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**KALC Chief Executive Bulletin – Issue 22 (August 2021)**

Dear Member Councils

Welcome to the August edition of my Bulletin. Hope you are all staying safe and well.

* **Coronavirus update:** On 16 August, the rules on self-isolating as a contact changed for people who are fully vaccinated and for under 18s; In September, the government will undertake a review to assess the country’s preparedness for autumn and winter, which will consider whether to continue or strengthen public and business guidance. The Prime Minister urged the public to remain vigilant and exercise caution. The statement can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-confirms-move-to-step-4>. Moving to step 4 of the roadmap can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-summer-2021-roadmap>. Guidance on what you can and cannot do can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-coronavirus-restrictions-what-you-can-and-cannot-do>. Guidance on returning to holding face-to-face meetings. Guidance on working safely during Covid-19 as part of Step 4 of the Roadmap can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19>. Please also visit the NALC Coronavirus webpage at <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/coronavirus-page> for further advice.
* **Improving Standards and Embedding Good Governance:** There is currently a petition on the UK Government and Parliament website calling for Government to legislate to enable councillors to be disqualified or suspended for poor conduct**,**which you may want to consider - see [Legislate to enable Councillors to be disqualified or suspended for poor conduct - Petitions (parliament.uk)](https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/586143).
* **6-month rule -** Members are reminded of the importance that councillors always try to attend meetings of the council, committees and representative roles as appropriate as set out in the 1972 LGA. Failure to attend a meeting over a 6-month period can lead to an automatic disqualification unless a REASON is provided and approved by the council which generates a resulting minute. This prevents the disqualification and resets the 6-month period. Where members cannot attend meetings, they should always try to submit a reason and *not just an apology* (which has no legal resonance). Full details are set out in NALC **LTN 8 Elections** *“Failure to Attend*” items: 12-15 which is available on our website.
* **Litter Motion and Petition:** KALC has been made aware of a Petition on the UK Government and Parliament website calling for mandatory printing of car registration numbers on all Drive Thru packaging, which has been signed by over 59,000 people. If the Petition has 100,000 signatures it will be considered for debate in Parliament – see [petition](https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/580772?fbclid=IwAR3or-1licyDK2gs9ohrc7Jb36vcmcQA4DzyLTRKU0-OwFAV7l_bxH2NdyI).
* **Local Audit Framework consultation:** Government is currently consulting on the Local Audit Framework - Section 8 of the consultation – paras 120 to 131 and Questions 22, 23 and 24 cover smaller authorities) [Local audit framework: technical consultation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-audit-framework-technical-consultation). The consultation deadline is **11.45pm on 22 September 2021**.
* **AGAR 2020/2021:** We have been advised by PKF Littlejohn that some councilshave not yet submitted their AGAR form (deadline was 2 July). If your council has not yet submitted its AGAR, we would encourage you to do so as soon as possible and to also contact PKF Littlejohn to let them know when you will be sending it – e-mail [SBA@pkf-l.com](mailto:SBA@pkf-l.com).
* **Lower Thames Crossing Community Impacts Consultation: Highways England is holding a further round of public consultation to seek views on:**
* Our plans to build and operate the Lower Thames Crossing and how we will mitigate its impact
* Changes to the project since the design refinement consultation in 2020
* How responses received at each of our previous consultations have informed the development of the project

For further details please see [Lower Thames Crossing consultation](https://ltcconsultation.highwaysengland.co.uk/?_cldee=bHRjQHJpY2hkLnN1cmZvbndhdGVyLmNvbQ%3D%3D&recipientid=contact-566e9882cf09e71180fb5065f38a1b01-81d4ee21d2434906925c81fca1ade1c9&esid=404b5bff-76dd-eb11-bacb-0022483f885b). The consultation deadline is **23:59 on 8 September 2021.**

* **National Model Design Code:** Government has now published the National Model Design Code which sets out clear design parameters to help local authorities and communities decide what good quality design looks like in their area – see [National Model Design Code - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=bd4cf65a-1576-47b4-9dc3-75dd05345754&utm_content=daily). The National Model Design Code forms part of the government’s [planning practice guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance) and expands on the ten characteristics of good design set out in the [National design guide](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide), which reflects the government’s priorities and provides a common overarching framework for design.
* **Parish Councillors Guide to Rural Affordable Housing:** On 5 July, English Rural launched their new guide (Parish Councillors’ Guide to Rural Affordable Housing) aimed at local (parish and town) councillors on affordable rural housing. For further details, please see <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/news/entry/1792-english-rural-launch-a-new-guide-on-rural-housing-for-councillors>.
* **Guidance on Transparency requirements for publishing on Contracts Finder**: For further details please see -

[2021-06-22\_Guidance\_on\_transparency\_requirements\_for\_publishing\_on\_Contracts\_Finder-\_Final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/996536/2021-06-22_Guidance_on_transparency_requirements_for_publishing_on_Contracts_Finder-_Final.pdf)

* **Kent County Council 2022/2023 Budget Consultation:** KCC is currently consulting on its draft 2022/2023 Budget. Further details are available from [Budget Consultation 2022-23 | Let’s talk Kent](https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/budget-consultation-2022-23). The closing date is **19 September 2021**.
* **Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan Consultation:** Kent County Council is currently consulting on its Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan. KCC want to ensure that their Improvement Plan reflects the views of Kent residents and want to hear from users and residents about what would make bus travel more attractive.  For further details please see [https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/busfuture](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fletstalk.kent.gov.uk%2Fbusfuture&data=04%7C01%7CClare.Ellen%40kent.gov.uk%7C57923c6224614709b7cd08d93d4728ae%7C3253a20dc7354bfea8b73e6ab37f5f90%7C0%7C0%7C637608198267213793%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=7tEgvIz4DLMCMh9J3ehy6Qflov1HCpKeJbVHeoI2XnY%3D&reserved=0). **The closing date is 29 August.**
* **Kent County Council Household Waste Recycling Centres consultation: KCC** has launched a consultation ‘Booking to visit a Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC)’. The consultation seeks views on the continuation of a booking system to visit KCC Household Waste Recycling Centres.  The 6-week consultation is available until **Thursday 30 September 2021**. The consultation questionnaire and supporting documents can be found at [www.kent.gov.uk/wasteconsultation](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.kent.gov.uk%2Fwasteconsultation&data=04%7C01%7Cnichola.hood%40kent.gov.uk%7C509e429faf144565396808d95e4e0211%7C3253a20dc7354bfea8b73e6ab37f5f90%7C0%7C0%7C637644511400433153%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=EnzYR6G4EEdJDYvgRejfoR4wHB5Sik6I1XKd0Hdpoeg%3D&reserved=0)
* **National Transport and Highways Survey 2021/2022:** Councils across the UK are asking residents to tell them what they think of transport and highways services in their area, and we're one of those councils. There are six independent surveys in total - feel free to take one or all of them. Apparently, each survey will only take a few minutes of your time. They are asking for your views on: accessibility; highways maintenance; public transport; road safety; tackling congestion; walking and cycling. For further details see - [National Highways and Transport Survey 2021/22 | Let’s talk Kent](https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/national-highways-and-transport-survey-2021-22). **The survey deadline is 28 February 2022.**
* **Cantium/EIS Kentparishes.gov.uk website:** As highlighted in May,the Cantium/EIS[kentparishes.gov.uk](http://kentparishes.gov.uk) website ceased after 31 May. If your Council now has a new website, please remember to inform your District/Borough Council so that they can update their website with your new website address.
* **KALC AGM – Saturday 13 November 2021:** The AGM will be held virtually on Zoom and will include a presentation fromRachel Coxcoon, Director of Climate Guide and Director of the Climate Emergency Support Programme at the Centre for Sustainable Energy on the Climate Emergency Action Plan for local government, communication and carbon footprinting. Motions for the AGM will need to be submitted to [chief.executive@kentalc.gov.uk](mailto:chief.executive@kentalc.gov.uk) **by Friday 17 September 2021**.
* **Upcoming KALC Online Training:** We are delighted to highlight the following L&D online events using Zoom – please visit [www.kentalc.gov.uk](http://www.kentalc.gov.uk) for further details:
* 2 September – **Dynamic Councillor Workshop**
* 9 September– **Data Protection for Councillors**
* 28 September – **Annual Clerks Conference**
* 29th September – **Public Speaking Skills for Councillors**
* 9 October - **An Introduction to Project Management**
* 14 October - **Data Protection for Clerks and Officers**
* 19 October - **Freedom of Information Skills for Local Councils**
* 20 October – **Annual Finance Conference**

Terry Martin

Chief Executive