

Newsletter – February 2022

Derbyshire Association of Local Councils



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1 – 'On-street' home-charging for electric vehicles – free webinar

The uptake of electric vehicles is accelerating – but one of the biggest challenges is providing charging points for motorists who can't 'plug-in' at home. "Meeting the demand for people who don't have a driveway is one of the biggest challenges facing the industry", say organisers of the online event on February 10th. (1230-1400). Experts from Oxford University's Transport Studies Unit will be joined by the Energy & Power Group to discuss possible ways forward, with Q&A after the session. [More details and a joining link to the free webinar can be found here.](#)

2 – Remote meetings petition – have you signed?

Currently standing at over 9,000 signatures, the ADSO/LLG petition calling for councils across England to have the choice to meet remotely is still open, and [can be found here.](#)

Among other points, the petition highlighted the following benefits to local democracy of allowing remote meetings:

- *Increased attendances at remote meetings by both councillors and the public*
- *Significant cost savings for some authorities arising from much less travel to meetings*
- *The environmental benefits of less travel, particularly in the large county authorities*

- *A better work/life balance for councillors*
- *Improved equality of access to meetings for all and opening up opportunities for more people to stand for election as councillors*
- *More transparency and openness for the public to see council meetings*
- *An option to move meetings online when there are constraints, for example bad weather such as snow or flooding.*

3 – Still love to Zoom? Get networking...

Missing your Zoom hit since meetings went live? If so, you can join one of NALC's networks – aimed at connecting councillors from across the country to provide mutual support and share learning and good practice. Although one of them – the Coastal Communities network – isn't likely to attract much interest here in land-locked Derbyshire (!), the others range from Young Councillors to Climate Emergency, and [can be accessed here](#).

4 – No Mow May to help our bees

“We can create enough nectar for TEN times more bees and other pollinators by changing our mowing routines”, says the National Trust. The organisation is appealing to local councils and residents to “keep the mower in the shed” throughout May, with the aim of allowing plants to flower. In conjunction with Plantlife, the project encourages people to take part in the Every Flower Counts survey.

5 – Consultation on OFCOM's review of Postal Regulations

NALC are asking for contributions to their response on the above (and councils are encouraged to send in their own responses too). The [consultation paper](#) is publicly available on our website and the deadline to send responses to NALC is 17th February to chris.borg@nalc.gov.uk

6 – Are your councillors ready?

PhD student Charlotte Matthews is asking Derbyshire's councillors to contribute to a survey 'researching perceptions of individuals' preparedness to undertake their roles as Town and Parish Councillors'. Topics range from life skills to mentoring – [the survey can be found at this link](#).

7 – SLCC Climate Change Summit

Want to know how to turn your community plastic-free? How to find out where a rural community's emissions come from? How to help restore nature at a local level? If so, sign up for SLCC's online Climate Change Summit on March 23rd and hear expert advice and guidance from the comfort of your own home. [The agenda and sign-up details are available here](#).

8 – Are you being social enough?

Everyone knows that social media is playing a growing part in UK life, but are councils making the most of it? Breakthrough Communications is offering a free media health check, available via the QR code below or by [visiting this link](#).



Has your council had its FREE social media health check yet?

Book today and find out how your parish or town council can get the most from its social media

We are proud to be NALC's partners for communications and data protection advice and services

To book your social media health check please scan the QR code or visit our website



breakthroughcomms.co.uk/socialmediahealthcheck/



9 – Getting levelled up

With the publication of a devolution white paper imminent, NALC is holding an online event on February 23rd to discuss what ‘levelling up’ means for local councils – including which new services, assets and powers councils could be eligible to take on. [Details and registration can be found here.](#)

10 – Spam alert!

It’s an ever-present problem, but this week seems to have seen an increase in the volume of spam emails targeting local councils. Some of these emails appear to come from the chair of the council, such as this recent example: *"Could you please spare a minute to assist me in completing a task discreetly. Would be glad to receive your response through email because I’m presently in a meeting.*

Best Regard

Cllr X (with the correct name of the chair used but not from their email address)"

As ever, please be careful when opening emails, especially those containing attachments. If in doubt, delete!

11 – Staying safe – a Councillor’s Guide

With personal safety high on the national agenda in recent months, the Local Government Association (LGA) is holding a series of webinars to help councillors stay safe. Covering topics such as risk assessment, use of technology, safe approaches to canvassing, surgeries and travelling, and how to deal with stalkers and harassment, the next free webinar will be on February 16th (1800-1930). [Joining details are here](#) – input code PSC1602 to book a place.

12 – What does the end of ‘Plan B’ actually mean?

As of today, Plan B Covid measures come to an end – meaning there is no requirement to wear face coverings in public indoor spaces. Although it also means the end of government advice on working from home, councils are free to allow staff to continue with this arrangement.

Although councils can request councillors, staff and members of the public to wear face coverings while attending public meetings, they cannot insist.

13 – The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee

What is your Council planning to mark this historic occasion? We’ll be discussing this at our clerk and chair forums next month but, in the meantime, take a look at the range of things suggested on the [NALC website](#) and also [possible funding opportunities](#) on the government website.

14 – Clerk & Chair Forums

We’d like your input! As part of a forthcoming survey of DALC members, what information would be useful for you to know about the activities of other DALC councils?

We'll also focus on your preparations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, including funding, and also how to best use your Annual parish meeting to connect with the community.

Topic: **DALC Clerks' forum TUESDAY 15TH FEBRUARY 2022**

Time: Feb 15, 2022 01:00 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81896082244?pwd=NG9kUFRFeGdySnVPWERIa3phOWIEUT09>

Meeting ID: 818 9608 2244

Passcode: 091010

One tap mobile: 02039017895,,81896082244#,,,,*091010# United Kingdom

Topic: **DALC Chairs' forum TUESDAY 15TH FEBRUARY 2022**

Time: Feb 15, 2022 2:30 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81837497441?pwd=cGVjb1BCUWgxN0ozaXJhQ29ka0QzUT09>

Meeting ID: 818 3749 7441

Passcode: 041196

One tap mobile: 01314601196,,81837497441#,,,,*041196# United Kingdom

15 – Upcoming training

Councillor Essentials	Wed 2 nd Feb	6 - 8.30pm	Zoom	Wendy Amis
Sustainability and Climate Change	Tues 8 th Feb	10 – 12.30pm	Zoom	Mike Deegan
Funding Training	Tues 8 th Mar	10 – 11.30am	Zoom	Malc Spray
First Aid in Work (accredited)	Wed 9 th Mar	9am – 4pm	Matlock, Staffs First Aid	
Chair Skills	Wed 23 rd Mar	6 – 8.30pm	Zoom	Wendy Amis
Planning Training	Wed 30 th Mar	6 – 8.30pm	Zoom	Matthew Gleadall
SPRING SEMINAR	Tues 5th April	9.30 – 4.00		Chesterfield Football Club

Plus: multiple dates for finance courses (see website for dates):

- Finance for councillors
- Year end accounts and audit
- The role of internal audit
- Introduction to VAT for local councils

Wendy Amis, Chief Officer