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**KALC Chief Executive Bulletin – Issue 14 (December 2020)**

Dear Member Councils

Welcome to the December edition of my Bulletin. I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and that you stay safe and well over this period.

* **Covid -19 – Tier 4** - [Prime Minister announces Tier 4: 'Stay At Home' Alert Level in response to new COVID variant](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-announces-tier-4-stay-at-home-alert-level-in-response-to-new-covid-variant?utm_source=6214caed-f481-41c2-a3eb-a2f579aa41cb&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily). Operation Stack is currently in place as the French border closes for 48 hours – see KCC press release for further details<https://kccmediahub.net/operation-stack-in-place-as-french-border-closes-for-48-hours745>
* **Covid-19/EU Transition/Winter** – We have been working with the Kent Resilience Forum on a mechanism for Local Councils to report local issues/concerns/incidents related to Covid-19, end of EU transition or winter. Local Councils should report such incidents to their District/ Borough/City/Unitary Council, who will be providing you with contact details.
* **Covid-19 – Financial Support Package** – We have written again (16 December) to the Secretary of State (copied to Kent MPs) calling for a financial support package for our sector and are liaising closely with NALC on their national campaign. Our letter has been sent to all member councils. If your council has lost income or incurred additional costs in providing Covid-19 related services, then we would encourage you to also lobby your MP and the Secretary of State.
* **Covid-19: Council Meetings -** NALC has updated its Coronavirus webpage ([**www.nalc.gov.uk/coronavirus**](http://www.nalc.gov.uk/coronavirus)**)** and has also issued an update on remote meetings where NALC’s strong advice is that councils should continue to meet remotely without the need for face-to-face contact, which we support.
* **Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement:** On 17 December, the Government published its [provisional local government finance settlement](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945484/Provisional_Settlement_2021-22_Consultation_Document.pdf), which confirms our (NALC/KALC) expectation the Government will continue with no referendum principles for local councils in 2021-22, which as you know we (NALC/KALC) have continued to lobby for and was in NALC’s spending review submission.

The relevant section is on page 12 of the consultation document:

*3.5 Council tax referendum principles for town and parish councils 3.5.1 In 2018-19, the Government announced that it did not intend to set referendum principles for town and parish councils for three years. This was contingent on the sector taking all available steps to mitigate the need for council tax increases and the Government seeing clear evidence of restraint in the increases set by the sector. 3.5.2 In 2020-21, the average Band D parish precept increased by 4.0%. This was the lowest percentage point increase in parish precept since 2012-13 but remains in excess of the rate of inflation. 3.5.3 In expectation that parish and town councils continue to show restraint when setting council tax precept levels, the Government proposes to continue with no referendum principles for town and parish councils in 2021-22. The Government will take careful account of the increases set by parishes in 2021-22 when reviewing the matter ahead of next year’s settlement.*

* **NALC Survey on climate change** - The survey will explore what local councils are currently doing to tackle climate change in their local area, the challenges they encounter and the difficulties they face when executing actions. The deadline to complete the survey is **29 January 2021**. The survey can be accessed via [**Complete the survey**](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/HVNZMR6)
* **Government Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund -** The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has launched the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, which will be delivered by Salix Finance. We have been advised that Local Councils are eligible for the new £1bn grant funding, as long as they meet the usual criteria that projects are taking place in buildings for which the public body pays the energy bills and will benefit from any resulting savings. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-decarbonisation-scheme-psds> for further details. The closing date for applications is **11 January 2021**.
* **National Transport Survey 2021 -** Across the UK, residents are being asked what they think of transport and roads services in their area. The National Highway and Transport Network have provided six independent surveys.  You do not have to take them all, but they would like to hear your views on any of the topics that impact you. Each survey will only take a few minutes of your time. Views are being invited on accessibility, roads maintenance, public transport, road safety, tackling congestion, walking and cycling. The deadline for completing the survey is **28 February 2021**. See [**national transport survey 2021**](https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/consult.ti/NTH2020_21/consultationHome)**,** which is on the Kent County Council website, for further details.
* **Government Night Flights Consultation** – The Department for Transport has issued a two-stage consultation process (see [night-flight-restrictions-consultation](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/night-flight-restrictions-at-heathrow-gatwick-and-stansted-airports-between-2022-and-2024-plus-future-night-flight-policy/night-flight-restrictions) ) which seeks views on the regime at the designated airports beyond 2022, and night flights in the national context. DfT are formally consulting on their proposal to maintain the existing night flight restrictions for the designated airports (Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted) from 2022 to 2024 and their proposal to ban QC4 rated aircraft movements during the night quota period (23:30 to 06:00). They are also seeking early views and evidence on policy options for the government’s future night flight policy at designated airports beyond 2024 and nationally. The consultation deadline is **3 March 2021**.
* **Kent County Council given temporary powers to tackle illegal HGV parking:** You may have seen in the local media that KCC has been given temporary power by government to clamp and issue fixed penalty notices for inappropriate or illegally parked HGVs from 1 January 2021 in the following areas: Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Folkestone & Hythe, Maidstone, Swale and Thanet. For further details see <https://kccmediahub.net/leader-announces-new-powers-to-penalise-inappropriate-and-illegal-lorry-parking-in-kent745>
* **Kent Active Travel** – Kent County Council is seeking views on their initial ideas for five walking and cycling improvement schemes across Kent. These seek to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of local people, as well as support the local economy. KCC has received funding for the following five schemes:
* Canterbury: Littlebourne Road to the City Centre
* Folkestone: Central Railway Station to Cheriton
* Thanet: Birchington to Margate Sands
* Folkestone: Hythe to Dymchurch
* Gravesham: Gravesend to Northfleet

The schemes aim to encourage and enable active travel, which means walking or cycling as a means of transport as well as for leisure. Making active travel an attractive and realistic choice for short journeys. The consultation deadline is 19 January 2021. Further further details see <https://kccmediahub.net/new-walking-and-cycling-schemes-out-to-public-consultation745>.

* **Kent County Council Highways** – Please see the following links for the KCC Highways Fault Reporting Tool and the Parish Portal which were referred to in the KCC Highways Parish Seminars earlier this week: [www.kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults](http://www.kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults); and <https://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ParishPortal.Web.Sites.Public/Unsecurepages/Login.aspx>
* **KALC Community Awards Scheme 2021:** A reminder that the closing date for nominations is Friday 12 February 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:
* 7 January 2021- **The Dynamic Councillor Workshop**: from 10am - 1pm
* 12 January 2021 – **Introduction to Planning** from 6pm – 9pm
* 14 January 2021 - **Getting in Front of the Camera**: how to build your confidence and engage with your community through video and Facebook Live from 6:30pm to 8:30pm*. In association with Breakthrough Communications*
* 21 January 2021 - **The Dynamic Councillor Workshop**: from 6.30pm-9.30pm
* 28 January 2021 **- Getting in Front of the Camera**: how to build your confidence and engage with your community through video and Facebook Live from 10am to 12 noon*. In association with Breakthrough Communications*
* 29 January 2021 – **Introduction to Planning** from 10am – 1pm
* 4 February 2021 - **The Dynamic Councillor Workshop**: from 10am - 1pm
* 11 February 2021 - **Using Facebook to enhance your Council’s Communications** – from 10am to 12pm*. In association with Breakthrough Communications*
* 11 March 2021 - **Beyond Facebook: how Councils can make the most of Instagram, Twitter and other Social Media platforms to get their message across** from 2pm to 4pm. *In association with Breakthrough Communications*

We have also set up in partnership with NALC and Nimble a rolling programme of

e-learning opportunities on:

* Diversity and Equality Essentials
* Modern Slavery
* Managing and Reducing Stress
* Display Screen Equipment Assessment
* Introduction to Leadership
* Time Management
* Personal Safety
* Health and Safety Essentials
* Freedom of Information Essentials

Further details, and booking, can be found on our website here: [bite-size training](https://www.kentalc.gov.uk/Bitesize_Training_31970.aspx)

* **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](mailto:manager@kentalc.gov.uk).

Terry Martin

Chief Executive