

your
county
matters

CCN
COUNTY COUNCILS NETWORK

CCN Councillor Guide



CCN

COUNTY COUNCILS NETWORK

Your Network

The County Councils Network (CCN) is the national voice for county councils and county unitary authorities, representing you and your councils on the national stage.

In total, the 37 councils that make up the CCN contain over 2,600 councillors representing 47% of the population, 26 million residents and 86% of land in England.

A cross-party, member-led organisation, CCN develops policy, commissions research and presents evidence based solutions to Government and other key influencers on behalf of counties.

To support transformation and the efficient delivery of essential public services we act as a network to share best practice, innovation, and ideas between councils.

Since the last county elections in 2013, CCN has grown into a prominent, influential and nationally respected research and advocacy organisation; acting as the main voice for member councils to ensure counties have the powers and resources to meet the needs and aspirations of their residents.

About this guide

This guide aims to give newly-elected county councillors a flavour of what CCN does as an organisation and why it is important to engage with the network's activities.

It gives an overview of who CCN is and what it does, as well as the network's significant achievements over the past few years.

We also outline CCN's priorities for the coming year, providing an overview of our major workstreams and areas where we need to influence and shape Government policy.

There is an overview of CCN's Your County Matters campaign which aims to illustrate the importance of county authorities and their communities.

You can also read about CCN's influence within the national and trade media and within Parliament, as well as an overview of the network's recent original research, evidence base and publications.

How to engage with CCN

Keep up to date with CCN:

Follow us on Twitter

 @CCNOffice

Follow us on LinkedIn

 County Councils Network

On our website www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk

On our YCM microsite www.yourcountymatters.org.uk

Dates for your diary:

17 May.....Executive meeting
20 June.....Health and social care seminar
4 July.....CCN Reception at LGA Conference
19 July.....Executive meeting
20 Sept.....AGM & Council
19 – 21 Nov.....CCN Annual Conference

For more information on any of these events,
email countycouncilsnetwork@local.gov.uk

A QUICK GUIDE TO CCN

COUNTY COUNCILS NETWORK

INFLUENCE

CCN helps influence and shape Government policy through its research, public affairs work with MPs and stakeholders, and media presence; shaping Westminster thinking on the issues that matter most to our member councils, be they social care, economic growth or local government finance.

RESEARCH

CCN undertakes and commissions ground-breaking research to support our evidence based advocacy to Government and the wider local government family. Recent high-profile work included research on social care, county economies, local government reorganisation & business rates.

SUPPORT

Alongside our national advocacy in Westminster, CCN provides a range of support services to member councils; from Councillor meetings and events, Officer Working Groups & Forums, expert advice, to regular communications and briefings to councils on national developments.

A COUNTY VOICE

CCN is the only national representative body who is dedicated to fighting the county corner. CCN is able to influence and advocate on behalf of counties in policy areas no other body can, such as county finance, while our networks shared characteristics are at the heart of all our advocacy.

CCN Governance

CCN is a cross-party, member-led organisation that encourages regular input from its members.

CCN Council, which sets out and approves the network's budget and programme of work, contains at least four members from each council.

CCN Executive, a smaller body of nominated Councillors, oversee the delivery of the Work Programme.

The Management Committee and small team in Westminster oversee the day-to-day operations.

CCN Chairman

CCN's chairman is currently Cllr Paul Carter CBE, who is Conservative leader of Kent County Council. He is a highly-respected politician with over two decades experience in frontline politics.



Delivering for you- CCN Achievements

Local Government Funding

A distinct purpose of CCN is ensuring the financial pressures facing county authorities are taken fully into consideration during settlement negotiations. CCN's response to the 2015/16 Local Government Finance Settlement delivered £292million of 'transitional funding' for county authorities following deeper than expected cuts that year. This significant concession from Government was achieved by strong advocacy from CCN; displaying compelling evidence to Government and the wider local government sector of the perilous state of county finances.

Following our advocacy, the Government made a commitment to a fair funding review as a precursor to 100% business rates retention. CCN member councils are the lowest funded type of local authority for all key services such as social care, children's services, and education. Consequently this means county residents pay a significantly higher amount of council tax compared to urban areas as councils look to make up the shortfall. Alongside our detailed work on the design of the new business rates retention system, CCN is calling for a new 'cost drivers' funding formula to be part of the review to correct this historic underfunding.

Social Care

CCN's ground-breaking work with LaingBuisson on the state of local care markets in 2015 and research on social care sustainability were directly cited as the catalyst for the many Government concessions in social care, such as its postponement of Part 2 of the Care Act, paving the way for the social care precept and improved Better Care Fund.

CCN was one of the most prominent voices calling for an urgent injection of additional funds into the system alongside genuine long-lasting reform, with our continued research and advocacy highlighting social care pressures facing counties in 2016/17. The Government's £2billion social care announcement in the Spring budget, and redirection of £76million of New Homes Bonus to CCN member councils, came as a direct result of CCN's advocacy. Looking ahead, CCN will be undertaking extensive work to influence the development of the incoming Government's long-term proposals for social care and also highlighting the increasing pressures facing children's social care and learning disabilities.

Schools

Last year, CCN was at the forefront in raising concerns over the planned removal of local authority oversight in local education. With 89% of local authority-overseen schools rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' in County areas, CCN's proactive campaigning through the national media and directly with Parliamentarians led the Government to abandon its policy of forced academisation.

Alongside this, CCN has been championing a fairer schools funding formula. CCN is now a leading national voice making the case for this Government to deliver on its promise of devising a reformed formula. Looking ahead, we will continue to ensure this important policy is still on the radar of whichever Government comes into power next month.

County Governance

The future shape of local government has been a recurring topic within the sector over the past 18 months.

Devolution deals and the renewed debate on local government reorganisation has raised questions over the future shape of local government across England. At CCN, we stand ready to support our member councils to make the strongest possible evidence-based case for empowered county governance and to outline the critical importance of county geographies. Our Your County Matters campaign, and detailed research on devolution and local government reorganisation, is helping to shape the debate on the future shape of local government in England, with more to come following the general election.

Speaking for you – CCN in the Media & Parliament

800+
media hits

From April 2016-May 2017

45+

national media hits

INCLUDING



theguardian

THE TIMES The Telegraph

BBC

APPEARANCES ON



CCN has become a prominent voice in the national media on county and wider local government issues, with regular coverage on education, social care, county funding, amongst other issues. The Network's Chairman is regularly featured on the BBC's prime-time news as well as other TV and Radio outlets. National journalists increasingly see CCN as the go to organisation to provide comment on a range of local government and county issues.

Parliament

CCN maintains a strong presence in Parliament, with Westminster based activities including:

- Weekly meetings with the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.
- The County All Party Parliamentary Group: CCN is the Secretariat for this APPG. The APPG regularly hosts Parliamentary briefings and its Health & Social Care Integration and County Growth inquiries have been influential.
- CCN Spokesman are regularly asked to give evidence at Select Committee Inquiries, with recent appearances on social care and business rates.
- CCN regularly meets with MPs and Ministers as well as Civil Servants to put forward evidence and research on behalf of counties, to influence their thinking.
- Regular Parliamentary events for networking between Parliamentarians and Councillors, as well as a monthly MPs newsletter.



SELECT COMMITTEES



EVENTS



CCN's Your County Matters campaign aims to highlight the importance of county authorities and their rural communities.



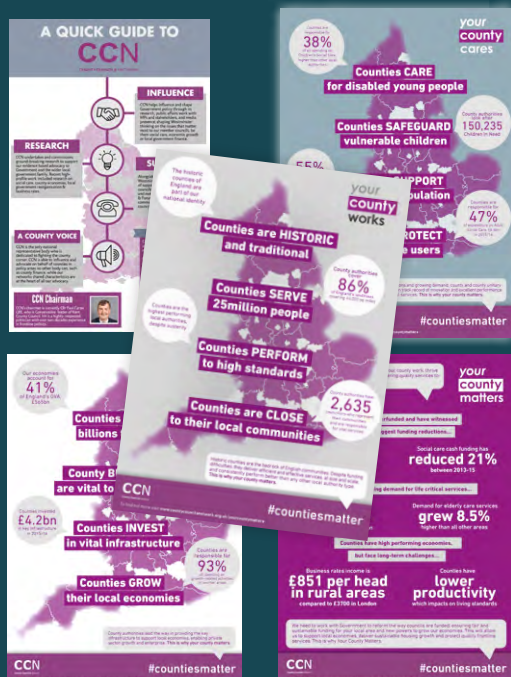
Launched last year, the campaign is split into three strands: *Your County Works*, *Your County Thrives*, and *Your County Cares*; emphasising how important county authorities are, both socially and economically, to your local communities. Above all, it emphasises how counties are a form of local government that put simply, work.

The campaign will continue to demonstrate to Government, MPs, and national stakeholders that county authorities are the critical bodies for driving growth, delivering devolution, and public service transformation outside of the big cities.

As part of the campaign, CCN has created several infographics, materials, and videos that have been used for advocacy. You can view and download them at our [microsite](#).

View our Your County Matters microsite: www.yourcountymatters.org.uk

Events



WHY... *your* **county** matters



Maintain highways & rural roads



Build vital infrastructure for communities



Support local economies and job creation



Care for the elderly and disabled



Protect vulnerable young people



Oversee high quality schools and deliver school places



Provide bus services for residents of all ages



Deliver public health services and advice



Ensure decisions and accountability are both local

Counties do all this, and more, despite heavy funding cuts.

This is why *your* county matters

CCN

COUNTY COUNCILS NETWORK



Our Work and Priorities

CCN's ambitious work programme sets out our campaigns and work-streams. Our core activity is organised under the overarching Your County Matters campaign narrative, with our policy priorities under three headings, supported by nine policy work-streams. Below we summarise our key activity.

your county works

- ✓ Fair Funding: Campaigning for fairer county funding
- ✓ Devolution: Illustrating the benefits of empowered county governance and devolution to county areas and local communities
- ✓ Transformation & Localism: Supporting member authorities with the transformation of public services

With a new government soon to be in place, CCN will step up our campaign for fairer funding and a sustainable business rates system, building on our positive Parliamentary, public affairs, and national media work and using its influence in DCLG. CCN will also continue to showcase the importance of county geographies and governance as the structure of local government that works, supporting member councils in delivering devolution and public service transformation, while providing evidence to support councils who wish to pursue unitary status or improve two-tier working.

your county thrives

- ✓ Industrial Strategy: Showcasing counties' economic strength, potential, and challenges
- ✓ Housing & Infrastructure: Making the case for a stronger county role in housing and greater investment in infrastructure
- ✓ Education & Skills: Campaign for the devolution of skills funding to local areas, fairer schools funding and a strong role in education

CCN will make the case for the role of county and county unitary councils in shaping and supporting local economies. CCN will undertake detailed studies on the performance and potential of county economies, advocating for greater devolved growth powers, necessary infrastructure investment in the wake of EU funding removal, and devolved powers and funding over skills and employment. We will engage extensively with Government's Housing White Paper to help shape the planning system, align planning and infrastructure, and reform infrastructure funding mechanisms. CCN will also explore work examining the future role of counties in education and engage with future discussions surrounding school funding.

your county cares

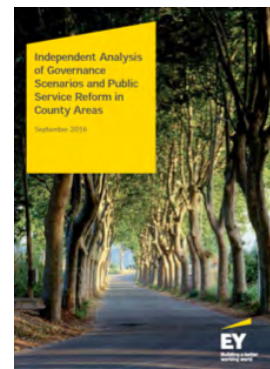
- ✓ Children's Services: Raising the profile of growing pressures in children's social care and showcasing county reforms
- ✓ Adult Social Care: Putting forward proposals on sustainable funding options for the Adult Social Care Green Paper
- ✓ Health Integration: local authority-led integration and health commissioning powers

CCN will continue to make the case for sustainable long-term reform of social care, seek to influence the development of the Social Care Green Paper and push for local authority-led integration, with new powers over health commissioning and sustainable funding for county areas. In addition, we are hosting a seminar on health & social care integration on June 20th. We will ensure that the pressures and challenges facing children's social care are more prominent in the national debate, supported by commissioned research examining learning disability pressures within the system and county reforms to children's services.

Publications & Research

CCN's work over the last four years has helped shape the narrative in a host of key policy areas; whether that be CCN's ground-breaking research on county social care markets with LaingBuisson, our devolution study with IPPR, social care research with LG Futures, internally produced publications by the CCN team on children's services and adult social care or, most recently, independent studies into governance and structural reform by EY and Shared Intelligence.

Visit www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk to download the publications.



Our original research and evidence feeds directly into our policy development and submissions to Government in order to influence a host of local government agendas, such as schools funding, health & social care integration, the needs based fair funding review, devolution and structural reform. All our latest submissions can be found on our website.

What we plan to deliver

To support CCN in representing our members with evidence-based policy proposals, CCN has recently commissioned a range of new research to support our engagement with the new Government on the priorities outlined in our work programme, including:

- Leading economic consultancy Oxford Economics are undertaking a detailed analysis of the performance and potential of county economies. The full analysis will be launched next month as part of CCN advocacy on regional growth and devolution. The project will provide each of our member councils with a detailed breakdown of the economic modelling undertaken.
- LG Futures have been commissioned to carry out a detailed analysis of the pressures in delivering learning disability services within social care provision.
- Building on their 2016 report, CCN has commissioned Pixel Financial Management to undertake further modelling on the implications of business rate retention.



Your Team

The CCN has seven full time members of staff located at Local Government House in Westminster.

Simon Edwards

Director

simon.edwards@local.gov.uk

Simon is the Director of CCN, responsible for leadership of the organisation, business management and all aspects of CCN's membership. Working with the Chairman and leading members Simon has led the transformation of CCN into an influential and respected network which advocates innovative policy solution on the challenges facing local government and the wider public sector.

James Maker

Head of Policy & Communications

james.maker2@local.gov.uk

As Head of Policy & Communications, James is responsible for the development of CCN's full portfolio of policy and research and oversees our communications, parliamentary, Whitehall and public affairs engagement work. He supports the CCN Chairman, Management Committee and Director to deliver the strategic objectives of the organisation and continue to grow our influence across Whitehall.

Michael Chard

Senior Policy Officer

michael.chard@local.gov.uk

Mike is a Senior Policy Officer leading our work on people based areas of our policy and research. He leads work across adults and children's social care and also CCN's advocacy on education, including our engagement on schools funding, and reforms to health and social care.

Elizabeth Hunter-Gray

Senior Policy Officer

elizabeth.hunter-gray@local.gov.uk

Liz is a Senior Policy Officer at the CCN leading work on place based areas of our policy and research. She leads work across Economic Growth, Devolution, and more recently, local government finance, including our engagement with reforms to business rates, fair funding review and Housing White paper.

Victoria Moloney

Public Affairs Officer

victoria.moloney@local.gov.uk

Victoria is the Public Affairs Officer at the CCN. She is responsible for CCN's parliamentary, stakeholder and membership engagement, providing effective avenues for CCN to influence policy makers and wider stakeholders. Victoria also provides policy support to the CCN team.

Ian Burbidge

Media & Communications

ian.burbidge@local.gov.uk

Ian is the Media & Communications Officer with responsibility communications, marketing and public affairs support. In his role Ian leads both internal and external communications, including press releases, newsletters, and articles. He acts as the first port of call for journalists as we expand our media profile.

Business Support Officer

countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk

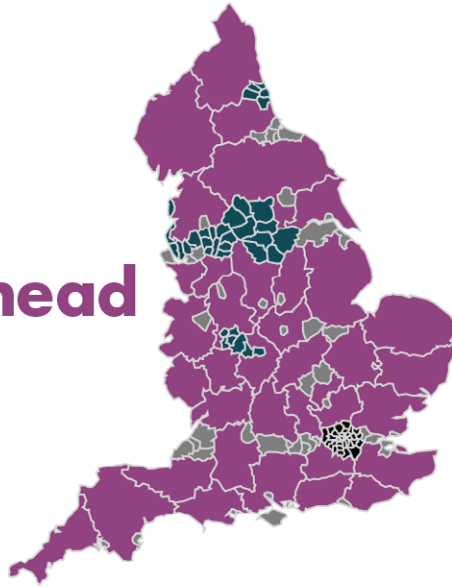
The Business Support Officer supports the Director on the effective and efficient management of CCN business processes, including finance, programme management, Annual Conference, meetings and events, member and stakeholder information.

FAIRER FUNDING

For Counties



Counties receive
£249 per head
for key services



London receives
£550 per head
for key services

Met boroughs receive
£407 per head
for key services

Non-CCN unitaries receive
£334 per head
for key services

The impact...



The social care crisis is most intense in counties

Counties receive
£439 less
per elderly resident compared to inner London



There is a council tax disparity across the country

The average county bill is
£1,600
compared to £1,141 for inner London



School budgets are under significant pressures

Counties receive
£2,048 less
per pupil compared to inner London

The Government's fair funding review could address these inequities

Any new system must be based on genuine cost drivers, not a regressive formula. CCN is calling for it to be accelerated to address the severe funding pressures faced by counties.



COUNTY COUNCILS NETWORK

Founded in 1997, the County Councils Network (CCN) is a network of 37 County Councils and Unitary authorities that serve county areas. We are a cross party organisation, expressing the views of member councils to the wider Local Government Association and to central Government departments.

To discuss any of CCN's proposals in more detail, please contact:

Simon Edwards

Director

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simon.edwards@local.gov.uk

James Maker

Head of Policy and Communications

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