters which affect all parishes in the country equally. Please also see the NALC Legal Briefing issued in 2009 for further guidance on the procedure for convening a meeting (or assembly) of a parish meeting, the powers of a parish meeting and the scope of matters which may be the subject of a consequent poll.
3. Meetings of a parish meeting are an effective forum for parish and town councils to engage with the local electorate. Even if the parish or town council disagrees with the issues raised, or related arguments, the council members' attendance and involvement in the parish meeting would demonstrate that the council is prepared to take account of local residents' views, which they must hold strongly if they have gone to the trouble to convene and attend a meeting of a parish meeting in the first place.

Convening a meeting

4. A meeting of a parish meeting may be convened by any of the following:
 - the chairman of the parish council;
 - any two parish councillors for the parish;
 - where there is no parish council, the chairman of the parish meeting or any

