

Stephen Rickitt

From: Northumberland Association of Local Councils <info@northumberlandalc.uk>
Sent: 17 October 2018 13:25
To: Stephen Rickitt
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Northumberland Association of Local Councils

NALC Enews
17 October 2018

Briefing / Training Sessions

Just a reminder of the forthcoming sessions - please use the links for more information and to book places.

Wednesday 24 October - Newton and Bywell - Recent Changes

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/recent-changes-in-local-council-procedure-west-northumberland-tickets-50121562944>

Wednesday 28 November - Bedlington Station - Recent Changes

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/recent-changes-in-local-council-procedure-south-east-northumberland-tickets-50122135657>

Friday 30 November - County Hall - CiLCA Roundtable

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/cilca-roundtable-tickets-51283204445>

Monday 11 December - Morpeth - Finance

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/local-council-finance-tickets-50123216891>

Recent Emails to Member Councils

These included

- 3 October - Draft minutes of the NALC AGM
- 3 October - Notes of the County Council's Town & Parish Liaison Working Group
- 11 October - Vacancies on the County Committee
- 11 October - CiLCA Roundtable
- 11 October - Exempt Councils and External Auditors
- 17 October - Northumberland Community Bank's AGM

Please let me know if your Council has not received any of these.

Freedom of Information

At the last week's Northumberland Town & Parish Councils Conference, an officer was present to assist with FoI issues. He had a sheet of FAQs which he kindly forwarded and these are at

[https://gallery.mailchimp.com/5060a2022e1081d67bbdd9b3a/files/adb5dc3a-7304-4d35-8ec1-0cefb8d4ac1a/NCC FOI FAQs Oct 2018.pdf](https://gallery.mailchimp.com/5060a2022e1081d67bbdd9b3a/files/adb5dc3a-7304-4d35-8ec1-0cefb8d4ac1a/NCC_FOI_FAQs_Oct_2018.pdf)

Planning Decisions

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has issued new guidance for planners when recording the decisions they make.

The Ombudsman receives more than 2,000 complaints and enquiries each year about English local authorities' planning functions.

Common areas in which the Ombudsman finds fault with the decision-making process include failing to explain properly the reasons for decisions, or overlooking material considerations.

Based on real casework examples, the learning points in the report offer clear, practical steps planners can take to ensure the decisions they make are evidenced and recorded properly.

There's more information via the link

<https://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/news/2018/sep/ombudsman-offers-practical-guidance-to-planners-when-recording-decisions>

Website Accessibility

You may come across comments regarding recent legislation aiming to make websites more accessible. I recently raised this with the national NALC's Legal Dept. who have said

" The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018

These Regulations came into force on 23 September and come from an EU Directive. The purpose of the 2018 Regulations is to improve the accessibility of public sector websites/ mobile apps so they can be used by as many people as possible. They build on existing obligations to disabled people under the Equality Act 2010. It is NALC's view that they apply to local councils, NALC and CALCs.

The requirements imposed to meet accessibility standards do not apply for existing websites until 23 September 2020, to new websites published on or after 23 September 2018 until 23 September 2019, and for apps, 23 June 2021. Essentially websites/ apps subject to the Regulations will have to meet an accessibility requirement, provide an accessibility statement and provide an accessible alternative format upon request. There are exemptions, such as a council is not required to comply with the accessibility requirement if doing so would impose a disproportionate burden on the council. NALC legal will be issuing a briefing in due course. The message at this stage is don't panic! We recognise that the aim of improving accessibility to ensure access for as many people as possible is a good thing, whilst also recognising the challenges it may pose. NALC is raising this with the Government and in the meantime we welcome your views including on what help you might need."

I wanted to draw this to your attention as reassurance that no urgent action is required from Parish Councils with existing websites.

HMRC's Employer Bulletin

The October 2018 edition is available at the link below and includes paying employees when the regular payday is a non-banking day, as well as PAYE Settlement, Welsh rates of Income Tax, National Minimum Wage and apprentices.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employer-bulletin-october-2018>



If you have any comments or observations, please contact

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or

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