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Northumberland Association of Local Councils

**NALC Enews
10 June 2020
Please forward to all Councillors
and Staff**

Emails to Member Councils

The Chairmen and Clerks of Member Councils have been sent the following email since the last issue of the Enews.

Email sent 9 June 2020 containing

1. VAT and ZOOM
2. Homeworking allowance
3. Website Accessibility
4. Coronavirus - Updates to the national NALC's website

If your Chairman or Clerk has changed, please let me know so that we can keep our mailing list up-to-date.

The advice from Govt. is still that businesses should work from home wherever possible and legal restrictions on gatherings remain in place. In essence this means that there should not be physical meetings for parish, town or community councils.

Whilst understanding the nervousness around an electronic meeting, business still needs to be transacted. In particular the AGAR and related audit papers can only be confirmed at a formal meeting of the Council. There is as yet no indication when physical meetings may be allowed again and in any event some Councillors and staff may well have to continue social isolation for some time because of their own (or households) circumstances.

At this link is a sheet of Hints and Tips for a virtual meeting. It is based on experience and follows a suggestion made at a recent briefing session. It's a work in progress and we'd really appreciate any additions based on your experience.

[https://mcusercontent.com/5060a2022e1081d67bbdd9b3a/files/ef7bf675-7dff-4d36-a1ff-9722f535dc48/Virtual Meetings Hints etc June 2020.docx.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/5060a2022e1081d67bbdd9b3a/files/ef7bf675-7dff-4d36-a1ff-9722f535dc48/Virtual_Meetings_Hints_etc_June_2020.docx.pdf)

One aspect to emphasise is that a Councillor can participate in a virtual meeting without a computer or tablet. It is possible to join using a landline telephone.

The association has been running a series of briefings for those unfamiliar with electronic meetings and two more have been arranged, They are free but please book on either of the links below.

[Thursday 25 June 2020 at 1030](#)

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/introduction-to-electronic-meetings-and-a-general-update-tickets-108960285146>

[Thursday 25 June 2020 at 1900](#)

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/introduction-to-electronic-meetings-and-a-general-update-tickets-108960399488>

Coronavirus

remain shut with only some limited exceptions.

Full details are at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close/further-businesses-and-premises-to-close-guidance>

The exceptions may well change and perhaps at short notice. We suggest that you do not rely on media reports but check the official Govt. website before deciding whether or not to open a facility.

There is also advice and templates at the Health & Safety Executive's website

https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/social-distancing-coronavirus.htm?utm_source=govdelivery&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=coronavirus&utm_term=social-distancing&utm_content=construction-9-jun-20

Trade Unions are also providing advice to their members.

The national NALC

Their dedicated coronavirus page contains as up-to-date information as is possible - please see

<http://www.nalc.gov.uk/coronavirus>

The national Chairman, Cllr Sue Baxter, has written a further letter to all Local Councillors at

https://mcusercontent.com/5060a2022e1081d67bbdd9b3a/files/ac108d6a-8c49-4cdc-8922-9ec82d8856da/Sue_Baxter_29_May_2020.pdf

Points of Light

Points of Light is a collection of case studies highlighting the work that local (parish and town) councils are undertaking to support their communities. The latest edition features several case studies that include electorate, precept and expenditure data, and summaries

https://mcusercontent.com/5060a2022e1081d67bbdd9b3a/files/be8cf899-1489-42db-bb03-94958b5acd30/point_of_light_2020.pdf

As an association we know that there's really good work being done in our communities across Newcastle and Northumberland. Can we urge you to provide details so we can send them to London for possible inclusion in the 2021 edition please.

Planning Issues

Details of the further changes to assist in recovery from lockdown are awaited. The Planning Portal's news pages are a useful resources in monitoring announcements.

<https://www.planningportal.co.uk/news>

Neighbourhood Planning

This bulletin from the Development Plans team at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government provides an update on the latest neighbourhood planning news and policy developments.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/notes-on-neighbourhood-planning-edition-24>

Natural Assets

The IPPR Think-Tank has published a report setting out a plan for nature in the North of England

<https://www.ippr.org/research/publications/natural-assets-north-final-report>

Local Electricity Bill

Power To Change have confirmed that the Local Electricity Bill will be re-introduced and debated in the House of Commons on Wednesday 10/6, directly after Prime Minister's Questions.

150 MPs (cross-party) now back the Bill and this is a great opportunity to build more support and highlight how it would help strengthen local economies and communities whilst helping stop

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For more info, please see

<https://powerforpeople.org.uk/the-local-electricity-bill/>

Policing

The latest newsletter from Northumbria's Police and Crime Commissioner is at

<https://www.northumbria-pcc.gov.uk/v2/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/OPCC-April-Newsletter-PDF.pdf>

The PCC has launched a Domestic Abuse Campaign urging friends and family to stand up against abuse, please see

<https://www.northumbria-pcc.gov.uk/friends-family-urged-stand-domestic-abuse/>



If you have any comments or observations, please contact
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Our website is at <https://northumberlandalc.uk/>

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