

**KALC Chief Executive Bulletin – Issue 7 (April 2020)**

Dear Member Councils

Welcome to the latest edition of my Bulletin. It continues to be an unprecedented and challenging time for us all, but I hope you are all keeping safe and well. Apologies again for all the e-mails recently, but it is important that we keep you updated on developments. Feedback on my bulletin is always welcome (e-mail chief.executive@kentalc.gov.uk) so that I can refine it for the next edition.

* **Covid-19:** We are continuing to send all councilsthe daily Public Health England updates, which we hope you find helpful in keeping up to date on what is happening nationally, along with updates from the Kent Resilience Forum such as the [**Kent Together helpline**](http://www.kent.gov.uk/KentTogether), the KRF Kent Together campaign toolkit and **the** [**KRF volunteers guidance**](https://www.kentprepared.org.uk/volunteers-guidance). You will also have seen that the new regulations covering remote meetings came into force on 4 April. NALC has issued a [**legal briefing note**](https://nalc.us12.list-manage.com/track/click?u=16886b5d6c31eade2f9a50027&id=2bd59f98bc&e=15448a65b5) on their interpretation of the regulations and practical guidance for local councils on[**how to hold effective remote council meetings**](https://nalc.us12.list-manage.com/track/click?u=16886b5d6c31eade2f9a50027&id=26d27ba8bb&e=15448a65b5).

Thank you to all those councils who have sent in details of what they are doing to support their local community. We will be updating the table at the end of next week, so if you want us to highlight the good work you are doing, please e-mail the details to me at chief.executive@kentalc.gov.uk. The updated table of examples will be placed in the Members Area of the KALC website and also shared with NALC (who are compiling a national list of examples) and with the Kent Resilience Forum (who are compiling good news stories across all tiers of local government in the county).

* **NALC Financial Impact Survey** – Hopefully, you will all have seen from NALC’s latest Coronavirus update, that they have produced a financial impact survey. The survey is important as it is intended to gather information on the impact of Covid-19 on member councils. This information is vital to NALC’s representation to the government on the loss of income to local councils during these difficult times, and the need for a tailored financial support package for the local council sector. The short survey includes questions on precept, staffing and income so it would be helpful to have this data to hand when [**completing the survey**](https://nalc.us12.list-manage.com/track/click?u=16886b5d6c31eade2f9a50027&id=f3dea39194&e=15448a65b5). The deadline for completing the survey is **5pm on Friday 24 April**.
* **KALC Remote Working Survey** – As mentioned above, on 4 April the Government brought the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings)(England) Regulations 2020 into force to allow local authorities to conduct meetings remotely. We would be grateful if clerks could complete our short [**survey**](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BGWFZ7L) of the Council’s capabilities to hold a remote meeting **by Friday 24 April**, so that we can assess how we can help you to make the process as smooth as possible. The survey should take about 5 minutes to complete.
* **Plunkett Foundation webinar – Public Works Loans Board and Loans:** The Plunkett Foundation has organised a webinar between 1400 and 1500 on 29 April on the Public Works Loans Board and its loans. Please feel free to book onto the webinar direct. The link is - [**https://event.webinarjam.com/channel/PlunkettPWL**](https://event.webinarjam.com/channel/PlunkettPWL). Some councils have raised the matter of Covid 19 and whether PWLB would have a payment holiday during this pandemic. NALC has raised the issue directly with Government, but HM Treasury is not currently proposing any changes. NALC and KALC will continue to lobby on this. Those councils that are affected by this should ask their local MP to approach Government as well. The webinar also provides an opportunity to raise this general issue about a repayment holiday on PWLB loans.
* **Government publishes its proposals to bring Britain’s planning system into the 21st century:** On 12 March, MHCLG published “[**Planning for the future**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-for-the-future)**”**, which sets out its proposals. The proposals include reviewing the formula for calculating housing need, infrastructure and use of brownfield sites. This will be followed by a Planning White Paper in the spring.

* **Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee – devolution inquiry:** The HCLG Select Committee has recently issued a call for evidence to support its renewed [**devolution inquiry**](https://committees.parliament.uk/work/110/progress-on-devolution-in-england/).  The main thrust of the Inquiry is aimed at testing the effectiveness or otherwise of the current administration’s tailored devolution packages for certain areas, without a one size fits all national blanket devolution approach.  The consultation deadline for responses to the Select Committee is **4 May**.  NALC and KALC will be responding.
* **NALC Expands its services with a new suite of HR resources:** NALC has launched a new suite of HR resources to help local councils on a range of employment matters. The resources include templates on numerous employment policies that you can tailor to your council’s needs, alongside how-to guides and notes to implement the policies. These cover the full range of employment matters such as annual leave, lone working, training and many more. The resources were produced in collaboration with HR Services Partnership. (see [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk))
* **KALC Survey 2020:** All member councils will have received our 2020 [**survey**](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2PLB5K6). Your Council’s views are very important to us, as they help ensure that we provide the services that our members need and that we continue to provide value for money. We have extended the deadline for completing the survey to **Friday 29 May**. The survey should take no more than 15 minutes. The results of the survey are considered by our Executive Committee to review and update our Strategic Plan which is then adopted annually at the KALC AGM.
* **KALC website:** Just a reminder that all clerks and councillors from our member councils can access the Members Area of the website by asking for a password from manager@kentalc.gov.uk. All you need to do is provide your e-mail address and the name of your council.
* **KALC Membership Subscriptions for 2020/2021:** Thank you to all our member councils for being part of KALC in 2019/2020. It was great to see that we had 312 member councils, which is a KALC record. The Membership invoices, together with KALC and NALC Benefits of Membership leaflets have all been sent out by e-mail now. If you haven’t received an e-mail from us or have any questions then please e-mail Laura on manager@kentalc.go.uk. Thank you to all those councils that have already renewed their membership for 2020/2021. We look forward to continuing to work with all our member councils in 2020/2021.

Terry Martin

Chief Executive