



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CIVIC OFFICERS – BUSINESS PLAN	
Document Owner	NACO
Dated	September 2025
Last Modified	August 2025
Review	August 2026

CHAIR'S FORWARD

I am pleased to introduce NACO's business plan for 2025 – 2028.

The **N**ational **A**ssociation of **C**ivic **O**fficers (NACO) promotes excellence in local authority civic offices throughout the UK. It provides training events designed specifically for civic officers and a network of experienced professionals.

The Association was formed in 1999 from the Civic Secretaries Group, which had existed since 1992. The Association was built on the foundation of sharing and promoting best practice in civic offices in the UK and providing training to civic staff.

The Association has grown since its inception and has achieved its position as the largest and most active organization for civic staff and is well regarded amongst practitioners, government departments and think tanks.

A democratically elected Executive Committee runs NACO and everyone is encouraged to stand for election or help in other ways.

We are a friendly, helpful organisation where mutual support is one of the great benefits to be had by members.

We have come a long way since 1999. Membership has consistently increased, as has the range of services we offer to our members. We manage to do this with no membership fee and by keeping our costs low, whilst attracting other sources of income to fund our activities.

Through implementing this business plan, I am confident that NACO will continue to grow and increase its influence across all forms of government and related sectors.

Tracy Frisby, Chair NACO

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the Association is to promote best practice and knowledge of civic life at national, regional and local level throughout the United Kingdom. The objectives are to:

a	Promote the exchange of information and ideas about civic ceremonial and related issues
b	Establish a framework for the development of Civic Officers
c	Provide a voice for consultation with central and local government and other organisations
d	Provide opportunities for joint development initiatives, resources and training

PRIORITIES

NACO Business Plan 2025-28 - Priorities Action Plan					
	Key Action	Costings	Executive Committee Lead	Target Date / Key Milestones	Progress / Comments
Priority 1 – to provide leaning and development opportunities for our members					
1	Implement targeted communication strategies to engage and recruit new members from underrepresented regions and local authorities	Nominal	Chair / Secretary / Communications Officer	Welsh / NI / Scotland targets on going	<p>As of 14th August 2025:</p> <p>Total number of NACO members: 1,710 (↑ 15.8%)</p> <p>Scotland Local Authority Members: 46 (2.69% ↑ 0.12%)</p> <p>Wales Local Authority Members: 36 (2.10% ↑ 0.01%)</p> <p>Northern Ireland Local Authority Members: 8 (0.46% ↑ 0.13%)</p> <p>England Local Authority Members: 1620 (94.7% ↓ 0.25%)</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct baseline analysis to identify underrepresented regions and local authorities Design targeted communication strategy and messaging framework
2	Review the effectiveness of the annual training	Nil	Training Event Sub Committee	Report to Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collate and analyse attendee feedback through post-event surveys

	event and determine strategic options for its future delivery			Committee annually in June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with members and stakeholders to understand evolving training needs and preferences Evaluate delivery formats, e.g. in person, virtual, hybrid to determine the most effective and accessible approach
3	Identify and evaluate potential keynote speakers to enhance the quality and relevance of forthcoming training events	Nil	Chair / Vice Chairs / Communications Officer	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop speaker criteria based on themes, audience needs and desired outcomes Create a shortlist of potential speakers through research, member recommendations and consultations Assess speaker suitability by reviewing past presentations, testimonials and availability Promote confirmed keynote speakers Gather feedback post-event
4	Promote the newly developed Civic Heads Training Programme – based on the evaluation of the pilot – to members and civic officers nationally	Nominal	Communications Officer	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a digital brochure and training overview highlighting the programmes benefits, structure and outcomes Engage regional representatives and civic offices to act as ambassadors and encourage participation Feature testimonials and feedback from participants to build credibility and interest
5	Enhance visibility and engagement with the Civic Office of the Year Award by implementing a strategic promotional campaign across the membership and civic offices nationally, aimed at encouraging a strong volume of high-quality applications	£500	Vice Chair / Training Event Sub Committee	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a clear timeline and promotional toolkit aligned with bi-annual schedule Share case studies or testimonials from previous winners to inspire interest Use targeted communications via newsletters, social media and all networks Investigate options for commissioning a new award shield or equivalent recognition item, as the existing shield is now full. Ensure the new item is designed, produced and ready for presentation at the 2027 awards ceremony
6	Ensure the ongoing maintenance and optimisation of the association's website – launched in 2022 – by working in partnership	£1,000	Website Manager / Website Administrators	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct quarterly content reviews to ensure accuracy, relevance and consistency across all pages Monitor website performance and user engagement metrics Gather feedback through surveys or focus groups to inform future enhancements and ensure the site continues to meet user need

	with Purple Spider to keep all content, functionality and security features up to date and aligned with member needs				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with Purple Spider to schedule updates, resolve technical issues promptly and plan for future development or feature upgrades
Priority 2 – To raise the profile of the Association regionally and nationally					
7	Strengthen the association's national presence and influence by actively engaging with civic offices, complementary associations and central government to advocate for shared priorities and promote the value of civic leadership	Nil	All Elected Officers / All Executive Members	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish regular communication channels with all to share updates, best practices and collaborative opportunities Represent the association at relevant national forums, conferences and consultations to ensure civic perspectives are included in policy discussions Build strategic relationships with central government departments to raise awareness of civic roles and advocate for supportive policies Monitor and respond to national developments that impact civic offices, ensuring timely and coordinated input from the association
8	Maintain and evolve a comprehensive communications strategy to support member engagement and external visibility, incorporating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newsletters Presidents Page Web presence Relationships with local and central government 	Nominal	Communications Officer / Secretary / Website Manager	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish regular newsletters featuring updates, member news, training opportunities and sector developments Develop and update the Presidents Page on key topics relevant to civic offices Conduct quarterly reviews of website content to ensure accuracy, relevant and alignments with current priorities Encourage member contributions to web content (Forum) to foster diversity of voice
Priority 3 – To maintain a sustainable and financially stable organization					
9	Maintain and grow membership levels while actively encouraging	Nominal	Secretary	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the benefits of membership through case studies, testimonials and clear value propositions across all communication channels

	volunteer involvement to support the delivery and development of NACO's work				
10	Strengthen the governance, capacity and sustainability of the Association and its Executive Committee to ensure long-term resilience, strategic leadership and effective delivery of member services	Nil	Executive Members	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an annual skills and capacity review of the Executive Committee to identify strengths, gaps and development needs • Introduce succession planning and role rotation to ensure continuity and broaden leadership experience within the Executive Committee • Encourage wider member involvement in sub-groups, working parties and advisory roles to build organizational capacity and engagement • Review and update governance documents (e.g. constitution and Terms of Reference) to reflect current practice and future needs • Promote transparency and accountability by publishing key decisions, financial updates and strategic progress to members
11	Enhance operational efficiency and member engagement by adopting and utilizing digital tools and technologies across the Associations activities	Nominal	Chair / Vice Chairs / Communications Officer / Website Manager	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise digital platforms for meetings, training delivery and member engagement to increase accessibility • Explore and implement new technologies to streamline administrative tasks such as event registration, member communications and data management • Maintain and update the Associations website in collaboration with Purple Spider to ensure it remains a central hub for resources and interaction • Introduce a secure digital archive for storing key documents, reports and historical records • Monitor usage and feedback to continuously improve digital services and ensure they meet member needs
12	Identify and pursue new income streams to strengthen the financial sustainability of the Association and support the delivery of its strategic objectives	Nominal	Treasurer / Deputy Treasurer	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a financial review to assess current income sources and identify areas of opportunity or risk • Explore sponsorship and partnership opportunities with relevant organisations, suppliers and stakeholders aligned with civic values

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host income-generating events such as training events, webinars or awards ceremonies with ticketed access and / or exhibitor fees • Monitor and evaluate the performance of new income streams to ensure sustainability and alignment with the Associations mission
16	Maintain the Associations aspiration to operate with zero membership fees by identifying efficiencies and securing alternative income sources to support core activities and member services	Nil	Chair	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly review operational costs and ensure financial efficiency without compromising service quality • <i>Develop income-generating initiatives</i> • Monitor financial performance and projections to ensure the zero-fee model remains viable and sustainable • Communicate the value of the membership clearly to stakeholders to reinforce engagement and support for the model • Review the zero-fee policy annually in line with strategic priorities and financial health, ensuring transparency with members