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Northumberland Association of Local Councils

**NALC Enews
15 April 2020**

**Please circulate to all Councillors
and Staff**

Emails to Member Councils

The Chairmen and Clerks of Member Councils have been sent the following emails since the last issue of the Enews.

Update dated 9 April containing the following items.

- ZOOM Discount
- Legal Update
- Covid-19 / Future Learn
- Accounts and Audits
- Contacts in Northumberland
- Contacts in Newcastle
- Vulnerable Individuals
- Community Volunteers
- Northumberland's draft local plan and neighbourhood plans
- Coronavirus and emerging neighbourhood plans

- National Financial Impact Survey

If your Council has not received a copy, or if your Chairman or Clerk has changed, please let me know.

ZOOM Discount

I understand that ZOOM are still finalising the terms of the discount with the Govt. and the national NALC.

The national NALC said:

NALC is currently liaising with the Crown Commercial Service and Zoom regarding the discounted package previously communicated (including on the [coronavirus page](#) under *local council activity and operation* section).

We have now been advised that the deal is for a minimum of 10 licences per subscription, which we hadn't been told previously. We are exploring this further and will provide an update as soon as possible.

In the meantime, Zoom has currently reduced their annual Pro Package to the equivalent of £9.99 a month if billed annually (£119.90, saving £24).

Safeguarding

Please see the link below to the Northumberland County Council Safeguarding Adults page. There is a new section which provides Covid 19 related Safeguarding advice and resources, particularly in relation to volunteers, people self isolating, financial scams and domestic abuse.

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Care/Support/Safeguarding.aspx>

PWLB and Loans

The national NALC have raised with Govt. whether there could be payment holidays for Councils who have taken out loans from the Public Works Loan Board. HM Treasury's first reaction was negative, but the national NALC are continuing to press Govt.

Employment Law Changes from 6 April 2020 / New Pay Scales

- Right to a written statement of terms
- Holiday pay reference period adjustment
- Parental bereavement leave
- Agency workers

The note is in the members' part of their website
<http://www.nalc.gov.uk>

Log-in details are available from this office.

In a conference call this morning, the national NALC said they have not heard of any progress being made in the pay negotiations. They will inform Councils as and when there is any substantive progress.

After Coronavirus

Looking ahead, it would be very useful for the Association to be able to learn lessons on how Member Councils and the Association responded to their communities. If you have a moment, a short email to us at info@northumberlandalc.uk setting out thoughts as they occur would be much appreciated please.

Email Addresses & Signatures

We have become aware that some emails are not getting through to the Association. On occasions this is undoubtedly due to the inevitable internet problems but we have learnt that sometimes the cause is the autocomplete functions using our old emails "northalc.org.uk".

Please check that emails to the Association are to
stephenrickitt@northumberlandalc.uk

or

info@northumberlandalc.uk

Turning to email signatures, there has been discussion on occasions about the time of dispatch and whether that could be construed as unreasonable. There is no fixed view but most accept that it is unreasonable to expect a response outside normal working hours. An

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What has been the most helpful thing you've learned – this, which I added to my email autosignature

"I work flexibly and am sending this email now as it suits my working hours to do so. I do not expect you to read, reply or action the email outside your working hours".

I have added a modified version to emails from stephenrickitt@northumberlandalc.uk



If you have any comments or observations, please contact
Stephen Rickitt, NALC Chief Officer stephenrickitt@northumberlandalc.uk
or
Louise Currie, Community Initiatives Officer louisecurrie@ca-north.org.uk

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