



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CIVIC OFFICERS' Annual Training Event and AGM

Wednesday 26 March 2025



Offices of the London Borough of Southwark
160 Tooley Street, London SE1P 5LX

THE event for all who work in Civic Office

Sponsored by



BOOKING IS OPEN!

We gave you notice of the date and venue during the summer, but here is the fully detailed timetable, workshop descriptions and importantly, the [Booking Form](#). Five years on from the event which had to be cancelled at the last moment, because of the Covid-19 lockdown, we will host our one-day, in-person event, at the London Borough of Southwark.

Feedback from Training Days since 2021 has highlighted our members' preference for in-person events, which offer unique networking opportunities. We have balanced that with online events, which have the benefit of a lower delegate fee, but now is the time for us to be in the real rather than virtual world, with this opportunity to meet in London. A generous offer from Southwark, to waive venue hire fees, has helped us maintain the delegate fee at the 2020 level, despite significant inflation in the intervening years.

Feedback from you, our members, has also informed our selection of workshops. We have looked at your suggestions, combining several ideas to create two as plenary sessions and three smaller break outs, from which you can choose two. Some will include familiar elements, but they are worth re-emphasising as many of our members are new to civic work. Even those with many years of experience will still find new subject areas. We believe we have put together a programme which appeals and offers you a toolkit for survival in an ever-reducing budget cycle.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND ELECTION TO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

During the AGM we will be electing a committee to steer **NACO** through the following year. Nominations for members of the Committee need to be made by 5.00 pm on Wednesday 19 March 2025. The Nomination Form is on the website, and we hope that if you are interested in becoming a member you will complete one. Please note that the form can only be accepted if it has been signed by your line manager, agreeing to your nomination. The Committee meets three or four times each year, usually online. If you would like to know more about what is involved, please contact the Chair, Tracy Frisby, on chair@naco.uk.com

SPONSORSHIP

We are very pleased that our event this year is sponsored by Link Support Services (UK) Ltd, a **NACO** training partner, with a pedigree of training and coaching elected members and officers of almost thirty years. Link supports over 150 public sector organisations - Councils, Police and Crime Panels, Fire and Rescue Authorities, Combined Authorities and Health Trusts. Of particular interest is the Link coaching session for new Mayors and Chairs, delivered to many of our members' authorities for over a decade.

The Managing Director of Link is David McGrath, known to many of you for his engaging and informative workshops at past **NACO** events. His sponsorship has enabled us to keep our delegate fee lower than would otherwise be possible.

OUTLINE PROGRAMME

There will be two Plenary Sessions, attended by all delegates and you then choose a further two workshops from a choice of three – A, B & C below.

Plenary Session 1

Uniting for Excellence: A Collaborative Journey

Join us for a unique opportunity to learn from and engage with a diverse range of professional associations. This plenary session will explore how these various bodies of expertise can come together to help us all enhance our skills and achieve greater success in our respective fields.

The following will be represented on the panel, to answer questions from the floor and those submitted in advance.

National Association of Civic Officers – **NACO**

The Lieutenancy – represented by a Deputy Lieutenant

Guild of Macebearers

Association of Democratic Services Officers – ADSO

National Association of Local Councils - NALC

National Association City and Town Sheriffs of England and Wales

Link Support Services (UK) Ltd – **NACO** Training Partner

If you have a question that you want to submit in advance, please send it between now and 24 March to comms@naco.uk.com

Plenary Session 2

An Update on NACO's Guidance Notes on a Ceremonial Response to Death

Led by Jim Babbington OBE DL

We know the importance that our members attach to this subject, so this session will begin with an update on the notes which were published in July 2024. Members will be able to ask questions and to share their own thoughts and information.

It will also be useful to consider how this guidance can be applied to tragedies, major accidents and terrorist incidents that are never far from our headlines and have an expectation of a council and civic response.

This area of work should be one in which civic officers can speak and act with authority through knowledge. September 2022 demonstrated this as, in the nation's grief, many of you shone as councils were grateful for your work in ensuring a high level of preparedness. This workshop will help you maintain that unique expertise.

Workshop A

Relevance of the Civic Office in the 21st century – what can save us?

Led by Phil O'Brien, **NACO** Communications Officer, co-facilitator of the **NACO** 'Role of the Civic Head' seminars and Affiliate Consultant at Link Services (UK) Ltd

Civic Office may be rooted in tradition and still command respect from the public, but that will not shield us from the realities of budget cuts, rationalisation, modernisation and re-skilling in today's local government world – and why should it? Precedence and protocol have their important place, but in feedback from previous **NACO** events you have told us that you want to know about surviving in a political climate, with Elected Mayors and Leader and Cabinet. How can we keep civic office relevant and useful to the councils we work for and ensure it can withstand scrutiny from within and without? Many of our members need a survival kit - some simple statements about the value of the Mayoralty and your roles in supporting it. You need to develop a confidence in your abilities and your value to your councils – to be armed for the fight!

Your facilitator, Phil O'Brien has worked on some guiding principles for 25 years and will talk about Articles of the Constitution, Corporate Plans, Themes and Objectives, Quality Engagements and working in a political environment. Veterans may have heard some of this before, but this will be a good refresher and a great start for those who are new to the role.

Let's make this properly interactive, by giving you the opportunity to question, amongst peers, how you can make this work for you and your civic head, so you don't leave thinking 'that all sounds great BUT..... '

Workshop B

Unlock Efficiency: Office Toolkits for Civic Success

Led by Paul Millward and Tracy Frisby, President and Chair of **NACO**.

This insightful session is designed to provide practical strategies for establishing an efficient civic office.

The workshop will cover key areas, including the Mayoral Induction process, essential tools for managing mayoral engagements, and best practices for maintaining accountability and performance within the office. You'll learn how to evaluate event requests that come to the Mayor, with a critical eye, ensuring thorough due diligence, and explore tools and technologies that simplify managing the mayoral diary.

Perfect for civic office professionals looking to streamline operations and enhance civic leadership, this workshop offers actionable advice for sustained success.

Workshop C

Managing Challenging People and Difficult Situations (Fair Mayor or Night Mayor?)

Led by David McGrath, Link Support Services (UK) Ltd

Brace yourself for a fast paced and lively session – looking at challenging situations faced by Civic Officers working with first citizens – and how to prevent and manage them. Our event sponsor repeats his successful and well evaluated session from our last event in Birmingham. David is a former councillor and veteran member and officer trainer. This session is guaranteed to be thought provoking, make you smile and act on practical tips to help you survive and thrive in the civic support role.

The Outline Timetable for the day is:

09:30 – 10:00	REGISTRATION
10:00 – 10:15	Civic Welcome and Housekeeping
10:20 – 11:20	Workshop 1
11:25 – 12:25	Workshop 2
12:30 – 13:15	LUNCH
13:20 – 14:20	Plenary Session 1
14:20 – 14:35	AGM
14:35 – 14:50	BREAK
14:55 – 15:15	Presentation of Civic Office of the Year Awards <i>Sponsored by Vaughtons and Logocloth</i>
15:15 – 16:15	Plenary Session 2
16:15	CLOSE

GENERAL

Our start time of 10.00am provides maximum opportunity for delegates to travel to and from London within a single day, minimising the need for an overnight stay, with its consequent costs.

For those who do have to stay overnight there are, of course, many hotels in London, including budget options.

Close to the LB Southwark venue in Tooley Street are:

Tower Bridge Premier Inn

Travelodge in Bermondsey (8-minute walk)

CitizenM Tower of London Hotel (20-minute walk)

Early booking will always ensure the best rate.

The Executive very much hopes that you will be able to attend this event and in order to do so please complete [the Booking Form](#). Within the Booking Form you will be able to select the workshops you wish to attend, in order of preference.

If you have any queries concerning booking, please contact secretary@naco.uk.com

AND FINALLY – THE DELEGATE FEE

The fee for the event will include attendance for the whole day, all refreshments and a buffet lunch.

Because of **NACO**'s good budgeting and housekeeping, we are proud to be able to offer this event at a delegate rate of only **£130**. This is the same amount as we were charging for the Training Event in 2020 which had to be cancelled because of the pandemic.