



Newsletter

May 2021

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Meetings

We have forwarded NALC's updated [information and guidance for Parish and Town Councils](#) on the return to in person Council Meetings. If you are unsure of your NALC login details please contact Anna at anna@mulberryandco.co.uk

Public attendance at face-to-face Meetings – the public must have the opportunity to attend in person but should be encouraged to use the 'remote' facility if provided and submit questions in advance. There is an expectation that all Meeting Venues will be COVID compliant.

Staff can attend Meetings in person or remotely.

We would particularly draw your attention to the very important plea from NALC for all members to respond to the [Government's call for evidence on remote meetings](#). It would be very helpful if you could share your responses with us as, in addition to your direct responses, we would like to pass on your thoughts and ideas to all Member Councils and also provide a composite response reflecting various views and experiences.

Working Groups - NALC has recently confirmed their formal legal advice initially provided some years ago (though it seems to vary in other guidance) to the effect that Working Groups are considered to have the status of committees/sub committees and are subject to the usual statutory requirements for service of Notices etc.

The view has long been held by most of us that Working Groups are informal, their purpose is limited to research and assembling of information (ie they do not make decisions) which will inform decision making by the Council and or a Committee that appointed them.

It would seem that there is now a concern as to the definition of working groups and an increasing trend for a more extensive use of Working Groups by Councils in place of formal meetings and this brings into question the Council's commitment to transparency.

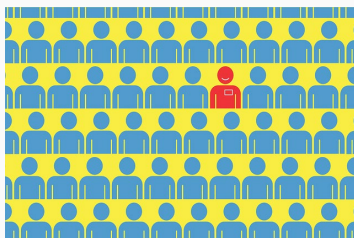
We appreciate this will affect many of you, particularly if your Council has recently appointed Working Groups at your Annual Meetings and we will be happy to chat through the implications.



Forums for Clerks and Chairs

We will be continuing with these Forums (remotely) shortly, they provide an opportunity to share information and provide updates.

Please keep a look out for dates which will be circulated soon.



Clerks

Whenever a vacancy arises most councils wish to appoint an experienced Clerk, unfortunately there are not enough to go round!

WSALC is currently considering ways in which the word can be spread that being a part time parish clerk can fit in well with other jobs and domestic life. With the demise of many local papers there is a challenge in how we reach those who may be interested and invite them to a briefing.

If anyone has ideas of how we might achieve this please let us know.

You can access the vacancies page on the [WSALC website](#)



PCC / WSALC Focus Groups

These come around every 6 months and are about to start again, arrangements have been made to meet with the following towns and parishes on the dates shown within agreed time slots, the purpose is to return to the same communities and establish whether policing has been effective:

18th May – Bramber

20th May – Rustington, Angmering, East Preston, Selsey

21st May – Midhurst, Haywards Heath

27th May – Broadbridge Heath, Southwater, Rusper, Warnham, Burgess Hill, Hassocks, Billingshurst

28th May – Pulborough, Littlehampton

1st June – Petworth, Fittleworth and the Witterings

7th June – Chichester and surrounding parishes

8th June – Turners Hill



Well done!

As lockdown restrictions ease it is probably now timely for all Councils to reflect on just how well you have all done in the last 15 months. There have been many hurdles and you have overcome them with hard work and commitment. It does no harm to review the last year and capture it maybe in a report and/or in any publication or other communication mediums. It may also be a good time with budget planning looming to think about lessons learned and any changes that will prepare the Council for the future.

NALC and the County Associations are still pressing the Government hopefully to give Council's the choice on holding 'in person' or 'remote' meetings.

This may be the opportunity to think about also offering the

community the choice.

And finally we are always on the lookout for interesting snippets from our parishes that they might wish to share with others, if you have something that can be published in our next Bulletin please let Anna have a note.



MULBERRY AND CO TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

Mulberry and Co are delighted to launch a brand new online training programme for town and parish councils delivered by an experienced and qualified team, ***all training is charged at a discounted rate for WSALC members.***

The training programme is designed to be flexible and individual and currently includes:

Councillors & Chairmanship training – suitable for both new and existing councillors

Clerks & Officers training – suitable for new staff or those requiring training/refreshing on a specific topic

Finance training – suitable for both officers and members, new and existing

***NEW* Planning training** – suitable for both officers and members, new and existing

Any of the scheduled modules are also available for individual councils to book either in the tailored made format or completely bespoke to your requirements, please contact Anna Beams at anna@mulberryandco.co.uk if you have a request or would like further details. Prices are quoted on an individual basis depending on your needs.

At present all training is taking place online by Zoom however we

hope to resume face to face training as soon as we are able and will then offer both a remote and face to face programme, as well as networking days and conferences.

For further details and to book please visit the [Mulberry and Co website](#).

We will be adding many more dates, topics and modules over the coming weeks and months so please do keep a look out for those!



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