YORKSHIRE LOCAL COUNCILS ASSOCIATIONS

__Benefits of Membership__

YLCA will only give advice to parish and town councils and parish meetings in membership of the Associations. Benefits of membership are:

- Access to an adviser for procedural, technical and legal queries by telephone, e-mail or letter at any time during normal working hours. (The Associations have a policy that advice will be given to the Proper Officer of the council (clerk) and to the chairman of the council if the query concerns the clerk or in exceptional circumstances where the clerk is not available and by prior arrangement). It is YLCA policy that wherever possible a response to any enquiry will be sent within 15 working days of its receipt; although councils will find that the response time is usually very efficient.

- An element of the membership fee affiliates councils to the National Association of Local Councils. This enables YLCA to access the services of a solicitor within the NALC legal team on behalf of the member council – this service is included in the membership fee. NALC also lobby government on wide and varying issues that affect parish and town councils. The Branch system (see below) gives opportunity to councils to influence government decisions via NALC.

  Councils who leave membership are informed that the authority will need to undertake a financial risk assessment for advice that will no longer be available from YLCA and may have to be bought in. Similarly, councils that are not in membership should be undertaking this type of assessment as part of their financial risk regime.

- A regular news sheet, 'White Rose Update' is sent to all members, which contains advice and information relevant to all parish and town councils.

- The YLCA website contains a wealth of information and is only accessible to member councils by password. Councils may give the password to their councillors, giving greater accessibility to information. The website also provides information from the National Association of Local Councils, ie Legal Topic Notes that are only available to member councils.

- Advice and Briefing notes are prepared on specific topics and issues. There are 35 advice notes available and these are being added to continuously.

- A regular schedule of training and information events including sessions for new councillors and training in chairmanship, local council finance and audits, meeting procedures, standing orders, agendas and minutes, employment, code of conduct and ethical framework, planning, cemeteries and allotments to name some of the more recent and future sessions for councillors and clerks.

- A weekly e-mail bulletin which ensures that members are kept up to date with developments in the parish sector both locally and nationally.

- YLCA operates a system of Branch meetings that allow councillors and clerks to come together three times per year to discuss issues of mutual interest and concern. The branches are also used as the electoral college for the Associations Joint Executive Board. There are 12 branches: Craven, Hambleton, Harrogate, Leeds, Richmondshire, Ryedale, Scarborough, Selby, South Pennine, South Yorkshire, Wakefield and York.

- The Joint Executive electoral system ensures that the Associations are led and directed by representatives of member councils.

- In partnership with the East Riding and Northern Lincolnshire Local Councils Associations and the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Training Partnership, YLCA organises an annual training conference for parish and town councillors, no matter what size of council – in York in 2013

- As the Lead Partner of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Training Partnership, YLCA is a keen promoter and leader in the training of council clerks and takes a key role in delivery of training in the Certificate in Local Council Administration.

Membership of YLCA is calculated on a formula using electorate numbers. Information about the subscription fee for your council is available from Sheena Spence, Chief Officer of YLCA on 01904 436622, or e-mail: admin@yorkshirelca.gov.uk.