



Thriving Council Committee

Thursday, 30 July 2026

Subject: Member Attendance at the Local Councils' Network (LCN) Conference 2027 and the Local Government Association (LGA) Annual Conference 2027

Report by:

Lisa Langdon
Assistant Chief Executive - Governance
(Monitoring Officer)

Contact Officer:

Katie Storr
Head of Democratic Services and Elections
katie.storr@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Ele Snow
Senior Democratic and Civic Officer
ele.snow@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Executive Summary:

The Council's Constitution (Members' Allowance Scheme) states that the relevant Committee Chairman (and/or their nominee) can attend approved conferences.

Any places in addition to the Chairman and/or their nominee are subject to available budget and approval by the relevant committee.

This report seeks approval for more Members to be able to attend both the Local Councils' Network (LCN) and Local Government Association (LGA) conferences in 2027, allowing for a total of up to five Member attendees at each conference.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- (a) That a total of up to five Member spaces be reserved at both the Local Councils' Network (LCN) Conference and the Local Government Association (LGA) Annual Conference, and authority be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to determine Member attendance.**

1. Introduction

1.1 Attendance at conferences by Members is a matter covered by the Constitution, namely the Members' Allowance Scheme.

1.2 As well as detailing which events are approved under the scheme, Part VI, Page 11, para 16 states:

“Any conference attendance outside the list or places in addition to the Chairman and or nominee is subject to available budget and approval by the relevant committee.”

1.3 This report seeks approval for a higher number of Member places to be reserved at both the LCN Conference, Monday 15 and Tuesday 16 March 2027 at the De Vere Beaumont State Windsor, and the LGA Conference, Tuesday 29 June to Thursday 1 July 2027, at the Harrogate Convention Centre. These are regarded as the two main conferences each year for local authorities and district councils.

1.4 It is suggested that up to a total of five places be approved which would enable the appropriate Committee Chairman and/or their nominee to attend, as well as other nominated Members.

2. Rationale for Additional Places and Budget Implications

2.1 Local Government is operating in an environment of significant change and challenge and, over the next two years and beyond, will undergo some of the most radical changes since the last major re-organisation of 1972 as a result of the proposed reorganisation of local government.

2.2 It is important that the Council and its elected Member representatives are in position to understand, influence and effect where possible, as the Council navigates the challenges and opportunities of Local Government Re-organisation, for the benefit of residents and businesses across the district.

2.3 Attendance at such events provides opportunity to build networks, share experiences, compare practice and gain experience and knowledge.

2.4 A larger number of Members attending key conferences supports an increase in Member knowledge across a wider cohort and allows for great learning opportunities, dissemination and application of learning back into the authority.

2.5 As set out in the financial implications, no additional budget is required for the additional places, as the costs can be met from existing budgets.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That a total of up to five Member spaces be reserved at both the Local Councils' Network (LCN) Conference and the Local Government Association (LGA) Annual Conference, and authority be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to determine Member attendance.

4. Alternative Options

	Option	Rationale for not recommending
1	Do not extend attendance numbers, retaining limits as set out in the Members' Allowance Scheme	The scope of each conference is such that greatest value is achieved when there are multiple attendees to be able to engage with overlapping sessions and speaker slots. To retain the limit as detailed in the Allowance Scheme would reduce the opportunity for engagement at the conferences, thereby limiting the benefits brought back to the Council (and therefore the district) to simply what could be attended by one or two people.
2	Offer unlimited attendance by Councillors	Whilst there are budgets allocated for conference attendance, travel expenses and suchlike, the potential cost of offering unlimited attendance would be far in excess of approved budgets.
3	Only request to extend attendance numbers if additional places are required at the time	Based on previous conference attendance, it is anticipated that more spaces will be required than detailed in the Constitution. To delay making the decision to extend attendance would mean the Council would miss out on 'early-bird' booking rates, leading to unnecessary costs being incurred.

ASSOCIATED IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

The Council's Constitution (Members' Allowance Scheme) states that the relevant Committee Chairman (or their nominee) can attend approved conferences.

Any places in addition to the Chairman and or nominee is subject to available budget and approval by the relevant committee.

Financial: FIN/66/27/TC/TMN

The cost of a booking at the LCN Conference has not yet been made public, however, the cost for 2026 was £549 (plus VAT) per person and included overnight accommodation and meals.

The cost of a booking at the LGA Conference (excluding accommodation but including all meals and refreshments) has not yet been made public, however, the 'early bird' fee for the 2026 conference was £549 (plus VAT), per person, or £599 (plus VAT) per person if booked after 'early bird' booked closed.

There would be additional costs relating to travel for both events and accommodation in respect of the LGA Conference. Accommodation and Travel bookings would be made with best value in mind.

All costs can be met from existing Member Training, Member Conference and Member Expenses and Travel budgets.

The costs for the LCN conference will be incurred during the 2026/2027 financial year, whilst those costs relating to the LGA conference will be incurred during the 2027/2028 financial year.

Staffing: There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

LGR implications:

It is important that the Council and its elected Member representatives are in position to understand, influence and effect where possible, as the Council navigates the challenges and opportunities of Local Government Re-organisation, for the benefit of residents and businesses across the district.

Attendance at such events provides opportunity to build networks, share experiences, compare practice, and gain experience and knowledge.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:

There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

Data Protection Implications:

There are no data protection implications arising from this report.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

Whilst there are no direct climate related risks arising from this report, opportunities to minimise carbon emissions will be taken into consideration when making travel arrangements for nominated attendees.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

There are no Section 17 crime and disorder consideration arising from this report.

Health Implications:

There are no health implications arising from this report.

Risk Assessment:

N/A

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**Call in and Urgency:****Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

☐

No

X

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

☐

No

X