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Sent: 07 April 2024 17:43
To: Kath Gruber
Subject: DALC April 2024 Newsletter

April News



Welcome to your April newsletter. I'm sure you will be busy with end of year audit preparation, but I hope that you are able to take a moment to read on for this month's news and information.

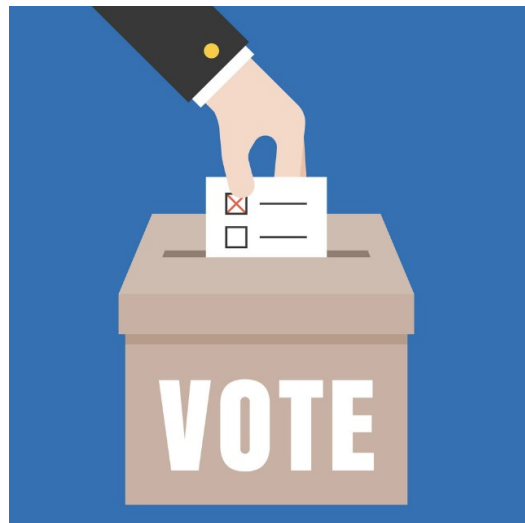
Wendy Amis | Chief Officer | Derbyshire ALC



External Audit

You should have now received notification from PKF Littlejohn of the requirements for external audit – if you haven't, please contact them on sba@pkf-l.com. There are very minor amendments from last year. For note, it is now recommended as good practice that your internal audit report is published alongside the other Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) documents on your website.

For smaller authorities that are part of the 5% sample (you will have



Pre-Election Publicity period Begins

Derbyshire voters go to the polls on May 2nd to elect a new East Midlands Combined Authority mayor and the county's Police & Crime Commissioner and, although parish and town councils are not directly involved in these elections, please avoid anything which offers undue influence or advantage that might affect those elections.

been notified by PKF if this is you!), plus intermediate authorities (income/expenditure over £200,000), the additional test area is a focus on General Power of Competence. You must identify whether you have GPoC and, if you do, you will need to provide supporting documentation.

Remember, if you have any questions about completing the AGAR forms, please do get in touch and we will be happy to help.



DALC Roadshows

In response to member requests for more face to face events and some networking opportunities, we have set up a series of roadshows across the county this Spring. We have sessions for clerks and for councillors and they are free to attend. We will cover matters including the Council's biodiversity duty and other current topics for the sector, seek to further understand what DALC can do for you, share the resources available to you, and there will be time for you to network and pose any questions you may have. Please do book your place through the DALC portal so we can plan refreshments appropriately.

Friday 26th April – Wingerworth Parish Hall

Monday 29th April – Wirksworth Memorial Hall

Wednesday 1st May – Chapel-en-le-Frith Town Hall

An example would be a local issue your council is involved in, which is also the subject of debate in the other election(s).” Further information about the pre-election publicity period, including some useful FAQs, **can be found on the LGA website here.**



Entries Arrive for DALC Excellence Awards

The first entry nominations for our 7th annual awards have arrived here at the DALC office! Categories this year are:

- Blachere Clerk of the Year
- TDP Environmental Project of the Year
- Blachere Council of the Year
- CCLA Councillor of the Year

Full details and an online entry form can be found here, requiring up to 500 words about why your nominee deserves an award.

Winners will be announced at our DALC Day event and AGM at

Thursday 16th May – Ockbrook and Borrowwash Parish Hall
Friday 17th May – Dalbury Lees Village Hall



Confused about Biodiversity Net Gain? An overview...

From April 2nd, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) will apply to smaller planning applications as well as larger developments. The new initiative, which seeks to improve our natural environment by imposing the requirement for a 10% 'net gain' in biodiversity from new developments, was the topic of a recent DALC forum.

For your information we've made all the forum's **presentation slides by BNG expert Andrew Towler** available **here**.

There is also a useful website **here** to explain more and help you calculate the value of your biodiversity units.



Practitioners' Guide urges switch to gov.uk domains

Chesterfield FC's stadium on October 17th.



Legal Topic Note outlines new procurement thresholds

The new procurement thresholds that came into effect at the beginning of 2024 have now been detailed in NALC's update to LTN84. The thresholds apply to public works, public services, and public supply contracts.

Updated LTN84 can be found on the DALC portal here.



The 2024-25 edition of the Practitioners' Guide (applicable to financial year commencing April 2024) includes further encouragement for parish and town councils to use gov.uk domains for their websites and emails. It also recommends that councils publish their full internal audit report on their websites, alongside the AGAR.

The 2024 edition can be found here. A quick-glance view of the **changes from the 2023 edition can be found here.**

Please note that for the financial year just ending, the 2023 edition should be used, and **can be found here.**



Keep up with our Round Robins

We know from members' feedback that our 'Round Robin' Q&As are an invaluable source of information, knowledge and experience to (and from) clerks across Derbyshire. We've also found that it's not just the originator of the question who wants to hear the answers and recommendations from our members!

So – to share the information with all our DALC councils, we've set up

New Parish Council for Drakelow comes a step forward

Derbyshire will welcome a new parish council next year if draft review proposals are approved. Drakelow's current parish meeting will be abolished on 31st March 2025 and replaced by a parish council of nine councillors, rising to 11 if the number of electors reaches 905.

South Derbyshire District Council has confirmed that if a minimum of 10% of Drakelow's electors support the plan, they will make a formal recommendation that the new Drakelow Parish Council be formed.

Details of the review can be found here.



NALC Legal View: Can a council give a character reference

As a corporate body, a council cannot "know" someone or have a view on someone's character, NALC's legal team has confirmed.

However, a chair or individual councillors would be free to give a reference in an individual capacity and could relate this to council activities if appropriate.

This advice would also apply to other forms of reference.

a page on the DALC portal with all the responses and recommendations. If you haven't yet logged onto the portal, just get in touch and we'll be happy to help. And – once again – a big thank you to all of you who have offered advice, knowledge and experience, it's much appreciated!



Membership reminder

Celebrating the best of Derbyshire - DALC teams up with CPRE

The Living Countryside Awards – a new scheme launched by Derbyshire CPRE in partnership with us here at DALC – seek to recognise the outstanding work done by individuals or groups to keep our county looking its best. These awards are wider than the work done by parish and town councils, so do share this with the community groups and others in your area. Categories include:

- 1 – Inspiring Groups
- 2 – Trailblazer individuals
- 3 – Made in Derbyshire
- 4 – Derbyshire 'Countryside Captured' photo competition

Further details of all the categories, plus an online

Just a quick reminder that DALC and NALC subscription fees are due now for the financial year 2024-25.

We always greatly appreciate your timely payment to help us continue to provide the best possible service.

nomination form, **can be found on the CPRE website here.**

Featured Training

Thursday 18
April
10am - 12pm



Social Media

This session will provide background on what social media is, social media strategies and how to manage expectations.

Registration

Tuesday 23
April
10am - 1pm



GDPR

This is an ideal introduction to Data Protection for new Councillors and Clerks as well as those requiring a basic knowledge of GDPR & the Data Protection Act 2018

Registration

Thursday
25 April
10am -
11:30am



Code of Conduct

This 90-minute course will cover:

Code of conduct regulations,
General Conduct principles,
Disclosable interests - including
pecuniary, Dispensations, Bias and pre-
determination, Complaints and sanctions

Registration

Tuesday 30
April
10am - 1pm



Freedom of Information

It is an ideal introduction to FOIA for new Councillors and Clerks as well as those requiring a basic knowledge of FOI.

[Registration](#)

Thursday 9
May
8:30am - 4:30pm



Basic Tree Survey and Inspection

Held at the Whitworth Centre, this will enable delegates to understand the legal and safety implications of hazardous trees; maintain health and safety while carrying out basic tree survey and inspection; recognise hazardous trees, determine levels of risk and decide on appropriate courses of action; collect and maintain adequate information; recognise your own limitations. Delegate fee includes LANTRA certificate of attendance. This course must be booked by Friday 26th April.

[Registration](#)

Derbyshire ALC

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