

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

109 GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON WC1B 3LD

SECRETARY'S CIRCULAR 1126

25<sup>th</sup> November 1988

**POLICY ON COUNCILLORS**

1. In 1975 the Association produced a set of recommendations on the numbers of councillors appropriate to normal parishes and communities of different population sizes. No other organisation has produced general recommendations of this type, not even the Boundary Commission. NALC's recommendations have been used by some district councils.

2. Although there has been no serious criticism of the recommendations it was suggested last year that, after 12 years, they ought to be reviewed.

3. The 1988 Annual General Meeting considered the recommendations and has approved them for re-issue. The only critical comment in the course of the discussion was that a council ought never to be composed of an even number of councillors because that increased the risk of matters having to be decided by a casting vote. A counter-comment was that absences through illness could produce a casting vote situation whatever the number of councillors.

4. The re-affirmed policy and recommendations for normal situations are that:-

(a) A Council of no more than the legal minimum of 5 members is inconveniently small and the practical minimum should be 7.

(b) Local council business does not usually require a large body of councillors and business convenience makes it appropriate to suggest that the practical maximum should be 25.

(c) Within those minimum and maximum limits the following are the recommendations:-

	<u>ELECTORS</u>	<u>COUNCILLORS</u>
Up to	900	7
	1400	8
	2000	9
	2700	10
	3500	11
	4400	12

	5400	13
	6500	14
	7700	15
	9000	16
	10400	17
	11900	18
	13500	19
	15200	20
	17000	21
	18900	22
	20900	23
	23000	24
Over	23000	25

5. Accordingly circular 334/1975 (reworded) – Policy on Councillors of NALC is replaced by the recommendations above.

JOHN CLARK  
Secretary.