

Stephen Rickitt

From: Northumberland Association of Local Councils <info@northumberlandalc.uk>
Sent: 18 December 2018 13:50
To: Stephen Rickitt
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Northumberland Association
of Local Councils

NALC Enews

18 December 2018

Email Addresses

The former "northalc.org.uk" email addresses have finally stopped working. Please use either stephenrickitt@northumberlandalc.uk or info@northumberlandalc.uk .

If sending an email to here, please check that predictive text does not select the old wording.

There's also no fullstop between "stephen" and "rickitt".

Council Tax Referendums

The provisional local government financial settlement has been announced. Once again the Govt. are NOT introducing referendums for town, parish and community councils.

The consultation paper says

"Town and parish councils

3.2.6 In 2018-19, the Government decided to defer the setting of referendum principles for town and parish councils for three years. However, this was conditional upon:

- the sector taking all available steps to mitigate the need for council tax increases, including the use of reserves where they are not already earmarked for other uses or for “invest to save” projects which will lower ongoing costs; and
- the Government seeing clear evidence of restraint in the increases set by the sector.

3.2.7 In 2018-19, the average band D parish precept increased by 4.9% (£3.02). This compares to a 6.3% increase (£3.63) in 2017-18 and is the lowest year-on-year increase in parish precepts since 2015-16.

3.2.8 The Government has decided to continue the deferral of setting referendum principles for town and parish councils subject to the conditions above, but encourages parish councils to continue this downward trend, and will keep this area under active review "

Full details of the settlement are available via

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/provisional-local-government-finance-settlement-england-2019-to-2020>

HMRC Employer Bulletin- December 2018

The latest issue is available via

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

Northumberland County Council Draft Local Plan

The latest version is being considered by their cabinet on 19 December and is available via

<http://committee.northumberland.gov.uk/Meeting.aspx?MeetID=9385>

Scam Emails

Colleagues may be interested in the following extract from another newsletter

But on 13 December, Bates Wells Braithwaite solicitors reported that Action Fraud has warned of a recent surge in so-called "CEO fraud" that has resulted in charities losing money intended to buy staff Christmas presents. So-called CEO fraud is not insider fraud by the chief executive officer – but fraud by someone impersonating the CEO or other senior staff member, and requesting the finance officer or person with similar responsibility to transfer funds to a plausible-sounding account. Using a spoofed or similar email address to the senior staff member's email address, the fraudster may ask that the finance officer (or whoever) does not contact the CEO because they are so busy, or may make the request while the CEO is known to be on holiday. This type of fraud is not new, but Action Fraud [see Resources, below] reported in 2016 that it was becoming more frequent, and this growth has continued.

This type of fraud could, of course, be carried out by an insider as well as an external person; there are many examples of finance or HR officers creating fictitious employees, contractors or suppliers. (If you don't have it, ask me for my update 1813 from 3 April 2018, on recent insider fraud cases in charities.)

In the newly reported gift cards fraud, the fraudster poses as the CEO or another senior person in the charity, and sends an email request to a colleague to buy gift cards, which they say will be given to staff for Christmas. They then request copies of the cards and use the codes to spend on themselves at the charity's expense.

Storm Surges

The latest Flood Friday video from the Environment Agency deals with these
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIJ6y01yW9k>

Next Issue

My intention is to send the next issue in the week of 7 January 2019. If, however, there is a significant announcement from Whitehall over the next few days, I may need to send a short note to Member Councils before then.

Seasons Greetings and Office Closure

We'd like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

I shall be away from the Pegswood office from Wednesday 19 December 2018, returning on Wednesday 2 January 2019. I anticipate having little, if any, access to emails during this period.

In the best traditions of local government, the following links may bring a bit of seasonal cheer.

Health and Safety Myths

http://www.hse.gov.uk/myth/xmasmyths.htm#utm_source=govdelivery&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=digest-13-dec-18&utm_term=headline&utm_content=xmas-myths

GDPR Myths

<https://ico.org.uk/about-the-ico/news-and-events/news-and-blogs/2018/12/sleigh-ing-the-christmas-gdpr-myths/>

Legislation banning Christmas

This has a basis in fact but not entirely. In the course of the English Civil War, the then Long Parliament passed an Ordinance in June 1647 banning the celebration of Christmas and other religious festivals.

The Ordinance was deemed invalid at the Restoration but can be seen at

<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/acts-ordinances-interregnum/p954>



If you have any comments or observations, please contact

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